

Welcome

The Program

WELCOME

Gloria D. Thomas, Director

Center for the Education of Women, University of Michigan

REMARKS

Christina B. Whitman, *Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs*
University of Michigan

Constance Barron, *1986 CEW Scholar*
New York Film and Television Actor; Executive Director, John Miller Music

PRESENTATION OF CEW SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Shelley Strickland, *2008 CEW Scholar, PhD Candidate in Higher Education*

Ken Fischer, *President, University Musical Society*

Margaret Ann (Ranny) Riecker, *President, The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation and*
Chairman, Harry A. & Margaret D. Towsley Foundation

CLOSING REMARKS

Gloria D. Thomas

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Donna Anuskiewicz
Christine Euritt
Lee Gorman
Wendy Kern
Muffy Mackenzie
Elaine Pitt
Deborah Tirico
Alicia Torres

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**MENAKKA AND ESSEL
BAILEY GRADUATE
FELLOWSHIP/ROBIN
WRIGHT FELLOWSHIP
SELECTION COMMITTEE**

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Doreen Murasky
Gloria Thomas

**MARY MALCOMSON
RAPHAEL SELECTION
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CEW Scholarship Program

COMMEMORATING 42 YEARS OF SUPPORTING WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL DREAMS

Today we celebrate the 42nd anniversary of the CEW Scholarship Program by welcoming 53 amazing students to our community of scholars and fellows. CEW scholars are extraordinary people. While they will all make their own unique paths in life, they share certain characteristics, including intelligence, vision, perseverance, and potential.

Times have changed over the past 42 years. Women at the University of Michigan now earn over 50% of undergraduate degrees and over 40% of graduate degrees (Status of Women Report, University of Michigan, 2007-2008). But these numbers do not tell the whole story. Behind today's statistics are the experiences of many women who have struggled as much as their 1970's predecessors to achieve their educational dreams—or who have given up secure and prestigious careers to devote their talents to solving the world's social, political and environmental problems. The Center created its Scholarship Program in 1970 with the goal of enabling these women to continue their education at the University of Michigan.

It's clear that CEW scholarships still fill an enormous need. This year's 53 scholars and fellows—like the 1440 who preceded them—certainly rely on the financial support. As important as the money, however, is the confidence they develop in knowing that someone believes in them. A recent scholar expressed her thoughts this way:

“The road to my academic success has been paved with hurdles that have seemed insurmountable, but with the help of my family, academic counselors, and the financial generosity that I have been shown, I am still fighting the good fight... I am deeply appreciative of this CEW scholarship. I have reached some emotional lows as of late and being the recipient of this award reminds me that there is light at the end of the tunnel. My intention is to extend that light for many tunnels to come. Thank you.”

OUR SCHOLARS

The scholarships and fellowships honor the performance and potential of students who have interruptions in their education, strong academic records, and impressive past accomplishments and future goals. CEW has awarded over \$5 million dollars in scholarships and fellowships since the program began. The scholarships go to women, and men, in any undergraduate or graduate program on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, or Flint campuses.

CEW scholars are today contributing their knowledge and talents across the world. They are doctors and nurses caring for the elderly and the disenfranchised; musicians and artists; teachers, scholars, social workers, lawyers, engineers and public policy experts working across the spectrum of disadvantaged populations; environmentalists and urban planners addressing issues of sustainability; and scientific researchers working to cure all kinds of diseases.

The 2012-2013 CEW Scholars represent all three University of Michigan campuses, a wide variety of disciplines, both graduate and undergraduate degrees, and an age range from 26 to 59.

THE HISTORY

Former CEW Director Jean Campbell first established the Scholarship Program in 1970 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the admission of women to the University of Michigan. In the beginning, private donations were used to establish a general scholarship fund, and the awards were simply called “CEW Scholarships.” Then, in 1990, the Margaret and Harry Towsley Foundation guaranteed the future of the program with a \$1 million endowment. In the twenty-two years since then, 506 women have been named Margaret Dow Towsley scholars.

Since the establishment of those early funds, generous individuals and organizations have created the dozens of scholarships and fellowships that CEW now awards—a total of 53 this year. Donors from all walks of life, but sharing a passion for the power of higher education in women’s lives, have made these awards possible. These resources, paired with the scholars’ intelligence, motivation, and effort, transforms not only individual lives, but also families, workplaces and communities. On the following pages, you will find a description of all the 2012 awards, and the scholars who earned them.

WITH GRATITUDE

On this joyous afternoon, we celebrate the rich partnership among CEW staff, the University community, and our loyal supporters. We join the scholars, their academic advisors, their families and friends in expressing our sincerest gratitude and admiration to the generous donors who have built such a strong legacy of financial assistance and encouragement for students at the University of Michigan.

Thank you.

*The Scholarships and
Fellowships*

GAIL ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: MELISSA JOHNSON*

In memory of their daughter Gail, the 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.

In the years following Harold Allen’s death in 2001, his widow Phyllis Allen actively engaged with Gail Allen Scholars. Mrs. Allen passed away this this past June at the age of 94. CEW extends its condolences to the Allen family and thanks them for their continuing association with CEW.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: ANNA KOSKIEWICZ*

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.

AAUW: MARY ELIZABETH BITTMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS *Recipients: SUSAN BUZA;*

ANNETTE KAVANAUGH

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

MENAKKA AND ESSEL BAILEY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP *Recipients:* TARA CLANCY;
HAFSA KANJWAL; PAULA ANNE NEWMAN-CASEY

Menakka and Essel Bailey, Ann Arbor residents and business professionals, are also long-time friends and supporters of the Center for the Education of Women. In 2011, the Baileys created a new fund, the Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowships. This gift enables American graduate students to study abroad—especially in South and Southeast Asia—and to do field work and language study in the fields of public health, health care, and the environment.

JANE AND BILL BLOOM SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* NURGUL MUKHAMEDINA

The Jane and Bill Bloom Scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2008. 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. Jane is the first scholarship recipient to establish a scholarship endowment with the intention of fully funding tuition for a CEW scholar. 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:* MICHELLE WILLIAMS

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. After marrying Ted Buttrey, who oversaw the growth of Buttrey Department Stores, Ruth produced a home talent show in the Midwest. Throughout her life, Ruth supported various women’s groups, especially as an active participant in the P.E.O. 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.

LOUISE G. CAIN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: KAREN FRAZIER*

The Louise G. Cain Scholarship was established in 2007. It honors the memory of the woman whose intelligence, initiative and organizational energy led to the creation of the Center for the Education of Women. In 1964, Louise wrote a Proposal for a Center for the Continuing Education of Women, urging the University of Michigan to use its “resources and prestige” to support the educational needs of women, especially those wishing to return to the University. In that same year, her dream became a reality. According to her ally Jean Campbell, who co-founded CEW and served for twenty years as its director, Louise was a visionary leader who enjoyed raising public awareness, fighting injustices, and championing worthy causes. With this scholarship, CEW carries on Louise Cain’s commitment to help women reach their full potential.

COLLEGIATE SOROSIS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: SHAZA KATRIB*

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 the Center for the Education of Women, thereby continuing their encouragement of women scholars.

MOLLY H. DOBSON SCHOLARSHIP *Recipients: REBECCA CALDWELL; CINDY GAMBOA; LAURA SHELP*

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: AMINA HASSAN*

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.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN FACULTY WOMEN'S CLUB SCHOLARSHIP (FWC)

Recipient: RACHEL POTTER

Founded in 1921 to promote friendship and fellowship among its members, the University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club (FWC) is comprised of women faculty members, spouses or partners of faculty members and their guests. In keeping with FWC's commitment to furthering the interests of the University and women, FWC is proud to award this scholarship from the FWC Endowment Fund.

ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* MOLLY DIERKS

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:* KATHERINE CROSMAN

The Sarah Winans Newman Scholarship, created in 2001, provides financial support to graduate, undergraduate 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 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: ALEXANDRA GEORGIADIS*

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 *Recipients: RABIA BELT; JAMIE SMALL;*

CAROLINE VANSICKLE

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: ROXANNE WING*

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 a degree as a nontraditional student, the Linda J. Rider Scholarship is awarded to women who need financial assistance to return to college later in their lives.

HELEN HUFF SHELL SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: MANDY LEE*

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: JACINDA ABCARIAN; JACQUELINE ANTONOVICH; PARRISH BERGQUIST; ANNE BORDONARO; TAMMY FLOWER; RANDA HASHWI; LYNN HAUSCH; ADRIANA HEREDIA; BAI HOANG; ASHLEE GRACE; DOREEN KEMBAZAZI; EMMA MAACK; SARAH MAINVILLE; PATRICIA MCCARTHY; CAROLINE MEEHAN; ALYSSA MOUTON; STACI RIDGEWAY; LATISHA ROSS; LEANN SCHUERING; ALLISON SPONSELLER; SILVIA TITA; JENNIFER VAUGHN; CICI VU; LAUREN YELEN; LEAH ZIMMERMAN*

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.

ROBIN WRIGHT GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP *Recipients:* ELIZABETH KOOMSON; LAMIA MOGHNIEH
CEW awarded the Robin Wright Graduate Fellowship for the first time in Spring, 2010. An internationally esteemed journalist, a foreign policy expert, and a University of Michigan alumna, Robin Wright funded this award to support the work of a UM graduate student from Africa or the Islamic World. Robin Wright has reported from more than 140 countries, but her primary passion and expertise is the Middle East, about which she has written five books. Wright's CEW Fellowship highlights her commitment to research on contemporary international and global issues, especially those related to political, economic or societal change in the Middle East or Africa and to new solutions for issues arising from the spread of globalization. The Fellowship places high priority on women graduate students who conduct their research abroad and who intend to return to their home countries to contribute their scholarly and professional skills. Wright believes that women are agents of change in the Middle East and Africa, and the Robin Wright Graduate Fellowship is another way that she is supporting those efforts.

IRMA M. WYMAN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipients:* VICTORIA HICKS; CHELSEA RANSOM
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 is herself 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. Ms. Wyman is now fully retired. Having benefited during her education from both the financial and psychological support of a Regents Scholarship, she established the Irma Wyman Scholarship in 1996 to provide a similar boost to others.

The Scholars and Fellows

JACINDA ABCARIAN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

As a teen, says Jacinda Abcarian, “I joined a small, after-school program called Youth Radio, which was just starting in Berkeley.” Jacinda quickly rose from student to professional reporter and producer. “My news features and commentaries aired on NPR for millions of listeners.” She eventually became the Executive Director of Youth Radio, now a Peabody Award-winning full service youth development agency in the heart of downtown Oakland, California. Along the way, Jacinda also earned a BA in sociology from UC-Berkeley.

Proud of the innovative, successful programs she helped create at Youth Radio to serve her community’s troubled youth, Jacinda is now at a point of major change in her life, both personally and professionally. She is the divorced mother of three, including a year-old baby, and she recently chose to transition “from being a full-time executive director of a 3.8 million dollar organization to being a part-time grant writer, working from home.”

This fall, Jacinda began work on an MSW at the University of Michigan’s School of Social Work, with a concentration in Community and Social Systems. When she completes her degree, Jacinda hopes to lead a government or nonprofit social agency. “I am,” she explains, “particularly interested in developing innovative approaches to serving court-involved youth and adults.”

