

2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

David Shiman Scholarship

Ari Kotler

Ari Kotler is a graduating senior in the College of Arts and Sciences, where he studies Sociology, Political Science (majors) and Mathematics (minor). He was born in Bogotá, Colombia and raised in Brooklyn, NY before coming to UVM. Over the past four years, Ari has worked in local government, public defense, and political organizing around issues like equitable housing and worker's rights. Most recently, he was an intern for Justicia Migrante, a migrant farmworker-led solidarity group. Ari also recently participated in anti-austerity and anti-racism campaigns at UVM. After graduation, he hopes to continue integrating scholarship with political action on pressing social issues.

Jeffrey Brace Scholarship

Emily Carey

Emily Carey is a senior in the College of Education and Social Services at the University of Vermont, and will be receiving her Bachelor of Social Work this May. This year she interned with an organization supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence, where she worked alongside several organizations in Vermont to further resources for Spanish speaking survivors. Emily was able to use her Spanish to advocate for survivors who have little to no support in this state. Many experiences in her life have left Emily feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work to be done, which is one of the many reasons why she has come to understand the importance of community involvement, mutual aid, and collective liberation.

Bethany Eldridge

Bethany Eldridge is a student studying Healing Informed Education, English and Special Education at the University of Vermont. Bethany designed her own major, Healing Informed Education, after she discovered that trauma-informed care was vital to being the kind of educator, counselor and mentor that she wants to be. Bethany has worked at Beckett Life Center in North Philadelphia through the DREAM program, which provides opportunities for fun, connection, mentorship and educational programming for kids and families in low-income housing. In Vermont, Bethany has volunteered at the Main Street Shelter, COTS and DREAM. She also plays basketball and Ultimate Frisbee. Through her leadership roles in sports, she brings her drive for social justice and activism, which also show up in the work that she does for the Women and Gender Equity Center at UVM, a community center dedicated to creating healing opportunities and resources for survivors of sexual violence.

Mia Papageorge

Mia Papageorge is a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Vermont pursuing a double major of Environmental Studies and Economics with a minor in French. She grew up in

Indianapolis, IN. Mia's proudest college accomplishments include being President of Asian Student Union, President of People of Color Outdoors, the Outreach Manager for the Eco-Reps program, Treasurer of Vermont Students Toward Environmental Protection, and a Teaching Assistant to the class Solutions to Environmental Studies. Mia hopes to combine her two majors and minors to work in the nonprofit environmental education sector or work to hope corporations more accountable regarding sustainability in France. In her free time, she likes to be outside, read, and be with friends.

Ananda Sahihi

Ananda Sahihi is a graduating senior in the College of Education and Social Services at the University of Vermont. She is completing her Bachelor of Social Work with a minor in political science. She is originally from Brooklyn, New York. In tandem with her undergraduate studies, she has served Vermonters experiencing homelessness as a housing advocate for CVOEO's Emergency Housing Program, and worked to combat the opioid crisis in Cleveland with MetroHealth Medical Center's Office of Opioid Safety and the Cleveland Justice Center. She is a passionate learner and excited to grow as a social worker after graduation.

Samantha Stanley

Samantha Stanley is graduating from the University of Vermont with a Bachelor's in Social Work. As Vice President of the Planned Parenthood Generation Action club, she advocated for reproductive justice. Samantha was an intern at the Essex Community Justice Center where she facilitated Restorative Justice panels for community members who had committed a crime. Additionally, she works as a Residential Counselor at Lund, providing direct service to mothers who have been impacted by substance use and trauma. Post-graduation, Samantha will be working as a Case Manager with mothers in recovery and will continue to advocate for alternatives to oppressive systems.

Linda Backus Memorial Scholarship

Alex Escaja-Heiss

Featured in *Teen Vogue* as one of [GLAAD's 20 Under 20 Rising Stars](#), Alex Escaja-Heiss is an award-winning filmmaker, an advocate for the LGBTQ community, and a student at the University of Vermont double majoring in Film & Television Studies and Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies. In addition to independent film production, Alex has worked alongside an assortment of organizations, including Outright Vermont, Outfest, GLAAD, and Planned Parenthood, as an advocate and peer educator for the LGBTQ community. Alex looks forward to graduating this year and moving to Los Angeles to continue creating representational content that intersects film and advocacy.