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PRESS RELEASE

AFSCME Members, Family Members Awarded 2021 Union Plus Scholarships

Winners Honored for Achievement and Union Values

Washington, D.C. – Union Plus recently awarded \$250,000 in scholarships to 199 students representing 37 unions, including 24 winners representing the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). This year's group of scholarship recipients includes university, college, and trade or technical school students from 42 states. The AFSCME winners are:

- **Sara Addeo of Washington, D.C.** Addeo, who is a member of AFSCME Council 20, Local 2921, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Farzana Ali, M.D., of Bay Shore, New York.** Ali, whose father, Muhammad Ali, is a member of Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/AFSCME Local 1000, has been awarded a \$4,000 scholarship.
- **Keiran Baker of Vacaville, California.** Baker, whose mother, Kendra Cheshareck, is a member of AFSCME Council 57, Local 2700, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Shane Cokes of Dayton, Ohio.** Cokes, whose father, Shawn Cokes, is a member of Ohio Association of Public School Employees/AFSCME Local 4, has been awarded a \$750 scholarship.
- **Makayla Colon of Baltimore.** Colon, whose mother, Keziah Colon, is a member of AFSCME Council 3, Local 1870, has been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship.
- **Ivy Ewing of Arlington, Washington.** Ewing, whose father, Jason Ewing, is a member of AFSCME Council 2, Local 2849, has been awarded a \$3,000 scholarship.
- **Tyger Gudeman of Normal, Illinois.** Gudeman, whose mother, Patricia Gudeman, is a member of AFSCME Council 31, Local 3236, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Brianna Hammond of Waddington, New York.** Hammond, whose mother, Holly Hammond, is a member of Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/AFSCME Local 1000, has been awarded a \$750 scholarship. Brianna's brother, Alex Hammond, was a 2017 Union Plus Scholarship recipient.
- **Cory Johnson of North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.** Johnson, whose father, Eric Johnson, is a member of AFSCME Council 83, Local 211, has been awarded a \$500 scholarship.
- **Alaina Leasure of Rochester Mills, Pennsylvania.** Leasure, whose father, Vernon Leasure, is a member of AFSCME Council 83, Local 763, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

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- **Esther Lee of Brooklyn, New York.** Lee, whose mother, Rachel Lee, is a member of AFSCME District Council 37, Local 1407, has been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship. Esther was a 2020 Union Plus Scholarship recipient.
- **Amanda Mavricos of Staten Island, New York.** Mavricos, whose mother, Joanne Mavricos, is a member of AFSCME District Council 37, Local 372, has been awarded a \$750 scholarship. Amanda was a 2020 Union Plus Scholarship recipient.
- **Jacob Mohring of East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.** Mohring, whose father, Andrew Mohring, is a member of AFSCME Council 88, Local 2455, has been awarded a \$4,000 scholarship.
- **Judy Olsen of Tacoma, Washington.** Olsen, who is a member of AFSCME Council 2, Local 120, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Abner Ortiz of El Cajon, California.** Ortiz, who is a member of AFSCME Local 3299, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Ekua-Janea Quagraine of Kansas City, Missouri.** Quagraine, whose mother, Elsie Quagraine, is a member of AFSCME Local 500, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Makayla Randolph of New Castle, Delaware.** Randolph, whose mother, Tina Anne Maria Kinsey-Randolph, is a member of AFSCME Council 88, Local 2548, has been awarded a \$1,500 scholarship.
- **Sofia Regan-Bone of Everett, Washington.** Regan-Bone, whose father, Bert Regan, is a member of AFSCME Council 2, Local 109, and whose mother, Nuria Regan, is a member of AFSCME Local 1671, has been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship.
- **Maureen Roddy of Mount Vernon, Ohio.** Roddy, whose father, Christopher Roddy, and mother, Jenifer Roddy, are members of Ohio Civil Service Employees Association/AFSCME Local 11, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Michelle Saechao of Kent, Washington.** Saechao, whose mother, Mone Saechao, is a member of AFSCME Council 28, Local 843, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Teralan Simmons of Rochester, New York.** Simmons, whose mother, Laniece Simmons, is a member of Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/AFSCME Local 1000, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Kellie Taylor-White of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.** Taylor-White, who is a member of AFSCME Council 17, Local 421, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Ryan Thein of Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.** Thein, whose father, Mark Thein, is a member of AFSCME Council 32, Local 903, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- **Karley Yung of Canton, Michigan.** Yung, whose father, Wood Yung, is a member of AFSCME Council 25, Local 1583, has been awarded a \$1,500 scholarship.

“During a time of continued disruption and hardship for many families, Union Plus is glad that we are once more able to share a higher than usual scholarship award amount to help union families offset the cost of college education,” Union Plus President Mitch Stevens said. “We are proud to support this year’s exceptional group of 199 winners as they pursue higher education in a new environment after a year of largely virtual schooling.”

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Meet Some of the 2021 AFSCME Honorees

Sara Addeo

Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts: Bachelor of Arts, French (1998)
The Field School, Washington, D.C. (1994)

Sara, who has been an elementary school partner teacher for the past seven years, is pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching. She is passionate about helping children reach their academic and social-emotional goals. Prior to teaching, Sara was a chef in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, New York City, and Hong Kong, where she began teaching English after the birth of her first child. Currently, Sara is a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) specialist at D.C.'s Hearst Elementary School, working with first through third graders.

Hearst Elementary Assistant Principal Elke Chen said Sara's knowledge and dependability lead to strong relationships with colleagues and the lead teachers she supports. "Sara has an insatiable drive to help her students succeed," Chen said. "She is thorough and thoughtful about how to best support them socially and academically. Her commitment to students, her ability to quickly learn and adapt, and her willingness to help the team makes Sara a standout at our school."

Activities and honors: Local School Advisory Team; D.C. Public Schools Room Parent; food competition TV show appearance; The Field School salutatorian

Volunteerism: trash cleanup at local parks

Farzana Ali, M.D.

Stony Brook [New York] University
The University at Buffalo (UB) Jacobs School of Medicine: Doctor of Medicine (2020)
Stony Brook University: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Public Health (2009)
Viqarunnisa Noon, Dhaka, Bangladesh (2001)

Farzana is a biomedical engineering doctoral candidate in Stony Brook's College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. She also teaches undergraduate courses in biomedical engineering and Python for data science. Farzana hopes to complete a residency in radiology and aspires to be a physician scientist using computer-aided diagnosis technology. Her family immigrated from Bangladesh in 2002. Three years later, while an undergraduate student at Stony Brook, Farzana's family vehicle was struck by a drunk driver. She lost two family members and the use of her legs in the accident.

Jennifer L. Peace, a TH instructional support associate with Stony Brook Medicine, has mentored Farzana for more than 16 years after they met through Sigma Beta honor society. Peace said Farzana will be an asset to the medical field. "Farzana is a passionate individual dedicated to learning and to contributing to a team, a community, and our society," Peace said. "She has overcome many obstacles in life through her never-give-up attitude, honest and hardworking character, and integrity to serve those in need."

Honors and employment: James Platt White Society Award; Stony Brook Undergraduate Award for Excellence; UB medical education teaching assistant; The World Bank Group consultant

Volunteerism: Mount Sinai Hospital peer mentor; Stony Brook University Medical Center Blood Bank; Friends of the Night People; Project Sunshine; UB Heals

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Makayla Colon

Bard High School Early College Baltimore (BHSEC) (2021)

Makayla will major in architecture at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore. Thereafter, she hopes to pursue a graduate degree in architecture and wants to be a licensed architecture working abroad. Makayla earned certificates of completion in architectural design and graphic design from MICA last summer. She participated in MICA's Art and Design College Accelerator Program during her time at BHSEC.

Chelsea Nakabayashi, Ph.D., who taught Makayla in a college-level course at BHSEC, said she is a truly gifted learner who excelled in the class and often exceeded expectations. "Makayla's high-quality academic work is due, in part, to the fact that she is highly inquisitive," Nakabayashi said. "She consistently showed her ability to engage in deeper thinking and reach insightful conclusions. With respect to her work ethic, I cannot praise Makayla enough."

Activities, honors, and employment: National Honor Society; MICA Visionary Scholar; art exhibit curator

Volunteerism: various community service projects

Ivy Ewing

Edmonds [Washington] College

Arlington [Washington] High School (AHS) (2020)

Ivy is an English major at Edmonds College, where she is a member of the Tritons' varsity cross country team. She expects to complete her associate degree next year. Ivy took dual-credit courses through the Everett [Washington] Community College in the High School program while at AHS. Her professional goal is to teach high school students how to use writing as an outlet and a creative way to communicate their ideas.

