



NAC Press Release

For immediate release
May 31, 2024

Eight Outstanding Students to Receive Academy Scholarships

Austin, TX — The National Academy of Construction has announced it will award eight NAC scholarships to outstanding students for the 2024-25 academic year. The NAC Scholarship Program, marking its fifth year, will distribute \$60K to those selected.

“The NAC Scholarship Committee provided a rigorous process for the candidate scholars. My congratulations to the recipients and a special thank you to our committee members,” said Mike Gavin, chair of the committee. “This year’s recipients are an impressive group.”

Edd Gibson, NAC CEO/President, praised the work of the committee’s effort. “The scholarships the Academy awards to these junior, senior, and masters students strengthen our legacy in giving back to the industry. We’re providing a great path forward for the recipients as they move into our industry, rewarding them for their dedication to their academic endeavors and their leadership activities, and making the industry aware of the potential of each of these future leaders,” he said. Gibson is the past chair of the Scholarship Committee.

The 2024 NAC Scholarship Recipients

Aidan Behilo, 2024 recipient of the Wayne A. Crew NAC Scholarship, is a senior at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). He is pursuing his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in civil engineering. Originally from Moodus, CT, he found his passion for construction and project management through his Eagle Scout project: the redevelopment of the Davison Memorial Walking Park in East Haddam. At WPI, he is involved with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) student chapter, the concrete canoe team, and Chi Epsilon, the civil engineering collegiate honor society. He interned in the summer of 2023 with Gilbane Building Company and will spend the summer of 2024 at infrastructure design firm HNTB. After graduating next May, he hopes to work in design or construction management and pursue a professional engineering license as well. Aidan is looking forward to joining the construction industry, where he can apply his skills for the betterment and upward growth of society.



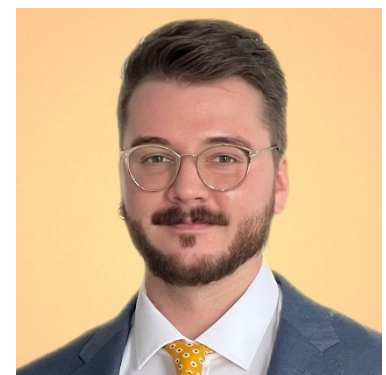
Larissa Cavalcante, 2024 recipient of the Paul Boulos NAC Scholarship, is an incoming senior at New Jersey Institute of Technology ADHC (NJIT), majoring in civil engineering. She plans to pursue a master's degree in construction and project management. She is a first-generation college student and has had several student leadership roles at NJIT, including serving as president of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) student chapter, vice president of administration for the NJIT Student Senate, and marketing director for the NJIT chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. Her interest in construction began at a young age while spending summers on construction sites with her father. In her freshman year, she worked for Gannett Fleming as a site inspection intern and will serve as a construction manager intern overseeing utilities for Merck Co. this upcoming summer. Her aim is to manage urban infrastructure and utilities within the heavy construction sector. She is particularly interested in working on water distribution and electrical power systems and managing projects that promote upward mobility in impoverished areas.



Justice Flora is a senior at Penn State. He plans to graduate with a degree in civil engineering in May 2025. This summer he will be interning with ExxonMobil in Houston, TX, in the firm's Civil Marine Operations Department. He has recently interned with Clark Construction in one of the company's projects with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. At Penn State, Justice serves as the corporate liaison for the Penn State chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers. He also is an Autodesk Fusion 360 software campus ambassador, the assistant captain and a College of Engineering mentor for the Penn State 3D modeling automotive and design team, and a Christian Fellowship Leadership Team representative. His efforts, however, go far beyond the classroom. He conducts an annual shoe drive for the children of Sierra Leone, West Africa, and has collected over 13,000 pairs of shoes since 2012. Justice truly believes that construction and engineering has changed his life for the better.



Chad Holobetz is a senior at Manhattan College pursuing a bachelor's degree in civil engineering with plans to earn a master's degree in construction management. He has completed two internships focused on major infrastructure projects at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, one in project management working on the Restoring the George Program and another in construction management for the LaGuardia Airport Redevelopment Project. He is a member of the Engineers Without Borders NY Professional Chapter, serving in a fundraising role to support a water distribution system project in Chimaltenango, Guatemala. He plans to travel there soon to directly contribute to that effort. He is also working on reviving the Manhattan College student chapters of Engineers Without Borders and of the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA). Chad's goal is to work in public service, where he can help improve the lives of those in the region through infrastructure development.