Jacinda’s former colleagues praise both her passion for helping others and her impressive leadership abilities. According to one of her admirers, Jacinda is a talented, award-winning reporter and behind-the-scenes innovator who has “worked very hard to open doors for countless Oakland youth who had very little hope of finishing high school, let alone pursuing careers.”

“With an MSW from the University of Michigan,” explains another colleague, “Jacinda will move to a new level of leadership, well equipped to take on complex societal problems that require creative, intelligent solutions.”

Proud to support her important work, CEW names Jacinda Abcarian a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



JACQUELINE ANTONOVICH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

After earning an associate's degree in her home state of California, Jacki Antonovich left school to marry and have a family. Her marriage turned turbulent and violent, so after five years she and her young son fled to a new life in Colorado. Jacki calls that move the best decision she's ever made, enabling her to start her life over and to complete an undergraduate degree. Since then, Jacki has earned an MA in history at the University of Wyoming, remarried and had a second child, and begun work on a PhD in US history at the University of Michigan.

"My saga of unanticipated challenges strengthens my resolve," Jacki explains, "and shapes the direction of my research interests." She has an "abiding, passionate enthusiasm for the history of American women and the evolution of the constructions of masculinity and femininity." Her current research centers on "the varied ways in which women outside the mainstream of feminism historically engaged in organizing and political work, sometimes for ends much different from their feminist opposites."



Jacki plans to become a college professor. She knows that her academic career, which has spanned 20 years, is an asset. It both helps her to understand today's diverse student population and offers inspiration to "other young women who face seemingly insurmountable challenges."

Jacki's professors describe her as a gifted student: an "intelligent, focused, creative thinker, diligent researcher and fluid writer" who is already producing high quality historical research. She is, explained one of her professors, "clearly very aware that there is life beyond the walls of academe and that it is critical to integrate all that learning can provide with an appreciation of the needs and possibilities of real people struggling to survive and make meaning out of their lives."

CEW is proud to support Jacki Antonovich's promising future by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

RABIA BELT *Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellowship*

Rabia Belt came to the University of Michigan from Harvard, where she earned an undergraduate degree in social studies. At U-M, Rabia has pursued dual degrees in the Law School and the Program in American Culture. She graduated *cum laude* with her law degree in 2009 and is now in the midst of dissertation work for a PhD.

Rabia's interest in disability issues began as a child receiving phone calls from her Aunt Tricia. "When I lifted the receiver, she would begin reciting my birth date, name, age and nothing more. My father explained that his sister was born with severe brain damage. I later learned that she could have had therapy that would have helped her significantly, but it was not available to her because she was black and poor."

From that and other experiences, Rabia discovered "the necessity of questioning the status quo and understanding the historical development of disability." Her commitment to those causes—as a teacher, scholar and social advocate—has led Rabia to her current research interests. Her dissertation explores 19th and 20th century US history, disability and legal history, and does so within the context of the history of suffrage, gender, African American and American Indian history. Rabia's intention is to highlight how imprecise definitions of and laws related to "mental deficiency" have affected the voting rights of a number of marginalized groups of American citizens.



Rabia looks forward to being a law professor, a role that suits her well. As one of her advisors says, "Rabia has been an extraordinary mentor and role model during her time at U-M, and in terms of continuing to make a contribution of 'exceptional usefulness' to society, she is already off the charts." Others describe her as possessing intellectual sophistication, theoretical depth, empathetic sensitivity, legal expertise, and outstanding skills as a writer and public speaker.

In support of her future successes, CEW names Rabia Belt a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow.

PARRISH BERGQUIST *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

One evening, as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, Parrish Bergquist watched a hillside burn. “I saw orange patches flickering across one of the mountains like embers glowing in a dying campfire.” In the morning she beheld scorched fields, the result of nearby farmers’ slash and burn agriculture. Thus did environmental issues become tangible to Parrish.

She learned that, for her Honduran neighbors, careless logging, ranching and farming practices—as well as global warming—are not abstract, politicized problems. They lead, for example, to villagers walking several miles to gather uncontaminated drinking water.

Before joining the Peace Corps, Parrish earned an undergraduate degree in English and American studies at the University of Virginia. Her experiences in Honduras turned her into an environmentalist. “Motivated by a sense of justice and stewardship,” Parrish applied to the University of Michigan, where she is currently working on dual master’s degrees in environmental planning from the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning and environmental policy and planning from the School of Natural Resources and Environment.



In addition to her studies, Parrish has worked with the Federal Trade Commission in Washington DC and with the Ann Arbor Transportation Planning team. As a member of an organization entitled Bike & Build, Parrish has also ridden across the US on a bicycle to fundraise and advocate for affordable housing. Inspired by the experience, Parrish established a new chapter of Bike & Build, recruited 30 riders and led a second cross-country excursion.

When she graduates, Parrish plans to work for a non-profit, consulting firm, or government organization, advocating for policies that enable cities to become more environmentally sustainable. Parrish’s former employers and U-M professors describe her as a bright, articulate, hard-working, innovative, passionate professional with an exuberant personality. They assure us that Parrish is destined to make a difference.

Grateful for her commitment to our environment, CEW names Parrish Bergquist a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ANNE BORDONARO *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

An interest in equity, justice and intergroup conflict led Anne Bordonaro to earn degrees in political science from Grinnell College and the CUNY Graduate Center. “However,” she says, “it wasn’t until teaching social studies in a large urban high school in Brooklyn that these issues came starkly into focus for me.”

Anne observed that an underlying cause of her students’ intergroup conflict was that they “did not understand or appreciate one another’s historical and cultural experiences.” Believing that the problem was exacerbated by the way history and social studies are taught in our schools, and that she lacked the skills and understandings to address the problem, Anne dreamed of pursuing a graduate degree in education.

That dream was postponed when her husband was hit by a car while riding his bicycle and suffered debilitating injuries. Anne, now the primarily breadwinner for her family of four, began a fifteen-year career as an educational reform consultant with the Carnegie Foundation and the Vermont Department of Education.

Anne is now a PhD student in the University of Michigan’s School of Education. Her goal is to be a teacher educator, focusing upon “improving history instruction to help heal racial and ethnic divisions and inequities here in the US and around the world.” Anne is particularly passionate about achieving a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She and her husband, a Palestinian Muslim from Israel, have observed firsthand the “incredible lack of appreciation the two groups have for one another’s experiences and the terrible consequences of this failure of imagination.” Anne has engaged in a number of volunteer activities to promote peace and understanding through interfaith dialogues.

Praised by those who know her as professional, experienced and articulate, with a talent for scholarship and research, Anne is “poised for success in her doctoral program and beyond.”

In support of Anne Bordonaro and her important work, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



SUSAN BUZA *AAUW-Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholarship*

Susan Buza was a student in the Honors College at the University of Michigan over 15 years ago but, as she explains, “I struggled with feelings that I didn’t belong.” As the first of her family to attend college, Susan felt strong pressure to succeed, but—when a series of crises and illnesses struck her family—she was forced to leave school. Susan took a job in the IT industry that moved her closer to her home. She married and began her own family.

For the past decade, Susan has worked as a systems administration and support specialist at the University of Michigan. In 2010, she took a course on security training as part of a special campus initiative. “I really enjoyed immersing myself in the class and began to think seriously about returning to school.” With the support of her U-M supervisors, Susan has become a student again, working on her undergraduate degree in psychology.



“My experiences over the last ten years have made me a more eager and dedicated student,” says Susan. Her academic goal is to earn either an MSW or a master’s degree in education and to work with at-risk and traumatized children and families. “I am determined to finish my college career on a much more positive note than I left on—not only for myself but as a role model for my own children.”

Those who have worked with Susan since her return to Michigan are positive that she will excel this time around. They speak of her strong intrinsic motivation, work ethic and intellectual curiosity. As one of Susan’s professors told us, “She possesses all the necessary characteristics to be successful—intelligence, industry, focus and persistence, and critical thinking skills.”

CEW welcomes Susan Buza back to the University of Michigan by naming her an AAUW-Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholar.

REBECCA CALDWELL *Molly H. Dobson Scholarship*

Rebecca Caldwell has many admirers. As one of them tells us: “Rebecca’s ability to adapt and prioritize even in the midst of unimaginable life circumstances sets her apart from other students. No matter what life throws at her, or how many setbacks she experiences, Rebecca remains focused on her goals because she knows that her security is significantly linked to the level and quality of her education.”

The “unimaginable life circumstances” that Rebecca has suffered and weathered include the long illnesses and tragic deaths of her mother and eldest son. As a teen-ager, Rebecca spent two years in various foster care placements and was unable to finish high school. However, as she explains, “My education remained of the utmost importance to me, so—as the single parent of two young boys—I earned a G.E.D.”

In the course of her life, Rebecca has also observed firsthand the need to give at-risk youth better treatment within the juvenile justice system and better opportunities for success. Her commitment to those causes first led Rebecca to earn an associate’s degree from Henry Ford Community College. Rebecca is now an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, majoring in criminal justice.

Her next steps are to work as a juvenile probation officer while pursuing a law degree, then to become a juvenile defense attorney. Rebecca explains, “I want to ensure that offenders afflicted by mental illness are offered treatment to target their illness, so that they may learn to function in spite of it.”

Rebecca is thriving in her life as a student. “I was apprehensive about going to college without having attended high school—especially being older than the traditional student. It was a remarkable and rewarding experience to realize that not only could I learn but I was capable of excelling.”

In awe of Rebecca Caldwell’s spirit and determination, CEW is proud to name her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.



TARA CLANCY *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship*

According to Tara Clancy, “Arsenic contamination of drinking water threatens the health of millions of people around the world. The problem is most acute in Bangladesh and West Bengal India, where a massive drilling campaign shifted the drinking water source from pathogen-contaminated surface water to ground water that was later found to contain high levels of naturally occurring arsenic.”

As a doctoral student in environmental engineering at the University of Michigan’s College of Engineering, Tara is doing dissertation research to evaluate options for disposing of the wastes generated while removing arsenic from drinking water. During the past summer, she used her Bailey Fellowship to fund a field trip to Bangladesh. There she collected and tested water samples and set up a pilot system for improved arsenic removal.



In preparation for her research, Tara also spent part of the summer continuing to learn Bengali through a Department of State Critical Language immersion program. Tara began her academic career by completing two degrees in environmental engineering—an MSE from U-M and a BS from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Tara’s goal is to become a faculty member, using her knowledge and skills to educate future generations of environmental engineers. She also plans to train local Bengalese how to use effective arsenic removal techniques. “As a female researcher, I will be able to provide technical expertise and information to area women, who control water use for families but historically have not been included in decision-making and educational campaigns.”

Praised by her professors for her enthusiasm, can-do attitude and intelligence, Tara has already established herself as an excellent researcher. She is, they tell us, “destined to improve the lives of thousands of citizens with her cutting edge methods.”

CEW congratulates Tara Clancy for her humanitarian work by awarding her a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship.

KATHERINE CROSMAN *Sarah Winans Newman Scholarship*

After earning a BA in political science from Davidson College, Kate Crosman spent nearly 10 years living on a small island in Thailand. “When I arrived, Koh Tao boasted no paved roads and only one telephone capable of making international calls.” By the time Kate left the island, “new catamarans had shortened the 3½ hour trip to the mainland to just over an hour. We had two 7-11 stores, 36 dive shops, and an internet café on every corner.” In other words, says Kate, in the process of changing from “an island of coconut farmers and fishermen into the largest scuba diver training center in Southeast Asia, development rolled relentlessly on.”

Lamenting the changes in the island she loved, Kate acknowledged that “each diver I trained, every business I opened and patronized contributed to the explosive growth.” Yet she also observed that money from tourists allowed her Thai friends to install flush toilets and send their children to school. Kate began to wonder “Is it possible to have both? Can we choose farsightedness and protect the places we love without sacrificing human well-being? Can we help others make sustainable choices in the context of their culture...without assuming that we know what is best?”

To engage directly with marine conservation, Kate spent 2009 and 2010 as a volunteer researching sea otter behavior with the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Now, ready to commit herself to finding answers to her questions, Kate is a master’s degree student at the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment. She plans eventually to earn a PhD and to spend her life working in the developing world, “creating holistic, culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate conservation initiatives.”

Kate’s professors and colleagues unanimously describe her as one of the best students they’ve ever encountered: a mature, intelligent, articulate and dedicated leader who “has the potential to make profound contributions to environmental science.”

In praise of her past and future accomplishments, CEW names Kate Crosman the Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.



MOLLY DIERKS *Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship*

Molly Dierks has two passions in her life: teaching and making art. “Some artists are most prolific when left alone for long stretches, but I find inspiration from the time, knowledge and experiences I share with others.”

Early in her academic career, Molly “absorbed the attitude that art is something you do for enjoyment, a hobby, and not a main pursuit.” So she majored in psychology at Dartmouth. But as graduation loomed, Molly panicked. “The corporate world, though it hinted at a potentially lucrative future, was clearly not for me.”

Instead, after earning her degree Molly went briefly to Italy to teach. She then continued to teach a variety of subjects, including art, calculus and Italian, in a number of settings. At the same time, she became a passionate art student, learning to work in enamel, fiberglass, foam, wood, neon, small and large scale metal sculpture, and video design. A trip to Uganda and South Africa, “to see what inspired some artists to create political art,” reinforced Molly’s love for both abstract art and feminist perspectives.



Finally ready to pursue an art career, Molly is now working on a master’s degree in the University of Michigan’s School of Art and Design. One of her professors describes Molly’s current art as “engaging feminist questions of representation, the body and sexuality through both traditional and nontraditional mediums, including found objects, textiles, paint, and other materials that communicate humor, anger, warmth, and complexity.”

Molly’s passion for teaching continues. “I love that I can share all that I have worked so hard to learn with my U-M students.” She plans a career that combines maintaining her own creative practice with teaching higher level visual art students.

Praised by her advisors for her exceptional perseverance, motivation, energy, talent and thoughtfulness, Molly Dierks is a worthy recipient of the Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship from the Center for the Education of Women.

TAMMY FLOWER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Though Tammy Flower's initial plan after high school was to become an elementary school teacher, a counselor convinced her that, given the abundance of teachers in Michigan at the time, nursing would be a wiser choice. She switched majors and earned an associate's degree in nursing at Kellogg Community College. "I'm so glad I became a registered nurse," says Tammy. "I did not realize I would enjoy it as much as I do."

Over the past 18 years, Tammy has worked as an RN with the last five years in the surgical department which she truly enjoys. Not surprisingly, teaching is one aspect of her jobs that she has especially enjoyed. Tammy has instructed prenatal mothers about proper nutrition and parenting. She has collaborated with the Child Abuse Prevention Council to promote parental education. And she has worked with both geriatric and young adult patients, providing information about and conducting health screenings.

Tammy's long term goal has always been to complete her BSN degree but, as the mother of four children, she chose to postpone her own education for a while. Now, with the encouragement of her family and co-workers, Tammy is excited to be back in school at the University of Michigan-Flint. When she completes her bachelor's degree, Tammy plans to go on for her master's degree in nursing informatics.

Her colleagues tell us that Tammy is an excellent nurse. They describe her as skilled, hard-working, flexible, enthusiastic and dedicated. They also praise her for being a strong advocate for her patients and a good role model for her fellow nurses.

Tammy's goal is to become a nurse educator and to "give back to my community in any way I can." In support her ambitions, CEW names Tammy Flower a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KAREN FRAZIER *Louise G. Cain Scholarship*

Perseverance is a quality, says Karen Frazier, “that is only truly put to the test in the most difficult of circumstances.” In her own “season of adversity,” Karen has proven to herself—and to everyone who knows her—that she can adapt and flourish.

After completing a BA in Spanish and psychology at the University of North Carolina, Karen opted for a professional career that would provide the financial and health care resources needed by her husband, who has a chronic illness. She won many accolades as a researcher and project manager at the Research Triangle Institute and the American Institutes of Research. But her heart was elsewhere. “Knowing I would be a more fulfilled individual and a better partner if I devoted myself to a career that I loved,” Karen earned an MA in Spanish from University of Virginia.



Then, committed to balancing her own ambitions with her husband’s access to outstanding medical care, Karen chose the University of Michigan for her doctoral degree. She is now studying Spanish in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and preparing for a career as a university professor and scholar. Her research interest is the “production and reception of socially conscious Latin American art during the 20th and 21st centuries and its political and ethical implications.”

Those with whom Karen has worked and studied are unanimous in their praise for her talents. She is, said one admirer, “one of the brightest people I have ever met. She has a tremendous ability to learn, apply and pass on new skills. She is an excellent, natural teacher who brings out the best in others. She has a strong work ethic, innate leadership skills, and the ability to work effectively with a wide variety of personalities.”

Described by everyone as “destined to have an impact,” Karen Frazier is clearly a rising star. CEW delights in naming her the Louise G. Cain Scholar.

CINDY GAMBOA *Molly H. Dobson Scholarship*

Cindy Gamboa gave birth to a son shortly after earning her high school diploma. She had dreamt of being the first in her family to attend college but, faced with a new direction in her life, Cindy put the dream aside and focused on being a wife and mother.

Cindy describes the southwest Detroit community in which she was raised as “home to multicultural groups of people, many of whom face social, economic and language barriers. Going to college is viewed as something only ‘rich’ people do, and many people of my background do not understand the opportunities education can open up.”

Committed to helping her neighbors, Cindy became involved in community outreach as an employee of the Detroit Health Department. When the funding for that program ended, Cindy accepted a position with the University of Michigan’s Healthy Environments Partnership Program in the School of Public Health. “I love the work I do with the project. I want to further my education to enhance my capacity to do similar work.”

With that goal in mind, Cindy is now working towards her bachelor’s degree in behavioral sciences at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, which she sees as a stepping stone for a master’s degree in public health. “I aspire,” she explains, “to create opportunities for children in under-served communities to improve their physical and mental health.



“Returning to school has helped me tremendously. I had come to believe I wasn’t capable of studying and earning good grades, but doing so has helped boost my self-confidence. I now know that I am limitless.”

Cindy’s supervisors share that opinion. One of her admirers tells us that Cindy is “without question one of the most remarkable, dedicated and committed young women with whom I have had the pleasure of working in a long career as a researcher and educator.”

Honored to help Cindy Gamboa continue and complete her educational and career dreams, CEW awards her a Molly H. Dobson Scholarship.

ASHLEE GRACE *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Ashlee Grace traces her love of the environment to a lifetime of camping, climbing, biking and travelling. She sees her desire to help others as a way to “pay forward” all the support she has received from family and friends.

A graduate of New York University with a BA in sociology, Ashlee tried several career paths before she discovered a way to intertwine her two passions: Going to work for the national non-profit organization Alliance for Climate Education was “a once-in-a-lifetime job” that opened her eyes to the global predicament of climate change.

After three years with ACE, Ashlee left to fulfill another personal goal. “I had always told myself that I would get a master’s degree once I truly identified my passion.” Ashlee is now working on dual master’s degrees in urban planning from the Taubmann College of Architecture and Urban Planning and in sustainable systems from the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan. She has a clear vision of where she wants to go next.



“As the public becomes more aware of environmental issues, and as companies and governments seek to make themselves more sustainable, we will need more and more leaders to help us move forward strategically and in ways that benefit both the environment and those most vulnerable to it. I want to be one of those leaders.”

Those who’ve interacted with Ashlee in both academic and work settings are sure she will achieve her goal. They describe her as an outstanding student, “enormously intellectually talented.” As one of her former professors told us, “I cannot imagine a person more committed to working for human betterment, or more proficient at arguing for a position or cause in which she believes.”

CEW delights in supporting Ashlee Grace by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ALEXANDRA GEORGIADIS *Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholarship*

“Imagine a world,” says Alexandra Georgiadis, “in which we save millions of dollars in expensive treatments, where heart disease is the exception, not the rule, and where young children take pride in their health. I imagine it every day, and I intend to dedicate the rest of my life to making it a reality.”

Alexandra first became interested in health and nutrition when, during her sophomore year in college, her father suffered a severe heart attack. “Convinced that diet and life style choices contributed to his heart disease, I made it a personal mission to assist my father in his recovery. To my surprise, changes in his diet provided lasting positive results.”

The study of preventative medicine became Alexandra’s passionate hobby. She earned her undergraduate degrees in economics and English from U-M and, as an early childhood teacher, introduced the concepts of good nutrition into her classroom. “I designed a month-long nutrition curriculum, and I persuaded the school to provide both healthful snacks and a healthier lunch program.”

Alexandra is now ready to turn her hobby into a full-time career. She has returned to graduate school to earn a master’s degree in human nutrition and dietetics in the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health. As she explains, “Obesity and chronic diseases are steadily increasing in both adult and child populations. It is a problem too large to ignore and too complex to tackle without the most dedicated and highly skilled professionals. I want to be one of them.”

According to one of her professors, “Alexandra has many strengths: a keen intellect; a deep compassion and ability to connect with families, patients, and peers; a dedication and fascination with nutritional sciences; and the rare ability to inspire others.”

In honor of her commitment to bringing improved health to everyone, CEW is proud to name Alexandra Georgiadis the Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar.



RANDA HASHWI *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“Growing up during the civil war in Lebanon,” says Randa Hashwi, “I had a hard time convincing my parents to allow me to attend Beirut University College. The school was just half an hour away but, because of the war, it took me two and a half hours to go home.” Though remaining in Lebanon became increasingly dangerous, Randa did complete her degree in business management.

Randa and her family moved to Canada in 1991, where she met her husband and returned with him to his home in Michigan. For the next 20 years, Randa devoted herself to raising her four children. “I did not understand the meaning of the phrase ‘the American Dream’ until I experienced it,” she says. Excited by the array of educational programs for young people, Randa involved her children in many of them, and today they are all outstanding students.



She never gave up on the idea of going back to school. “It was difficult,” Randa admits, “to accept the fact that my degree from Lebanon is not accepted in the US, so I have to start over. Yet I am grateful for the chance to attend the University of Michigan-Dearborn.”

