



# Pueblo County Sheriff's Office

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## News Release

For Immediate Release  
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### Sheriff Lucero Awards Two Students with Scholarships

**Pueblo, CO:** Pueblo County Sheriff David J. Lucero awarded two local high school seniors with the 2024 County Sheriffs of Colorado Scholarship. Pueblo West High School's John Velasquez IV and Rye High School's McKenna Heasley were each awarded a \$1,000 scholarship through the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office.

The County Sheriffs of Colorado, the state's sheriffs' association, offers 31 scholarships of \$500 each to deserving high school and/or college students in Colorado to fund higher education. However, being a strong proponent of higher education, Sheriff Lucero increased the scholarship amount to \$1,000. This year, Lucero opted to once again award two \$1,000 scholarships as the result of the level of competition among the applicants.

"I was very impressed with the quality of the candidates who applied for our scholarship this year," said Pueblo County Sheriff David J. Lucero. "I am pleased to be able to award scholarships to two of these outstanding students – John Velasquez and McKenna Heasley. Both John and McKenna exemplify the spirit of this scholarship program as they are dedicated and hard-working students. I'm pleased to help further their education."

John, 18, had a 3.8 GPA and ranked in the Top 35 in his class at Pueblo West. He plans to attend Pueblo Community College to pursue law enforcement/criminal justice with the goal of becoming a law enforcement officer.

John has been a member of the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post #157 since 2021 and is currently the Cadet Captain. To date, he has logged over 400 hours of volunteer time with the Explorers. John also attended early college at PCC and will have completed 14 classes at the end of this semester. John has been on the Dean's List at PCC and multiple times on the Honor Roll at Pueblo West High School. Additionally, John held a part-time job for the past 1 ½ years. John is the son of John III and Tammy Velasquez.

McKenna, 18, had a 4.0 GPA and ranked in the Top 10 in her class at Rye. She plans to study athletic training at Colorado State University Pueblo with the goal of becoming a certified athletic trainer.

(MORE)

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McKenna has been actively involved in several community service projects to include Mountain Air Festival, Nutcracker in a Nutshell, Assistant Teacher Sangre de Cristo School, Care & Share Food Drive, providing tours at the Buell Children's Museum and assisting at the Rye home track meets. McKenna has also taken classes at PCC and CSU Pueblo and will have earned 51 credit hours when she graduates high school. She has been on the honor roll every semester and is a member of the National Honor Society. McKenna has worked as a seasonal lifeguard. She is the daughter of Christine Heasley.

This is the 45<sup>th</sup> year for the County Sheriffs of Colorado Scholarship Program, which is funded in part from the CSOC honorary membership fund. The fund consists of contributions from citizens and businesses. CSO considers the scholarship program an investment in the future and one that helps provide deserving students with the opportunity to make a positive contribution to society.

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