



## Five Star Senior Living Inc.

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NEWS RELEASE

# MIT AgeLab's OMEGA Program and Five Star Senior Living Award \$5,000 Scholarships to Five High School Students for Work with Older Adults

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Program recognizes students for leading efforts in their schools and communities that foster intergenerational connections.

NEWTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The **MIT AgeLab** presented the fifth annual **OMEGA scholarship awards** to five accomplished young adults on Aug. 28. The OMEGA scholarships recognize young people who are leading efforts in their schools and communities to foster intergenerational connections. This year, through the generous sponsorship of **Five Star Senior Living**, the number of \$5,000 scholarships awarded reached beyond New England and increased from one to five. The 2020 OMEGA scholarship winners are:

- Andrew Barry and Finn Harrington, Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, Massachusetts
- Benjamin Burns, Winchester High School, Winchester, Massachusetts
- Olivier Mastey, The Leffell School, Hartsdale, New York
- Russell Yang, The Harker School, San Jose, California

The five winners are founders and/or leaders of programs or nonprofit organizations that leverage the experience and wisdom of older adults while also meeting their needs and providing social connections across generations. The students were able to rapidly innovate within their initiatives to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic that began in the spring of 2020.

## About our winners

Barry and Harrington lead an ongoing Noble and Greenough School program called the **Golden Dawgs**, which connects students with local older adults through activities on the school campus, such as painting, theatre and lectures. The Golden Dawgs program was started by **Caroline Collins-Pisano**, a former AgeLab summer intern and previous OMEGA Scholarship recipient. When COVID-19 struck, Barry and Harrington established a pen pal and friendly calling program pairing student volunteers with Golden Dawgs to help alleviate some of the loneliness brought on by the pandemic.

Burns started his initiative in March 2020 in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **GenLynk** is an organization dedicated to bridging the intergenerational communication gap by connecting senior citizens with community volunteers through modern forms of communication. GenLynk is currently recruiting interested participants and volunteers in the Boston area.

Mastey supported an intergenerational chess program offered through **DOROT**. Participants meet weekly to play chess, engage in conversation and storytelling, and create meaningful connections. When it became clear that COVID-19 would render onsite chess play impossible, Mastey took the program virtual, coordinating the transition to online chess play and providing technical assistance to participants.

Yang founded **Engage STEM**, a student-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is “to provide and promote accessible STEM education.” Engage STEM leads several initiatives for high school students, including Tech Literacy for Seniors, which establishes student-run chapters in senior and community centers worldwide to offer technology education to older adults. Although its in-person events are temporarily suspended, Yang and Tech Literacy for Seniors continue offering student-run, virtual technology training and workshops to older adults around the world.

The OMEGA awards were presented virtually on Aug. 28 by the MIT AgeLab and Five Star Senior Living. Virtual participants included recipients’ families, mentors, teachers and older adults who participated in their initiatives; Zehra Abid-Wood, Five Star Senior Living vice president of corporate development and strategic implementation, and other Five Star staff members; Director of the MIT AgeLab Dr. Joseph Coughlin and AgeLab researchers; and leaders of community organizations serving older adults that collaborated in the recipients’ projects.

Each OMEGA scholarship winner received \$5,000 toward their college tuition and an additional \$1,000 for their school or community partner to continue its outstanding intergenerational efforts.

## About OMEGA

**OMEGA**, which stands for Opportunities for Multigenerational Engagement, Growth, and Action, was developed to

support the development and growth of student-led programs and clubs that connect high school students with older adults. The **Massachusetts Institute of Technology AgeLab** is a research program started in 1999 to invent new ideas and creatively translate technologies into practical solutions that improve the quality of life of older adults and those who care for them. Through research ranging from longevity planning to caregiving, transportation, smart home, multigenerational work, and more, the AgeLab draws upon resources across MIT and applies user-centered systems thinking to understand the challenges and opportunities of longevity and emerging generational lifestyles to catalyze innovation in society, business, and government. Follow the MIT AgeLab on Twitter @MIT\_AgeLab.

## About Five Star Senior Living Inc.

Headquartered in Newton, Massachusetts, Five Star Senior Living Inc. (Nasdaq: FVE) ranks fourth on the 2019 American Seniors Housing Association's (ASHA) list of largest U.S. senior housing operators. With nearly 24,000 team members, the company operates more than 260 senior living communities in 32 states offering a platform of life services, including independent living, assisted living, Alzheimer's/memory care and continuing care retirement communities. Ageility, a Five Star division, provides rehabilitation and wellness services to Five Star residents and external clients in over 240 clinics nationwide. Learn more at [www.fivestarseniorliving.com](http://www.fivestarseniorliving.com).

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