

CEW+LEADERS

50

YEARS

OF

SCHOLARSHIPS

M | CEW+ 1970-2020

CELEBRATING **50** YEARS OF AWARDING SCHOLARSHIPS

CEW+ would like to thank Debbie Tirico for generously underwriting the cost of this booklet.

2020 is both the **50th anniversary of CEW+ Scholarships** and the first time we have celebrated scholars during a global pandemic. This year, because of the pandemic, we celebrated our 2020 Scholars with six virtual events celebrating the 79 CEW+ Scholars.

Thank you to the sponsors, alumni, family members, community members, and Scholars who attended these virtual events. In this scholarship booklet, you will find the collective scholarships and Scholar biographies that were celebrated within these virtual events. Our hope is that this year's booklet helps to give the connection across all of our Scholars and scholarship types.

CEW+ would like to thank the members of our Leadership Council who helped us with the presentation of the CEW+ Scholarship awards by serving as Scholar citation readers at our six virtual events that took place between Wednesday, October 28 and Friday, October 30:

Barbara Anderson

Christine Black

Andrea Darden

Lee Gorman

Susan Gutow

Caroline Lee

CEW+ would also like to acknowledge the members of our CEW+ Scholar Community Board who helped facilitate the small group gatherings during our six virtual events:

Cara Canady

Kelley Emerson

Stephanie Haley

Christine Popovic

Scholarship Readers

Nicole Allen
Rebekah Ashley
Lisa Bardwell
Angela Benke
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Angela Ebreo
Brenda Flanagan
Iona Giddings
April Gross
Sheri Samaha
Gail Schulz
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Scholarship Selection Committee

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Mischa Boardman
Maria Castro
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Shelley Spivack
Gail Tubbs
Carol Welsch

Facilitators

Shareia Carter
Sarah Devitt
Khalilah Burt Gaston
Tiffany Marra
Doreen Murasky
Morgan Tibble

CEW+ Staff

Angela Ebreo
Gloryvee Fonseca-
Bolorin
Sarah Keovongsak
Erin Lane
Tiffany Marra
Alicia Marting
LaVashia Mundy
Doreen Murasky
Marchelle Olive
Sarah Prince
Courtney Reid
Janice S. Reuben
Morgan Tibble
Shay Vaughn
Jamie Zawistowski

CEW+ Student Bio Writers

Catherine Brist
Julia McDaniel

CEW+ Leadership Council

Barbara Anderson
Christine Black
Mischa Boardman
Andrea Darden
Lee Gorman
Susan S. Gutow
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Marina v. N. Whitman

** in memoriam*

CEW+ Scholarship Program

Commemorating 50 Years of Supporting Women and Nontraditional Students' Educational Dreams

CEW+ empowers women and underserved individuals in the University of Michigan and surrounding communities by serving as an advocate and providing resources to help them reach their academic, financial, and professional potential.

The History

CEW+ was founded in 1964 (then called the Center for the Continuing Education of Women) to address barriers that kept women from successfully pursuing degrees and careers. CEW+ quickly discovered that traditional financial aid was dependent on full-time enrollment – an impossibility for many women at that time, regardless of their ambition, intelligence, and ability to succeed.

CEW+ founder, Jean Campbell, and her staff responded to the financial need many women faced by designing an innovative scholarship program focused on women, raising an initial \$7,500 in private donations. The first scholarships were awarded in the spring of 1970 to mark the 100th anniversary of women being admitted to the University of Michigan.

In 1990 the Margaret D. and Harry A. Towsley Foundation's \$1 million endowment to the program greatly expanded the number of scholars CEW+ can support each year. CEW+'s scholarship program continues to grow as many other generous individuals and organizations provide funds for more than 70 scholarships.

CEW+ joins with all of our generous donors in celebrating over 1,800 scholars and fellows who have received support since the program began. By connecting private resources with scholars' intelligence, motivation, and effort, CEW+ helps to transform individual lives which in turn helps families, workplaces, and communities.

Continued on the next page

The Scholars

CEW+ Scholars come from a variety of graduate and undergraduate programs on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses. They are students who have experienced an interruption in their education, who are underrepresented in STEM fields, or who are providing significant care for a minor, older adult, or disabled adult. CEW+ Scholars show remarkable resilience as they juggle the demands of an elite institution with existing family and work responsibilities. Some are returning to college after time away to raise a child or care for a family member, many have worked multiple jobs to save for college, and others have traveled to the U.S. in pursuit of educational opportunities.

Despite strong academic records, impressive accomplishments, and defined goals, many scholars experience significant financial barriers to their success. Much like the original scholarship recipients of the 1970s, these bright, determined students have overcome daunting obstacles to pursue their educational dreams. CEW+ Scholarships provide the necessary boost for them to successfully complete their degrees and make an impact in their fields of study.

This year, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of a rich partnership between the University community, our generous supporters, CEW+ scholar alumni, and CEW+ staff. We join the scholars, their families and friends, and their academic advisors in expressing our deepest admiration and best wishes for their success at the University of Michigan.

Congratulations 2020-21 Scholars!

The CEW+ Scholar Success Fund

CEW+ Scholars often tell us it's more than just the scholarship that makes the difference in their academic careers. The customized support CEW+ provides to scholarship applicants and awardees is just as important as the funding. With this wisdom in mind, we created the Scholar Success Fund so CEW+ Scholars can engage in a variety of programs and services that will help them expand their network, access resources, and be successful at the U-M and beyond.

The Scholar Success Fund supports...

- Assistance with scholarship applications and financial aid
- Programming and events tailored for nontraditional students
- Dedicated staff members who create programs and outreach to meet the emerging needs of the CEW+ Scholar Community
- Responsive holistic career and education during their tenure as a student and beyond

Since creating this fund, CEW+ supporters have recognized its importance and generously answered the call. Their foresight continues to ensure that all CEW+ Scholars can thrive – both during and beyond their award year. On behalf of all our scholarship recipients, we want to thank every donor who has prioritized the academic careers of CEW+'s impressive scholars. Your support helps validate scholars' goals and abilities, and enhances a sense of belonging at the University of Michigan.

Through the Scholar Success Fund, we ensure that every scholar is able to reach their full potential and embrace a sense of purpose and belonging as a student and beyond. Together, we create a vibrant community more powerful than any individual.

If you are interested in learning more about funding a scholarship and the Scholar Success Fund, please contact Alicia Marting at amarting@umich.edu or 734-764-7258.

Thank you.

The Scholarships

GAIL ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Jessie Bakitunda

In memory of their daughter Gail, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Allen established the Gail Allen Scholarship in 1997 with their family and friends. Gail was the 1995 CEW+ Dorothy Gies McGuigan Scholar whose goal was to become a teacher who would “engage high school students to think critically about our society and help young women find their voice.” Gail’s excitement for studying history and women’s studies at the U-M was interrupted by illness, but she persisted and earned her master’s degree and teaching certification. She was pursuing further studies in history at the time of her death. Gail’s scholarship is awarded annually to recognize women who are returning to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree at the U-M. To honor Gail’s interests, preference for this scholarship is given to women enrolled in history, women’s studies, or related fields.

AAUW: MARY ELIZABETH BITTMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Jessica D’Alfonso, Keirra Scott, Jenae Wright

In 2006, the American Association of University Women joined with the Bittman family to establish the Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholarship. A member of AAUW for over 50 years, Elizabeth was an Honorary Life Member—Ann Arbor Branch. She was also a 70-year resident of Ann Arbor, active in both business and community activities. Despite economic difficulties, Elizabeth graduated from the U-M in 1941 with a degree in political science—at a time when a college education for women was less common than it is today. In honor of Elizabeth’s belief that, “an education is something that can never be taken away,” this scholarship is designed to help women and underserved students whose studies have been interrupted to complete degrees in their chosen fields.

AAUW-ANN ARBOR BRANCH: USED BOOK SALE SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Erica Hernández

This endowment was established by a U-M alumna to honor the American Association of University Women-Ann Arbor’s book sale legacy and commitment to scholarship funding. In 1990, the Ann Arbor branch created this annual scholarship to support individuals returning to school to complete their degrees at the undergraduate and graduate level. Money is raised by the dedicated member volunteers who facilitate the annual AAUW used book sale, a 100% recycling project. AAUW is a membership organization that promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive social change.

CHRISTINE KAHAN BLACK SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Marsha-Kay Hutchinson

The Christine Kahan Black Scholarship is the first CEW+ Scholarship ever established as a Christmas present! Chris Black has had a lifelong commitment to higher education, advancement for women, and equity of opportunity. As a highly respected administrator and innovator in Research Development Support at the U-M Medical School, Chris is a teacher/mentor for researchers as they develop and fund their projects. She specializes in helping young faculty—many of whom are women—develop projects and win their first grant from the National Institutes of Health. Early in her career, Chris developed award-winning videos to inspire young women to pursue careers in science and technology. She’s done similar work for students with disabilities, and, with her husband, supports scholarships for students with physical challenges through the Ann Arbor Community Foundation as a memorial to their son, Burt. Now, to honor Chris and her career spent helping people meet their potential to do great things, Chris’s husband, Herb Black, established the Christine Kahan Black Scholarship. He presented it to her on December 25, 2013.

JANE AND BILL BLOOM SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Phimmasone Owens, Stephanie Steiner

In 1964, when Jane Bloom walked through the doors of the newly opened CEW+ (then called the Center for the Continuing Education of Women), she was only the second person to seek assistance. Her affiliation with CEW+ began then – when Jane was a forty-year-old mother of ten and Ann Arbor-area chicken farmer – and it continues to this day. With perseverance and determination, and help from CEW+ along the way, Jane Bloom completed both an undergraduate and a medical degree at the U-M and had a distinguished career as a physician. Throughout it all, Jane’s husband Bill, who died in 2011, was a supportive partner. Together they established a scholarship endowment with the intention of fully funding tuition for a CEW+ Scholar; their scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2008. With their scholarship for an undergraduate on the Ann Arbor campus, Jane and Bill send a message to all future recipients to “aim high, raise your sights, and stick with it for a rewarding life.”

RUTH JEANETTE BUTTREY SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Stephane Fuerst

The Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship was created in 2004 by her granddaughter, Stephanie Buttrey. It honors Ruth Buttrey, who filled her life with learning and adventure. An early proponent of women's education, Ruth studied at a teacher's college as well as at the New England Conservatory and the Chicago Musical College. She then worked with a company in Chicago that sent representatives throughout the country with scripts and costume trunks to produce shows for local organizations using local talent. While traveling, she met Ted Buttrey in Havre, Montana, who volunteered to be in one of her shows. A few years later during the Depression, Ruth wrote her own show and sent her own producers through the northwest, earning welcome income for the family during those difficult days. In the late 1930s they moved to Texas where Ted oversaw the growth of Buttrey Stores, Inc. Throughout her life, Ruth supported various women's groups, especially as an active participant in the PEO Sisterhood. Ruth and Ted also endowed many scholarships in his home state of Montana. CEW+'s Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship recognizes an outstanding undergraduate on the Ann Arbor campus, with a special focus on the fields of business and engineering.

JEAN W. CAMPBELL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Ronnie Rios

Established in memory of Jean Campbell, this scholarship honors her lifetime of work dedicated to the service of others. Encouraged by her parents' commitment to community involvement and achievement, Jean flourished in her efforts to ensure that those around her had the opportunity and resources to live up to their potential, a trait she lovingly passed to her three children. Serving as a founding member, and then as the first director of CEW+, Jean contributed immeasurably to CEW+'s growth and reach, raising the funds necessary to create the Center's scholarship program in 1970. Known nationally for promoting research on women's education and her pledge to improve the lives of women and underserved populations, Jean was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree alongside former President Obama in 2010. She was devoted to her family, her husband and three children Bruce, Joan, and Carol. This scholarship, established by Tim Williams in memory of his late wife and Jean's daughter, Joan, and in honor of Jean's lifetime of accomplishments, will continue Jean's legacy of supporting women and underserved students at the U-M.

CEW+ GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Dyrel Johnson

The CEW+ Graduate Scholarship was established in 2008, the result of a Presidential Donor Challenge launched by University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman. The Challenge made it possible for donors to increase the impact of their gift by matching a portion of their funds with a University contribution. The CEW+ Graduate Scholarship Fund supports promising graduate students, ensuring that the University will continue to attract the “best of the best.” With gratitude, CEW+ acknowledges Loretta M. Skewes for establishing the CEW+ Graduate Scholarship Fund, thereby enabling others to contribute and ensuring that we will continue to grant CEW+ Graduate Scholarships in perpetuity.

COLLEGIATE SOROSIS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Yvette Ramirez

The Sorosis Corporation, composed of alumnae of Collegiate Sorosis, established a foundation to support sorority members in need of financial assistance in order to remain at the U-M. With the closing of Collegiate Sorosis, the alumnae voted to make foundation funds available for women’s scholarships through CEW+, thereby continuing their encouragement of women scholars.

LUCILE B. CONGER ALUMNAE GROUP SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Elizabeth Storey

Established in 1990, the Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholarship provides funding for undergraduate women. The Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group was one of thirty-two U-M alumnae organizations nationwide. From 1947 to 2016, the Conger organization was involved in raising funds to provide scholarships for women to attend the U-M.

MOLLY H. DOBSON SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Tamarah Baker, Tawn Hill, Dawn Isby

Created in 1992, the Molly H. Dobson Scholarship supports women returning to school to complete undergraduate degrees. These scholarships recognize women who have shown creativity, persistence, and dedication while striving to complete their education. The scholarships were created through the generosity of Molly Dobson, a dedicated emerita member of the CEW+ Leadership Council and an active volunteer in the University and larger Ann Arbor community. Molly created these scholarships because she believes in the value of

education. They are designed to be flexible because she knows that deserving women have different educational needs and goals.

ROBERT BRUCE DUNLAP MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Angela Boruszewski, Carri Shafley

This scholarship was established in 2006 in memory of Robert Bruce Dunlap. Robert was a long-time University employee, first at the University Hospital and later at the School of Dentistry, and an even longer-term sometime patient at the University Hospital. As a professor's son, he was well imbued with the importance of education and the necessity of helping students further their education. Because of Robert's long association with the University Hospital and his gratitude to all members of the medical teams, it is appropriate that first preference be given to an Ann Arbor campus undergraduate student pursuing a career in a health-related field.

ELIZABETH M. DUSSEAU SCHOLARSHIP *and* **MARGARET DUSSEAU BREVOORT SCHOLARSHIP**

Recipients: Nasya Tan, Alyshia Dyer

The Elizabeth M. Dusseau and Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholarships, established in 2013, were endowed in the estate of Elizabeth Dusseau, who died in May 2012 at the age of 101. Elizabeth Dusseau earned her bachelor of arts and master's degrees in public health from the U-M, and became an expert in parasitology. After many years of dedicated service to the University, Ms. Dusseau was promoted to assistant professor, a rank she held until she retired in 1978. Margaret Dusseau Brevoort began her long career as a social worker in Ann Arbor. However, she spent most of her professional life in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the executive director of Milwaukee Psychiatric Services Agency and a renowned and early proponent of social work education. Elizabeth Dusseau chose to endow these scholarships in her name and that of her sister to honor their upbringing. Born in Monroe, Michigan, to a family that highly valued education for both male and female children – at a time when such a belief was somewhat radical – their family's commitment to women's rights was deeply ingrained. It is no surprise that Elizabeth and Margaret made their marks upon the world. When possible, Elizabeth's CEW+ Scholarship will be awarded to a woman in the field of science, and Margaret's will go to a woman in the field of social work.

GISSINER FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Tyran Chandler

Jayne Gissiner grew up in Flint, MI and cares deeply for her hometown and its incredibly resilient residents. Jayne and Steve are committed to helping provide opportunities to help Flint residents pursue their University of Michigan education. The Gissiners are committed to scholarship funding because education is a gift that no one can take from the recipients. The Gissiner Scholarship Fund is for students who meet CEW+'s pool and match scholarship criteria who graduate from a Flint, MI high school or GED program and who are pursuing undergraduate degrees at any of U-M's three campuses. If possible, preference should be given to students majoring in economics, natural sciences, business, education, nursing, social work, engineering, or other similar majors.

MARGARET E. GNEGY SCHOLARSHIP FUND Recipient: Sarah Alsomairy

Dr. Carol Stratford received a CEW+ Scholarship in 1980 while pursuing her PhD in pharmacology at U-M, and is the first CEW+ Scholar to pay it forward through an endowed CEW+ Scholarship. After earning her PhD she went on to complete her law degree as a mother in her forties. Carol established this fund to provide support to women and nontraditional graduate students pursuing degrees in the sciences. Naming this scholarship fund for Professor Margaret (Peggy) Gnegy, Carol honors her longtime friend, who provided thoughtful guidance and encouragement during and after Carol's time as a U-M student. Peggy was the first female instructional-track faculty member of the Department of Pharmacology at the U-M Medical School and served as a committed teacher and mentor to many. Focusing her efforts on providing strong and caring guidance to women students and faculty, she mentored fifteen female doctoral students, six female postdoctoral students, and continues to mentor to this day. Peggy has served as Chair of the Graduate Program of the Department of Pharmacology for 20 years and won the Rackham Distinguished Graduate Mentoring Award in 2009. Carol's hope is that recipients of this fund will be inspired by Peggy's role as a trailblazer for women in the sciences.

