

Welcome

The Program

WELCOME

Gloria D. Thomas, PhD, Director
Center for the Education of Women, University of Michigan

REMARKS

Shelley Strickland, PhD, 2008-09 CEW Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar
Vice President of Development and Donor Services, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

PRESENTATION OF CEW SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Maureen Martin, MBA, 1987-88 CEW Best Products Scholarship
Executive Director, U-M Foundation Relations and Program Initiatives

Zilka Joseph, MFA, 2008-09 CEW Elsie Choy Lee Scholar
Poet and Educator

Angela Linder, PhD, 1997-98 CEW Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar
*Associate Dean for Undergraduate Student Affairs,
Associate Professor, Environmental Engineering Sciences, College of Engineering, University of Florida*

Karen-Lee Jones Stewart, DDS, 2001-02 CEW Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar
*Owner, Private Dental Practice,
Adjunct Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Prosthodontics, School of Dentistry, University of Michigan*

CLOSING REMARKS

Gloria D. Thomas

**CEW SCHOLARSHIP
READER COMMITTEE**

Vanessa Campbell
Chris Euritt
Damon Ford
Lee Gorman
Christine Green
Joyce Hunter
Lineve McKie
Jane Schwyn
Lin Van Nieustad

**CEW SCHOLARSHIP
SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Toni Antonucci
Connie Cook
Kevin Early
Edie Goldenberg
Nancy Hunt
Lisa A. Martin
Virginia Nelson
Rushika Patel
Tracy Wacker

FACILITATORS

Kirsten Elling
Anne Lehker
Doreen Murasky
Debbie Tirico
Gloria Thomas

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

Amy Conger
Nesha Haniff

**MARY MALCOMSON
RAPHAEL SELECTION
COMMITTEE**

Kwasi Ampene
Tom Fricke
Pamela Smock

**CENTER FOR THE
EDUCATION OF WOMEN
STAFF**

Wanlada Ault
Kristina Bee
Jacqueline Bowman
Eilisha Dermont
Kirsten Elling
Connie Hansen
Sarah Keovongsak
Catherine Mueller
Doreen Murasky
Ebony Reddock
Janice Reuben
Carrie Ross
Mary Lynn Stevens
Beth Sullivan
Gloria Thomas
Ekeoma Uzogara
Deborah Willis

CEW LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Tiffany Ford, West Bloomfield, MI
Lee Gorman, Ann Arbor, MI
Christine Green, Ann Arbor, MI
Susan S. Gutow, Ann Arbor, MI
Margaret Kephart, Ann Arbor, MI
Constance M. Kinnear, Ann Arbor, MI
Rebecca McGowan, Ann Arbor, MI
Ann Sneed Schriber, Ann Arbor, MI
Alicia Torres, Ann Arbor, MI
Don Vereen, Ann Arbor, MI
Marina v. N. Whitman, Ann Arbor, MI

EMERITAE COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Lisa Baker, Ann Arbor, MI
Nancy Barbour, Alexandria, VA
Norma C. Barfield, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Ellen M. Byerlein, Petoskey, MI
Jean W. Campbell, Ann Arbor, MI
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Desma Reid-Coleman, Southfield, MI
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Anthony Derezinski, Ann Arbor, MI
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Anne Duderstadt, Ann Arbor, MI
Susan S. Florsheim, Highland Park, IL
Twink Frey, Grand Rapids, MI
Beverly Geltner, Ann Arbor, MI
Matina Souretis Horner, Belmont, MA
Rani Kotha, Ann Arbor, MI
Judith H. Lax, Ann Arbor, MI
Anne E. Lehker, Milford, MI
Ashley M. Maentz, Lake Bluff, IL
William Martin, Ann Arbor, MI
Robert D. Oliver, Ann Arbor, MI
Ann V. Parfet, Kalamazoo, MI
Lana B. Pollack, Ann Arbor, MI
Kathleen K. Power, Ann Arbor, MI
Ranny Riecker, Midland, MI
Karla Scherer, Chicago, IL
Martha R. Seger, Ann Arbor, MI
Gil Seinfeld, Ann Arbor, MI
Carol S. Smokler, Boca Raton, FL
Maxine J. Snider, Chicago, IL
Nellie M. Varner, Detroit, MI
Erica A. Ward, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Irma M. Wyman, Minneapolis, MN

CEW Scholarship Program

COMMEMORATING 44 YEARS OF SUPPORTING WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL DREAMS

As we award today's 50 scholarships and fellowships, we also celebrate 44 years of the scholarship program in a special way—within the 50th Anniversary of the Center for the Education of Women.

THE HISTORY

When the Center was founded in 1964, it sought to understand and address the barriers that kept women from successfully pursuing degrees and careers. CEW's leaders documented, almost immediately, that a major obstacle to women seeking to return to school was the financial burden. Traditional financial aid required full-time enrollment—an inaccessible luxury for many women, regardless of their ambition, intelligence, and ability to succeed.

Determined to support women on their terms, CEW founder Jean Campbell responded to the growing, evident need. Together, she and her staff designed an innovative scholarship program focused on returning, non-traditional women students, and raised \$7,500 in private donations. In the fall of 1970, to mark the 100th anniversary of the admission of women to the University of Michigan, the first CEW scholarships were awarded.

Seeing the impact of these scholarships, new donors stepped forward. In 1990, the Margaret D. and Harry A. Towsley Foundation guaranteed the future of the program with a \$1 million endowment; in the 24 years since, 550 women have been named CEW Margaret Dow Towsley Scholars. Many other generous, foresighted individuals and organizations have created dozens of scholarships and fellowships, which CEW now awards—a total of 50 this year. New donors are still creating new scholarships, two of which will be inaugurated today.

The CEW scholarship program has become a signature offering of the Center. As we turn 50, we take pride in having awarded almost 1600 CEW scholarships and fellowships since the program began—more than

Continued on the next page

\$5.5 million to support women's ambitions and accomplishments. By connecting private resources with scholars' intelligence, motivation, and effort, CEW helps to transform not only individual lives, but also families, workplaces, and communities.

THE SCHOLAR

The scholarships and fellowships celebrated today honor the performance and potential of students who have interruptions in their education, strong academic records, and impressive past accomplishments and future goals. Most have considerable financial need. The awards go to women, and men, in any undergraduate or graduate program on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, or Flint campuses. While women at the University of Michigan now make up about half the enrolled population, these numbers do not tell the whole story. Behind today's statistics are the experiences of adult women who have struggled as much as their 1970s 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, economic, and environmental problems.

Today's fifty awardees are, like their predecessors, extraordinary people. While they will all make their own unique paths in life, they share intelligence, vision, perseverance, and potential. Before returning to the University, today's awardees worked in myriad fields. They have been technicians, artists, researchers, servers, hairdressers, carpenters, realtors, Peace Corps and Americorps workers, and engineers. They are now on their way to solving health disparities, leveraging business acumen, working on environmental improvements, and, even doing rocket science—to name just a few of their inspiring goals.

On the following pages, you will find a description of all the 2014 awards, the scholars who earned them, and a description of the goals they hope to achieve.

WITH GRATITUDE

On this joyous day, and at the half-century mark, we celebrate a rich partnership among the University community, our loyal supporters and volunteers, and CEW's staff. We join the scholars, their academic advisors, their families and friends in expressing our sincerest gratitude and admiration to all who have built such a legacy of success for students at the University of Michigan.

Thank you

*The Scholarships and
Fellowships*

GAIL ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* PAMELA AMMIANO

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

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* MARTHA GUTH

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:* REBECCA DECAMP

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:* ALEXANDRA CHEN;
FRANK SEDLAR; CHERYL YIN

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.

CHRISTINE KAHAN BLACK SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: LILY SOBOLIK*

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

JANE AND BILL BLOOM SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: CHANA ELIAS*

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: KEDISHIA GRANT*

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 PEO Sisterhood. Ruth and Ted also endowed many scholarships in his home state of Montana. CEW’s Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship recognizes an outstanding undergraduate on the Ann Arbor campus, with a special focus on the fields of business and engineering.

CEW GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: AURORA KAMIMURA*

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: AMY OKUMURA*

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.

LUCILE B. CONGER ALUMNAE GROUP SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient: NICOLETTE JEFFERSON*

Established in 1990, the Lucile B. Conger Group provides CEW scholarships for undergraduate women. The Lucile B. Conger Group is one of thirty-two University of Michigan alumnae organizations nationwide. Founded in 1947, the Conger organization has approximately 300 current members. The group is actively involved in raising funds to provide scholarships for women to attend the University of Michigan.

MOLLY H. DOBSON SCHOLARSHIP *Recipients: DEBRA MCGEE; SALEEMAH 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:* ELIZABETH CHISLEA

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

ELIZABETH M. DUSSEAU SCHOLARSHIP and MARGARET DUSSEAU BREVOORT

SCHOLARSHIP *Recipients:* KRISTINE SCHANTZ; MELISSA GRANT

The Elizabeth M. Dusseau and Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholarships, established in 2013, were endowed in the estate of Elizabeth Dusseau, who died in May 2012 at the age of 101. Elizabeth Dusseau earned her bachelor of arts and master's degrees in public health from the University of Michigan, and became an expert in parasitology. After many years of dedicated service to the University, Ms. Dusseau was promoted to assistant professor, a rank she held until she retired in 1978. Margaret Dusseau Brevoort began her long career as a social worker in Ann Arbor. However, she spent most of her professional life in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the executive director of Milwaukee Psychiatric Services Agency and a renowned and early proponent of social work education.

Elizabeth Dusseau chose to endow these scholarships in her name and that of her sister to honor their upbringing. Born in Monroe, Michigan, to a family that highly valued education for both male and female children—at a time when such a belief was somewhat radical—their family's commitment to women's rights was deeply ingrained. It is no surprise that Elizabeth and Margaret made their marks upon the world. At Elizabeth's request, her CEW Scholarship will be awarded to “a woman in the field of science,” and Margaret's will go to a “woman in the field of social work.”

U-M FACULTY WOMEN'S CLUB SCHOLARSHIP (FWC) *Recipient:* JHANA FREDERIKSEN

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.

BETH HALLORAN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* SHAYNA BRADFORD

The Beth Halloran Scholarship is being inaugurated in CEW's 50th Anniversary year. One of the U-M's most admired fundraising leaders from 2001-2011, Beth Halloran is now a senior executive at Minneapolis Foundation. From 2005-08, she served as Development Director at CEW. Her energy, focus, intelligence, and integrity not only generated fundraising success, but also nourished lasting relationships with CEW donors. Two of those donors, Molly Dobson and Connie Dunlap, connected with Beth in a special way and deepened their friendship even after she left Ann Arbor. In 2013, Connie and Molly collaborated to endow a new CEW Scholarship in Beth's honor. The Beth Halloran scholarship is to be awarded annually to women students whose academic careers have been interrupted, and/or who are the primary parent responsible for minor dependents.

BEATRICE KAHN SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* MICHAELE BRADFORD

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. Beatrice died in November 2012 at the age of 94. Her husband, her family, and her many friends established the Beatrice Kahn Scholarship at the Center for the Education of Women in her memory.

ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* ERYN ROSENTHAL

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:* CONSUELO JULIETTE MORALES

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 U-M Medical School. A long-time volunteer and friend to the Center, Sarah recognizes the contributions CEW makes to the University community and is pleased to continue her commitment to the education of women.

