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## **2023 CCA & Mud Hole Scholarship Winners Announced**

*Sophomore Year of Scholarship Program Awards Another \$6,000 in College Funds*

**Oviedo, FL, June 20, 2023** – The CCA Florida Youth Scholarship Program presented by the Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program kicked off an exciting week of activities and competition for ten Florida high school students pursuing college funding and an opportunity to make a positive impact to the environment and their communities. This year’s winners were announced and celebrated at the annual awards banquet, held at Mud Hole’s Oviedo, Florida headquarters. First place was awarded to Samuel Bernbaum of Maitland, who takes home a \$3,000 scholarship. Carson Smith of Panama City earned the \$2,000 second place prize, and the \$1,000 third place award went to Emma Hoelle of Sarasota. Students were graded throughout the week based on their attention, focus, creativity, speeches, and overall engagement as they experienced a wide variety of activities, including tours of the Duke Energy Mariculture Center in Crystal River, Sea Life Orlando Aquarium, and Bajio Sunglasses in New Smyrna Beach, fishing for barramundi at Osceola Outback Adventures, and building a custom fishing rod at Mud Hole’s Rod Building Education Center in Oviedo, of course.

“Mud Hole’s Education Program was designed to reach kids through hands-on learning and to add value to their education experience,” said Anthony Youmans, Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program Director. “Working with CCA on this exciting week of activities and seeing the students fully engaged in the conservation-focused program is extremely rewarding and fulfilling to our mission. We are looking forward to continuing our support of this valuable scholarship initiative.”

Beyond hosting the program’s kick-off and banquet events, and documenting the week’s itinerary with CCA Florida, Mud Hole commits the \$6,000 in scholarship funds through the Matt McGuffee College Scholarship Initiative, honoring the beloved former employee who passed away at an early age in 2022.

“We’re really proud of the opportunities this program brings to high school students across Florida,” CCA Florida Youth Scholarship Program Director, Amanda McLennan said. “In only the second year of the program, we’ve identified so many amazing students that have a true commitment to conservation and environmental awareness. The partnership between CCA and Mud Hole is really making a difference to the future of our state’s natural resources.”

As with last year’s inaugural program, this year’s ten participating students now have the opportunity earn the \$5,000 Grand Scholarship by returning to their high schools to create conservation-focused programs that positively impact their communities. For more details and video of the program’s week of activity, visit <https://mudhole.com/blogs/news/2023-scholarship-winners-announced>.

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### **About the Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program**

Since 2008, the Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program has been offering teachers and students the chance to explore custom rod building in the classroom. Mud Hole works closely with educators to incorporate custom rod building and tackle crafting into school curricula through professionally developed lesson plans and teaching tools, as well as deeply discounted pricing for rod building and tackle crafting components, tools, equipment, and supplies. Since its inception, the Mud Hole Education Program has reached over 50,000 students through more than 700 schools and youth organizations. Mud Hole Custom Tackle, based in Oviedo, Florida, is the world's largest supplier of rod building & tackle crafting goods, offering a superior shopping experience at [mudhole.com](http://mudhole.com), rapid delivery, industry leading customer service, and world class online content and instruction.

### **About CCA Florida**

The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) was founded in 1977 after drastic commercial overfishing along the Texas coast decimated redfish and speckled trout populations. One of 19 state chapters, CCA Florida became the fifth state chapter in 1985. A 501(c)3 non-profit, the purpose of CCA is to advise and educate the public on conservation of marine resources. Through habitat restoration projects, water quality initiatives and fisheries advocacy, CCA Florida works with its over 18,000 members including recreational anglers and outdoor enthusiasts to conserve and enhance marine resources and coastal environments. Join the conversation on Facebook or learn more at [ccaflorida.org](http://ccaflorida.org)