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College Bound Opportunities
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Local Students in Need Celebrate First Steps to College *College Bound Opportunities Welcomes 27 New Scholars Into Program*

(Deerfield, IL) On Sunday, twenty-seven high school juniors from Highland Park, Deerfield, and Lake Forest high schools and their families came together at Congregation Solel to celebrate a major step towards earning a college degree: their acceptance into College Bound Opportunities (CBO). CBO is a local nonprofit that mentors students in need to provide access to college and, more importantly, graduate from college. CBO's founder, Cliff Bregstone, addressed the students saying, "What an amazing day! We are celebrating 27 special people in the CBO Class of 2020. Now who can tell me what that year means?" One scholar raised her hand and said that was the year they would be graduating college. "That is exactly right!" Bregstone answered.

Founded in 2006, CBO provides a comprehensive set of programs, including ACT Prep classes, laptops, career workshops, and financial assistance for these scholars. But most importantly, it provides a one-to-one mentor relationship with a community volunteer. Most of the students in the program are the first in their families to go to college, so the need for a mentor is critical to their success. The students and their families met their volunteer mentors for the first time on Sunday. A few of the new mentors for this class have an intimate knowledge of the program. They were actually CBO scholars who have since graduated from college. Anna Aguilar was in the first class of scholars in 2007 and decided to become a mentor. "CBO has been in my life for the last 7 years so becoming a mentor was the least I could do," said Anna. "I want to be able to help someone on their journey to college." Each mentor will be working with their student for the next six years helping them navigate the college application process and adapt to college life.

In its first year, the organization accepted four students. This newest class brings the total number of scholars in the program nearly 160. In addition, another 38 scholars have earned a college degree. But even more students need help in the community. Unfortunately, CBO still must turn away more than 50% of qualified applicants due to funding constraints. Due to this competitive application process, being accepted into the program represents an important accomplishment for these students. Addressing the students again, Cliff Bregstone stated, "You were selected because you showed the desire and drive to succeed."

About College Bound Opportunities:

College Bound Opportunities (CBO) is a not-for-profit organization centered in the ten communities within Deerfield and Highland Park High School District 113 and Lake Forest Community High School District 115. CBO identifies high-achieving but under resourced young people who, without support, would likely forgo post-secondary education and assists them in applying to and completing college. CBO goals are achieved through a program of one-to-one mentoring between volunteers and scholars. Additional aid provided by CBO includes tutoring, training services, laptop computers, and up to \$16,000 in financial support. Learn more at <http://cbo4success.org>.

Congressman Brad Schneider showed his support of CBO by congratulating the students on being accepted into the program.

College Bound Opportunities accepted 27 local high school students into its program to help under-resourced students earn a college degree. Congressman Brad Schneider came out to congratulate the students and their families for this achievement.