BETH HALLORAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Alyssa Selasky

One of the U-M's most admired fundraising leaders from 2001-2011, Beth Halloran is now a senior executive at St. Catherine University. From 2005-2008, she served as Development

Director at CEW+. Her energy, focus, intelligence, and integrity not only generated fundraising success, but also nourished lasting relationships with CEW+ donors. Two of those donors, Molly Dobson and Connie Dunlap, connected with Beth in a special way and deepened their friendship even after she left Ann Arbor. In 2013, Connie and Molly collaborated to endow a new CEW+ Scholarship in Beth's honor. The Beth Halloran Scholarship is to be awarded annually to students whose academic careers have been interrupted, and/or who are the primary parent responsible for minor dependents.

JOAN P. IRELAND SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Mavia Parveen

Like many of today's CEW+ Scholars, Joan Ireland was a nontraditional student. After raising her children in the Midwest, she moved to California and returned to school to pursue graphic design. When she met her husband, Everett, they discovered that they had both been students at the U-M at the same time, but had never met one another. Out of gratitude to the U-M, and their lifelong enthusiasm for learning, Joan and Everett Ireland both established Michigan scholarships as part of their estates. Joan Ireland passed away in 2014, and her bequest established the Joan P. Ireland Scholarship in perpetuity at CEW+. The Joan P. Ireland Scholarship will provide support to deserving women students, undergraduate or graduate in any field, who need financial assistance in order to pursue a degree.

BEATRICE KAHN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Lovella Calica

Beatrice Kahn began graduate work in the early 1950s, about 10 years before CEW+ was created. She was then the busy mother of three young daughters and eager to prepare for a career in her newly chosen field of social work. Her entry into the MSW program was hastened by her husband's unexpected cancer surgery; she was concerned that she might become the sole or primary support of her children. She completed her degree in social work and went on to 29 years as a gifted therapist and marriage counselor at Child and Family Services. Her own experience and her long friendship with Jean Campbell and other CEW+ leaders made Beatrice Kahn a dedicated and enthusiastic supporter of the Center. Beatrice died in November 2012 at the age of 94. Her late husband, her family, and her many friends established the Beatrice Kahn Scholarship at CEW+ in her memory.

ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Melissa Brading, Rey Jeong, Keesa Johnson, Najwat Rehman

The Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship assists women and underserved students pursuing their own work in art, writing, or music. It is also given to students researching creative women who have struggled to find their own voices within these fields. The cultivation of creativity was a vital part of Elsie's search for life's purpose and meaning. In "Art in My Life," a talk Elsie gave in 1991, she said: "Literature, art, and poetry have been my friends all my life; they are my media of expression in good times and bad. Looking back, I can say that these arts not only enriched my life, they have helped me regain part of my health." Elsie advocated for making known the unheard voices of women in the arts in world cultures throughout time. Her eight-year research on an 18th-century Chinese woman poet resulted in *Leaves of Prayer: The Life and Poetry of a Farmwife in Eighteenth-Century China* (The Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, 2nd ed., 2000). The Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship was established in 2001 by her husband, the late Professor Emeritus, Joseph T.A. Lee, with the support of family and friends.

SARAH WINANS NEWMAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Ritvija Agrawal, Haley Amemiya

The Sarah Winans Newman Scholarship, created in 2001, provides financial support to undergraduate, graduate, and professional women pursuing degrees in biological and biomedical sciences and related fields, demonstrating financial need, and showing promise of academic merit. Dr. Newman most recently served as Associate Dean of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies and, from 1970 through 1996, was a professor in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at the U-M Medical School. A long-time volunteer and friend to the Center, Sarah recognizes the contributions CEW+ makes to the University community and is pleased to continue her commitment to the education of women.

POTENTIAL MADE POSSIBLE SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Victor Rateng

In honor of the 50th anniversary of awarding scholarships, donors to the Center created the Potential Made Possible fund to celebrate the legacy of our community. In 1970 the first CEW+ scholarships were awarded as expendable merit awards. Today our community has grown to over 1,800 scholars and we look forward to seeing what the next 50 years will bring. Students eligible for this scholarship have experienced an interruption in their education or are providing significant care for a minor, older adult, or disabled adult, or are underrepresented in their discipline in the United States or at the University of Michigan. This scholarship fund is for graduate and undergraduate students on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses. Students can have domestic or international status as long as they meet one of our eligibility requirements. Our scholars show remarkable resilience. Some are returning to college after time away to raise a child or care for a family member, many have worked multiple jobs to save for college, and others have traveled to the U.S. in pursuit of educational opportunities.

THE SUSAN QUACKENBUSH SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: David Seaman

This scholarship is a gift from Susan Quackenbush, a two-time U-M alumna and member of the Ann Arbor recovery community. Susan believes strongly in the power of connection and community to make an impact on a person's life. She is committed to helping support members of the University's recovery community as they pursue their Michigan degrees and work to make the next best choice is their recovery journey.

MARY LUCILLE RANDOLPH AND LEA KING DEAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Yung Joo Hwang

The Mary Lucille Randolph and Lea King Dean Memorial Scholarship was established to support undergraduate or graduate student caregivers. Susan E. Randolph, a 1969 graduate of the U-M, and Arnold Y. Dean, her spouse, along with their family have endowed this scholarship in memory of their mothers – Lea King Dean and Mary Lucille Randolph – brave women who strove for a better life for their children.

MARY MALCOMSON RAPHAEL SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Marisol Fila, Jo Osborn, Julia Rios, Roya Talibova, Kevser Pinar Ustel

The Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholarship was established in 1985 for women graduate students in a humanities or social science field in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. The scholarships are awards of distinction presented to women held in the highest esteem by their faculty, who have demonstrated academic excellence and potential to make a contribution of exceptional usefulness to society. The scholarships are provided through an endowment established by the late Margaret Earhart Smith in recognition of her friend Mary Malcomson Raphael, a singularly resourceful and creative woman who “had a gift for evoking power in people above and beyond their ordinary capacity.”

LINDA J. RIDER SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Karima Corchado-Siddiqui, Salene Riggins

This scholarship in celebration of Linda J. Rider was established by her family in 2004. When Linda enrolled at the U-M at the age of 41 to earn her bachelor’s degree, she was a professional writer, editor, photographer, and single mother. To honor her accomplishment of earning an undergraduate degree as a nontraditional student, the Linda J. Rider Scholarship is awarded to women who need financial assistance to return to college later in their lives.

HELEN HUFF SHELL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Maya Genson

The Helen Huff Shell Scholarship was established in 1982 by Helen when she retired from her distinguished career in personnel management. Throughout her career, Helen diligently sought to enhance the status of women in the workplace. Her scholarship recognizes that commitment to women in business or the professions.

MARGARET DOW TOWSLEY SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Diana Barajas, Connie Chow, Krysta December, Katherine Downs, Saadet Durmaz, Sara Feldman, Cassie Gaskins, Raysham Hayat, Lisa Koo, J'Taime Lyons, Roberta Mooney, Natalie Moreno, Anjli Narwani, Jennifer Pollard, Melissa Sharpsteen, Katharine Shiffler, Seulgi Son, Aimee Szabo, Cecelela Tomi

The life and work of Margaret Dow Towsley has opened countless doors for women and children and immeasurably improved the life of the Ann Arbor community. After completing a bachelor’s degree at the U-M and a master’s degree at Columbia University Teachers College, Margaret

Towsley taught preschool at the University School in Ann Arbor, married pediatrician Dr. Harry Towsley, and started a family. A neighborhood summer playgroup in her home became the Children's Play School, which thrived for more than 53 years. Margaret was one of the first persons in Ann Arbor to acknowledge the special needs of children and working mothers, and her leadership helped inspire and shape the Perry Nursery School. An early believer in equal access for women, Margaret was a major force in creating a gender-integrated Ann Arbor YMCA. When women and their organizations needed a home of their own, she helped establish the Women's City Club. An active political leader, she became the first woman elected to the Ann Arbor City Council. Those who knew Margaret Towsley describe her as a woman devoted to her family and as a mother who fostered in her five daughters an independence of spirit and a confidence to reach for their own stars. Her quiet and sustained support nourished the CEW+ Scholarship Program since its founding. Returning women students have benefited in untold ways from her faith in the Center and her belief in educational opportunities for women. Indeed, Margaret Towsley always acted upon the premise that, given support and nurturing, all people can achieve their dreams.

IRMA M. WYMAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Christine Agpasa, Lina Al-Aameri, Basmalah Algahmi, Lisa Bain, Corinne Bitsko, Rita El Jbeily, Kori Johnson-Lane, Mintu Joy, Shalom Kebede, Doris Li, Maya Makhloof, Priyanka Marudhavanan, Bruna Menezes, Katherine Nicholson, Conner O'Brien, Gandhimathi Padmanaban, Kylie Schache

The Irma M. Wyman Scholarship provides support for women and underserved students in engineering, computer science, and related fields, on either the undergraduate or graduate level. Criteria for selection also include merit, promise of future contributions, and life circumstances. Irma was a 1949 graduate of the College of Engineering at the U-M, one of two women in her class. She became involved with the computer industry in its early stages and rose to become the first female vice president at Honeywell, Inc., then a Fortune 100 company. After retirement from the corporate world, she served 10 years as Archdeacon of the Diocese of Minnesota. Having benefited during her education from both the financial and psychological support of a Regents Scholarship, she established the Irma M. Wyman Scholarship in 1996 to provide a similar boost to others. Irma passed away in 2015 at the age of 87. CEW+ is proud to continue her legacy.

PETER AND ZDRAVKA ZDRAVKOVSKI SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Alice Sneha George

This scholarship is made possible by a gift in honor of Smilka Zdravkovska and her siblings Nevenka and Zoran's parents: Petar Zdravkovski and Zdravka Zdravkovska. Their father, Petar, was a great champion of universal education, including for women. As Secretary of Education in Macedonia after WWII, he was also an early innovator of hybrid education: with many schools destroyed during the war, he devised a distance learning plan, over the radio, to reach all children, involving the local teachers whenever possible. Their mother, Zdravka, dreamed of studying architecture right after high school, but the beginning of WWII interrupted those plans. After raising three children, she went on to earn a degree late in life as a nontraditional student, and became a teacher of French. The children, a mathematician, a physicist/librarian, and a chemist, inspired by their parents' example, established this scholarship in order to support graduate students in STEM fields and architecture.

The 2020-21 Scholars

Christine Agpasa Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Christine Agpasa believes that no matter how challenging our circumstances, “we can still dream big, help others, and have an impact with a kind, determined heart” and she has worked hard to do just that throughout her education. Christine is pursuing an engineering degree with a focus on environmental engineering. When she enrolled, she worried she was at a disadvantage by not placing into Calculus I and starting her degree with fewer credits than her peers. Despite these concerns, she pushed herself to learn pre-calculus in a new way while also learning to manage school, work, and life away from her support system. She ultimately earned a passing

grade in the rigorous course and went on to succeed in Calculus I. Already, her professors and peers have come to recognize her exceptional work ethic and commitment to helping others succeed.

Outside of the classroom, Christine supports fellow students through the Women in Science and Engineering Residential Program, where she is an active member and peer mentor. Christine is passionate about connecting students with resources and opportunities that support their growth, and has also lifted up those around her as external chair of the Filipino/x American Student Association, treasurer of DREAMS Multicultural Council, volunteer at Center for Success Detroit tutoring children in reading and writing, and a Posse Foundation Leadership Scholar.

Christine’s commitment to her communities extends to her research interests as well. Her goal is to further technology and methods that will combat the pressing crisis of climate change and how it disproportionately affects lower socioeconomic communities and people of color. Additionally, Christine is a research assistant for the Gamification of Diversity Training in STEM, helping to develop an immersive board game learning tool designed to prompt discussion on cultural awareness and open-mindedness. With her characteristic hard work and “kind, determined heart,” Christine is sure to impact many more lives for the better.

CEW+ applauds Christine’s pursuit of her dreams and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Ritvija Agrawal Sarah Winans Newman Scholar



Ritvija Agrawal's path to earning a PhD has not always been easy, but she is proud of the way she has overcome obstacles and stayed committed to her dreams. Growing up in a conservative community, Ritvija faced pressure to give up her education and instead become a homemaker. She credits her mother's constant support with giving her the encouragement she needed to continue her studies. She earned an MS degree in Biotechnology from Madurai Kamaraj University in 2011, after which she worked as a research assistant and lecturer for several years to support her brother's education. Ritvija is currently pursuing a PhD in Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology.

She says, "My diverse personal experiences taught me that, with patience and perseverance, challenges and struggles in life can be turned into opportunities for reflection and growth."

Ritvija's research focuses on structural biology and biochemistry, two fields that have great relevance for the diagnosis and prevention of disease. She hopes that her research will help doctors design better treatments for their patients. She is also passionate about teaching and mentoring other students. She says, "Teaching for me is a privilege as well as a responsibility to seed the passion of science in the next generation of students and scientists." She loves teaching all sorts of students, and especially enjoys cultivating an appreciation for science among introductory students who don't plan to become scientists themselves.

Known as a "highly enthusiastic teacher," Ritvija is also widely praised for her independence, work ethic, and initiative. She was also fortunate to meet her husband during graduate school, and she looks forward to building a life with him. She is happy and proud that the University of Michigan has given her the chance to achieve her ambitions and to thrive.

CEW+ applauds Ritvija's determination and names her a Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

Lina Al-Aameri Irma M. Wyman Scholar



As a dedicated spouse and mother of three, a refugee from Iraq, and a woman in the male-dominated field of engineering, Lina Al-Aameri has experienced many challenges on her journey to achieve her academic goals. Though she was consumed with working multiple jobs as a pick-packer, food-service supervisor, and teaching assistant, as well as caring for her family, Lina never lost sight of her dreams. After one year in Michigan, she began to take evening classes at Henry Ford College and then transferred to the University of Michigan - Dearborn, where she is currently studying mechanical engineering. Lina says, "I am persistent in getting my degree

and working as an engineer to model to my kids that despite where you come from and how you started, hard work and dedication are key to a better life."

Lina is determined to break barriers and show her daughter that people like her--females, mothers, wives, refugees--can achieve success in fields that have generally been dominated by men, and do so regardless of age. Lina is known as a natural mentor in her classes, and she is also an active member of the Society of Women Engineers and the Islamic Institute of America. With her degree, Lina hopes to work with companies that supply clean energy and be part of the movement towards a cleaner, safer environment. Known for her "perseverance and willingness to take on a challenge," Lina is sure to change the world for the better.

CEW+ commends Lina's persistence and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Basmalah Algahmi Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Basmalah Algahmi has persevered through tremendous obstacles in pursuit of her education, and she passionately believes that every child deserves access to a supportive school. Basmalah grew up in Yemen, where her community did not readily support girls' attendance at school or focus on their studies. Basmalah always loved learning, however, and she remained determined to do so, walking more than an hour each day to take a class in preparation for the GED. Though her English was limited and she had little support, she took the GED and passed all subjects. She then began attending college level classes, but her education was interrupted due to the War in Yemen, which forced her to immigrate to the United States in 2016. Drawing on her remarkable determination, Basmalah soon resumed her college studies in the United States while working part time. Basmalah reflects, "School is the place where I feel that I am home, strong, and safe."

Basmalah is now earning her bachelor's degree in software engineering at the University of Michigan - Dearborn, where she is known as an excellent student. She is guided by her vision of teaching kids how to code at the same time we teach them how to read and write. She hopes to open coding institutions around the world where students can build big projects, learn together, and achieve financial stability.

For the past two years, Basmalah has also worked for ACCESS, a pro bono legal clinic in Dearborn. She started as a volunteer and she was soon hired as a part-time employee, assisting in interpretation and completion of legal documents for clients. Her mentors at ACCESS remark that she has "the will and the talent to change the world." Recognized by those who have the pleasure to work with her as "capable and brilliant, personable and persistent," Basmalah has a bright future ahead of her.

CEW+ celebrates Basmalah's persistence and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Sarah Alsomairy Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar



Sarah Alsomairy is earning her Doctor of Pharmacy in the College of Pharmacy, where she has deepened her commitment to serving low-income and minority communities through her profession. Sarah's parents emigrated from Yemen to the United States, where her father received a difficult diagnosis and eventually lost his life due to related complications. Sarah witnessed firsthand how systemic racism, distrust, lack of representation, and communication barriers result in medication non-adherence and harm families like hers. Sarah knew that her dad's experience was not an isolated story and she decided that, since her community did not have access to medical professionals who

understood them, she needed to become one.

After earning her master's degree from Johns Hopkins University, Sarah returned to Michigan to pursue her pharmacy education. Sarah chose this path knowing that pharmacists are often the most accessible healthcare providers. She is currently the Vice President of the Student National Pharmacists Association, whose mission is to provide support to minority communities, and served in leadership for the Fighting Diabetes organization. Sarah also worked to start a new student organization at the College of Pharmacy, the Arab American Pharmacists Association, drawing from her own experiences as an Arab-American woman in the field. She currently serves as the first President of the Michigan chapter, and leads the organization's mission to develop outreach programs within local communities and increase Arab-American representation. Sarah's vision for success is to be a trustworthy individual for her community, to break down cultural and societal barriers, and defeat stereotypes to prove young Muslim women are more than their outward appearance.

Beyond her significant volunteer work, Sarah is already a highly valued pharmacy clinician intern, researcher, and clinical study coordinator, known for exceptional patient care as well as for her work ethic and maturity.

CEW+ is inspired by Sarah's steadfast commitment to her communities and pursuit of her professional dreams and names her a Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar.

Haley Amemiya Sarah Winans Newman Scholar



Haley Amemiya has always loved science, but she didn't see a lot of scientists who looked like her when she was growing up. Now that she is earning her graduate degrees, Haley is determined to change that. Haley is pursuing a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology as well as an MS degree in Bioinformatics. She studies bacterial genetics and hopes her research will help inform the design of future antibiotic therapies. She is also passionate about making science accessible to everyone. Haley says that one of her "highest priorities" is "creating avenues to support underrepresented groups throughout their academic careers."

