



## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For questions: NWILED @ 815-297-7361

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### **NWILED awards the John D. Cooke, III Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship**

HANOVER, IL – Since 2018 Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) has offered an entrepreneurial scholarship. On December 8, 2021, the NWILED Board of Directors unanimously voted to rename the annual scholarship in honor and remembrance of the late John D Cooke III who was a founding member of the organization. We are pleased to announce the first-place winner of the **NWILED John D. Cooke, III Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship** for 2022 is Samantha Rury from Wahlert High School in Dubuque, IA who was awarded \$2,000 and the runner up winners are Aly Anderson and Jovian Pham from Galena High School who each received a \$1,500 award.

Notably, all three students are from the Galena area and all three have interest in agriculture. Ms. Rury and her family own Hoof It Goat Treks in Galena. She plans to use her scholarship to attend Illinois State University for animal science and intends to apply her education to growing her family’s adventure-based agricultural business. Ms. Anderson plans to use her scholarship to attend Highland Community College and peruse a career in agricultural marketing. Mr. Pham remains undecided after being admitted to four schools and intends to study statistics and economics in pursuit of a career in creative data analytics for the agriculture and natural resources industries. Mr. Cooke’s message to the scholarship recipients would undoubtedly be, “Congratulations, and press on to excellence!”

Through the Cooke scholarship NWILED hopes to enrich the lives of deserving students who are from either Carroll or Jo Daviess County that are entrepreneurial and want to start a business or pursue a career in business. This year NWILED received a total of eight applications that were reviewed and judged by a panel of seven individuals including Mr. John Cooke IV. Scholarships are to be used for start-up costs related to launching a business and or advancing a career in business through education and training.

Past winners have included students connected to Three Sisters Sweet Shoppe in Elizabeth, and Davis Lumber Company in Scales Mound, in addition to a student from Savanna that proposed a sign language business, and a student from the Galena Territory who is developing a hand-crafted artisan doll line.

#### Photo details

1. Wahlert High School (Left to Right): David Rury, David Schmit, Samantha Rury, Christina Eisbach
2. Galena High School (Left to Right) David Schmit, Jovian Pham, Aly Anderson

For more information about NWILED visit [nwiled.org](http://nwiled.org).