In addition to her father's AFSCME membership, Ivy's mother, Heidi Ewing, is a Service Employees International Union (SEIU) member. Ivy is thankful unions exist to be a metaphorical megaphone for workers. "I am immensely thankful to have hardworking parents, and I'm even more thankful for the unions that protect their rights," she said. "Every hardworking individual deserves to have their rights protected and a platform for them to be heard."

Activities and honors: National Honor Society; AHS honor roll; AHS ecology club; AHS varsity cross country; AHS band; Arlington Health and Rehabilitation dietary aid

Volunteerism: Santa Run food drive; Arlington Food Bank; Haller Park cleanup; homeless outreach; foreign children aid fundraising

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Esther Lee

*St. John's University Queens Campus, New York
Midwood High School (MHS) at Brooklyn [New York] College (2020)*

Esther is a pharmacy major at St. John's. She discovered her passion for the pharmacy profession through volunteering while at MHS, where she was a *summa cum laude* graduate and a part of the school's Medical Science Institute. Esther earned the AP Capstone Diploma, the Advanced Regents Diploma and AP Scholar with Distinction honors upon graduation. While in high school, Esther completed college-credit courses through the Brooklyn College (BC) CollegeNow Program.

In addition to her mother's AFSCME membership, Esther's father, Kent Lee, is a National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) member. Esther said unions have had a significant impact on her family. "Their dedication to providing the vital services that have helped my family and countless others is what has helped communities such as mine thrive," she said. "Many of the opportunities that we've had are notably due to union aid. Because of this, my family's future is secure financially, socially, and emotionally."

Activities, honors, and employment: American Society of Health-System Pharmacists; National Honor Society; MHS Big Sister Little Sister program; Key Club Distinguished Member and Distinguished Editor awards; Bloomberg Arts Internship Program; Brooklyn Botanic Garden intern; BC psychology lab; BC environmental science lab

Volunteerism: Brooklyn Community Christian Church summer academic kids' camp; MHS special education department monitor; MHS library

Jacob Mohring

Stroudsburg [Pennsylvania] High School (SHS) (2021)

Jacob will major in biology at the University of Scranton [Pennsylvania] and hopes to attend medical school. During the summer of 2019, Jacob conducted molecular biology research at East Stroudsburg University (ESU) to isolate and characterize alpha-gal antigens in Lone Star ticks and the correlation to a red meat allergy. This research fueled Jacob's interest in biology as a college major.

Abdalla Aldras, director of ESU's biotechnology program, provided laboratory space for Jacob's 2019 research and was impressed by Jacob's creative mind, motivation, diligence, and work ethic. "Jacob is a fast learner, conscientious, self-disciplined, and has impressive oral and written communication skills," Aldras said. "Even as a high school student, he worked as hard as my best undergraduate student. I am certain he will be an excellent scientist."

Activities and honors: SHS Science Olympiad club; HOSA – Future Health Professionals; Eagle Scout; SHS marching band; Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Management Information Systems competition national winner

Volunteerism: church building renovation

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Judy Olsen

Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington: Bachelor of Liberal Arts (1999)
Spanaway Lake [Washington] High School (1987)

This fall, Judy will begin the Master of Public Health program at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. She is a registered environmental health supervisor with the Tacoma-Pierce County [Washington] Health Department (TPCHD) and maintains a National Asthma Educator certification. Judy briefly attended the University of Washington's Daniels Evans School of Public Affairs in the early 2000s before withdrawing because of health reasons. She was inspired to return to graduate school due to conditions she has witnessed in her work with TPCHD, where she has worked since 2005. Judy hopes the master's degree will enable her to tackle the collective impact of climate change, housing, and health equity.

Judy is a founding member of the Puget Sound Asthma Coalition (PSAC), which was awarded the 2015 Warren Featherstone Reid Award for Excellence in Healthcare by the Washington State Department of Health. Julie Postma, Ph.D., R.N., associate dean for research and associate professor in Washington State University's College of Nursing, has worked with Judy through the PSAC for five years and said she is a public health hero. "Judy's new focus on climate change and community resilience builds on her expertise in health equity and housing," Postma said. "I look forward to being a part of the community she galvanizes to help us prepare for our nation's future public health needs."