In addition to being a talented scholar, Haley also shines through her commitment to service. After beginning graduate school, she reestablished U-M's chapter of the Association for Women in Science and was elected its president. The mentorship program she established through AWIS has become tremendously popular, doubling its membership in just four years. Describing this work, Haley's mentors say, "Her personal efforts have had an immediate and positive impact on hundreds of women." She has also volunteered at the Michigan Science Center in Detroit, worked with F.E.M.M.E.S. to teach 4th and 6th grade girls about DNA, judged the Forsythe Middle School Science Fair, and helped organize the 2016 March for Science - Ann Arbor, an event that was attended by 15,000 people. Describing her commitment to the March for Science, Haley says, "I am eager to bridge the gap between science experts and lay individuals to convey the importance of science, science literacy, outreach, and equality in STEM."

Widely known as a person whose "encouragement and excitement for science" inspires others, Haley stands out as a uniquely dedicated and selfless student. Her mentors describe her as "an absolute model of both scholar and mentor."

CEW+ commends Haley's commitment to making science accessible and names her a Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

Lisa Bain Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Lisa Bain is pursuing a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering with the ultimate goal of creating a medicine to treat dementia. Never one to be deterred by difficulty, Lisa has pursued her interest in chemistry and medicine in the face of obstacles from a very young age. When she struggled in math after moving during elementary school, she sought ways to learn outside of class time, and was later accepted into an after-school program for gifted mathematics students. And when she again had to transfer in high school, she taught herself what she had missed and successfully completed AP Chemistry and calculus despite the doubts of her teachers. Now at the

University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Lisa brings both a tenacious love of math and science and a deep love for her grandmother, who was recently diagnosed with dementia, to her studies.

In her first semester, Lisa earned the William J. Branstrom Freshman Prize for being within the top 5% of her class in the College of Engineering. Lisa is pursuing a concentration in biopharmaceuticals along with a minor in biochemistry, and she has conducted research through the Multidisciplinary Design Program and has plans to conduct research in Dr. Eniola-Adefeso's lab, where her work will be focused on cellular adhesion and vascular targeted drug delivery. Lisa ultimately plans to build on these experiences and use her chemical engineering degree to engage in research within drug development, transportation, and delivery. Lisa says, "At a personal level, my degree and potential future research will not be finished in time to help my grandmother, but it could grant other families precious time with their loved ones."

Beyond her studies, Lisa is deeply involved in the Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program, where she is known among the most active members. She is now serving as a peer mentor in the program. Lisa's professors and peers alike know her as "driven, focused, positive, full of energy, and a goal-getter."

CEW+ applauds Lisa's pursuit of her goals and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Tamarah Baker Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Tamarah Baker has been working in the healthcare field for many years, but she only recently returned to college to earn her bachelor's degree. She experienced family tragedy that caused her to temporarily step away from her education. Now she has returned to school and is studying in the accelerated nursing program. As a first-generation student and a mom, Tamarah is proud of her commitment to her goals and her ability to overcome the obstacles that have stood in her way. Describing her journey, she says, "Education has saved me and sustained me."

Tamarah is passionate about using her nursing skills to uplift her community. After finishing her bachelor's degree, she plans to return to school and earn a master's degree in nursing with a special focus on mental health care. She says, "I want to give back to my community by providing mental health screenings and services in underserved and low-access neighborhoods." She has a particular interest in working with the elderly and hopes to help her older patients participate fully in their daily lives.

Widely known for her compassion and kindness, Tamarah brings a warm demeanor to every patient she meets. Her mentors praise her friendliness and note that these qualities make her an excellent colleague. One mentor says, "She is kind and empathetic, always putting the needs of others before her own. She is careful and consistent when caring for all patients." Another commends the way Tamarah "gives her all to every patient and sees her patient advocate role as a privilege." With her empathy and dedication, Tamarah is certain to become an exceptional nurse.

CEW+ admires Tamarah's perseverance and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Jessie Bakitunda Gail Allen Scholar



Jessie Bakitunda is earning her master's degree in African studies, motivated by the Ubuntu principle, central to African social values, that "individuals exist and thrive only if their communities thrive." A native to Uganda, she is committed to investigating her own cultural history and using her research to transform her communities. Jessie consistently approaches her education with her motivation in mind, choosing courses that promise future benefits for serving marginalized communities.

Her current path is informed by her professional work with the American Embassy Nile Explorer Project and the Private Education Development Network, through which employees, marginalized communities, international expatriates, and volunteers came together to solve community problems, as well as her studies of African and European literature, which offer "a wealth of information about how people from other parts of the world address social challenges and inequalities." Building on her experiences of community collaboration and literature, Jessie's research now focuses on the writings and intellectual ideology of Jemusi Kibuuka Miti, Reverend Batulumayo Musoke Zimbe and Apollo Kaggwa in colonial Buganda.

Jessie intends to establish herself as a scholar of Ugandan intellectual history, focusing on Ugandan elites from the colonial era, and share Ugandan perspectives internationally through the publication of her research. Ultimately, Jessie intends to serve her community as a university professor. Known as a "phenomenal young scholar and community leader," Jessie is sure to reach her goal of contributing to the livelihood and transformation of Uganda.

CEW+ is inspired by Jessie's work and names her the Gail Allen Scholar.

Diana Barajas Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Diana Barajas has understood the power of education since she was a child. As a first-generation college student and the first member of her family to graduate from high school, she has always worked hard to achieve her goals. After graduating with her bachelor's degree, she began working at UC Berkeley's Division of Equity and Inclusion, helping to expand educational support for other students like her. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in higher education at the University of Michigan, and looks forward to advancing social justice and equity in higher education.

Diana is passionate about supporting other first generation and low-income college students. As an undergraduate, she struggled with imposter syndrome and often felt like an outsider. This experience made her realize how important it is for schools to develop programs specifically designed to meet the needs of nontraditional students. Diana is determined to change these dynamics and make universities more welcoming for everyone. She has led a number of projects to achieve those aims, including one that organizes workshops for formerly incarcerated students and another that supports undocumented students. Her goal is to ensure that "all students have the access and resources that they deserve to empower themselves, their families and their communities through the power of education."

Widely recognized for her "approachable style, positive energy, and ability to empathize and connect with people across multiple identities," Diana truly gives back to those around her. She shines through her dedication and attention to detail, which she uses to advance the cause of equity. With her compassionate leadership and tireless work ethic, Diana is sure to make a major difference in the lives of many students.

CEW+ is inspired by Diana's determination and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Corinne Bitsko Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Corinne Bitsko is working to create a world where people with chronic illnesses receive the care that they need. Growing up, Corinne experienced the toll that a lack of adequate medical care for her mother's chronic illness took on her family, but when she arrived at the University of Michigan, she wasn't sure what to do next. Though it would have been easy to become paralyzed by uncertainty in this new and challenging environment, Corinne took the initiative to build relationships in her Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program, talking to advisors, peer mentors, WISE-RP directors, and professors in an attempt to find inspiration and direction. Through these

conversations, Corinne realized her new dream of studying neuroscience, becoming a doctor, and helping people like her mom.

In characteristic fashion, Corinne then dedicated herself to learning as much as she could while demonstrating care for her community. She joined Mu Epsilon Delta, a pre-med fraternity, served as docent for the Museum of Natural History, joined the campus orchestra, and increased her involvement in WISE-RP as a peer mentor. With the intention of giving back, Corinne even initiated the process of connecting WISE-RP with the American Medical Women's Association. She is respected and admired by both her professors and her peers, who recognize her as a tremendously insightful, hardworking, genuine, and driven individual.

Next, Corinne intends to pursue a master's degree in public health before going on to medical school and becoming a general practitioner. Her goal is to open her own specialized clinic, helping to diagnose and manage chronic illnesses, and bring together a team of experts who would help manage all financial, personal, and familial hardships that chronic illness can cause. Corinne says, "It's time healthcare providers were able to address all of these issues when creating a treatment plan. With my education at University of Michigan I hope I can create a model for my future clinic and clinics around the country."

CEW+ is inspired by Corinne's vision and proudly names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Angela Boruszewski Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar



Angela Boruszewski never lost sight of her passion for earning a bachelor's degree while working as a dental hygienist and caring for her son for the past fifteen years. When Angela completed her associate's degree in 2006, she was eager to continue her education, but she didn't see how it would be possible with the demands of working two jobs, paying bills and student loans, and single parenthood.

Despite the obstacles to returning to school, Angela persisted in continuing her dental hygiene education. She took on a clinical subbing position at Delta College, where she found that discussing her professional experiences with students helped her improve as a clinician. During her full-time work as a dental hygienist, she learned new skills in digital x-rays, local anesthesia, digital charting, treatment planning, and on-the-job dental assisting. She even led her hygiene team to become fully digital, helping to create the template that all hygienists at that office now use to do their digital records for every patient, and led staff through additional research to improve clinical care.

Angela is now pursuing her bachelor's degree in dental hygiene at the University of Michigan, balancing school, family, work, and finances. Upon completing her degree, Angela's vision is to work as a dental hygiene instructor at a college dental hygiene program or at a local community program where she can educate and promote dental health and awareness. She also hopes to serve as part of the House of Delegates for her profession, helping to develop and organize programs that provide dental health to a multitude of communities. Known for her diligence and care for patients, Angela is sure to positively impact many future dental hygienists and community members.

CEW+ values Angela's persistence and commitment to dental hygiene and names her a Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.

Melissa Brading Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Melissa Brading knows that when you love something, you have to give it your all. She has practiced this philosophy throughout her life, which she has devoted to her love of choreography and dance. After spending fifteen years working in the professional dance world, Melissa returned to school to improve her skills as a teacher. She is currently pursuing a master's in dance and plans to teach in a university setting after she graduates this spring.

Melissa's exciting career has spanned every aspect of the dance industry. She has worked as a dancer, a choreographer, a teacher, and even as an office manager at The Joyce Theater in New York City. Last year, she received funding to further her studies at workshops in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. A committed teacher, Melissa believes that being a dancer is fundamentally about "communicating and bringing humanity together." She is especially proud of her years teaching at the Limón Institute in New York City, and of her work with the Avodah program, which gave her the chance to teach dance classes for incarcerated women. Working with incarcerated students was extremely rewarding for Melissa and has inspired her to seek out more ways to use dance as a tool for social justice.

Melissa's thesis research will focus on strategies that help dancers listen more closely to cues from their bodies. By helping her students develop greater body knowledge, Melissa hopes to also improve their strength, health, and overall well-being. Her professors applaud this focus and also praise Melissa as a uniquely talented and engaging teacher. When Melissa taught a class for the American College Dance Association last year, one observer called it "undoubtedly the best class I saw at the entire conference." Melissa is also recognized as exceptionally organized and professional, two qualities that will serve her well as she continues her career. She looks forward to continuing to work with her students and hopes to be a model of resilience and joy.

CEW+ applauds Melissa's creativity and names her an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Lovella Calica Beatrice Kahn Scholar



Lovella Calica is a powerful example of the value of persistence and the importance of giving back to one's community. A first-generation college student, Lovella graduated from Central Michigan University in 2003 and is currently pursuing a master's degree in social work. After she completes her studies, Lovella plans to open a holistic wellness center for veterans and help pioneer new treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Although Lovella has faced challenges throughout her life, she has approached them as opportunities to grow stronger and uplift others. She experienced difficult circumstances as a child and overcame them by channeling her creativity through writing. In 2007, she founded the national nonprofit Warrior Writers to help others heal through creativity as well. Through Warrior Writers, Lovella provides writing workshops and a supportive community for veterans struggling with PTSD. She describes her approach as aiming "to face veteran suicide head-on by creating connection, community, and healing." She has edited four anthologies of writing and artwork by veterans and has co-authored a guide to help others create similar writing workshops in their own communities. She is proud of the way her work has improved veterans' well-being and hopes to provide a model for others who work with survivors of trauma.

In addition to her professional achievements, Lovella is renowned as a person who is hard-working, passionate, and caring. Her colleagues describe her as a "wonderful collaborator and leader" who consistently "strives for excellence" in all of her endeavors.

CEW+ is inspired by Lovella's journey and proud to name her a Beatrice Kahn Scholar.

Tyran Chandler Gissiner Family Scholar



Tyran Chandler is driven to change lives, starting with his own and extending to disadvantaged individuals in his communities and beyond. Tyran grew up in poverty in Flint, which severely limited opportunities but cultivated his entrepreneurial spirit and determination. When he was sentenced to prison, Tyran drew upon those qualities to change course and forge a meaningful academic path for himself.

Through his studies, Tyran quickly discovered links between poverty and crime and wealth and business and devoted himself to learning. He enrolled in business courses through the Jackson College PEI Program and earned a 4.0 GPA, membership in Phi Theta Kappa, induction into the National Honor Society (one of very few to ever be inducted while incarcerated), and ultimately, two associate's degrees. All the while, Tyran's success was never just about himself; he worked consistently as a mentor, tutor, student ambassador, and writing fellow, running workshops and facilitating programs to support his peers' education.

Determined to continue his education, Tyran applied to the University of Michigan and is now pursuing a bachelor's degree in sociology with a double minor in business and entrepreneurship. Tyran has never lost sight of his commitment to his community. He says, "It is my goal through my education that I become an advocate for both U.S. based minority groups and around the world." He has developed a program for teaching financial literacy to youth in Flint, winning the OptiMize fellowship, the Resolution Social Venture Challenge, and the TechTown Detroit award for the program. He has also been awarded the Engelhardt Social Justice fellowship, become a trained field organizer, served as an intergroup dialogue facilitator, and worked as a research assistant, all while excelling in his classes and developing a sneaker app. He is recognized for how "he stays humble, grateful, and goal-driven" and "intent on making a better life not just for him and his family, but for those in his community that the rest of the world seems to have forgotten."

CEW+ is inspired by Tyran's commitment to his education and names him a Gissiner Scholar.

Connie Chow Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Connie Chow was inspired to work in corporate sustainability by her volunteer work in the U.S. and abroad. When Connie was a child, her mother would take her and her sister to volunteer at homeless shelters, medical clinics, and nursing homes. While completing her bachelor's degree at UC Irvine, Connie also volunteered in developing countries and observed firsthand how challenging it was to access food, clean water, and basic shelter — resources that would be taken for granted or wasted in the United States. After graduating, Connie began working at a management consulting firm, but she was troubled by the way her firm prioritized profit over everything else. She wanted to have greater impact on sustainability by influencing corporate culture, so she returned to school to complete a dual master's degree in business and sustainability at the U-M Erb Institute.

Connie's capstone research project focused on identifying investment opportunities that would lead to a reduction in plastic waste at a high-profile bank. Last year, the project became a lightning rod for controversy at her school. Rather than shying away from the challenge, Connie leveraged her communication skills to open up discussions around the role of business in society. Her colleagues praised the way she approached the problem "with characteristic aplomb, compassion and curiosity, turning a controversy into a learning opportunity." Her ability to make all stakeholders feel heard is an invaluable asset that will serve her well in her future career.

After graduating, Connie plans to work at a mission driven company focusing on advancing sustainability in their business. She cites her parents as her most important role models, crediting her work ethic to her father and her compassion to her mother. She is a powerful agent of change who will integrate sustainability into corporate culture.

CEW+ celebrates Connie's skill in navigating the disparate values, priorities, and viewpoints held in environmental and corporate worlds, and recognizes her as a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Karima Corchado-Siddiqui Linda J. Rider Scholar



Karima Corchado-Siddiqui has dedicated her life to serving others. A proud mom, Karima took time away from working and studying in order to raise and homeschool her children. After 38 years away from the classroom, she chose to return to her studies. Karima earned her bachelor's degree in art history from the University of Michigan in 2019, finishing in five semesters and graduating with honors. She is currently pursuing her master's in accounting and plans to become an arts accountant when she graduates.

Karima discovered her interest in accounting while working toward her undergraduate degree. While she had previously been interested in cataloguing and archiving art, she realized that those same skills would translate to the careful record-keeping used by accountants. She plans to become an arts accountant so that she can combine her knowledge of the art world with her business expertise. She looks forward to using her skills to network with artists from around the world.

Karima's teachers praise her dedication to her studies and call her a "standout" student whose work "sets the benchmark of excellence" for those around her. Reflecting on her journey, Karima credits her children with motivating her to succeed. She says, "I wanted to show them by example that it's never too late to reinvent yourself or find your niche in life." She is proud to be a model of perseverance and hopes to inspire others to follow in her footsteps.

CEW+ applauds Karima's tenacity and names her a Linda J. Rider Scholar.

Jessica D'Alfonso AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar



Jessica D'Alfonso is a model of persistence and dedication to one's education. Five years after graduating high school, Jessica enrolled at Henry Ford College, taking on a full course load while working full-time. Though balancing these responsibilities has been tremendously difficult, Jessica has approached each and every educational opportunity with passion and hard work. She took on writing for the campus newspaper and went on to become the online editor, win numerous awards from the Michigan Press Association, earn freelance contracts with local news agencies, and secure an internship with the Detroit Metro Times. Her academic excellence earned her a Michigan Community

College Summer Research Fellowship with U-M's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program as well as a transfer scholarship to the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor.

At U-M, Jessica has pursued new opportunities with the same dedication, working as a student research assistant as well as a communications specialist with the City of Dearborn while maintaining a 3.8 GPA. She says, "I pursue as many opportunities as I can feasibly manage that I feel will be beneficial toward my life goals. There have been many times I have wanted to give up, but I instead have persevered because I am dedicated to obtaining my bachelor's degree."

Jessica is pursuing her bachelor's in sociology with a focus on law, justice, and social change. She plans to use her degree to work with formerly or currently incarcerated individuals and to help change the criminal justice system. Her goal is to help individuals to secure meaningful education, gainful employment, and housing following their release from prison, while also working to address the barriers, like discriminatory employment laws, that perpetuate the need for this kind of help.

Known as a "bright, thoughtful, and incredibly hard-working" student and person, Jessica is sure to improve the lives of many.

It is with great pleasure that CEW+ names Jessica an AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

Krysta December Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Krysta December was undaunted in the face of challenges that threatened to derail her plans for a career change. After completing two bachelor's degrees at Michigan State University, Krysta began working first in chemical analysis, and then as a systems analyst for 20 years. While she excelled in her career, she did not feel a passion for her work and so she crafted a plan to change her course. Krysta undertook part-time work and volunteer opportunities to gain experience and make connections in her new field. She became a Master Gardener, then a Master Rain Gardener, and is now completing a master's program in conservation ecology at the U-M School

for Environment and Sustainability.

Krysta is passionate about protecting Michigan's lakes and waterways. She has a vision to promote the creation of rain gardens, which capture rainwater runoff and reduce pollution. She is also passionate about sharing her love of conservation with the next generation, and has worked on garden projects with preschool, elementary, and middle school students in Ann Arbor. She says, "The education and work that these kids have already performed has made a difference, and will continue as long as even one of them protects our water in one way, every day." In her first term at the School for Environment and Sustainability, Krysta is investigating the impacts of climate change on our northern forests' resilience in the face of wildfire and drought.

Beyond her academic pursuits, Krysta is a proud single mother by adoption to two children with special needs. She is active in her children's school where she serves as the secretary of the Parent-Teacher Organization. Her children give her the inspiration to continue with her studies. She says, "I wanted them to see me doing work that I enjoyed, so they would believe me when I told them to do what they loved."

CEW+ commends Krysta's dedication to protecting Michigan's forests and waterways and showing her children that it is worth the effort to follow your passion, and proudly names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Katherine Downs Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Katherine Downs is forging a new path as she completes dual master's degrees in social work and Middle Eastern and North African studies. This is not an established program, rather it is a testament to Katherine's deep understanding of the need for mental health care providers who are culturally competent and critically conscious. After graduating, she will become a clinical social worker and specialize in working with Arabic-speaking refugees. She also hopes to work with international organizations to design and implement mental health programs for displaced people on a larger scale.

Katherine was inspired at a young age by her mother, a nurse practitioner who shows tremendous dedication to her patients. Katherine's career in social work is a reflection of her understanding that one can make the world a better place through daily, individual actions. After completing an undergraduate degree in global studies, she worked for the Center for American Progress, and in 2018, she volunteered at Libraries Without Borders in Amman, Jordan. There she helped to facilitate psycho-social support activities for adolescents living in refugee camps.

Katherine's master's thesis focuses on how trauma can be mobilized in collective resistance to oppression and toward healing and liberation. This work focuses on the Palestinian women's movement and was selected from a competitive application pool to receive funding through the International Institute. She hopes her research will inform future interventions for trauma survivors, many of whom never receive formal treatment. She also plans to support trauma survivors in her clinical work, and will graduate with a certificate in trauma-informed practice. She says, "I have spent my whole life trying to figure out what 'a better world' means to me. Where I've arrived is that better comes from the day-to-day work of being present for someone in the worst minute of their day or the worst days of their life." Known as "a tireless supporter of those who need help the most," Katherine is sure to make a difference in many lives.

CEW+ is inspired by Katherine's fearless dedication to advancing the causes she believes in and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Saadet Durmaz Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Saadet Durmaz is a first-generation college student earning a master's degree in social work at the University of Michigan. She was born in Turkey to working-class parents. As a teenager, she had aspirations of earning a graduate degree but chose instead to seek full-time employment and focus on the financial stability of her family. However, even after earning scholarships and putting herself through college, she returned home to find little opportunity. After observing the hardships of the working women in her life, and experiencing the inequity in financial attainment for women in her country, Saadet was drawn to research as a means to fight these injustices. She

became determined to "never let gender and money be a reason why I couldn't do something."

Saadet made the bold choice to pursue an academic career related to women and gender. When the opportunity arose to travel to Michigan with her partner, she left everything familiar behind. Saadet overcame many challenges during her first years in Michigan, including managing her immigration status and learning English through nonprofit ESL classes. In spite of these challenges, Saadet completed a master's in women and gender studies at Eastern Michigan University, where her research focused on the impact of international policies on social and economic opportunities for women. Saadet's vision is to bring together her expertise in gender studies with her current training in social work to provide support for first-generation, LGBTQ, immigrant, and underrepresented students like herself. She says, "I will strive to educate and support future generations through my social work practice while presenting myself as a role model to LGBTQ identified first-generation college students."

Living away from her family and support system has not been easy for Saadet, but she remains committed to her work and enthusiastic about making a difference through her research and practice. Known for her "perseverance, resiliency, and passion," Saadet is certain to improve the lives of vulnerable students everywhere.

CEW+ applauds Saadet's persistence and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Alyshia Dyer Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar



Alyshia Dyer was motivated to study public policy after working for seven years as a police officer. After completing her associate's degree from Washtenaw Community College, Alyshia began working as a deputy sheriff in Ypsilanti, policing the community where she grew up and lived. While working as a sheriff, she took a special interest in helping young people avoid the juvenile justice system. She took on a leadership role as the Youth Resource Officer and helped train her colleagues in best practices to promote children's mental health.

Alyshia excelled at this work, but she also recognized many inequities in the criminal justice system and wanted to change them. She saw families receive unfair treatment from the system because of how they looked or where they lived. Many of these families were also struggling with poverty and trauma. Alyshia wanted to help build a world where all children could thrive, regardless of their zip code. She returned to school and completed her bachelor's degree at Eastern Michigan University in 2018 while continuing to work full-time. Alyshia is now proud to be a full-time student working toward dual master's degrees in social work and public policy at the University of Michigan.

Alyshia intends to use her education to reform the criminal justice system. She plans to focus on addressing racial inequities in Michigan, especially within Washtenaw County. Alyshia is also passionate about expanding trauma-informed policies to promote community mental health. She says, "I want to help create an equitable society and help other children achieve their dreams even when they have extreme obstacles in their way." She continues to give back to her community by volunteering with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and as a board member on the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health Black Lives Matter task force. Alyshia's mentors praise her compassion, intelligence, and curiosity and say, "Ms. Dyer has tremendous potential to be an esteemed leader in the public sector position of her choosing."

CEW+ applauds Alyshia's vision and names her the Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar.

Rita El Jbeily Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Rita El Jbeily is earning her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering with a concentration in biochemistry. Inspired by the tenacity of her parents, who immigrated to the United States from Lebanon with limited English and no higher education, she is proud to be a first-generation college student with an exceptional work ethic. Rita regularly participates in Science Learning Center group study sessions and is recognized by her professors for dedication to her learning, as well as that of her peers. She is also a member of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), where she has served as a member of the Engineering Elementary Exploration Day and Scout Out Engineering committees and a SWE Ambassador, and works as a lab assistant for DeSantis Lab.

Rita is continually driven by her goal to improve lives. She plans to use her degree to conduct research and work with pharmaceuticals and technology focused on distributing medicine more effectively in the body, which could save many lives locally and globally. Influenced by her experiences with her own caring doctor, Rita intends to attend medical school and ultimately become a pediatrician, influencing the younger generation and serving her community.

Recognized as a "motivated, talented, intellectually curious" student and an "original, insightful thinker who is also an excellent communicator," Rita will undoubtedly make a difference in her community.

CEW+ commends Rita's dedication and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Sara Feldman Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Sara Feldman is a dedicated student, researcher, scholar, caretaker, and daughter. Currently earning her doctoral degree in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education and conducting research in the field of dementia, Sara also cares full-time for her mother, who has Alzheimer's disease. Sara says, "Caregiving is one of the quietest, loneliest, and most challenging experiences. Yet having the opportunity to provide support and care, and to be with my mother—my best friend—is the best opportunity I've ever had the privilege to be part of."

Alzheimer's disease has affected three generations of Sara's family: her great-grandmother, grandmother, and now her mother. Despite the difficulties, Sara has chosen to view this disease as an opportunity and a gift, and she has drawn on her family's experiences and her own for direction and strength in her scholarly work. Sara studies the ethical, legal and social aspects of Alzheimer's disease in clinical care settings and specifically considers how to promote early caregiving preparedness. Sara is deeply committed to developing new and innovative interventions and programs for family caregivers of older adults with dementia.

Sara works daily to honor her mother and other family members by working to change how clinicians approach early diagnosis of dementia in clinical care settings. She currently serves as a research associate for REVEAL-SCAN, an NIH-funded research study focused on risk communication to participants with a family history of Alzheimer's disease. On the team, she is recognized for her strength, resilience, "outstanding work quality," and "high work ethic." Sara is also recognized as a "model citizen" in her community, volunteering for services roles, spearheading a new student interest group in aging and health, and teaching and mentoring undergraduate and master's students. Sara has additionally served as an intern for the Centers for Disease Control, a health research specialist, an instructor, a health educator and a clinic assistant.

CEW+ is honored to support Sara in her endeavors and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Marisol Fila Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar



Marisol Fila knows the meaning of persistence. She earned her undergraduate degree in history at the University of Buenos Aires while working full-time to support her studies. Marisol always wanted to attend graduate school and was thrilled to begin her studies at the University of Michigan in 2015. Although she was initially apprehensive about moving to a new country, Marisol embraced that challenge with impressive courage and commitment. While she still finds it difficult to live far away from her family, she is also proud of the community she has created for herself in Michigan. Marisol is currently a PhD candidate in the Romance Languages and Literatures program, where

she studies both Spanish and Portuguese.

Marisol's research focuses on twenty-first-century black presses in Buenos Aires, São Paulo, and Lisbon. Her work highlights publications and activism by black artists and intellectuals in these three cities. Marisol hopes her scholarship will spread "awareness of diverse experiences of marginalized black communities in the interconnected Atlantic world," a goal she also pursues through her service and teaching. Since 2016, she has organized a guest speaker series that brings Afro-Latin American activists to campus. She is a member of a Humanities Collaborative project titled, "Expanding the Reach of the Global Feminisms Archive," for which she has conducted, transcribed, and translated interviews. Marisol has also been a leader in developing lesson plans that will share the project's archive with students at UM and in K-12 schools. In her own teaching, Marisol focuses on community-based learning to promote diversity and inclusion. She is always trying to grow and improve as both a scholar and a teacher.

Marisol's mentors describe her as "a remarkably energetic and collaborative scholar" and praise her work as "extraordinary." They also commend her "commitment to others," a core value that links all of Marisol's endeavors. Although she has faced difficulties while pursuing her graduate education, Marisol has faced them with grace and strength.

CEW+ applauds Marisol's dedication and names her a Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar.

Stephane Fuerst Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar



Stephane Fuerst is on a mission to make better workplaces. A first-generation student, Stephane experienced firsthand how difficult it is to navigate an institution and pursue career goals without meaningful support. Seeking financial stability, she changed course from her initial interest in psychology and completed a degree in radiologic imaging, going on to become a highly valued MRI technologist. In her role at Michigan Medicine, Stephane witnessed how organizations that respect and support their employees can transform the workplace and the lives of their employees, including her own.

Stephane became an integral part of the Michigan Medicine team, coaching patients through difficult exams, serving as a technical expert, acting as Lead Technologist on the midnight shift, and earning the highest possible marks on her annual employee review. Stephane also serves on the Voices of the Staff Network, meeting with the University's executive officer team to provide input, collaborating with School of Information graduate students to improve awareness of employee benefits, and working on a project to support the individual development plans and career growth of University employees.

Inspired by her experience, Stephane is now completing her bachelors in organizational studies and cognitive science and plans to continue on to graduate school in organizational psychology. Her studies are guided by her goal to "apply positive psychology in workforces to help people find worth, meaning, and community within their jobs." Stephane is additionally pursuing a minor in business, conducting research through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, and participating in the Barger Leadership Institute. She has approached her education with tenacity and heart and is known by her colleagues and mentors alike as a profoundly empathetic and intelligent individual with "an impressive ability to address problems with creativity, thorough analysis, and tireless dedication."

In recognition of Stephane and her commitment to cultivating supportive and meaningful workplaces, CEW+ names her a Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

Cassie Gaskins Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Cassie Gaskins is a first-generation student and mother. Although it took her more than 12 years to earn her bachelor's degree, she is currently working toward a master's degree in public health with a concentration in industrial hygiene. She has been recognized as a two-time University of Michigan honors student as well as a James B. Angell Scholar. She says, "I understand that earning an education is a privilege and it is not afforded to everyone, that is why I never gave up and keep pushing for more."

After graduating, Cassie plans to become an exposure scientist. She is motivated to understand the underlying mechanisms in occupational exposures that cause disease—as well as the best techniques to assess risk. Cassie is specializing in occupational health because she wants to ensure that workers can do their jobs safely. This is especially important to her because many of her family members work in high-risk occupations, as she herself once did when she began her career as a dock worker. Cassie wants to guarantee that no workers have to take unnecessary risks just to support their families.

Cassie's commitment to public health is part of her broader desire to make a difference. Before graduate school, she worked in the Henry Ford Health System, which provides care for underserved communities in Detroit. She started out in their call center, but worked her way up until she was helping to run quality control initiatives for the entire health system, earning the Diversity Hero Award for her service. She says, "I am also interested in developing strategies to better communicate scientific information to the general public. Long term, I plan to take the technical skills and insights I gained as an exposure scientist and apply them globally." Known as a trailblazer who shows "clear signs of a leader and a change agent," Cassie is sure to become an innovator in occupational safety.

CEW+ applauds Cassie as she works to protect the dignity and quality of life of men and women who work in high-risk occupations and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Maya Genson Helen Huff Shell Scholar



Maya Genson is a business leader and Ann Arbor native with a remarkable, lifelong commitment to learning. Learning differences made school harder for Maya from a young age, but she continually found new ways to learn, grow, and succeed. When her learning differences became too difficult to manage alone at Eastern Michigan University, Maya didn't give up and instead chose to transfer to Landmark College in Vermont, an institution that specifically supports young adults with learning differences like her. Determined to continue learning, she went on to earn a double A.S. degree in advanced massage and esthetics and eventually open a massage practice, Ann Arbor

Massage and Bodywork, with her husband.

Maya is proud to have now earned her bachelor's degree as a non-traditional student. She successfully ran her business while taking courses at Washtenaw Community College and then enrolled in the School of Information at the University of Michigan, where she is known for her persistence, passion for education, and outstanding ability to approach complex problems. Maya's experience redesigning and updating the website for the Mercy Education Project, making it more accessible to the Detroit-based girls and women they serve, was one of many projects during her undergraduate studies that deepened her interest in using technology to make positive changes within a community.

Committed as ever to learning, Maya is currently pursuing a master's degree in supply chain management at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. Maya's interests center on the complex problem solving needed to create human-centered interaction design, and she is excited to participate in the process of creating new products that allow accessibility to all types of users. Upon graduation, she plans to work at a software supply chain company and fully utilize her education in a professional environment.

CEW+ commends Maya's persistence and names her a Helen Huff Shell Scholar.

Alice Sneha George Petar and Zdravka Zdravkovski Fund Scholar



Alice Sneha George has faced many obstacles on her journey to becoming a chemical engineer, but those obstacles have never diminished her determination. Alice was born in Chennai, India and earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Anna University in 2017. After finishing her degree, Alice worked as a research chemist for two years before enrolling in graduate school at the University of Michigan. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in chemical engineering.

Alice's interest in engineering stems from her desire to improve living conditions for people in developing countries. She is especially passionate about increasing access to safe water, clean energy, and healthy food. As she continues in her career, Alice ultimately plans to start a consulting firm that will help create long-term solutions to these problems.

Alice is an active participant in GradSWE, the graduate Society of Women Engineers. As a member of GradSWE, Alice volunteered with outreach programs that taught engineering concepts to students at local elementary schools, high schools, and community colleges. Motivated by a strong desire to support and uplift other women to complete their education, Alice strongly believes in the phrase, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation." She is known to her mentors as a dedicated, enthusiastic student who "displays tremendous potential for future excellence."

CEW+ commends Alice's tenacity and names her the Petar and Zdravka Zdravkovski Fund Scholar.

Raysham Hayat Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Raysham Hayat is always progressing — as a professional, as a mother, and as a human being. After growing up in Pakistan and securing admission into a top military dental institute, Raysham met the rigors of high academic performance, military decorum, and character development. However, she found that despite her successes, she felt pressure to settle for life as a homemaker. She made the difficult decision to move abroad and seek better opportunities. After moving to the United States, Raysham worked as a dental assistant, shadowed other dentists, and completed her board exams. When she was admitted to the Internationally Trained Dentist Program at

the U-M School of Dentistry, she did not hesitate to move once again, this time traveling across the United States with her infant son.

Raysham is currently working towards a doctoral degree in dental surgery. She plans to continue into a faculty position upon completion of her degree and is enthusiastic about educating the next generation. She says, “To be in a position to influence young minds is an exciting and thrilling prospect for me. I have always been involved with my community at a grassroots level, irrespective of the country in which I live.” She is also committed to providing dental care for underserved communities, and has participated in the Michigan Dental Association’s Missions of Mercy to provide care for uninsured patients. She looks forward to continuing her community service work as she increases her skills and abilities.

Beyond her academic pursuits, Raysham is an avid reader and nature lover who has completed snow hikes and treks in the Himalayan mountains. Viewed by her instructors as a highly motivated scholar and a caring and compassionate clinician, Raysham is a tremendous asset to the dental profession. In the words of one of her professors, Raysham “is the kind of individual that we all want taking care of our families and ourselves.”

