

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY SENATOR FIELDS

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Reginald F. Lewis Scholars as they successfully matriculate throughout the educational equity initiative program.

WHEREAS, the University of Louisiana System (UL System), one of the nation's largest highest educational systems, developed the Reginald F. Lewis Scholars program to enhance the academic experience for black males; and

WHEREAS, data inspired the UL System when it recognized the disparities comparing black males to all other demographics in higher educational settings; and

WHEREAS, the first cohort of scholars were introduced in June 2021, during the UL System Black Male Summit, an event designed to address the challenges black male faculty, staff, and students experience; and

WHEREAS, the cohort of scholars comprises eighteen sophomores, two from each UL System member institution, who are participating in the three-year curate educational experience; and

WHEREAS, the universities and the cohort of scholars are: *Grambling State University*, JaDeric Talbert and Isaiah Farrell; *Louisiana Tech University*, Cameron Green and Da'Voznik Armstrong; *McNeese State University*, Malaki Johnson and Isaiah E. Johnson; *Nicholls State University*, John Edmonds and Lance Jones; *Northwestern State University*, Ebenezer Aggrey and Derrick Varnado; *Southeastern Louisiana University*, Demille Davis and Dylan James; *University of Louisiana at Lafayette*, Caleb Franklin and JaCaleb Smith; *University of Louisiana at Monroe*; Carl Whitlock and Earnest C. Wyatt; and the *University of New Orleans*, Rabruntae Rachal and Robert Hill; and

WHEREAS, the all black male cohort of scholars is filled with a group of diverse individuals with varied backgrounds, interests, and degrees of study; and

WHEREAS, named for renowned business leader, Reginald F. Lewis, each scholar is met with high expectations to be diligent and enthusiastic in their academic pursuits, social engagement, and community service; and

WHEREAS, each scholar receives a institutional scholarship covering tuition and fees and a meal plan thanks to the various food service partners throughout the UL System; and

WHEREAS, throughout the past nine months, the scholars have grown exponentially through countless hours of community service, mentorship sessions, and various personal development opportunities provided by the UL System; and

WHEREAS, in January the scholars kicked off a touring exhibit, "carrying a dream" which featured artifacts honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life; and

WHEREAS, this summer the scholars will be matched with internships designed to enhance their workplace experience while growing their social network; and

WHEREAS, during the cohort's second year, the students will advance their cultural competency by participating in a study abroad program in France; and

WHEREAS, this is just the beginning for the Reginald F. Lewis Scholars as each is nurtured to greatly contribute to the future of their university, community, and the state of Louisiana as they pursue their academic dreams.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Reginald F. Lewis Scholars as they successfully matriculate through the University of Louisiana System's Reginald F. Lewis Educational Equity Initiative Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to each Reginald F. Lewis Scholars in care of Ms. Cami Geisman, Vice President for External Affairs and Chief of Staff of the University of Louisiana System.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE