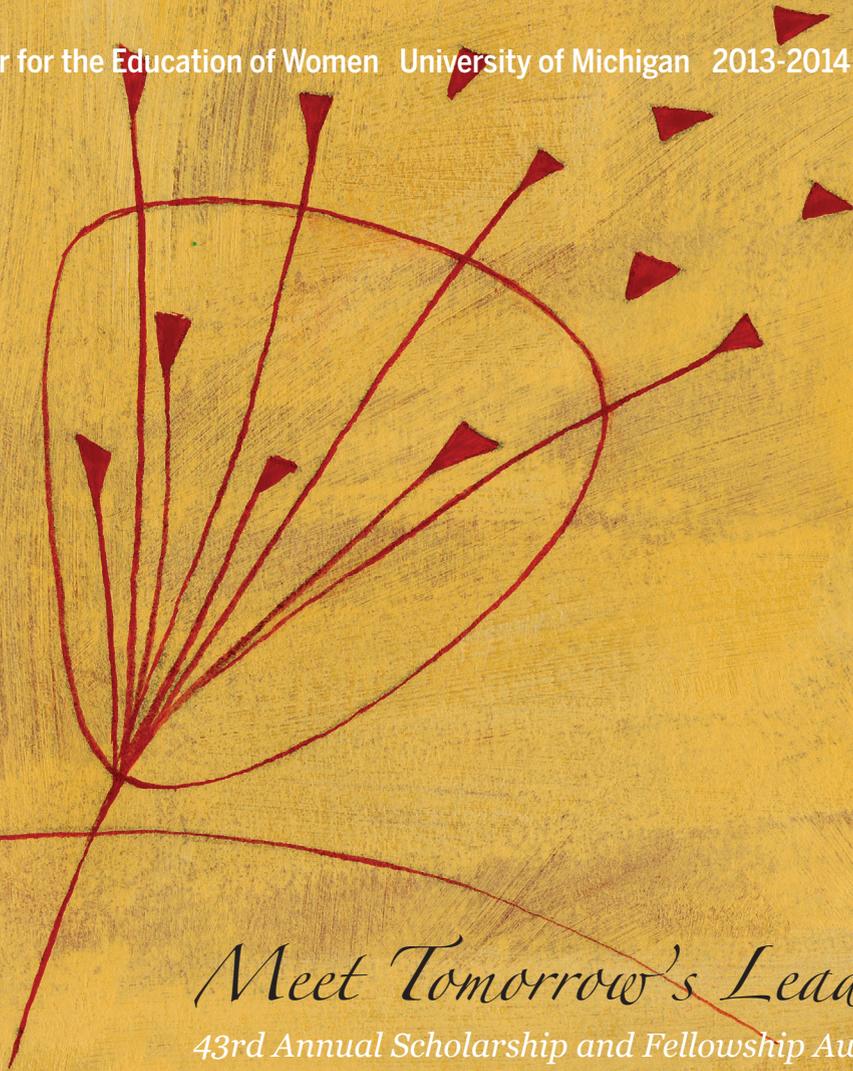


Center for the Education of Women University of Michigan 2013-2014



Meet Tomorrow's Leaders
43rd Annual Scholarship and Fellowship Awards

*Celebrating 43 years
of awarding scholarships*

CEW would like to thank Deborah and Michael Tirico for their support of the scholarship program, especially this awards booklet.

Celebrating 43 years of awarding scholarships

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**CENTER FOR THE
EDUCATION OF WOMEN**

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

330 East Liberty St. Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

734.764.6005 www.cew.umich.edu

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The Program

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REMARKS

Shani Allison, M.S. 2009 CEW Irma Wyman Scholar
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PRESENTATION OF CEW SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

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Margaret (Peggy) Thompson, M.D.
*Associate Dean, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, Grand Rapids,
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CLOSING REMARKS

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CEW Scholarship Program

COMMEMORATING 43 YEARS OF SUPPORTING WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL DREAMS

Today we celebrate the 43rd anniversary of the CEW Scholarship Program by welcoming 54 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 43 years. Women at the University of Michigan now make up about half the undergraduate population and 45% of graduate student enrollment. 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.

It's clear that CEW scholarships still fill an enormous need. This year's 54 scholars and fellows—like the 1493 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 former scholar expressed her thoughts this way:

“You have been chosen for this award because others see your potential. Believe in yourself, as we do, and use this gift to hone your talents so that you can pay it back at some future date in some way to help other women prosper. This is the model of women helping women to succeed; the foundation of CEW.”

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 5.25 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.

Before returning to their studies, scholars over the years have held nearly every high-paying or minimum-wage job, from politicians and government officials to Peace Corps volunteers; from auto assembly workers to medical professionals; and from stay-at-home moms to professional musicians, to name only a few.

Continued on the next page

CEW scholars today are 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 2013-2014 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 57.

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.” The scholarships were designed specifically to assist students who were often unable to access other scholarship funds: part-time and non-traditionally aged students. Then, in 1990, the Margaret and Harry Towsley Foundation guaranteed the future of the program with a \$1 million endowment. In the twenty-three years since then, 532 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 54 this year. Donors from all walks of life, but sharing a passion for the power of higher education to change 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 2013 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:* NANCY GRIGG

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.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* MOLLY KLEINMAN

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 *Recipient:* ELISA DACK

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:* CINDY BICK;

JILLIAN GROSS; DANA KORNBERG; DANIEL PEPPER

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: APRYL STEINER*

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

RUTH JEANETTE BUTTREY SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: ALEXANDRA APOSTOLIDES*

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.

CEW GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: KIM LIJANA*

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

COLLEGIATE SOROSIS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* JEAN MRACHKO

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:* JENIFER DALLESKA; ANGELA MORRIS

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

THE ELIZABETH M. DUSSEAU SCHOLARSHIP and THE MARGARET DUSSEAU BREVOORT SCHOLARSHIP *Recipients:* KARAM AL-ROUSAN; NANCY BRENNAN

The Elizabeth M. Dusseau and Margaret Brevoort Dusseau Scholarships, being awarded for the first time this year, were both endowed by Elizabeth Dusseau, who died in May, 2012 at the age of 101. Ms. Dusseau and her sister Margaret were born in Monroe, Michigan to a family that highly valued education for both male and female children—at a time when such a belief was somewhat radical. Also strongly engrained in their family was a commitment to women's rights. With such an upbringing, it is no surprise that Elizabeth and Margaret made their marks upon the world. Elizabeth Dusseau earned her BA and master's degrees in Public Health from the University of Michigan and became an expert in parasitology. After many years of dedicated service to the University, Ms. Dusseau was promoted to assistant professor, a rank she held until she retired in 1978.

Margaret Dusseau Brevoort also began her long career, as a social worker, in Ann Arbor. She spent most of her professional life, however, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as a renowned and early proponent of social work education and the executive director of Milwaukee Psychiatric Services Agency. The Dusseau sisters were both life-long supporters of equal rights for women. At Elizabeth's request, her CEW Scholarship will be awarded to "a woman in the field of science," and Margaret's will go to "a woman in the field of social work."

U-M FACULTY WOMEN'S CLUB SCHOLARSHIP (FWC) *Recipient: SARA JOSEPH*

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.

THE BEATRICE KAHN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: LESLIE MCGARVEY*

Beatrice Kahn began graduate work in the early 1950s, about 10 years before the Center for Education of Women was created. She was then the busy mother of three young daughters, and eager to prepare for a career in her newly chosen field of social work. Her entry into the MSW program was hastened by her husband's unexpected cancer surgery; she was concerned that she might become the sole or primary support of her children. She completed her degree in social work and went on to 29 years as a gifted therapist and marriage counselor at Child and Family Service. Her own experience and her long friendship with Jean Campbell and other CEW leaders made Bea Kahn a dedicated and enthusiastic supporter of the Center. This year, for almost the first time, she will not be at the annual scholarship meeting; she died in November 2012 at the age of 94. Her husband, her family, and her many friends have established the Beatrice Kahn Scholarship at the Center for Education of Women in her memory.

ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: KATIE ST. CLAIR*

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: SARAH MCKAIG*

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: CHANI HODONSKY*

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

MARY MALCOMSON RAPHAEL FELLOWSHIP *Recipient: CLAIRE HERBERT*

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: SUSAN LOWE*

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

HELEN HUFF SHELL SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: MARISSA DASILVA*

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: AJA BONNER; STEFFANIE BRISTOL; ADRIENNE CALL; COLLEEN CAMPBELL; KAREN CAMPBELL; LISA CLOTHIER; KESHIA COLEMAN; KATHERINE GURDZIEL; ERIN HAMILTON; SHANNAN HIBBARD; KARLA JOHNSON; CLAIRE KANG; LISA LANGDON KOCH; SANDY LAHOUD; SONYA LEWIS; SANDY MAKLED; GRETCHEN MITSCHELEN; KAREN PROCOPIO; MEGHAN RILEY; JENNIFER SCHAFFER; DANA SCHLEGEL; DONNA SMITH; KIMBERLY SPRINGER; EMILY TALBOT; RONNIE TRONT; KRISTIN VAN AUSDAL AND MICHELE WAGNER*

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 *Recipient: NAMA KHALIL*

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: APRIL PARRISH; OLGA SHALEV*

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

KARAM AL-ROUSAN *Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar*

Soon after Karam Al-Rousan graduated from dental school at the Jordan University of Science and Technology, she established her own dental practice, including volunteering her services in remote, under-served areas of the country. She closed the practice four years later to move to Michigan with her husband.

After the birth of their two children, Karam put her desire to return to school on hold for a while. “Six busy years passed by,” she explains. “The kids are now in grade school, and I am a fellow in the Graduate Prosthodontics Program in the University of Michigan’s School of Dentistry.”

Karam’s interest in prosthodontics stems from watching her aunt’s 10-year struggle with missing teeth. “The defining moment was seeing the tears of joy in my aunt’s eyes when a prosthodontist placed two implants to stabilize her ill-fitting lower denture, enabling her to eat properly and smile more confidently.”



Karam has definite standards for her future prosthodontic career: “A good clinician should use only products and techniques that have been proven safe and effective by independent research and clinical trials. Thus, it is imperative that teaching, research and clinical practice be integrated to benefit from each other synergistically.” When Karam completes her master’s degree she intends to impart these principles to undergraduate and graduate dental students and to apply them in her own advanced practice.

The professionals with whom Karam has worked commend her commitment to thorough and ethical practice. In the words of one advisor, “She is compassionate and does not compromise when it comes to the dental health of her patients.” Given those qualities, in addition to her skill and hard work, Karam is destined for the frontline of prosthodontic research and practice.

Karam Al-Rousan is the first Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar.

ALEXANDRA APOSTOLIDES *Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar*

When Alexandra Apostolides completed her BA in English and philosophy from Amherst College, she could not find a job that offered her the fulfillment she sought. After a few false starts, says Alexandra, “I realized that, if I wanted to engage in work that was challenging and took place on a sophisticated level of ideas, I would have to specialize in a field that combined challenging theoretical concepts with real-world objectives.”