Currently working on her bachelor’s degree in health policy studies, Randa will continue with graduate work in public health. “I have always been passionate about women’s issues,” Randa explains. “My ability to speak both Arabic and English will enable me to help women in my community access good health care.”

Randa has overwhelmed UM-D faculty with her talent and dedication. According to one of her professors, “I have no doubt that Randa will be one of my most memorable students of all time.” She is brilliant at analyzing and writing about what she reads. She is intelligent, prepared and totally committed to her education.

With our congratulations to Randa Hashwi for her perseverance and success, we award her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship.

AMINA HASSAN *Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholarship*

Amina Hassan has known since her high school days that she wants to be a nurse. She has been working toward that goal for a while now, earning nursing certificates at both Lansing Community College and Washtenaw Community College. Despite several “trials and challenges” that have interrupted her education, Amina proudly proclaims “I continue to come back to my studies so that I can achieve my dream.”

Amina cites several reasons for seeking a nursing career. First, of course, “I want to help people, care for them, and provide a healing hand.” Amina also knows that, through her studies, she is providing a brighter future and a good role model for her two children. In addition, Amina relishes the opportunity to be a role model for other women. “I come from Somalia, a small country on the east side of Africa, where the norm is for women not to attend secondary or post-secondary school. It makes me feel good that I can help change that custom by starting with myself. If it means that I’m also setting an example for other Somalian women, I would be very proud.”

When Amina completes her BSN from the University of Michigan’s School of Nursing, she knows that, as part of her new career, she will continue her current commitment to help Somalis for whom English is difficult. “They call me whenever they have an appointment with a healthcare provider. So, by becoming a nurse and increasing my medical knowledge, I can make it easier for members of my Somalian community to get good health care.”

Judging from the impression she has made thus far in her nursing program, Amina’s future looks bright. Her instructors describe her as a dedicated, hard-working and conscientious student who “shows promising potential to contribute to the profession of nursing.”

CEW congratulates Amina Hassan for her humanitarian goals by naming her the Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.



LYNN HAUSCH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Lynn Hausch is the single mom of three young adult children. She is also someone who believes in leading by example through activism and education. Thus, her passion for a wide range of issues, including the alternative energy and sustainable agriculture movements, has led her to become involved in many community projects.

For example, Lynn has currently proposed a service learning project in the local community and is making plans to create Detroit's first edible garden in one of the city's parks as her community service project. "I envision it containing apple, pear and plum trees; raspberry, blueberry, and blackberry bushes; and a variety of grapevines. This garden would provide healthy snacks for children and families visiting the park and would be a source of food for homeless individuals."



Lynn has also coordinated the children's organic garden on the campus of the University of Michigan-Dearborn, leading weekly hands-on programs about the principles and practices of organic gardening for area children and their families. In addition, she has worked as a summer intern on numerous sustainability and alternative energy ideas with Cass Community Social Services.

Lynn earned her associate's degree in business administration from Henry Ford Community College in 2009. She then became an undergraduate student, concentrating in environmental studies and urban service, on U-M's Dearborn campus. When she graduates, Lynn intends to continue her education with an MBA.

"My dream," says Lynn, "is to help others achieve a self-sustainable lifestyle." Her professors tell us that Lynn possesses all the traits to make her dream a reality. They praise her commitment to social and environmental issues, her eagerness to volunteer for worthy causes, and her thoughtful and questioning mind. As one of her professors explained, "Lynn is a person who 'walks the walk.' She will be able to do great things as her education and activism advance."

In support of her ambitious goals, creative thinking, and dedication to our environment, CEW happily names Lynn Hausch a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ADRIANA HEREDIA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“I started playing the violin when I was eight years old,” says Adriana Heredia. “My mother was a dancer, so I grew up listening to music and observing her rehearsals.” When she was 17, Adriana began music composition studies at the National University of Villa Maria in her native Argentina.

After graduating, Adriana moved to Pennsylvania with her husband, who entered an orchestral conducting program at Penn State. She spent two years taking and giving private violin lessons, and composing several violin pieces, before the terms of her visa allowed her to apply for graduate work.

“I fell in love with the University of Michigan when I came for my interview,” Adriana exclaims. “It’s been a blessing to develop my musical skills at this institution.” Now in the second year of a master’s degree program in music education in the School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Adriana says that she has grown so much as an artist and person that “I can almost not recognize myself from one year ago.”

Adriana loves composing music. “The field has historically been a man’s world but, even though I don’t feel any different treatment towards me as a female, I think a woman’s vision of emotional and spiritual matters is interestingly unique and enriching.” One of her professors and admirers told us of Adriana’s recent composition—a piece for string quartet, piano, percussion, and actress, based upon the final words of Virginia Woolf—which highlights her commitment to exploring unfamiliar territory.



Adriana’s goal is to remain in school to earn her doctoral degree. It is, according to her professors, a perfect outlet for her “natural and outstanding talent” and her “unique compositional voice that successfully fuses a variety of influences from both the classical and vernacular music worlds.”

CEW is proud to contribute to Adriana Heredia’s promising future as a musician and composer by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

VICTORIA HICKS *Irma M. Wyman Scholarship*

“Until I was sixteen,” says Victoria Hicks, “I lived what I consider to be a normal American life. I was a successful student and an active member of many school and church groups.” Then Victoria became pregnant and, in the midst of other family turmoil, “closed the door on my childhood and embraced the future as a mother and the head of my own household.”

Victoria formulated three goals for herself: Give her daughter a life of opportunity; reach her educational dreams; and “not succumb to pressure and become a tragic statistic.” She succeeded on all counts. Her now teen-aged daughter is thriving, and Victoria is excelling in her career and academic pursuits.

At age 19, Victoria was a part-time student and a full-time welder in a factory. Over the next decade, she rose from skilled trades to a management position overseeing multi-million dollar construction projects. “I wish I could say it was easy, but honestly it wasn’t.” She credits the mentoring she received from two of her Washtenaw Community College professors with giving her the strength to “push harder, think smarter and not give up.”



When Victoria graduated with honors from WCC with an associate’s degree in mechanical and manufacturing technology, she set her sights on the University of Michigan, where she is now in the process of earning her bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in the College of Engineering. Her goal is a master’s degree in industrial operations and manufacturing engineering.

Victoria has impressed her U-M professors in many ways. In the words of one, she is a thoughtful student who “has already mastered something that we have to teach many students: that completing tasks, working well in teams, and being responsible are critical elements of being a successful engineer.” With her strong analytical skills, Victoria is bound to succeed and thrive in her chosen profession.

With admiration for Victoria Hicks’ determination and values, CEW names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

BAI LINH HOANG *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Bai Linh Hoang, a first generation Asian American from Los Angeles, is the first person in her family to earn an undergraduate degree. Her background led Bai Linh to major in women’s studies at UC Berkeley and to develop an interest in moral philosophy, social stratification and “the implementation of progressive social change for marginalized groups.”

Before coming to the University of Michigan, where she is now working on a PhD in political science, Bai Linh pursued her interests in a number of settings—including an internship in the San Francisco DA’s office, advocating on behalf of victims of elder abuse, and a paralegal position at the US Department of Justice. Bai Linh also earned a master’s degree from the London School of Economics and a Master of public policy degree from the University of Wisconsin.

All of these experiences, says Bai Linh, have “strengthened my commitment to philosophy, women’s studies and progressive social change—and shown me that I am most enthusiastic when I am engaged in researching and writing about how political philosophy can illuminate the way we think about real political and social problems.”

At U-M Bai Linh is focusing on the intersectionality of race, gender and class—especially as it relates to their political participation and the representation of their perspectives. For her dissertation, Bai Linh will investigate political elites’ responsiveness to citizens’ political participation: specifically, on a normative and empirical level, what it means for elites to “listen” to their constituents in a democratic society. Her career goal is to become a university professor and researcher.

It is an ambition for which Bai Linh is singularly well suited. As one of her professors explains, Bai Linh’s uncommon combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to American politics and political theory gives her the tools to investigate the “important questions that political theorists regularly tackle.” Another professor describes Bai Linh as a spectacular analyst who “can reach deeply into a complex argument, pull it apart, examine its moving parts, and see how it fits back together.”

With Bai Linh Hoang’s outstanding promise as a political scientist, CEW proudly names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



MELISSA JOHNSON *Gail Allen Scholarship*

“I trace my interest in studying history to the stories I learned about my family’s past,” says Melissa Johnson, including her great-grandmother’s 1909 voyage from Hungary to Ellis Island. “Even a generation ago, it would have been unthinkable that anyone in my family would go to college but, one hundred years after that teenage girl rode in steerage across an ocean, I have earned two degrees and am seeking another.”

Melissa’s own journey began with a series of history courses at Mount Hood Community College in Oregon, which Melissa took “with no larger goal than simply learning more about something that interested me.” Discovering a talent for critical reading, writing and thinking, Melissa completed a BA and then an MA in history at Portland State University. Now a PhD student in the University of Michigan’s History Department, Melissa is interested in the social and cultural roles that churches have historically played in women’s public lives—and vice versa. For her dissertation, Melissa plans to investigate “power relations between men and women in religious environments.” She then intends to become a college professor.

Melissa credits the mentoring she has received from her professors for giving her the confidence to pursue her education. Knowing that “teaching will be among the most important things I will do as a professional historian,” Melissa hopes to find a position “at an institution that serves non-traditional students, so I can nurture their dreams as my mentors nurtured mine.”

As one of her former advisors assures us, Melissa “can and will achieve anything she sets her mind to.” She has dazzled her professors with her sophisticated understanding, elegant writing style, and challenging questions.” Another of her professors describes Melissa “as a self-starter who will benefit greatly from the moral encouragement that comes from a reward like a CEW scholarship.”

With such glowing endorsements, CEW delights in awarding Melissa Johnson the Gail Allen Scholarship.

HAFSA KANJWAL *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship*

Hafsa Kanjwal spent the past few months in Srinagar, Kashmir. As she explains, “This disputed territory between India and Pakistan is a place of insurgency and political problems. Research on the region focuses almost exclusively on the political strife and overlooks the social aspects of life.”

Hafsa’s goal is to bring light to the social side of Kashmir. She spent her summer writing the introduction to a translation she is doing for her dissertation work. *From Darkness to Light* is the autobiography of a Muslim woman named Shamla Mufti. It is the first autobiography of a contemporary Kashmiri woman to be published, and it offers critical insight into regional social, educational and cultural dynamics by incorporating historical events from a woman’s perspective.”

Her interest in the Muslim world encompasses Hafsa’s whole academic career. She earned a BS from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, with a major in regional studies of the Muslim world, before beginning a joint doctoral program in history and women’s studies from the University of Michigan. Along the way, Hafsa has also studied Urdu with a Department of State Critical Language scholarship. In 2006, Hafsa co-founded KashmirCorps, a non-profit organization that prepares Kashmiri youth to lead social change through intensive leadership training and exchange programs.



When Hafsa completes her PhD, she intends to continue her scholarship of the “social and cultural history of Kashmir” in the Southeast Asian region. One of her advisors explains that Hafsa’s goal is to begin a history of gender in Kashmir. “She will be a pioneer, as almost no scholarly work has been done on this subject. Her work promises to open up new analytical vistas in South Asian women’s studies.”