ALINE UNDERHILL ORTEN FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP *Recipient:* TRIANA KAZALEH SIRDENIS

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

MARY MALCOMSON RAPHAEL FELLOWSHIP *Recipients:* ELIZABETH ARMSTRONG;

BONNIE WASHICK; ROBIN ZHENG

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: JENNIFER GONZALEZ*

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: K. CHAMISA MACKENZIE*

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: NEJAY ANANABA; MEREDITH BILLINGS; SYBIL BOONE; MIATTA BUXTON; LORA CAMPREDON; AMANDA DUDA; ANGELA EKE-USIM; DENISE GLEICH; CASAUNDR A HENDRICKS; JOANNA HERRMANN; KELLI HUGHES; FUMIE KAWASAKI; JESSICA LOWEN; AGNES "SILVER" LUMSDAINE; TINA NELSON; ANALIDIS OCHOA-BENDANA; BRIDGET ROTHENBERGER; LILLY FINK SHAPIRO; KELLY E. SLAY*

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: SALMA KHALID*

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: AVA DUPRE; STEPHANIE WOOTEN*

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 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

PAMELA AMMIANO *Gail Allen Scholar*

Pamela Ammiano acknowledges that, over the years, “I have let the current of life take me where it may.” The result has been rewarding in many ways, but has also presented Pamela with detours, hardships, and frustrations.

When Pamela graduated from high school, she had neither the faith in herself nor the encouragement from others to continue her education. Later, when she summoned the courage to enroll in a community college, Pamela discovered that she loved learning. But, she laments, “As would often be the case for me, my timing was off.”

Over the years, Pamela returned to the classroom a few times, struggling to combine her part-time studies with full-time jobs, long commutes, and relocations. She was also the sole breadwinner and then the divorced mother of two young children. Though Pamela eventually established a successful career as an IT manager, she still yearned to earn her degree.

She enrolled at the University of Michigan-Dearborn in 2006, taking just one or two classes a semester. Finally, as her older daughter begins her own college journey this fall, Pamela is herself a full-time student—an undergraduate at UM-D, finishing up her major in American studies and concentrating on enhancing her writing talent. Pamela sees this degree not as the culmination of her goal but as a springboard to a master’s degree in women’s studies and a career as teacher and advocate. “I am particularly interested in how gender shapes identity in general and how it shapes my daughters’ lives as they become young women.”

Pamela’s long educational path has led her to this exciting point in her life, and it promises to lead her in exciting new directions. She’s won the admiration and support of many advisors and colleagues, one of whom assures us that Pamela “has great potential as an academic and/or writer. Her dedication to learning, intellectual acumen, and mature voice and vision make her a unique and deserving student.”

Pamela Ammiano is the 2014 Gail Allen Scholar.

NEJAY ANANABA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“My desire to become a dentist began as a first-grader, in the once beautiful West African country of Liberia,” explains Nejay Ananaba. While playing on the beach, she fell and fractured a front tooth. Nejay was frightened about going to the dental clinic the next day, but “when the pediatric dentist greeted my mother and me, I remember thinking ‘He doesn’t look mean.’ After he had restored my tooth, I bluntly told him, ‘I want to be just like you when I grow up.’”

Nejay stayed true to that wish, even after her family moved to the US for a year, during the 1990 Civil War in Liberia. She finished her primary and secondary education in Liberia. After high school, she returned to the US for college and graduated from Xavier University of Louisiana with a BS in chemistry/pre-dentistry and then enrolled in the School of Dentistry at the University of Michigan to earn her DDS. While at U-M, Nejay did groundbreaking, award-winning research, collecting data in Liberia to advance the establishment of that country’s first dental school.



After she graduated, Nejay became a clinical instructor at the School of Dentistry. She also worked as a part-time staff dentist at U-M’s Community Dental Center. At the Center, her patients were primarily young children and infants, which reminded Nejay of her own childhood experience and her original desire to be a pediatric dentist.

Nejay taught and practiced dentistry for four years and is now back at the University of Michigan, working on a master’s degree and certification in pediatric dentistry. When she graduates, Nejay plans to combine a private practice with teaching. “I truly believe,” she says, “that I have a passion for teaching future dental practitioners and giving back to our profession.”

What kind of dentist will she be? As she herself learned as a six-year old girl, “Coming to the dentist can be a scary and anxious experience for both children and their parents. I will always strive to provide quality care in a warm, compassionate, and caring manner.” From one of her admiring colleagues comes this prediction: “She will do great things!”

Nejay Ananaba is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ELIZABETH ARMSTRONG *Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellow*

Before Elizabeth Armstrong began her PhD in the University of Michigan's joint program in the School of Social Work and Department of Sociology, she worked in a variety of settings for marginalized women: an outreach program for street-level sex workers, a residential facility for adjudicated adolescent girls, and a domestic violence shelter.

Elizabeth became discouraged by the frequency with which such programs lost funding, “a casualty for especially stigmatized groups in an era of fiscal restraint.” But Elizabeth also realized that in order to have a meaningful impact, she needed to gain the skills necessary “to change the systems I had been trying to work around.”

So Elizabeth, who has a BA in psychology and human services from Simon's Rock College of Bard and an MSW from the University of Michigan, is now in the midst of what her advisors call a stellar graduate career. They point to the breadth and excellence of Elizabeth's contributions in so many areas of academic life: the number of books, articles, and presentations she has authored and co-authored in the fields of sociology, social work, and women's studies; the number of grants, accolades, and prestigious awards she has received from various U-M units and departments, including the Susan Lipschutz Award from the Rackham Graduate School; and the amount of time she contributes, despite her rigorous schedule, to her two departments and to area non-profit organizations devoted to disenfranchised women make her an outstanding recipient of this fellowship.



Equally impressive, Elizabeth is in the midst of an ambitious and innovative dissertation. It examines why few social service organizations simultaneously and holistically address two frequently co-occurring problems—intimate violence and drug/alcohol abuse—especially since the handful of organizations that do so are generally more effective in helping their primarily female clients. Her dissertation is groundbreaking for a number of reasons. It skillfully synthesizes the knowledge and theory of both social work and sociology, and it seeks answers to important questions that have theoretical, policy, and practical implications, and it does so by combining a number of complex research modalities.

Elizabeth Armstrong, “a scholar of great promise,” is a 2014 Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellow.

MEREDITH BILLINGS *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

At an early age, Meredith Billings was fascinated by higher education. In junior high, she pored over college catalogs, imagining what it would be like to be on the campuses featured in the glossy photos. As a high school student, Meredith admits to “dragging my parents to campuses all across the country.” No surprise, then, that her youthful interest foreshadowed Meredith’s eventual career path.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in neuroscience from the College of William and Mary, Meredith joined AmeriCorps and spent a year as a VISTA volunteer at Middlebury College, working on anti-poverty initiatives. In the process, she learned that “colleges and universities can be key players in working towards social justice within their communities.”

While working on a master’s degree in higher education at the University of Maryland, Meredith realized she was drawn to academia and to statistical research. She is now a PhD student at the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE) in the University of Michigan’s School of Education, honing her skills and learning to conduct complex, multi-institution quantitative studies. Her dissertation examines the effects of various state-level governmental decisions, such as financial aid policies and appropriations, on would-be college students.



When she becomes a university professor, says Meredith, one of her goals will be to improve the quality of educational research, in part by requiring all graduate-level education students to complete specialized courses in applied statistics, data analysis, and research design.

Praised by her professors for her ability to conduct and clearly explain complex educational research, Meredith is well ahead of most graduate students in the number and quality of her publications and presentations. She is poised to complete a stellar dissertation and become a leader in the field of higher education—a fitting outcome to her childhood obsession.

Meredith Billings is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

SYBIL BOONE *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Sybil Boone recalls enduring long bus rides in order to receive medical care, because the facilities in her local community did not accept her family's insurance plan. "At the mercy of the Memphis bus system, we would normally forego the trip unless someone in the family was seriously ill or injured." These childhood experiences led Sybil to her life-long interest in eliminating disparities and improving the exchange of health-related information.

To that end, Sybil is now a student in the University of Michigan's School of Information, working on a master's degree with a specialization in health informatics and human-computer interaction. The path to this point in Sybil's professional development has been circuitous. She struggled financially in her first attempt as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan and was forced to withdraw.



So Sybil set out to educate herself in other ways, including volunteering as a dental assistant in Ecuador. Then, after working as a waitress to pay off her tuition debts, Sybil reenrolled at U-M. "I contacted previous professors to finish courses I'd taken earlier. It was initially a humiliating experience, but their genuine interest in wanting me to succeed was gratifying. It propelled me to complete my bachelor's degree."

Next, Sybil embarked on a 12-year career as a research administrator in U-M's School of Medicine, exposing herself to "the multifaceted needs of our country's health system" and becoming adept at devising technological solutions to problems facing hospitals and other types of organizations. When Sybil graduates, she plans to apply her skills to improve access to information and technology for vulnerable populations in the US and beyond.

As one of Sybil's admirers reminds us, "Changing career directions and returning to school takes courage, passion, and dedication." Sybil has proven that she possesses all those qualities, in addition to natural leadership and team-building abilities.

Sybil Boone is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

MICHAELE BRADFORD *Beatrice Kahn Scholar*

“I know it sounds like a cliché, but the year I spent in Alaska really did change the course of my life.” Michaele Bradford is referring to her time as an AmeriCorps volunteer in Anchorage, where she worked first in a domestic violence shelter and later as a legal advocate at an area courthouse. As a result of those experiences, Michaele learned that “the social justice I was so passionate about in my personal life could be translated to my working life as well.”

Michaele began her academic career with a bachelor’s degree in English from the University of Florida and had her sights on an advanced degree in creative writing. As life often has it, however, she ended up working in small for-profit and non-profit organizations before joining AmeriCorps. Then, when she returned from Alaska, she remained with AmeriCorps, this time with VISTA Michigan.



As Michaele explains, “When I began my AmeriCorps service, I had very little faith in my abilities to work one-on-one with people; I was more familiar with analyzing people in books than with helping live persons.” But, with Michaele’s many on-the-job successes came increased self-confidence, high praise and admiration from her colleagues and supervisors, and the awareness that she would need more education.

Michaele is now completing her master’s degree in the University of Michigan’s School of Social Work. With the information and skills she’s learning there, Michaele is excited to embark on a new career as a social worker, focusing her attention on children and families living in poverty.

As it turns out, social work is clearly Michaele’s true calling. She is, says one of her admirers, “a standout among her peers. She has a deep understanding of the struggles of those living on the margins of life. With her initiative, leadership abilities, talents, and insights, Michaele personifies social work.”

Michaele Bradford is the 2014 Beatrice Kahn Scholar.

SHAYNA BRADFORD *Beth Halloran Scholar*

“I am obsessed with reaching my full potential as a biomedical researcher,” declares Shayna Bradford, “despite warnings about the obstacles I face as an African-American woman in science, a single mother, and a first generation college student.”

Shayna traces her fascination with medical research to *Gifted Hands*, a memoir by world-renowned brain surgeon, Dr. Benjamin Carson. “Struck with awe by the miracles of the brain,” Shayna declared neuroscience as her undergraduate major at the University of Michigan.

After earning her BS, Shayna worked in a University laboratory and cared for her small child before returning to the classroom. Now a PhD student in the Medical School’s Department of Pathology, Shayna’s research focuses on the “blood-brain barrier—a 400-mile long network of small vessels that protect the brain from harmful agents circulating in the body’s blood system.”



