

As Scholarship Committee Chair for the AAUW Greater Naples Branch and Director for Scholarships for the Greater Naples AAUW Charitable Foundation, I am pleased to announce our 2021 scholarship recipients. This year we had the pleasure of receiving 16 submissions for our Local Scholarship Fund. The Local Scholarship Fund supports the scholarship awards that we have been awarding for the past 20 years to local adult female returning students. We also received 13 submissions for our STEM Scholarship Awards, some of them recent high school graduates and some of them older students. All of the candidates presented impressive and robust transcripts, essays and recommendation letters making it very difficult for the Scholarship Committee to narrow down our selections.

I am always humbled and astonished by these accomplished women who come to us to tell their stories and amaze us with their dedication to their work, their education, their families, their community and their vision to make the world a better place. I am honored to tell you that we were able to make 12 awards this year that will make a positive impact in the education of 12 deserving women, a source of great pride for the members of the AAUW Greater Naples Branch as we seek to support our mission of equity for women and girls. Thank you to our members for their support of this program that has enabled our organization to give awards for over 20 years! Following is a brief description of each of our recipients:

**Tiffany Cootware – Williams was awarded the Florence Chandler Scholarship.** Tiffany is pursuing a Master's Degree in Social Work. She has a cumulative 3.95 GPA while working, taking her classes and raising three children. She has a long involvement in the justice system working as a Corrections Officer for Lee County. With her Master's, she plans to work in human trafficking services. She has one year left until graduation.

**Lindsey Deshombres was awarded a Local Scholarship.** Lindsey is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing at Kaiser University. She has already obtained a BA in Health Science and is maintaining a GPA of 3.52 in her academic career at FSW and FSU. She has worked in home healthcare and assisted living facilities and is looking to take her career to the next level by becoming an RN. Lindsey provided recommendation letters from colleagues that painted a picture of a detailed, conscientious young woman with a constructive attitude and strong desire to succeed not only for herself but for her mother and sister for whom she provides.

**Jasmin Ramirez was awarded a McMahon Foundation Local Scholarship.** Jasmin is pursuing a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and has been accepted by FGCU where she will begin in the fall. She has attended Arcadia University and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology this May. She holds three part-time jobs including a paid internship with the Boys and Girls Club. She is building her credentials to return to her hometown of Immokalee where she intends to focus her career on healing generational trauma.

**Emma Fernandez was awarded a Local Scholarship.** Emma is pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Health at John Hopkins University. She has maintained a GPA of 3.4 at Florida State while working a number of internships and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Family and Child Sciences. The Master's program is a two-year program and she is interested in serving the minority population because of the disparities in care.

**Avorie Anderson was awarded the John & Blanche Rebar Scholarship.** Avorie is pursuing a degree in Aeronautics at Embry Riddle and was the first Blanche and John Rebar scholarship recipient in 2019. She's earned a 3.882 cumulative GPA and will graduate in May 2022. She is interested in becoming a wilderness pilot EMT. In embarking on a career in aviation, she is keenly aware of the challenges women face in joining a male dominated field and is a supporter of the AAUW mission.

**Sandra Gregorio - Matias was awarded the Women's Giving Circle Scholarship.** Sandra is a prior recipient of the Laura A. Candris STEM scholarship. She is carrying a 3.938 at FSU on the pre-med track and wants to specialize in audiology and speech pathology. She will resume on-campus courses in the fall and will graduate in 2023.

**Mia Ginsberg was awarded a McMahon Foundation STEM Scholarship.** Mia has been accepted at the University of Pennsylvania to pursue computer science and engineering. She is carrying a 5.51 cumulative GPA and is graduating first out of her class of 568 students at Gulf Coast High School where she was the President of Girls Who Code computer club. Already honored in the world of information technology, it is clear she will be a strong contributor in her field.

**Hailey Jones was awarded a McMahon Foundation STEM Scholarship.** Hailey is graduating from Estero High School with a cumulative GPA of 3.75 while working full-time. She will be attending the University of Central Florida which offers a wildlife veterinary track and desires to be a wildlife veterinarian. She has a Bright Futures scholarship and her recommendation letters show a young woman focused on community service and the dedication to reach her goals.

**Kinsey Brown was awarded a Local Scholarship.** Kinsey is pursuing a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science after obtaining her Bachelor's from FGCU. She set her sights on attending University of Illinois for their informational science program with the intention of returning home to Southwest Florida equipped to use her education to preserve and memorialize our local history. She won the immediate admiration of our Foundation president, Catherine Hackney, as a fellow academic.

**Rebecca Paul was awarded the Laura A. Candris Scholarship.** Rebecca was a 2019 recipient of a STEM Scholarship as well. She graduated from high school at the same time that she attained an Associate's degree and a certificate in dental assisting. Having been the victim of ridicule from her peers over her smile, Rebecca became inspired to become an Orthodontist to help kids who were also self-conscious of their smiles. She now displays a smile as big as her lofty goals to finish her degree in Biology at FGCU and head on to dental school.

**Taylor Sorrell was awarded a Friends of Bayview Scholarship and an Albert Mangini Memorial Scholarship.** Taylor was a 2020 recipient of the Albert Mangini Memorial Scholarship and is pursuing a Bachelor's in Agricultural and Biological Engineering at Purdue. Raised in Golden Gate Estates, she witnessed family members that were affected by life-threatening illnesses that led her to study the correlation between how nutrients affect disease evolution and progression through biological means. Taylor has a heart for service, working as a teaching assistant at the university and is already heavily engaged in research in her field.

**Abigail Sanjuan- Santiago was awarded a Local Scholarship.** Abigail recently graduated from FGCU with her bachelor's in social work and we are happy to support her on her next journey at USF for her Master's. She has a keen interest in returning to Immokalee and has focused her work so far on training families within the foster parent program.