



# MEET TOMORROW'S LEADERS

47th Annual  
CEW Scholarship Awards  
2017-18

*Celebrating 47 years of  
awarding scholarships*

CEW would like to thank Deborah and Michael Tirico for generously underwriting the cost of this booklet.

*Welcome*

## **WELCOME**

**Tiffany Marra, PhD, Director**  
*CEW, University of Michigan*

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**Suzette Price-Heller, BA, 2009 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar**  
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# *CEW Scholarship Program*

COMMEMORATING 47 YEARS OF SUPPORTING WOMEN AND NONTRADITIONAL  
STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL DREAMS

*CEW advances diversity and inclusion at the University of Michigan by serving as a resource, voice, and advocate to empower women and nontraditional students. CEW provides immediate and ongoing services and financial support needed to ensure educational success and degree completion. Women and nontraditional students are CEW's primary constituency, but all students are welcome. CEW also serves those who encounter education and career obstacles based on their non-linear paths to, and experiences within, the University community.*

## **THE HISTORY**

The Center for the Education of Women was founded in 1964 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 fall 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 50 scholarships.

*Continued on the next page*

CEW joins with all of our generous donors in celebrating over 1,700 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.

### **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 or are providing significant care for a minor, older adult, or disabled adult, showing 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 travelled 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.

Today, we celebrate a rich partnership between the University community, our generous supporters, and CEW's 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.

*Thank you*

# *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 University of Michigan 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

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 have questions about funding a scholarship or supporting the Scholar Success Fund, please contact Charlotte Myers at [charlomy@umich.edu](mailto:charlomy@umich.edu) or 734-764-7258.

*The Scholarships*

**GAIL ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: CASSANDRA BYRD*

In memory of their daughter Gail, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Allen established the Gail Allen Scholarship in 1997 with support from their family and friends. Gail Allen 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 Allen’s excitement for studying history and women’s studies at the University of Michigan 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. The Gail Allen Scholarship is awarded annually to recognize women who are returning to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree at the University of Michigan. To honor Gail’s interests, women enrolled in history, women’s studies, or related fields are given preference for this scholarship.

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: ALICE REGISTER*

Created in 1990 by the Ann Arbor Branch of the American Association of University Women, the AAUW Scholarship supports women returning to school to complete their degrees at the undergraduate or graduate level. AAUW is a membership organization that promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive social change. The AAUW Scholarship is dedicated to creating better access to education for women.

**CHRISTINE KAHAN BLACK SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: MARY ADAMS*

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 University of Michigan 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** *Recipient: BRANDY ZANTELO*

In 1964, when Jane Bloom walked through the doors of the newly opened 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 University of Michigan 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 sent 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: LINA ALYAQOBI*

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 which sent representatives throughout the country with scripts and costume trunks to produce shows for local organizations using local talent. In that way 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.

**AMY AND LAWRENCE CHO FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: MEGAN MULLINS*

Created by Amy and Lawrence Cho, this scholarship provides support to students seeking undergraduate and graduate degrees. Amy graduated with honors from the University of Michigan Medical School in 2007, and is an Emergency Medicine Specialist. Lawrence earned both his B.S. and M.B.A. from the University of Michigan, also graduating in 2007, and works at the Minnesota Mayo Clinic. As the 2003 recipient of the CEW Sarah Winans Newman Scholarship, Amy hopes that this scholarship will provide vital financial support to a student, encouraging them to achieve their academic pursuits while thriving within the University of Michigan community.

**COLLEGIATE SOROSIS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: KELLY HOWARD*

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 University of Michigan. 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: KATE WILLIAMS*

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 University of Michigan alumnae organizations nationwide. From 1947 to 2016, the Conger organization was involved in raising funds to provide scholarships for women to attend the University of Michigan.

**MOLLY H. DOBSON SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipients: ALICIA ALONZO, JENINE CONNERS, AND N'KENGE GONZALEZ*

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** *Recipient: REBECCA MERRYFIELD*

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. The donor has stipulated that this scholarship may be extended beyond one year until graduation.

**ELIZABETH M. DUSSEAU SCHOLARSHIP** *and* **MARGARET DUSSEAU BREVOORT SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipients: JESSICA SOUVA AND VALERIE MALOOF*

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 University of Michigan, 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. At Elizabeth's request, her 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."

**JANICE GEDDES SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: MIKISHA COURSE-DEASON*

As one of CEW's first scholarship recipients, Janice Geddes valued the funding that allowed her to earn her B.A. in English as a single mother, and always envisioned paying it forward. After working in marketing for 15 years, Jan took a position at the University of Michigan where she was employed for 14 years before retiring in 2005. With the establishment of the Janice Geddes Scholarship, Jan intends to support students with a similar experience to her own, providing encouragement in their academic pursuits.

**MARGARET E. GNEGY SCHOLARSHIP FUND** *Recipient: ERICA COOPER*

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 intends to honor 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 15 female doctoral students, 6 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: MARY NAGY*

One of the University of Michigan's most admired fundraising leaders from 2001-2011, Beth Halloran is now a senior executive at St. Catherine University. From 2005-08, 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: RACHEL BURRAGE*

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 University of Michigan at the same time, but had never met one another. Out of gratitude to the University of Michigan, 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: JIMMY IVY*

Beatrice Kahn began graduate work in the early 1950s, about 10 years before the Center for the Education of Women 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 Service. Her own experience and her long friendship with Jean Campbell and other CEW leaders made Bea Kahn a dedicated and enthusiastic supporter of the Center. Beatrice died in November 2012 at the age of 94. Her husband, her family, and her many friends established the Beatrice Kahn Scholarship at the Center for the Education of Women in her memory.

**ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipients: AL EVANGELISTA AND BRENNAN K. MURPHY*

The Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship assists undergraduate and graduate women 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 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 Joseph T. A. Lee, with the support of family and friends.

**SARAH WINANS NEWMAN SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: VERONICA VARELA*

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 University of Michigan 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.

**ALINE UNDERHILL ORTEN FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: MICHAEL CURRAN*

Established in 2001, the Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholarship extends support to women pursuing careers in chemistry, biology, natural resources, epidemiology, and related fields. Aline's intelligence and versatility always led her to new ways of learning and teaching. An early student of engineering, she started her career in chemistry by attending classes with medical students and began a lifelong pattern of excelling by crossing disciplinary lines. Like Dr. William Beaumont on Mackinaw Island in the previous century, Dr. Orten had an opportunity to study working intestines through the open wound of a cooperative patient who participated in her study for many years. She later worked to construct an analyzer of body fluids, the first in the Midwest. Always innovative in her own work, Aline understood that rapidly changing environments in the sciences demand high levels of education, resourcefulness, and flexibility. The scholarship is dedicated to that purpose.

**MARY MALCOMSON RAPHAEL FELLOWSHIP** *Recipient: DOREEN KEMBAZI*

The Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship 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 fellowships are awards of distinction presented to women held in the highest esteem by their faculty. Fellowship recipients have been nominated by their departments and are selected on the basis of their academic excellence and their potential to make contributions of exceptional usefulness to society. The fellowships 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** *Recipient: REBECCA RICHARDSON*

This scholarship in celebration of Linda J. Rider was established by her family in 2004. When Linda enrolled at the University of Michigan 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.

**RETIREMENT INCOME SOLUTIONS SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: NAME WITHHELD*

This scholarship is made possible by a gift from local financial advisory firm, Retirement Income Solutions, Inc. (RIS). CEW Leadership Council member and Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager at RIS, Margaret Kephart, said the decision for RIS to support a CEW Scholarship was clear, “We all believe strongly that education holds the key to a better life and have seen that play out in our own families and communities. And many of our clients work in higher education, so this scholarship was a natural extension of the work we do.” Margaret herself was a nontraditional college student, and benefited from mentoring and support of women who believed in her. RIS Scholarships have also been created at two other outstanding local organizations, Girls Group and the Ann Arbor Rotary Club.

**HELEN HUFF SHELL SCHOLARSHIP** *Recipient: DAHLIA ROCKOWITZ*

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:* SARA ABELSON, TABATHA CRONANDER, FERNANDA CROSS, PAMELA EMERY, CHRISTIE GRAZIANO, MELISSA GRESSMAN, MARLENA HANLON, ANDREA HILL, ALISHA MARCHAND, TARA MARTINES, BRETNEY MOORE, SAUDA NABUKENYA, LESLIE PITTMAN, CHRISTINA POPOVIC, MIEKO PRESTON, LAUREN ROJAS, AMANDA ROSE-HORNE, KARISSA ROUDEBUSH, KURURAMA SÁNCHEZ-MASOMERE, AMBER SHERRILL, VALERIE TAING, VY THAN, LISA YOUNG LARANCE, LIZ ZHANG

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 University of Michigan 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 play group 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:* **GEORGETTE DORO, FLORENCE NOEL,  
AMY WHITESALL, MONEQUA WILLIAMS, CORNELIUS WRIGHT**

The Irma M. Wyman Scholarship provides support for women students in engineering, computer science, and related fields on either the graduate or undergraduate 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 University of Michigan, 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.

*The Scholars*

SARA ABELSON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Sara Abelson is earning her PhD in health behavior and health education and believes that there is much room for schools to improve in order to provide healthy environments that facilitate the success of all students. Through her research and dedication to marginalized student populations, she aims to help strengthen colleges and improve both mental health and academic outcomes. Drawing from her experiences as a health equity scholar, Sara knows firsthand the many challenges that individuals face on college campuses and hopes to “help schools provide all young people the opportunity to thrive.”

Sara is described as “a rising star who will continue to make significant contributions to the field of mental health research from a public health perspective for diverse college students.” With her vision and resolve, she is poised to become a national leader in the quest to equip college campuses to better serve students. Sara’s greatest impact is sure to lie in improving health, well-being, and academic outcomes.

Applying her understanding of student needs and the challenges facing administrators, Sara will turn her research into informed practice. By “investigating the impact of campus climate, policies, programs and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives,” Sara will help schools identify strategies for ensuring the most positive outcomes among LGBTQ+ students, students of color, first-generation students and more.

CEW congratulates Sara on her many achievements, and is excited to name her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MARY ADAMS

*Christine Kahan Black Scholar*



Mary Adams' conviction that 'being healthy should encompass both body and mind' has strongly informed her decision to pursue her Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner MSN. Despite a number of obstacles on her path, she never gave up the desire to make a difference in the world.

When financial constraints prohibited Mary from completing her undergraduate degree, she joined the United States Army Reserve. The GI Bill allowed her to begin pre-nursing courses, but before long, her first pregnancy halted her progress. After nearly ten years working full-time in a steel mill to support her family and taking classes in her minimal free time, Mary earned her associates degree—though not in nursing.

After experiencing several major changes in her personal life, Mary decided that the timing was right to return to school and fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse. Despite working full-time while taking classes and caring for her two children, Mary was able to earn her associate's degree in 2007 and began working as a floor nurse.

Seeking to expand her impact, Mary pushed forward, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 2014 with her bachelor's of science in nursing. Her current master's program is focused on the marriage of mental, physical, and spiritual care to improve the overall health and well-being of aging patients. In Mary's words, "I have worked very hard to get where I am and I feel privileged to have come this far."

Mary's resilience and passion for improving the world of nursing and patient care will continue to serve her well, and CEW is honored to name her a Christine Kahan Black Scholar.

ALICIA ALONZO *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*



Alicia Alonzo is earning her bachelor's degree in criminal justice at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. As a young mother with many competing responsibilities, Alicia worked hard to earn her G.E.D. so she could find a job to support her and her children. When her employer of 11 years was abruptly sold, Alicia was devastated to lose her job. Refusing to accept defeat, she recognized the opportunity and enrolled at a local community college, going on to earn her associate's degree in criminal justice in 2014.

Alicia's professors describe her as someone who "constantly strives to do her very best." She plans to apply this commitment to quality to her work with young women, drawing from her own experiences to guide them in good decision-making while recovering from challenges. Alicia will focus on young mothers living in domestic abuse situations, helping them plan for their education, manage finances, secure child care, and navigate tough legal situations. As a bilingual advocate, she is equipped to serve under-resourced populations and educate women on strategies for breaking the cycle of abuse.

Alicia would ultimately like to work as a parole officer, a job where she can provide direction and help vulnerable populations clarify life goals. Thankful for the help she received from her community during difficult times, she hopes to similarly intervene on behalf of young women and families in need.

CEW is confident in Alicia's ability and indomitable spirit, and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

LINA ALYAQOobi *Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar*



Lina Alyaqoobi has overcome many challenges in pursuit of her goals. When the stress of living in Iraq during the war started to cause serious health problems for her father, Lina's attention shifted from her education to caring for her family. After moving to the United States, Lina hoped that she would be able to return to school, but difficulties obtaining her student visa arose. Despite these setbacks, Lina remained committed to getting her education, and after marrying a United States Army soldier in 2010, she was finally able to begin taking courses in 2012.

Lina is currently in her second year at the University of Michigan studying pre-med microbiology, well on her way to fulfilling her dream of becoming a doctor. She recognizes the shortage of doctors willing to apply their skills in areas of the world affected by the devastation of war, and plans to address that need. Recently, she spent time in Portugal and Iraq volunteering in a drug rehab unit and researching addiction.

Having personally lived through two wars, Lina knows first-hand the many ways people's lives are ravaged by conflict, and hopes to work with an organization like Doctors Without Borders in order to mitigate this impact and improve long-term health outcomes.

CEW is inspired by Lina's compassion, and names her a Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

RACHEL BURRAGE *Joan P. Ireland Scholar*



Rachel Burrage is earning a joint PhD in social work and psychology. Inspired by her mother achieving her PhD as a first-generation college student, Rachel excelled in school, and at the age of 16, received a full-ride scholarship for her first two years of college. After earning her bachelor's degree in 2006, Rachel knew she wanted to continue on to earn a PhD like her mother before her.

Throughout her studies, Rachel developed an interest in improving the outcomes of individuals experiencing trauma, and aiding in their recovery process. Rachel's doctoral research focuses on collective trauma experienced by indigenous peoples, striving to add to the understanding of the effects of trauma, "especially those at the family, community, cultural, and intergenerational levels." Focusing her dissertation on resilience among survivors of abuse in the Indian Residential School System of Canada, Rachel is contributing valuable scholarship to the understanding of the effects of trauma in underserved populations.

Though some roadblocks have slowed Rachel's progress, she refuses to give up, and is described as an essential contributor to research surrounding the complex mental and physical health problems experienced by abused women and their children. "Negotiating the often competing expectations of being a mother, the primary breadwinner of the family, and a PhD student have made the last few years challenging, to say the least," Rachel admits. Nevertheless, she remains focused on her end goal.

In recognition of her unwavering commitment to earning her PhD and making a positive difference in the lives of those affected by trauma, CEW names Rachel Burrage a Joan P. Ireland Scholar.

CASSANDRA BYRD *Gail Allen Scholar*



Cassandra Byrd's path to earning her bachelor's in biology may have been nonlinear, but she is grateful for the experiences that have led her to pursue her master's in education at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. A difficult upbringing initially derailed her educational goals, but Cassandra willed herself back on track with determination and hard work.

"Earning this master's degree would provide a symbolic measure of success not only for me but for my family and local community," Cassandra says. Armed with a passion for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), Cassandra plans to use her master's in community-based education to encourage youth from disadvantaged backgrounds in STEM fields. She hopes to someday work at the state and national level to shape educational policy and make STEM learning more accessible both in her local community, and beyond.

Cassandra's colleagues appreciate her innovative ideas and commitment to addressing matters of equity. Praised as a "clear leader," Cassandra is poised to make a significant impact on the STEM field by empowering a diverse generation of youth.

CEW values Cassandra's commitment to promoting STEM accessibility, and names her a Gail Allen Scholar.

JENINE CONNERS *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*



Jenine Connors has a number of passions, but a common thread throughout her life is her steadfast belief in the power of education. In order to affect positive change within her community, Jenine has elected to pursue her bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Though juggling schoolwork with her responsibilities as the primary caregiver to her children, Jenine remains committed to completing her degree. She hopes to promote early learning, while simultaneously proving to adults in her community that it's never too late to advance one's education.

As president of the UM-Dearborn Association of Nontraditional Students, Jenine recognizes the challenges students on non-linear paths face when working to achieve their educational goals. She aims to support adult learners in all their endeavors. "As the adult student population grows, their needs are often inadequately met on college campuses," Jenine says. She hopes to help develop the means for these students to successfully navigate those challenges. She also serves as a preschool literacy mentor for the *Read to Me* program, drawn to give back outside of the standard requirements of her degree.

As her vision of success evolved from wanting to get a job, to wanting to make an impact on her community, Jenine intends to develop outreach focused on providing education, enrichment, and self-sufficiency to the families living around her. Recognized by peers as someone dedicated not only to her personal accomplishment, but the growth and success of everyone she meets, Jenine is a force of nature in her community and beyond. She recently received the prestigious UM-Dearborn Difference Maker award in recognition of her achievement, leadership, integrity, and commitment to making a difference.

CEW is thrilled to work alongside Jenine to support the goals and aspirations of nontraditional students, and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

ERICA COOPER *Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar*



Erica Cooper’s interest in public health began with a pen-pal friendship. Her Zimbabwean friend’s account of the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa opened her eyes to global health crises. As the first member of her immediate and extended family to attend a four-year university— compounded by a difficult medical diagnosis at the age of 18—persistence has been key in Erica’s educational successes.

When Erica’s diagnosis kept her from pursuing her dream of volunteering abroad with the Peace Corps, she shifted her focus. She began volunteering with AmeriCorps and was placed in the heart of Appalachia. This volunteer work sparked her interest in addressing the challenge of food insecurity right here in the United States.

After earning her MPH in human nutrition/dietetics, Erica began working on the Navajo Reservation, further solidifying her goals and leading her back to the University of Michigan to earn her PhD in nutritional sciences. She is described as having “a need and ability to apply the knowledge she’s gained from past experiences to fully understand the new task at hand.”

Erica is devoted to investigating how maternal and child nutrition interventions can be used to positively impact overall population health. Her ultimate goal is to use her research to develop a standardized dietary index tool that will be widely used across the scientific community to benefit physical health, as well as behavioral and cognitive outcomes.

CEW names Erica Cooper the inaugural Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar in recognition of her commitment to improving health on a global scale.

MIKISHA COURSE-DEASON *Janice Geddes Scholar*



Mikisha Course-Deason was born to teen parents in South Central Los Angeles, resulting in her placement into legal guardianship and foster care from the age of two until her legal emancipation at seventeen. Attending five different high schools affected both her grades and self-esteem, and she was labeled ‘unlikely to graduate.’ Through self-reflection, hard work, and grit, Mikisha powered through and earned her diploma.

After high school, Mikisha found mentors, counselors, and community members who helped her gain stability and the life skills she needed to succeed. While attending community college, she served as a peer mentor and earned her associates degree in behavioral and social sciences. During this time she discovered her passion for supporting foster youth, and founded a club on campus called Foster to Famous, which offered resources and opportunities to youth and low socioeconomic status students.

Mikisha focused her energy on obtaining her bachelor’s degree in social work, and got a job at the Children’s Law Center in Los Angeles. She worked as a courtroom representative for youth transitioning out of care, helping them locate stable housing, obtain employment, and pursue higher education. After graduation, she began working toward her MSW at the University of Michigan—the #1 school of social work in the country.

Mikisha is committed to advocating on behalf of the foster care population in an effort to increase access to stable housing for foster youth exiting the system. She will use her knowledge and leadership skills to work with public officials to promote policy change, while ensuring that mentors, emotional support, affordable housing, and higher education are accessible for transition aged youth and adults formerly in foster care.

CEW stands in awe of Mikisha’s resilience and compassion, and names her the inaugural Janice Geddes Scholar.

TABATHA CRONANDER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Tabatha Cronander maintains that “you can be a mom and wife and also be yourself,” and wants her children to know that anything is possible. Upon deciding to return to school in 2010 to earn her nursing degree, she cherished her family duties, but longed to add depth to her identity. While nursing school was challenging, Tabatha found it rewarding and graduated with honors.

When a major setback initially stalled Tabatha’s progress toward a graduate degree, she drew strength from her passion for patient care, and persevered. With the desire to “be a partner in [her] patients’ health care needs,” Tabatha is pursuing her master’s of science in nursing at the University of Michigan-Flint with the goal of becoming a nurse practitioner. She hopes that through her career she can build relationships with her patients, encouraging them to take control of their own health.

Tabatha’s ultimate goal is to earn her doctorate in nursing, and knows that her hard work will impact her community. Described as “a prompt and caring nurse,” her dedication to the field doesn’t stop within the hospital walls. As an active community volunteer, Tabatha’s consideration for others knows no bounds. With the continuation of her education, Tabatha is constantly exploring new areas of nursing, and learning how she can increase her impact as a practitioner.

CEW is inspired by Tabatha’s commitment to the health and well-being of her patients, and is pleased to name her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

FERNANDA LIMA CROSS

*Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Growing up in Brazil, Fernanda Lima Cross was the only student attending her private school through need-based scholarship support. She struggled with feelings of inferiority, and felt ostracized by peers. After moving to the United States at the age of 19, her dream of attending college seemed unattainable. Putting her fears aside, she elected to take a course at a local community college.

Refusing to be limited by continued stigmatization, Fernanda rose above her challenges and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology in 2007. She drew inspiration from her previous experiences and dedicated herself to researching how social stratification can shape a student's outlook, and ultimately obstruct educational achievement.

Determined to maximize her potential, Fernanda forged ahead and earned her MSW. Upon graduation, she set her sights on a PhD in psychology with the goal of becoming a college professor and academic researcher. Her goal is to investigate the intersection of Latinx parents' immigration status, parental socialization practices, and ethnic socialization goals for their children, with a focus on mixed status families and their children's academic outcomes and development.

Fernanda has a deep understanding of the challenges Latinx youth experience on their paths to academic success and plans to serve as a mentor for minority students. In her words, "the perseverance that helped me overcome obstacles throughout my life will help me remain committed to engaging in research that can inform practice interventions targeting minorities so that my work will improve their lives."

CEW supports Fernanda's dedication to improving the academic outcomes for Latinx youth and is proud to name her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MICHAEL CURRAN *Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar*



Michael Curran's ideal career would allow him to collaborate with creative minds and develop innovative solutions to better the world. Though various challenges have threatened his progress towards these lofty goals, Michael has remained steadfast.

After earning his bachelor's degree in philosophy and athletic training, Michael immediately jumped into a master's program in sports medicine. He graduated in 2003, and quickly recognized the important role academic research played in his career goals. Though not immediately able to pursue his PhD, Michael spent over a decade gaining thoughtful experience as the head athletic trainer for a minor league baseball team, a product specialist for an orthopedic bracing company, and an assistant athletic trainer for two different universities.

When the opportunity arose to earn his PhD, Michael focused his research on biomechanics and understanding the effects, prevention strategies, and recovery process from injury. Specifically focused on deficiencies in patients who have undergone ligament reconstruction, he will explore the rehabilitation techniques that are best used to recover subsequent lost function.

This scholarship will allow him to earn the education he always wanted and make a difference in the world of sports medicine. Recognizing the connection between ineffective recovery strategies, negative physical and mental outcomes, and the associated financial burden on patients and families, Michael's innovative research is sure to change lives.

CEW is pleased to support Michael Curran's continued progress toward smarter injury rehabilitation, and names him an Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar.

GEORGETTE DORO *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*



Georgette Doro has always excelled in school regardless of outside challenges. The daughter of refugees, education was considered a great privilege in her family. After double majoring in biology and international studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and graduating in 2013, Georgette set her sights on the next chapter. She is currently earning her master's degree in health information technology, and is excited to begin a career in this innovative field.

Upon graduation, Georgette intends to first focus on the local level, contributing to management and administration at health institutions. Particularly interested in how mandated electronic health records provide improved patient care, she hopes to eventually take her work nationally, with an organization like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. "I was ecstatic to find a new and rising field," Georgette says, recognizing the opportunity for cutting edge reform in healthcare administration. Ultimately, Georgette hopes to use her education to work with global health organizations, assisting developing countries in the design and implementation of their IT health systems.

Every obstacle an opportunity, Georgette is known as a true professional committed to doing her very best. "When I know I have done all I could, with the means, time and capacity, I believe that my day has been successful," she says.

Georgette is well on her way to improving healthcare on a global scale. CEW commends Georgette Doro's persistence and dedication, naming her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

PAMELA EMERY *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Pamela Emery has refused to let persistent health crises dictate her opportunities and potential. After sustaining an injury on the job in 2001, Pamela channeled her compensation benefits into tuition costs, and graduated with her bachelor's in research psychology from UM-Flint. Her journey, however, was far from over.

After earning her degree, Pamela struggled for years to find sustainable work. She reflected on her goals and interests, and decided to return to school for a second bachelor's in the robust field of molecular biology and biotechnology. She was excited about the doors this degree would open, but soon began experiencing deteriorating health. She made an appointment, and discovered the unthinkable: she had primary bone cancer.

Pamela put her education on hold to focus on her grueling treatment and recovery. The cancer had aggressively spread through her right arm, but through surgical intervention and rehabilitation, the arm was saved and she regained strength. She re-enrolled, but was soon plagued with shoulder pain. The cancer was back. Again, Pamela underwent treatment, while also doing cancer research alongside her doctor. After experiencing complications from a failed cadaver bone implant, receiving a titanium prosthesis, and undergoing shoulder replacement, Pamela hopes she's finally on the road to long-term recovery.

Pamela has been attempting to return to school since 2012, and is now back on track and focused on her goals. Determined to take advantage of her reclaimed health, she has decided to complete her biology prerequisites and forge on toward a master's in biology, all while maintaining a job to help with expenses. Her goal is to teach, and do cancer research in hopes of contributing to a world where no one has to experience the suffering she's been through.

When most would have given up, Pamela persisted. CEW commends her unconquerable spirit, and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AL EVANGELISTA *Elsie Choy Lee Scholar*



Al Evangelista learned early on in life that art creates unique and powerful opportunities for diverse individuals to come together and create change.

As an artist and a queer person of color, Al recognizes his opportunity to increase representation within the fine arts community. Compelled to “create art that enforces, questions, and shows the errors in our fundamental understanding of diversity and identity,” it is his goal to foster growth and communication in LGBTQ+ communities through dance and theatre. After earning his bachelor’s degree in theatre in 2009, Al chose to further his education and entered the master’s program for dance at the

School of Music, Theatre, and Dance.

Al is described as “a scholar and artist with an impressive breadth of knowledge and a keen desire to untangle challenging topics through a deep immersion in ideas and action.” Inspired by studies linking isolation and premature mortality rates, he recognizes the opportunity for theatre and dance to evaluate community and change lives. With his professional career, Al hopes to unlock the potential for relationship building and personal growth through exploring the intersection of identity, diversity, and equity.

CEW is certain that Al Evangelista will continue his pioneering career in dance and theatre, and names him an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

N'KENGE GONZALEZ *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*



Growing up in a multicultural family and community sparked N'Kenge Gonzalez's interest in international studies from an early age. Eager to learn more about social, political, and environmental policy across the globe, she has always sought to be a student of the world.

N'Kenge is now following her passion by pursuing a bachelor's degree in international studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Upon completion, she hopes to secure a job that allows her to promote the restructuring of corporations to enhance their commitment to social responsibility. She plans to eventually earn

her master's degree in organizational leadership so as to expand her expertise. N'Kenge believes that "if more corporations and governments commit to being global stewards, we can begin to repair wealth and education gaps, as well as reduce the environmental recklessness which has been a pervasive part of standard operations."