Alexandra returned to Greece, where she spent her childhood, hoping to find a direction for her future. “I also wanted to understand the issues afflicting Greece more deeply than I had known them growing up,” she explains, “and to discover a way for me to be useful.” To that end, she volunteered her talents to help assimilate the growing numbers of immigrants.

While in Greece, Alexandra also worked as an editor, translator and teacher, but she did not find her calling. “I wanted a job where there was more action, and a measurable impact on my environment. I had always loved math and physics and had just read Brian Greene’s *An Elegant Universe*—a book that shook me with its astounding blend of philosophy and physics. Feeling the need to act quickly, and trusting my instincts, I made a decision and went for engineering.”



Next, Alexandra selected the University of Michigan as the best place to prepare for her new career. Changing disciplines so dramatically has involved lots of soul searching and catching up, but the challenges have only strengthened her commitment to engineering.

When she completes her second-bachelor’s degree in civil engineering, Alexandra hopes to continue with a master’s degree and then to focus on energy and water resource issues.

Alexandra’s success in adapting to and excelling in her studies is impressive. According to her professors, she performs at the top of her classes and has a bright future in engineering.

Alexandra Apostolides is the 2013 Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

CINDY S. BICK *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow*

Cindy Bick is currently a doctoral student in the University of Michigan's Department of Ecology and Environmental Biology. She also has a master's degree in EEB from U-M as well as both a BA in social science and a BS in biology from San Jose State University.

With the funds from the Bailey Fellowship, Cindy traveled this past summer to the Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands archipelagos to do essential research for her PhD. She observed the endangered tree snail family Partulidae—approximately 128 species endemic to Pacific oceanic islands.

According to Cindy, the fact that Partulidae have a wide and diverse range suggests that prehistoric human beings are responsible for the dispersal of these life forms from their original sources to other habitats. Cindy is interested in tracing the evolutionary history of these life forms and “genetically reconstructing their regional anthropogenic movement.”

The importance of her work is two-fold. Discovering the origin of the Partulidae will first help biologists to understand the ways that early human cultures of the region migrated to various island locations. Additionally, Cindy explains, “the Solomon Islands are presently the focus of intensive industrial logging, with depletion of harvestable timber on many islands projected by 2015. An updated taxonomy will help us design a rational conservation program for the snails. This may be our last chance to study many of these partulid populations (‘among the most imperiled organisms on the planet’) and to retrieve the latent evolutionary and historical information they embody.”

According to one of Cindy's advisors, during her initial field expedition to Papua New Guinea, “she proved to be a highly determined and successful field biologist....These are among the most remote inhabited places on earth, and I am most impressed by her intrepid competence—she is completely unflappable!”

Cindy Bick is a 2013 Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

AJA BONNER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Aja Bonner's commitment to social equity and community resilience comes in part from the fieldwork she did in Chicago's poorest neighborhoods during her years as an undergraduate education and social policy major at Northwestern University.

After earning her bachelor's degree, Aja stayed in Chicago and, as one of the city's emergency management coordinators, continued working in the same impoverished areas of the city. But, as Aja explains, "I became frustrated by being able to help communities cope only with disasters, when many of them faced acute needs even in the absence of a crisis."

Aja then spent four years with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention supporting international security issues, including in Tanzania and other international sites. It was a different aspect of her position at the CDC,

however, that most powerfully influenced Aja to re-shape her career: During a rotation with the Healthy Community Design Initiative, Aja discovered the relationship between "the built environment and human health" and knew she'd found her calling.



In 2012, Aja made "the difficult decision to follow passion over job security." She left the CDC to enroll as a master's degree student in the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. When she completes her studies, Aja will work as an economic and community development specialist, in preparation for her long-term goal of leading a metropolitan planning organization. As an urban and regional planner, says Aja, "I can

transform socially and economically distressed neighborhoods—without displacing indigent citizens—into healthy, resilient and economically vital communities."

Those who have worked with Aja especially commend her strengths in communication, leadership and interpersonal relationships. One of Aja's advisors describes her as a multi-talented individual: a "wunderkind of service" to the College in addition to an excellent student. "She is," explains another professor, "devoted to the planning profession and its need to assure access to a high quality life for everyone."

Aja Bonner is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

NANCY BRENNAN *Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar*

“I grew up not knowing my strengths or having any real sense of myself except in my schoolwork,” says Nancy Brennan “and that fell apart my freshman year.” Coming from a small town, Nancy struggled to adjust to the university environment. She now laments, “I didn’t ask for help, feeling both that it would prove I couldn’t cut it and that I didn’t deserve it.”

Without guidance or self-awareness, Nancy floundered. She eventually graduated from the University of Michigan with a BA in French but then, at age 35, found herself without a job, going through a divorce and struggling financially. Despite “my unrelenting drive up to that point to work as much as possible so as to avoid poverty, I had nothing to show for it.”

Nancy’s epiphany came when she realized that she had been putting her efforts into doing what she thought she “should” instead of pursuing a life that felt meaningful. In a previous job as an HR executive with Target Corporation, Nancy had worked with low-wage employees: “I connected them to local agencies, petitioned the corporate office for increased pay, helped them develop promotion plans. It was the most fulfilling part of my work, my own therapy.” She acknowledged to herself that she wanted to be a therapist. It took her a while to recover financially and to convince Michigan’s School of Social Work that she was a “worthy investment.” Now she is in her final semester as an MSW student and already planning her next steps: she hopes to earn a U-M fellowship to extend her clinical training, and ultimately have a clinical practice working with disenfranchised populations.



She’s all confidence now. Nancy has collected lots of supportive friends and colleagues along her journey. They look forward, with affection and confidence, to her bright future as a social worker.

Nancy Brennan is the first Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar.

STEFFANIE BRISTOL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Seeking to make a difference in the world, Steffanie Bristol considered a career in medicine, politics or business. She then took an “Introduction to Public Health” course and discovered that her seemingly disjointed career interests were intricately intertwined.

Steffanie sought ways to explore her fit in this new, interdisciplinary field. While completing a BS in health science at Clemson University, she led a group of students to secure funding for a health clinic for non-English speaking Latino immigrants. She also completed a medical mission in Alajuelita, Costa Rica with the Foundation for the International Medical Relief for Children.

Realizing the importance of combining her on-the-ground experience with research and administrative skills, Steffanie became a health policy researcher, first at Massachusetts General Hospital and then at the Harvard School of Public Health. To prepare herself to fulfill her career goals, Steffanie returned to school at the University of Michigan, where she now earning both a master’s degree from the School of Public Health and an MBA from the Ross School of Business. To gain a more holistic view of health care, Steffanie used her graduate internships to gain exposure to the health insurance industry at Health Care Service Corporation and the medical device industry at Medtronic, Inc.



Steffanie worries that “the trajectory of the health care industry threatens our nation’s long term fiscal stability.” Her goal, she says, is to be “a dynamic health care leader with the mix of business acumen, health care knowledge and research skills necessary to advance organizational performance, translate research into practice, and improve health outcomes.”

Everyone with whom Steffanie has worked uses superlatives to describe her intellect, passion, work ethic, and leadership skills, among other impressive traits. As one former colleague assures us, “Steffanie will quickly become an integral and high-valued member of the health care industry.”

Steffanie Bristol is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley scholar.

ADRIENNE CALL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“Growing up in a small town in rural northern Michigan,” says Adrienne Call, “I did not worry about having enough to eat or receiving good medical care. Not forced to focus on these basic needs, I was able to grow, learn and mature into adulthood. With age came my awareness that these are rare opportunities for many Americans.”

Adrienne began her college career plagued by questions: “Why, in the wealthiest country in the world, are over 17.9 million families unable to reliably put food on the table? Why are 48.6 million people without adequate health care services?”

After graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in psychology, Adrienne set out to help eliminate such inequalities. She rebuilt homes in Texas and worked with the homeless in Colorado; she became the coordinator of a cancer clinic at the University of California San Francisco, addressing clients’ medical, psychological and financial issues.



Adrienne came back to the University of Michigan when she realized that something was still missing. “I was making a difference in individual lives, but I was not having an impact on the processes that cause medical disparities. I felt like a band-aid, applying topical solutions after the fact rather than helping to prevent problems.”

Adrienne is now working on a master’s degree in the Ford School of Public Policy and an MSW in the School of Social Work. As part of her educational path, Adrienne also continues her public service. She spent the summer of 2012 in Bolivia, providing medical services to underserved indigenous populations.

With her deep commitment to serving others and her strong academic abilities, Adrienne has proven to her professors that she has a bright future as a medical social worker and patient advocate, developing innovative programs, shaping policy and implementing change.

Adrienne Call is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

COLLEEN CAMPBELL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“The choice to return to school was not an easy one,” admits Colleen Campbell. “I was living comfortably in New York City, working as the Assistant Director of Financial Aid at The Juilliard School. I loved the city, was close to my family, and enjoyed my job. But every day, I saw the immediate effects of confusing aid applications, insufficient scholarship offers, burdensome regulations, and crippling student loans.”

Knowing these were pervasive and persistent problems, she understood the need for systemic changes in higher education policy. In order to play a role, Colleen knew she’d have to make some changes in her own career.

Colleen returned to the University of Michigan, where she’d earned a BA in the history of art in 2008. This time, Colleen is a master’s degree student, working on dual degrees in the Ford School of Public Policy and the School of Education’s Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education. Colleen is enhancing her studies by working in broader academic circles—both as a Board Fellow for the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra and as an intern for U-M’s Living Arts residence hall community. She also spent this past summer in Washington D.C. as an intern in the Department of Education’s policy research unit.



Colleen is preparing herself to be part of national policymaking, focused on “the ‘iron triangle’ of higher education: cost, quality and access.” It is a goal for which she is well suited, according to her advisors and employers. They praise her insightfulness and ability to motivate others and assure us of her “vast potential” to contribute to a bright future for

higher education in this country.

Colleen Campbell is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KAREN CAMPBELL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Karen Campbell's parents instilled in her a strong work ethic, and they encouraged her to get an education. But, says Karen, "I knew no one personally who had graduated from college, and I never saw the fruits of what the elusive college degree could provide." As a result, she lacked the drive and determination for academic success, and a college education remained just a dream.

"But in 2009 all that changed!" Karen proudly explains. "After years of working low-paying jobs that led to other low-paying jobs without room for advancement, I realized that the impoverished life I'd had as a child had become the cold, hard truth of my adult life. I wanted more for my children and myself."

So, Karen and her best friend decided to become each other's role models. Together they enrolled at Henry Ford Community College, and together they transferred to the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where Karen is now working towards her undergraduate degree in behavioral sciences.



Karen's educational aspirations reach beyond a bachelor's degree. She's planning to earn a graduate degree and become a school psychologist. "I hope to help teens cope with family tragedies and give them the guidance they need to continue their educations. I want to be a productive member of society—a role model for young women in Detroit, something I never had while I was growing up."

Another inspiration for Karen is to be a role model for her two children. "The legacy I leave my kids has to amount to more than a first class ticket on the poverty train of life."

