

Ruby Falls Awards Steiner Scholarship to Two Outstanding Team Members

Annual Scholarship Recognizes Employees Committed to Attaining Academic and Leadership Success

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (January 09, 2024) – Ruby Falls proudly announces the selection of two outstanding employees to receive the annual John Thomas Steiner, Sr. Memorial Scholarship. Molly Cress and Emmanuel Herrera have been honored with the award for their commitment to academic achievement and sincere dedication to serving the community.

A Ruby Falls team member since July 2022, Molly Cress has demonstrated her ability to pursue her interests and ambitions effectively, showcasing her determination and dedication toward achieving her goals. “By the time I was 4,” she explains, “I decided that being a doctor was for me, more specifically, pediatrics.” Cress is currently a Biology Pre-Professional student at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga and volunteers at Children’s Hospital at Erlanger Emergency Department. While in high school, Cress volunteered as a candy striper in the Lakewood Ranch Medical Center surgery waiting room. Through these experiences, Cress has gained a deeper understanding of pediatrics. According to Cress, “This volunteer role is important to the community since often, these children are having one of the worst days in their lives, and my role is adding a little smile to a dark day.” In addition to being a tour guide at Ruby Falls, Cress helps guests board the elevator in small groups as they embark on their cave adventures.

Achieving a balance between work, school, and extracurriculars, Emmanuel Herrera has been a valuable member of the Ruby Falls team since May 2021. An American Military University senior, Herrera is an English literature major and member of the English Honors Club. With an enduring interest in learning new things and building community, Herrera actively participates in book clubs and a variety of extracurricular activities at school. Eager to help others whenever possible, Herrera has tutored officially and unofficially in history, English, philosophy, and even trades such as car mechanics. “I eventually learned that I have a love for helping and teaching others, whether it be through tour guiding, tutoring, or simply answering questions,” Herrera shares. Aspiring to become a teacher, Herrera currently



*Emmanuel Herrera, Mo Steiner, and Molly Cress.
Photo courtesy Ruby Falls.*

works as a tour guide and connection ambassador at Ruby Falls, where he serves as a peer-to-peer mentor, fostering internal communication and training team members.

“Ruby Falls employs many students, and we see firsthand the challenge of juggling school and employment,” says Kara Van Brunt, Executive Director at Ruby Falls. “We could not be prouder to continue to invest in team members like Molly and Emmanuel and support their educational goals.”

The John Thomas Steiner, Sr. Collegiate Scholarship was established in 2008 to honor the memory of the former Ruby Falls president and seeks to recognize Ruby Falls employees who have demonstrated commitment to their community and careers. Motiva “Mo” Steiner, widow of the late John Steiner, Sr. presented the awards.

For more information, visit:
<https://bit.ly/RubyScholarship>



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About Ruby Falls

Ruby Falls is home to the tallest underground waterfall open to the public in the United States. Over half a million guests visit the thundering waterfall annually, located 1,120 feet beneath the summit of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, TN. Committed to cave conservation and environmental sustainability, Ruby Falls is the first attraction in the United States to earn certification from Green Globe and is recognized as a leader in tourism sustainability. www.RubyFalls.com.