Shayna has many career goals. She plans to become a professor of biomedical science and to “conduct research on the molecular basis of health disparities in diseases affecting the brain.” She also sees it as her responsibility to become a source of medical information and support for her native Detroiters. “Many people from my community, suffering from diseases such as diabetes, don’t fully comprehend their conditions or the medications they take to manage them. And their lack of understanding leaves them feeling vulnerable and frustrated.” In addition, says Shayna, “My highest priority is to be a mentor and teacher to the next generation and to recruit and inspire women and men of color, as well as people in under-resourced countries, to pursue careers in biomedical science.”

It is this commitment that especially impresses Shayna’s academic advisors. As one of her professors explains, “Shayna is wise beyond her years. Her maturity, work ethic, and ability to be flexible and innovative are admirable. I look forward to the day that I can call on her, as a successful, independent scientist, to help mentor other young women.”

Shayna Bradford is the inaugural Beth Halloran Scholar.

MIATTA BUXTON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“After surviving almost ten years of carnage during the Liberian civil war,” explains Miatta Buxton, “it was bittersweet to be in the United States—sweet to be out of imminent danger yet bitter because my family was still in Liberia.” Miatta struggled to adjust to her new home, but she proudly tells us that from her experiences came a renewed determination to succeed. She earned a BA in environmental science and biology from Queens College, City University of New York, and then a master’s degree in public health from the University of Michigan.

At that point, and in part to repay her student loans, Miatta took a job as a project coordinator in the School of Public Health, where she worked for five years. The experience not only gave Miatta practical insights into epidemiology, but also clarified and intensified her desire to pursue her own research agenda by earning a PhD.

Miatta is now a doctoral student in epidemiology at Michigan’s School of Public Health. Her dissertation research focuses on the effects of infection and inflammation on adverse pregnancy outcomes. She plans to become an expert in the field of maternal and child health and to “develop an early sensitive detection method to identify patients at high risk for adverse pregnancy outcomes.” It is, says Miatta, her way to reach out to people both in developing countries, like her native Liberia, and in the US.



All of those with whom Miatta has worked are confident of her future. “She has,” explains one advisor, “all the earmarks of the successful doctoral student and future researcher. She is bright, organized, intellectually curious, and a very good communicator.” As another admirer tells us, “She is exactly the type of person who will use her training at the University of Michigan to make a real difference in public health.”

Miatta Buxton is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley scholar.

LORA CAMPREDON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“Why do you want to be a doctor?” Faced with the question on a medical school application, Lora Campredon admits that her honest answer was “Because everyone else is doing it.” Lora’s vision of studying medicine was a response to her dilemma of finding the most rewarding way to use her bachelor’s degree in biomedical engineering from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Instead, Lora went to Tanzania, where she worked with a Duke University organization called Engineering World Health (EWH). The experience showed her that she didn’t have to be a doctor or nurse in order to serve people. “I realized that there were some very interesting people doing exactly the kind of work I wanted to do, and the thing they all had in common was a degree in public health.”

After spending a few more years with EWH, Lora has come to the University of Michigan to earn a master’s degree in epidemiology/international health in the School of Public Health. When she completes her MPH, Lora envisions working for a non-profit or government group to improve health in developing countries or disaster areas.



This past summer, Lora worked and studied in southern Thailand, learning mosquito collection techniques and analyzing chikungunya, a rapidly spreading tropical disease that just arrived in the US. She’s excited to have learned that her background in engineering, math, and systems thinking are exactly the skills she’ll need as an epidemiologist, tackling chikungunya and other global health challenges.

Lora has made a tremendous impression on everyone with whom she has worked and studied. In the words of one of her mentors, “Lora is technically and scientifically top-notch, among the very best students I’ve ever taught. Lora’s defined purpose in life is to put her many personal and technical talents to use to help advance the living standards of people in the developing world. She will happily do whatever it takes to succeed at this noble goal.”

Lora Campredon is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ALEXANDRA CHEN *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow*

After graduating from Yale with a BA in the history of medicine, Alexandra Chen spent four years in Zambia, including three years with the Peace Corps. During her time in Africa, Alexandra became aware of a certain “stubbornness” in the construction industry, especially in urban areas such as the capital, Lusaka. “Every project used the same energy-intensive materials and methods to produce buildings.”

That observation led Alexandra to the University of Michigan, where she is earning dual master’s degrees in architecture and urban planning and civil and environmental engineering. As part of her studies, Alexandra spent the past summer in Bali, Indonesia—supported by her Bailey Fellowship—conducting research on “behavior change in the built environment of the developing world.”

Alexandra explains, “My interest is the relationship between traditional building and modernization. I respect and want to understand the design techniques and challenges of those who are working to change the construction industry.”



She is particularly focused on Bali, where builders are exploring ways to balance the beauty and sustainability of traditional Indonesian bamboo structures with issues of cost, safety, and long-term durability. To that end, Alexandra partnered with Ibuku, a Balinese design firm specializing in bamboo buildings and furniture. Her research involved analyzing a variety of structures in the region, including traditional residences, modern civic and commercial ventures, furniture, and even boats—by taking photographs, studying architectural drawings, and conducting interviews.

After graduation, Alexandra plans to work in the developing world, “leveraging rich local traditions with modern needs” by implementing socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable building practices.

Praised by her professors for her enthusiasm, rigor, and creativity, Alexandra possesses the traits to be a leader in her field. “Her commitment to the issues of design, sustainability, and social justice is rare for a student at this stage of her architectural career,” says one of Alexandra’s advisors, “and it deserves to be nurtured. We need many, many more students like Ms. Chen.”

Alexandra Chen is a distinguished 2014 Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellow.

ELIZABETH CHISLEA *Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar*

After earning an associate's degree in dental hygiene from Lansing Community College, Beth Chislea has worked in private dental practices in the mid-Michigan and Northern Michigan areas for the past sixteen years. Throughout that time, Beth has been active both in her professional association and in her community.

She has volunteered with Traverse City Health Clinic, caring for the uninsured and underinsured members of the community. In addition, Beth has participated in a community-based oral health education and fluoride varnish initiative with the Capitol Area Community Services, Head Start, and Early Head Start Programs.

Following the birth of her son, Beth cut back on her career, but not on her dedication to the profession. She has maintained an active membership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association, serving in a number of local- and state-level leadership positions. One of things her colleagues tell us they most admire about Beth is her on-going commitment to keeping current about the latest dental hygiene research, products, and procedures.



It was through her work with the Association that Beth first learned about the University of Michigan's Dental Hygiene Degree Completion E-Learning Program, the Dental School's completely online format that allows hygienists to apply some of their prior academic credits toward their degrees. The time was right, and the computer-based learning design fit her life, so Beth enrolled and is currently working toward a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene.

Since the beginning, says Beth, the aspect of dental hygiene that has most appealed to her is educating others. When she completes her degree, Beth wants to teach dental hygiene students and perhaps eventually become the director of an alternative practice organization. As Beth explains, "Because healthcare is evolving and multifaceted, the opportunities for dental hygienists outside the traditional setting are growing, and I hope to inspire and motivate others in one of these alternate settings."

Beth Chislea is the 2014 Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.

REBECCA DECAMP *AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar*

Rebecca DeCamp credits her desire to be a teacher to two important people in her life: Mr. Southerland, a grade school teacher who believed in her; and Dr. Fox, a community college history teacher who told captivating stories. Rebecca also loved musical performance, so she initially won a bassoon scholarship to Central Michigan University and set out to become a music teacher.

Although Rebecca was unable to complete that degree, she did confirm for herself that she has a knack for helping others learn. “The look on the face of fellow classmates when I’d helped them understand what they needed to do, and more importantly why they needed to do it, was all I needed. Teaching became something that I craved.”

It took over ten years before Rebecca was able to fulfill her dream. This time, Rebecca is drawing upon her talent and love for foreign languages by majoring in Spanish education. “Being accepted into the University of Michigan was one of the best days of my life,” she says. “I will never forget opening my acceptance letter, which to this day hangs on my refrigerator.” When she completes her bachelor’s degree in 2015, Rebecca looks forward to beginning her new life as a secondary school Spanish teacher, creating a classroom that’s comfortable and fun. “I want my students to look forward to my class, as I once did Dr. Fox’s class.”



Citing her outstanding proficiency with the Spanish language and her “voracious appetite for learning,” Rebecca’s professors rate her highly. As one of them tells us, “Rebecca is the very best of what Michigan has to offer.”

Rebecca DeCamp is the 2014 American Association of University Women: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

AMANDA DUDA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“Helping others has always been my passion,” says Amanda Duda, “and I ultimately decided to turn that passion into a career by becoming a social worker.” Amanda earned both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in social work from Wayne State University. Since then, she has been a school social worker and a part-time social worker at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital.

Amanda certainly enjoys her work and, judging from the praise she receives from colleagues and supervisors, she has been a valuable team member and leader. At the same time, over the past six years Amanda has observed procedures and policies that she believes do not contribute to the welfare of her clients. Frustrated that she lacked the background to address these issues effectively, Amanda decided it was time for her to go back to school.

She is currently an MBA student in the NetPlus+ program at University of Michigan-Flint, learning the principles of effective organizational management and leadership. As she explains, “My career goal following graduation is to meld my two graduate degrees. I aspire to direct a non-profit organization, creating positive change for people while leading others who share the same vision.”



Volunteering with Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe has long been Amanda’s extracurricular avenue for helping others. The goal of this non-profit organization, similar to that of the Center for the Education of Women, is improving the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. Amanda wholeheartedly embraces the Soroptimist mission; she’s chaired many committees, served as secretary, and is in the running to be President-elect. Her service is yet another way that Amanda is learning how to meet the needs of clients while maintaining a strong business organization.

And it is proof of something one of her former colleagues told us, “Showing a commitment to issues greater than herself is in Amanda’s DNA!”

Amanda Duda is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AVA DUPRE *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*

Ava Dupre believes in her dreams. As a child, Ava was fascinated by outer space, Star Wars, Star Trek, model rockets, and astronomy. She began her college career as an engineering major at Mott Community College. Health problems led her to leave school and embark upon an 15-year odyssey, working in warehouses, restaurants, and construction companies and coming to terms with the incongruities in her gender identity.

After a time of heavy contemplation “about what I wanted out of life and my place amongst humanity,” Ava tells us that she decided to pursue her life-long love of space. Thus, she enrolled at the University of Michigan to complete a bachelor’s degree in earth and space sciences. During that same time, Ava began a second journey: claiming her true identity through gender transition.

It was, to say the least, “a very difficult few years.” But Ava has emerged a happier, more self-confident person.

“I never realized how hurtful it was to carry the burden of suppressing my identity until I faced my fears,” she explains. As a volunteer at U-M’s Spectrum Center, Ava is now an esteemed role model who shares her story with classes of students, staff, faculty, and community members.



Ava is currently working on her master’s degree in space systems engineering in the Department of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Space Sciences in U-M’s College of Engineering. She’s planning a career dedicated to the advancement of human beings in space and/or the increased understanding of the space environment.

Those with whom Ava has worked are especially in awe of her tenacity. In the words of an advisor, “Ava is one of the strongest students I have ever had the pleasure to work with. Her passion and perseverance show through all that she has accomplished.” Given her intelligence and conscientiousness, Ava has the ability to thrive in both the academic environment and in her future career.

