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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ashley and Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride Partner to Offer College Scholarships to Harford and Cecil County Residents

Increasing access to college education through scholarships for local LGBTQIA+ students lacking financial support

Havre de Grace, Md. (July 29, 2022)—With a higher likelihood of being bullied in high school, harassment outside of school, and a lack of understanding and education in their own circles, LGBTQIA+ people are less likely to pursue a college education, to begin with. Combined with the fact that they are far more likely to lack financial support from families, their chances for a college education decrease even further. A new partnership between [Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride \(UCBPride\)](#) and [Ashley Addiction Treatment \(Ashley\)](#) seeks to combat this trend, securing a \$1,000 match by Ashley for the highly sought-after [scholarships](#) provided to a Cecil and Harford Community College student through UCBPride.

UCBPride began offering scholarships in 2021 as a part of their effort to expand their services beyond the festival. “After the second festival, we started having some intentional internal discussions about how we might build on our signature event to have a greater community impact,” said Sue Knause, UCBPride president. “The scholarships seemed like a logical and important starting point.”

“We are proud to support an organization like UCBPride that not only creates a welcoming environment, events and resources for the local LGBTQIA+ community but also supports their education, helping them pursue their goals through education. We know that UCBPride is an important cornerstone in creating a support network and more inclusivity in the surrounding counties. By doing so, they help the local LGBTQIA+ community work against the high rates of SUDs and mental illnesses that are so often caused by the discrimination and inequity this group experiences. As a treatment provider that recognizes the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ patients, we want to do our part,” said Ashley’s co-CEO and president, Alex Denstman.

Last year, UCBPride worked with Harford Community College and Cecil College to establish two \$500 scholarships. Knause said there was an overwhelming response when the scholarships were introduced in 2021. “The Harford Community College scholarship had nearly 30 applicants in the first year.” But she noted that she was not surprised by the need, given that LGBTQIA+ people are more likely to be financially cut off from their families; 60% of LGBTQIA+ college students nationwide reported not having financial support from families.,

“One of the best ways to advance a community is to provide financial support for its members’ education. This act of generosity ensures that every citizen has access to high-demand workforce training programs that transition students into highly sought-after employees. Cecil College



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applauds the positive impact that Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride scholarships have on the LGBTQIA+ community,” said Dr. Mary Way Bolt, Cecil College president.

“Harford Community College is grateful to Ashley Addiction Treatment and Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride for the scholarships they are providing LGBTQIA+ students on our campus,” said Dr. Theresa Felder, president of Harford Community College. “Harford is committed to equity and inclusion; we strive to educate students and inspire a passion for good citizenship and civic engagement, and we are committed to advocating for and promoting these values on campus. We want our campus to be a place where everyone feels welcome and the financial support of these organizations will certainly help to make that happen for someone who may otherwise be unable to attend due to financial barriers.”

“We are so grateful for the community support for these scholarships,” Knause said. “And having matching contribution support from Ashley Addiction Treatment—one of our amazing community partners—is something that we couldn’t have imagined in our second year of offering scholarships.”

Knause noted that although the scholarship drive typically ends on July 1, UCBPride has elected to keep this year’s campaign open until the \$1,000 match goal is met. For more information about the scholarship, visit <http://www.ucbpride.com>.

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ABOUT ASHLEY ADDICTION TREATMENT

Ashley Addiction Treatment (Ashley) is a nationally recognized leader in evidence-based treatment of substance use disorders. Ashley’s comprehensive programs integrate a full spectrum of medical, clinical and holistic treatment methods, and result in frequent publications of ongoing research into effective treatment methodologies. Ashley’s driving principle – “everything for recovery” – guides healing for each individual with respect and dignity. Accredited by The Joint Commission and a division of Ashley Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Ashley has treated over 50,000 patients since 1983 and has awarded more than \$65 million in scholarships to assist patient recovery. Offerings include inpatient and outpatient treatment, sobriety enrichment, community outreach, family and children’s education, and specialty programs. For more information, please visit ashleytreatment.org.

ABOUT UPPER CHESAPEAKE BAY PRIDE

Founded in 2019, Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride provides unwavering advocacy and support for LGBTQIA+ people, communities, and their families in Cecil and Harford Counties. UCBPride’s 2022 Pride Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 8 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Concord Point Park in Havre de Grace, MD. For more information about the festival or our organization, please visit www.ucbpride.com.



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