Sharing her advisors’ “tremendous confidence in her potential,” CEW proudly names Hafsa Kanjwal a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

SHAHA KATRIB *Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholarship*

Though she's only 30, Shaza Katrib has already had a career as a mechanical engineer. "I am very proud of what I accomplished," she says. However, after earning her BS in engineering from Michigan State University, Shaza spent six years coming to the realization that she should have followed a different path.

"Engineering was difficult, and I loved its challenges. But instead of being driven by those challenges only, my motivation came from people who thought I could not succeed, who thought engineering was too difficult for girls or was not the right lifestyle for me. 'How dare they tell me what I wanted and what I was capable of,' I thought. And so I did it. I became an engineer."

Now Shaza knows she is doing something "for the right reasons, for me." Working on her master's degree in the University of Michigan's School of Education, she's overcome the internal struggle that she would be a failure if she quit engineering. "I know with all my mind, heart and soul that I am a teacher." Shaza will teach high school physics and math, but she is also determined, she says, "to help students learn to be true to themselves, to be curious, to be confident enough to follow their dreams and not fall to obstacles, especially the views of society. I want to teach the whole person."



In addition to her parents being supportive throughout it all, those who've observed Shaza in the classroom are also her biggest supporters. One of her colleagues told us that "as a teacher, Shaza knows how to build relationships and think outside the box to help students understand complex ideas. She will be an excellent teacher."

Shaza believes the opportunity to change her path is a priceless privilege. Confident that she will share her courage, determination and wisdom with future generations of students, CEW proudly names Shaza Katrib the Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

ANNETTE KAVANAUGH *AAUW-Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholarship*

Annette Kavanagh recalls the day she was accepted into the dental hygiene program in the University of Michigan's School of Dentistry as "one of the best days of my life." Annette's journey to her goal has been a long one.

Her grandfather was a dentist and, from an early age, Annette knew she wanted to follow in his footsteps. She took a dental assisting course in high school, earned an associate's degree from Macomb Community College and began on-the-job training in a dental office. Over the past twenty years, Annette has worked as a dental assistant and office manager in several different practices.

Now the mother of four children, Annette—with the encouragement from her family—is an undergraduate student at U-M, fulfilling her dream to become a dental hygienist. Her ultimate goal is to return to school and become a clinical instructor.

When she completes her degree, Annette plans to enhance her career by volunteering her services to underprivileged groups. Earlier this year she traveled to Honduras with the Christian Dental Society Mission to provide dental services to indigent people in the region. "I worked hard to get where I am now in my academic career, and I believe I was given this opportunity so that I can give back to those around me."

One of Annette's professors describes her as "a model student in all respects. I wish I could clone her!" She has shown herself to be a natural leader, serving in several elected positions with the Student American Dental Hygienists' Association, and is highly respected by her peers for her organizational and leadership abilities.

Impressed by her perseverance and commitment, CEW supports Annette Kavanagh by naming her an AAUW-Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholar.



DOREEN KEMBABAZI *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Doreen Kembabazi was a high school student in her native Uganda when she decided to become a history teacher. “My interest was a result of a bloody 1961 war between my ethnic group and a neighboring one. We were brought up in an atmosphere of hatred. Our elders used racially derogatory names to refer to our neighbors, who did the same. We were enemies and, as young people, we had no idea why.”

Then, during her last year of high school, Doreen had a roommate from the “enemy” group. “I realized that there was nothing bad or immoral about her. She was a normal teenager like me, caught up in the hatred of our ethnic groups.” From that point, Doreen committed herself to challenging a Ugandan culture that not only inculcated hate but also forced women to lead constricted, unfruitful lives. She earned a BA in education and a MA degree in history from Makerere University and along the way taught in a high school and at Mountains of the Moon University.



Convinced of “the lack of widely available, accurate information and the tendency for leaders to promote politically expedient, rarely questioned versions of history,” Doreen applied to the University of Michigan’s History Department, where she is now a PhD student. For her dissertation, Doreen is investigating the ways by which the Idi Amin regime controlled and used women. As an advisor explains, this project will involve “rooting around in back rooms, in old file cabinets, and in cellars, looking for the files that can constitute an archival foundation for a gendered history of Amin’s Uganda.”

When she finishes her studies, Doreen will continue lecturing at the university, “researching issues of gender, ethnicity and politics in Africa.” Her U-M professors assure us that, given the quality of Doreen’s mind, the forcefulness of her personality, and her work ethic, she is destined to succeed.

CEW honors Doreen Kembabazi by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ELIZABETH KOOMSON *Robin Wright Graduate Fellowship*

Elizabeth Koomson is committed to helping poor rural women in her native Ghana. As a PhD student in a joint social work and anthropology program at the University of Michigan, Elizabeth is in the midst of an in-depth study of Ghanaian women who work in small-scale mining communities in the northeastern part of the country. She is examining such aspects of their lives as their health risks, the cultural barriers that keep them at the bottom of the employment ladder, and the impact of forced mobility on the daily lives and education of their children.

As Elizabeth explains, part of the problem is that, as “predominantly single parents, these women bear the responsibility of raising their children alone, without institutional structures to enforce laws compelling Ghanaian men to support the upkeep of their children.”

Elizabeth began her education in Ghana, earning a BS in agriculture and consumer science at the University of Ghana. After moving to the United States, she completed an MSW at the University of Michigan before moving on to her doctoral studies. Her career goal is to become an academic researcher, studying women and children and with specific focus on women in Kejetia, a small-scale mining community in the North Eastern part of Ghana.

According to one of her professors, when Elizabeth returns to Ghana, she will take with her a passionate desire to create social change and promote the welfare of rural women and children. Given her talent, drive and outstanding research skills, Elizabeth is destined to succeed.

CEW honors Elizabeth Koomson by naming her a Robin Wright Graduate Fellow.



ANNA KOSKIEWICZ *American Association of University Women Scholarship*

Anna Koskiewicz knows that “the tough trials and tribulations in my life have made me who I am today, an optimistic, determined, motivated individual.” Anna, raised in Hamtramck, has truly had her share of obstacles to overcome.

Though she was a happy and high achieving student in grade school, Anna became the object of bullying when she hit the 7th grade. “I was known as the heavy girl with glasses, and not a single day went by without my being teased.” Miserable and confused, Anna left school in the 9th grade. And for the next ten years she worked menial jobs and suffered many serious effects from her low self-esteem.

When she decided it was time to transform her life, Anna says, “I set a goal to graduate with a G.E.D. and sign up for college within two years. I did it in six months.” She found support at the Mercy Education Project in Detroit, where she studied for her G.E.D. Not only did Anna pass, but she did so in three months—six to nine months less than the average; and she made one of highest scores in the state on the math portion of the test!



Finally ready to face her fears about returning to school, Anna enrolled at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where she is now thriving as an undergraduate psychology major. Anna’s goals are “to graduate with honors and go on to graduate school to become a clinical psychologist. I plan to help others who have suffered bullying, neglect or abuse.”

Anna proudly proclaims that “No one is going to stop me this time.” Those who know and have worked with Anna share that belief. One supporter tells us that Anna is destined for success because of her “native intelligence, determination, intellectual curiosity, ability to prioritize essential tasks and strong desire to achieve.”

Honored to be a part of her new life and ambitions, CEW names Anna Koskiewicz the American Association of University Women Scholar.

MANDY LEE *Helen Huff Shell Scholarship*

As a child in her native Hawaii, Mandy Lee often rode buses. “I knew how important public transportation was to the community, especially for less affluent and disabled populations.” Later, on visits to Tokyo and Hong Kong, Mandy observed that transportation systems were “essentially the lifelines of these cities.” It took several years, however, for her to envision a career based upon her admiration for mass transit.

Mandy earned an undergraduate degree in international relations and Japanese studies at Tufts University and became a financial accountant in Boston, Massachusetts. While she found the work enjoyable, Mandy also felt that something was missing in her life. When local city officials announced plans to revitalize its downtown with a “vibrant transit-oriented center,” Mandy worked with a group of local citizens to write green guidelines for development. “Working with the city, in even such a small capacity, gave me the sense of fulfillment I’d been seeking,” she says.

Mandy is now in the process of turning her life-long interest into a new career. She is currently working on a Master’s degree in urban planning in the University of Michigan’s Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

When she graduates, Mandy hopes to “to merge my diversity of interests into a career helping communities encourage sustainable, mixed-use urban environments, especially around transit stations.”

Both Mandy and her professors agree that the four years she spent as a financial accountant were valuable preparation for her new career. In Mandy’s words, “I was able to develop a clearer picture of what I wanted for my life.” As one of her professors told us, “Mandy is a mature student with excellent time management skills, organizational abilities, and seriousness of purpose. She will make an impact in our field.”

To honor Mandy Lee’s accomplishments and potential, CEW names her the Helen Huff Shell Scholar.



EMMA MAACK *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“I love doing work that empowers low-income people,” says Emma Maack. After graduating with a BA in religion from Northwestern University, Emma spent five years in Paraguay and San Francisco coordinating micro-finance projects. Though she enjoyed dealing with issues of social justice and equality, Emma longed to be more engaged with the environment.

“Then I discovered that a number of people and organizations were working to bring environmental and social justice issues together.” Emma had found her professional home. She worked in her native California first to create park access for underserved youths and later to address issues related to watersheds and habitat conservation.



Beginning this fall, Emma has returned to school to learn more about the programmatic and policy aspects of environmental social justice. She is a dual master’s degree student in the University of Michigan’s Ford School of Public Policy and School of Natural Resources and Environment. It amuses Emma to recall how she always laughed off the suggestion from her father, a biochemist, that she become a scientist. “Now I’m more connected to the realm of science than my dad probably ever expected.”

When she graduates, Emma plans a career in program management and evaluation at a non-profit organization or public agency working on land and water conservation. “My aim,” she explains, “is to work on issues that specifically address social justice, such as the Big Sur Land Trust, which is engaging with farmworker communities in the Salinas Valley.

Praised by a colleague for her “dedication and commitment to underserved groups and communities,” Emma also clearly possesses all the traits of an outstanding student. One former professor described her as intelligent, hard-working, conscientious and very professional.

In support of her exciting her career direction, CEW is happy to name Emma Maack a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

SARAH MAINVILLE *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Libraries are essential to Sarah Mainville's life. "I spent my childhood in a small community library," she remembers, "It instilled in me a deep curiosity and respect for other cultures and customs. In my small town, as in many throughout the world, the library is a place for people from all economic brackets."

Later, as an undergraduate philosophy major at Grand Valley State, Sarah found refuge in the university's library. "If I needed to clear my head, I would wander through the aisles to see what I could 'accidentally' find. It opened my eyes to the connections I have with something greater than myself."

Committed to connecting with and helping others, Sarah has lived in Taiwan for four years, teaching English as a second language; she's tutored immigrant children in Seattle and served as an AmeriCorps volunteer. In all of those places, Sarah says, "the library has been my gate into the new cities that I've called home."

