



NAC Press Release

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NAC Awards First-Ever Academic Scholarships

Austin, TX — The National Academy of Construction is pleased to announce that academic scholarships have been awarded to three deserving students. This marks the first time NAC has awarded scholarships, providing two \$5,000 scholarships and one \$2,000 scholarship for the 2020 academic year.

The scholarships were established through the generosity of NAC members to provide funding for undergraduate and/or graduate students pursuing a bachelor's or master's degree in construction, or a closely related field, and who desire a career in the construction industry. The intent of these scholarships is to provide financial support for two semesters for deserving students. To be eligible for consideration the students must be juniors or above, have a high GPA, be advancing toward a degree in a construction or construction-related program, and demonstrate exceptional leadership as well as participate in extracurricular activities.

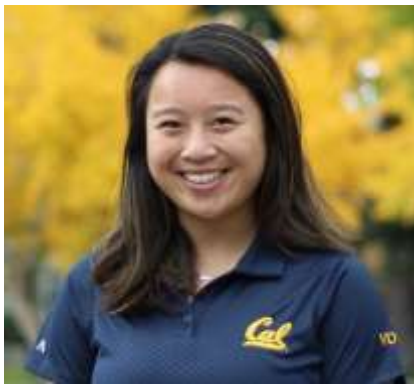
"Part of the mission of the Academy is service to our nation," said Wayne Crew, NAC General Secretary. "What better way to do that than to involve NAC members, such as those in the Scholarship Committee, to seek out exceptional future leaders and reward that excellence? We're happy to honor our three scholarship recipients. We believe this initial effort will become part of what the Academy does annually."

The Scholarship Committee, formed in mid-2019, worked extremely hard to establish the scholarship program, solicit student applicants, and gather additional supporting recommendations from NAC members, professors, and other university personnel. The committee effort was made even more challenging with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the goals and objectives were all met.

The Scholarship Recipients

The 22 applicants for this first-time offering by the Academy were judged to be highly qualified, making the committee's final selection all the more difficult. The committee reviewed the submitted applications, conducted interviews with five finalists, and selected the most deserving candidates as the final recipients. The recipients were all nominated by Academy members, supported by letters from their professors, and judged to exceed all criteria.

"Once we began receiving the nomination packages, it became obvious our job in reaching a final decision was going to be tough," said Edd Gibson, Scholarship Committee chair. "As a professor and someone involved in the academic world on a daily basis, I can honestly say the candidates were all superb. Awarding scholarships showcases NAC's commitment to future leaders in our industry. I think we're off to a great start in helping these first three scholarship students achieve their goals and dreams."



Karilin Yiu is a senior at the University of California, Berkeley, studying civil engineering with an emphasis in construction engineering and management. She is a leader in the Virtual Design and Construction student competition teams and the steel bridge competition team. She also tutors a number of students. She is the project manager of the UC-Berkeley Sustainable Solutions Competition Team, which is focused on resilient infrastructure projects under disaster scenarios. She has interned for Arup and BKF Engineers. She also worked for Webcor on the San Francisco Airport new Terminal 1 Boarding Area B. She hopes to attain a master's in engineering project management.



Maryam Echreshzadeh is currently a senior majoring in civil engineering at New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, NJ. A naturalized citizen, Maryam emigrated to the U.S. in order to pursue her dream of working as a civil engineer in the construction industry. She has served as president of the STEM Club and as a senator in student government. She currently volunteers at both Alzheimer's New Jersey and the VA. She has interned at Neglia Engineering Associates for the past two years, where she has contributed to environmental and municipal projects through CAD drawings, site surveys, mapping, and construction inspection. She hopes to attain a master's degree as well.



Julia Gravano is a senior at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, MA. Currently studying construction management, Gravano is president of the WIT Construction Management Club, where she organizes site visits to construction and facilities management projects. She has interned at Calnan and Associates as well as at Consigli Construction, both in New York City. Julia was inspired to pursue construction career after she visited her uncle's construction company in Tampa in 2017. She is a strong leader and serves as a mentor to fellow students and in a student shadow program for high schoolers interested in construction, facilities management, and commercial real estate.

“NAC is committed to diversity and inclusiveness in the industry,” said Gibson, committee chair. “This first collection of applicants represents a diverse group of outstanding students who are excited about pursuing a career in the engineering and construction industry. The Scholarship Committee is inspired by their stories. We thank committee members John Dalton, John Kolaya, Pat Natale, Zorica Pantic, Sarah Slaughter, Bo Temple, Hans Van Winkle, and Mike Vorster and the 18 NAC members who nominated the applicants. The committee also appreciates the excellent support from NAC General Secretary Wayne Crew, Academy general counsel Sam Baker, and Sandy Pittman, NAC program coordinator.”

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