Ava Dupre is a 2014 Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

ANGELA EKE-USIM *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

“I grew up in Africa,” explains Angela Eke-USim, “where healthcare falls far below world standards and where many rural areas record the highest rates of infant, under-five, and maternal mortality, most from preventable causes.” For as long as she can remember, Angela has wanted to be a physician. She achieved that ambition in 2008 by completing a medical degree from Olabisi Onabanjo University in her native Nigeria.

Angela is now living in Ann Arbor, attending classes and caring for her two pre-school children while her husband maintains his career in Nigeria. She is a graduate student in the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health, earning her MPH in epidemiology. One of Angela’s goals is to minister to under-served populations. She sees herself as an advocate for good health for the children of Africa, providing “guidance for clinical practice, basic research, and disease prevention.” As part of that career plan, Angela also hopes to gain admittance into a pediatric residency training program in the US.



In the past ten years, Angela has worked with several non-governmental aid agencies, most notably the African Solace Organization. Angela explains that ASO was founded by a single mother of three “who, through her own life experiences, created an avenue to provide academic, financial, and health assistance to widows and single mothers. She has shown me that it is possible for one person to bring about constructive change.”

With her passion for public health, as well as her stature as an “academically strong, mature, thoughtful, and engaged professional,” Angela has proven to her U-M professors and advisors that she will succeed in all of her career plans.

Angela Eke-USim is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

CHANA ELIAS *Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar*

Chana Elias knows exactly where she's going—and why. Her path has been broken and rocky, but Chana is determined to honor two important young women: her five-year old daughter, for whom she wants the best in life, and her beloved sister Mira, who lost a long battle with cancer just as Chana was reclaiming her own life.

Chana is currently an undergraduate in the University of Michigan's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, with a focus on geology. If her chosen career seems unconventional for someone with Chana's background, it's because it is! But it's not at all surprising, according to those who know and admire Chana for her enthusiasm, her ability to animate a classroom with her curiosity and energy, and her life-long courage to "march to the beat of the drum she hears." As one of her advisors explains,

"Chana goes about her work not just with the hope of changing her world for the better, but hell-bent on doing so. Her commitment to excellence in all facets of her life—including jumping out of airplanes for the sheer joy of it—is redoubtable."



To reach this point in her life, Chana has waited tables, trained and worked as an esthetician, studied nursing, and worked as a critical care technician at U-M hospitals. She also studied journalism at Washtenaw Community College and became a reporter for the student newspaper, *The Washtenaw Voice*. In the words of her advisor, "Chana raised the quality of our content with an array of award-winning pieces that helped us produce a newspaper that won a National Pacemaker Award—the highest honor in collegiate journalism, and the

first for *The Voice*."

Chana Elias is the 2014 Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

JHANA FREDERIKSEN *University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholar*

Jhana Frederiksen's childhood fascination with art and architecture was solace for an otherwise turbulent family life. Over the years, key mentors recognized Jhana's artistic talent and enthusiasm and encouraged her dream to become an architect.

After earning BS degrees in architecture and civil engineering from Lawrence Technological University, Jhana and her long-time mentor, Dr. Rochelle Martin, worked together on several exciting projects. As Jhana fondly recalls, "We entered competitions, edited each other's writing, and created our own opportunities for research and continued learning—including an extended European tour to study unique styles and solutions in architecture and urban design."

Jhana also has over fifteen years of professional experience with area firms, including the Ann Arbor office of Quinn Evans Architects. As one of her recent projects with Quinn Evans, Jhana was a member of the team that designed the Ann Arbor Municipal Center.



Her career has been multi-faceted, successful, and rewarding. However, Jhana has always known that, in order to achieve her goal of having "a meaningful humanitarian and environmental impact on the world around me," she would need further education. To that end, Jhana is now working on her master's degree in the University of Michigan's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. When she graduates, Jhana plans to obtain her license and continue her career as a practicing architect, devoting herself to socially

conscious projects for modern global conditions.

Jhana's professional and academic colleagues admire her innate design talent, passion, and dedication. As one of her advisors tells us, "The agility with which Jhana negotiates the complicated demands of architecture school probably extends from her rich background in the arts and her previous experiences as an architect—though I sense an even more powerful source of motivation extends from a deep passion for learning in and of itself."

Jhana Frederiksen is the 2014 University of Michigan Faculty Women's Club Scholar.

DENISE GLEICH *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Denise Gleich knows firsthand that “addiction is a destructive disease; it destroys families, lives, and dreams.” It almost destroyed her own family and left her, at the age of 35, a widow with three children. As Denise now realizes, her experiences created in her “a deep compassion for people who suffer from drug and alcohol abuse.” Those experiences have finally led to her true calling as a substance abuse counselor.

To reach this point in her life, Denise has travelled an amazing, frustrating educational road. As a young mother, she enrolled at the Detroit College of Business, but left to raise her two daughters. Later she attended Henry Ford Community College and earned an associate’s degree in science/CAD technology, which led to a job training Ford Motor Company engineers. But after only three months the entire training team was laid off!

Unemployed, and now the mother of three adolescent girls, Denise worked as a bartender and re-enrolled at HFCC, this time to study architecture. When a slump in the housing market lessened the need for architects, a dejected Denise withdrew from her classes. Then in 2010, while working as a waitress, Denise overheard a co-worker talking about the SOAR program for returning adult students at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Like many CEW scholars before her, Denise found in SOAR the support and encouragement she needed to try once more to complete her education. She is now an undergraduate at UM-D, excelling in her studies of psychology, sociology, and anthropology while simultaneously working toward certification as an alcohol and drug counselor, and looking ahead to earning an MSW.



One of her UM-D professors perfectly sums up Denise’s life: “Her perseverance in coming back to school as an adult is testament to her commitment to improving not only her own life, but of her goal of strengthening her community.”

Denise Gleich is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

JENNIFER GONZALEZ *Linda J. Rider Scholar*

Jennifer Gonzalez assures us that, were we to meet her today in a professional or social setting, we would see no traces of the struggles she has faced and overcome to become the happy, successful, motivated young woman she has become. Jennifer's childhood was complex and dysfunctional in many ways. As a result, and despite her impressive intellectual and social skills, Jennifer became a high school dropout and teenage mother.

"I have struggled every day since my daughter's birth," says Jennifer, "to meet her needs and provide for her financially, emotionally, and physically." Jennifer returned to school to earn her diploma and then an associate's degree from Washtenaw Community College. She then took a series of jobs and worked her way up to the position of staff accountant for a health organization.

Today, a wife and mother of four, Jennifer is once again a student, completing a bachelor's degree in health policy studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She has several ambitious plans about the next stages of her life. Initially, Jennifer will use her new knowledge to enable her to move into leadership positions in her current career.

At some point, Jennifer also intends to create a non-profit organization for the benefit of disadvantaged youth and teenaged parents. "I was fortunate that I had the support of my nuclear family and friends, but I want to become an example to others that a person can accomplish anything, no matter what the obstacles." Someday, Jennifer hopes to return to school, perhaps to earn a PhD in a field related to health policy, urban studies and psychology.

The quality most mentioned by Jennifer's admirers is her enthusiasm for new ideas. It is, they tell us, impossible to hold her back when there's work to be done and something new to conquer. "Given the opportunity," explains one of her colleagues, "Jennifer will always succeed. As her life story reveals, she is perseverance personified!"

Jennifer Gonzalez is the 2014 Linda J. Rider Scholar.

KEDISHIA GRANT *Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar*

“My journey,” says Kedishia Grant, “began in the Caribbean island of Jamaica, where I grew up in a poor socioeconomic society. My grandmother ran a small grocery store, and I often helped out.” Their customers were farmers and other poor citizens, and the store was barely able to survive. Kedishia knew that she wanted a better life for herself and her family.

She studied hard and earned admittance to one of her country’s most prestigious high schools. There, Kedishia was introduced to basic economic principles about how sound management could alter people’s lives for the better. “I developed a passion for business,” she tells us, “and decided to become a business professional in order to contribute to the economic development of my own community.”

The first step toward that goal was a certificate in business studies from the Caribbean Examination Council.



But Kedishia knew she needed more education. She came to the United State and earned an associate’s degree in business and liberal arts from Washtenaw Community College. In a sociology class at WCC, she viewed a video about the constraints third world countries face while trying to participate in world trade. “I was deeply touched to watch farmers beg for those in power to reward them fairly for their labor. It reminded me of the farmers back in my home.”

Kedishia came to the University of Michigan to earn her bachelor’s degree in economics and international studies. “I may not be the smartest person in my classes,” she says, “but I am driven by passion and interest.” Her professors would agree with her latter statement—but not the former. One of them tells us that, in recognition of her academic performance, leadership, and service, Kedishia was recently named to Phi Theta Kappa’s All-Michigan Team.

When she graduates, Kedishia plans to earn an MBA and set out on her goal to “transform the despair of the world’s hardest physical laborers into hope and endless possibilities.”

Kedishia Grant is the 2014 Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

MELISSA GRANT *Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar*

A first generation college student, Melissa Grant grew up believing that “education can be a great equalizer, lifting people from the direst of circumstances.” Melissa enrolled at Michigan State University and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in international relations. Especially interested in the former Soviet Union, Melissa completed an internship in Tbilisi, Georgia, as part of her studies.

After graduation, Melissa had difficulty finding a position related to her major and branched out into a different field. She joined the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness as the developer and director for a newly-funded AmeriCorps program. “It turned out to be a profound experience,” explains Melissa, “forcing me to think more critically about my role in society and the structural forces that oppress people.”

Her work also introduced Melissa to the field of social work and inspired her to enroll at the University of Michigan, where she is now working on her MSW. When she graduates, Melissa intends to become a clinical social worker, perhaps in a hospital or palliative care setting. Her long-term goal is to continue her academic journey with a PhD in social work and a teaching career. “College can be a challenging and isolating experience for any student, especially one from a non-traditional or underrepresented background. I hope I can be a positive role model for others who are uncertain that they can achieve their goals when the odds are against them.”



Praised by a colleague for bringing energy, passion, and commitment to helping others, Melissa is “a genuine emerging leader.”

Melissa Grant is the 2014 Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar.

MARTHA GUTH *American Association of University Women Scholar*

In order to fulfill her dream of combining a career as a professional singer with that of a classical voice professor, Martha Guth is on the path to complete her doctorate of musical arts degree. She explains, “One of my main life goals has always been to teach at the university level. For years my life has been about striking a balance between scholarship and performance.”

Hence, Martha is currently a DMA student in the University of Michigan’s School of Music, Theatre & Dance. She already has an undergraduate degree in vocal performance from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and a master’s degree in the same field from Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, and two years of further study in Germany at the Hochschule für Musik, Augsburg/Nürnberg. In addition, Martha has a wide range of impressive experiences in the music world.



For one, she is a researcher and writer for the Metropolitan Opera Sirius Radio Broadcasts. “This means,” Martha explains, “that I prepare questions for all of the musicians, writers, and artists interviewed on live radio broadcasts.” Martha is also a founding faculty member of the Vancouver International Song Institute, a program that encompasses scholarship, performance, and innovation in Art Song.

Her role as co-creator and co-editor of *Sparks and Wiry Cries*, a music-oriented e-zine, began as a podcast on her personal website. Over the past two years, it has grown into its own online program devoted to Art Song. “We host articles by prominent and upcoming scholars, blog entries by performers, and interviews with well-known musicians and composers.”