No wonder, then, that Sarah is beginning studies for a master's degree in library and information science from the University of Michigan's School of Information. As she explains, "I must take part in the cultivation and protection of our collective experiences. Access to information should not be limited to those with money or power, so I want to work in a community that will benefit most from the self-empowerment of access to information." Another of Sarah's goals is to organize literacy programs for students and immigrants within the community.

Sarah has impressed her friends and colleagues as one of the most kind, thoughtful, curious and interesting people they've known. One of her fans calls Sarah "a bit of a Renaissance '[wo]man' with creative outlets like sewing, knitting, cooking, gardening, writing, film making, photography, and home renovation and repair. She could teach herself how to do or make just about anything."

In support of the people whose lives she'll touch, CEW awards Sarah Mainville a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship.



PATRICIA MCCARTHY *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Patricia McCarthy began her impressive professional career as a special education teacher. After graduating with a BS in psychology from Emmanuel College, she worked for six years in Massachusetts' only psychiatric hospital for children.

Patricia left teaching to return to school at Northeastern University, where she earned both an MBA and a master's degree in information systems. Since then, Patricia has held a number of positions, including in Hewlett-Packard's University Relations Department. At HP, she collaborated with campus administrators across the country on issues related to intellectual property rights, technology transfer, and curriculum reform. In the process, she also served on National Science Foundation review panels.



Yet, through it all, Patricia kept alive her interest in clinical mental health by enrolling in continuing education programs on such topics as infant development and trauma. In addition, she ran her own private therapeutic massage practice in San Francisco for many years.

Patricia says, "I didn't realize that I've been doing social work for much of my life! All of my activities have been organized around the values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, and the importance of human relationships."

Now Patricia is back in school once again, working on an MSW from the University of Michigan's School of Social Work. Her goal is to expand and polish her social work competencies before becoming an infant mental health clinical practitioner and public policy researcher.

One of her former colleagues tells us that Patricia "has worked harder than anyone I've known to make her presence on the planet a significant benefit to those in need, and she's done so without seeking accolades." As a way to publicly recognize Patricia McCarthy for her past accomplishments and to wish her success in her future ambitions, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

CAROLINE MEEHAN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

After graduating from Notre Dame with a BA in history, Caroline Meehan worked as a fundraiser for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC. She enjoyed the position but, as she explains, “I wanted to have a more direct and meaningful impact on people and social justice issues.” Caroline found the perfect opportunity at N Street Village, a non-profit organization for homeless and low-income women in DC, where she spent over two years as a director of development.

Caroline’s experiences at N Street Village convinced her that homelessness was the social justice issue about which she was passionate. “I wanted to dedicate my career to mitigating and ultimately solving the dehumanizing problem of chronic homeless in America.” That, Caroline realized, might be better achieved by focusing on program and policy creation.

To that end, Caroline is now at the University of Michigan, earning two degrees: an MSW in the School of Social Work and a Master’s of public policy from the Ford School. Caroline sees both disciplines as essential for her future work. As she explains, “If I am going to be effective in addressing homelessness, I need to understand both the larger systems and issues that create and perpetuate homelessness and the particular challenges facing homeless individuals and those who work with them.”



When she graduates, Caroline plans to work first in the government sector and then for a non-profit organization. Given the praise she has received from her colleagues, Caroline is bound to be successful. As one former employer explained, Caroline worked tirelessly not only to raise funds but to enlighten everyone—both friends and elected officials—about the plight of the homeless. She volunteered for every task and was “an inspiration to many of us at N Street Village for her quiet and humble humanitarianism.”

CEW thanks Caroline Meehan for her dedication to others by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LAMIA MOGHNIEH *Robin Wright Graduate Fellowship*

A Lebanese native, Lamia Moghnieh describes herself as having “intimate familiarity with the contingencies of everyday life there.” As she explains, those contingencies include “massive political and social upheavals, in the form of Israeli invasions and occupation and intermittent outbursts of internal political violence that continues to this day.”

Lamia is committed to serving communities in need in her country. As one of her U-M professors explains, “Lamia is deeply tied to Lebanon and is a student who is constantly trying to find ways to give back. She prioritizes doing something for Lebanese society over her own needs and always put this at the heart of her career decisions.”

Lamia completed both a BA and an MA in psychology from The American University of Beirut and worked as a psychologist in Lebanese Red Cross clinics. She also earned a master’s degree in social sciences at the University of Chicago and an MSW from the University of Michigan. Now Lamia is a PhD candidate in the Departments of Social Work and Anthropology at U-M.



Her research focuses on understanding the politics of suffering in Shia Muslim communities, including the cultural and social difficulties faced by humanitarians trying to treat trauma victims. Lamia’s immediate goal is to complete her dissertation research with humanitarian clinics, like International Medical Corps (IMC) and the Red Cross in Southern Lebanon.

Then, as she explains, “I look forward to returning home after I receive my PhD and transmitting the knowledge I have acquired—through both teaching and practice.”

It is clear from her lengthy and impressive academic achievements that Lamia is an exemplary student. Certainly her professors believe her to be. One of her professors describes Lamia as “a terrific scholar and instructor, destined to be a great asset to the psychiatric social work and anthropology community of scholars in Lebanon.”

With gratitude and admiration for her achievements and promise, CEW names Lamia Moghnieh a Robin Wright Graduate Fellow.

ALYSSA MOUTON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Alyssa Mouton concentrated on peace and justice studies for her BA degree from Michigan State University. Her academic focus was the impetus for Alyssa to volunteer with various human rights organizations around the world. Her first experience, in Bangkok, Thailand, was with a grassroots NGO called Asia Partnership for Human Development.

“I found,” says Alyssa, “that I enjoy the challenge of living in a new country, or within a new culture, and working toward human development and poverty alleviation.” Her next job took her to a rescue mission in Denver, Colorado, where she witnessed the social and health disparities in the US. Then, seeking a global perspective to health issues, Alyssa joined the Peace Corps.

“Working as a health extension agent with a rural clinic in the Kayes region of Mali, I experienced firsthand the impact that the lack of access to quality health care has on the quality of life for individuals in developing countries.” In fact, the lessons were personal: “I struggled to maintain my own health. I felt vulnerable when I contracted illnesses I’d never had to consider protecting myself against in the United States.”

Alyssa’s experiences convinced her that “health is a fundamental human right which neither markets nor governments have been able to ensure for millions of the world’s poorest citizens.” Those experiences also led her to the University of Michigan, where she is currently a student in a dual master’s degree program from the Schools of Public Health and Public Policy. When she graduates, Alyssa plans to work with an international development agency, like Oxfam, that focuses on disaster relief and global public health, especially for women.

Alyssa wins praise for both her outstanding scholarship and her commitment to others. Her former Peace Corps supervisor describes her as an exemplary volunteer: courageous, innovative, determined, motivated and ethical.

With respect for her past and future accomplishments, CEW names Alyssa Mouton a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



NURGUL MUKHAMEDINA *Jane and Bill Bloom Scholarship*

Nurgul Mukhamedina tells this story: “Every night Alex and I waxed grocery store floors. The work was hard, but Alex was 19 and healthy and believed God had given him this way to help his mom and save for college. Alex, like thousands of children who’ve come to the US as undocumented immigrants, was ineligible for financial aid.

One night Alex went to prepare the stripping solution. When I found him an hour and a half later, he was unconscious, barely breathing, and burning with fever. I looked for a phone or an alarm but everything was locked. I kept ice from the freezers on his body and waited until the store manager arrived the next morning.

Afraid a hospital would not accept him without insurance, Alex insisted on going home. I did not speak English at the time; I was confused and afraid, so I agreed. Alex’s mom put him in bed and started to pray. Four days later, we finally took him to a doctor. Breathing the toxic fumes from stripping chemicals every day for several years had burned Alex’s lungs and so weakened his immune system that he couldn’t fight back.



I re-live that night every time I go to a grocery store. I cannot change the past, but I can create a new future.”

Nurgul studied law in her homeland of Kazakhstan before coming to the US four years ago. After earning an associate’s degree at Oakland Community College, she is now working on a bachelor’s degree in political science and economics at the University of Michigan.

When she graduates, Nurgul will work with undocumented young people, helping them pay for college. “Everyone” she says, “has the right to safe working conditions, medical care and a guaranteed minimum wage. And everyone deserves a college education.”

Her professors call Nurgul the kind of exceptional student who comes along only once in a while. Honored to support her bright future, CEW awards Nurgul Mukhamedina the Jane and Bill Bloom Scholarship.

PAULA ANNE NEWMAN-CASEY *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship*

Paula Anne Newman-Casey did her undergraduate work in biology at Reed College and in a joint program between the Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University. She then spent six months in Esperanza, Ecuador, helping to run a clinic in that small, rural community. In Paula Anne's words, "My interest in global eye health blossomed during my time in Ecuador."

She returned to the US, earned a medical degree from the University of Michigan's School of Medicine and completed a residency in ophthalmology at the Kellogg Eye Center. In the course of her studies, Paula Anne also returned to Ecuador two more times. "I re-discovered the challenges of treating chronic diseases in low-income countries, where infrastructure is very limited. In this milieu, cataract surgery can have a dramatic impact on a person's quality of life."

Paula Anne spent June, 2012, at the Aravind Eye Institute in Madurai, India, learning the specific technique for low-cost, low-complication rate cataract surgery that Aravind pioneered. Now back in the US, Paula Anne is participating in an intensive two-year master's level program in health and health care research through the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program and U-M's Rackham Graduate School.

"My aim, says Paula Anne, "is to share the Aravind technique in countries where there is a high incidence of treatable blindness from cataracts, especially among women, and to build institutional relationships that would enable me to develop local practitioners' capacity to perform the technique." Paula also hopes to obtain an academic appointment and teach medical students and ophthalmology residents.

"She brings a genuine passion to the projects in which she is involved," proclaims one of Paula Anne's colleagues, "and she will develop into a successful clinician-scientist capable of making important contributions to our specialty."

CEW is proud to support her important work by naming Paula Anne Newman-Casey a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.



RACHEL POTTER *University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholarship*

“I was an army brat,” says Rachel Potter. “By the time I graduated from high school, my family had moved 11 times and lived in posts all over the world.” From her experiences, Rachel learned firsthand about the importance of government and public policy. “When I graduated from college, I was determined to get involved in the kinds of government policy that could so dramatically affect the lives of American families like my own.”

Graduating with a BA in communications from Boston College, Rachel then sought out opportunities to deepen her understanding of how government works. She earned a master's degree in public policy from the University of Southern California. And she worked in all three branches of government, including as a lobbyist, as a legal assistant on a federal district court case, a Presidential Management Fellow in the White House Office of Management and Budget, and as a Robert Bosch Fellow in Germany.



Her experiences, explains Rachel, “have led me to understand that political decisions—while sometimes steeped in ideology—also rely on high quality information and that impartial research improves the decisions reached by policymakers.” Now a PhD student of public policy and political science at the University of Michigan, Rachel plans to become a university professor, both “creating policy-relevant research and teaching future policymakers.” Her PhD research will focus on the ways and situations in which government agencies “open themselves up to outside influence from lobbyists and other interest groups.”