CEW+ celebrates Raysham’s resilience and integrity and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Erica Hernández AAUW-Ann Arbor Branch: Used Book Sale Scholar



Growing up, Erica Hernández witnessed firsthand how the health care system failed to provide members of her Hispanic and Latino community equal access to quality services. Erica often served as her mother's translator at doctor's appointments, watching as repeated unsuccessful attempts to communicate with medical professionals, as well as financial barriers, led her mother and other members of her community to wait until a visit to their home country to address health care needs. These experiences ultimately led Erica to her life's purpose: transforming the health care system to better serve vulnerable populations.

A first-generation student, Erica earned her undergraduate degree in business administration, determined to make change beyond one-on-one patient care and play a role in organizational transformation in health systems. Following her graduation, Erica worked in health care administration at the Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital and as a project manager for the Henry Ford Innovation Institute and the American Hospital Association. During much of this time, Erica also served as President-Elect of her Hispanic Employee Resource Group, supporting patients in the Hispanic and Latino community by securing translation services and providing outpatient specialty care through a voucher program for a local clinic. Erica says, "It was very meaningful to actively support a health organization that serves patients like my mom and helps secure resources for next-generation families."

Erica is now pursuing her master's degree with a global health certification track in the Health Management and Policy program at the University of Michigan, where she also serves in the Students Engaged in Global Health and La Salud student organizations. Erica's goal is to "enter the health management and policy space as a Hispanic and Latina trailblazer," serving as a health care policy advocate with a deep understanding of the uniqueness and diversity of patient populations. Recognized as "hard-working with a high moral standard," Erica is sure to impact the lives of many patients and families.

CEW+ is inspired by Erica's vision and names her an AAUW-Ann Arbor Branch: Used Book Sale Scholar.

Tawn Hill Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Tawn Hill's life story exemplifies the power of persistence. A proud first-generation college student, Tawn initially started college directly out of high school, working 40 hours a week to pay for her tuition. Eventually the toll of working and going to school full-time became too much for her, and she stepped away from her education so that she could earn a living. She returned to college in 2009, taking her classes one at a time so that she could afford them while raising her two children. She completed her associate's degree in 2014 and is happy to be currently pursuing a bachelor's in business administration from the University of Michigan-Flint. She looks forward to

graduating next year and being a role model for her children.

When she's not taking classes, Tawn works as a school administrator for Brandon School District. She loves working in schools and tries to make sure that every student has an equal chance at success. She says, "It is my personal goal to make sure that every student I encounter can chase their dreams, whether that is college, a trade school, or some other personal decision." Her colleagues describe her as a compassionate presence and praise the way she gets to know all of her students, going "out of her way to make sure every student's individual needs are met." After graduating, Tawn plans to keep working to improve her school district and ensure that every child has access to an excellent education.

In spite of all these accomplishments, Tawn says, "Being a mom is my greatest accomplishment and always will be." She hopes her experiences will inspire her children to realize that anything is possible with hard work. Her life's journey has not always been easy, but Tawn is proud of where she has come from and what she has achieved. Although she has faced many challenges, she has learned "to cherish the journey, to be persistent and to fight for what you want!"

CEW+ applauds Tawn's dedication and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Marsha-Kay Hutchinson Christine Kahan Black Scholar



Marsha-Kay Hutchinson was inspired to study dentistry while growing up as a child in rural Jamaica. Residents of her community had to travel 18 miles to see the nearest dentist, leaving many without access to adequate care. After witnessing these inequities, Marsha-Kay decided to pursue a career in healthcare so she could advocate for underserved communities. She is currently enrolled in the joint DDS/PhD program in oral health sciences and will be the first African-American woman to complete this program at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry.

Marsha-Kay credits her mother with encouraging her pursuit of higher education. A first-generation college student, Marsha-Kay earned a full scholarship to Howard University and graduated in 2016 with a bachelor's degree in biology. She also received the James A. Bayton award for the graduating senior with the best academic record, conferred by Howard University's chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Inspired by her mother's example, Marsha-Kay is committed to helping other minority students succeed in higher education. She serves as a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion representative within her program, and assists with recruitment efforts at historically black colleges and universities. She also volunteers as a mentor through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Washtenaw County and takes a special interest in teaching her mentee about science. Describing these commitments, Marsha-Kay writes, "One of my main career goals is to provide shoulders for the younger generation to stand on."

Marsha-Kay's current research focuses on improving treatments for patients with oral cancer. She hopes her work will help reduce racial disparities in treatment outcomes and add to the global body of scientific knowledge. She also plans to return to rural Jamaica and provide treatment for communities like the one where she lived as a child. Marsha-Kay's professors describe her as "an extremely knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated student" who is "always willing to help and learn from her colleagues."

CEW+ applauds Marsha-Kay's dedication and proudly names her the Christine Kahan Black Scholar.

Yung Joo Hwang Mary Lucille Randolph and Lea King Dean Memorial Scholar



Yung Joo Hwang is passionate about working with children who feel displaced and struggle to be the bridge between their families and society. As a young child, Yung emigrated from Korea to a white suburban community in Michigan, where she was usually the only Asian student in her class and also served as the primary translator and cultural navigator for her parents.

Though Yung's experiences growing up made her transition to college difficult, she nevertheless earned her degree in history from the University of Michigan. After college, Yung married and devoted herself to raising her three children, eventually returning to work as a substitute teacher. In the classroom, Yung met students who reminded her of herself: students who were stuck or fearful because of what society or their parents told them they had to be. She realized her calling to be a school social worker and returned to higher education after over thirty years away, maintaining a 4.0 GPA in her first year of graduate school. Yung believes, "When a young person can see their full potential, they can change the world. My goal is to help as many young students as I can to reach their full potential."

Yung is currently pursuing a master's degree in social work at the University of Michigan. She has also served as a crisis line volunteer and Education Project intern for Ozone House, supporting the educational needs of homeless youth in the community. She is known by her professors and by her community for her deep commitment to social justice for marginalized people, her care and compassion, and her remarkable ability to solve problems.

CEW+ is proud to name Yung Joo Hwang a Mary Lucille Randolph and Lea King Dean Memorial Scholar.

Dawn Isby Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Dawn Isby always dreamed of earning her college degree, but she had to put those dreams on hold when she became a mother. As a single mom who worked two jobs, Dawn didn't have time for school and frequently put the needs of others above her own. She recently returned to school at age 56 and is excited to be earning her college degree. Dawn was proud to start college at the same time as her granddaughter, who has been a major source of encouragement for Dawn. Dawn is pursuing a degree in Integrative Studies with concentrations in entrepreneurship, fine arts, and English. When she describes going to school with her granddaughter, she

says, "We are having fun, learning new challenges, meeting people from all walks of life, and I am carrying a backpack for the first time in my life."

Dawn's new dream is to open a community arts center in Detroit after she graduates. A passionate artist herself, Dawn hopes to share the power of creativity with others in her hometown. She believes that art can be healing, and she is especially motivated to share art with her underprivileged neighbors who wouldn't be able to access it otherwise. She also plans to support other students by creating a scholarship fund for those in need. She says, "Everyone should be able to attain higher learning. It is challenging, but it enriches lives and opens the door for many new opportunities."

Dawn is thriving as a college student, and is proud to have made the Dean's List at both Henry Ford Community College and at UM Dearborn. She credits the support of her husband and her granddaughter with making her achievements possible. Praised as a "composed, compassionate, and thoughtful" student, Dawn inspires those around her to push themselves and to succeed.

CEW+ values Dawn's commitment to her goals and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Rey Jeong Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Rey Jeong is a first-generation college student who is on course to receiving an MFA in art at the Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design after studying animation as an undergraduate. She completed an eight-month artist residency and a solo show in South Korea, which marked her debut as a contemporary artist.

Rey's work focuses on methods of inverting systems of marginalization, specifically the use of grass-roots techniques like workshops and conversations to empower people of color. By creating autonomous spaces for sharing unspoken diasporic experiences, participants take away shared learnings and a network of allies. Her most recent exhibitions combine interactive installations, video, and time-based sculptures, and she curated an exhibition of eight emerging young artists in Ypsilanti in 2019.

In addition to her own creative projects, Rey is proud of her work as a teacher. She hopes to inspire students to connect with their own communities and to envision the "transformative possibilities" of art.

CEW+ commends Rey's innovation and names her an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Dyrel Johnson CEW+ Graduate Scholar



Dyrel Johnson has pursued his academic goals with great determination in the face of academic barriers, the financial toll of college education, and the challenge of balancing parenting, full-time work, and studies. Dyrel persisted and earned his bachelor's degree in communication, during which time he learned firsthand how difficult it is for underrepresented students to navigate college without support. He is now committed to "engage in work that will ensure future students have collegiate experiences that are better" by empowering students to advocate for themselves as they navigate postsecondary education.

Dyrel is now pursuing a master's degree in higher education with a concentration in diversity and social justice, continuing his life's work of giving underrepresented students the necessary tools to succeed. Dyrel has dedicated his career to supporting youth from his greater Detroit community in this way: over the past thirteen years, he has served as a performing arts instructor for the Cherry Hill School of Performing Arts, a program manager for Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Metro Detroit, program director for Detroit's buildOn, a presenter at the 2019 Michigan Pre-College and Youth Outreach Conference, and now as program manager for College Day, part of the U-M Center for Educational Outreach. He is committed to using all that he learns through his studies to inform his real-time work at the Center, where he is recognized as an "outstanding, talented, collaborative, well-rounded, charismatic, and reflective individual with a promising career in higher education." Dyrel is deeply invested in work that supports underrepresented students' retention and success.

Though his first year of graduate studies brought unique challenges with personal circumstances and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on his community, Dyrel maintained a 4.00 GPA. Dyrel takes pride in his personal commitment to academic achievement and intends to use his degree to empower students like him to pursue higher education and chase their dreams.

CEW+ is proud of all that Dyrel has accomplished and celebrates his future plans, naming him a CEW+ Graduate Scholar.

Keesa Johnson Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Keesa Johnson is a community-driven designer who uses creativity to promote social change. After earning her bachelor's degree in 2000, Keesa took time away from school to raise her three children. She returned to school in 2019 and is excited to continue her education. Keesa is pursuing a Master's in Integrative Design and will be the first African-American woman to graduate from this program at the University of Michigan. She is also earning a certificate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from the Rackham Graduate School.

Keesa's designs focus on advancing racial equity and creating sustainable food systems. As the granddaughter of farmers, Keesa knows that food is deeply connected to identity. She hopes to help marginalized communities access healthy food, and, in doing so, help heal historical injustices. Keesa also promotes these values in her work outside the classroom. She is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager at the Campus Farm, where she gives tours and leads workshops to teach other students about food justice. She is also a graduate assistant for the Food, Justice and STEM program and is currently working on a project for the Dabls Bead Museum in Detroit. As part of that project, Keesa will be growing plants whose seeds will be used as beads, creating "a generative cycle that is good for the environment, climate, and all living systems involved."

Keesa's mentors recognize her as a "natural leader" and note that "empathy and humanism are at the core" of every project she pursues. They also note that Keesa's work has only become more important since the pandemic began disrupting U.S. food systems in March. In fact, Keesa spent her summer working with two urban farms to help them shift online and survive the pandemic. Although the present moment is full of challenges, Keesa also hopes it will create opportunities to reimagine the food system and create "equitable, just, and liberating environments through the lens of design."

CEW+ commends Keesa's vision of equity and names her an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Kori Johnson-Lane Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Kori Johnson-Lane is passionate about making a difference in her community. After graduating from the University of Michigan with her bachelor's degree, she moved to California and worked for a nonprofit that helps local governments address climate change. Kori specialized in topics related to groundwater management, analyzing data and coordinating outreach programs. Kori worked as an advocate for a year, but she quickly realized that she wanted to return to school and study engineering so that she could develop physical solutions to environmental problems. She is now working

toward two master's degrees, one in the College of Engineering and one in the School for Environment and Sustainability. After she graduates she plans to continue working in water management and "ensuring access to safe and affordable drinking water."

Kori is especially proud of her success in the College of Engineering. Even though she had never studied engineering before starting her master's program, she has risen to the challenge and is thriving. She has even taken extra classes to develop her skills in calculus, studying beyond her required course work while also working to support herself financially. For her capstone project, she is working with the Ann Arbor 2030 District, a public-private partnership to reduce water and energy consumption by 2030. She is determining how much water the city currently uses, which will be the baseline against which future water reductions are measured.

Kori also believes in sharing her knowledge with others. She is an active member of the Society of Women Engineers and has traveled abroad to teach engineering and STEM workshops at the University of Liberia. She is happy to have been a part of those programs and hopes to help influence water projects on a global scale. At the same time, she also wants to address water issues close to home, and works as a research assistant studying water affordability in Detroit. Widely known for her motivation, persistence, and "contagious positive attitude," Kori is sure to make an impact on the world.

CEW+ commends Kori's tenacity and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Mintu Joy Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Mintu Joy has always been curious about electronics. Growing up in Kerala, India, she watched professionals tinker with cars at her family's service station. Watching their work helped her discover her passion. She says, "I realized that more than cars themselves, my fascination was in making them smart, using complex electronics systems. I wanted to be an engineer." After completing her undergraduate degree at one of the top programs in India, she landed a position working with the Tata Group, where she developed, tested and maintained smart electronic systems for large automotive companies. Although Mintu quickly advanced within the organization, the birth of her

first child left her feeling compelled to leave her career in order to care for her family. Now, seven years after completing her first degree, Mintu is returning to fulfill her professional aspirations as she completes a master's in electrical engineering at U-M Dearborn.

Mintu is specializing in vehicle electronics and is excited to graduate with the skills and practical knowledge she will need to grow as an engineer and innovator. She plans to use smart technologies "to build cars that are comfortable and at the same time safe." Known as a dedicated, meticulous, and personable scholar, she has the ability to bring diverse people together to work on teams. Her mentors praise her ability to learn new concepts and achieve goals in record time. She is also known as someone who does more than what is expected of her, even taking the initiative to learn Japanese when she was working with Japan-based clients through the Tata Group. In March 2020, these accomplishments were recognized when Mintu earned the Maize Designation in the U-M Dearborn (M)Talent program, a distinction for students who demonstrate the professional skills needed to excel in any setting.

CEW+ is inspired by Mintu's determination to grow as an engineering professional and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Shalom Kebede Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Shalom Kebede is rightfully recognized as “the champion of her own education.” As a bank employee in Ethiopia, Shalom worked in Research and Product Development and often researched technology related products in the banking industry. This experience sparked her interest in working in the tech industry as she observed how technology was changing the world of business and the potential it has to transform promising, emerging markets like Ethiopia.

Well versed in business but lacking the technical skills to make this transition, Shalom contemplated returning to school to make this goal a reality. When Shalom moved to the United States, she was presented with the opportunity to do just that. She took it as a chance to forge a new path for herself, drawing inspiration from her parents’ sacrifices for her education and the support of her spouse. Shalom invested in her love of technology and desire to learn, taught herself to code, and eventually enrolled as a Computer and Information Science major at the University of Michigan - Dearborn.

As she pursues her degree, Shalom is also involved with the Society of Women Engineers, the National Society of Black Engineers, and the Black Student Union, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA and balancing the responsibilities of motherhood. She is known on campus for her remarkable perseverance and determination to succeed.

Shalom is proud to be the first woman in her family to study computer science. She hopes to be a trailblazer in the field and encourage other women to build careers in STEM. Ultimately, her goal is to open centers in Ethiopia to teach girls to code and introduce them to be successful women in the field. Shalom also intends to use her skills to find inexpensive solutions that can help small business owners in Ethiopia build revenue.

CEW+ applauds Shalom’s persistence and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Hye In (Lisa) Koo Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Lisa Koo is a passionate advocate for women of color in the legal industry. Born and raised in Seoul, South Korea, Lisa moved with her family to New York City when she was ten. After attending Wellesley College and completing a bachelor's degree in art history, Lisa returned to New York City and began working in the art industry. Now a third-year law student at UM, Lisa draws strength from her unique life experiences and her background in art auction houses to mentor other women of color. She was inspired to become a lawyer so that she could make an important impact on the world.

Lisa is also a determined advocate for greater diversity and inclusion across her industry. She serves on the executive board of Res Sista Loquitur, the women of color coalition, where she recruits fellow students to support the success of female, minority law students. In 2020, Lisa also worked as a summer associate at Goodwin Procter, a global law firm based in Boston. She brought back the knowledge she learned from that experience and has shared it with other law students. As she progresses in her career, Lisa plans to seek a leadership role in a firm where she can influence recruiting practices and create new mentorship opportunities for young lawyers. She says, "The legal industry has traditionally been male dominated; representation by women of color gets increasingly sparse in the higher levels. I hope to change that by using my law degree to motivate younger minority women to push boundaries."

Praised for her commitment, motivation, and intellectual curiosity, Lisa is sure to make a difference in the lives of many women. In the words of one of her mentors, "She has both the passion for helping women advance in the profession and the experience with mentorship to put her passion into action."

CEW+ applauds Lisa's vision for supporting women of color and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Doris Li Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Doris Li spent her childhood expecting to become a professional cellist. Growing up in a musical family, she took for granted that she would one day pursue a musical career of her own. When she was accepted into the University of Michigan's prestigious School of Music, it seemed that her life plan was on track. However, while taking a course on programming, Doris discovered a new passion for software engineering. She and her classmates spent hours working on their final project, which was to create an app that tested the user's musical knowledge. She says, "I fell in love with the feeling of achieving goals with teammates and creating content that could reach

countless people in no time." She decided to add a second major in computer science and began pursuing her new goal of becoming a software engineer.

Adding a major in computer science has not been easy, but Doris has been working hard to manage her increased course load while also developing her programming skills. She took extra courses during her winter break and also began working on the web team at The Michigan Daily. She was elected as an executive board member of Girls in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (GEECS), a student organization that encourages women to pursue careers in technology. As a board member of GEECS, Doris organized an outreach event that focused on teaching HTML to high school girls. Doris's hard work paid off, and she secured an internship in software engineering last summer.

Doris hopes to eventually use her programming skills to help make music education more accessible. She feels lucky to have grown up in a family where music was common, but she knows that not all children have the opportunities that she did. She plans to develop apps that will allow students to study music even if they can't afford lessons or sheet music. Her dream is to help all children experience the "joy and excitement" that comes from studying something that they love.

CEW+ commends Doris's passion for engineering and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

J'Taime Lyons Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



J'Taime Lyons is a dedicated advocate for children and young adults in high poverty communities. As a first-generation college student who experienced a significant period of family grief during those years, J'Taime came to intimately understand the toll that long-term stress can take--and how important community supports are. As a teacher and Community in Schools support specialist of many years, J'Taime also witnessed how trauma and systemic inequities affected her students and how racial inequities in management, higher education enrollment, and social services impacted their lives.

Never content to witness injustice without taking action, J'Taime has worked daily to meet the urgent needs of her community. During her time as a support specialist, J'Taime made a significant impact designing and piloting a program to engage and empower parents as advocates in schools, advocated for a trauma-informed framework that has led to regional improvements for the Community in Schools organization, and was awarded the 2018 Impact Award for Student Support Specialist of the Year. She has also strategized the development of Durham's Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP), pioneered school-based wraparound services for at-risk students that decreased negative behavior by 96% at Eastlawn Elementary, and volunteered for numerous organizations to impact the broader educational system. Her colleagues remark that "her determination is unparalleled."

After losing her son to AIDS, J'Taime only rededicated herself to her students. She says, "There were many moments I felt stuck, but teaching allowed me to see the urgent need of my community. Unable to care for my own child, I devoted my career to providing my students with the opportunities they deserved." With that goal in mind, J'Taime is now earning her master's degree in business administration and public policy with the intention of building strong cradle to career pipelines in high poverty communities, launching a social impact consulting firm, and solving systems-level problems in the social and public sectors.

CEW+ is proud to name J'Taime a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Maya Makhlouf Irma M. Wyman Scholar



When Maya Makhlouf was growing up, her mother always emphasized the value of education. From a young age, Maya heard her parents' story of traveling thousands of miles to the United States to further their education. After she completed her undergraduate degree and a prestigious internship at Ford Motor Company, Maya faced a choice: continue her studies in graduate school or start her career in the automotive industry. Reflecting on her family's belief in education and her own desire to become an innovator, Maya ultimately chose to do both at once. She enrolled in the UM Master of Automotive Engineering program at the same time that she began working

at the Ford Motor Company full time.

In her work experience, Maya observed that most supervising and technical staff she consulted were male. This fueled her fire to become a technical leader so that other young women could see themselves represented in industry leadership. She says, "I want to be a public figure of encouragement for young students who may not look like their peers." In addition to serving as a role model, Maya has been actively contributing to opportunities for women engineers through out her academic career. As an undergraduate, she served as the Alternative Spring Break co-chair and the Membership Officer for the Society of Women Engineers where she created a mentoring program for first-year students interested in joining SWE. Now, Maya continues to foster opportunities for women engineers as she serves as the co-chair of the STEAM committee at Ford. Maya is proud of this work, and she plans to continue working to advance diversity in engineering fields throughout her career. She believes that "every young person entering the industry should be able to see themselves in the leadership role they want," and she is working hard to fulfill that vision.

Praised as a reliable, hardworking, and dedicated individual, Maya also shines through her ability to lead and uplift others. She is a thoughtful and disciplined engineer who is well on her way to achieving her goals. CEW+ is proud to celebrate Maya's leadership and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Priyanka Marudhavanan Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Priyanka Marudhavanan is a talented engineer who is completing a master's degree in global automotive and manufacturing engineering. After finishing her degree, she plans to continue into her dream career in electric vehicle technology. Priyanka completed her bachelor's in electrical engineering in Chennai, India and became a design engineer with the Mahindra Automotive firm, where she worked while helping to support her family. Because of her outstanding performance, Priyanka was nominated as an Auto Expo delegate, and it was there that she became fascinated with electric vehicles.

Priyanka is currently researching vehicle to grid energy transfer, a technology that allows electric vehicles to store energy generated from renewable sources like solar and wind. Her thesis is focused on developing tools that will allow electric cars to connect to the power grid through smart communication protocols. She hopes that the technology she develops will benefit society, ultimately leading to autonomous vehicles that can serve the elderly and others who can't drive. She is also passionate about using her research to help reduce pollution across the globe. When she reflects on her decision to pursue graduate education at the University of Michigan, Priyanka says, "I definitely say this is one of the best decisions of my life."

Beyond the classroom, Priyanka excels in campus competitions. Her team was recently selected from 600 students as a finalist in the Campus Covid Challenge for their transportation solution, Optimizing Blue Bus Routes. An accomplished researcher, Priyanka has also published two papers and filed two patents. After finishing her master's program, she plans to continue her education and complete a doctoral degree. Known for her "innovative, curious mind" and her "inventive ideas," Priyanka is sure to go far.

CEW+ celebrates Priyanka as she follows her dreams and proudly names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Bruna Menezes Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Bruna Menezes is a visionary leader and talented scholar who advocates for women of color in STEM. Brunna is completing a PhD in chemical engineering, conducting research to improve the efficacy of drugs used to treat breast cancer. Upon graduation this semester, Brunna will start working as a senior scientist for Applied Biomath, where she will develop new medications and also influence young women and minorities by taking on a visible leadership role.

Bruna has already started on her path to inspire the next generation of STEM scholars, serving for the past two years as the President of the Movement of Underrepresented Sisters in Engineering and Science (MUSES). Drawing on her own experience as a first-generation, female scholar from Brazil, Brunna has served as a mentor and leader. Brunna's understanding of the strengths and intersectional identities of women STEM students has helped her develop empowering programming, secure a permanent study space, and develop partnerships with other peer-led organizations. She says, "Many young women and other minorities lack representation in the STEM field, especially in engineering. I want to be a role model to these women in the future." Brunna was honored for her work with MUSES as the recipient of the Willie Hobbs Moore 2020 Achievement Award, which recognizes outstanding mentorship of students in STEM fields.

As she continues her career, Brunna hopes to develop outreach programs in Brazil so she can give back to the community where she grew up. She knows that not all students are fortunate enough to have the educational opportunities that she has had, and she is motivated to change that. She plans to create scholarship programs that will give those students the opportunity to shine. She says, "I especially want to motivate these students to also contribute to the community around them." Praised as a conscientious and resilient scholar, Brunna has already made important contributions for women and for science.

CEW+ is thrilled to celebrate Brunna and her impact on women of color in STEM and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Roberta Mooney Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



With a passion for women’s health and a decades-long dedication to the field of nursing, Roberta Mooney is returning after 19 years out of school to complete a master of science in nursing with certified nurse midwife specialization. After completing her undergraduate nursing degree at the University of Michigan and a master’s in basic medical science at Wayne State University, Roberta started her career and her family. She worked at the Henry Ford Health System for over 25 years, and since 2016 she has worked as a nurse in labor and delivery, drawing on her own experience as a parent to inspire and encourage the pregnant women she serves. She

credits her two daughters as her most important teachers, saying, “Seeing the world through their eyes, living their experiences with them, and learning to let them go has helped me grow more patient and compassionate.”

Working as a nurse helped Roberta discover her interest in improving women’s health. She wants to be more than a ‘baby catcher,’ and to instead become a skilled and energetic provider who will serve diverse women throughout their reproductive years. She says, “At this point in my career, my vision of success is to work directly with women and families every day to improve their health and the health of their families. If our families are strong, then our communities will be stronger as well.” She looks forward to providing excellent healthcare to women from all walks of life.

Seen by her colleagues as an adaptable, dedicated, and kind individual, Roberta is also “an exemplary advocate for women and women’s health issues.” She is equally adept at both patient care and data analysis, which she uses to improve labor support services and improve maternal health. With her wealth of knowledge and years of experience, Roberta is sure to make a tremendous impact in the field of midwifery.

CEW+ celebrates Roberta as she achieves her goals and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Natalie Moreno Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Natalie Moreno's path to medical school was not easy, but she never lost sight of her commitment to promote better health outcomes within vulnerable communities. Following her graduation from Johns Hopkins University, Natalie applied to medical school three times, but without experienced mentors or institutional support, the application process was arduous. Natalie was often encouraged to pursue another career, however Natalie persisted in her dream. She reapplied while conducting public health disparities research through an internship at Los Angeles County, volunteering in two emergency rooms in safety net hospitals, taking non-degree granting courses for her own enrichment, and working as a direct support professional for college students with learning disabilities. Now, she is a rising surgeon at the University of Michigan.

Natalie defines success by how many lives she is able to positively impact. Alongside training as a surgeon, Natalie launched a virtual learning platform to address the pause in clinical education for medical students during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has enhanced students' clinical skills and prepared rising physicians during a critical shortage in the healthcare workforce. She also cares for uninsured patients at the student-run clinic, interprets for Spanish speakers, conducts forensic evaluations and writes medical affidavits for refugees through the U-M Asylum Collaborative, and serves as the president of the Latino and Native American Medical Association. Natalie's involvement in each of these activities is driven by her desire to better care for vulnerable populations and usher in the next generation of physicians who will do likewise. Natalie reflects, "It is with utmost joy that I look forward to training the next set of hands who are ready to take a stab at the risk factors among our patients and close the gaps in health equity."

Recognized for her "resilience, work ethic, and tenacity" and known as "one of the most talented and industrious students in our medical school program," Natalie is a remarkably promising physician.

CEW+ greatly admires Natalie's drive and determination and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Anjali Narwani Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Anjali Narwani is driven by her vision to empower educators and learners, and particularly women, with access to rich digital learning experiences. Anjali spent 14 years as an educational technologist in her home city of Dubai, building her specialization in learning technologies and faculty training. She has experience teaching programming and implementing educational technology systems, as well as teaching a range of students in international settings. Throughout this work, Anjali became more and more invested in understanding how one can measure the quality of learning online.

This question ultimately compelled Anjali to enroll in the combined psychology and education doctoral program at the University of Michigan, where she is researching the cognitive psychology underlying online learning. Specifically, Anjali is interested in the characteristics differentiating unsuccessful from successful online learning. Anjali says, "I believe in the positive potential of online technologies to help create channels for access in order to bridge some of the disparities for education of women in STEM fields." With this potential in mind, her work considers the universality of learning online in contrast to individuals' learning experience needs. Currently, Anjali is collecting data on how students and faculty have responded to the sudden shift to online education. Ultimately, Anjali's vision of success is to produce a framework grounded in education psychology theory to inform online instructional designers and to positively impact online learner experiences globally.

In addition to her research, Anjali has been actively engaged in developing communities of practice in educational technology. She has presented at international forums such as EdMedia + Innovate, Online Educa Berlin, and the Blackboard Teaching and Learning Conference Leeds. She has also been an active contributor to projects at the Ross Business School Office of Digital Education and the Academic Innovation Center.

CEW+ is proud of Anjali's commitment to improving online education for all and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Katherine Nicholson Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Katherine Nicholson passionately believes that math and science can make the world a better place. Katherine first experienced the possibilities of engineering in high school as a member of the Underwater Robotics Team. Though there were many times that she felt out of place in the world of engineering because of her lack of experience, she stuck with it and the team placed fifth in the international competition. So when Katherine arrived at the University of Michigan as a prospective data engineering major and found herself the only woman in a classroom or on a project team, she drew from her characteristic determination and dedication and built a community

of her own through the Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program and the Society of Women Engineers.

Katherine says, "Difficult classes and inadvertent sexism caused me to question my place in my major. I realized, though, that it has always been my dream to apply my love of STEM to a career so that I can make a difference in the world and that engineering was the best place for me." Now, Katherine supports women in STEM as a peer mentor, recruitment team member, STEM student advisory group member, and Community Conversations facilitator. The WISE RP team remarks that Katherine has "made a lasting impression upon our staff, community, and alumni."

As a data science engineer, Katherine is interested in doing work that tangibly impacts her communities and the world. She is interested in joining the field of cybersecurity, information security, and privacy upon graduation. Already, Katherine is pursuing this goal through her work at the Institute for Social Research on a project that uses data to improve elections. Her team's work focuses on an algorithm that would rely on social media posts rather than surveys to predict public opinion, which could represent many more voices than polling does when limited to those who choose to participate in a phone survey.

Katherine is "a shining example of leadership, selflessness, and professionalism," and CEW+ is proud to name her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Conner O'Brien Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Conner O'Brien learned about the importance of conservation and self-sufficiency from a young age. Growing up in a solar-powered, straw bale home outside Taos, New Mexico, Connor developed a unique perspective on sustainability that set him apart from his peers. Although Conner had early exposure to green technology, he also realized that many families in his New Mexico community struggled to find adequate housing. This housing shortage was made worse by outdated infrastructure that disproportionately harmed marginalized communities. Witnessing these housing disparities first-hand, Conner developed a passion for social transformation that

continues to this day.

After completing his undergraduate degree, Conner initially began working in the financial industry, but he found this career unsatisfying. Drawing on his passion for sustainability and inspired by his daughter, wife and family, Conner returned to school to complete a dual degree in Sustainable Systems and Energy Systems Engineering. He is enthusiastic about using his degree to improve the world through sustainable refurbishment, a process that focuses on improving current infrastructure rather than building new communities. Conner believes that this approach can not only create a more sustainable world, but also address social inequalities like the ones he witnessed growing up in New Mexico.

Conner is excited to share his vision of a sustainable world with others. He says, "Living off the grid provided me with a direct experience of renewable living that few people have, and I've made it my mission to introduce this lifestyle to the rest of the world." His current research is allowing him to develop real-world knowledge of green design as he develops a plan for the University of Michigan to go carbon neutral. Praised as a dedicated and resilient scholar who deftly manages a rigorous course load, Conner is already making impressive strides toward building a sustainable future.

CEW+ applauds Conner's vision of social transformation through sustainability and names him an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Jo Osborn Mary Malcolmson Raphael Scholar



Jo Osborn discovered her passion on a summer trip to Peru, where she participated in her first archaeological excavation. Jo initially planned for her trip to be a one-time experience, but she was hooked. Since that first excavation, she has worked tirelessly to pursue her dream of becoming an archaeology professor. Although she has faced some setbacks on her journey, Jo is well on her way to achieving her dream.

Jo's dissertation research explores Pre-Colombian communities on the Peruvian coast, with a particular focus on the Topará valley. As part of her research, she discovered and excavated a deeply buried Topará fishing village that had several intact and well-preserved rooms. Describing this discovery, one of Jo's professors said, "Nothing like it has been found before." Jo's contributions to Andean archaeology have been widely recognized. In 2018, she received a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship, and in 2019 she published a solo-authored article in *Latin American Antiquity*, a flagship journal in her field. She is spending the 2020-21 academic year at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington, D.C., where she will be funded by their competitive Junior Fellowship in Pre-Colombian Studies. Jo's professors call her "incredibly bright" and a "passionate advocate for social justice." They also praise her commitment to teaching and note that she is especially patient and conscientious with her students.

In addition to her research, Jo is also enthusiastic about helping more women succeed as archaeologists. When she was an undergraduate, there were no tenured or tenure-track women in her school's archaeology department. As a result, she did not have any women mentors until she started graduate school. Jo is determined to change that dynamic and hopes to be a role model for other young women. She is a proud mother to her infant daughter, Maeve, and plans to demonstrate that motherhood and scholarship can go hand in hand. Maeve joined Jo at a regional conference last Spring, and Jo looks forward to bringing Maeve along on her field work in the future.

CEW+ commends Jo's passion and proudly names her a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Scholar.

Phimmasone Owens Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar



Phimmasone Owens has been pursuing her education against the odds since she was in first grade. The only refugee student to be held back that year, she made a promise to herself to do something about her education. She learned to read and speak English, joined English honors classes in high school, and graduated among the top twenty-five students in her class.

This would not be the last time Phimmasone persisted through great difficulties to fulfill that promise. Phimmasone became a wife and mother shortly after high school and worked full time while her husband finished college and launched his career. In 2016, Phimmasone and her husband divorced. Though her circumstances were daunting, Phimmasone remembered her promise to herself. As an unemployed single parent raising three children, she enrolled in community college and, three years of hard work later, transferred to the University of Michigan with a 4.0 GPA. Phimmasone says, “What this education will do is to show my three children it is never too late and to teach them to work hard and to believe in yourself.”

Phimmasone is now pursuing her bachelor’s degree in environmental science, a field to which she is personally dedicated. Beyond her studies, Phimmasone serves as a volunteer with Project Grow, her community garden, where she serves on the board as the educational chair. She has taught cooking classes using sustainable cooking traditions from her culture and worked with others addressing the social justice of food inequalities. She is also an avid gardener, growing her own herbs inside her apartment and renting a garden plot to further her hobby, and she is always looking for new ways to be more environmentally sustainable in her own life. Phimmasone works each day to change the world for the better, especially for those who are underprivileged.

CEW+ applauds Phimmasone’s determination in the face of adversity and names her a Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

Gandhimathi Padmanaban Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Gandhimathi Padmanaban is passionate about pursuing her education. As a first-generation college student, she completed a bachelor's degree at Anna University in Chennai, India, where she studied engineering and computer science. A hardworking scholar, Gandhimathi was invited to present her undergraduate thesis at a national conference. After five years of industry experience as a software engineer and two years devoted to her family as a homemaker, Gandhimathi is now returning to pursue her goal of becoming a research faculty member.

