**Cameron County - Economic Development & Community Affairs Department**

**Cameron County Housing Finance Corporation 2023 - 2nd Annual**

**Fair Housing Awareness High School Essay- College Scholarship Contest**

**PURPOSE:** Cameron County Housing Finance Corp. and the Brownsville Sunrise Rotary Club have collaborated once again to award (8) eight college scholarships to 2023 high school graduates that live in Cameron County. The essay theme is Fair Housing and “what does it mean to you to have a *home”*.

**WHO**: Cameron County High School Graduating 2023 seniors & residents of Cameron County (enrolled in a School District in Cameron County) are encouraged to enter this Essay Contest. Students entering college/technical school in the Fall Semester of 2023.

**WHAT**: Fair Housing Awareness Essay writing Contest, a limit of no more than 5,000 words (or less), of a typed and double-space essay. Eight (8) Scholarships of $2,500 will be awarded. Only one (1) submission will be accepted for each essay writer. The mission behind this Fair Housing Essay contest is to recognize the students creative essay writing & promote excellence in writing at the high school level. Students will explain what fair housing means to them. In addition, what does it mean to you for anyone to own their own home, vs. renting a house. Students who plan to attend college & study a field in either Civil Rights Law, Architecture, Engineering, Political Science, Journalism, Real Estate, Housing Construction or other field are encouraged to participate. Students may choose to include artwork that depicts persons/families/houses with their essay (however; are not required).

**WHEN**: The deadline to submit the Essay is Friday **March 3, 2023 11:59 p.m. Central Time, no essays will be accepted after this deadline**. The Essays must be submitted to the following Cameron County email address below in the following formats: Microsoft Word and or PDF document. The winners will be recognized at a Cameron County Commissioners Court meeting to be announced and will Post on the Cameron County Website, Facebook and Instagram (at a later date). **Students must submit their work to the following Email address following the instructed above date and time.**  2023FairHousingEssay@co.cameron.tx.us

For your information the below is only general background information on Fair Housing:

* Affirmatively furthering Fair Housing is a requirement of the CDBG Program and the Texas Department of Agriculture requires units of local governments (such as Cameron County) applying for CDBG funding to affirmatively further Fair Housing.
* April is Fair Housing Awareness month, Cameron County Commissioners Court recognizes this by adopting fair housing Resolution and Policies of no housing discrimination ----
* What is the Federal Fair Housing Act and Whom Does it Protect?

The Federal Fair Housing Act refers to Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 ([www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov)). This Act, in addition to the Texas Fair Housing Act ([www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us)) protects your rights to rent an apartment, buy a home, obtain a mortgage, or purchase homeowners insurance free from discrimination based on Race, Color, National Origin, Religion, Sex, Familial Status, and Disability. HUD in its proposed 2013 rule of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, states that in its belief the Fair Housing Act has two main goals. 1.) Ending housing discrimination; and 2.) Promoting diverse, inclusive communities. To learn more, visit HUD’S website: **www.hud.gov/fairhousing** ***Cameron County is appreciative of The Brownsville Sunrise Rotary Club & Volunteer Judges in assisting in this community project.***