In addition to all of these projects, Martha conducts master classes at universities in the US and Canada. And, of course, she performs solo works by Handel, Brahms, Mahler, Haydn, Orff, and Mozart; has a growing discography; and has had the honor of premiering many new compositions.

According to one of her professors, Martha is a very talented soprano, with a growing and distinguished professional record. But she is also a musical scholar, “smart and quick. Early in her DMA, Martha has already established herself as a leading light.”

Martha Guth is the 2014 American Association of University Women Scholar.

CASAUNdra HENDRICKS *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

By the age of ten, CaSaundra Hendricks had already concluded that “getting on welfare, selling my body, or finding a man to take care of me” were her only options for the future. “Such low aspirations,” she laments, “are prominent in communities where young women don’t know they have choices outside of what they might see in their immediate circumstances.”

CaSaundra married at age 17 and had the first of her five children a year later. It was the beginning of what she describes as “30 years of domestic servitude, living in fear that my then husband might decide to leave me and our family.” CaSaundra worked during that time as a hair stylist, but she knew education was the true way up for both herself and her children. And so, when her youngest child entered school, CaSaundra did too—starting at Wayne County Community College and graduating five years later with a BA in sociology from the University of Michigan-Dearborn.



Her studies deepened CaSaundra’s concern for poor women, so she took a job as a social worker for a private foster care and adoption agency in Detroit. “My clients were primarily young, uneducated African American women who tended to hold the same limited beliefs about themselves that I’d held all those years ago. And that saddened me.”

CaSaundra has now returned to the classroom, this time as a master’s degree student at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. “It is,” she explains, “incumbent upon those of us who have been fortunate enough to gain the tools to change our lives to go back and help others.” And that is what CaSaundra plans to do when she graduates. Though she also admits that, “if time and money permit, I’d love to earn a PhD!”

“Have you ever watched someone blossom before your eyes?” asks one of her professors. “That’s CaSaundra. She is one of those rare students wherein the true meaning of ‘promise’ resides.”

CaSaundra Hendricks is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

JOANNA HERRMANN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Joanna Herrmann credits her grandmother, “one of the lucky ones to escape Nazi Germany,” with instilling in her family the value of tikkun olam, or “repairing the world.” Hence Joanna’s lifelong desire to participate in “humanity’s shared responsibility for solving global injustices.”

That mission initially inspired Joanna to design her own interdisciplinary major—human rights and social consciousness—for her undergraduate degree at the University of Virginia. It then led her to an internship with the Immigrant Women Program at Legal Momentum, where she disseminated information and lobbied Congress on key aspects of comprehensive immigration reform legislation.

Next, Joanna spent five years at the Aspen Institute, rising from Executive Assistant to Senior Program Manager. During this time, she helped develop a network of investors and capacity-building organizations to support small businesses and entrepreneurship in emerging markets. In the process, she explains, “I discovered the potential of using business strategies to alleviate poverty, one of the key drivers of oppression and strife in the world.”



Joanna eventually realized that, in order to be most effective, she would need additional education. She’s come to the University of Michigan to study global sustainable enterprise at the Erb Institute, in a joint MBA and MS program in the Schools of Business and Natural Resources and Environment.

Eventually Joanna hopes to become the chief sustainability officer at a Fortune 500 company. That position, she explains, will enable her to help businesses align corporate social responsibility programs with their for-profit core business models. “I can be at the nexus of creating market solutions to poverty. Providing opportunities for the poor to raise themselves out of poverty is a critical aspect of human rights, crucial to creating a more equitable and peaceful world.”

Joanna clearly possesses all the qualities and skills she’ll need to tackle her ambitious goals. “What stands out for me about Joanna,” says one of her admirers, “are her sharp mind, generous heart, and brave conviction. She challenges assumptions, speaks out when something is not right, and pushes others in the right direction.”

Joanna Herrmann is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KELLI HUGHES *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

The photograph shows an elementary school-aged African-American boy standing on an empty milk crate, being fingerprinted at a police station. “That image,” says Kelli Hughes, “captures my concerns about racial disparities in the classroom and the ‘school-to-prison’ pipeline.”

Social justice has always been Kelli’s passion. She graduated from Oral Roberts University with a BS in elementary education and then returned to her home state of Michigan, first to earn a master’s degree in library and information science at Wayne State University and then to work in the public school system. For the past five years, Kelli has been a middle school science and ESL teacher.

Kelli recognizes that her school district, where she has taught for seven years, is remarkably diverse. “We have students from all over the world, who speak a total of over 100 different languages at home. Yet in the midst of our cultural conglomerate are underlying issues of racism, inequality, and intolerance when it comes to minority populations, particularly regarding discipline and special education placement.” Kelli is proud to say that “rising above the problems is a small group of teachers, myself included, who are championing the need for social justice in our classrooms, schools, and district.”



Kelli is an inspirational teacher. As one of her colleagues tells us, “She has a deep concern for each and every student’s needs and puts in extra effort to develop solutions for at-risk and minority students. Kelli simply will not allow struggling

students to fail. She never gives up!”

Now Kelli is taking the next steps to prepare herself for a leadership role in educational social justice. She has just started her doctoral studies in metropolitan education at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. As Kelli explains, “I hear the pleas of students who are victims of social injustice in the American school system, I see the despair on their faces, and I read the hopelessness in their eyes.” She is determined to help.

Kelli Hughes is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

NICOLETTE JEFFERSON *Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Scholar*

Nicolette Jefferson is in the midst of achieving educational goals which she once thought were unattainable. Though she graduated from high school intent upon becoming an engineer, life intervened to delay that plan. By the time she began taking college classes six years later, Nicolette was a single mom whose main focus had shifted to caring for her baby daughter.

She took a job as an in-school police officer for the Detroit Public Schools, a position she has held for the past decade and for which she has earned accolades from her colleagues. Though Nicolette never gave up on her dream of continuing her education, the reality is that, like so many of our CEW scholars, she struggled to balance a full-time job with attending classes and being a mother. Thus, she says, “I made a regretful decision to withdraw from college to focus solely on my occupation and parenting duties.”



Nicolette credits her decision to once again resume her education to the people in her life who have encouraged her: co-workers in the Detroit School District who urged her to pursue her degree, and the Wayne County Community College professor who “introduced his course with a heart-felt lecture on the value of setting and meeting goals and emphasized that each student could become anything that he or she desired. A cliché maybe, but I believed the words he was saying!”

Nicolette earned her associate’s degree in science at WCCCD and immediately began work towards her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. After much thought and exploration, Nicolette is confident that the right career path for her is health policy studies. Her next step is to become a physical therapist, in which she plans to earn her doctorate degree.

Nicolette has earned the respect of those who know her from both her academic and professional worlds. As one of her professors explains, “Nicolette is an extraordinarily talented student and an admired leader among her peers.” Her future is bright.

Nicolette Jefferson is the 2014 Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Scholar.

AURORA KAMIMURA *CEW Graduate Scholarship*

“Woman. Mother. Wife. Scholar. Activist. Educator. Latina. Daughter of immigrants.” These, says Aurora Kamimura, “are the identities that describe who I am.”

On the path to fulfilling her lifelong dream to earn a PhD, Aurora completed a BA in social science from the University of California, Irvine and a master’s degree in administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University. Now, as a highly recruited doctoral student at the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education in U-M’s School of Education, Aurora is preparing for a career as a university faculty member, continuing her commitment to educational access and equity for underrepresented students.

Aurora’s path has taken her in many directions. After completing her MA, she worked for twelve years, including stints as Coordinator of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Michigan and Associate Dean of Student Services at Santa Ana College. Throughout it all, Aurora’s focus has been on helping young Latinas recognize and live out their academic promise.



Seeking to be a role model for Latinas, Aurora also worked with an organization called CoolSpeak, travelling across the country to give motivational speeches for at-risk youth. “I have had the opportunity to share my passion with middle and high school young women—daughters of migrant parents, non-college educated and non-English speaking immigrants. It was a chance to share my story and struggles with them and inspire these young women to graduate from high school and continue onto college.”

The colleagues and advisors with whom Aurora has worked speak of her in superlative terms. Calling her “a true gem” of her graduate program, one of Aurora’s professors said this: “The very heart of the work we celebrate at CEW is served by support for Aurora. It is an investment in the kind of woman whom we will rely on to lead our field and transform our society in the years to follow.”

Aurora Kamimura is the recipient of the 2014 CEW Graduate Scholarship.

FUMIE KAWASAKI *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Growing up in Japan, Fumie Kawasaki never imagined going to college. When she graduated from high school, she trained to be a dental technician. Shortly afterwards, however, she married an American and moved to the US.

Adjusting to her new life took a while. Fumie was 34 when she started planning her next career and began taking classes, first at Jackson Community College and Washtenaw Community College. As Fumie explains, “Being back in the classroom gave my life a new sense of purpose.” Fumie graduated from Eastern Michigan University with major in math and a minor in computer science. While at EMU, she worked as a math tutor, winning several awards for her excellent service.

Fumie is now master’s degree student in applied statistics at the University of Michigan. Despite her early trepidation, Fumie is excelling in her studies, praised by her professors for her mathematical acumen and hard work. In

the words of one professor, “It would be a huge understatement just to say that I was deeply impressed by Fumie. She stands out as perhaps the most conscientious and hardworking student I have ever had. We are obligated to encourage and recognize students like Fumie, for they are the ones most likely to be successful in making a difference in the world.”



Next in her career, Fumie plans to acquire more experience as a data analyst and consultant. In recognition of the positive impact education has had on her life, Fumie also intends to find ways to share that message. As she explains, “I have learned that I must do something to make a difference for the betterment of society. I ultimately would like to be involved

in research that allows me to apply my quantitative skills and personal experiences to support people like me who have faced many challenges.”

Fumie Kawasaki is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

TRIANA KAZALEH SIRDENIS *Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar*

“As the daughter of two teachers,” says Triana Kazaleh Sirdenis, “I used to think education required a traditional classroom environment.” Over time, however, Triana broadened her perspective to include many other places where learning occurs, including in community health settings. She made this discovery in part because of her own long-time, hands-on commitment to public health non-profits and centers in Lansing, Detroit, and Ann Arbor.

Triana earned her BA from Michigan State University in psychology and health studies. During and after her undergraduate education, she was involved with many community organizations. For example, Triana has worked with 4-H Youth Development on teen mentorship and refugee youth programs; with an MSU study on the effects of partner violence on infant development; with the Arab Center for Economic and Social Services environmental health program; with U-M’s Project Healthy Schools on nutritional and physical fitness education; with People’s Kitchen Detroit on food access work; and with the Center for Sexuality and Health Disparities at U-M on sexual and gender minority health research.



Given all of her experiences, Triana returns to her studies as an already seasoned professional. She knows, however, that by earning a master’s degree in health, behavior and health education in the School of Public Health, she will increase the depth and breadth of her knowledge. She is particularly eager to study evaluation methods, using her quantitative and qualitative research skills to analyze the effectiveness of public health initiatives.

The next step in Triana’s career plan is to extend her education with fellowships in the areas of community-based public health and research, social justice-oriented health education, and community organizing. “My public health work has always been guided by my deep commitment to social justice,” Triana explains, “and I will continue to seek out opportunities that challenge me to grow.”