Gandhimathi's scholarship is a part of her larger vision, which is to use her education to make the world a better place. Although her parents did not attend college themselves, they always supported Gandhimathi's aspirations, and she is grateful for the many opportunities she has received. During high school, she volunteered as a tutor to help other students learn about math, and she continues to believe that education should be accessible to everyone. With an enormous encouragement and support from her husband, she is currently working towards a master of science in human-centered design and engineering at U-M Dearborn, where her research focuses on human factors and machine learning that can be used for development of Human-centered Intelligent Systems. She is proud of the way she has overcome obstacles on the way to achieving her goals.

Known as a remarkable student who thinks of creative solutions, Gandhimathi is developing critical skills for in-depth research on user experience design and human-computer interaction. Her former coworkers praise the way she "always works to find the root cause of a problem" and takes the initiative to help out, even when problems aren't directly related to her projects. Her professors similarly praise her dedication, commitment, and "brilliant leadership qualities." With her strong programming skills and ability to meet any challenge, Gandhimathi is certain to make important contributions to the world of engineering.

CEW+ applauds Gandhimathi's dedication to learning and proudly names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Mavia Parveen Joan P. Ireland Scholar



Mavia Parveen believes that everyone deserves an education that allows them to meet their potential, and she is working diligently to provide such an education to young Muslim women, particularly in the Detroit metro area. Mavia became a teacher after experiencing firsthand how schools in her neighborhood failed to prepare students for college and particularly how young women in her community were not encouraged or well-supported in their education. In 2018, Mavia started work at Muneer Academy, where she has had the opportunity to teach and support students who share her Desi cultural background. She is determined to offer home-schooled girls

the opportunity to attend a school where a team of teachers will focus on them, provide an education, and offer new opportunities.

After a few months at Muneer Academy, Mavia realized that she needed to continue her education and enhance her leadership skills to effectively tackle the problems that young Muslim girls from low socioeconomic backgrounds face. While raising her three children and working at Muneer Academy, she is now earning her master's degree with K-12 building level Administrator Certification at the University of Michigan, where she is focused on developing strategies to build a broader base of community support. Mavia intends to use her education to create a model that teachers can use to teach their subjects effectively and efficiently as well as to encourage critical thinking, civic engagement, and community participation.

Mavia acts on her commitment to supporting girls and women both inside and outside of the classroom. Prompted by her personal experiences as a Muslim woman, for the past five years, she has organized events, classes, and workshops especially for South Asian women to socialize and learn together in the Metro Detroit area.

Mavia is known for her enthusiasm, work ethic, and commitment to the education and empowerment of young Muslim women. With these qualities, she has a full and rewarding future ahead of her, and CEW+ is honored to name her a Joan P. Ireland Scholar.

Jennifer Pollard Margaret Towsley Scholar



Jennifer Pollard is passionate about helping students and faculty succeed in their academic and professional development. As a first-generation student, Jennifer acutely felt the challenges of navigating an academic environment without strong support services. Motivated to make a difference, Jennifer went on to build a career supporting students of all backgrounds. She has served as an educator in high school settings and as a counselor in outpatient psychiatric, vocational rehabilitation, and university student services settings.

While working as a university career counselor, Jennifer became interested in STEM students' experiences with faculty inside and outside of the classroom to the point that she was inspired to return to graduate school. Currently, Jennifer is earning her PhD through the University of Michigan's Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, where her research focuses on teacher identity development among early career STEM faculty. Faculty have remarked on Jennifer's analysis of faculty members' experiences as they prepared and taught their first courses, and how meaningful it will be for scholars in higher education. In addition to her own research, Jennifer has worked closely with faculty on a multi-year study of the experiences of new undergraduates in a comprehensive academic and social support program for STEM students. Recognized as a "brilliant scholar and teacher" with an amazing "drive to improve," Jennifer has already made significant contributions to higher education at the University.

Jennifer has remained committed to supporting student learning and success as well as contributing to her wider community, albeit that she has suffered some health challenges in the last year or so. She has served as a Graduate Student Instructional Consultant with the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching and has gone above and beyond to support her own students in their career interests. Outside of the academic realm, Jennifer has also worked to support community jazz musicians through her email newsletter and Facebook Group, *LiftingUpA2Jazz* and through her volunteer work with the *A2 Jazz Fest*.

CEW+ is inspired by Jennifer's commitment to learning, teaching, and supporting others, and names her a Margaret Towsley Scholar.

Yvette Ramirez Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar



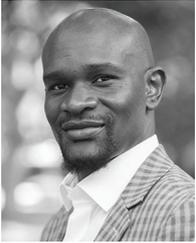
When Yvette Ramirez graduated from college in 2012, she left without much confidence in her academic potential. Through her subsequent work as a community organizer and her new understanding of the root causes of community problems, however, she soon realized that her academic experience was not an accident or an anomaly. Instead, Yvette began to name, and work to dismantle, the systemic barriers that keep first-generation, Latinx, and especially Andean indigenous people from seeing their collective cultural memories and histories treated with necessary value and respect.

For nearly the past decade, Yvette has worked at the “intersection of community-based arts, education, and advocacy,” seeking change while supporting underrepresented voices. She served as program coordinator at The Laundromat Project in New York City for five years, where she annually supported 20 multidisciplinary, socially-engaged artists and took the lead in incorporating ethical oral history and archival strategies in the organization’s programs and artist development curriculum. This experience, along with a desire to contribute to a paradigm shift in artistic, documentary, and institutional work that will authentically include Andean diasporic communities, motivated Yvette to pursue a career in archives and information sciences.

Now earning her master’s degree at the University of Michigan, Yvette’s guiding objective is working toward that paradigm shift. Because there was no archival repository or institution collecting materials related specifically to the U.S. Bolivian diaspora experience, Yvette started the Bolivian Diaspora Archive Project, building off the intergenerational knowledge of the Bolivian diasporic experience through a living, post-custodial digital archive. Yvette hopes that this collective research repository will “not only generate a cultural resource but inspire future scholarship and thought leadership around Bolivian/Andean identity within the United States.” Recognized as “a team-player, a quick start, an expert researcher, a heads-down but heart-forward worker, and a creative soul at her core,” Yvette is sure to change her field for the better.

CEW+ is proud to name Yvette a Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

Victor Rateng Potential Made Possible Scholar



Victor Rateng is a model of determination and persistence toward one's educational goals. Financial constraints have often made access to consistent education all but impossible for Victor, but he has repeatedly found a way to continue his studies both in his home country of Kenya and now in the United States. Though tuition fees kept him out of high school for some time, he passed the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations and after working for a few years, successfully enrolled at the University of Nairobi. A first-generation graduate school student, Victor earned his degree in four years despite unrelenting financial stress and commuting between work and

college for four or more hours each day.

The first to attend graduate school from his blended family of 24 siblings, Victor is now pursuing a Master of Public Policy degree from the Ford School at the University of Michigan, motivated by his first-hand experience of challenges that African communities face. As Senior Program Officer for Twaweza East Africa, Victor managed a nationwide public opinion survey focused on Kenyans' experiences, which underscored the disconnect between citizens and their leaders regarding local and national policymaking. Determined to improve the lives of fellow Kenyans, Victor began his studies at the Ford School with the intent to pursue a career as a citizen-centered international policy advisor specializing in Sub-Saharan Africa policy. Victor says, "I believe and hope the MPP degree will empower me to transform the lives of ordinary citizens."

Though the financial strain of relocating to Ann Arbor has not made it easy, Victor has pursued his dreams in graduate school with typical hard work and commitment. In the Ford School, Victor has served as a board member on the Student Affairs Committee and is currently the 2021 International Economic Development Program (IEDP) Kenya Board President. Kenya was voted as the 2021 IEDP destination due to Victor's successful nomination and proposal. He would be proudly returning to Nairobi for this visit with other members of the Ford School if there was no pandemic. Instead, he looks forward to leading an Africa speaker series to expose his peers to the beauty of his home.

CEW+ proudly names Victor a Potential Made Possible Scholar.

Najwat Rehman Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Najwat Rehman has relied on creativity throughout his life. As a child growing up in Pakistan, he expressed his creativity by building beautiful structures with his sister's Lego sets. He continued to express his creativity when he attended university, where he studied marketing and advertising. After earning his bachelor's degree, Najwat worked for several years as a brand consultant and supported his family. He is happy to be back in school and is currently pursuing a master's degree in integrative design.

Najwat believes that design should be accessible to everyone, and he has worked on numerous projects to promote that vision. In 2012, he founded The Desi Design, a magazine focused on design and advertising in Pakistan. In 2013, he participated in the Emerging Leaders of Pakistan Program, which gave him the chance to network with other young entrepreneurs. He also co-founded Together for Tolerance, an organization that works to counter narratives of violent extremism and empower Pakistani youth. In all his projects, Najwat works to involve stakeholders and democratize the design process. He says, "I am committed to using my varied skillset to imagine and realize futures that are not just provocative, but just and equitable as well."

Najwat's thesis research explores the use of speculative design methodologies to connect researchers and policymakers to help address Pakistan's food security vulnerabilities arising from climate change. He is working in collaboration with researchers and policymakers in Pakistan and utilizing a co-design approach to improve Pakistan's policy response to its climate change challenges. After completing his degree, Najwat plans to work in academia and looks forward to teaching design to other students. Najwat's professors praise his persistence and enthusiasm and say they are "consistently amazed by Najwat's passion for learning."

CEW+ is inspired by Najwat's dedication and names him an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Salene Riggins Linda J. Rider Scholar



Salene Riggins always knew she was destined for higher education, even when challenges temporarily got in her way. She took time away from her studies to work and raise her daughter, but she never gave up on her dream of returning to college. Salene will graduate this spring with a bachelor's degree in integrative studies, with concentrations in leadership communication in organizations, psychology, and marketing. She will be the first member of her family to earn a college degree.

Outside of the classroom, Salene is proud of her positivity and her entrepreneurial spirit. She has worked full-time throughout her educational career and has advanced to management positions at each of her jobs. When she's not working, she enjoys ballroom dancing and is a member at Brightmoor Christian Church. After graduating this spring, Salene plans to open an insurance agency in Novi, which she hopes to one day pass on to her daughter. Out of all her accomplishments and accolades, Salene says, "I am most proud of setting an example for my daughter."

Beyond her academic success, Salene also shines by actively working to improve her community. At UM-Dearborn, she is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success, where she networks with business leaders, and a peer mentor in the Association of Nontraditional Students, where she helps other returning adults transition into university education. She is also an appointed member of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission in Novi. Salene plans to continue her work in local government in the future and hopes to one day run for city council or for mayor. She says she wants to "bring a voice of change and hope" to local government. Salene's professors commend her "insightful comments" and say, "She is proactive, driven, focused, conscientious, willing to lead, and able to break through barriers."

CEW+ applauds Salene's persistence and ambition and names her a Linda J. Rider Scholar.

Julia Rios Mary Malcolmson Raphael Scholar



Julia Rios has been interested in clinical neuroscience throughout her life, beginning when she was a high school research intern at the National Institute of Mental Health. Since that first internship, she has continued to develop her research skills and her passion for promoting public health. Julia is currently pursuing a PhD in Clinical Science at the U-M Department of Psychology, where she studies addictive eating behaviors.

Julia's research focuses on the impact that early food environments and dietary restraint have on individuals' long-term health. She is investigating early eating habits that may predict future struggles with food regulation and plans to develop interventions that will help parents teach their children to have healthy relationships with food. Julia hopes her research will lead to more personalized dietary recommendations that consider disordered patterns of eating and promote better lifelong health. A strong believer in public science, Julia also hopes her work will inform government policy, nutrition programs, and eating disorder treatment approaches. She especially wants her work to benefit low-income and minority families, who are disproportionately affected by health problems related to diet, and who often lack access to nutritious foods.

In addition to her research, Julia excels in her supervised clinical work at the U-M Addiction Treatment Services and the University Psychological Clinic. Julia's mentors praise her initiative, thoughtfulness, organization, and dedication, and note that she is particularly skilled at integrating knowledge across academic disciplines. This interdisciplinary approach makes Julia a uniquely talented problem solver. She says, "Graduate school has taught me first-hand that challenges are not hindrances; they are opportunities to expand."

Julia attributes her motivation to her daughter, who inspires her daily to help other mothers and infants live healthier lives. She says, "I hope to exemplify dedication, grit, and self-compassion for my daughter through my roles as a female academic, teacher, mentor, therapist, and, of course, mom."

CEW+ is inspired by Julia's dedication and names her a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Scholar.

Ronnie Rios Jean W. Campbell Scholar



Ronnie Rios learned about the power of education at a young age. Although her parents had not had the opportunity to attend college, they encouraged Ronnie and her siblings to strive for excellence and reach their full potential. Ronnie remembers her mother reminding her throughout her childhood that her most important job was “to be a straight A student.” Ronnie completed bachelor’s degrees in sociology and international studies and a master’s degree in communication at Northwestern University. She is currently a PhD candidate in the higher education program at the University of Michigan School of Education.

Although she thrived in the classroom, Ronnie also encountered barriers as a Latina scholar attending a predominantly white institution. Knowing these inequities could harm other students, Ronnie dedicated herself to improving the landscape of higher education and increasing access for underrepresented communities. She worked in university administration for 13 years and took a special interest in supporting students of color, first-generation students, undocumented students, and students from working-class backgrounds. This past summer, she also worked as a Research Fellow at the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, where she helped advocate for immigrant students by analyzing federal legislation and policy. After she completes her degree, Ronnie plans to become a senior university administrator and promote projects that will further advance diversity, equity, inclusion and justice.

Ronnie’s current research studies the messages that Black and Latinx high school students receive from teachers and counselors about attending college. In her dissertation, she plans to investigate whether these students are encouraged to attend elite institutions. Recognized as a thoughtful scholar who always tries “to learn as much as possible,” Ronnie hopes her example will inspire other students of color to pursue advanced degrees. Her ultimate career goal is “to effect change that will alter the opportunities for all minoritized communities and students.”

CEW+ values Ronnie’s commitment to education and names her the Jean W. Campbell Scholar.

Kylie Schache Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Kylie Schache is a promising scientific researcher earning her bachelor's degree in biochemistry with a minor in applied statistics. Through her involvement in Women+ Excelling More in Math, Engineering, and the Sciences (F.E.M.M.E.S.), Kylie became passionate about women's success in STEM and creating opportunities for girls to engage with women scientists. Kylie went on to join the F.E.M.M.E.S. executive board, working with the data management committee to collect and analyze survey data and publicize the positive impacts of F.E.M.M.E.S. She also volunteers to provide 4th-12th grade girls with mentorship and empowering STEM-focused experiences.

Kylie hopes "to one day be a living example that success as a scientist is determined solely by curiosity, intelligence, and perseverance, and not by gender." As a researcher, Kylie is already striving to embody those qualities. Kylie works in a research laboratory that studies *Acinetobacter baumannii*, a dangerous multi-drug-resistant pathogen for which new antimicrobials are urgently needed. While the research process repeatedly produced inconsistent results, Kylie did not give up. Instead, she worked with her mentor to re-design protocols, re-do experiments, and ultimately find new, reliable data. Kylie proceeded to receive the Blue Ribbon Award for her research presentation through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. Additionally, Kylie has been recognized as a William J. Branstrom Freshman Prize Winner for academic achievement.

Kylie aspires to a career in biochemical research because she seeks to contribute to the fight against the leading causes of death - including potent adversaries like *Acinetobacter baumannii*. She intends to complete her PhD and eventually lead a research team. Kylie hopes to contribute to a scientific discovery that will ameliorate human health and inspire the next generation of researchers. Known as "organized, highly motivated, engaged, talented and perseverant" as well as "a good person and a fantastic role model," Kylie has immense potential to improve health across the globe.

CEW+ commends Kylie's persistence and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Keirra Scott AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar



Keirra Scott is earning her bachelor's degree in general studies, and, upon completion, seeks to attend the University of Michigan dual degree program in law and economics. Keirra has long been a fierce advocate for student success in education, among other important social justice issues. As a single mother, caretaker for her brother and grandmother, first-generation student, and now transfer student, Keirra's path to higher education has not been easy. Of the challenges she has faced, Keirra says, "No matter how hard things got, I stood strong in believing if I keep working at my dreams they will become a reality. I'm now able to help others who may have similar

circumstances or situations."

Keirra is driven to empower others to see through their dreams and make changes in their communities. She is a current Mellon Fellow and Social Innovation Fellow with optiMize, an organization that supports students' self-directed projects that work towards a more just and sustainable society. Remarkably, Keirra took on this leadership role during her first year as a transfer student, working on both her "My Voice, My Vote, My Future" project to encourage civic engagement in her hometown of Detroit and providing critical support for transfer students who are passionate about making a change in the world. Keirra is recognized for her unmatched ability "to empower people, see a vision that others have trouble seeing, and motivate people to believe in themselves."

With great admiration for Keirra's unwavering commitment to earning her degree and empowering others to do the same, CEW+ names her an AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

David Seaman Susan E. Quackenbush Scholar



David Seaman has wanted to be a lawyer since he was in fourth grade. Although initially told he was “too kind” to be a lawyer, David held onto his dream, believing that compassion was an essential trait for working in the legal system. Unfortunately, David’s dreams were temporarily derailed when he began to struggle with dependence on substances. This struggle with substance use disorder caused challenges for David, but he was able to recover with support from his local community. David returned to school in 2018 at Washtenaw Community College, where he quickly distinguished himself as an honors student. He is dedicated both to pursuing education

and uplifting those around him.

