



## The Maine State Society of Washington, DC Foundation

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### Maine State Society Of Washington, DC Foundation Announces 10 Maine Scholarship Winners

WASHINGTON, DC -- The Board of Directors of the Maine State Society of Washington, DC Foundation has selected 10 high achieving Maine students attending four-year colleges and universities in Maine for merit-based scholarships totaling \$13,000.

The Foundation received applications from students at nine different schools across the state, led by Bowdoin College, Bates College and the University of Maine. All students have a GPA exceeding 3.2 and have completed at least one full year of study at the time of their application. The scholarship committee considered a variety of factors including course load, academic excellence and other scholarship, work ethic, essay and philanthropy when making its recommendation to the rest of the Board.

Here's a look at the winners, with details on where they live, go to school and what they study:

- **Top recipient (\$2,500):** Ana Eliza Souza Cunha, University of Maine, Junior, Biology Major, Orono
- **Marge Pearson award (\$2,500):** Marina MacKinnon, Bowdoin College, Sophomore, Biology Major, Brunswick
- **Lauren Lecompte (\$1,000),** Saint Joseph's, Junior, Nursing Major, Lewiston
- **Lars Gundersen (\$1,000,** Bates College, Sophomore, Politics & Environmental Studies Double Major, Freeport
- **Grace W. Pouliot (\$1,000),** University of Maine, Junior, Elementary Education Major, South Berwick
- **Francesca Haines (\$1,000),** Bowdoin College, Sophomore, Biology Major, Auburn
- **Jennifer Hart (\$1,000),** University of Maine-Farmington, Sophomore, Psychology/Math Major, Oakland
- **Kyle J. Flaherty (\$1,000),** Bates College, Junior, History Major, Litchfield
- **Eric Hall (\$1,000),** Bowdoin College, Sophomore, Government & History Major, Lewiston
- **Lexie Jamieson (\$1,000),** Bates College, Sophomore, Politics Major, Scarborough

University of Maine junior Ana Eliza Souza Cunha is the recipient of the Foundation's top scholarship, a \$2,500 award.

Cunha is a Biology major from Orono, with a pre-med concentration and minors in psychology and neuroscience. She earned a spot in the National Science Foundation Fellows Program for sensor technology, where she “worked alongside engineers to verify and improve upon technology that decreases the time of assessing honey bee hive health.”

The farmers she worked with as part of her research inspired her essay to the Foundation, which was focused on how she wants provide medical care to farming families in Maine. “I want to give back to not only the state I grew up in, but to the hardworking individuals that helped lead me to where I am today.”

Cunha has also shadowed doctors at Eastern Maine Medical Center Walk-In Care in Bangor, volunteers as orientation ambassador on campus, is a Board member of Spiritual Coexistence Club and works in the campus community garden. Cunha is also an officer with Partners for World Health, a Maine-based non-profit that collects unused packaged and sterile medical supplies bound for the landfills and send them to developing nations in need.

Marina MacKinnon is the recipient of the sixth Marjorie Pearson scholarship award, bestowed annually upon an outstanding female applicant with a strong academic record who also demonstrates superior volunteer leadership, as well as a passion for the State of Maine.

Pearson, who hailed from Millinocket, Maine, was one of the founding members of the Foundation. For 20 years, her vision, along with those of her Maine State Society colleagues, helped support the future of young Mainers attending college in the state. Pearson died in November 2011.

MacKinnon is a co-founder of the Safe Water for Guatemala Youth Project, where she managed promotion, fundraising and on-the-ground efforts to provide water filters, medicine and public health training to rural Guatemalan villages, and works to increase awareness of the global issue of water management at public events. This work has inspired her to pursue a career in public health, which was the focus of her essay to the Foundation. The Brunswick native is also a Mitchell Scholar and a member of the Common Good Grant committee, which reviews community grant proposals and makes awards in the greater Brunswick area.

The Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit, has been raising funds for its annual scholarship program since 1991, via Maine State Society events across the Washington, DC region, and outreach campaigns. The Foundation has awarded nearly \$225,000 in funds since the scholar program began. Scholarship application guidelines and a list of past winners can be found at <http://mainestatesociety.org/foundation>.

**NOTE TO EDITORS:** For headshots, bios and additional information about our award winners and the Foundation, please contact the Foundation at [mssf scholarship@gmail.com](mailto:mssf scholarship@gmail.com).

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