That dedication has impressed Triana’s professors and colleagues. As one of them told us, “Triana’s passion for social justice and community organizing is clear, and she has a strong commitment to improving the health and well-being of communities here in Michigan.”

Triana Kazaleh Sirdenis is the 2014 Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar.

SALMA KHALID *Robin Wright Fellowship*

This fall, Salma Khalid is in Pakistan, conducting field research in her native country. The project, co-funded by the World Bank and the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, addresses citizens' habit formation related to hygiene practices and water purification in rural areas.

Salma's association with the World Bank is not new. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in economics from Lahore University of Management Sciences and a master's degree in public policy from the University of Chicago, Salma spent two years at the World Bank as an economic development researcher on Pakistan.

Now a PhD student of economics at the University of Michigan, Salma continues to focus on health issues in Pakistan. The research she is currently conducting will form the basis of her upcoming dissertation: an analysis of community-level interventions to increase people's knowledge and change their attitudes and behavior regarding nutrition and personal hygiene, with the general objective of reducing maternal and child malnutrition.



Specifically, Salma will focus on water treatment. As she explains, "Data indicate that less than 10% of citizens in rural areas of Pakistan treat their drinking water. Unfortunately, data also show that 67% of stored household drinking water is contaminated with E.coli."

Research indicates that most attempts to improve health conditions have targeted individuals and have been difficult to sustain. Salma and her fellow field workers will approach the problem from a different angle: using self-organized peer groups as the medium by which to teach citizens about the efficacy of water treatment. "Social pressure and group feedback have been shown to be helpful in altering people's behaviors," explains Salma, "so we will be mobilizing groups for biweekly meetings in order to inform them about the existence, cost, and benefits of water treatment products."

When Salma completes her graduate studies, she intends to return to the World Bank and continue conducting policy-related health projects in South Asia.

Described by a U-M professor as a sharp scholar and apt critic, Salma is certain to have a profound impact on the welfare of her fellow Pakistanis.

Salma is an ideal choice for the 2014 Robin Wright Fellowship.

JESSICA LOWEN *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Jessica Lowen acknowledges that, like many CEW scholars before her, she has overcome obstacles to reach her current academic status. Raised by unconventional parents in rural Oregon, Jessica had a childhood that combined excessive freedom and responsibility. She was, for example, cliff jumping from high canyon walls at the age of four, and she took her first job to help support her family when she was eleven.

Since then, Jessica has lived a life of incident. She traveled to Africa and Mexico. She completed an undergraduate degree in anthropology and Spanish from Whitman College and an MA in anthropology and gender studies from the University of Oregon. However, when she moved to Ann Arbor to begin work on a PhD, the combination of the birth of her daughter, her husband's unemployment, and her own chronic illness made it necessary for Jessica to postpone her educational plans.



To temporarily support her family, Jessica worked as an English as a Second Language instructor. At the same time, she volunteered for, and occasionally relied upon, a number of local service groups, including food pantries. Now, her health restored and her husband settled into his career, Jessica is ready to move forward with her academic goals. She is a PhD student in the University of Michigan's Department of Anthropology, planning a career as a university professor and researcher.

Her background taught Jessica many truths that drive her academic interests: "What is considered 'healthy' and 'good' is almost entirely culturally specific; the psycholinguistic processes that we take for granted as 'normal' are not universally so; and there are more healing methods on earth than we imagine." Those truths guide Jessica's dissertation research on the complex topic of faith-based grassroots activism within the sex trade industry.

Jessica's professors are excited about her research. As one of them explains, "It focuses on the economic and religious lives of a large population of marginalized women in the US. Given Jessica's powerful intellect, energy, and enthusiasm, her study will bring important but missing knowledge about this aspect of the American poor."

Jessica Lowen is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AGNES “SILVER” LUMSDAINE *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Silver Lumsdaine began her college education with a BA in psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and then intended to enroll in medical school. Instead she embarked on a long period of exploration, including working as a youth cross country and track coach, a photojournalist and communications volunteer with USA Track and Field, and an assistant high school athletics director.

As Silver explains, “I’ve stirred the pot of self-discovery by working in education, coaching, fitness, wellness, and journalism.” The common denominator for Silver’s many jobs has been her ongoing interest in health and wellness. The result? “What I couldn’t articulate a decade ago I can now say with certainty: I want to catch people before they fall, not patch them up afterwards.”

To that end, Silver is concurrently working on a Master of Public Health in health behavior and health education as well as a Master of Science in nutritional sciences from the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health. In addition to her extensive background and experience, Silver brings to her studies a fervent commitment to the importance of good physical health for everyone. One of Silver’s professors praises her by saying, “Her passion for health and her love of simultaneously learning for others and passing on what she knows sets her apart. There is a massive need for people who can understand health science and communicate it effectively to non-scientists, and Silver has the potential to be one of the best.”



When she completes her degree, Silver plans to continue her education with a fellowship related to public health policy. And at some point Silver envisions completing a PhD or DrPH. Wherever her career takes her, however, Silver’s goal is to work at the intersection of communication, motivational psychology, and sociology in order “to put public health and disease prevention at the forefront of the collective public mind.”

Silver Lumsdaine is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

K. CHAMISA MACKENZIE *Helen Huff Shell Scholar*

Raised in the Quaker faith, Chamisa MacKenzie lives the values of simplicity, integrity, equality, community, and peace. Her commitment to serving others began early and has continued throughout her life.

After graduating with a BA in human development and social relations from Earlham College, Chamisa became an Early Head Start Home Visitor in Portland, Oregon. Working with low-income, primarily immigrant parents, Chamisa discovered a talent and passion for supporting and empowering others.

She next joined the Peace Corps, in order to serve in a country and culture foreign to her. For three years, Chamisa lived in the rural town of Volcan in southern Costa Rica, designing and implementing programs to enrich the local citizens, especially young women. “I am,” she says, “a stronger and more compassionate person because of my experiences in Costa Rica.”



Chamisa also came to understand “how interconnected our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health is to our built environment, political systems, regulatory agencies, and surrounding cultural norms and pressures.” That awareness has led Chamisa to the University of Michigan, where she is completing a joint master’s degree program in social work and public health. “I want,” she explains, “the specialized skills to become a psycho-therapist as well as the skills and knowledge to be a public health practitioner.”

As part of her academic program, Chamisa completed a yearlong clinical internship at the University of Michigan Health Systems Outpatient Psychiatry Department. Her experiences proved to Chamisa that “I have found the work I am meant to do. I am inspired by the resilience of people in difficult situations and am deeply committed to working towards a more socially just world.” And it proved to her professors and supervisors that she has the intelligence, aptitude, and cultural sensitivity to become an outstanding social worker.

Chamisa MacKenzie is the 2014 Helen Huff Shell Scholar.

DEBRA MCGEE *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*

Debra McGee proudly declares that “my mother had the first and only equal opportunity home in our neighborhood. The boys cooked and sewed; the girls removed trash and shoveled snow.” That upbringing carried over into Debra’s choice of endeavors as an adult—from drumming to machine tooling to truck driving. It also fostered the idea that she could realize her dreams by hard work and a belief in herself.

Debra describes her life as a series of “starts, stops, and road blocks,” but she’s come to understand that “my many experiences have made me who I am today, a resilient, compassionate person who finds a saving grace in everyone I meet.”

Working as a job coach in upstate New York, says Debra, “I first witnessed how, with encouragement and support, individuals can attain recovery and a sense of worth even while dealing with the challenges of physical or mental illness.” It was the beginning of Debra’s interest in social work. She set out with the “humble desire” to earn an associate degree in human services by taking evening classes at Mott Community College. Having accomplished that objective, Debra then set her sights on an MSW.

With that goal in mind, Debra is now completing her bachelor’s degree in social work at the University of Michigan-Flint. An internship at the Flushing Area Senior Center piqued Debra’s interest in the field of geriatric social work. “I have found my niche,” she exclaims. “I truly enjoy helping my senior clients and, while it can be difficult, it does not feel like work.”

Her professors tell us that, in addition to Debra’s academic prowess, she is an excellent percussionist, vocalist, and music educator who shared her talent as an artist-in-residence for the Flint Arts Council. Given the depth and breadth of Debra’s gifts and experiences, her admirers predict that she will flourish in her new career. “It is a logical extension of her honorable life’s path.”

Debra McGee is a 2014 Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

CONSUELO JULIETTE MORALES *Sarah Winans Newman Scholar*

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of California, Davis, Consuelo Morales began her career in Los Angeles in 1995, teaching biology to “incredibly bright and motivated African American and Latino students who faced many personal and health-related issues, from violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse to gang affiliations.”

Finding herself under-prepared and under-supported for the challenging task, Consuelo left the classroom and moved to Spain, where she taught English, learned Spanish, and discovered “what it's like to be an outsider in a country where your culture is not the dominant one.”

That insight led her back to the States, to another LA classroom, and to a degree in education from the University of Phoenix. This time around, says Consuelo, she was much more successful—but also increasingly aware of her students' need for more science knowledge. “I truly believe science knowledge is an essential, empowering tool, to which all people need access but which has been historically inaccessible to under-served students and communities.”



Driven to improve the link between students' classroom science knowledge and their experiences in their communities, Consuelo came to the University of Michigan and earned a master's degree in public health. In the process, she realized that she'd eventually need “still more tools” in order to reach her goals.

Consuelo is now working on a PhD in science education in Michigan's School of Education. When she graduates, she plans to become a university professor, science educator, and teacher trainer. Her research focus will be on the ways to create better links between secondary science education and the public health of surrounding communities, especially for historically underserved populations. In addition, she would like to research the ways to leverage the valuable science knowledge that already exists within those communities to further student engagement and learning in science.

As “an exceptional educator, a committed community member, and a strong emerging scholar in science education,” Consuelo has impressed her many colleagues and academic advisors, who predict a successful future for her.

Consuelo Juliette Morales is the 2014 Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

SALEEMAH MORRIS *Molly H. Dobson Scholar*

It's difficult to comprehend the horrific facts of Saleemah Morris's childhood. Suffice to say that she endured physical and psychological hardships that few are able to overcome. But Saleemah *has* overcome them and, as her staunchest admirers and mentors marvel, she has become "a woman who is keenly aware of her gifts and committed to cultivating her potential by pursuing the necessary knowledge and experiences."

Saleemah credits her younger sister, for whom she took in to raise, for helping her to find a way out of her desperate existence: "While we were homeless, my sister was the first to take a stand for education by enrolling in community college. Her tenacity and dignity encouraged me to believe in my own possibilities. I also enrolled in community college and became increasingly convinced that education was the one and only solution to the problems that consumed my life." In the course of the next few years, Saleemah earned an associate's degree in applied science/paramedic from Henry Ford Community College.



Today, the single mother of a 14-year old son, she is an undergraduate biology major at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, not only excelling in her studies but volunteering for dozens of worthy causes, from Coats for Kids fundraisers and War Against Homelessness initiatives to Gleaners and the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

Saleemah has very specific goals for her future. After completing her degree at UM-D, she plans to enroll in the University of Detroit Mercy's accelerated nursing program and then earn a master's degree as a certified registered nurse in anesthesia. As Saleemah explains, not only does nursing appeal to her nurturing personality, but it will allow her to "serve those in our society who find themselves degraded and receiving substandard medical treatment."