Activities and honors: Rebuilding Together South Sound board member; 2017 Washington State Public Health Association Public Health Excellence Award

Volunteerism: National Multiple Sclerosis Society; Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

Abner Ortiz

San Diego Community College District (SDCCD)
UEI College, Gardena, California: Pharmacy Technician Diploma (2013)
Rubidoux High School (RHS), Jurupa Valley, California (2011)

Abner is a pharmacy technician at the University of California (UC) San Diego Medical Center, Hillcrest, where he has worked the past two years. He has concurrently taken biology – allied health courses at SDCCD in pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in nursing and ultimately wants to be a nurse practitioner. In his current role with the UC San Diego Medical Center, Hillcrest, Jacob is the liaison between the pharmacy and patients within a UC San Diego Alzheimer's medication study. He would be the first member of his family to earn a college degree.

Dr. Adriann Deguzman, discharge pharmacy supervisor and health sciences clinical instructor for the UC San Diego Medical Center, Hillcrest, was immediately impressed with Abner's passion and confidence. "He continues to stand out amongst his peers because he is a fast learner, a true team player, and always maintains an optimistic attitude," Deguzman said. "I largely attribute Abner's success in our pharmacy to his strong desire to give the best care to our patients, his insatiable appetite for learning, and his drive to support our team to the best of his ability."

Activities and honors: SDCCD dean's list; UEI honor roll; UEI student ambassador

Volunteerism: UC San Diego COVID-19 vaccination operation at PETCO Park

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Makayla Randolph

University of Delaware (UD)

St. Georges Technical High School, Middletown, Delaware (2020)

Makayla recently completed her freshman year as a Provost Scholar at UD, where she majors in applied molecular biology and biotechnology interest. She hopes to be a pharmaceutical scientist and wants to be involved in the production of medicines and vaccines. Makayla looks forward to working in a laboratory and believes she can help the world as part of a pharmaceutical research team.

The daughter of a longtime union member, Makayla said her mother appreciates AFSCME and the American labor movement. In particular, Makayla enjoyed the 2019 Labor Day celebration along the Philadelphia waterfront with her family. "AFSCME cares that families have a way to celebrate and relax," Makayla said. "There is strength in numbers, and AFSCME has enriched our lives by helping my mom with job security, a wage that increases with the cost of living, and adequate health care."

Honors: Seeds of Greatness Bible Church Scholar; St. Georges Tech honor roll; St. Georges Tech biotechnology exemplary certificate; St. Georges Tech Spanish certificate of recognition; St. Georges Tech perfect attendance certificate

Volunteerism: Brandywine Valley Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA); church children's ministry

Sofia Regan-Bone

Everett [Washington] Community College (ECC)

Everett High School (EHS) (2020)

Sofia is pursuing an associate degree in business as part of ECC's Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA). She plans to attend Seattle University to complete her bachelor's degree in business administration. Her interest in finance and marketing was sparked through her involvement with DECA in high school. Sofia completed 10 AP courses at EHS and earned the AP Capstone Diploma. She is a first-generation college student.

As a member of a strong and proud AFSCME home, Sofia is thankful for the union's professional support of her parents and the family as a whole. "Thanks to their AFSCME membership, my parents have experienced suitable working conditions and the financial means to pay for our education and extracurricular activities," Sofia said. "We know that we can rely on AFSCME to support and stand up for us."

Activities and honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; ECC President's List; Washington State Seal of Biliteracy; AP Seminar and Research Certificate; AP Scholar; World Language Assessment for Spanish

Volunteerism: Providence Hospital children's summer camp; Salvation Army toy drive; Everett Recovery Café community center; EHS Thanksgiving food drive

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Maureen Roddy

*Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio
Fredericktown [Ohio] High School (FHS) (2019)*

Maureen is a medical laboratory science major at Wright State and expects to graduate in May 2023. She aspires to work in an Ohio hospital medical lab and eventually wants to work for the World Health Organization. Maureen is a trip leader and logistician for Wright State's Outdoor Resource Center and was inspired to pursue the work-study position after participating in the center's Freshman Outdoor Orientation Trip (FOOT).

Rebecca Rodeheffer, the FOCUS Team Director for Catholic Campus Ministry at Wright State, said Maureen is a reliable and high-achieving student. "Maureen is a giving woman whose humor, cheerfulness and ability to follow through with commitments makes her a natural leader," Rodeheffer said. "She shows an aptitude to be involved and active on campus, finding niches that she is passionate about and pursuing them in a disciplined and joyful manner."