Both in her jobs and as a student, Karen has shown qualities that predict her future success. She is, as one of her employers describes her, "a driven, dedicated person who completes every task." In the words of another of her admirers, Karen has a "quiet inner resolve" to achieve.

Karen Campbell is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LISA CLOTHIER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“My journey to Social Work has been a wonderful one,” exclaims Lisa Clothier. It has also been lengthy. Lisa married out of high school and travelled with her Marine husband to many different states. Along the way, she attended various colleges—a total of eight in all—whenever she was in one place long enough to do so.

“I knew I wanted to complete my education, but I also had to work to help support and raise our family of three children.” Lisa finally earned a BA in marketing from Baker College in 1995. In addition to holding several jobs since then, she has been a constant and enthusiastic volunteer.

As Lisa explains, “I have always loved serving people.” She worked with the Gleaner’s Food Bank and currently volunteers at Mott Children’s Hospital. Lisa also recently left her position as Director of Volunteer Services at the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Michigan. At Make-A-Wish she observed the inspiring way that medical social workers interacted with the ailing children and their parents and “the spark was ignited.”

Lisa had found her true calling.

She has just begun her first semester as a MSW student in the University of Michigan’s School of Social Work. “It has been a long time since I was in a classroom,” she acknowledges, “but I know that my dedication to my education and passion to help others will see me through.” When she graduates, Lisa plans to be a medical social worker in a hospital setting.



Lisa has won the admiration and confidence of everyone with whom she has worked. “Her life,” says one of her former colleagues, is “the absolute definition of the ability to persevere and succeed with one’s plans.” With her high standards, personal integrity, enthusiasm and empathy for others, Lisa will make a wonderful social worker.

Lisa Clothier is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KESHIA COLEMAN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“I have not always valued formal education,” Keshia Coleman admits. “Not because I wasn’t a good student but because I was a self-motivated learner who would go to libraries to read and research all the subjects that interested me. So my thought was ‘Why do I need to go to college? That’s only for people who want to be doctors and lawyers.’”

That philosophy served Keshia well for many years. She pursued her interests in “how to build houses, how the human brain works, and how to play the piano,” even if her eclectic knowledge did not lead to a career. Instead, Keshia worked in childcare and retail jobs after marrying and giving birth to five children.

The changing point in Keshia’s life came, she explains, when she learned about the problems facing American schools. “I became troubled at the outlook for my daughters’ academic success, so I decided to try my hand at homeschooling them.” The project was so successful that, not only did her daughters excel when they returned to public schools three years later, but Keshia had found a true reason to enroll in college herself.



Having discovered her talents for teaching, especially reaching out to struggling students, Keshia earned an associate’s degree at Washtenaw Community College before becoming an undergraduate elementary education major in the University of Michigan’s School of Education. When she graduates, Keshia plans to enter a graduate program to become a school psychologist.

Keshia Coleman has discovered her purpose. “I want to make a change in someone else’s life that propels him or her into a bright and productive future. I also want to be the domino effect that sets off a reaction that changes the world.”

Keshia’s colleagues describe her as a dedicated mother, keen observer, critical thinker and brilliant teacher who is “fundamentally kind, incredibly witty, and eager to learn.”

Keshia Coleman is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ELISA DACK *AAUW Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar*

After earning an associate's degree from Ferris State University in 2002, Elisa Dack became a practicing dental hygienist in West Branch, Michigan. Elisa's original plan was to continue her education and become a dentist. Then "motherhood stepped in," she explained, "and dental school was not a viable choice for me while my children were young." Instead, Elisa combined her hygienist career with various volunteer roles in the community, especially devoting herself to the oral health and general welfare of area children.

With all three of her children now in school, Elisa has become a student once more. She's enrolled in the E-Learning Program from the University of Michigan's School of Dentistry, a part-time, on-line curriculum that allows working dental hygienists to earn bachelor's degrees. This time, Elisa plans to continue her education with a graduate degree. "I'm not ruling out dental school completely," she explains, but the path she's on "feels right for now."



Elisa sees her current training as a dental hygienist as an avenue to many exciting career choices, possibly including teaching at the university level. Being a student again is revitalizing for Elisa, inspiring her to become active in professional organizations. One day, she says, "I hope to be a large part of change in our state of Michigan, allowing dental hygienists to become advanced practitioners, giving care to under-served, low-income individuals who may not receive any kind of oral care."

Professors in the E-Learning Program commend Elisa for her high-level achievement. She has, says one of them, "a proactive approach to learning" and a sincere dedication to be the best she can be. In response to Elisa's stated goal to make an impact on her field, they assured us that given her intelligence and commitment, Elisa is capable of doing anything she wants in her career.

Elisa Dack is the 2013 AAUW Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

JENIFER DALLESKA *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*

Jenifer Dalleska had a childhood dream of being a doctor, complete with a lunch box filled with tissue ‘bandages’ for her injured dolls and bottles of water ‘medicine’ for her stuffed animals.

That dream faded by the time Jenifer was a teen. In fact, she admits, “I decided that college in general was a waste of time.” She attended her local community college only because her parents insisted. Even then, Jenifer didn’t enjoy her classes—until she took a course for emergency medical technicians and re-discovered a love for health-care and education.

Jenifer set her sights on becoming a nurse, but her plans were waylaid by what she calls the “age-old story of girl-meets-boy-and-gets-married, boy-gets-job-in-different-state-and-couple-moves.” Eventually, she and her husband returned to Michigan, and Jenifer took nursing classes one-at-a-time while working full time.



That plan turned out to be frustratingly slow. Now, after giving birth to a daughter and losing her job due to a faltering economy, Jenifer has decided it’s time to devote herself to earning her degree. She is currently a bachelor’s degree student of nursing at the University of Michigan-Flint. Jenifer, the formerly reluctant student, has found a love of learning. When she completes her BSN, Jenifer aspires to continue her education with a doctorate in nursing practice. In the meantime, she’ll return to her former role as an emergency room nurse.

Jenifer exemplifies all the best qualities of returning students. She is diligent, inquisitive and committed to learning everything she can. In addition, she is—in the words of one of her admirers—“the queen of time management—she works, she cares for her family, she tutors anatomy and physiology students, all the while performing very well in her courses and giving back to her community.”

In other words, like her fellow recipients, Jenifer personifies the type of student for whom a CEW scholarship is intended.

Jenifer Dalleska is a 2013 Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

MARISSA DASILVA *Helen Huff Shell Scholar*

Marissa DaSilva is currently an RN in the pediatric cardiology unit at the University of Michigan's Mott Hospital. A complex personal and professional path led her to that position—and to her desire to become a pediatric nurse practitioner.

Marissa's initial career goal was veterinary medicine. She took pre-vet courses, worked as an assistant in veterinary hospitals and earned an associate's degree from Washtenaw Community College. Along the way, she experienced high points—her marriage and the birth of her son; and low points—a car accident and long recovery period and her son's medical problems. "Over the first few months of his life," she explains, "he needed multiple transfusions to address a blood disorder."

Marissa spent the next few years focusing on her family and earning a bachelor's degree in biology from Eastern Michigan University. However, her son's early, but now resolved, medical problems inspired Marissa to switch her focus from veterinary medicine to biological research. She worked for five years as a research lab technician. Then, realizing that she missed having direct contact with patients, she earned a BSN from the University of Michigan's School of Nursing.



Now Marissa is back in school completing the requirements for her MS degree in pediatric primary care, which will enable her to combine her love of science with the passion she feels for healing the sick and injured. Marissa's new goal is to be a pediatric nurse practitioner in a community- or hospital-based clinic and eventually to become a preceptor to nurse practitioner students.

According to her colleagues and supervisors, Marissa has already proven herself to be an excellent nurse, "one of the best." They predict that she will be a successful nurse practitioner and "a wonderful addition to the field of primary care."

Marissa DaSilva is the 2013 Helen Huff Shell Scholar.

NANCY GRIGG *Gail Allen Scholar*

When Nancy Grigg was 9, she taught her first pupil—a “dutiful yet difficult” kindergarten-aged brother who agreed to “play school” with her. When her mother passed away three years later, Nancy became teacher, caretaker and mother-figure for all three of her younger brothers.

Through it all, Nancy held on to her dream of being a teacher. She attended college for three years before leaving to marry and give birth to a son. When she later took a job as a tutor for at-risk students, Nancy was delighted to once again be in a classroom doing what she most enjoyed.

Nancy’s life took another dramatic turn when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. “Many people would have found it devastating,” she admitted “but I did not. Unlike my mother’s brain aneurysm, my disease is not fatal. I am relieved that I can live a full life. It’s a catalyst to make every moment count and to live with intention.”



Nancy enrolled at the University of Michigan-Flint to complete the bachelor’s degree in English she’d started years ago. With encouragement from supportive faculty members, Nancy flourished. She took a job in the U-M-Flint Writing Center, a rewarding experience that she says has “confirmed for me that I have the qualities of a teacher.”

Sensing that her goal of being a college writing teacher is getting more real all the time, Nancy is now a master’s level English major at the University of Michigan, specializing in composition and rhetoric. She is also busy sharing her theories and teaching experiences at national conferences and building a strong network among writing center specialists.

All of her enthusiasm for her new career, along with her natural talent for inspiring students, has Nancy’s professors and colleagues convinced that she has a bright future in academia.

Nancy Grigg is the 2013 Gail Allen Scholar.

JILLIAN GROSS *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow*

Jillian Gross earned a BA in history and religion from the University of Michigan in 2001. Then, both before and after a master's degree in nonprofit leadership at Seattle University in 2008, Jillian worked in several professional and volunteer settings: as a development officer at the American Cancer Society and Habitat for Humanity, as well as an educator and curriculum advisor.

The deciding moment for her future came, says Jillian, "after a trip to India with Habitat for Humanity. I knew I would return and, since that experience, I have immersed myself in learning about Indian society." Now a PhD student at U-M's Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, Jillian is committed to helping improve higher education in India.

According to Jillian, "India currently has the largest and youngest population in the world, and yet the capacity of the postsecondary education system extends to less than ten percent of the college-age population. Recognizing the looming educational, workforce, and economic crisis foreshadowed by these statistics, the country is engaged in a massive undertaking to provide skilled training to 500 million people by 2022." One avenue is a system of community colleges, inspired by the US model.



With support from a Bailey fellowship, Jillian spent the summer in India, working with India's National Council on Skill Development. She both conducted her own research related to the organizational development of community colleges and worked on complementary

NCSO-sponsored investigations.

Jillian plans to become a university faculty member, and to support policies in emerging economies that adapt the community college model in pursuit of social and economic justice.

Praised by her advisors for both her commitment to marginalized populations and her success as a researcher and scholar, Jillian is poised to strengthen community colleges and "enhance the international standing of the University of Michigan."

Jillian Gross is a 2013 Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

KATHERINE GURDZIEL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“As children, my brother and I wandered the fields near our home, looking for insect cocoons and bringing them home to watch them hatch,” recalls Katherine Gurdziel. That early interest in biology, she explains, has led—through a circuitous route—to her career in bioinformatics.