It is easy to believe what one of Saleemah's advisors tells us: "You have only to meet Saleemah and have a short conversation to know that she is a woman who will achieve every educational goal she sets."

Saleemah Morris is a 2014 Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

TINA NELSON *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Tina Nelson calls herself “a woman on a mission.” CEW joins her many admirers in calling her the perfect example of how education transforms lives.

A few years ago Tina, the mother of five children, took a job as a parent liaison at her children’s school. There she met the resident social worker, who, says Tina, “prodded me relentlessly to advance my own education. My self-confidence was compromised by my recent divorce, so the social worker actually made the phone call that led to my acceptance into the University of Michigan-Dearborn and its SOAR Program for returning adult students.”

Tina took one photojournalism class, and her life changed forever. “I discovered the power of media arts. As a photojournalist I reveal life’s triumphs and trials through a variety of camera lens, capturing and preserving the spirit of those moments.”



Tina’s talents did not go unnoticed. As she marvels, “I became the ‘go to’ student photographer on campus and for local organizations and events throughout metropolitan Detroit.” In 2012 Tina received White House press credentials, and she has photographed President Obama on many occasions, including his second term inauguration. Since then, Tina has also edited and produced several well received photo essays, including “Through the Lens Series, A Moment in History.”

“I am not the same person I was in 2009,” says Tina. When she graduates with her bachelor’s degree in communications from UM-D, she plans a career in multimedia, perhaps adding an MA in film and photography to her credentials.

Tina inspires wonder and admiration from everyone who knows her. As one of her advisors tells us, “No language can adequately tell you how much I believe in Tina Nelson. She’s likely to be one of the most successful students I’ve ever seen, and her accomplishments at UM-Dearborn are too numerous and wide ranging to name. She does not just take pictures, she creatively captures the emotions of participants at each event, and every picture tells a story.”

Tina Nelson is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

ANALIDIS OCHOA-BENDANA *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

A month before Analidis Ochoa-Bendana received her undergraduate admission letter from Northwestern University, she got the surprising news that she was going to be a mother. “As a hard-working, high-achieving high school student, I struggled to come to terms with how it would be possible to pursue my ambitious academic and career goals while raising a child.” Analidis deferred college enrollment for one year before plunging into her new responsibilities of being a caring mother, wife, employee and college student.

Looking back at the financial and daily-living struggles she faced, Analidis now realizes that her situation resulted in some long-term personal benefits: “I learned to manage my time, become organized and resourceful.” By the time she graduated from Northwestern with a BA in political science, Analidis had also learned and become passionate about the social inequality she was witnessing and experiencing firsthand.



“I set out to investigate the causes for poverty, social, and income disparities, as well as the extent to which race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are determinants of health outcomes in children.” Especially concerned about education policy, Analidis taught middle school math and science in the Miami-Dade Public Schools before deciding to resume her formal education.

Analidis is now a master’s degree student in the University of Michigan’s Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, where, according to one of her professors, she is “already an accomplished researcher in the area of children’s health, particularly the relationship among poverty, education, and health outcomes.”

When she graduates, Analidis tells us that she intends “to influence the policymaking process, perhaps by running for public office one day.” Before that, she plans to become a policy analyst on issues of education or health and human services at the state level.”

Given her curiosity, enthusiasm, energy, interpersonal skills, and intelligence, Analidis has proven to her advisors that she is bound to succeed with all of her career plans.

Analidis Ochoa-Bendana is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

AMY OKUMURA *Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar*

Amy Okumura came from her native Japan in 2000 to fulfill her “American dream” of being a lawyer with important corporate clients. She had already earned an undergraduate degree in law from Doshisha University, and she soon became one of the youngest students to graduate from University of New Hampshire School of Law. Amy then joined a major law firm, managing patent and trademark issues for international corporations.

“I thought I had it all figured out,” says Amy. “Then my American dream was shaken to its core.” While driving in Canada on a wintry day in 2011, Amy hit an icy patch of road. Her car slid under a semi-truck and was dragged for hundreds of yards before breaking free. “This frightening near-death incident made me realize that I wanted to do something more meaningful with my life.” During her recovery time, Amy decided to help other people in need.



She left her legal career and enrolled at the University of Michigan to earn a master’s degree in social work. At the same time, Amy became a hospital interpreter for Japanese patients. “Because of my own experiences, I could empathize with the terrified and confused Japanese mother of a 16-month old girl with the flu, one of my first clients. I helped her throughout the process and, as she left, I told her I understood how scared she must have been. She cried and thanked me, and I realized my unique opportunity to serve people like her.”

Amy intends to use her talents as a community organizer among the culturally and socially disadvantaged. Ultimately she plans to launch a nonprofit organization to empower Asian immigrants and offer social/mental health services. “Who knows?” says Amy. “Perhaps my legal training will come in handy after all.”

It certainly won’t hurt, say Amy’s professors. However, they are much more excited and impressed by her other talents. As one of them told us, “Amy truly has the heart for the social work profession.”

Amy Okumura is the 2014 Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

ERYN ROSENTHAL *Elsie Choy Lee Scholar*

After graduating from Yale University in comparative literature, Eryn Rosenthal embarked on an impressive artistic and research journey, focusing on identity and transition in post-apartheid South Africa, the Holocaust, and post-Franco Spain.

Though she initially used theater to investigate these themes in performance, Eryn explains that over time “the more linear structure of narrative and words began to dissipate” and she realized she “needed more physical tools to share [her] study with others.” Thus began her artistic shift to choreography. Eryn sees dance as a way to “communicate and investigate many contradictory truths at once, and invite these truths to live, debate, and wrestle it out” within the human body.

Eryn is currently an MFA student in U-M’s School of Music, Theatre & Dance, honing her professional skills to impact the field of dance and reach wider audiences with her work. Her goal is to continue to build a career for herself in multidisciplinary performance, focused on issues of social justice and the often absurd poetics of the everyday.



In addition to her studies, Eryn is also engaged in an ongoing performance series she created. *The Doors Project* is a site-specific series set in doorways and thresholds around the world, investigating the political, familial, economic, and personal dimensions of very different transitions. Together with colleagues in Barcelona, Madrid, and New York, Eryn has already created and performed mini-chapters of *The Doors Project* to local audiences.

She is currently developing projects with artists in Paris, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. Her thesis performance at U-M will examine issues of transition for anti-apartheid activists in the township of New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

“Eryn comes to Michigan with an unusually broad range of life and artistic experience,” explains one of her advisors. “Her ambitions are grand, and she has all of the talent, determination, and enthusiasm to achieve them.” In addition, Eryn is a “virtuosic,” “natural teacher who inspires her students with her knowledge and passion.” In the words of another admirer, “Eryn is an incredibly talented and charismatic performer with a magnetic presence.”

Eryn Rosenthal is the 2014 Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

BRIDGET ROTHENBERGER *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Bridget Rothenberger held on to her hunger for education through a series of serious personal obstacles and detours. She started college on three different occasions, but circumstances forced her to abandon her dreams in order to support herself and her growing family. For all the blessings of her role of wife and mother, however, Bridget tells us that “the thought of returning to school never left my mind.”

She succeeded in earning an associate’s degree from Jackson Community College. But in the end, “it would take the loss of a family business, the birth of a third child, and finding personal wholeness and forgiveness” before Bridget finally finished her undergraduate degree in psychology from Spring Arbor University. Heeding the encouragement of her professors, Bridget then enrolled at the University of Michigan–Dearborn for her master’s degree in clinical health psychology. At the same time, she embarked upon a career as a social worker.



Today Bridget balances being a student and mother with a full-time position as a treatment coordinator in an urban mental health program. As Bridget explains, “I find strength in having come this far, and I hope my example serves my children well as they set out to make their unique way in the world.”

As for the many breaks in her education, Bridget looks at them now as “extremely important paths of self-discovery. While I need the financial security of higher education, I have been blessed to be able to align this reality with my passion and unique life perspective.” Looking to her future, Bridget hopes to work in a setting that incorporates holistic treatments for a wide range of health issues. Eventually she wants to earn a PhD in health psychology, conduct research, and “spend my wisest years teaching at the college level.”

One of Bridget’s admirers calls her a leader, a humanitarian, and a visionary—someone destined to flourish and shine.

Bridget Rothenberger is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KRISTINE SCHANTZ *Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar*

Kristine Schantz learned a great deal during her nine years with the Peace Corps. After graduating from Hope College with a BA in management, Kristine volunteered in a small Burkinabé village and eventually became the Peace Corps Director of Programming and Training in Guinea, overseeing 100 volunteers and four major projects. “During that time,” says Kristine, “I was confronted with the developing world’s complex challenges on a daily basis and discovered that solving the issues requires collaborative, focused, and dedicated action.”

In the Peace Corps, Kristine also worked with “a beautifully diverse set of people, from women artisans who greeted me with a song and dance when I arrived by bicycle to their village, to reserved government officials in air-conditioned offices, offering their insights on how to work together effectively to meet their country’s needs.”

Kristine is now a student in the University of Michigan’s Erb Institute, earning joint degrees in the Ross School of Business and the School of Natural Resources and Environment. She’s here to enrich her knowledge and skills in the art of leveraging business resources to address human needs. “U-M offers tremendous opportunities for hands-on, collaborative learning,” says Kristine, who is involved in several extra-curricular, university-designed programs that connect students with area groups and causes.



Promoting social development through the power of business is Kristine’s career aspiration, and she is drawn to industries facing the greatest sustainability challenges. She currently works with Chrysler Group on a supply chain sustainability study in an effort to decrease risk and increase positive impacts. As she explains, “My background and my current studies in both business and environment will enable me to assist challenging industries to strategically integrate economic, environmental and social priorities.”

Speaking for her academic colleagues, one of Kristine’s professors praises her intelligence, hard work, and unique background. “Her first-hand experiences with the Peace Corps expanded her intimate understanding of human struggle and resilience in the face of resource scarcity.”

Kristine Schantz is the 2014 Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar.

FRANK SEDLAR *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship*

When Frank Sedlar completes his MS in civil engineering in 2015, he plans to continue his current research project and then begin work on a PhD. Frank, who also earned a bachelor's degree in civil and environmental engineering at Michigan, is preparing for a career as a hydraulic and flood engineer.

With the funds from the Menakka and Essel Bailey Fellowship, Frank spent this past summer on the island of Java, Indonesia. As home to nearly 60% of Indonesia's 250 million people, Java is the most densely populated island in the world. Providing municipal services in such conditions is impossible, leaving the citizens of Java, particularly in the capital city of Jakarta, with no choice but to dispose of their trash in the roads or canals. As a result, the canals, as well as the surrounding ocean coast, are the source of many public health problems. "During previous fieldwork in the canals of Jakarta," says Frank, "I contracted coughs, headaches, and general nausea and was left to wonder about the health effects from long-term exposure to this trash."



The situation worsens during the area's annual floods, which are difficult to control because pumps, canals, and reservoirs become clogged by trash. The only solution to such widespread contamination is a comprehensive governmental initiative, spurred on by local grassroots organizations. "And central to their mission," explains Frank, "is accurate data with which to make their case."

To collect such data, Frank placed cameras in strategic sites along the canals and, with time lapse photography and analytical software, measured the trash fluxes. By providing this "automatic, continuous and remote way to measure the variations in the flow of trash through the canals," Frank is contributing to the creation of sorely needed governmental policy changes.