Applauded for both her dedication to school as well as her commitment to giving back to the community, N'Kenge is a multi-talented agent of change. In addition to her academic pursuits, N'Kenge hosts a radio show on the UM-Dearborn station that surveys the cultural landscape of America through music and conversation. Though her path to achieving her bachelor's degree has been circuitous, she is now more dedicated than ever to reaching her goals and making an impact on the world.

In recognition of her commitment to corporate social responsibility, CEW names N'Kenge Gonzalez a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

CHRISTIE GRAZIANO *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



After being placed on a waiting list for three years, Christie Graziano was accepted into the nursing program at her local community college. Expanding her family while attending school full-time proved challenging, but her ambition and dedication, along with the prestigious F.W. and Elsie L. Heyl Science Scholarship award, propelled her to the finish line. Christie holds the distinct honor of being the only nontraditional student ever to receive that scholarship.

After graduating cum laude with her bachelor's degree, Christie chose to pursue her masters of science in nursing from the University of Michigan. While she knew the program would be difficult, she proceeded, recognizing the opportunity working as an advanced practice registered nurse would offer her and her children.

With an interest in cardiac care, Christie plans to contribute time and research to an intervention targeting cardiac disease process. Aware that advance practice registered nurses are also poised to affect policy change, she will be active in state and federal legislative bodies in order to make an impact on a larger scale. She also hopes to travel in order to assist with integrating positive health behaviors beyond her local community. Her personal goal is to never settle for the status quo, and she aims to be seen as reputable, influential, and competent, taking excellent care of her body and spirit to exemplify healthy living to patients.

CEW gladly names Christie a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar in recognition of her commitment to the field of nursing.

MELISSA GRESSMAN

*Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Melissa Gressman has refused to let her nontraditional path stop her from achieving her goals. After her high school pregnancy, Melissa worried she wouldn't be able to pursue her dream of obtaining a degree in higher education. With encouragement from a special teacher, she enrolled at a local community college and excelled at her coursework, ultimately earning an associate's degree. This success strengthened her confidence, and spurred her to push forward and obtain her bachelor's degree in literature in 2016.

Pairing her passion for helping others with a deep understanding of the challenges that prevent women from going to college, a master's degree in educational studies became Melissa's goal. Melissa is particularly interested in adolescent education, and looks forward to the opportunity to intervene on behalf of young people in need.

Melissa plans to incorporate planning, positivity, and self-care into her journey to become an education professional. She hopes that earning a master's degree will allow her to more skillfully impact the lives of her students. Inspired by the high school teacher who helped her discover her potential, she looks forward to offering the same encouragement to other young people in need of an ally. Upon completing her degree, Melissa intends to apply her expertise within her own community.

CEW celebrates Melissa's dedication to encouraging students to achieve their educational goals and proudly names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MARLENA HANLON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Marlena Hanlon is carrying her rich life experiences into her work toward a master’s degree in social work and urban planning. In her estimation, “although I have had many twists, I have returned to my sense of self and continued forward – delayed, but not dissuaded.” Her goal is to work with local governments and communities to transform current urban living conditions into thriving spaces that support human connection.

As a resident of Southwest Detroit, Marlena has already begun her work, participating as both a citizen and consultant on issues involving community planning. Commended for her extensive real-world knowledge, Marlena is said to possess a “nuanced background comprised of amazing educational experiences and lots of real work practice in purchasing, repurposing and developing small scale real estate.” Because city planning encompasses nearly every discipline affecting human life and interaction, Marlena feels that this is the arena in which she will have not only the greatest and most lasting impact, but also find the most fulfillment.

Already thriving in her intended field, Marlena reflects on a time when she felt a desire to earn a college degree, but feared feeling restricted by returning to academia. Those days are firmly behind her as she joyfully engages in her studies and new line of work, eager to convert potential energy into real-life solutions.

CEW is happy to support Marlena Hanlon’s continued progress toward her master’s degrees, naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ANDREA HILL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Though Andrea Hill moved 33 times before her 18th birthday, she remained committed to her education, finding comfort in both school and music. When unforeseen circumstances prevented her from taking a full music scholarship her freshman year of college, she found another way to pursue her goals. Playing in the band at her community college, Andrea performed at Carnegie Hall and also earned a National Association of Jazz Educators Musicianship Award. She then decided to switch gears and focus her efforts on massage therapy school, and began working

a job that would allow her to fund her bachelor's degree in sports medicine and exercise science. Graduating with honors in 1995, Andrea built a successful massage therapy practice from the ground up and enjoyed her work.

Though Andrea was proud of her accomplishments, she felt she had something more to offer. In hopes of broadening her ability to offer therapeutic services for the public good, she decided to pursue her master's of social work from the University of Michigan. Upon graduation, she intends to teach and work as a general psychotherapist, focusing on treating trauma, anxiety, and depression, while working to integrate behavioral therapy into primary healthcare settings.

Working to gain a wealth of diverse experiences prior to graduation, Andrea completed an internship focusing on those living with substance abuse disorders, and over the summer, worked as a research assistant at the School of Social Work. This fall she will start a new internship with Catholic Social Services where she will offer general psychotherapy for a broad range of issues. Recognized for her commitment and dependability, Andrea provides continual motivation to peers and associates.

Andrea is a multi-talented woman with much to offer, and CEW proudly names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KELLY HOWARD *Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar*



Some of Kelly Howard's earliest memories are of her mother studying to become a nurse. By the time Kelly was in school herself, she and her mother bonded over their mutual love of learning, doing homework together at the kitchen table. When Kelly graduated with a bachelor's degree in zoology in 2003, she wasn't sure what she wanted in a career. It was then that her mother encouraged her to follow in her footsteps and become a nurse.

Now pursuing her doctorate in nursing, Kelly has not let the challenges in her life stand in her way. "I view most goals and obstacles in my life as puzzles," she says, while working full-time, earning her DPN, and raising two children with her wife. "Their moral support pushes me through the long days and keeps me learning what I need to learn to achieve my degree," she says.

Recognizing the importance of sustainable interventions, Kelly aims to develop new methods for nurse practitioners to aid their patients in transitional care between the hospital and home. She knows that major strides can be made in aiding patients to achieve better outcomes, and will work diligently to address unmet needs.

Known as someone who is "passionate about patient care and is always willing to explore ways to improve processes and clinical practice to ensure excellence," Kelly is sure to be a leader in her field. CEW is pleased to name Kelly a Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

JIMMY IVY *Beatrice Kahn Scholar*



Jimmy Ivy encountered many challenges early in life. His struggles with financial stability and escalating health problems caused his grades to suffer. Football proved to be a saving grace, and served as a primary motivator. When his athletic career was unexpectedly cut short due to injury as an undergraduate, Jimmy felt the weight of his challenges catching up to him. Against all odds, he was determined to complete his bachelor's degree in education, and graduated in 2015 while also juggling full-time work.

Throughout his undergraduate studies and work in school settings and residential placements, Jimmy related deeply to children managing a multitude of problems, making it difficult for them to focus on their education. With basic survival needs at stake, he recognized that school was not their primary focus. This led Jimmy to conclude that success and graduation rates are not necessarily related to competence—rather, the emotional toll a difficult life can take on a student's ability to thrive. With this conviction, Jimmy knew that he wanted to make an impact in the children's homes, solidifying his decision to obtain a master's degree in social work. He is motivated by what he calls his "moral duty" to give back to students whose stories mirror his own.

Ultimately, Jimmy dreams to own a private practice, offering behavioral and mental health services to disadvantaged and urban populations. He hopes to use these services to address poverty and social injustice while providing educational resources and therapy. Upon completion of his degree, he plans to start out in a clinical position in order to lay the foundation for his long-term goals.

CEW recognizes Jimmy's resilience and dedication to supporting youth success, and proudly names him a Beatrice Kahn Scholar.

DOREEN KEMBABAZI

*Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow*



As a child in Uganda, Doreen Kembabazi's first teachers were her grandmother and neighbors, all of whom educated her on the injustices and sexual violence perpetrated against women. By the time she began learning about African history in high school, she noticed a difference: stories about men and high politics now dominated the conversations. It was this stark contrast that motivated Doreen to pursue the study of women and gender in 1970s Uganda through a PhD in African history at the University of Michigan.

Doreen believes that “while the government continues to treat the 1970s as a degrading period that offers no lessons for the contemporary Uganda situation, Ugandan women continue to remind them of the importance of learning from the 1970s.” Unearthing formerly inaccessible archives, she intends to write her dissertation on the “lived experiences of Ugandans.” She believes that her work will not only provide a better understanding of this time period, but offer context for digesting current moral reform projects taking place in present day Uganda and across Africa.

Upon graduation, Doreen will use her foundational understanding of women and gender to seek a position that will allow her to teach, research, and contribute to conversations surrounding gender, LGBTQ+ issues, and human rights. As the sole provider and caregiver for her son, Doreen acknowledges the challenges of single parenting while pursuing a PhD, but is proud of her efforts to provide a better life for her son while advancing the discourse on women's progress in Africa.

CEW is thrilled to name Doreen Kembabazi a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow as she completes her important work on Ugandan women and gender.

VALERIE MALOOF *Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar*



Over the course of 20 years, Valerie Maloof's life experiences led her to finding her calling in social work. Before her acceptance to the University of Michigan Masters of Social Work program, she worked in various fields including politics, public relations, and human resources. The common thread in each of her positions was the overwhelming desire to help people.

