

AAUW STEM Scholarship Awardees 2022

This opportunity to meet the scholarship awardees is inspiring as we learn their motivation to follow a STEM major which will lead to their life commitments.

Congratulations to the AAUW STEM Awardees for 2022. These students have achieved the highest academic successes, participated in academic and leadership extra-curricular activities and volunteered or were employed in the community.

Let's meet the awardees:

Nontraditional Community STEM Scholarship:



Maya Hallstrom is a STEM Scholar at Rockford University majoring in Biology with a focus on biomedical sciences and conservation/wildlife. She graduated from Rock Valley College where she served as the PTK Honor Society President and was awarded the RVC Organizational President of the Year award after leading her chapter to be one of the TOP 100 Chapters in the World. Maya's volunteer work at the Dogwood Pet Resort led her to part time employment as a veterinary assistant at Auburn Animal Clinic. Maya graduated from Auburn High School.

High School Senior scholarship awardees:



Ella Gasparini will be attending Southern Illinois University Carbondale to study Biomedical Sciences and Physiology on the Pre-Physician's Assistant track. Ella is inspired to work in pediatrics after her successful experiences as a lifeguard and swim teacher for young ones. She is not only an academic leader as an officer in the National Honor Society but also an athlete as Captain of the Guilford swim team.



Natalie Mar will be attending the University of Texas at Arlington to study biomedical engineering. She plans to focus on imaging and medical technology in order to develop better walking aids for the elderly. During her time at Hononegah, she was awarded the Illinois State Scholar award and the Northern Illinois Outstanding Student-Athlete award for swimming.



Madison Ost will be majoring in Pre-Occupational Therapy so she can help children with special needs. Madison has been a straight A student through her 12 years in the Rochelle school districts. Her academic awards and achievements are many, but she also has demonstrated leadership skills by holding many offices in Key Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and National Honor Society.



Ashley Thammavong will be majoring in Physics/Biology in order to participate in research and development of new medical technologies, tests and forms of treatment of cancer. While at Auburn High School, Ashley has been active in the Scholastic Bowl, Model United Nations and National Honor Society, etc. Her main focus as the oldest child of an immigrant family has been translating documents, paying bills and making appointments for her hard-working parents.



Julia Wells will be attending the University of Minnesota to major in Neuroscience. Julia will be receiving an Associate of Science degree along with her High School diploma on the same day. While at Forrester High School and Highland Community College, she was a proven leader for the Women in Science Club and the Earth Club, a tutor for Highland Community College in over 10 classes, on the speech and debate team, and Captain of Swim Team. Julia also has employment experience as a math tutor and also a Dietary Worker in the memory care unit in a nursing home.

Congratulations to the awardees. And special appreciation to the AAUW membership and Board for their generosity in funding these scholarships. Awardees, please know that the Rockford AAUW is committed to the success of regional, women scholars who will be the future leaders in the STEM fields.