Activities and honors: Wright State Student Honors Association; FHS varsity cross country; FHS John Philip Sousa Award; FHS Nick Gaumer Sportsmanship Award

Volunteerism: St. Vincent de Paul homeless shelter; Catholic Campus Ministry food drive; Dayton Children's Hospital; Operation Santa; Operation Linus

Kellie Taylor-White

*Northcentral University, San Diego
University of Phoenix: Master of Arts, education (2011)
Louisiana State University: Bachelor of Arts, political science/sociology (1991)
Robert E. Lee High School, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (1986)*

Kellie is a Doctor of Education in special education candidate at Northcentral University, focusing on multisensory disabilities. She is director of the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) with the Louisiana Workforce Commission and helps Louisiana residents better their lives and increase wages. Kellie is involved in numerous education and development organizations. She has extensive professional experience, including five years as a field representative and constituent service representative for a U.S. congressman.

In addition to being an AFSCME member, Kellie is an American Federation of Teachers (AFT) member. Her mother, Sibal Walker, is a Communications Workers of America (CWA) member. One of Kellie's earliest memories is marching hand-in-hand with former President Jimmy Carter and her mother, who at the time was assistant president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO, during a strike in the early 1970s. "My experiences with the labor movement shaped my view of the world as a place where my small contributions — when teamed with others — can influence, change, and better the world for everyone," Kellie said. "These experiences taught me that united we have a voice that tears down walls, breaks barriers, and lifts spirits."

Activities, honors, and employment: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics; National Science Teachers Association; American Education Research Association; National Society of Leadership and Success; Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education; Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches Laity Empowered for Active Discipleship

Volunteerism: church children's minister; quilting teacher

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Karley Yung

Washtenaw International High School (WIHI), Ypsilanti, Michigan (2020)

Karley will attend Yale University this fall as a QuestBridge National College Match Scholar. She will major in biomedical engineering, a field in which she has been interested since attending a summer camp following seventh grade with a biomed and electrical engineering study group. Karley is fascinated by tissue engineering, which she believes has the capability to improve thousands of lives. She earned an International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma upon graduating from WIHI.

Brian Nemerovski, counselor at WIHI, described Karley as a once-in-a-generation student who has overcome financial, familial, and personal challenges to reach the highest levels of achievement at the all-IB magnet school. "Karley is truly one of the top students and citizens I have encountered in my roughly 15 years working with high school students," Nemerovski said. "She has a seemingly limitless capacity to learn, lead and advocate for herself and other marginalized people."

Activities and honors: WIHI student government; HOSA – Future Health Professionals; WIHI Project Period co-founder; Canton Public Library Teen Leadership Council; Yale Hospitalization Scholar; College Board Opportunity Scholar; Joyce Ivy Foundation Summer Scholar; IB Year 1 Analysis & Approaches (Math) Higher Level Award; Music Teachers National Association Award

Volunteerism: Charter Township of Canton student election inspector

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Learn More About the Union Plus Scholarship Program

The Union Plus Scholarship Program, now in its 30th year, awards scholarships based on outstanding academic achievement, personal character, financial need, and commitment to the values of organized labor. The program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation.

Since starting the program in 1991, Union Plus has awarded more than \$5 million in educational funding to more than 3,400 union members, spouses, and dependent children. Union Plus Scholarship awards are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school, or recognized technical or trade school. The selection process is very competitive, and this year 5,008 applications were received from 67 unions and all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, two U.S. territories, and six Canadian provinces.

Visit unionplus.org/scholarship for applications and benefit eligibility.

About Union Plus

Union Plus, founded by the AFL-CIO in 1986, uses the collective buying power of America's 12.5 million union members to deliver top-quality benefits and services at competitive prices to working families. In addition to the scholarship program, Union Plus offers the Free College program, which makes it possible for union members and their families to earn an associate degree completely online at no cost. As a complement to the Free College program, Union Plus offers the Bachelor's Degree Completion program, providing union members and their families a no-cost option to complete their bachelor's degree completely online. Union Plus also provides a wide range of money-saving programs, including discounts on wireless services from AT&T, the only nationwide unionized wireless carrier; insurance protection; savings on travel and recreation; and more. For additional information, visit unionplus.org.

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