



For Immediate Release

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## **Polaris Charter Academy 8<sup>th</sup> Grader Wins Prestigious Daniel Murphy Scholarship**

***Carl Donnell is PCA's first graduate to be awarded \$100,000 in scholarship funding.***

Chicago (March 17, 2015) – Carl Donnell will receive \$100,000 in high school scholarship support from the [Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund](#). He was selected as one of 100 awardees from over 1,000 applicants throughout the city of Chicago after an intensive application and interview process. In June 2015, Carl will graduate in [Polaris Charter Academy](#)'s second class of 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates and is interested in many top high schools, including [St. Ignatius](#), [ChiArts](#), and [Blair Academy](#), an east coast boarding school.

"Because of your academic abilities, leadership skills and hard work you are being invited to join the DMSF community of scholars. Your accomplishments are a tribute to your family, teachers and school community." – Meghann Sendak, Director of Education, Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund

Donnell began at Polaris in 2007 as a 1<sup>st</sup> grader in the school's first year. During his time at PCA, he has been dedicated to academics, school culture, and extracurricular activities. He was a lead role in Polaris Players' *Wiley and the Hairy Man* fall showcase, has been honored as a Light Leader in Critical Thinking, volunteers as reading buddy for younger students, and participates on the school Spirit Crew as the school mascot.

"One of the things I appreciate most about Carl is he is very solutions oriented. He looks for opportunities to better the school community. He is the one who came to us and said he wants to be the mascot. He is the one who pushed to get Spirit Crew up and running. He is a true Explorer with incredible integrity and honestly represents the very best of our community." – Michelle Navarre, Head of School

[Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund](#): The mission of the Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund is to give high school scholarship assistance and educational support to Chicago students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The Daniel Murphy Scholarship Foundation was founded in 1989 and conducts five "Core Programs" designed to enhance the lives of its scholars: Bridge to Excellence Program, Tutoring, Mentoring and Affinity Group Programs, Summer Opportunities Fair and Caddie Program, and College Counseling. Over 2,000 students have benefitted from the support of DMSF.

[Polaris Charter Academy](#) is the only public Expeditionary Learning (EL) school in Chicago and the first school in the Midwest to be recognized as a Mentor School and credentialed by the EL network. The mission of Polaris Charter Academy is to educate students to be self-motivated,

creative, critical thinkers, with the ultimate goal of shaping life-long learners and citizens with a strong sense of personal and civic responsibility. Students “learn by doing” as they conduct fieldwork, speak with experts, work collaboratively, and create authentic, high-quality end projects for audience beyond the classroom. While on sabbatical in the fall of 2005, three Golden Apple Award-winning teachers identified the common thread of their best practices in teaching: they all gave students the opportunity to “learn by doing.” With this common ground established between them, Michelle Navarre, Tracy Kwock, and Roel Vivit’s vision came to fruition as Polaris Charter Academy opened its doors in the fall of 2007.

For additional information and the latest on Polaris Charter Academy, please visit: [www.pcachicago.org](http://www.pcachicago.org). For media inquiries, please contact Carolyn Talaske at 708-271-3957 or [ctalaske@pcachicago.org](mailto:ctalaske@pcachicago.org).

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