Katherine enrolled at Smith College with the intention of becoming a doctor and using her interest in biological processes to help people. As a sophomore, Katherine was diagnosed with a chronic illness, which eventually forced her to withdraw from school. When her symptoms were under control, Katherine returned to Smith but realized she needed a new career plan, one that would be less physically taxing than medical school.

Computer science seemed the perfect answer. Katherine graduated with a BA in computer science and took a position at Harvard’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital, applying mathematical modeling to determine the factors in age-related sleep patterns. Excited by her new career, Katherine returned to school, earning a master’s degree in bioinformatics from Brandeis University, and then worked as an analyst with MIT’s Whitehead Institute. There, says Katherine, “I most enjoyed studying gene functions and interactions in normal and disease states.”



That interest has led Katherine to the University of Michigan, where she is currently a doctoral student in the Medical School’s Bioinformatics Program. She plans to become a medical researcher, either in academia or industry. “I am proud to have overcome the setbacks caused by my chronic illness,” says Katherine, “and to have found a way of fulfilling

my ambition to make a difference in medicine.”

Katherine’s professors are confident that she will indeed make a difference. As one advisor tells us, “This tenacious young woman will reach her goal of utilizing advanced bioinformatic approaches in the context of developmental biology and cell signaling to make an impact on human disease. I expect great things from this outstanding young investigator.”

Katherine Gurdziel is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ERIN HAMILTON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Even before completing her BA in psychology from Texas A&M, Erin Hamilton was beginning to realize that her true career lay elsewhere. After graduating, Erin took on the difficult job as an investigator with Child Protective Services. It was, she says, “one of the most challenging experiences of my life,” and it taught her that “hard work and white-knuckled dedication cannot take the place of feeling called to a profession.”

Erin tried other jobs but eventually let herself listen to the long-ago buried voice urging her to pursue her interest in design—and the relationship between design and human behavior. It turned out to be Erin’s “true fit” and led her to earn both a BS in interior design and an MS in design studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It also initially involved long commutes from her home in northern Wisconsin and weeks away from her new husband.



After postponing her admittance to the University of Michigan for one year in order to care for her newborn daughter, Erin is now a doctoral student in both the College of Architecture and Urban Planning and the School of Natural Resources and Environment. She proudly proclaims herself to be “part researcher, part designer and part psychologist.” Having discovered a love for teaching, Erin plans to become a university professor and to conduct multidisciplinary research about “the role of mindful design as a mediator of personal well-being and pro-environmental behaviors.”

Erin’s background in psychology and design, as well as her natural gift for interdisciplinary thinking, is impressive. “She is,” explains one of her professors, “adept at grasping how fundamental concepts in one domain of inquiry might inform complementary concepts in other domains.” In addition, Erin’s doctoral research will address an essential question: how can the world’s population maintain sustainable life on this planet?

Erin Hamilton is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

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.”

Amina Hassan is the 2013 Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.

CLAIRE HERBERT *Mary Malcolm Raphael Fellow*

For most of her life, Claire Herbert wanted to be an architect. Then, after two years at the University of Oregon, her goal changed. “I learned all of the horrifying ways the built environment has contributed to and exacerbated inequality,” says Claire. “Realizing that architecture was not the best way to prepare myself to help rectify the social problems of racism and poverty, I switched my major to sociology and political science.”

Today, as a PhD student in the University of Michigan’s Department of Sociology, Claire is committed to the city of Detroit—as a teacher, researcher and resident. “The birth of my daughter in 2012 gave me a new perspective on my adopted city. As a mother and academic, I worry about the trash incinerator a few miles away that spews black fumes. I worry about the women who were sexually assaulted outside the bar at the end of my block. And I wonder what I would do if my daughter were old enough to attend one of Detroit’s overcrowded, underperforming schools, and how I would feed my family healthy food if I couldn’t drive to the suburbs each week for groceries.”



Claire points out that the pernicious conditions in Detroit are not unique and that studying them “will help us understand the conditions of distressed urban environments throughout the US and across the world.” For her dissertation, Claire is focusing on “resistant property actions,” which she describes as some urban residents’ grassroots tactic of appropriating private property for homes, gardens and other aspects of their survival.

Her research is important. In the words of one of Claire’s professors, “Her dissertation will make a significant contribution to studies about the capacity of individual acts of resistance to produce social and legal change.” When she graduates, Claire will continue to combine research, teaching and activism as a university professor. Given her “exceptional promise” and commitment to social justice, Claire is poised to make a difference in our state and beyond.

Claire Herbert is the 2013 Mary Malcolm Raphael Fellow.

SHANNAN HIBBARD *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“I marinated in music when I was a child,” explains Shannan Hibbard, “sitting between my parents at least three times weekly as they sang the alto and tenor lines in church hymns.” But maintaining her love for music was a challenge, given her “very strict religious environment,” and music instructors who seemed “stoic and emotionless” or who “yelled and intimidated students.”

Fortunately for us, those negative experiences led Shannan to become a music teacher herself, one who could help children “experience the transformative power of music-making in a loving, thoughtful and respectful environment.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in music education at the University of Michigan, Shannan chose to work in the inner city. “In a time when it had the lowest high school graduation rate in the nation, I taught in Detroit as an act of social action, a commitment to an underserved population of students.” Shannan calls her time in Detroit “a dance of learning and applying.” In the process, in an effort to find answers to her challenges as an educator, Shannan became a researcher.



Between teaching positions, Shannan earned a master’s degree in music education from U-M’s School of Music. Now she’s back once again, working on a PhD in music education—driven, she says, to become a university professor, to improve her practice as a music teacher educator, to pursue more formal research and to serve her local community.

Shannan wins accolades from everyone with whom she has worked and studied: “The best teacher I have ever known”; “a model for others”; “a most musically creative teacher”; and “an intelligent scholar destined to have a major impact in the field of music education.”

As one of her admirers explains, “Every future teacher who has the opportunity to work with Shannan is lucky.”

Shannan Hibbard is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley scholar.

CHANI HODONSKY *Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar*

Chani Hodonsky is in awe of her work as a medical researcher, “doing experiments that no one in the world has ever done before. When they are finished, I am the first person in history to know the results....Such true discovery is something few people are fortunate enough to experience.”

When Chani graduated from the University of Michigan with an undergraduate degree in German, she intended to go to medical school. She moved to Virginia for a while, where working in the office of an orthopedic surgeon reinforced her interest in human physiology. She returned to Michigan and, to fortify her medical school credentials, took a job as a research technician in the University of Michigan Health System.

It was an eye-opener, Chani says. “I discovered a whole different way of benefitting my community.” After five years as a research technician, Chani changed her plans. Instead of being an MD, she decided to combine her passion for basic science and community involvement with a master’s degree in public health. To that end, she is now studying hospital and molecular epidemiology in U-M’s School of Public Health, with the goal of becoming an academic or government epidemiologist—or perhaps of entering a PhD program.



Chani’s interests extend beyond the laboratory and into the realm of Ultimate Frisbee, another of her passions. She is currently the director of the Ann Arbor Ultimate League as well as coach of the University’s ultimate team.

“Enthusiastic” is the word that her friends and advisors use most often to describe Chani, praising both her hard work and her generous, can-do spirit. “She devotes herself fully to the things she loves most.” As another of her colleagues tells us, “Chani has the potential to be a true scientific visionary. She is always coming up with new ideas to pursue and new potential solutions to old problems.”

Chani Hodonsky is the 2013 Aline Underhill Orten Foundation scholar.

KARLA JOHNSON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Karla Johnson's dedication to the under-served members of our society comes from her own childhood experiences. Growing up in a single-parent home in inner-city Dallas gave her first-hand insight into how families cope with divorce, financial struggles and other tremendously challenging circumstances.

At the same time, says Karla, "the lessons of my childhood taught me resilience, ingenuity and a firm belief that I can accomplish anything I set my mind to." Her background is also the catalyst behind her decision to pursue a career in family and health law.

Karla began her academic journey with a BA in psychology from Smith College. She is now at the University of Michigan, completing dual graduate degrees: a JD from the Law School and an MPH from the School of Public Health. In the process, Karla has taken advantage of every opportunity to work in new and challenging environments to assist individuals and communities in need. She has provided vital services in various legal clinics, interned with a US Court of Appeals judge as well as the HIV Law Project and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and even incorporated student mentorship into her busy professional life.



Karla has her future career clearly worked out. "I first plan to work for a legal aid organization to address clients' legal and non-legal needs. I also plan to pursue federal clerkship opportunities. My ultimate goal is to serve in a position that allows me to work on health law and policy issues that impact women and low income communities of color."

Her commitment to others is clearly the quality most admired by Karla's colleagues and advisors. As one of her professors tells us, "Karla is a crucial voice in the classroom." And with her intelligence and tenacity, she will be a similarly important voice for the women she represents in the future.

Karla Johnson is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

SARA JOSEPH *University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholar*

“To me,” says Sara Joseph, “social justice is both a career and a calling. From an early age I felt compelled to participate in what Jews call *tikkun olam*, or ‘repairing the world’.” In high school, for example, Sara contributed her baby-sitting money to help build latrines in Honduras and organize children’s camps in the Ukraine.

After graduating from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill with a BA in international studies, Sara spent five years working in non-profit organizations, helping them strategize, evaluate, market and raise funds. In one instance, Sara moved to Nicaragua to work for Witness for Peace and re-energized the organization with a successful communications and development program.

To capitalize on her past experiences and her gift for building interdisciplinary relationships, Sara is now working on an MBA in the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business, honing her skills both inside and outside the classroom. She works with the Social Venture Fund, a student-led venture philanthropy program. She is also a consultant and board member for the Third Wave Foundation, supporting social enterprises led by young women.



This past summer, Sara spent three months in Ghana, working with the global health organization Abt Associates. Through all of these projects, Sara is focused on becoming the kind of “cross-functional leader who can fit into the nonprofit culture and bring the full MBA skill set to bear.”

Sara plans to use her education in the field of international development and global health, ultimately becoming the program manager of a world-wide philanthropic foundation. One of her former colleagues declares that “Sara’s professional career is bound only by the goals she sets for herself” and she is bound to succeed. “Every organization needs a Sara Joseph, and Sara with an MBA will be even better.”

Sara Joseph is the 2013 University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholar.

CLAIRE KANG *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

With her belief that architecture deals with both tangible and intangible environments, Claire Kang focuses on the discrepancy between the limited capacity of the existing infrastructure and the needs and desires of the generations yet to come. She describes architecture as “a constant theme in my life.” However, she had never truly understood what “architecture really is and what it means to me” until she began collaborating with professionals from other disciplines at work.

After getting her undergraduate degree in architecture, Claire’s intention was to immediately enroll in a graduate architecture program, but family obligations intervened. As a native Korean who moved to Canada with her family, she often struggled with the balance between her academic career and family. She postponed her education when her mother returned to Korea in order to care for Claire’s ailing grandmother. Nonetheless, she never abandoned her love of architecture, and took jobs that kept her close to the discipline. Working as a graphic designer, for example, allowed Claire to “think outside of architecture and yet keep in close proximity to it.”