This year, David transferred to the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, where he will be studying philosophy, politics, and economics. He still plans to become a lawyer. This past summer he interned with Judge Judith E. Levy, a federal judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. David hopes his work will allow him to help build a more equitable world. He says, “I hope I can foster hope through action, bringing communities together where fear has ripped them apart.” His mentors describe him as “smart and dedicated” and say “there is no limit to David’s academic and professional potential.”

Beyond his academic work, David also shines through his compassion and commitment to supporting others. He is a local leader in the Recovery Dharma movement, which blends meditation and mindfulness with a twelve step recovery program, and is an active member of the Ann Arbor Zen Buddhist Temple. He volunteers with the undergraduate chapter of the ACLU and works as a detox counselor and administrative assistant at Dawn Farm. He is also the proud stepfather of 13-year-old Rylie June and partner to his wife Megan. David and his family live in Ann Arbor with their 8-year-old Labrador retriever and 11-year-old orange tabby.

CEW+ is inspired by David’s resilience and proudly names him the Susan E. Quackenbush Scholar.

Melissa Sharpsteen Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Melissa Sharpsteen has overcome tremendous obstacles to forge a path for her education more than once, always with the intention of serving others in need. Melissa grew up in the foster care system, where there was little support for her academic goals, and she became the first in a family of five children to graduate from high school. Though she lacked stable housing or financial support, Melissa persisted in her dream of attending the University of Michigan and ultimately earned her bachelor's degree in economics.

Compelled to address social disparities and inequities, Melissa eventually went on to law school at the University of Louisville. Motivated by the loss of a family member to the disease, Melissa chose to work with the HIV/AIDS Project during her schooling, and continued her volunteer work with HIV/AIDS patients at Bay Area Legal Services while employed as an associate attorney in Florida.

Then, in 2009, Melissa was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer. Her personal struggle to survive cancer, as well her leadership with the Celma Mastry Ovarian Cancer Foundation and public service with Faces of Courage Cancer Foundation, sparked her desire to pursue a career in public health. Melissa says, "I knew I had 'unfinished' business in Ann Arbor. I wanted to go back and give back to the community that gave me so much during my early years." Melissa moved back to Ann Arbor and began volunteering for the Cancer Support Community and The Link Program at St. Joseph Mercy. Soon after, she was accepted into the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan.

Upon her graduation, Melissa intends to pursue a managerial role at Michigan Medicine or St. Joseph Mercy. Ultimately, her goal is to participate in cancer research with a focus on population health, and in the development and implementation of systems to improve quality of care, reduce health care costs, and address disparities in health care.

CEW+ is inspired by Melissa's passion for serving others and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Katharine Shiffler Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Katharine Shiffler is pursuing a master's degree in landscape architecture at the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability. As a landscape architect, Katharine's guiding vision is to design places that heal the human spirit.

As a volunteer in the Peace Corps, Katharine both cultivated and witnessed the healing potential of greenspaces. Katharine served for two years with her partner Liz in the Nicaraguan countryside, and while they were proud to be among the first same-sex couples to serve in the Peace Corps, negotiating

this reality in their conservative ranching community was an emotional challenge. Katharine and Liz partnered with the community health center to create a healing space for patients, families, staff, and, ultimately, themselves. The space included a vegetable garden and a walkway with aromatic herbs and flowers, and provided a place for people to reflect and relax steps away from the clinic. Katharine left the experience inspired to pursue a career designing healing landscapes.

Already a confident facilitator of human-centered design and a skilled collaborator across cultures, Katharine is now building on her skills at Michigan with a focus on improving collective wellbeing through ecological design. For her master's project, Katharine is collaborating with The Farm at St. Joe's, a hospital farm that is a national model in the "green care" movement. Additionally, Katharine is a Dow Sustainability Fellow; in this role, she has developed an indigenous foods garden and organized a speaker series, inviting various experts on native foods to Ann Arbor. Her professors and peers alike recognize her as an exceptional teacher and leader with impressive creativity, intelligence, work ethic, and adaptability. Katharine says, "I hope this experience and the connections I've made at Michigan propel a career in healthcare design. Because now more than ever, we need outdoor places that heal the human spirit."

CEW+ is excited to support Katharine in her endeavors and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Seulgi Son Margaret Towsley Scholar



Seulgi Son is committed to building a more just society. As Seulgi grew up, she increasingly appreciated the sacrifices that her parents had made in their youth, devoting themselves to the democratization of South Korea under the military dictatorship in the 1980s. Seulgi learned from her parents that “critical thinking and determined actions” are the force behind social changes, and this lesson motivated her lifelong engagement in community issues.

Volunteer experiences working on social inclusion projects with disabled people, rehabilitation programs in the small village of Vaunières in France, and work as a teacher serving out-of-school youth in Korea, pushed her to reconsider the roles that communities and government play in alleviating inequity. This led her to seek a career where she could conduct and apply research in the interest of the public good. Seulgi obtained a bachelor’s degree in anthropology and a master’s degree in city planning at Seoul National University. Now, she is completing her dissertation in the Urban and Regional Planning doctoral program at U-M where her research is focused on Seoul’s transition to more locally-rooted, resilient food systems. Balancing a rigorous academic program and the recent birth of her first child, Seulgi’s research advances scholarship on social and health equity in food systems planning, specifically, the roles that urban and regional planners can play in local governance.

Seulgi’s professors have remarked on her “critical contributions to gaps in food systems, sustainability and urban planning literatures,” especially in light of the historical lack of engagement with food systems among urban planning practitioners. After completing her degree, she intends to serve as an urban planning educator and leading food systems planning scholar, lending expertise to policymakers and community initiatives in realizing sustainable and equitable food systems. Already, she is known as “an outstanding student, scholar, researcher and colleague” who has overcome formidable obstacles.

CEW+ celebrates Seulgi’s deep commitment to equity and justice and names her a Margaret Towsley Scholar.

Stephanie Steiner Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar



Stephanie Steiner's vision for her future students is to "create an environment for them where they can fall in love with learning and be proud to have control in their success." As a mother of two and a non-traditional student, Stephanie has worked hard to create that environment for herself as well, and she is sure to be a model for every young person who enters her classroom.

Stephanie first realized her dream of becoming a teacher when she took a paraprofessional job at her daughter's school, where she gained new insight to her daughter's education and grew passionate about the relationships she was creating with students and their families. Stephanie returned to school at Washtenaw Community College and earned her associate degree in elementary education with honors. Though she had her second daughter during this time, Stephanie was not deterred from her goal of serving students in the ways they uniquely need. She transferred as a junior to the University of Michigan School of Education and has earned straight As throughout her time at U-M.

A highly dedicated student, Stephanie is perhaps best known by her professors and peers for her exceptional work ethic and commitment to being the best teacher she can possibly be. She is recognized for her leadership skills, her positive, flexible nature, and her "zest for learning." Stephanie arrives on time and well-prepared for every class, despite commuting from Ypsilanti and caring for her family in the mornings, and she is quick to ask for additional feedback. She is seen as "the type of educator we need in our elementary schools."

CEW+ supports Stephanie's vitally important work and names her a Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

Elizabeth Storey Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar



Elizabeth Storey believes, “the healing of one has a profound effect on the whole.” Though her path to higher education has not been easy, Elizabeth has embodied this belief by lifting up others with every step she has taken toward her academic goals. Her experiences with adversities such as poverty, loved ones’ mental illnesses, and as a survivor of abuse may have delayed the pursuit of her education, but they also strengthened her resolve to work with and help vulnerable populations.

Elizabeth’s commitment to make a difference in the lives of others extends from her personal relationships to her intended career path of social work. She is a remarkable mother of two and a tireless advocate for LGBTQIA+ inclusion and rights, fighting along with her son to help make change in legislation and to create a Gay Straight Alliance club in their school district. While supporting her family, Elizabeth has served as a volunteer for the Jackson Angels Network, where she has worked hard to source emergent needs for displaced families in need. Significantly, Elizabeth also cared for her father, who had Alzheimer’s Disease, for the last eight years of his life, which led her to the realization that she was meant for social work. Her organization and focus on her father’s care, as well as the impact of social workers who worked with her and her father, affirmed her path to higher education.

Elizabeth is currently pursuing her bachelor’s degree in sociology with a social work sub major with the intent to continue on to a master’s in social work. Her goal is to help others who, like her, have found themselves needing support, encouragement, and resources. She is proud to be a 44-year-old, non-traditional student, turning her passion into her profession after a 20-plus-year hiatus. Her professors recognize that she has “the empathy, the will, and the experience to assist those in need already” and remark that “with her degree, she will be an unstoppable force for good.”

CEW+ is inspired by Elizabeth’s commitment to pursuing her dream and names her a Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar.

Aimee Szabo Margaret Towsley Scholar



In 2015, Aimee Szabo found her calling in public service. After eight years working as an English language instructor in Italy, Aimee returned to the United States for family reasons and found herself without a clear sense of purpose and passion or many career prospects. So with characteristic openness and commitment, Aimee took a leap of faith and accepted a two-year position with AmeriCorps.

In her new role, Aimee created block clubs and provided support services to residents through the Detroit Urban Safety Project. Ultimately, she was selected to represent the program at the state level, building relationships with people in public service across the state and deepening her commitment to the community. Aimee then went on to manage a workshop for survivors of traumatic brain injury, working with them to help them achieve their vocational goals and forge new pathways to employment post-injury. Aimee reflects, "Each day, I am motivated by the strength my clients demonstrate and I am inspired by the barriers they have worked so hard to overcome. Through this lens, I realized that my dreams were still achievable, too."

Now, Aimee is pursuing a master's degree in public administration and policy at the University of Michigan - Dearborn. Aimee is proud that as a first-generation student and after a 13 year break in her education, she is successfully following her dreams, working full time at the workshop and serving her community, and maintaining a 4.0 GPA in her program. Her professors and colleagues know her best for her ability to contribute rare and "uncommonly nuanced" insights, her "seemingly innate ability to work well with and lead others," and her contagious commitment to service.

CEW+ supports Aimee's true calling to public service and names her a Margaret Towsley Scholar.

Roya Talibova | Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar



Roya Talibova's path to higher education was not straightforward: she grew up amidst the dissolution of the Soviet Union and faced both a widespread lack of educational opportunities and a traditional community that expected her to build a family instead of pursue an academic profession. Despite these challenges, Roya has pursued her education with consistent and characteristic tenacity.

Roya's early experiences of violent conflict, fascination with the relationships between individuals, peoples, and states, and determination to further her education led her to pursue a PhD in political science and scientific computing, along with a master's degree in statistics. Her research focuses on combat motivation, battlefield behavior, and post-war political attitudes of marginalized individuals against the backdrop of a long-term repressive rule. She is also researching whether local NGOs are able to report on human rights violations with greater accuracy than other groups, and has co-authored an award-winning paper focused on the long-term effects of Stalin's Great Terror on voting in contemporary Russia. She is recognized as an exceptional scholar by her mentors and colleagues, who anticipate her "rapid emergence as a leading voice" in the field.

Roya is a respected teacher and mentor and hopes to become a university professor. Her goal is to provide policy-makers with resources to alleviate the burden of people who are affected by political violence, while modeling that a woman can have a successful academic career while caring for her family. Roya has developed close collaborative relationships with female students, working on research projects with female co-authors and organizing mentorship sessions with female undergraduates. She is part of the "Visions in Methodology" community of women scholars and has initiated a new program to fund undergraduate women to attend and present their early research at the Society for Political Methodology Conference.

Roya is a remarkable scholar bringing forth "innovative theory, exhaustively collected data, and creative new measurement" to the study of human rights, and CEW+ is proud to name her a Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar.

Nasya Tan Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar



Nasya Tan was inspired to study epidemiology after watching her parents navigate the health care system. As the child of two deaf parents, Nasya often took on the role of advocate and was acutely aware of the barriers faced by people with disabilities. Witnessing these inequities motivated Nasya to help make the healthcare system more accessible. She earned a master's degree in public health in 2013 and is currently pursuing a PhD in epidemiologic science.

Since completing her master's, Nasya has continued to conduct research in epidemiology and public health. She has presented at numerous national conferences and published six peer-reviewed papers, including one as lead author. Her mentors describe her as "an intellectually gifted, highly motivated self-starter" who shines through her "impeccable work ethic" and "delightful" personality. Although she has faced obstacles along the way, Nasya has remained unwavering in her commitment to her studies. Even when she faced challenges, she says, "I was determined to continue my education so I could conduct research on the health disparities I was witnessing among the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities."

Nasya's dissertation research will study increased risks of cardiovascular disease among deaf and hard-of-hearing populations in the United States. Although cardiovascular disease is an important indicator of overall health, there is currently little research focused on cardiovascular disease within the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Nasya hopes her research will help fill this gap and advance policies to support deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals around the world. Her ultimate goal is to help members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community "live longer, healthier lives."

CEW+ admires Nasya's persistence and proudly names her the Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar.

Cecelela Tomi Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Cecelela Tomi is dedicated to serving the children of Sub-Saharan African immigrants and creating supportive spaces and programming. As the daughter of a Tanzanian immigrant growing up in Western Massachusetts, Cecelela experienced firsthand how the U.S. education system fails to meet the needs of immigrants' children. Now, she is pursuing a master's degree in social work to change this reality.

Cecelela is completing her field placement at The James and Grace Lee Boggs School in Detroit where she is working to record the voices of students and pioneering families and teachers. Cecelela says, "Students are their own best advocates when they are allowed to speak for themselves." Additionally, as a research assistant at the Curtis Center for Health Equity Research and Training, Cecelela investigates how organizations use a racial equity approach in professional development training. She also develops reports for the Young Black Men, Masculinities, and Mental Health Project.

Cecelela served in U-M's Central Student Government where she drafted recommendations to adopt a trauma-informed approach in COVID-19 response policies. She served on the board of the Association of Black Social Work Students, U-M Chapter, and she is developing a short film building off the work of U-M Anthropology's Kelly Askew for an art installation focused on bringing awareness to taarab music (Kiswahili orchestra) and the voices of East Africa. Art advocacy is one of many avenues that Cecelela uses to lift up those around her.

Cecelela intends to use her degree to create culturally affirming spaces for children of Sub-Saharan Africans. She passionately believes that quality sexuality education and the fully-funded opportunity to study abroad are essential parts of providing support and a sense of belonging to those children. With her persistence, passion, and strength drawn from her maternal grandmother and namesake Loyce, and her paternal grandmother Margaret, Cecelela promises to change the lives of many young people.

CEW+ is pleased to name Cecelela a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Kevser Üstel Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar



Kevser Pinar Üstel is pursuing a joint PhD in sociology and social work at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, currently writing her dissertation in the sub-field of medical sociology and mental health. Pinar's path to this work was not easy: she persisted through an international move, the imposter syndrome she experienced as a new graduate student, a late change in her degree focus, and the birth of her first child, to find her voice as a writer and researcher and set her own research agenda. Now, she is conducting important original research on informal mental health support networks.

Through the study of two online psychiatric medication withdrawal support groups, Pinar's research investigates how members come to participate in online mental health support groups, develop knowledge, and establish their status as lay experts, as well as how members' sense of self is changed during this process. As there has been very little professional discussion or clear guidelines about withdrawal from antidepressants, and as patients increasingly turn toward these informal support groups, their study becomes more important for both sociology and social workers. Pinar's advisors have remarked on the necessary and innovative nature of her research, which combines an online ethnography and in-depth interviews.

Initially, Pinar was doubtful about her ability to conduct interviews in English; instead, she has conducted dozens of successful interviews, completed her data collection, and come to be known by her mentors and colleagues as a compelling and eloquent writer, all throughout her pregnancy and raising her first child. Motivated by those mentors who helped her to stay in graduate school, Pinar is also a committed educator who has served as a graduate student instructional consultant with the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching and mentored two Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program students at the University.

With her "intelligence, maturity, and perseverance in the face of formidable challenges," Pinar has a full and rewarding future ahead of her, and CEW+ is honored to name her a Mary Malcomson Raphael Scholar.

Jenae Wright AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar



Jenae is a proud first-generation college student pursuing a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies and Conservation. Despite the intense difficulties of independently supporting herself since graduating from high school in 2007, Jenae has repeatedly chosen not to give up and to return to her education. Jenae first had to leave her studies in 2008 due to the challenge of getting to campus and the need to keep her full-time job, but she nevertheless returned to college in 2012. When a loved one was then diagnosed with leukemia, she worked full-time to support herself and cared for him. Despite these obstacles, Jenae again returned to her education in

2018 and earned her associate's degree from Washtenaw Community College. She says, "I hope I can be a beacon for others who have struggled and don't know if they can make it or think they don't belong in higher education."

Jenae's deep care for her community extends from her immediate loved ones to Ann Arbor to every living being that inhabits the environment she is studying. For the past two years, Jenae has served as a volunteer with the Creature Conservancy as well as Natural Area Preservation for the City of Ann Arbor, where she is especially active in her work as a trained salamander and frog surveyor. Jenae is already using her environmental studies education to improve nature in Michigan and make her community a better place, just as she plans to in the future. Recognized as an exceptionally "successful, resourceful, and reliable" student who consistently uses her energy and time to benefit others, Jenae is sure to make an impact.

CEW+ applauds Jenae's tenacity and commitment to her education and names her an AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

Thank you.

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

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Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity and Title IX/ Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office for Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, (734) 763-0235, TTY (734) 647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call (734) 764-1817.

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CEW+ empowers women and underserved individuals in the University of Michigan and surrounding communities by serving as an advocate and providing resources to help them reach their academic, financial, and professional potential.



330 East Liberty Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

734.764.6005 cew.umich.edu