After leaving the workforce in 2005 to raise her two daughters, she always imagined she'd return to a career that would allow her to engage in public service. Through life's many challenges, Valerie began to recognize the importance of sound mentors in times of need. After deciding to return to school, Valerie found that she didn't struggle so much with the curriculum, but rather the balance of work, school, personal life, and self-care. While she believes it would have been easy to talk herself out of pursuing her goals, she was persistent and followed her gut. She hopes her young daughters will be inspired by their mom's dedication to follow her dreams.

When Valerie finishes her MSW in 2018, she plans to work with the Latinx community as a therapist and immigration advocate. She also expects to remain involved at the U-M School of Social Work, contributing to existing scholarship on immigration and domestic violence within the Latinx community. Her experience has shown her the dire need for Spanish-speaking, culturally competent therapists in the U.S. After interning at Catholic Social Services last year, she learned more about the role social work plays in immigration and deportation practices. Long-term, Valerie hopes to contribute much needed mental health services to immigrants and families under threat of deportation or experiencing family separations or insecurity due to immigration status.

Valerie recognizes the importance of mental health services and the vital role they play in supporting immigrants and their families. CEW gladly names her a Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar.

ALISHA MARCHAND *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Alisha Marchand is earning her master's of science in nursing with the goal of becoming a certified nurse midwife. When she graduated from high school in 2001, Alisha was on the path to becoming a pediatrician, taking advanced courses at her honors college. When her husband's job relocated them to Georgia, her studies were put on hold and the change of scenery spurred her to reevaluate her career goals.

After the birth of her first child, Alisha realized that she was drawn to providing bedside care and support to women during all stages of their pregnancy. Working while raising children deepened her understanding of the difficulties mothers often face in their everyday lives. Though obstacles have threatened her progress, Alisha is persistent, noted for her "tenacity and solid work ethic."

Her vision is to work with rural communities, providing support and care to women who may not be equipped with the resources for a healthy pregnancy. She plans to use her CNM to partner with a physician and open a clinic that provides prenatal care to pregnant women struggling with drug addiction. Alisha recognizes the unmet need within this population—especially in rural communities—and plans to fill that void.

CEW names Alisha Marchand a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar in recognition of her dedication to improving the lives of pregnant women in need of targeted prenatal care.

TARA MARTINES *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Growing up, Tara Martines enjoyed caring for the people around her. Becoming a nurse seemed like a natural fit. After entering a program to gain her associate's degree, she experienced a number of challenges that threatened to stall her progress. In January of 2009, the unthinkable happened: Tara and her husband were victims of a violent crime. The event left her husband unable to work, and Tara as the sole provider for her family. She was forced to take a semester off to care for her husband, but kept her goal in sight and graduated with her associate's degree in nursing in 2010.

Tara didn't stop there, going on to earn her bachelor's degree in nursing, graduating summa cum laude and Sigma Theta Tau. She was honored for her compassionate nursing with the Everyday Hero Award, and earned the Level 2 Clinical Advancement award for her excellence in care and dedication to best clinical practices—all while working full-time to provide for her family. As an added boost, she was recognized for her exemplary writing ability with the Barrett Creative Writing Award. Not willing to allow any further delay, she immediately set her sights on earning a master's degree in nursing leadership.

Throughout her journey, Tara's eyes have been opened to the inequalities around her. As a leader in informatics, she plans to contribute to the public health community by using informatics systems to collect, analyze, interpret, and disseminate data. Tara will be able to support public health interventions by promoting standards for the modernization of the health system.

In recognition of her achievements and great potential, CEW is proud to name Tara a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

REBECCA MERRYFIELD *Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar*



For ten years, Rebecca Merryfield worked as a dental assistant, but always admired the dental hygienists in her office. With their additional training and responsibilities, they treated their own patients and practiced independently. In order to become a hygienist she knew she would need to earn a degree, but had grown up doubting her ability to succeed in higher education. Taking a leap of faith, Rebecca set her fears aside and enrolled in classes. Soon she realized she was not only passing her courses—she was excelling.

Though the birth of her children temporarily halted her educational progress, she was determined to complete her education. When the timing was right, Rebecca returned to school and graduated from her program as one of the top students, earning multiple honors and being voted president of her class.

Upon completing her bachelor's of science in dental hygiene, Rebecca plans to become a dental hygiene educator. Using her education, she will promote life-long learning for those choosing to pursue dental hygiene. Recognizing a need for educators as many are retiring, she finds it important to ensure that the education and training of dental hygienists continues, and she aims to be a leader in this area. She hopes to use her position to assist patients living in rural communities with limited access to providers and care.

In recognition of Rebecca and her dedication to the future of dental care, CEW gladly names her a Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.

BRETNEY MOORE *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Bretney Moore's first experience in higher education didn't result in a degree. She spent the next five years on an unfulfilling career path before deciding it was time for a change. Despite these early struggles, Bretney maintains that she wouldn't change her past, as it's provided her with experiences and perspective she wouldn't have otherwise had. Her evolving interests and life circumstances led her to earn her bachelor's degree in English in 2013. She credits mentors and women of color in the academy for helping her believe in herself and chart her current course.

Now working on her PhD in English Language and Literature, Bretney is already planning to pursue a master's in social work upon graduation. Her vision for success involves combining literary and social work methodologies in order to develop arts-based writing programs highlighting the experiences of marginalized populations. Again, the rich tapestry of Bretney's prior work experience plays to her advantage, as she plans to incorporate the experiences of women she met while working for Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's Gynecology Services. In her words, "this experience absolutely colored the future scholarship, teaching, and community organizing work that I hope to pursue." Believing firmly in the power of personal narrative, Bretney will amplify the voices of those who are often silenced.

Praised for her thoughtfulness and creativity, Bretney is known as an excellent role model to first year graduate students. Her plans to use literature and written expression to promote social justice and personal healing are sure to break new ground.

CEW is excited to support Bretney's innovative work, and gladly names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MEGAN MULLINS *Amy and Lawrence Cho Family Scholar*



Megan Mullins earned her master's degree in public health in 2015, and is forging ahead in pursuit of a PhD in epidemiological science. When separate cancer diagnoses in her family revealed stark inequalities in care provision, Megan knew she wanted to make a career of combatting healthcare disparities. Focusing her dissertation on end-of-life care for women with ovarian cancer, she will pair her studies with research in order to improve services available to all families as they navigate difficult times.

Though financial constraints threatened to slow Megan's progress, she worked diligently to earn scholarships that would cover the cost of her undergraduate degree in political science. She initially planned to become a doctor, but an internship steered her interests in another direction. Described as "flexible, giving her ideas time to form and change if new evidence is presented," Megan is respected for the thoughtfulness she pours into her work.

Megan sought out a position with Seton Healthcare Family, a member of Ascension Health, and worked her way up, receiving multiple promotions during her tenure. "While my desired role has changed, my vision for success has consistently been doing work to combat inequity among the sick," Megan says. She believes that well-informed research relevant to patients is the key to change in healthcare policy and practice.

CEW anticipates great things from Megan's research, and names her the inaugural Amy and Lawrence Cho Family Scholar.

BRENNA K. MURPHY *Elsie Choy Lee Scholar*



After earning her bachelor's in fine arts in 2004, Brenna K. Murphy worked as a preschool teacher, but refused to let her art slip to the margins. In her words, “despite immense financial barriers, limited compensation, and significant time restraints over the years, I have not given up on my artistic practice.” While juggling conflicting responsibilities, Brenna has persevered and added a number of accomplishments to her résumé, including residencies, awards, fellowships, and exhibitions.

In recent years, several unexpected events shaped the trajectory of Brenna's practice. The loss of a close friend and her experience as a survivor of the massive earthquake in Nepal reinforced her belief in the power of art to aid in processing and managing grief. Despite these important benefits, she knows that art programs are being funded less and less each year. Resolving to be part of the solution, Brenna hopes to teach in universities, art centers, and museums, merging her interests in art and education. She sees art as an avenue for reaching broad audiences, and earning her master's degree is sure to open doors.

Brenna's ultimate vision of success is developing a financially sustainable art practice that allows her to create, exhibit her work, and engage with individuals through formal and informal education settings. Seen as “tireless, driven by a depth of thought and emotion which seems unflagging,” Brenna's practice is held in high regard by her peers.

CEW joyfully names Brenna an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

SAUDA NABUKENYA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Raised in rural eastern Uganda, Sauda Nabukenya knows firsthand the challenges many African women face in pursuing education. Surrounded by poverty, disease, and the harsh effects of war, Sauda was determined to rise up and succeed in school. Despite the many obstacles in her path, she studied diligently and earned a government scholarship to pursue her undergraduate degree. As the first college graduate in her family, she strives to inspire other young women to achieve their academic goals.

Sauda knows that many women in Africa still have a long road ahead of them in their fight for basic human rights. Sauda plans to use her studies to aid in legal reform that will facilitate access to education and gender equality. She believes that women are empowered to make change once they are armed with knowledge and an understanding of their own historical oppression.

Pursuing her PhD in history, Sauda will research legal and constitutional history, investigating how law and legal institutions perpetuate gender inequality. Her goal is to become a legal and constitutional historian and researcher who teaches and advocates on behalf of women's rights. She invites "women and the young generation to participate in processes that determine laws and policies that affect them and their position in society."

CEW is proud to award Sauda Nabukenya a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship to complete her PhD and add to the important discourse surrounding women's inequality in Africa

MARY NAGY *Beth Halloran Scholar*



Raised in a household that placed high value on education, Mary Nagy has set her sights on an MPH from the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health. Mary credits her mother, “the hardest working woman [she] know[s],” for inspiring her to achieve higher education. Mary earned her bachelor’s in biology in 2005, and a second bachelor’s in 2010 when she decided to pursue nursing.

