Scholarship Recipients

Spring 2021/Fall 2021
Harold Adams III
Urbana, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Sociocultural & Linguistic Anthropology
May, 2020

My family undoubtedly inspires me. I am in the lower end of 6 children and the first to graduate from college and pursue a Master's degree. Every day I get to inspire both my younger and older family members. This is why I chose LER. This Scholarship allows me to forge a new path of academic excellence for generations to come in a profound and relevant field.
ExxonMobil Scholarship

- Senior Benefits Consultant at GoHealth
- Health Education Intern at McKinley Health Center
- Student Development Representative for the University of Illinois Foundation
- Member of the Future Health Care Executive Campus Organization
- Dean’s List

Chiamaka Akuba
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Community Health
May, 2019

My parents are Nigerian immigrants and I’ve seen them work hard all my life to get to where they are and that motivates me to work even harder. As a first-generation student, the value of education and how it can lead to my success despite facing both financial and academic challenges. Opportunities like this allow for students like myself to make an impact on the world. I’m breaking generational glass ceilings and I believe that there’s power in that!
Delaney & Schwochau Scholarship

- Research Assistant at Mongolian Marketing Research Association
- Communication and Research Assistant at Ulaanbaatar International Finance Corporation
- Teacher Assistant for Pui Tak Christian School
- Teacher Assistant for Faro Education
- Vice President of the Mongolian Cultural Organization
- Fluent in Russian and Mongolian

Gandulguun Ankhaa

As a first-generation student, my parents have always inspired me to strive for success and to be the best I can be. They’ve granted me the opportunity to begin paving the academic road for my two younger siblings. Having seen them sacrifice so much, I am determined to give back to them and fulfill the dreams they passed on to me.
General Mills Scholarship

- Interim Manager of Civic Engagement at the Office Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs
- Managed 16 public sector union employees in five offices across the state of Illinois and assisted with the transition and implementation of the office’s work from home policy
- One of the youngest managers in the Illinois State Treasurer’s Office

**Blaise Bernardi**
Tinley Park, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Political Science & History
May, 2013

*I chose to go back to obtain my Master in Human Resources and Industrial Relations because I believe this program will provide me with the tools and opportunities to achieve my career goals in an economy that has changed drastically the past ten years, and continues to evolve due to the past year.*
Graduate College Fellowship

- Program Intern at Bridging the Gap from Education to Employment
- Diversity Ambassador for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions
- Student Advisory Council Member for the Morrill Scholarship Program
- Advocate Intern at the Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center
- James F. and Barbara Young Sipp Mount Leadership Endowment

Noel Boykin
Reynoldsburg, OH
Ohio State University
Criminology & Psychology
May, 2021

I am tremendously grateful for this fellowship and the access to a phenomenal education that LER has provided. I am thankful for the investment to further my education, advance my personal and professional development, and enact positive change. This experience will help me achieve my goals and create wonderful workplace environments that prioritize people and build happiness and fulfillment.
There comes a time when you realize that you have to bet on yourself, as a first-generation college graduate, deciding to pursue a master's degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations was the best way to do that. I have always found an importance in life-long learning and continuous growth professionally and personally.
Walsh Family Scholarship

- Treasurer of the Chinese Students Scholar Association
- Secretary for the President of the UIC CSSA
- Fluent in Chinese

Thank you for my family, my friends, my professors, and anyone who help me always give me strength to seek my goals. I enjoy learning in management and specifically in human resources. If I can demonstrate my professionalism and help others grow in the process, it will satisfy my sense of accomplishment and communication. Therefore, I desire to learn more about it. I don’t want HR to be a tool for me to make a living, but a career that I strive for in my life.
PepsiCo Scholarship

• Enterprise Research Intern at the State Farm Research & Development Center
• Human-Centered Design Intern at Siebel Center for Design
• Human Resources Intern at Unilever
• Sr. Human Resources Assistant Intern for Amazon Operations
• Leadership Certificate
• Graduated Magna Cum Laude
• Highest Distinction in Psychology for Undergraduate Research

Kenna Ducoff
Batavia, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Psychology
May, 2021

During my experience at Unilever, I had the privilege to engage in a Purpose workshop & draft a personal purpose statement. What inspires me to be the best I can be is when I am enabled to live by this purpose - “to inspire others to adapt and embrace the uncertainty of the journey, rather than just the comfort of a set destination.”
Stephen Schaefer Scholarship

• Mock Interviewer at UIUC Career Center
• Client Coordinator at Bloom Financial
• Teaching Assistant at Ball State University in the Department of Psychological Sciences
• Undergraduate Employee at Ball State University Career Center
• President at Epsilon Sigma Alpha
• Leadership Committee Member at Ball State University Dance Marathon

