2018 STEM SCHOLARS

The Minnesota High Tech Foundation awards scholarships each year to undergraduate students in STEM majors. The scholarships help prepare our future workforce for careers in growing science and technology sectors in Minnesota. Providing financial support to undergraduates pursuing STEM degrees allows students to focus on studies and reduces the growing financial pressure of paying for school.

STEM jobs are the foundation for Minnesota's future. Investing in our youth today strengthens tomorrow's workforce and fosters Minnesota's next generation of innovators.

Since 2007, the Minnesota High Tech Foundation has awarded more than $600,000 in the form of 150 STEM scholarships. Selected scholars need to meet the exacting criteria for the prestigious award. The criteria includes high achievement in academic studies, demonstrated financial need, confirmed accomplishments outside of the classroom, and plans to contribute to Minnesota's technology-based economy by joining Minnesota's workforce after graduation.

In 2018, we are pleased to recognize 11 students majoring in STEM education, biomedical and electrical engineering, mathematics, computer science, neuroscience, chemistry, and more.

We are grateful not only to those of you whose personal contributions have made this possible, but also to Keyot, Thomson Reuters, and Women Leading in Technology for sponsoring named scholarships. This support has made these investments in the next generation of innovators possible.

Lidiya Ahmed
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
SPACE PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS, AUGSBURG UNIVERSITY

Lidiya was born and raised in Ethiopia and will be graduating in the Spring of 2020 from Augsburg University with a Bachelor's degree in Space Physics and Mathematics. She is currently a LEAD fellow and has worked at different community-based programs, such as the campus ministry's urban plunge program, Soup for You and campus kitchens program as a communications and operations coordinator. She is also currently a STEM peer mentor and has been involved with rocketry competition by the physics department, and worked as a teaching assistant and 3D printing coordinator for the Mathematics Department. Lidiya loves space science and plans to pursue a Ph.D. in space physics after graduating from Augsburg.

Brandon Askin
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY, ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

Brandon will be graduating with a B.S. in Manufacturing Engineering Technology from Saint Cloud State University (SCSU) in spring of 2019. He is a disabled Afghanistan War veteran, father of two children, and consistently makes the Dean's List. After his military career was abruptly ended by several injuries he returned to the United States from Germany and worked as a welder and fabricator for DCI, Inc. for 2 years. He then went on to pursue a degree at SCSU where he has raised over $10,000 for student veterans on campus while serving as the president of the local chapter of the Student Veterans Organization. He has spoken on several panels about mental health and gives an annual speech at the 9/11 Memorial event at SCSU.
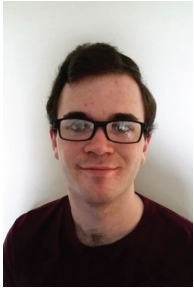
Michelle Bongin
THOMSON REUTERS NAMED SCHOLARSHIP
COMPUTER ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Michelle is a senior at the University of Minnesota Twin-Cities and will be graduating in May 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering. In her spare time, Michelle tutors French to beginner and intermediate students at the U of M Twin Cities. Michelle currently participates in the work study program as the Web and data Assistant for North Star STEM Alliance (NSSA). In addition to this she served as community outreach chair of National Society of Black Engineers. Michelle interned last summer with General Electric Healthcare in Wisconsin as a software engineer where she implemented a SAML authentication with Shibboleth in the cloud environment for data security. Upon graduation she intends to work full-time as a computer engineer who develops firmware in the health care sector and later plans to attend graduate school.

Aaron Coe
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
PHYSICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE, BETHEL UNIVERSITY

Aaron Coe is a senior at Bethel University pursuing degrees in Physics and Computer Science with a minor in Mathematics and has been on the Dean's List every semester during his college career. This past summer, he researched spintronics with Prof Dan Ralph at Cornell University. Last summer, he worked with the team of Prof Masayoshi Tonouchi at Osaka University studying the charge dynamics of carbon nanotubes. Aaron is an officer in his Society of Physics Students chapter where he leads outreach programs to local middle schools to showcase physics principles and inspire young students. He works as a TA and tutor for physics and mathematics classes. After graduation, Aaron plans to pursue a doctorate in physics.