One of his advisors describes Frank as "one of a rare class of students who excel because of their passion for learning and their interest in culture and society."

CEW proudly awards Frank Sedlar a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship.

LILLY FINK SHAPIRO *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

Lilly Fink Shapiro earned her bachelor's degree in anthropology from Wesleyan University. Since then, she has applied her ethnographic research talents to the topic of "food" in all of its social complexity. For example, Lilly explains that "when and what and exactly how to eat captured my attention during the summer I spent in France. I found myself recording copious notes after each eating experience, fascinated by how something as basic as eating could be so complex and culturally rich in meaning."

When Lilly took a leave from her formal studies to learn Spanish and explore Bolivian culture, she discovered that her "most formative hours were spent at the kitchen table with my host mother, 'Mamita.' Together we peeled purple potatoes and delved into cooking, families, politics, and religion."

With such a background, it is not surprising that Lilly is now at the University of Michigan earning a master's degree in health behavior and health education in the School of Public Health and focusing on issues of food, health, and food system reform. As part of her studies, Lilly coordinates interdisciplinary faculty members involved in an academic program called the U-M Sustainable Food Systems Initiative.



Lilly understands that food is a multidisciplinary issue, "affecting not only public health but also ecosystems, food industry worker conditions, food safety, fossil fuel dependence, local and global politics, the treatment of animals, food access, and sovereignty." So she is expanding her studies to incorporate all of these aspects. In her new career, Lilly hopes to influence public policy and programs and to design educational curricula to help decrease diet-related illnesses and other health disparities in the US.

Lilly's "unapologetic passion" for food and food systems has impressed her professors, one of whom calls her "by far one of the brightest, most engaged and thoughtful students I have ever encountered, a promising scholar with outstanding potential to make a substantial impact."

Lilly Fink Shapiro is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

KELLY E. SLAY *Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar*

As a doctoral student at the School of Education's Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, Kelly examines diversity policies that foster access and success in higher education contexts for students from less privileged backgrounds—much like her own. Being a first-generation college student and a woman of color from a low-income, working class family from Detroit has occasionally led Kelly to reflect upon the “difficult life experiences” that threatened to impede her educational progress. And there were many: financial hardships, untimely family deaths, and, throughout her childhood, living in a home that at times did not have running water, gas, or electricity. “My sister and I would sit at the dinner table, draped in blankets and race to finish our homework before the candles melted down.”

Kelly is well aware, however, that her life is equally blessed. “The work ethic and foundational values of faith that my parents instilled in me, and the mentorship I received from a network of counselors and teachers who saw in me promise and ambition” have continued to serve Kelly well.



Kelly's educational journey began at the University of Michigan, where she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology, and continued at DePaul University where she completed a master's program in public service management and higher education. Kelly explains, “I came to the University of Michigan to study issues of access and equity with a critical lens and to develop as an education professor and scholar so that I can change the lives of students of color, women, and other marginalized groups.”

In the words of one of Kelly's advisors, “We talk often in higher education about the importance of such factors as resilience, self-confidence, leadership, and long-term goals for student success. Kelly exemplifies these qualities—along with considerable intellectual strengths.” She has distinguished herself in the classroom and in the School of Education community as a sought-after collaborator, a truly thoughtful learner, and a promising scholar who has earned the respect of both faculty and students.”

Kelly E. Slay is a 2014 Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

LILY SOBOLIK *Christine Kahan Black Scholar*

Lily Sobolik recognizes that her connection to “people outside the mainstream” comes in part from the differences between her family background and her undergraduate experience. By the time Lily graduated from Whitman with a BA in classics, she had developed a keen empathy towards people from different backgrounds.

Her first opportunity to live her beliefs came when Lily accepted a position in the office of Montana’s Governor. As head of the Governor’s Transition Task Force, she was charged with improving the transitions of youth with disabilities into adulthood. The success she experienced with the task force, says Lily, “demonstrated that I had become a well-respected leader in the field of disability rights.”

Emboldened by her accomplishments, Lily left the Governor’s Office for a position that would allow her to work more directly with families affected by disabilities. She found it at Kaiser Permanente’s Autism Research



Program. While the work was rewarding, it also showed Lily that she wanted to do more than collect data and disseminate information. She wanted to be a change agent: reforming systems and designing policies that improve equity and life quality for people with disabilities.

To do so, Lily knew that she needed more knowledge and skills. She is now a student at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, working on her master’s degree and learning how to optimize her impact on the disability community.

When Lily graduates, she plans to work in county or state government in the western United States, “aligning and reforming policy by promoting collaboration amongst agencies that serve people with disabilities.”

As one of her advisors tells us, “Lily embodies all that both CEW and the Ford School stand for in terms of engaged and humane application of education for the betterment of individuals and society. I cannot imagine anyone better qualified to be a CEW scholar.”

Lily Sobolik is the inaugural Christine Kahan Black Scholar.

BONNIE WASHICK *Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow*

“As a first generation college student, I am indebted to a series of educators,” says Bonnie, “who engaged and challenged me, opening my eyes to alternative ways of seeing, being, and acting in the world—for enabling me to arrive at the excellent University of Michigan pursuing a PhD in political theory.”

No wonder, then, that education and teaching are at the center of Bonnie’s life. She earned her bachelor’s degree in international studies and philosophy from American University before enrolling at the University of Michigan. As a doctoral student in political theory, Bonnie is one of the Political Science Department’s most celebrated young scholars and teachers.

Enhancing her teaching skills is one of Bonnie’s primary career goals. “Enabling students to look anew at their world with a critical, inquisitive eye is a compelling motivation for me,” she explains, “as is conveying to them that the classroom is a space where they may safely question ‘circumstances’ or received wisdoms they have long accepted.” As testament to her talent and passion for teaching, Bonnie recently won the Horace H. Rackham Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award.



As awe-struck as her advisors are about Bonnie’s teaching ability, they are equally enthusiastic about her amazing aptitude as a scholar. For her dissertation, Bonnie is exploring the ways that “everyday people” manifest their feminist identity and practice through online interactions. Her objective is to enhance feminist scholarship by incorporating technological developments like the blogosphere and other digital “safe spaces.” One of Bonnie’s professors predicts that this “exciting research will lead to many insights and hypotheses that others can build upon. It is a project with great potential impact.”

Inspiring “enthusiastic, unqualified, bang-the-table and stomp-my-feet support” from her academic mentor, Bonnie Washick is a 2014 Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow.

STEPHANIE WOOTEN *Irma M. Wyman Scholar*

Stephanie Wooten ruefully admits that, although she did well in all her high school subjects, she allowed societal norms—and the traditional male dominance in science-based fields—to dissuade her from majoring in math or science as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan. Not that she regrets majoring in English and film studies. “Both areas provided me a solid foundation in communications and an appreciation for the power of the written word.”

Even at the point when Stephanie had completed a master’s degree in cinematic arts from the University of Southern California, she intended to make film and television her career. Thwarted, however, by a plummeting economy and lack of funding for humanities programs, Stephanie explains that she instead channeled her creative interests into designing Nerds in Babeland, “a website dedicated to giving women a voice in the ‘geek/nerd’ community, a place where they could write about their interests in comic books, technology, gaming, sci-fi, fantasy books, and TV.”



Her experiences with Nerds in Babeland led Stephanie to many realizations, among them that women, especially those from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, need a stronger voice in the information technology community. In addition, she became convinced that “while it may not be possible to guarantee that every child from a low-income family has a computer or internet access, we can develop classroom and after-school programs that allow all children to become involved with and excited about information-related fields.”

To that end, Stephanie is now working on a master’s degree in human-computer interaction from U-M’s School of Information. As she explains, her dream is to “inspire new generations of young women to reach out past the limitations of peer pressure to acquire a passion for technology.”

In other words, as one of her admiring employers tells us, “Stephanie’s goal is to bring her own female voice to social media, and to bring other female voices with her along the way.”

Stephanie Wooten is a 2014 Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

CHERYL YIN *Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship*

Cheryl Yin is an Asian-American working on a doctorate in linguistic anthropology. She came to the University of Michigan after completing an undergraduate degree in anthropology and linguistics at Pitzer College. When Cheryl graduates in 2017, she plans to become a writer and university professor.

With support from the Menakka and Essel Bailey Fellowship, Cheryl recently moved to Cambodia, where she will spend the next two years conducting fieldwork research for her dissertation on the “lingering effects of the Khmer Rouge language policy in Khmer honorifics.” For most of the first year, Cheryl will be in Phnom Penh, and she’ll divide the rest of her time in two provincial areas of the country.

As Cheryl explains, when the totalitarian Khmer Rouge regime took over Cambodia in 1975, their goal was to dismantle the elaborate social hierarchy that prevailed in the country and to establish in its place an egalitarian society “where all Cambodians were to work, eat, sleep, and speak like farmers.” As part of that plan, the Khmer Rouge murdered millions of ethnic minorities, academics, musicians, and urbanites and forced others out of their city homes and into the countryside. The Khmer Rouge also established compulsory language requirements that forbade Cambodians to use their traditional honorifics, or socially stratified ways of addressing their fellow citizens.



When the Khmer Rouge regime fell in 1979, Cambodians reverted to their traditional language customs. But, according to Cheryl, it is not clear to what extent the honorifics and other aspects of the Khmer language were forever altered by the Khmer Rouge policies. By observing Cambodians’ social interactions, analyzing historical documents, and conducting informal interviews, Cheryl seeks to understand the long-term effects of linguistic egalitarianism on Cambodian society.

Praised by her professors as an excellent scholar doing important and original work, Cheryl Yin is an ideal recipient of a Menakka and Essel Bailey Graduate Fellowship.

ROBIN ZHENG *Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow*

One quality that endears Robin Zheng to her Philosophy Department professors is her belief in using moral philosophy to explain and solve real-world social ills. Robin began her academic career with dual bachelor's degrees in physics and philosophy from Washington and Lee University, and she is now a doctoral student at the University of Michigan.

Robin is an activist. In the words of one advisor, "Robin rises to John Dewey's call to philosophers to orient their investigations to problems that people currently face. She has done more to integrate theory and practice for social justice than any other graduate student I have ever advised."

Robin's dissertation deals with responsibility, accountability, and the perplexing fact that our thoughts and actions are to a large extent governed by "implicit biases" over which we have no conscious control. She discusses the implications of this reality on issues of race and gender, and discrimination and prejudice, and she advances strategies for addressing moral responsibility. She is superbly equipped to carry out this ambitious research. "Robin has initiative, intellectual independence, and great discipline," praises one of her professors. "She is also a wonderfully clear philosophical writer."



In addition to her academic workload, Robin has taken it upon herself to create several programs promoting diversity at the university and beyond. As Robin explains, "Philosophy is a highly white male discipline that seriously needs diversification. One hurdle is the fact that it is seldom part of high school curricula." To address this problem, Robin helped to design an ongoing after-school program to teach philosophy to students, which began in a Detroit high school and has now become the Michigan High School Ethics Bowl.

Robin is also a talented educator, exploring new ways of teaching that encourage women and minorities to study philosophy. "It is important," she explains, "to recognize and support the unique needs of such students. I am convinced that philosophy offers great rewards to all students' personal and professional lives, so one of my goals is learning how best to teach in ways that allow them to thrive in the discipline."

Hailed as "an outstanding scholar and citizen," Robin Zheng is a 2014 Mary Malcolmson Raphael Fellow.

Thank you!