After working as a nurse for six and a half years, Mary felt a tug to dig deeper, and resolved to pursue a master’s degree in environmental health science. In hopes of improving the health and happiness of those around her, Mary plans to work to provide reliable and safe living spaces within her community. Though she loves nursing and the impact it has on those she cares for, Mary noticed that she was seeing the same patients over and over. This led to the realization that prevention on an environmental level is necessary for improving long-term health outcomes.

Mary is noted for her “abilities to contextualize the scope of environmental health problems” as well as her skill in effectively communicating thoughts and ideas to her audiences. She hopes to someday work at the state or federal level to spark change in the area of environmental contamination, especially contamination that disproportionately affects poor communities and communities of color. Mary’s program is preparing her well for the work ahead.

CEW celebrates Mary’s plans and names her a Beth Halloran Scholar.

FLORENCE NOEL *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*



Florence Noel is earning a dual master's degree in general management and entrepreneurship, as well as human computer interaction and social computing.

Despite facing multiple medical diagnoses that threatened to alter her course, Florence persevered, earning bachelor's degrees in both English and African American studies in 2007 from Duke University. While balancing schoolwork and challenging personal circumstances, Florence remained committed to promoting positivity, and lent her talents to nonprofit organizations like Computers for Youth, Girls Who Code, and the NYC Department of Education. Florence holds a deep

admiration for her parents—both immigrants—who had to fight to find their way in the U.S. “Bearing witness to their triumphs instilled in me a resolve to not allow circumstance to determine my possibilities, but to strive to determine my possibilities for myself,” she says.

After working in the nonprofit sector for nearly ten years, Florence became disheartened by the challenges and uncertainty that many organizations face. Instead of accepting the status quo, she resolved to investigate best practices for combining financial profitability with social impact and sustainable environmental practices. Recognizing the opportunity that smarter technology and information management systems could provide, Florence plans to utilize her master's degrees to maximize social enterprise's ability to serve their target communities and earn a profit.

Applauded for her spirit and resiliency in the face of adversity, Florence serves as an inspiration to her peers. She intends to develop and manage businesses in both the United States and her home country of Haiti. Through her ventures, she plans to contribute to a more effective business model for social enterprises here and abroad.

CEW looks forward to her continued contributions, and enthusiastically names Florence Noel an Irma M. Wyman scholar.

LESLIE PITTMAN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Leslie Pittman is earning her master's degree in social work in hopes of working with youth and supporting community development. A first-generation college graduate, Leslie credits the unwavering support of family and friends with her continued achievement. She knows firsthand the effect outside support can have on one's success, and hopes that her story will serve as inspiration for her children and community members.

In her time working at YouthVille Detroit, a nonprofit that provides after school programs for Detroit youth, Leslie developed and implemented an innovative program called *Ladylike*, "one of the first youth programs promoting the healthy development of young African-American girls." Leslie is revered among colleagues as a woman of action, committed to youth in need of a positive role model.

As an agent of change in impoverished communities, Leslie believes in dreaming big. Once she earns her MSW, she will seek work that recognizes education as the antecedent for community development, a connection she feels is crucial for making a significant and lasting impact.

CEW is proud of Leslie Pittman's important work, and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

CHRISTINA POPOVIC *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Christina Popovic took an interest in art at a young age. In 2001, she earned a bachelor's of arts in interior design and worked in the field for 8 years. Though she accomplished a goal she had always strived for, Christina's work didn't fulfill her as she had anticipated. Then, in 2008, her life changed when her mother was diagnosed with cancer. Spending many days in the hospital at her mother's side, Christina recognized a developing interest in the intricacies of her mother's care. This experience led her to decide she wanted to switch gears and pursue nursing. In her words, "in the midst of all of the chaos, I saw a silver lining."

While still working full-time, Christina took night classes to fulfill her nursing pre-requisites, and soon transitioned into an intense accelerated second degree program. She excelled in her studies and was honored with several special distinctions, including the highly selective Leadership Award and induction into the Sigma Thau Honor Society. Since graduating in 2011, she has found her passion working in oncology—including the same unit in which her mother received chemotherapy. For the past several years, she has been a Nurse Clinician in the Brachytherapy unit at Beaumont Hospital. Eager to do even more, Christina is now earning her graduate degree in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care to become a nurse practitioner.

Christina plans to use her knowledge and skills to provide excellent care to patients while serving on a team that diagnoses, treats, and manages the entire disease process. As a mother, she hopes that her career change will show her daughters that anything is possible if you work hard and persevere.

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

MIEKO PRESTON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



As a minority student with a disability pursuing her master's in architecture, Mieko Preston knows firsthand how good design can improve the lives of people with physical challenges. During her undergraduate studies, she found the discipline a challenging yet rewarding test of her capabilities. Her unwavering dedication to succeeding in a field that often made her feel unwelcome earned her a bachelor's degree in architecture in 2003.

Despite her resolve, Mieko's path has not been easy. A stroke forced her to relearn how to talk, walk, and read, threatening to derail her architectural goals. After a grueling five years on the path of rehabilitation, Mieko is poised to earn her master's and work toward a more inclusive design paradigm.

Mieko has risen above her challenges to build quite an impressive résumé, serving as a member of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students and the Initiative for Inclusive Design. She is also proud to be one of the architects behind the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in Washington D.C. One of Mieko's core values is the dissemination of knowledge over personal gain. Though earning her master's degree will take longer than the typical three years, Mieko is undeterred, recognizing the important contributions she stands to make in the field of architecture.

Mieko's perseverance, knowledge, and personal experiences grant her unique perspective on the many benefits of inclusive design. With this in mind, CEW names Mieko Preston a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ALICE REGISTER *American Association of University Women Scholar*



Raised by a Japanese mother and an American father, Alice Register credits her multicultural upbringing with teaching her to thoughtfully consider different viewpoints. Alice attended 12 different schools in the U.S. and Japan prior to graduating from high school, and quickly learned how to adapt to new environments and ideas. She focused on her grades in hopes of earning scholarships to fund her higher education, but when her awards did not cover the full cost of tuition, Alice took on part-time work and student loans to make ends meet. “I feel that I was made especially aware of the privilege of receiving an educational degree,” she recalls.

Alice earned two bachelor’s degrees in 2001, one in anthropology and one in studio art. She worked in various capacities before starting a job as an assistant project manager and desktop publishing specialist, working primarily on marketing and product materials for a translation company. Soon, however, interest in her family history made Alice reconsider her goals. She wished to become an agent for social change, and felt drawn to return to school.

Inspired by her and her mother’s upbringing in Okinawa, Japan, Alice believes there is a story to be told that is not covered by mainstream media. In an area densely populated by U.S. military personnel, Okinawan citizens struggle with issues that arise from supporting military bases. Alice is now earning her master’s degree in Japanese studies in hopes of understanding these issues at a deeper level, and working on matters of representation within the Okinawan context.

CEW is inspired by Alice Register’s advocacy, and names her an American Association of University Women Scholar.

REBECCA RICHARDSON *Linda J. Rider Scholar*



Returning to earn her bachelor's degree after a 25-year hiatus, Rebecca Richardson is familiar with the challenges that face nontraditional students returning to the fold. Fortunately, Rebecca found her footing by volunteering in UM-Dearborn's prison college program, designed to engage nontraditional students in meaningful service work. Rebecca's experience volunteering at the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility sparked her desire to earn a dual bachelor's degree in behavioral sciences and women's and gender studies, with a minor in criminology and criminal justice. Grateful to have found her place in the campus community, Rebecca co-founded the

UM-Dearborn Association of Nontraditional Students (ANTS) in 2013, and works in the campus SOAR Program. In 2014, her impressive efforts were recognized with the prestigious Difference Maker award.

Rebecca's research, paired with her dedication to volunteer work, shaped her vision for the future. Upon graduation, she plans to develop an education and vocational training program at the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility that assists with transition upon release. With a focus on helping inmates pursue education beyond the facility and supporting them as they seek employment, Rebecca strives to create equal opportunity for these women.

Described as a "workhorse who does the research, follows up on the ideas, and keeps the communication flowing," her peers and mentors have confidence in her work and future plans. Personally, Rebecca is proud of her persistence, and hopes to serve as an inspiration to her children and grandson.

CEW is thrilled to work alongside Rebecca as she supports the education of nontraditional students and incarcerated women, and names her a Linda J. Rider Scholar.

DAHLIA ROCKOWITZ *Helen Huff Shell Scholar*



From a young age, Dahlia Rockowitz recognized the many injustices at play in the world around her. While earning her bachelor's degree in history, she resolved to be part of the solution, and volunteered with AmeriCorps. Combating food insecurity in the District of Columbia filled immediate needs, but Dahlia felt that addressing the root of the problem would better serve communities in the long-term. Frustrated with antiquated social welfare systems and their associated burdens, she shifted her focus to affecting policy change.