John Hendrickson
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
COMPUTER SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS, MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE

John is currently attending Minneapolis College and plans to transfer to the University of Minnesota College of Science & Engineering in the fall of 2019, where he will pursue a degree in computer science and a minor in mathematics. John is a recipient of the STEM Scholarship award at Minneapolis College and works as a CRLA-certified student tutor in STEM disciplines at the schools learning center. John is also an active member of MCTC's math club and participates in a bi-yearly math competition organized by the Student Math League. John is passionate about volunteer work and donates his time to several First Nations non-profit organizations, such as the Native American Community Development Institute and the Minnesota Two Spirit Society.
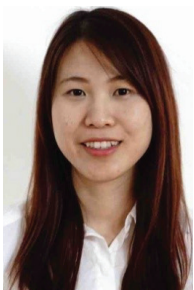
Malvern Madonado
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
COMPUTER SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS, COLLEGE OF ST. SCHOLASTICA

Malvern is an honors student at the College of St. Scholastica, graduating in May 2019 with a double major in Computer Science and Mathematics. He was recently named 2018 Affirm Scholar for the Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing conference and selected a runner-up of the 2018 Quip Diversity Scholarship. Earlier this year, he presented two papers on computer science education and modeling chaotic systems using neural networks at the Midwest Instruction and Computing Symposium. Malvern has completed two Software Engineering internships at Facebook and interned at the State of Minnesota, Department of Human Services, as an Urban Scholar. He has participated in various professional programs such as Code2040 Tech Trek, Google IgniteCS, Mentor Connection, and CodePath. On campus, he facilitates an iOS Development training program, works as a web assistant, and team leader at the IT Help Desk. Following graduation, Malvern plans to join the tech industry and to pursue graduate studies at the intersection of computer science and math.

Thao Nguyen
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
COMPUTER SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Thao is a computer science undergraduate at the University of Minnesota. She was an officer of Normandale Community College's STEM club and Math Club in fall 2017. She also participated in Academy of Math and Science at Normandale. She received the Coca-cola Leaders of Promise scholarship in August 2017. During the summer of 2017, she joined the Urban Scholar program and was placed to work at the Metropolitan Airport Commission. Thao also came back as a facilitator for first-year Urban Scholars in 2018 and was placed at the office of Minnesota Management and Budget. Thao plans to obtain a Master's degree in technology management.
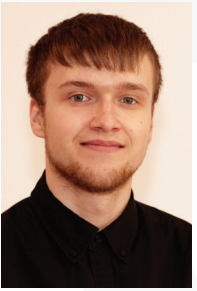
Sheng Xun [Shane] Ong
MHTA FOUNDATION STEM SCHOLARSHIP
COMPUTER SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Shane is graduating in December 2018 from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, with a major in Computer Science. Shane was awarded the CC Lee Scholarship for two consecutive years after transferring from Malaysia to the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. Shane led the IEEE Student Chapter at UMN as the Systems Administrator last academic year. Shane currently works as a student web developer at the Institute of Astrophysics, maintaining and improving the University of Minnesota's Department of Physics website. Shane has also worked as a research assistant at the Minnesota Traffic Observatory, creating a tool which helped analyze large data sets of moving vehicle trajectories. Shane has recently accepted a full-time offer as a Cybersecurity & Privacy Associate at PricewaterhouseCoopers after interning there this summer, and will continue to pursue his interest in cybersecurity.

Donald Posterick
KEYOT NAMED SCHOLARSHIP
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING, DUNWOODY COLLEGE

Donald graduated in May 2018 with his A.A.S in Electronics Technology and began the Software Engineering Program in the Fall of 2018 at Dunwoody. Donald served as the lead programmer for Dunwoody's autonomous snow plow teams, resulting in third and second place finishes during the past two years, among 12 of the top engineering universities in the Upper Midwest. Donald is described by faculty as a student who demonstrates "a focused determination to succeed and an outstanding desire to excel." Donald earned not only the Academic Excellence Award in Robotics & Manufacturing, but he also received this year's Student Leadership Award from the Dunwoody Alumni Association.

Katie Riedel
KEYOT NAMED SCHOLARSHIP
INDUSTRIAL AND SYSTEMS ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Katie Riedel is graduating in May 2019 with a major in Industrial and Systems Engineering and minor in Management. Katie has interned as an Industrial Engineering at both Boston Scientific and Stratasys, where she worked to optimize manufacturing lines using Lean Six Sigma methodologies. Katie also interned at ASTER Labs and worked on a University of Minnesota research team optimizing replacement schedules for Hennepin County's snowplows. Katie spends her free time volunteering as a referee at robotics tournaments hosted by High Tech Kids, serving as the Vice President for the University of Minnesota's GOFIRST Robotics student organization, and mentoring K-12 students in the FIRST Robotics programs. She dreams of one day earning a Master's of Business Administration. Katie looks forward to a career in STEM while also continuing to dedicate time to her passion for STEM education through the FIRST Robotics programs.

Kaitlin Rubash
WLiT NAMED SCHOLARSHIP
MATHEMATICS AND EDUCATION, CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Kaitlin plans to graduate in December of 2019 with a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Education and a minor in Spanish. She is a teaching assistant for the Mathematics Department at Concordia College. Kaitlin hopes to teach in a diverse middle school to help all students gain a higher understanding and appreciation of math. In addition, she hopes to help them learn to apply lessons from the classroom to the world around them. Kaitlin values connecting with students on a personal level so that they can succeed to the best of their abilities both in her classroom and throughout their school career.