My best friend, Maddy, inspires me to be the best version of myself. Without her constant support through my undergrad years, I wouldn't have had the confidence to become someone I am proud of. I cannot thank her enough for believing in me when I couldn’t believe in myself. Her servant leadership style encouraged me to become a leader that I would want to have in any scenario. I hope I’m making her proud!
UPS Scholarship

• Human Capital Intern at Camping World Holdings
• Graf Intern for the Illinois Leadership Center at UIUC
• Leadership Paraprofessional for the Illinois Leadership Center at UIUC
• Organization Member for the Undergraduate Society of Human Resource Management
• Member Development Committee Member for the Human Resources Psychology Organization

Shayla Hall

Aurora, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Psychology
May, 2021

As someone who has experienced many challenges throughout life, the knowledge that there is always room to grow and learn is something that inspires me to be the best that I can be. Setting goals and reflecting on the growth that is needed to reach those goals, is something that I tremendously value. Growth and learning is an endless process, which only inspires me to continue to do just that.
LER Scholarship

• Peer Assistant in the Psychology Department at UIUC
• Human Capital Intern at Deloitte Enterprise Consulting
• Marketing Assistant Intern at La Société du Vin
• Teachers’ Assistant at Luo’s Seminar
• Fluent in Chinese

I have always been very fond of strategical management and more importantly, the management of the relationships with other people. This leads me to investigate and experience more related to human resources since I find human resources fits my impression so well and my internships validate my expectations. It is quite simple to see the reason why I choose LER and human resources that I believe the LER program will provide me better resources and greater opportunities.
I can’t explain how grateful I am for this fellowship. As a first-generation student, I’m excited to be in a position to make a difference. My goal is to actively contribute to a business’ success by promoting a developmental culture. This fellowship is providing me that opportunity. Thank You.
ASPIRE Fellowship

- Visiting Project Coordinator for the STRONG Kids 2 Research Study
- Behavioral Lab Assistant at Business Administration
- Language Services Intern at OSF Healthcare Heart of Mary Medical Center
- Research Assistant for the Meghan Fisher Mealtime Professional Development Project at UIUC
- Capitol Scholar
- Recipient of the Undergraduate Research Support Grant
- College of AHS Dean’s List

Karen Hernandez Patricio

Urbana, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Community Health
May, 2020

My biggest inspiration and driving force are my parents and community. I aspire to give back to them as they paved the way to get me where I am today as a first-generation college graduate and now an incoming graduate student. I am very grateful for being selected as the recipient of this scholarship. This scholarship will not only allow me to continue my education, it will also allow me to reach my goals and full potential.
Hendricks Honorary Scholarship

- Project Manager at The VOS Group
- Freelance Social Media Manager
- Administrative Assistant at Citizen Relations
- Co-President at Irvine Campus Fellowship
- Behavioral Interventionist at Behavioral Health Works
- Dean’s Honor List
- Fluent in Mandarin

Jocelyn Hsieh
Irvine, CA
University of California Irvine
Psychology & Social Behavior
December, 2020

I chose LER and human resources because I have a strong passion in helping people and organizations reach their goals and full potential. This field perfectly matches my interests and skill set in active listening, problem solving, and communication with diverse groups of people. My strengths in empathy and genuine desire to learn more about people motivate me to advance my career as an effective human resources professional.
Yiming Huang
Shanghai, China
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Psychology & Communication
May, 2021

Spirit of LER Scholarship

- Human Resources Assistant at NIO
- LAS 101 Intern for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UIUC
- Director of the Chinese Student and Scholarship Association
- Publication Team Leader at the UIUC Photon
- Consultant at the Illinois Business Center
- Dean’s List
- Native in Mandarin

The human Resources program can train me in evaluating talents and persuading others to work towards a shared goal while modeling better cooperative techniques. Through this program, I am allowed to enjoy working with people to enhance our environment fully.
LaTorre Family Scholarship

- Instructional Design Student Worker at the University of Illinois System
- Teaching Assistant for BADM 508 (Leading Organizations)
- Resident Advisor at University Housing
- Secretary at the Undergraduate Psychology Association
- Evelyn M. Ebbert Scholarship Recipient
- Dean’s List

As a first-generation Korean-American student, receiving a college education has always been of the utmost importance to me and to my future, but financial difficulties made this dream daunting to achieve on my own. I am extremely grateful to receive the LaTorre Family Scholarship which commemorates L. Donald LaTorre’s deeply integrated commitment to higher education. This scholarship has given me the confidence and means to reach closer to my goals and towards advancement in my professional career. As I commit to my graduate journey with UIUC’s LER program, I hope to pave the way for the next generation of HR professionals.
Patrick J. Walsh Scholarship