Dahlia has noticed that most of the people in position to steer these conversations are men, and believes in bringing more diverse voices to the table. She maintains that “society’s most ‘wicked’ problems – poverty, climate change, etc. – are related and compounding, and we can only overcome them with a cross-sector, interdisciplinary approach.” Committed to ensuring that marginalized groups are able to actively participate in the establishment of the policies that affect them, Dahlia hopes to catalyze reform. Earning her master’s degree in environmental justice and policy at the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability will give Dahlia the confidence to seize her place at the traditionally male-dominated table, allowing her to contribute to real-time social and environmental solutions. Known for her keen intellect and interpersonal skills, Dahlia has the full support of professors and peers.

CEW is honored to name Dahlia Rockowitz a Helen Huff Shell Scholar.

LAUREN ROJAS *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Lauren Rojas is pursuing her master's of science in nursing, with a focus on acute pediatric care. After years of struggling to find her calling, Lauren, with the unwavering support of her grandmother, decided to first focus her energy on being a good role model and mother. She carried this positivity into her bachelor's of science in nursing program, and earned her degree in 2009. She loved her new field, but her grandmother's cancer diagnosis and tragic passing ignited her desire to be an oncology nurse and help families fight the devastating disease. She says, "The pain I have overcome on my journey has given me a sense of resilience and hope which affects the kind of nurse I am to my patients and fuels my determination to succeed."

With a focus on underserved and vulnerable populations, Lauren plans to advocate for those without access to affordable, quality healthcare. Seeing her patients persevere in the face of illness motivates her to keep fighting for a more positive and inclusive healthcare environment.

Renowned as a mentor to other nursing students, Lauren is respected by her peers and appreciated for her dedication to quality care. CEW is certain Lauren will continue to make a significant impact as nurse practitioner and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AMANDA ROSE-HORNE

*Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Amanda Rose-Horne is pursuing her master's in clinical social work and hopes to someday work at the University of Michigan Depression Center. After the birth of her first child, Amanda struggled to balance work, motherhood, and self-care, all the while longing to provide more for her family. Through the support of her husband and her nurse-midwife, Amanda found her footing and decided to return to school for a degree in social work.

As a parent, one of Amanda's central goals is to raise children who understand that "women do not have to choose between being good parents and being good workers." Through clinical social work, Amanda plans to focus on mothers suffering from postpartum depression. She hopes to address the stigma and improve the care women receive on their path to well-being. Beyond her local work, she seeks to advocate for "women's rights to education and healthcare globally."

In order to realize her macro-level goals, Amanda intends to travel the world, gathering knowledge and sharing her experiences. As a student, Amanda is recognized for her commitment to bettering the lives of mothers, and applauded for her steadfast dedication.

In recognition of Amanda Rose-Horne's documented success and great potential, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KARISSA ROUDEBUSH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Karissa Roudebush enlisted in the Army National Guard and excelled in advanced physical training before being deployed to Iraq for 14 months. “This experience made me want to help people more,” she recalls of her time overseas. Seeing innocent civilians struggle to maintain stability as their lives were turned upside down by war proved a catalyst in Karissa’s decision to become a nurse. She wanted to take a stand for healing.

A mother of three, Karissa is attending the University of Michigan-Flint, pursuing her master’s of science in nursing in hopes of becoming a family nurse practitioner.

She has spent the past 8 years working as a nurse in various roles, and feels that now is the time to further her education and expand her influence. Committed to the promotion of positive health behaviors, Karissa believes that educating patients about preventative care will empower them to more effectively manage their health. She also wants to inspire her children, and believes that seeing both of their parents earn graduate degrees will motivate them to pursue their own dreams and aspirations.

During her time in Iraq, Karissa saw the acute need for competent nurses around the world, and would like to lend her abilities both nationally and globally. Recognized by her peers as “very eager and enthusiastic about every aspect of her life,” she is poised to channel that energy toward her work in family care.

In recognition of her courageous service and commitment to others, CEW names Karissa a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KURURAMA SÁNCHEZ-MASOMERE

*Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Kururama Sánchez-Masomere emigrated to the United States from Zimbabwe and earned her undergraduate dual-degree in criminal justice and organizational communications. Forced to quickly assimilate to life in the U.S, she felt a tug between her two identities while growing up. Now, she is dedicating her career to giving immigrants and refugees a voice, and empowering them to leverage the many advantages their cultural diversity brings to Michigan and its communities.

With a special interest in how the integration of immigrants benefits economic development, Kururama plans to make an impact through research and policy advocacy in Michigan and beyond. After earning her master’s degree in public policy, she will seek employment within local government to promote policies and programming in support of immigrant communities, as she believes local government is where lives are touched and change is made.

As a mother and a first-generation immigrant, Kururama hopes to serve as a role model to her two children, instilling in them an appreciation for the benefits of cultural diversity. Kururama has seen firsthand the conflicts that arise when individuals aren’t provided a space to express cultural authenticity, and will thus dedicate her career to promoting diversity and inclusivity within the state of Michigan and across the country.

Kururama is described as someone having “the skills and compassion to successfully carry on this work and advance it for many years to come.” CEW celebrates her dedication and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AMBER SHERRILL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



When a medical diagnosis postponed Amber Sherrill's goal of becoming a nurse, she viewed the setback as an opportunity to model persistence to her children. She never lost sight of her objective, and after a 12-year interruption, Amber enrolled to earn her bachelor's of science in nursing at UM-Flint. Recognized by peers for her "wonderful habit of exceeding expectations," Amber has resolved to not only earn her degree, but to reach higher and serve on an esteemed med-flight team.

Prior to enrollment in the BSN program, Amber was a member of the Civil Air Patrol where she assisted with emergency ground services and trained for her pilot's license. Upon completion of her program, she plans to pick up where she left off while working as a trauma nurse in an emergency room.

In addition to her med-flight aspirations, Amber plans to learn about nursing in different regions of the world through UM-Flint's travel abroad nursing program. "The extraordinary instructors and clinical staff that I have the honor of learning from and working with on a daily basis continue to help me work towards my goals," Amber says of her return to school. Her ultimate objective is to provide excellent patient care while making her children proud.

CEW confidently names Amber Sherrill a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

JESSICA SOUVA *Elizabeth Dusseau Scholar*



Jessica Souva earned her bachelor's of science in nursing from the University of Michigan in 2002. Intent on immediately pursuing her master's degree, she did not anticipate having to wait another 14 years to reach her goal. When financial constraints interrupted her first attempt to earn her MSN, Jessica knew she would return. Unfortunately, her second attempt to achieve her goal was complicated when her daughter developed a serious medical condition. Realizing that she may never find a 'good' time to return to the program, she submitted her application and forged ahead, opting to to slow down and pursue her degree part-time.

Even as her daughter's condition worsened, Jessica persevered, providing care for her while working and maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Though challenging, she feels she is setting a good example for her children, encouraging them to push forward despite circumstances that are out of their control.

Studying nursing systems, populations, and leadership with a focus on informatics, Jessica's goal is to "make significant contributions to the field of nursing and the use of technology in healthcare." As technology rapidly changes, the effects can be felt within the nursing community, and she plans to provide support to nurses to ensure that they are able to focus on patient care. This is a great fit for Jessica, described as someone who "works hard with new nurses and students, recognizing the need for good mentoring."

CEW values Jessica Souva's perseverance and dedication to improving the field of nursing and is proud to name her an Elizabeth Dusseau Scholar.

VALERIE TAING *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Valerie Taing, the daughter of refugee parents who emigrated to Seattle, WA from Cambodia in the 1980s, witnessed firsthand the many sacrifices her parents made to provide her the opportunity to succeed. With the support of government benefits, Valerie's father was able to obtain training to become an auto mechanic, while her mother provided care for Valerie and her siblings. It was early on in life that she learned the important role those benefits played, providing opportunity to her entire family.

Valerie's childhood experiences piqued her interest in immigration, inequality, and welfare. She went onto work as a community organizer, policy advocate, and strategic planner in the areas of housing, health, and child care for over ten years. With this foundation, she developed the vision of completing a joint PhD program in social work and sociology with the goal of teaching and conducting policy-relevant research. Valerie will combine her knowledge and personal understanding to promote policy discussions around early childhood education and care, as well as welfare needs across the country.

Considered "one of the most promising students in her cohort," Valerie is excited to train future social work and public policy students, encouraging them to be engaged and committed as they become practitioners. Her drive to provide students the tools to manage challenging circumstances while advocating on behalf of the communities they represent is certain to leave a lasting legacy.

Upon graduation, Valerie says she looks forward to the opportunity "to arm students with the skills and tools to effectively assess and navigate the challenging political and professional terrain they will inherit in whatever position they occupy."

CEW commends Valerie's vision and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

**VY THAN** *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Vy Than immigrated to the United States at the age of 15 and initially struggled with the transition. She wasn't confident in her English, and rarely spoke to anyone during her first four years. As she became acclimatized, her father encouraged her to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse. She took the leap, and earned her associates degree in 2010. Emboldened by this success, she went on to earn her bachelor's of science in nursing from the University of Michigan-Flint in 2013. Vy, the first member of her family to graduate from college, was on a roll, and decided to channel this momentum into a nurse practitioner doctoral program.

Raising her two young boys while working and taking classes has not deterred her progress. In her words, "I want to use my advanced nursing knowledge and skills to provide better care for people that focuses on health promotion and disease prevention." Her conviction that regular primary care is the key to limiting the long-term burden plays a major role in her desire to offer thoughtful and considerate prevention strategies.

Now fluent in both English and Vietnamese, Vy hopes to inspire Vietnamese speaking members of her community to seek medical care more proactively, knowing they can comfortably communicate with their provider. She hopes that offering inclusive and thoughtful care will improve health outcomes within this community, and across all demographics she works with.