Rachel has impressed her academic advisors as a “talented, dedicated, serious, creative, and curious young scholar.” One of her professors tells us that, in addition to having in-depth knowledge and understanding of the political system, Rachel excels in high level theoretical and statistical work. That combination will lead her to an important graduate and professional career.

In support of Rachel Potter's dreams, CEW names her the University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholar.

CHELSEA RANSOM *Irma M. Wyman Scholarship*

Chelsea Ransom credits “an unsuspecting advisor” at Michigan State University for shaping her career path. “Noting my unusual interest in calculus, biology, physics and chemistry, she asked why I was a psychology major.” The advisor suggested that Chelsea check out engineering. When she did, Chelsea was hooked. She transferred to the University of Vermont and earned a BS in civil and environmental engineering.

Chelsea’s first professional position, as a consultant with an firm specializing in hazardous waste management, gave her a wide range of practical experiences. It also rekindled an earlier desire to apply her engineering know-how in developing countries. So Chelsea joined the Peace Corps and became a water and sanitation engineer in Mali, West Africa—“the best decision I’ve ever made!”

In Mali, Chelsea taught villagers to build latrines and wells. At the same time, she learned the obstacles both to sustaining the improvements she’d helped to introduce and to replicating them in other regions. Studying the problem, Chelsea heard about a promising resource recovery technique called anaerobic digestion. Finding a way to make that process work has become her passion.

Chelsea is currently enrolled in a dual master’s degree program in the School of Natural Resources and Environment and the College of Engineering, specializing in sustainable systems engineering. Chelsea has ambitious plans for her next career, including starting her own business to promote and implement resource recovery techniques throughout Africa.

Those who know Chelsea say she has the qualities to make her dreams a reality. They call her tenacious, with great initiative and a passion for using her environmental engineering knowledge to benefit mankind. And they praise her “can-do” attitude. As one former colleague told us, “Chelsea finds a way to get it done.”

In honor of her entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to others, CEW names Chelsea Ransom an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.



STACI RIDGEWAY *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“As far back as I can remember,” says Staci Ridgeway, “I have wanted to be a teacher.” She credits her third grade teacher, Mrs. Russell, for inspiring her by “modeling what a real teacher can do to shape the minds and lives of young children.”

When Staci graduated from high school, she began working to save money for college. A year later, when she had her first child, Staci put that plan on hold. But she found the next best thing: a position with the Detroit Public Schools as a special education classroom assistant. She loved her job, especially when she ended up in the same elementary school where she’d been a student.

Though her colleagues encouraged Staci to earn her degree, she chose to spend her time caring for her daughter and her mother, who had been diagnosed with leukemia. Through it all, says Staci, “my mom, knowing my dreams of becoming a teacher, encouraged me to keep working. It is the voice of my mother that keeps me going to this day.”



Finally, after nearly 20 years as a classroom paraprofessional, Staci began coursework in special education at Wayne County Community College. She earned her associate’s degree in 2006 and enrolled at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where she is now working on her bachelor’s degree in learning disabilities from the School of Education.

“I live for the day that I can be in my own classroom, giving the gift of education to students in the Detroit Public Schools. It’s where I received my gift, and I want to give it back.”

Staci has earned the admiration and support of her colleagues in the Detroit Public Schools. They speak of her devotion to her students as well as her knowledge, skill, enthusiasm and strong desire to learn.

Inspired by Staci Ridgeway’s passionate belief in the potential of her students, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LATISHA ROSS *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“As an Afro-Puerto Rican-American girl from a low-income area of the Bronx,” says Latisha Ross, “I learned that my school did not expect much from me.” When her high school counselor asked to speak with her, Latisha assumed the conversation would be about her success in advanced placement classes and her plans for college. Instead, “I was lectured on the risks of teenage pregnancy.”

Fortunately for Latisha, she has also had “phenomenal academic and social support” for her educational journey. Both her mother and her aunt earned college degrees and expected her to do the same. They shared their experiences and prepared her for the obstacles she was likely to encounter.

Despite their encouragement, Latisha remembers that “the transition to college was a bumpy road.” Juggling a full-time job and a full-time evening class schedule, while also helping to care for her two younger siblings, was overwhelming. Latisha quit and took two low-wage jobs to save money for her next college attempt. After earning an associate’s degree at a nearby community college, Latisha eventually completed a BA in psychology from New York University.

Now a PhD student in the University of Michigan’s Combined Program in Education and Psychology, Latisha is committed to issues of educational inequity for underrepresented students, especially African American and Latino students. One of her current research interests is the effect of parental academic socialization on African American boys and girls. Whether her next step is as a university professor and researcher or a community activist, Latisha plans to “pay-it-forward” by preparing marginalized students for academic challenges and success.

Latisha has won admiration and praise from her U-M professors. They see her “tenaciousness, integrity and incredible work ethic,” as well as the complexity and clarity of her thinking, as evidence that “she will make her mark.”

Eager to support Latisha Ross and her commitment to future generations of students, CEW awards her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship.



LEANN SCHUERING *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

People may assume that, because Leann Schuering is working on a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in voice performance at the University of Michigan, her ultimate career goal “must be to become a famous opera singer on the stages of the Metropolitan Opera of New York, La Scala of Milan, and Covent Garden in London.” Not so, says Leann. “My dream is to do the one thing that really makes me tick: teach.”

After earning a BA in environmental studies from the University of Chicago, Leann switched to vocal performance for her master’s degree from the University of Illinois. Her education and her work as a performer eventually led Leann to a position as a voice instructor at Millikin University. It was a job she loved. Over time, Leann says, she became just as excited about working one-on-one with her students to improve their performances as she did in focusing upon her own.



Determined to reach her full potential as a teacher, Leann came to Michigan, where she now exclaims “I am becoming my best self. Everything I gain here, I will share with my students now and far into the future.” As a university professor, Leann knows she will be fulfilling her “strong, deep seated need to teach.”

Leann’s U-M advisors speak of her in superlatives, one of them calling her the “best prepared and hardest working music performance student I have ever worked with.” Leann, a “highly intelligent, deeply talented and thoroughly committed graduate student,” brings an infectious joy and energy to her work—as a student, performer and teacher.

Leann’s professors tell us that her prodigious talents “bode exceedingly well for a highly successful future in academia and performance.” Impressed with her gifts and her enthusiastic commitment to her students, CEW is honored to name Leann Schuering a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LAURA SHELPH *Molly H. Dobson Scholarship*

Laura Shelp first enrolled at Henry Ford Community College and the University of Michigan-Dearborn the late 1980's but left before finishing her degrees. Laura returned to HFCC in 2003 and was much more successful—an honor student this time around. “Being a non-traditional student,” she believes, “has been beneficial for me. I have more focus and determination.”

Laura earned her associate's degree in networking administration at Henry Ford and immediately re-enrolled at UM-D, where she is now an undergraduate student in health policy studies with a focus on information technology. Laura has also been working on the Dearborn campus for over 14 years, rising from a clerical worker to her current role as front-line manager in the school's computer labs. Laura sees her BA as a way to advance in the computer field. “I will be able to obtain a management position overseeing IT in the healthcare sector.”

Her return to school also helped mark a turning point in Laura's personal life. She ended a 15-year abusive relationship, removed herself and her two children to a safe environment and, in her words, “began on a path of growth and independence.” Laura credits First Step, an organization that reaches out to families in crisis, as helping her and her children to empower themselves. She proudly maintains a relationship with First Step, and provides monetary support of their services each year.



Those who know Laura admire the way she has faced obstacles in her life and surmounted them. As one of her professors explained, “While a university can offer opportunities, a student must be willing to take advantage of them. Laura has shown the maturity, intelligence and persistence to do exactly that.”

Sharing the opinion of another professor that “Laura Shelp will be a credit to the proud traditions of the University of Michigan,” CEW is honored to name her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

JAMIE SMALL *Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellowship*

Jamie Small is in the midst of complex dissertation research that, in the words of one of her advisors, “employs rich and innovative methodologies to questions that are original, provocative and timely.” Specifically, Jamie is investigating how attorneys and other state-level legal actors conceptualize and process cases involving the sexual victimization of men.

Jamie’s long-standing interest in issues of gender and sexuality is evident in the fact that she earned her master’s degree in human sexuality studies at San Francisco State University. Before that, she received an undergraduate degree in English from Indiana University.

Now a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan, Jamie is a student in a joint program in the Departments of Sociology and Women’s Studies. When she completes her PhD, Jamie plans on an academic career. “Being an educator is a central element in my role as a scholar,” she says, “and I suspect that teaching will be an important focus of my career.”



Jamie’s advisors are convinced that she will also make her mark as a scholar. They call her dissertation project “socio-legal research at its finest: carefully designed, deeply contextualized, theoretically driven and empirically rich.” As one of her admirers explains, “Jamie does exactly what a promising young feminist theorist is expected to do—use gender as a methodological lens to look at how the American legal system is socially constructed.”

Another of Jamie’s professors predicts that, on the basis of her research, she will become “the clear national expert” on all dimensions of the topic of male sexual victimization and the law.

Praised for her passion, creativity, and independent intellectual vision, Jamie is a social science scholar who possesses the talent and future promise this award is meant to honor. CEW congratulates Jamie Small on her selection as a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow.

S. ALLISON SPONSELLER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

As an undergraduate English major at the University of Michigan, Allison Sponseller was already developing the talents that would eventually lead her to a career in social work. Allison was an RA at Alice Lloyd Hall and a peer advisor for the College of Literature, Science and the Arts. And in both those roles she won praise from her supervisors for her intelligence, poise, enthusiasm, maturity, and ability to relate to the students with whom she interacted.

When she graduated, Allison set out on a deliberate plan to “gain experience and be certain that graduate school was the path I wanted to follow.” Her journey led her many places, including first to a health clinic for migrant and seasonal farm workers in Traverse City. Allison then moved to Roxbury, Massachusetts to work at Project Hope, a community-based organization serving homeless and formerly homeless women. In Roxbury, she also volunteered with The Food Project, an urban farm that provides food to the community and teaches about food security, access and justice.

Looking back at her diverse experiences, Allison values everything she learned about herself and about a life of service. Those experiences solidified Allison’s decision to return to school, where she is now enrolled in a master’s program in the University of Michigan’s School of Social Work. She’s excited to be learning about working with individuals and about developing programs, applying for grants, collaborating with community partners, and becoming an advocate for the community.

Next steps? Allison says, “I’d like to be a program manager in a low-income, urban, community-based organization that addresses food access and food justice.” Those with whom she has worked are confident that, given her strong sense of self and her deep commitment to others, Allison has chosen the perfect career.

CEW is delighted to support Allison Sponseller’s future by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



SILVIA TITA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Silvia Tita calls her educational path “sinuous”—including degrees in both the sciences and humanities earned in three different countries. Through it all, Silvia has known that her goal is to be “a good art historian.” It is an ambition she has already achieved and exceeded.

Based upon Silvia’s mathematical proficiency, her parents and teachers in her native Romania encouraged Silvia to follow a career in the sciences. While earning her undergraduate degree in computer science from Polytechnics University, however, Sylvia also completed a degree in the history and theory of art at the University of Arts.

