

Beta Sigma Awards \$6,000 in Scholarships



2017 Beta Sigma Boulé Scholars

Left to Right: Xavier Farrell, Suraji A. Omour, Grand Sire Archon-Elect Gregory Vincent, Sire Archon Vincent Jackson, Famara D. Diere, Israel Robinson
(Not Shown: Cory G. Bryant)

At its 7th Annual W.E.B. Du Bois Public Policy Program held on June 21, 2017, Beta Sigma Boulé (Springfield, Massachusetts) announced \$6,000 in scholarship awards to five outstanding high school graduates. The Beta Sigma Boulé Foundation presented a \$4,000 academic scholarship award to Xavier A. Farrell, a graduate of Springfield's High School of Science and Technology. Mr. Farrell began his freshman year at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in September. The scholarship is named in honor of the late Howard L. Edmonds, a prominent educator in the Springfield public schools and a charter member of Beta Sigma Boulé.

Additionally, \$500 book scholarships were awarded to four outstanding young men who also entered college as freshmen this fall: Cory G. Bryant (Morehouse College), Suraji A. Omour (Springfield College), Famara D. Dieme (Western New England University), and Israel Robinson (Tufts University).

The W.E.B. Du Bois Public Policy Program is a forum for community leaders to come together and address public policy topics of significance to the African American community such as education, health, social justice, and political action. This year's program featured Grand Sire Archon-Elect Gregory Vincent as keynote speaker.

In his remarks, Archon Vincent made several references to notable African American leaders and pioneers whose legacies began in Western Massachusetts, including W.E.B. Du Bois and Edward Jones. Jones was a graduate of Amherst College and is believed to be the second African American to receive a college degree (1826). Archon Vincent also acknowledged the contributions of Archon Charles Hamilton Houston, valedictorian of Amherst College's class of 1915 and a Harvard-educated lawyer who mentored Thurgood Marshall and several other black lawyers. Archon Vincent encouraged young people in the audience to be proud of their heritage and to seek out mentors for guidance and direction. He also encouraged them to develop good study habits and surround themselves with positive people. Archon Vincent also addressed a number of questions from the audience about the state of higher education and related issues.