Kiana Mokrian is pursuing a master's degree in sustainable design and construction at Stanford University. Originally from Canada, she earned her bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Windsor. Kiana is interested in accessibility in the built environment and won a Canadian provincial competition for an app she designed to locate accessible infrastructure. Her interest in pursuing a master's degree in construction and sustainability was solidified from her work on an international public-private partnership bridge project between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario. At Stanford, she currently serves as president of Leaders of the Built Environment, a student organization overseeing social, professional, and philanthropic initiatives in the Stanford Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. She is also a fellow in the Threshold Ventures program, which supports students interested in entrepreneurship. She hopes to integrate her education in mechanical, civil, and environmental engineering to lead sustainable and accessible construction projects with a focus on integrated project delivery.



Alexa Rademacher is a graduate student in construction engineering and management at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She earned her undergraduate degree in civil engineering with a minor in graphic design at UW-Madison last fall. Throughout her undergraduate career, Alexa has held leadership positions in student organizations, including the Society of Women Engineers and Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society. She now serves as a teaching assistant in construction management courses and is a mentor for undergrad students. She is a student advisor for the Construction Club and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) student chapter. She also is a graduate student representative for UW-Madison's Civil and Environmental Engineering Advisory Board. She has worked in project engineering, construction claims, and roadway design and construction, and plans to leverage her visual communication skills to integrate community perspectives in construction projects. She also will continue her role as a mentor for other students studying construction.



Mackenzie Schmader is pursuing a bachelor's degree in construction management and technology at Arizona State University. She has successfully completed four internships with commercial general contractors. She is currently employed by McCarthy Building Companies, where she is involved in the construction of a new academic building at ASU's Tempe campus. At the ASU Del E. Webb School of Construction, Mackenzie has revitalized the Advancing Women in Construction chapter, serving as president for two years. She also has served as vice president of the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) student chapter. In 2024, she was appointed as the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Student Competition Student Chair following her involvement as a team captain in 2023. After graduating next May, she will start full time as a project engineer with a commercial general contractor while concurrently completing her master's in construction management through ASU's Accelerated Master's Program.



Elise West is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in construction management at the University of Florida. Originally from Bradenton, FL, she began as a civil engineering major but found her true calling in construction management. She served as an intern with the construction management firm Willis A. Smith Construction in her hometown of Bradenton. At the University of Florida, Elise is active in Sigma Lambda Chi, the international construction honor society. She is a member of the university's Gator Guard Drill and Ceremony Team, which has performed in numerous parades and other events, including in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. She also participates in the UF Scuba Club and hopes to pursue her master diver certification this summer. Prior to attending UF, she received a U.S. Army ROTC scholarship and plans to be a commissioned officer in the Army. Her goal is to become an Army pilot and a successful leader.



The Scholarship Committee for 2024 is made up of Mike Garvin, Chair, Andy Ciancia, Vice Chair, and members Chimay Anumba, Burcu Akinci, Wayne Crew, Anne Ellis, Evelyn Fujimoto, Mark Hastak, Sabrina Kanner, Pat Natale, Mike Rigsby, Sarah Slaughter, Jill Tietjen, Kumar Topudurti, Hans Van Winkle, and Dan Whiteman. A special recognition goes to long-time committee member John Kolaya, who passed away this year before deliberations began.

The National Academy of Construction, established in 1999, is an organization of industry leaders—construction users, constructors, engineers, architects, consultants, attorneys, sureties, editors, and academics—who have made outstanding, life-long contributions to the construction industry. In addition to honoring the personal contributions of its members, the Academy provides its leadership and expertise to a variety of organizations, governmental and nongovernmental, for the betterment of the industry and nation, fostering collaboration, future improvement, and building the next generation of leaders. For more information on this release, contact Rusty Haggard, rhaggard99@gmail.com.



NAC Press Release

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September 18, 2024

NAC-ACE Selects Five for “Alumni” Scholarships

Austin, TX — The National Academy of Construction in conjunction with the ACE Mentor Program has selected five outstanding students for scholarships during the 2024-25 academic year. Each of these students plan to pursue a career in the built environment. As many of you know, NAC has partnered with the ACE Mentor Program to offer joint scholarships for the past three years, with recipients chosen from a competitive pool of applicants by a joint committee of NAC and ACE members and staff. These scholarships are offered students who are “Alumni” of the ACE Mentor high school programs and who are in their final years of gaining an undergraduate or master’s degree. Funding for these scholarships has come from our NAC Auction and has been matched by ACE. As you can tell in the writeups below, NAC and ACE continue to make a difference in the lives of our future generation.

