From our newest Nicholas Scholars... THANK YOU!

The Nicholas Scholars Program enables us to award scholarships to incoming students who demonstrate exceptional leadership potential and academic excellence... and who may not have been able to pursue their chosen calling without your support. Your gifts have empowered these students to pursue their dreams of protecting the planet now and into the future!

Russell Bargmann

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment
Previous Experience: Speechwriter for U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), who served on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Future Aspirations: To confront New Mexico's pressing climate challenges posed by reduced snowpack, aridification, and extreme heat

Melody Chen

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment
Previous Experience: Program and client strategy manager at SMS and email marketing platform Attentive
Future Aspirations: To build business strategies that minimize environmental impact and help companies make more informed decisions regarding their resource usage

Sara Goh

Area of Interest: Ecotoxicology and Environmental Health
Previous Experience: Research assistant at the Levin Lab at the Duke University School of Medicine, conducting neurobehavioral toxicological studies
Future Aspirations: To conduct environmental health research focused on pollutants and the inequities that shape their impacts

> Being named a Nicholas Scholar has been both an honor and a source of affirmation... The recognition not only eases the challenges of continuing my education but also strengthens my confidence that the School sees potential in me as both a scholar and a future leader in environmental health.
>
> *Sara Goh*

> The privilege of being recognized as a Nicholas Scholar was one of the major drivers in my decision to pursue a master's degree at Duke and the Nicholas School. This recognition reaffirmed both the value of my academic and professional experiences ... as well as my potential for growth and leadership during my time at Duke and beyond.
>
> *Jordan Heinlein*

Jordan Heinlein

Area of Interest: Terrestrial and Freshwater Environments
Previous Experience: Environmental Specialist for the City of Miami Beach and environmental scientist at services firm AECOM
Future Aspirations: Learning about ecosystem services and nature-based solutions to see how these approaches might be applied to environmental challenges in certain biomes

Sylvia Hipp

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment
Previous Experience: Senior Analyst at Cornerstone Research, Presidential Scholar at Dartmouth College conducting reviews of urban river restoration projects
Future Aspirations: A career focused on enabling a clean energy transition, particularly on assessing and improving the reliability of renewable energy resources

Kaitlyn Kukula

Area of Interest: Ecotoxicology and Environmental Health
Previous Experience: Research technician/assistant focusing on issues such as HIV cures, waterborne bacteria identification, and fecal contamination and water quality in the Weminuche Wilderness
Future Aspirations: To pursue a career in water resources with a focus on watershed science, contaminant biology and chemistry, and environmental health

Ran Lan

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment
Previous Experience: Served as Graduate Program Associate at Schneider Electric focusing on power systems sustainability strategy, and food resilience research intern working on edible landscaping in Singapore
Future Aspirations: To build expertise in both energy and business management that is versatile and applicable in various corporate settings

Athena Tamayo Luisce

Area of Interest: Terrestrial and Freshwater Environments
Previous Experience: Avian Field Technician at UNC Wilmington, collaborating with National Park Service to protect shorebird species in Outer Banks
Future Aspirations: To work in environmental management and program/ policy evaluation, with a strong focus on stakeholder engagement

AJ Meyer

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment
Previous Experience: Project management consulting at a global technology company and volunteering for grassroots environmental nonprofits
Future Aspirations: To work effectively at the intersection of rising energy demand—driven by technologies like AI—and its impact on historically underserved communities

Lige Nie

Area of Interest: Business and Environment
Previous Experience: Focused on sustainability across food, carbon capture and utilization, insurance, and marine sectors as Senior Business Analyst at McKinsey
Future Aspirations: To become an early-stage impact investor focused on nature-based solutions

Jess Ostfeld

Area of Interest: Terrestrial and Freshwater Environments
Previous Experience: Work with Puget Soundkeeper and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Future Aspirations: To become a more effective leader in the field of natural resources by expanding skills in leadership and environmental policy

> In all honesty, being offered the opportunity to become a Nicholas Scholar made attending the Nicholas School financially feasible for me. ... It will also give me the opportunity to work with people from a wide range of backgrounds, providing countless chances to broaden my perspective and better understand the nuances of environmental issues.
>
> *Jess Ostfeld*

Ellie Peichel

Area of Interest: Coastal and Marine Systems
Previous Experience: Varied environmental experiences, from working on an oyster farm to advocating for more just mining laws
Future Aspirations: To help reimagine conservation frameworks by centering relational values: the understanding that no being exists in isolation but is shaped through connection with others

Joshua Salzberg

Area of Interest: Energy and Environment, City and Regional Planning
Previous Experience: Served on Climate Corps team at the Environmental Defense Fund
Future Aspirations: To bring climate solutions to the municipal and regional scales, identifying the complex relationships between land use planning paradigms and grid infrastructure planning challenges

Danielle Schwartz

Area of Interest: Terrestrial and Freshwater Environments
Previous Experience: Assistant field manager at Amber Waves, a community-supported teaching farm focused on educating new farmers
Future Aspirations: To gain the scientific foundation and social context to more holistically address issues of climate change and environmental justice

Anna Marie Steltenkamp

Area of Interest: Terrestrial and Freshwater Environments
Previous Experience: Duke undergraduate student in cultural anthropology and environmental sciences and policy
Future Aspirations: To be a practitioner of community-based initiatives that weave together biocultural restoration and food production, specifically in coastal watershed and riparian forest management

Learn more about all the current Nicholas Scholars at: nicholas.duke.edu/admissions/financial-support-aid/nicholas-scholars-program

> This financial support was instrumental in making these graduate studies a viable pathway for me. Further, it provides the means to step out of the program with more flexibility, due to a lessened debt load, to be able to return to community-based work, which most often cannot afford to support high wages, and further invest in my professional growth, continued education, and career aspirations.
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> *Anna Marie Steltenkamp*

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