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## Take Stock in Children Sarasota County Celebrates 2017 Graduates



*Take Stock in Children Class of 2017 – Photo by Cliff Roles, 5/31/17*

**SARASOTA, FL (6/1/17)** – Take Stock in Children, a statewide non-profit organization established to break the cycle of poverty by providing scholarships, mentors and hope to deserving low-income students, proudly announces the graduation of **41** local high school seniors.

This graduation signifies the culmination of a long-term commitment by these students to meet with their Take Stock in Children mentor once per week, maintain good academic standing and stay drug and crime free throughout their middle and high school years. This work has allowed the students to earn for themselves their scholarship for the next chapter in their schooling.

The TSIC Class of 2017:

- Tyler Abbott, SMA—Suncoast Technical College
- Kasi Beauchamp, NPHS— Florida Gulf Coast University
- Jada Bennett, SHS—Florida Atlantic University
- James Adams, SHS—State College of Florida
- Larry Destine, NPHS—State College of Florida
- Alexia DeVincenzo, NPHS—State College of Florida
- Sawyer Figlow, Prew —State College of Florida

- Dominick Gomez, SHS—State College of Florida
- Kiara Huewitt, RHS—Florida Gulf Coast University
- Hassan Hogan, NPHS—Santa Fe College
- Ja’Quan Johnson, SHS—State College of Florida
- Terra Jones, SHS—State College of Florida
- Natascha Jonsef, SHS—University of North Florida
- Vladzimir Kuschchava, NPHS—Florida State University
- Odane Lennox, BHS—Gator Engineering Program of SCF & UF
- Luigi Lockhart, BHS—State College of Florida
- Jahnessa Lambert, BHS—State College of Florida
- Erinn Lee, BHS—State College of Florida
- Mikayla Lyons, RHS—Duke University
- Sarah Marin, SHS—Florida State University
- Dylan McKee, NPHS—University of South Florida
- Leah McRae, NPHS—Santa Fe College
- Brandin Muniz, NPHS—University of South Florida
- Brionna Newell, RHS- Barry University
- Isabella Penkwitz, PV—The Naval Academy
- Jennie Porcelli, SMA—State College of Florida
- Ajayla Poquette, RHS—Tallahassee Community College
- Alyx Reckahn, PV—State College of Florida
- Melissa Roberts, BHS—Johnson & Wales University
- Bailey Pachter, VHS—State College of Florida
- Maria Parada Rodriguez, NPHS—Boston University
- Daniela Romero, SMA—State College of Florida
- Selena Sanes, BHS—State College of Florida
- Harley Schmidt, NPHS—State College of Florida
- Taliah Stanley, BHS—Pace School of Performing Arts
- Jayden Sweet, NPHS—Florida Gulf Coast University
- Da’Quone Tirene, BHS—undecided
- Kenith Turner, SHS—Malone University
- Shelia Uria Valdez, BHS—Hobart & William Smith Colleges
- Chatoria White, BHS—Manatee Technical College
- Jacorey Williams, BHS—Santa Fe College

“This is a milestone achievement for [Take Stock in Children](#) as we celebrate breaking the cycle of poverty through education,” says Lisa Bechtold, Executive Director of Take Stock in Children of Sarasota County. “We are extremely proud of our students who will now take the next steps and make their college dreams a reality.”

The formal TSIC ceremony, sponsored by Publix Super Markets Charities University of South Florida Sarasota Manatee, State College of Florida and The Francis, was held on May 31, 2017 at the Francis in Downtown Sarasota. This inspiring evening celebrated the success of these students along with their mentors and families and was one of a series of TSIC graduations taking place across the state.

To learn more about TSIC, call 941-358-4407, email [Mandy@takestocksarasota](mailto:Mandy@takestocksarasota), or visit our website at [www.takestocksarasota.org](http://www.takestocksarasota.org).

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Take Stock in Children is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization with a solid history of providing mentors, educational scholarships and hope for Florida’s low-income and at-risk youth. The

organization has provided educational support and college scholarships for over 17,000 children in partnership with more than 800 public schools throughout 67 counties in Florida. It is the only scholarship mentoring program with the mission of breaking the cycle of poverty through education, and has attained a high school graduation rate of 97 percent in Florida (as compared to Florida's average graduation rate of 76%). The program's multi-year commitment to students and their comprehensive program services begin in middle school and continue through high school graduation and into college. Upon successful high school graduation, as a fulfillment of their contractual agreement, students are then awarded a college scholarship to any college, university or vocational school in the state of Florida. To learn more about Take Stock in Children, please call 941-358-4407 or visit [www.takestocksarasota.org](http://www.takestocksarasota.org).