Looking back, Claire values the years in the work world for drastically enriching her view on architecture. Now, with this richer awareness, appreciation and range of experiences, Claire has returned to school. She is currently a master’s degree student in the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan—where she has worked on diverse team projects including the development of a prototype bed for pediatric cancer patients and the designing of energy-efficient urban data centers.

When she graduates, Claire plans to work for a design practice that specializes in urban infrastructural renewal projects, thus focusing on the creation of active public spaces for local communities. Her interest in sustainability is just one aspect of Claire’s academic career that wins praise from her professors. They also describe her as an excellent student and an “articulate, creative, thoughtful and talented designer” destined to succeed.

Claire Kang is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

NAMA KHALIL *Robin Wright Graduate Fellow*

Simply put, Nama Khalil is an Egyptian-born, American artist retooling to become a cultural anthropologist. More accurately, from the beginning of her academic career Nama's focus has been the Muslim world. She's simply adding the skills of ethnographic research to her talents as a photographer, in order to more fully explore the politics and culture of her homeland.

Nama earned a BFA from Cleveland Institute of Art in video and photographic arts. She then came to the University of Michigan for a master's degree in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies. Along the way she gained extensive experience as a photographer, exhibitor and curator, including internships at both the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn and the Arab American Institute in Washington DC.

Now a doctoral student in U-M's Department of Anthropology, Nama is in the midst of making preliminary explorations for her future research. With support from the Robin Wright Fellowship, she spent the past summer in Cairo, observing female youth activists and artists and collecting their stories related to the 2011 "Arab Spring" revolution.

Nama is looking ahead to her dissertation project, which she describes as an exploration of the gendered aspect of political issues—as well as the role that images played in the "Arab Spring." As Nama explains, "With the Egyptian uprising, observers frequently remarked on how the visual arts were harnessed in mobilizing dissent. YouTube videos, street art, graffiti slogans, posters, online digital media, and other materials played an integral part in instilling a consciousness of resistance amongst participants and observers worldwide." Nama is interested in how that visual culture contributes to identify formation, nationalism and socially constructed gender norms in the Middle East.

Praised for bringing to her work a rare combination of analytical ability and visual sensitivity, Nama aims to become a university professor, eventually hoping to move to Egypt and teach at the American University in Cairo.

Nama Khalil is the 2013 Robin Wright Graduate Fellow.

MOLLY KLEINMAN *AAUW Scholar*

According to Molly Kleinman, “We have a very long way to go to ensure that all of society benefits from the research conducted inside the walls of universities.” An eight-year staff member in the University of Michigan Library system, including as Special Assistant to the Dean and as the institution’s first Intellectual Property Specialist, Molly is an expert on the subject and an avid supporter of open access to information.

Molly’s academic journey began with a bachelor’s degree in English from Bryn Mawr College. She then spent a few years in New York—by day, an associate at a literary agency and by night, a member of the Wow Café, an experimental women’s performance collective in Greenwich Village.

Molly came to the University of Michigan in 2005 to earn a master’s degree in information systems. She discovered “almost immediately that my knowledge about publishing contracts, copyright, and communicating with authors was valuable in the context of academic libraries.”



Now a PhD student in the School of Education’s Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, Molly is developing the skills in research methodology and data analysis that she will need in the future. “We have,” she explains, “the technological means to open up access to so much of what we produce on campuses, be it a patented innovation or a scholarly journal article. But legal and political barriers prevent it. My goal is to help figure out how to remove those barriers and to reform the role of universities in the future.”

It is a goal that Molly’s admirers are confident she can achieve. In fact, says one of her former employers, “I am convinced Molly can accomplish anything.” Her strengths as a leader, writer, public speaker, complex thinker and passionate advocate mark Molly as a “promising star in academia.”

Molly Kleinman is the 2013 AAUW Scholar.

LISA LANGDON KOCH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

After completing an undergraduate degree in international studies at Boston College—including an internship at the State Department in Washington D.C.—Lisa Langdon Koch worked for a year on a Defense Department project.

Then, after earning a master’s degree in public policy from the University of Michigan, Lisa took her career in a very different direction. She moved to Chicago to become the inaugural Director of Public Policy with one of the city’s major food bank and anti-hunger organizations. However, Lisa soon became frustrated by the agency’s lack of precise information about the extent and characteristics of hunger in Chicago and by her limited ability to conduct the necessary research.

Lisa returned to the University of Michigan in order to enhance her skills as a researcher and policy expert. Now a doctoral student in political science, Lisa is focusing her interests once again on international relations. Her dissertation research explores the problem of nuclear proliferation and “the internal and external

circumstances that matter when leaders make decisions about how and whether to develop nuclear weapons.” Lisa points out, for example, one of our country’s current dilemmas: “Should the US engage with or threaten Iran in order to prevent them from acquiring nuclear weapons?”

When Lisa completes her studies, she intends to become a university professor, committed both to teaching and to “producing scholarship that expands our knowledge of international relations and effective foreign policy making.”

Lisa’s advisors unanimously praise her talents as a teacher and scholar. They are especially excited about her dissertation, “a remarkably sophisticated and extremely promising project that will highlight all her many strengths as a scholar” and become the definitive work on the topic of nuclear proliferation. In addition, as one of Lisa’s professors explains, international security research is heavily male-dominated. Lisa’s work is a perfect step forward in efforts to advance more women in the field.

Lisa Langdon Koch is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.



DANA KORNBERG *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow*

When Dana Kornberg completes her PhD—a joint degree from the University of Michigan’s Departments of Sociology and Urban and Regional Planning—she will become a university professor. In preparation for that role, she has earned a BA in humanities from Florida State University and an MA in Asian cultures and languages from The University of Texas.

Dana’s passion is India, where she has twice lived and worked: Once as a program officer with the William J. Clinton Foundation’s HIV Initiative and once as an intern with the Grameen Creative Lab.

As Dana explains, her current research “grows out of a puzzling phenomenon: Why have India’s urban administrations begun promoting household waste incineration—which exacerbates air pollution, threatens public health, and reduces employment—instead of strengthening existing recycling systems that provide livelihoods to over four million people nationwide?”



With the support of a Bailey fellowship, Dana will investigate the question this year in Delhi. She will focus both on “top-down” policy formation and “bottom-up” impact of the policies on Delhi’s waste collectors, labor activists and local citizens. As part of her project, Dana plans to accompany waste workers as they go about their daily work.

Citing UN figures, Dana explains that “a majority of the world’s people now live in cities. Because governmental institutions and urban planning policies are at the center of determining what kinds of places these cities will be, there is an urgent need for studies that analyze the actual effects of policies on productivity, quality of life, sustainability, equity and infrastructure.”

According to her advisors, Dana is a “remarkable emerging scholar who possesses a quickness of mind, great powers of insight, and sharp theoretical and analytical skills.” Her research is a prism through which she will contribute to understanding broad issues of urban living.

Dana Kornberg is a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

SANDY LAHOUD *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Born in Saudi Arabia of Lebanese descent, Sandy Lahoud grew up in France and moved to the US with her family in 2001. Sandy's parents and her three older brothers are all science-oriented: architects, mathematicians, doctors, or engineers. So it is no wonder, says Sandy, that she too is a scientist.

Sandy began her education at Henry Ford Community College and went on to earn double bachelor's degrees in computer engineering and electrical engineering at the University of Michigan. Since then, Sandy has worked at Terumo Cardiovascular Systems, a firm that designs and manufactures devices to sustain patients' lives during open-heart surgeries. Over her six year tenure at Terumo, Sandy has been promoted from Engineer I to Senior Engineer and recently to Product Development Senior Supervisor.

Wishing to refine her managerial leadership skills and thereby enhance her career, Sandy has returned to the University of Michigan-Dearborn to earn a master's degree in engineering management. Being a good leader is very important to Sandy. She is proud of the many ways she has mentored others along her academic and professional path—and even in her role as a black belt judo coach. “Helping those around me to achieve their goals allows me to create a positive atmosphere; it has always been a factor in any direction I take.”



Sandy has already achieved remarkable success in her career and is highly regarded by her colleagues and professors. In the words of one of her supervisors, Sandy “has grown from an excellent engineer able to attack a variety of technical issues to a leader who can envision various paths and work through key issues.” Given the tenacity and enthusiasm with which she tackles any challenge, Sandy is setting herself on a course to even greater achievement.

Sandy Lahoud is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

SONYA LEWIS *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

This is what Sonya Lewis tells us: “I have come to my interest in public health via two pathways: as a physician and as a mother. I am a psychiatrist who worked in clinical practice for eight years. I am also the mother of two daughters. In my medical practice, I treated many patients whose lives were irrevocably altered by substance abuse and addiction. As a mother who volunteers at my children’s public school, I interact with young students who struggle with obesity and consequent physical challenges.”

Because of Sonya’s experiences, she is determined to become an expert in wellness and disease prevention. So she has returned to the classroom once again. Sonya has already earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and Judaic studies from the University of Michigan and an MD from Jefferson Medical College. Along the way, she has also been a student at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Cal Poly, and Bryn Mawr College.



Now, as a first-semester MPH student in the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health, Sonya is focusing on Health Behavior and Health Education and planning for a new career. “I will gain the skills and knowledge necessary to shift my focus from attending to individual patients to developing community-focused interventions.”

“I deeply believe that human suffering—both emotional and physical—can often be avoided when vulnerable people are identified early and are empowered to make positive choices about their own health.”

Those with whom Sonya has worked are not surprised by this shift in her career goals. As one of her former colleagues tells us, “Dr. Lewis always integrates personal and professional ethics into her practice of medicine. She has the dedication necessary to pursue this new path and to make significant contributions to the field of public health.”

Sonya Lewis is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KIM LIJANA *CEW Graduate Scholar*

Kim Lijana knows that her parents' decision to move their young family from the Bronx to Greenwich, Connecticut—in order to secure a better education for Kim and her brother—is both a reason for her own educational opportunities and an impetus for her desire to help under-represented students to succeed.

Kim earned a BA in English at Miami University. In the process, she tutored students in rural Ohio. “I found,” she explains, “students their school systems had failed: sixteen-year old dropouts; seventeen-year-olds about to graduate but reading at a first-grade level; and brilliant but bored, unsuccessful students.”

Kim's outrage led her to earn a master's degree in secondary education from Johns Hopkins University and to become an urban teacher. Here, Kim discovered another sad truth: “Students can be inspired, can improve multiple grade levels in one year, can even want a better future but, if they are not given the resources and necessary information,” they face a hard road to college success.



While teaching at a Washington DC school, Kim offered to set up a special class for upperclassmen needing support for applying to college. “When the principal said the program was unnecessary, I gave my resignation letter at the end of the year and took a job at an area charter high school.” There Kim created a very successful college counseling program.

Kim is now a PhD student in U-M's Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, completing a dissertation that tracks the college process for high-achieving students from under-served high schools. When she graduates, Kim plans to combine college teaching with her crusade to improve college access for under-supported students.

