LOCAL STUDENT SELECTED FOR $14,000 GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C., (June 8, 2022) - Today, the Golden LEAF Foundation announced that 215 rural North Carolina students were selected to receive up to a $14,000 Golden LEAF Scholarship, including one in Avery County.

High school seniors entering college as first year students are eligible for a $3,500 scholarship each year for up to four years of undergraduate study at a participating four-year North Carolina college or university. Community college transfer students are eligible for $3,500 a year for up to three years of undergraduate study.

Recipients from rural, tobacco-dependent or economically distressed North Carolina counties are selected based on career and educational goals, a review of school and community service activities, academic performance, length of residence in the county and expressed intent to contribute to the state's rural communities upon graduation from college.

The Golden LEAF Foundation established the Golden LEAF Scholarship Program to broaden educational opportunities and provide support to students from rural counties with the goal that after graduation recipients will return and contribute back to rural communities. The North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA) administers the program and selects students for awards.

"We are proud to award scholarships to hardworking and bright students with deep roots in their rural communities," said Scott T. Hamilton, Golden LEAF Foundation President, Chief Executive Officer. "These students were selected out of a pool of more than 1,600 applicants. We look forward to the future success of these scholarship recipients as they follow their education pursuits and develop into North Carolina's next generation of rural leaders."

"My sincerest congratulations to Carly for earning this award," said Representative Dudley Greene. "I'm sure you will put in the hard work to help you accomplish your goals. We need students like you to help our rural communities thrive!"

"Congratulations to Carly from Avery County for receiving this award," said Senator Warren Daniel. "She has already demonstrated leadership and strong academic performance. I look forward to hearing of her future success!"

The newly selected 2022-23 Golden LEAF Scholarship recipient is as follows:

Avery County

Name	High School	University
Carly Benfield	Avery County High School	North Carolina State University

About Golden LEAF Foundation:
The Golden LEAF Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1999 to receive a portion of North Carolina's funding from the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement with cigarette manufacturers. For more than 20 years, Golden LEAF has worked to increase economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural and tobacco-dependent communities through leadership in grantmaking, collaboration, innovation, and stewardship as an independent and perpetual foundation.

The Foundation has provided lasting impact to tobacco-dependent, economically distressed and rural areas of the state by helping create 66,000 jobs, over $700 million dollars in new payrolls and more than 90,000 workers trained or retrained for higher wages. Golden LEAF has provided 6,251 scholarships totaling more than $42 million to students from rural communities attending North Carolina's colleges and universities.

For more information about Golden LEAF and our programs, please visit our website at www.goldenleaf.org.

About North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority:
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA) administers the program on behalf of the Golden LEAF Foundation. Established in 1965, NCSEAA is the State agency that promotes access to higher education by administering financial aid and savings programs, informing students and families about paying for college, teaching educators about financial aid administration and advocating for resources to support students.

# # #