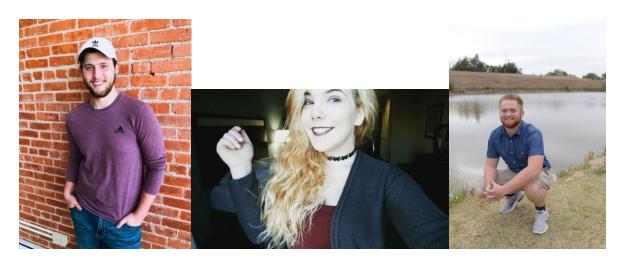# GBCF My Hometown Scholarship has successful debut; winners announced

Braeden Corman of Larned   Britani Grabast of Hudson   Jordan Taylor of Larned

It was a first for the Golden Belt Community Foundation (GBCF) but it appears it won't be the last. "The debut of the My Hometown Scholarship Contest was a great success and the GBCF plans to offer it again in the future", said Sue Cooper, program officer.

Applicants from Barton, Pawnee, Rush and Stafford counties were asked to submit a 30- to 60-second video explaining "What makes my hometown great?"

"The encouraging feedback from the community and the scholarship review committee indicates we will offer this opportunity again next year," Cooper said. "Our social media traffic soared when we shared the videos of students who wanted to champion their communities.

"It is a privilege to work with so many parents and students each year on a variety of scholarships," she added. "All applicants expended a great amount of time and energy for this contest. We congratulate all of them and wish them the best in the pursuit of their education."

The winners are Braeden Corman of Larned, Britani Grabast of Hudson and Jordan Taylor of Larned. Each earned a $500 scholarship.

"The videos had a common thread of hometown spirit influenced by family and friends," Cooper said. "Applicants know they can rely on their communities for support;

they have such pride about their hometowns. They know their communities want them to thrive and stay connected to their roots."

Cooper also noted the importance of review committee members. Their professionalism and the GBCF's scholarship process ensured recipients were selected fairly, she said.

"In addition, the committee thought the video applications were a refreshing variation to the traditional online process," Cooper noted. "They allowed the review committee and our neighbors in central Kansas to see the students' personalities and heart."

Amber Rugan, rural Ellinwood/Stafford County, was one member of the video review committee. "The winners shared attractive video editing and on-location shots," she commented. "And they agreed that local people make their hometowns great.

"Reviewing scholarships is a highlight of my year," she continued. "My heart grows as I am introduced to applicants' backgrounds, character and aspirations."

Rugan mentioned highlights of the winners' videos: Corman demonstrated unique interviews with the future generation at multiple locations; Grabast included local on-site trivia and passion; and Taylor offered a personal account of support throughout his childhood.

"Each captured the viewers' attention," Rugan said. "These videos have the potential to bolster community image and increase hometown pride.

"I love that the subject of the videos was the individual towns," she continued. "The committee, as well as the public identified with the heart of these local towns. At the same time, they connected to the applicants through their unique creations."

The GBCF should be commended for being innovative and always seeking to engage the community in positive projects, Rugan noted.

"The best part of the Foundation's innovation with this project is that it allows applicants to demonstrate their skills, personalities and unique perspectives of what makes a hometown great. My Hometown is a homerun," she said. "It produced a competitive field of creative videos. I look forward to hometown pride being showcased in more video applications."

At nearly $23 million in total assets and more than 180 funds under management, the Golden Belt Community Foundation has been connecting people who care to causes that matter since 1996. Golden Belt Community Foundation exists to provide non-profit organizations in central Kansas with a permanent source of support and to serve as a vehicle for charitable giving for donors. GBCF serves the counties of Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford. For more information about Golden Belt Community Foundation, call (620) 792-3000 or visit their website at www.goldenbeltcf.org.