A number of personal and financial hardships led Silvia to Toronto, where she earned an MA in the history of art. Eventually she made her way to University of Michigan and the History of Art Department, where she is now in the process of completing a dissertation on the Early Modern Period. Her research addresses the Donation of Constantine and “the intersection of patronage, image-making and ecclesiastical politics of the sixteenth and seventeenth century papacy.”



Silvia is a student of Latin, Italian and French languages; she has studied in Paris and Rome; and she has studied in various institutes, including the Newberry and Vatican libraries. Her professors call her an erudite scholar, an extremely gifted and genuinely hard-working student. As one of her advisors tells us, Silvia “is deeply learned, well read and strikingly creative, to a degree rarely seen among graduate students today.”

When Silvia completes her PhD, she plans upon either an academic career or a position as a museum curator. Whatever path she chooses, Silvia’s advisors assure us that her abilities as a scholar will lead to important insights and contributions to the field of art history.”

CEW supports Silvia Tita and her work by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

CAROLINE VANSICKLE *Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellowship*

Caroline VanSickle's commitment to the field of paleoanthropology is personal. She grew up in Kansas at a time when many local school boards did not allow evolution to be taught during the school day. "I was," she explains, "one of a handful of high school students who gave up my evenings twice a week for additional lessons. I find it ridiculous that I had to go to such lengths to learn about a concept so central to biology."

Caroline's passion for both biological research and enlightened science education stems in part from that experience. She earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology from Kansas State University before coming to the University of Michigan, where she is now a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology.

Caroline's research centers on the anatomy of the birth process. "My goal," she says, "is to situate women within our evolutionary history." Specifically, Caroline is investigating how childbirth has evolved over the past 200,000 years, based upon the skeletal remains of early humans and Neanderthals. Her research, which she has conducted at the Smithsonian and the British Museums of Natural History and at similar institutions around the world, may also shed light on a possible connection between female pelvic structure and the extinction of the Neanderthals.

As important as her research, however, is Caroline's commitment to improving science education. One of her goals is to become a university professor and mentor, encouraging more students—especially women—to study the sciences, including the historically male-dominated field of paleoanthropology. Another goal, says Caroline, is to "actively encourage a better understanding of science in general by finding public contexts in which to discuss science, biology and evolution."

Caroline is honored for her potential as a researcher. "We regard her as a future star in the field of anthropology," says one of her advisors, "and as a public intellectual outside the academy."

CEW is proud to name Caroline VanSickle a Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow.



JENNIFER VAUGHN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Jennifer Vaughn began playing cello when she was six years old. Blessed with a renowned instructor and a loving, supportive mother, Jennifer excelled as a student and musician. By the time she was 25 years old, Jennifer had a B.Mus. in music performance from Oberlin College and an M.Mus. in music performance from Kent State University. In addition, she had won many accolades and embarked on a promising career in an award-winning string quartet.

But all was not as it seemed. Jennifer was also in the midst of a very dark period of her life, drinking heavily and increasingly unable to perform or function. With help from a lot of people, however, Jennifer began her journey back. “As baffling and terrifying as my life was, today I am blessed with optimism, hope, and a new perspective on life.”



One part of that new perspective is Jennifer’s commitment to “be of service and to reach out my hand to people in need.” Another is her renewed love for playing the cello. She performs in a variety of settings but is also aware of the need for a more secure career. The ideal answer for Jennifer is to become a music librarian, which combines her love of her art with her desire to help others.

Jennifer is now working on a master’s degree from the University of Michigan’s School of Information. In her words, “Flexing my somewhat atrophied academic muscles, I dove into my new courses excitedly and wholeheartedly.” She looks forward to her coursework and to her future career as a music librarian.

Her professors and supervisors are Jennifer’s biggest fans. They praise her intelligence, love of learning, attention to detail, care for others, and passion for music. She is, says one admirer, “on the perfect path.”

Excited by the opportunity to help Jennifer Vaughn reach all of her dreams for the future, CEW names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

CICI VU *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“A few years ago,” says Cici Vu, “I decisively gave up my successful extended paralegal career to pursue a new path in environmental public policy.” It was not a capricious decision: Cici had charted the path years earlier but waited for the opportune time to act.

The impetus was Cici’s 2010 selection as a fellow of the Coro Center for Civic Leadership Program in San Francisco. Coro is a prestigious non-profit, non-partisan organization that provides experiential and skills-based training to groups of diverse leaders at different stages of their professional development.

Cici excelled in the Coro Program. Its range of field assignments and projects gave her renewed conviction and enthusiasm to continue her education. At the same time, as Cici explains, “In leaving my job, I was acutely aware of the risks in changing careers in mid-life, but I believed facing them and being true to my mission would render far greater rewards.”

It had been a while since Cici earned an associate’s degree in paralegal studies from DeAnza College and a subsequent BA in political science from UC Davis. Now, as a master’s degree student the University of Michigan’s Ford School of Public Policy, Cici is specializing in environmental policy and looking forward to her next career in environmental and energy governmental affairs, diplomacy or consulting.



Cici’s commitment to social and environmental justice is long-standing. She spent three years as a member of the Board of Directors for the California ACLU before moving to Michigan, where she is currently a member of the our state’s ACLU Board of Directors.

Those with whom Cici has worked speak of her in superlatives. They especially praise her commitment to under-privileged and under-represented people and her “amazing ability to bring people together.” She is, they say, “poised for greatness.”

CEW looks forward to following Cici Vu in her exciting new career, and we are honored to name her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MICHELLE WILLIAMS *Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship*

According to Michelle Williams, “My grandmother was my mom, my dad, my mentor and my hero. And it is her advice I took one last time three years ago when I decided to follow my dream to be a doctor.” Born in Brazil but raised by her grandmother in Guyana, Michelle Williams took a job with the Guyana national television station when she graduated from high school. She won media scholarships to Japan and England to learn the ins and outs of news production and then worked as a news anchor on Guyana television for more than a decade, before moving to the US in 2000.

Michelle continues to be inspired by her grandmother’s example. “She was a superwoman with an incredible work ethic. She never believed in giving up, she never believed it was too late to follow your dream, and she always believed in doing your best, win or lose.”



When Michelle finally began her college education at Lake Michigan College in 2010, she was the mother of three children. With her grandmother’s example to guide her, Michelle worked the midnight shift at a nearby hospital at the same time she began her journey to medical school. Michelle has just started her first semester as an undergraduate, studying biochemistry at the University of Michigan. Next comes medical school and a career as a family physician.

“It is no surprise to me,” says Michelle, “that I am considered a non-traditional student, because my entire life has been out of the ordinary. Though I’m grateful for the life I’ve had, I aspire for my children to have a better one.”

It is also no surprise that, following her grandmother’s example, Michelle is a hard worker. Among the many positive qualities that Michelle’s professors and advisors attribute to her, none is more frequently mentioned than her “amazing work ethic.”

In support of Michelle Williams’ dreams, CEW names her the Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

ROXANNE WING *Linda J. Rider Scholarship*

“It was the pride I felt for my father and our family business that inspired me to dream of starting my own business someday,” explains Roxanne Wing. But her life “veered in other directions.” She earned a BA in accounting at Walsh College and then married and became a full-time mother. “I thoroughly enjoyed my time with my two children but, as they left for college, I knew I had reached the end of that portion of my journey.”

Roxanne began the next phase of her life by becoming an MBA student at the University of Michigan-Flint. “Though this exciting experience,” says Roxanne, “I have begun to rediscover my abilities and my passion for business.” She has also renewed her forgotten dream of being an entrepreneur. When Roxanne completes her degree, she plans to use her newfound knowledge to expand the home-based nutritional business she recently created.

The process of learning has awakened in Roxanne a desire to empower others. “I am excited about becoming an educator and sharing my knowledge and experience to help others achieve their goals.” When she graduates, Roxanne also hopes to teach business classes at a community college and serve as a model for would-be women entrepreneurs like herself.

Roxanne’s U-M-Flint professors call her as an outstanding student and leader with strong ethics, business acumen and professional demeanor. They predict that she will succeed in achieving her goals and having a positive impact.

In support of her ambitions for the next stage of her life journey, CEW is happy to name Roxanne Wing the Linda J. Rider Scholar.



LAUREN YELEN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

Lauren Yelen's interest in science originally led to her earning a BS in biology—along with a BA in French—from Arizona State University. It then brought her back to her home state, where she completed a master's degree in ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Michigan. Aiming for a career as a laboratory scientist, Lauren has spent the past few years researching the effects of climate change on the tundra ecosystem in arctic Alaska.

Plans for her future changed, however, when Lauren “crossed paths with landscape architecture students” and discovered her ideal career—which will combine her interest in ecology with her love of nature and “making things.”

“After purchasing a home in Ann Arbor,” says Lauren, “I planted an organic vegetable garden and replaced much of my front lawn with low maintenance native plants. The experience was strong affirmation that landscape architecture is something I am passionate about.” Lauren also became a master gardener, a process that taught her the importance of “understanding ecological principles when designing public spaces.”



This is Lauren's first semester as a master's degree student in the landscape architecture program in the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment.

When she graduates, Lauren will devote herself to designing public and private outdoor spaces that both accommodate and mitigate ongoing climate change. She is also interested in helping to revitalize urban communities with edible gardens and green spaces.

Those who've worked with Lauren know she has the intelligence and creative talent to thrive in her new career. As one of her advisors tells us, “Landscape architecture combines Lauren's passion, her training as an ecologist, her skills in organization, and her ability to understand new ideas and concepts.”

To support her growth and success, CEW names Lauren Yelen a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LEAH ZIMMERMAN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarship*

“I spent most of the last decade with grassroots environmental organizations in Eastern Russia,” says Leah Zimmerman, “working alongside those fighting to save one fifth of the world’s fresh water and one quarter of the North Pacific’s wild salmon.” Those experiences led Leah to an unexpected conclusion: “I want my life’s work to be about cleaning up and protecting my own home, Michigan.”

Leah’s career path began when she read *Crime and Punishment* as a teen-ager. Her fascination with Russian language and culture led Leah to major in Russian and East European studies at Yale, to do post-graduate study in Vladivostok, and to work for over five years with a San Francisco-based, international-conservation organization called Pacific Environment.

Leah is now jointly enrolled at the University of Michigan as a master’s degree student in the School of Natural Resources and Environment and an MBA student in the Stephen M. Ross School of Business. She plans to use her enhanced leadership skills and strengthened scientific foundation to manage a Michigan-based environmental nonprofit organization. “My vision, she says, “starts with watersheds. Recognizing the wealth of the region’s lakes and rivers and the ongoing global conversation about water supply, I intend to pursue holistic watershed conservation in Michigan.”



Leah has inspired supreme confidence and admiration in everyone with whom she has worked. Her former colleagues laud her leadership abilities, “brilliant strategic mind,” and enthusiasm and commitment to grassroots environmental conservation. “I am confident,” says one of Leah’s former supervisors, “that she will become a leader in her chosen community and area of specialty.”

According to Leah, “To be close to family and working to protect and improve my home, these are things that motivate and satisfy me.” On behalf of her fellow Michiganders, CEW is delighted to thank Leah Zimmerman for her commitment to our environmental well-being by naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Thank you!