In recognition of the progress Vy Than has made in her own life and in the field of nursing, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

VERONICA VARELA *Sarah Winans Newman Scholar*



Veronica Varela is earning her PhD in neuroscience and plans to teach and mentor at institutions serving underrepresented minority students. After taking eight years off of school, Veronica returned to a campus that provided much needed childcare. When she separated from her partner, she relied on a fellowship that allowed her to continue working toward her undergraduate degree while caring for her children. Though challenging, Veronica effectively balanced lab work, classes, homework, and raising two daughters, earning her bachelor's degree in psychology in 2012.

Shortly after beginning her graduate studies, Veronica was diagnosed with cancer and underwent multiple surgeries. Forced to take a year off to recover, she stayed focused on her goal and is poised to earn her PhD in 2018. As a woman, minority, and mother, Veronica hopes to serve as an inspiration to her daughters, showing them that through hard work and perseverance, one can accomplish their goals.

Serving as a voice and advocate for other minority students, Veronica holds the Diversity Student Ally position in the neuroscience graduate program. Having experienced firsthand the many challenges that minority students face as they follow their academic pursuits, she strives to expand diversity, inclusion, and preparedness amongst graduate students.

Though Veronica has faced many challenges on her journey to earn her PhD in neuroscience, she has remained steadfast. Seen as a standout student in her program, Veronica is described as “a stunning example of facing women’s challenges and being successful.”

In recognition of Veronica’s strength, dedication, and persistence, CEW names her a Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

AMY WHITESALL *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*



Amy Whitesall graduated with a bachelor's degree in journalism in 1991 and spent 15 years in the field before leaving a struggling industry in 2007. She enrolled in classes at a local community college and developed a freelance business to help support her family. While the work proved lucrative, Amy felt a disconnect, and longed to once again feel engaged with her audience. When unexpected financial setbacks arose, Amy decided to chart a new course.

While reflecting on her interests, Amy realized that “life experience has helped me better appreciate the struggles people have with technology, and also the ways that well-designed technology can help mitigate those struggles.” She envisioned herself producing technology that serves all users, including aging populations and those with cognitive and physical disabilities. Needless to say, Amy has found her new passion. Now employed at U-M, she is simultaneously working toward her master's degree in human and computer interaction at the School of Information. Returning to school after 26 years in the workforce seemed daunting at first, but Amy now feels that the rich life history she brings to the classroom helps make her a stronger student.

Commended by colleagues for her dedication to improving the field of technology and accessibility, Amy believes in leaving things better than she found them. She hopes to work for a company that prioritizes accessible design over rushing products to the market.

CEW is proud of Amy's thoughtful and inclusive work, and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

KATE WILLIAMS *Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar*



Kate Williams believes that in the workforce, “women are a necessary and imperative key for a viable and fruitful future.” With that in mind, she is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in communication with a minor in human resource management from UM-Flint. After an 8-year hiatus from postsecondary education, Kate realized that in order to support herself and make a difference in the world, she would need to further her education. Her experiences informed her commitment to workplaces that valued their employees and “utilized exceptional human resource departments and practices.”

Upon graduation, Kate hopes to make a difference in the field of human resources by educating companies on the benefits of effective employee relationship management. As a woman returning to college after a lengthy break, she also intends to develop a nonprofit that encourages women to go back to school, and supports their progress toward degrees.

Applauded by peers and mentors for her thorough preparation and foresight, Kate hopes that her nonprofit grows from a local resource to a national player. Regardless of the obstacles on her path to success, Kate has remained steadfast and strives to make an impact in her community and beyond.

CEW is thrilled to support Kate in her valuable work and names her a Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar.

**MONEQUA WILLIAMS** *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*



Monequa Williams is earning her bachelor's degree in engineering, but does not plan to stop there. She has her sights set on a graduate degree in hopes of contributing to the redesign of current educational frameworks. Monequa has realized quickly that students from underserved communities do not often see reflections of themselves in their professors, and has identified a major opportunity for growth.

Many challenges stood in Monequa's path to success and threatened to keep her from achieving her goals. After learning to celebrate her strengths and accept setbacks as opportunities, she found she was drawn to education. Monequa recognizes that sheer power of will is not always enough, and wants to contribute to a structure designed to support students in need. This interest will take her on a path less traveled in the higher education world.

Monequa plans to use her degree "to examine which factors, outside of funding, stand as barriers to academic achievement in underserved communities." She seeks to ensure that students from all communities and backgrounds have access to role models as they strive to achieve their goals. A methodical student, Monequa is uncompromising in her preparedness, ensuring that her "understanding of material is foundational instead of problem-specific."

Monequa's dedication and readiness has not gone unnoticed. Recognized as "a remarkable interlocutor, who does not shy away from hard questions and difficult topics," she is poised to make a lasting impact in her field.

CEW is pleased to name Monequa Williams an Irma M. Wyman Scholar. We look forward to her future contributions and efforts to create a more inclusive environment in higher education.

CORNELIUS WRIGHT *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*

Cornelius Wright has been a full-time University of Michigan employee focusing on student services for 19 years. His journey began immediately after high school when he jumped into a bachelor's in engineering program, but he ended up leaving after two years in the program. He later went on to earn his associates degree, and recently re-enrolled at the University of Michigan in pursuit of his original goal.

Described by a co-worker as someone “often relied upon as a source of information as well as for generating new ideas and problem solving,” Cornelius has built a reputation as valuable team player. He built his career around the desire to help students, and plans to earn a master's degree in higher education administration with a focus on student affairs. Keeping students' needs at the forefront of his mind, Cornelius seeks to explore ways to better serve the diverse U-M student population.

Cornelius's drive and ambition has led him through many positions at the University, but he knows his desire to continue climbing the ladder requires further education. He enjoys working in student services, and is dedicated to helping students achieve their career and education goals. Recognized for his “deep commitment to his education,” Cornelius will continue to make an impact on the lives of the students he serves. Balancing a full-time job, and with the encouragement of his family, Cornelius is excelling in his coursework and inspiring those close to him.

CEW is excited to watch Cornelius Wright continue to grow and evolve in his role in student services and names him an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

LISA YOUNG LARANCE

*Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Lisa Young Larance's parents believed in her ability to make an impact on the world, even when teachers discouraged her. During her undergraduate career, professors ignited her passion for meeting the needs of diverse women around the globe. She earned her bachelor's degree in women's studies in 1991. After graduation, Lisa worked as an English teacher in Japan, inspiring her to complete her master's degree in social work in 1998.

Throughout her graduate studies, Lisa learned of the injustices women face around the world. "There I found my passion," she said, "learning from the nuances of women's experiences in order to affect positive, sustainable change." Working to provide a voice to those who are marginalized, Lisa is pursuing her PhD in social work and sociology. Through her research and applied practice, Lisa seeks to understand and develop interventions that will encourage positive outcomes for women, promoting change worldwide.

Described as someone who "has devoted her life to her family and to her work assisting women who have experienced violence," Lisa has demonstrated resiliency throughout her journey to earn her PhD and is a well-respected clinician among peers. In hopes of "shap[ing] how marginalized women are treated by intervention providers," Lisa has developed a network that spans the globe, and she intends to leverage her connections in order to generate crucial social change.

In recognition of Lisa's dedication to improving the lives of women around the world, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

**BRANDY ZANTELO** *Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar*



Brandy Zantello is studying for her bachelor's of science in dental hygiene. She is known for a long time that this was the field for her, but only recently decided to expand her reach and become an educator. Though obstacles in her path—including a significant medical diagnosis for her husband—placed strain on her and her family, she persisted and was able to balance work, school, and caregiving responsibilities in pursuit of her dreams. After earning her bachelor's degree, Brandy plans to continue on to earn her master's in hopes of a full-time teaching position.

Seen as a dependable colleague with a strong commitment to quality, she has found an ideal fit in dental hygiene education. She says, “Working one-on-one with students helped me realize how a career in dental hygiene education could support not only the students but my profession as well.” As a life-long learner, Brandy hopes to be a role model for those working to advance in dental hygiene.

Brandy hopes to use her degree to promote the collaboration of dental hygienists and other medical professionals to improve the health outcomes of patients. As a mentor to others entering the field, she hopes that her impact will be felt on the local, state, and national level.

CEW appreciates Brandy's commitment to the collaborative overall health of her patients and names her a Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

LIZ ZHANG *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*



Liz Zhang is earning dual master's degrees in social work and health services administration in hopes of channeling her personal experiences into informed practice. Despite moving to the United States to support her then husband's higher education, their marriage could not withstand the immense strain of his ongoing mental health challenges. Through the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Liz found support and set out on a path of healing and personal growth. Remembering the impact NAMI had on her life, she decided to pursue a career advocating for individuals and their family members as they manage the effects of

mental illness.

Described as someone who tackles her demanding dual programs "without complaint and with tenacity and enthusiasm," Liz has found her true calling. With the goal of becoming a clinical social worker, she intends to work with disadvantaged populations and "provide them a safe and supportive space to reconnect with their inner strength and find their passion for life."

Though Liz looks forward to affecting change in a community-based mental health agency, she envisions an even wider impact for her career. She hopes to be a trailblazer in the field, shining light on the disparities experienced by minorities and immigrant families. She aspires to make mental health care more readily accessible to those who need it most.

CEW is proud of Liz's commitment to quality mental health care and accessibility, and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

*Thank you*

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