

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Just for Kids Awards Scholarships to Local Students in Inaugural Program**

**BUFFALO, N.Y., April 10, 2026** — Just for Kids School Age Programs proudly announced the recipients of its first-ever scholarship program, awarding 30 students with financial support to pursue continued education during the 2026-2027 academic year.

The inaugural scholarship cycle resulted in an overwhelming response from students across the region. After a comprehensive and objective review process conducted by the organization’s Scholarship Selection Committee, 30 students were selected based on academic achievement, leadership, community involvement, and future educational goals.

“This milestone reflects our deep commitment to investing in the next generation,” said Kristina Kleeh, MA/CAS, Executive Director of Just for Kids. “These students represent determination, resilience, and promise. We are honored to support them as they take the next step in their educational journeys.”

Collectively, the organization awarded \$27,500 in scholarship funding. Scholarship recipients will attend a range of institutions this fall, pursuing majors in fields such as education, engineering, healthcare, business, and public service.

The scholarship program was established in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Childcare Network of the Niagara Frontier, Inc., a NYS nonprofit organization which oversees the Just for Kids School Age Programs across multiple school districts in WNY. The program recognizes high school seniors who demonstrate leadership, service to others, and a commitment to lifelong learning—values that align with the organization's mission to nurture and empower youth both inside and outside the classroom. The organization plans to expand the program in future years through donor support and community partnerships.

“I was once the child benefitting from programs like Just for Kids, and now I am proud to be a leader helping children feel safe, confident, and valued. Receiving this scholarship would not only support my educational goals, but it would also honor the role Just for Kids has played in shaping who I am today,” stated scholarship recipient Haley Ventura of Williamsville Central School District.

“This scholarship will be a reminder to me that I can achieve anything that I put my mind to, as long as I work hard for whatever I’m trying to accomplish. This is just one small asset to get me going on a new and exciting journey,” said scholarship recipient Maya Rizzo of Grand Island Central School District.

“We believe education transforms lives and strengthens communities,” said Christine Pleban, AuD, President of the Board of Directors. “This is only the beginning of what we hope will become a long-standing tradition of support for students in our region.”

### **About Just for Kids**

Just for Kids School Age Programs, a 501(c)3 nonprofit operated by the Childcare Network of the Niagara Frontier, Inc., provides high-quality before- and after-school programs, break and summer camps, and enrichment opportunities across Western New York. With nearly three decades of experience, the organization has been recognized for childcare excellence, quality leadership, and an outstanding work environment. Employment opportunities are available; interested candidates can learn more at [www.justforkidsonline.org](http://www.justforkidsonline.org).

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