Kim's advisors praise her commitment to social justice, her extensive background in education, and her leadership abilities. They predict that her dissertation research will “break new ground in advancing the education of promising low-income urban students.”

Kim Lijana is the 2013 CEW Graduate Scholar.

SUSAN LOWE *Linda J. Rider Scholar*

“Being a college student at this point in my life is something I never dreamed could happen,” says Susan Lowe. Soon after dropping out of high school and marrying, Susan realized “it would not be the fairy tale marriage I had always hoped to have.”

Knowing she needed to provide financial and emotional stability for herself and her two children, Susan earned a GED and embarked on a successful 20-year career as a medical billing specialist and office manager. Eventually, explains Susan, “The toll of a marriage fraught with abuse and strife caught up with me.” She and her husband divorced, but several years of physical, emotional and financial struggles followed.

Today Susan has discovered a zest for life. “I have the freedom to pursue my passions, something entirely new for me. It has taken me half my life to find my voice.” Susan is an undergraduate at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, double majoring in sociology and women and gender studies. Through coursework in an environmental science class, Susan has developed a strong interest in protecting the environment. She is now hoping to pursue a degree in environmental law at the University of Michigan, enabling her to work to protect future generations from industrial pollutants.



Susan also devotes her time to a wide range of volunteer campus organizations. As she explains, “I feel a need to give back.” To that end, Susan recently founded the Association of Non-Traditional Students (ANTS), an organization dedicated to giving non-traditional students a stronger voice on campus.

It may have taken Susan a long while to find her voice, but in her short time on campus, she has become an active and admired member of the community. Her advisors praise Susan’s questioning and open mind and her infectious excitement for learning: “She has a passion for helping others and a gift for lifting people’s spirits.”

Susan Lowe is the 2013 Linda J. Rider Scholar.

SANDY MAKLED *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“We’ve all heard the saying ‘It is never too late to get an education,’” says Sandy Makled. “I have fought to make it my reality. School has always been the place where I feel most comfortable.”

In high school, Sandy excelled in all her courses, especially math. Later, over the course of nine years, she earned associate’s degrees in accounting and liberal arts from Henry Ford Community College. During that time, Sandy also married and had four children. She eventually decided to take a break from her studies and focus solely on raising her family. To indulge her passion for education, Sandy became involved in her children’s schools—working as a noon-hour supervisor and a PTA officer.

When it was finally time for Sandy to continue her own education, she realized that her career goals had changed: “Watching my children grow up and observing the impact I had on them, I realized my true calling in life is to be a teacher.”



Sandy traces her commitment to learning to her own background. She is the youngest of 10 children of immigrant parents. As the only one of her siblings to earn a college degree, Sandy believes she is called to instill the value of education in children and make a difference in their lives. To that end, Sandy is now working toward her undergraduate degree in education, with a major in mathematics, at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She plans to teach middle school math and science and eventually to earn a graduate degree in administration and become a school counselor or principal.

Her commitment to high standards, hard work and organization explains much of Sandy’s success. As one of her professors explained, “Sandy stands out among her peers for knowledge, wisdom, and—most notably—her strong work ethic. She is an example to others and deserves to be acknowledged.”

Sandy Makled is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LESLIE MCGARVEY *Beatrice Kahn Scholar*

Leslie McGarvey learned to admire dentists at an early age. “When I was 13, I tried to remove my orthodontic braces with a pair of pliers. My dentist sat me down and talked to me about my teeth and my ambitious plan to destroy my braces. Instead of being angry with me, he treated me with kindness and respect and taught me that we were partners in my dental health care.”

Later, when Leslie was seeking information and support for her dream to enroll in dental school, she reached out to several dentists in her community for chats in coffee shops, informational phone interviews and clinic visits. “The professionals I met were open, honest and willing to mentor me,” she recalls. Discovering that the dental establishment encourages such mentorship, as well as donation of time and resources to the community, Leslie knew she was meant to be a dentist.

Her decision meant switching careers. Leslie had graduated from the University of Scranton with an undergraduate degree in biology and immediately taken a position in an analytical lab. She later became an environmental engineer for General Motors. It was work she enjoyed and, after several years and many promotions, Leslie was travelling around the world conducting environmental and safety audits at GM facilities.

In the back of her mind, however, Leslie envisioned a career that would allow her to help people more directly. She decided to leave her position in order to become a student in the University of Michigan’s School of Dentistry. When she completes her DDS, Leslie plans to practice dentistry in a public health clinic or veteran’s hospital.

In addition to what one of her advisors describes as her “dental acumen,” Leslie brings to her studies all the skills and experiences of her former profession. Given her fierce determination to learn, Leslie has proven that she will be a valuable dentist and public servant.

Leslie McGarvey is the first Beatrice Kahn Scholar.



SARAH MCKAIG *Sarah Winans Newman Scholar*

Sarah McKaig graduated from Western Michigan University in 2003 with dual undergraduate majors in French and international and comparative political science—with an emphasis on French Canadian politics. “In retrospect,” she laughs, “I’d love to sit down with myself-at-that-time and give her a reality check: The state of Michigan does not have much need for those majors!”

The silver lining is that, after a long search, Sarah found a job as a physical therapy technician. She has worked for the same organization, Physiotherapy Associates, for over seven years, rising to the position of Patient Services Manager and becoming “thrilled with the work.”

Then, as Sarah explains, “in 2008 my husband and I welcomed twin boys into our lives, and I felt a new drive to continue my education. I want my sons to know that their mother followed her dreams to practice physical therapy and improve others’ quality of life. I want them to be proud of me, so I changed some things around in my life to make my dream a reality.”



Sarah began by taking pre-requisite courses at nearby community colleges. Now she is a full-time student at the University of Michigan-Flint, completing her degree to become a doctor of physical therapy. Sarah already knows the direction she’ll take in her new career. She plans to continue her education with a certification in women’s health and to specialize in lower back and pelvic floor treatments.

The talents and dedication that Sarah has already shown as a long-time physical therapy technician are sure signs that she’s headed for future success. Calling Sarah both motivated and “calmly confident,” her advisors assure us that she will be an incredible asset to the field of physical therapy and especially to the women she’s chosen to help in her future work.

Sarah McKaig is the 2013 Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

GRETCHEN MITSCHELEN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Gretchen Mitschelen describes herself as a displaced homemaker who escaped an abusive husband. She is proud of the fact that, while “I could have been driven to despair because I was uneducated and unemployed when I left my marriage, I chose instead to channel my feelings in a positive direction and create my own future.”

Gretchen’s future lays in the field of nuclear engineering. She was inspired to choose that field in part by the presence of two nuclear power plants in her area. “It has always piqued my interest about what it would be like to work at one of the plants,” Gretchen explains. When Lake Michigan College introduced a new program in energy production, Gretchen decided to explore it and eventually earned her associate’s degree. “I have found the subject matter fascinating. Learning about how things work on the atomic level is one of the most interesting things I have ever done.”



In addition to seeing her education as a way to a richer, more secure life, Gretchen wants to set a good example for her two children. “I want to show them that it is possible to make great changes in your life when you aren’t afraid of hard work.”

When Gretchen completes her BS in nuclear engineering from the University of Michigan’s College of Engineering, she hopes to eventually earn her PhD. “My dream job would be conducting research on new, more efficient nuclear power fuels or designing the next generation of power plants.”

“Excited” is one word Gretchen’s professors use to describe her. “She wants to be involved in everything!” According to another of her admirers, “There’s a very bright future for Gretchen in the nuclear industry. I am confident that she will add much value. Those who work with her—and in the future, for her—will have their performance heightened by Gretchen’s talents.”

Gretchen Mitschelen is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ANGELA MORRIS *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*

“My educational journey has included a few unusual twists,” says Angela Morris, “but my goal of providing for myself and my family through education has remained a constant.”

When Angela graduated from high school, she was a single parent with a young son to care for. She worked as a secretary in her hometown of Detroit while attending court reporting school. In need of extra money, Angela also worked with her uncle, doing roofing and other repairs.

“It sparked my interest in construction,” says Angela. “I enjoyed the melodic music of fastening drywall to metal studs. I relished the snap that ceiling grids make when locked into place correctly. And I liked the exhaustion I felt after a good day’s work.”

Angela left court reporting behind, entered the Carpenter’s Joint Apprentice Program and, after four years of training, earned her carpenter’s journeyman’s card. Being female in a predominantly male field had its challenges, but Angela would probably still be a carpenter if she hadn’t suffered severe back injuries by age 30 that forced her to change careers.



She enrolled in Henry Ford Community College and began exploring her options. Learning about the SOAR Program for non-traditional students at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, Angela enrolled at UM-D, where she is a senior communications major.

For her next career, Angela is interested in public advocacy for non-profit organizations devoted to helping troubled youth, especially those aging out of the foster care system. To that end, Angela has completed an internship at Alternatives for Girls, a Detroit-area non-profit program for at-risk young women.

Angela has impressed her professors with her intelligence and strong communication skills, as well as her thoughtful and insightful diligence. “She will,” explains one of her advisors, “make a difference in her new career, as she does now with family, friends and others in need.”

Angela Morris is a 2013 Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

JEAN MRACHKO *Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar*

Jean Mrachko has been a teacher for over 16 years. Now, as a PhD student in educational administration and policy at the University of Michigan's School of Education, Jean is positioning herself "to contribute positively to my chosen profession on a broader scope." Her goal is to become a leader in creating, implementing and analyzing policies that affect children's educational experiences.

Jean has a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Northwestern University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Castleton State College. She has taught world languages in secondary schools and colleges in Illinois, Vermont, and Ohio. Jean describes her many experiences as encompassing wealthy and impoverished districts; urban, suburban and rural settings; public, private and charter institutions. Through it all, says Jean, "I have seen the impact of numerous conditions on the quality and equality of our children's learning experiences.



"When I began my teaching career, my goal was to improve public schooling as a devoted teacher. Along the way, I have come to understand the depth and breadth of the issues challenging our system." And so, says Jean, "I chose to leave my comfortable suburban teaching position, where I held a department chair position and tenure, to pursue a career in education reform."

With the knowledge and skills her doctorate will give her, Jean plans to focus her attention on meeting those challenges as a state- or district-wide educational administrator and leader.

As her professors remind us, Jean brings unusually broad and diverse educational knowledge and experience to her new role as a graduate student. To that she adds dedication, a strong work ethic and the willingness to serve others, both in the academic and greater educational communities. Add to that Jean's growing talents as a scholar, and you have a person poised to achieve her goal of improving secondary education.

Jean Mrachko is the 2013 Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

APRIL PARRISH *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*

April Parrish has overcome many obstacles on her path to educational and personal fulfillment. Despite the hurdles, she always pushed herself to achieve. For example, she says, “I flew a plane solo before I was licensed to drive and graduated from high school at 17 as a licensed private pilot.”

April attended college for a while but quit to support herself and her young son. After returning to school three years later and earning her associate’s degree, April completed the rigorous training to become an emergency dispatcher for the city of Ann Arbor—a position she held for ten years, earning many commendations along the way and also marrying “the perfect man.”