2024 NAC-ACE Alumni Scholarship Recipients



Arkin Si

“I plan to use my scholarship money towards my current undergraduate education at Rice University, where I am majoring in civil engineering and minoring in data science. At Rice, I’ve been able to take core courses within civil engineering, ranging from structures courses to transportation courses. I’ve also been able to take advantage of the small faculty-student ratio in the civil engineering department, participating in research looking at coal power plants and the effects of various environmental regulations on them. This summer, I will be interning at a transportation engineering design firm, gaining experience

in multimodal transportation engineering and design. I hope that this experience will allow me to gain some insight into the construction industry and provide me with a look into my future career options. At Rice, I’ve also been awarded an ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers) scholarship award, as well as a Rice Civil Engineering department scholarship, where I was one of the scholarship recipients selected by the department.”



Viviana Alatorre

"This past year, I have been fortunate to reconnect and work alongside my ACE mentors. They had offered me a summer internship job last year at the RTSPC Pinnacle Architecture Design and Planning firm and even after the summer ended, I stayed on part time with the firm remotely. I am excited to say that I will be working with them again this summer! This opportunity showed me how impactful and diligent interior design can be. Interior design, like many forms of architecture, impacts the way the user experiences a space and how they feel since it's an essential to our daily lives. As a student at City College of New York (CCNY), I feel architecture is the ultimate form of physical expressionism, becoming a billboard of my artistry. I am committed to working

hard to achieve my ultimate dream of becoming a licensed, multicultural female architect and I will always remember the importance of community engagement ranging from sport teams, awareness and even the CCNY green bee club!"



Henry Conde

"My name is Henry Conde, and I am on track to graduate in May 2025 from Rowan University with a BS in Electrical and Computer Engineering with a Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Power Systems Engineering. I achieved President's Scholar of Excellence, fall 2023, and my overall GPA is 3.8. Through the Rowan branch of the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), I served as Tournaments and Workshop Chair. Last summer, I worked as an electrical engineering intern with Exelon Corporation at Atlantic City Electric, Mays Landing, NJ. I was selected for the 2024 Rowan/Exelon Co-op program and received a 2024 Rowan Excellence in Experiential Education Award. I serve on the ACE Board-Alumni Committee and present to current ACE

students on my educational experiences. I received several scholarships through my ACE participation and was recognized at the 2023 American Council of Engineering Companies of NJ (ACECNJ) Engineering Excellence Awards."



Cate Stinger

"My architecture education began in my high school's CTE center architecture program in the 9th grade. This four-year program prepared me for an architectural education and connected me with firms around my area. At the same time, I was a part of the ACE mentorship program. After graduating, I started at the University of Toronto Daniel's School of Architecture. The following summer I interned in Manhattan at Marin Architects, then interned at Corgan in Dallas the next summer. I am returning to Corgan this summer on the education team designing public schools in the Dallas area. I am now a design specialist in my architecture program, which is a select degree that I applied to at the end of my second year. Following my

fourth year this coming year, I plan on applying to get my March degree and working on my certification."



Adeline Leung

“As a 1st year master’s student studying Sustainable Design and Construction at Stanford, I aspire to design and build high-performing structures that contribute to the mitigation of climate change and increase resilience within the built environment. In the past year I have progressed my career through working in an architecture/engineering firm that focused on large-scale transportation and infrastructure projects. While in school, I represented Stanford at the ASC competition Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) challenge and after months of intense preparation, my team secured

2nd place. Through this experience I learned so much about construction delivery methods and contracts. Finally, I was honored to receive a DBIA and ACE Alumni scholarship to help offset the financial burdens of tuition for the coming school year. I’m excited to enter the industry upon my graduation to start working towards those goals and I am extremely grateful for the help of this scholarship in helping me achieve them.”

With 13 previously awarded NAC-ACE scholarships plus these five in 2024-25, this brings the total to 18 scholarship recipients and \$86,000 given out for this program. Thank you to the NAC Scholarship Committee for its work in selecting these recipients and most importantly to the NAC members who have donated to support this effort and also to ACE for its efforts and matching funds.