When April returned to school in 2007, she felt her “life’s pieces were finally falling into place.” Then a year later her husband was diagnosed with cancer, “rocking our family physically, psychologically and financially.” April left school to care for her husband.



Things are now looking up for April and her family, so she is back in school, an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. “I have chosen to study biological and mechanical engineering,” she explains, “because it satisfies my longing to help others, my need to be challenged, and my deep desire to find a better way.” For April, that “better way” includes researching better delivery methods for chemotherapy treatments.

Looking back at her life, April acknowledges that not all of her life choices reflect her abilities. She now has a “sense of clarity about what is important and what is not” and is confident that she can accomplish anything she works for. “Determination has become my favorite word!”

April’s co-workers hold her in the very highest regard. They praise her combination of compassion and toughness: “She’s calm in the face of chaos,” and “will not stop until she’s solved a problem.”

April Parrish is a 2013 Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

DANIEL PEPPER *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow*

Daniel Pepper comes to the University of Michigan's School of Medicine with an impressive background. After earning a BA in philosophy from the University of Chicago in 2002, he became a successful freelance journalist. Daniel's work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *TIME*, *Newsweek*, *The Economist*, and *National Geographic Adventure*. His work's focus ranges from systematic violence and hunger in Africa to political and social turmoil in Iraq to the fight for basic rights in marginalized sections of Indian society.

Daniel has devoted himself to public health service in India, establishing electronic medical record systems in slums and remote villages. After completing his medical coursework, Daniel plans "to continue working in this area...whether in India or elsewhere, so that less fortunate people can have access to better healthcare and better information about their healthcare."

With support from the Bailey fellowship, Daniel spent the summer in New Delhi, conducting research into barriers and opportunities for implementing point-of-care electronic medical record systems in small, private clinics in urban India. "In countries like the U.S.," explains Daniel, "the impact of digitized medical records on health outcomes is small. However, in developing countries the use of computerized health information...has the potential to make the difference between a life of thriving and one of destitution."

While in India, Daniel surveyed private healthcare providers, "who bear the brunt of the country's healthcare burden and often attend to over one hundred patients a day." The results will inform policy makers, healthcare professionals and industry leaders about physicians' concerns regarding the consideration of a new technology like electronic health records. The promise of this technology, says Daniel, is that it can not only serve to provide better healthcare, but also improve the quality of the clinical experience by "reducing patient wait times, facilitating follow-up, and providing valuable epidemiological real time data."

Says one of his professors, "Daniel has some very important and impressive qualities that have been essential to his success: He is tirelessly dedicated to working for a better world and has a native unflinching inquisitiveness."

Daniel Pepper is a 2013 Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

KAREN PROCOPIO *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Reflecting on her life, Karen Procopio sees “numerous obstacles interwoven with opportunities and a driving desire to make a difference in the lives of others.” Karen was raised in Battle Creek, destined to follow in her family’s footsteps as office and factory workers. “I knew in my heart I wanted to be so much more...but I didn’t know what or how.”

“One Saturday in high school, my boyfriend’s parents invited me to a football game in Ann Arbor. I had never set foot on a college campus, nor seen anything as overwhelming as a football stadium packed with 100,000 fans. A wave of sadness filled my heart. Why didn’t I know about this place called ‘college.’ Why wasn’t I entitled to this experience? Was I destined for the packing lines and unworthy of a college degree? Had I nothing more to offer the world?”



Karen’s journey from that day in the Big House to today has been amazing. She’s taken courses at Kellogg Community College, EMU, Mesa Community College and the University of Phoenix. She moved to Arizona, where she’s earned numerous computer-based certifications, a bachelor’s degree and teacher certification. She’s worked as a journalist, a word processing specialist, a network administrator and a K-12 teacher. She’s flourished in the world of academia and teaches computer science at an International Baccalaureate academy for gifted students in Mesa, AZ.

And Karen has found her purpose. “My goal is to empower my students, especially those who need the kind of direction and guidance I wish I’d had—in particular, girls who exhibit technical interests and abilities.”

To enhance her effectiveness, Karen is working on an MA in educational technology at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She hopes to earn a PhD and continue to enrich her students’ lives.

“Teaching is an art; Karen Procopio is a Picasso.” So says one of her colleagues, joining his praise to the others who describe Karen as a master teacher and computer guru.

Karen Procopio is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MEGHAN RILEY *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“It was relatively late in my undergraduate years,” explains Meghan Riley, “when I first discovered that women’s literature—especially by otherwise marginalized writers—is my passion.” Meghan particularly admires the works of Octavia Butler and Audre Lorde and, since graduating from the University of Michigan-Flint with a bachelor’s degree in English and education, Meghan has been sharing their works with her students.

Meghan began her career as a remedial reading, math and job skills teacher. She took off three years after the birth of her first child before returning to the classroom in an alternative high school. When funding problems closed the school, Meghan taught for Upward Bound and then became a tutor at Mott Middle College.

Throughout this time, Meghan continued to read and study women’s literature and feminist writings. “What engages me particularly are the recurring themes of lack of agency, difference or otherness and voice. I use these themes to get students to explore their own sense of ‘otherness’ as well as increasing their empathy for those who may be different from them in some key way.”

Given Meghan’s fascination with and gift for literary theory and analysis, it’s no surprise that she is now working on a master’s degree in liberal studies at the University of Michigan-Flint. Next, Meghan intends to continue her education with a PhD in English and gender studies. Her goals are to teach and eventually to direct a Women’s Studies Center and perhaps open a non-profit tutoring center.

Meghan garners high praise from her professors and advisors. In the words of one of her many admirers, “Meghan is a highly intelligent, articulate, and thoughtful woman. Her commitment to gender studies and to feminist literary analysis, her strong speaking and writing skills, and her profound intellectual curiosity make her an ideal candidate for advanced graduate study, a doctoral degree and a future career in academia.”

Meghan Riley is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

JENNIFER SCHAFFER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“I have started and stopped my education many times over the last 15 years,” says Jennifer Schaffer. “This time I will finish my bachelor’s degree!” Jennifer, who has associate’s degrees in both marketing and culinary arts, is currently an undergraduate at the University of Michigan-Flint, majoring in earth and resource science.

Jennifer’s resolve has several sources. One of them is her mother. “In the fall of 2011, after it became clear that my mother’s battle with cancer would soon be over, I returned to college in hopes of finishing my degree in her honor. Though she won’t be around to see me graduate, I’ll be the first person in my family to obtain a four-year degree, and I know it would make her proud.”

Jennifer is also seeking a career that offers both a secure future and an opportunity to help others. After working many years as a chef and kitchen manager, Jennifer lost her job to Michigan’s struggling economy. Describing herself as “a long time member of the Girl Scouts, an outdoor enthusiast, and someone who understands the importance of protecting our natural resources,” Jennifer decided to change careers and become an environmental scientist. Her goals are to become a hydrologist, study the Great Lakes ecosystems and earn a master’s degree in resource management.

In addition to her studies, Jennifer is an avid volunteer, involved in fundraising for Flint-area nonprofits. Most notably, and in memory of her mother, Jennifer works with the American Cancer Society and the McLaren Foundation’s Art Therapy Program, an organization to which her mother was particularly attached.

Along with her intelligence and passion for learning, Jennifer’s strong civic consciousness impresses her friends and colleagues. In the words of one admirer, “Jennifer models behavior that challenges those around her to work harder, think more deeply, care more openly, and go the extra mile.”

Jennifer Schaffer is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

DANA SCHLEGEL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

After graduating from Harvard with a BA in biochemical sciences, Dana Schlegel joined the Peace Corps and became a high school biology teacher in Mozambique. “It was one of the best decisions of my life.”

As part of her curriculum, Dana taught genetics to her students, “challenging them to think logically as they struggled to draw family trees, understand the genetic code, and reason through problems.” Watching their excitement, Dana recalls, “I realized how important it was to me to continue teaching in some capacity.”

While in the Peace Corps, Dana had another life-changing experience: She learned Mozambican Sign Language and became an interpreter for deaf high school students, which “allowed them to communicate with their teachers, ask questions and discover that they were just as capable of learning the material as their hearing classmates.”

Back in the US, Dana sought ways to continue her new-found passions. Working at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, she supported Portuguese speakers from various cultures as a medical interpreter. She also discovered the field of genetic counseling.

Dana is now enrolled in dual master’s degree program in the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health and Department of Human Genetics. She knows that genetic counseling is the perfect career for her. “It will allow me to use my enthusiasm for genetics, for teaching, for advocacy for those at a disadvantage, and for connecting with people of various cultures and languages.”

As her professors explain, Dana is committed to applying her skills as a genetic counselor to global health care issues. To that end, she is currently engaged in a research program related to sickle cell disease in Ghana. In the words of one of Dana’s advisors, she has a “record of superior academic achievement and a demonstrated commitment to reducing social, educational or economic disparities based on race, ethnicity or gender.”

Dana Schlegel is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

OLGA SHALEV *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*

“Twenty three years ago,” says Olga Shalev, “after the fall of the Iron Curtain, my family immigrated to Israel from the Ukraine. I am an only child, and the only grandchild of Holocaust survivors, in a typical Jewish family, where education is considered to be one of the most important values.” With the unwavering support of her family, Olga earned a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from the Technion, Israeli Institute of Technology.

Then, after doing her military service as a lieutenant in the Israeli navy, Olga returned to her alma mater to earn a master’s degree in materials engineering. She worked for seven years as the chief R&D engineer in the Energy Sources Department at RAFAEL Advanced Defense Systems. During her time there, she successfully managed many developments projects.

Having discovered a fascination with renewable energy, Olga came to the University of Michigan to earn a PhD in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering in the College of Engineering.



The U-M scientists with whom Olga now works are unanimous in their praise for her talent and experiences as a researcher. In the short time that she’s been here, Olga has already “made extraordinary progress”, says her research advisor, “contributing an essential piece of knowledge that was missing in the field and that is likely to become a go-to reference for scientists and engineers working in the rapidly growing field of organic electronics.”

When she graduates, Olga plans to teach and continue her research in the area of renewable energy, developing and refining such devices as solar cells and batteries. She is also determined “to provide an example and give confidence to other young women pursuing goals of scientific research”, while combining family and professional life.

Olga Shalev is a 2013 Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

DONNA SMITH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

After earning a bachelor's degree in computer engineering from the University of Michigan and an almost 20-year career in the automotive industry, Donna Smith was laid off. It was, she exclaimed, "a life-changing opportunity to transition to a career I was truly passionate about. I soon realized, however, that—other than my four children—I didn't know what I was passionate about!"

Donna's journey of self-discovery began as "a recollection of buried interests." She identified several, including biology, most of which came from helping her children with their homework; and health, which has been developing since learning about her family's hereditary susceptibility to sickle cell disease.

Donna spent three years investigating her interests with classes, volunteer work, mentoring, job-shadowing, and career counseling. And she discovered her passion: public health research. After mapping out her new education and career plan, Donna is now in the midst of earning her master's degree in environmental health sciences in the University of Michigan's School of Public Health.



The range of possible ways for her to use her MPH is exhilarating to Donna. "It seems that everything relates to public health. It's something I love about it. I can go in any direction to learn something new or build on current expertise." Her vision for the future is "to remain a problem-solver but replace automotive knowledge with health science knowledge and replace time formerly spent interfacing with computers to time communicating with people, helping them understand how chemical and biological factors affect them."

The characteristics that most impress Donna's professors and mentors are her intelligence and her willingness to work hard, teach herself new skills and commit enthusiastically and doggedly to every challenge. Nothing can stop her. As one advisor assures us, "Scholarship money spent on Donna will be very well spent. She will make an impact."

Donna Smith is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KIMBERLY SPRINGER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“When I contemplated giving up a tenured professorship, the prestige of academia and a comfortable lifestyle,” says Kimberly Springer, “a popular saying kept popping up around me: ‘Leap and the net will appear.’” Kimberly’s net turned out to be the University of Michigan’s School of Information, where she is currently a master’s degree student.

Kimberly’s academic career began with a BA in women’s studies and sociology from the University of Michigan, followed by a master’s and a doctoral degree in women’s studies from Emory University. After two years as an assistant professor at Portland State University, Kimberly took a position as a senior lecturer at King’s College London. There, in addition to her teaching, Kimberly became involved with extracurricular archival projects that changed her life. “I served with the Remembering Olive Collective, a women’s history group documenting and archiving the legacy of 1970’s-era activist Olive Morris.” Kimberly also served on the advisory board for a Black Women’s Oral History project.



Seven years later, Kimberly returned to the US as an associate professor at Ohio State University, teaching feminist theory, African American women’s history, social movements and cultural studies. Her enthusiasm with web-based research eventually inspired Kimberly’s decision to devote her energies full-time to social computing and digital archiving.

When she completes her degree, Kimberly plans to work as a digital archivist/curator. “I have most definitely not left behind my scholarly interests in race, gender, class, sexuality, and social change,” Kimberly tells us. “My new career affirms my background and love of theory. Archival practice is simply a faster, more hands-on way of making sure information, records and history make their way into the hands of people who need the resources the most.”

“Pragmatic, creative, and visionary.” With accolades like these from her colleagues, Kimberly is bound “to make the University proud.”

Kimberly Springer is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KATIE ST. CLAIR *Elsie Choy Lee Scholar*

As a child with sketchbook in hand, Katie St. Clair found solace in her backyard, painting “long-stemmed irises and heavily topped peonies.”

For Katie, diagnosed with dyslexia at age nine, school was stressful and demoralizing. From the beginning, she explains, “My teachers noticed that I had a different way of processing information, and they placed me with students with severe mental handicaps or behavioral issues.”

Only art kept Katie afloat. “While drawing in the margins of my school papers, I was able to concentrate on what was being taught and hold onto the information. Art was the door to more successful encounters with math, social studies, geography and reading.” Nonetheless, at 13 Katie begged her mother to withdraw her from school. She took her education into her own hands, listening to books on tape while drawing.



Then, says Katie, “I taught art for the first time at age 17 and found my reason for being”—even though becoming a teacher meant returning to school. She enrolled at the Art Academy of Cincinnati for a BFA and worked day and night to keep up in her classes. Katie graduated as valedictorian and won prestigious residencies at the New York Studio and Munich Exchange Residency programs.

Her desire to teach eventually led Katie to the MFA program in painting in the University of Michigan’s Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design. “Art schools are full of dyslexic students,” Katie explains. “We represent adult learners like Picasso, da Vinci, Yeats, Warhol, Disney, and Spielberg who have all the intelligence necessary to express our unique selves but are often marginalized in an academic setting. I believe in the physicality of learning, a tactile, kinesthetic approach to reach as many students as possible.”

The joy, inspiration and admiration that Katie evokes in both her students and her professors are amazing to behold. Her future as a life-changing teacher and artist is bright.

Katie St. Clair is the 2013 Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

APRYL STEINER *Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar*

Apryl Steiner graduated from Western Michigan University in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Not sure of what direction to take in her career, Apryl opted for a position as a corporate operations manager, a job she held for seven years. When Apryl realized that she wanted to be a nurse, she began taking the necessary pre-requisite college courses. However, at the same time Apryl also found herself balancing increased job responsibilities with the birth and care of her three children.

Apryl decided to become a stay-at-home mom. Six years later, she's returned to school, working toward a BSN in the University of Michigan's School of Nursing. After graduating and taking a nursing job, Apryl envisions her next move to be earning a master's degree as a certified nurse midwife.

Nursing is the perfect choice for Apryl. Not only is she enamored by the mix of science and psychology, but she tells us that she has learned enough about herself and her personality to know that she will do well in her frenetic new work environment. "I thrive under pressure. In situations where most people throw up their hands in despair, get angry or quit, I feel a rush of adrenaline," explains Apryl. "I love the challenge of having to multi-task, be self-disciplined, self-motivated and organized, and to manage my time and pay meticulous attention to detail."

Those self-described attributes are the same qualities that Apryl's professors use to describe her. One of Apryl's advisors tells us that, "In the fast-paced and pressured environment of the hospital, Apryl is always professional, reliable and organized. She is able to work with some of the most challenging patients. Even in complex patient care situations, she remains calm, asks appropriate questions and is ready to learn."

Apryl Steiner is the 2013 Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

EMILY TALBOT *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Emily Talbot comes to the University of Michigan with an impressive resume of work in some of the world's most prominent museums, including the National Portrait Gallery in London, the British Museum and New York's Museum of Modern Art. Beginning as an intern, Emily rose to become a cataloguer and assistant curator. Along the way, she also developed an expertise in the area of prints, drawings and photographs.

Emily integrated her on-the-job education with impressive academic training. She has a BA in fine arts from New York University, an MA in museum studies from NYU, and an MA in the history of art from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. As she explains, "Rather than seeing my employment as separate from my scholarly pursuits, my curatorial training shaped my scholarly methodology and was integral to my decision to pursue a doctorate."



Working on a PhD in the History of Art Department, Emily is focusing on nineteenth-century art and visual culture. Her dissertation research explores "composite photography," an early form of photomontage that aimed to replicate the compositional strategies of contemporary painting. When Emily completes her doctorate, she plans to become a university professor in the field of art history. As she explains, "The frameworks by which we define art and artistic movements are currently undergoing a productive transformation, one to which I seek to contribute in my research."

Emily's professors are unanimous in their opinion that she has a brilliant future. Her dissertation project is "important, original and destined to offer genuine new insights." Honored by her department for "her unusual creativity, extraordinary motivation and exemplary record of academic achievement," Emily possesses "all the makings of a first-rate scholar."

Emily Talbot is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

RONNIE TRONT *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“In less than two months,” says Ronnie Tront, “I went from a career in the automotive industry as a senior electronics engineering designer to a career in education. In those same two months, I went from planning my retirement to planning a return to college to support my new career.”

Ronnie could never have imagined the path her life has taken. She earned an associate’s degree in electronics technology from Henry Ford Community College and worked at Ford Motor Company/Visteon Automotive for nearly 30 years. Her intention was to work nine more years before retiring. Instead, in 2007, and without warning, she was handed a termination notice.

Ronnie had spent several enjoyable years mentoring high school students, and her plan for her retirement had always been to earn a bachelor’s degree in education. So she immediately enrolled at HFCC once more. Before she took even her first college class, however, Ronnie was asked to become a substitute chemistry teacher in a nearby charter school.



Her extensive background and expertise with science and computer technology clearly makes Ronnie a desirable commodity. Over the past five years, she has both earned an associate’s degree in education and been a part-time teacher at two schools, for three different subjects, and for both high school and elementary students.

Ronnie is now a senior at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, completing a degree in elementary education-science. Her goal is a master’s degree in computer education. “The past five and a half years is an experience I would not trade for anything,” she says, “not even retiring in comfort from the Ford Motor Company. I love being a teacher.”

Her enthusiasm for her new vocation is evident to Ronnie’s colleagues, one of whom told us that “Ronnie loves what she does, and it shows.” According to one of her professors, “I know a great teacher when I see one.”

Ronnie Tront is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KRISTIN VAN AUSDAL *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“My twenty years as a professional musician have paid off in deeply rewarding ways,” says Kristin Van Ausdal, particularly the opportunity to tour with The Cleveland Orchestra as a violinist “in one of the best violin sections in the world.”

Kristin’s musical success, which has also included playing with the Lansing, Detroit and Grand Rapids symphonies, began with a bachelor’s degree in music performance from Western Michigan University and MM and specialist degrees in Music Performance from the University of Michigan’s School of Music.

Recently, however, Kristin came to realize that—while the job of an orchestral musician stays the same from week to week—“the world outside constantly shifts.” She’s decided that she wants to be part of that politically, economically and socially changing world.



Following the advice of a friend to “find the place where your experiences qualify you to effect change,” Kristin turned to the field of public policy. She was inspired to do so by her long-time awareness of the complexity of being an art manager and the conviction that “there must be a better way to address the needs of the nonprofit world.”

Particularly alarming to Kristin is the fact that, while Europeans see the arts as a way to stimulate the economy, arts budgets in the US are being slashed, “as a waste of taxpayer money instead of a potential boon to local growth.”

Kristin is now a master’s degree student in the University of Michigan’s Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. Her dramatic career shift has meant tackling courses foreign to most music majors, but she is thriving and reveling in the challenge. When she graduates, Kristin will become a public policy professional, focusing on cultural nonprofits.

Praised by her Ford School professors for her gifts as a writer and thinker, Kristin is poised to become a “thoughtful voice” in the arts community.

Kristin Van Ausdal is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MICHELE WAGNER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“I know what it’s like to feel alone and helpless,” says Michele Wagner. Michele’s childhood was traumatic in many ways but, with support, she has “come out on the other side with insight others may not possess. I know now that I am not alone. There are people out there fighting to help others, and I want to be one of them.”

It has taken Michele many years to reach the point where she can fulfill her dream of helping others. When she was younger, going to college was unlikely, since no one in her family had ever done so. Instead, Michele worked as a waitress while raising her son. Now that he is grown, she is ready to embark on an exciting new chapter of her life.

Michele is currently an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan-Flint, taking courses for a bachelor’s degree in social work. She’s also become an active volunteer in several nonprofit organizations. Not only is it an important part of her social work training but, as Michele explains, “When I give back, I feel satisfied.”



Michele intends to earn her MSW, with the ultimate goal of opening a half-way house for people with addictions. “I have watched someone struggle with addiction, and I know how heart wrenching it can be. I can make a difference. Personal struggles belong to all of us, not just the individual. And personal success is something we can all rejoice in.”

It is that determination and seriousness of purpose that has most impressed Michele’s professors. They praise her compassion, good judgment, mature outlook and practical approach to problem solving. As one of her admirers tells us, “Michele will have a profound impact on the people with whom she works.”

Michele Wagner is a 2013 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Thank you!