- Graduate Assistant for International Education
- Teaching Assistant for LAS First Year Experience
- Summer 2021 Intern Coordinator at I-Connect
- Social Media Manager at SwaTaleem Foundation
- Research Assistant for Gender and Fieldwork in India
- Dean’s List
- Fluent in Tamil, Kannada, and Hindi

Surabhi Kiran
West Windsor, NJ
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Psychology
May, 2021

My biggest motivators are extremely small-scale things - it comes from being able to put a smile on people’s faces and making my friends and family laugh, seeing butterflies on a sunny day, seeing the sunrise and driving to get some coffee. I associate joy and motivation as inter-related because the more I feel joyful, the more I feel motivated to be my best self, help others, as well as challenge myself to push myself to new heights. I don’t think I can write a personal statement without including my wonderful mom because she truly inspires me to try my best in everything that I do. She is my best mentor and guide through this journey of life!
Marathon Petroleum Scholarship

• Mock Interviewer at The UIUC Career Center
• Manager at Mobil
• Assistant Manager at Mobil
• Audit & Assurance Senior Assistant at Deloitte
• Seasonal Administrative Tax Assistant at AGT The Safe Money People
• New Hire Onboarding Advisor for Deloitte Greater Washington Talent
• Recruiting Volunteer for Deloitte Greater Washington Talent
• Student Admissions Ambassador for the UNC MAC Program

Shantra Kurian
Darien, IL
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
Master of Accounting
June, 2019

Making the decision to switch careers from Accounting/Business Administration to Human Resources was one that I did not take lightly. While I recognized it would be a challenge on many levels, I knew it was the right choice for me, as I was craving the opportunity to contribute to the people and culture side of an organization. From the outset of my research, I was immediately drawn to UIUC’s MHRIR program. I could tell that if I were to join the program, not only would I give myself the best chance at a successful career in the field of HR, but I would also come out of the program with a robust education and a supportive professional network of individuals who are truly invested in my future. Thank you to the School of LER and a special thank you to Marathon Petroleum Company for their gracious gift towards my professional goals!
Eaton Scholarship

• Human Resources Intern at Pro Cooperative
• Computer Lab Assistant at the University of Northern Iowa
• Research Assistant for the Psychology Department
• Tau Honor Council Chair for Alpha Sigma Tau
• Director of Structured Recruitment for Alpha Sigma Tau
• Certificate in Organizational and Industrial Psychology
• Dean’s List, 5 Semesters

As a first-generation college student, I am honored to receive this scholarship. I have always loved helping people and that has inspired me to become the best HR Professional I can be. I want people to love coming to work and create a positive work environment. These goals of mine are what drives me to be the best I can, and I am grateful that I have the opportunity to do so.
May Family Fellowship

- Human Resources Senior Associate at the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines
- Intern at the Philippine General Hospital
- HR Intern, Labor Relations Department at St. Luke’s Medical Center
- Intern at the Philippine Human Rights Information Center
- Director and Department Head at The Initiative PH
- Graduated Cum Laude

Even when as a kid I knew that I wanted to create lasting impact to society. I want to become an expert and a respected HR professional in the Philippines to hopefully improve the labor and employment system. Going to LER will surely prepare and develop me for that goal. I am extremely grateful to have received this scholarship and I hope to one day be able to give the same opportunity to aspiring HR leaders.
PepsiCo Scholarship

- HR Supervisor/Sub-Team Lead at GAO Tek Inc.
- Research Assistantship at Western Michigan University
- Teaching Assistantship at Western Michigan University
- Senior Server at Millennium Restaurant Group
- Compensation and Benefits Project at Western Michigan University
- Member of SHRM, SEHR, and Psi Chi Honor Society
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude

Nikki Mason
Portage, MI
Western Michigan University
Behavioral Sciences
May, 2021

I am honored to receive this generous award from PepsiCo. As a first-generation graduate student, receiving this scholarship means so much to me and my family. This award will help lift my financial burden and will help me focus on my goal of becoming a successful HR professional. I am sure to do well with this investment towards my future. With such amazing resources, staff, and alumni, I know my future is bright as an Illini.
Floyd & Judith Whellan Scholarship

- Student Volunteer at Carle Foundation Hospital
- Bakery Associate at Angelo Caputo’s Fresh Markets
- Fundraiser Chair for Alpha Kappa Delta Phi
- Academic Chair for Alpha Kappa Delta Phi
- Sisterhood Chair for Alpha Kappa Delta Phi

Arianna Mendoza
Planfield, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Human Development & Family Studies
May, 2021

My parents are my biggest inspiration and push me to be the best I can be. As first-generation immigrants, both my parents worked tirelessly to establish a comfortable life for not only themselves, but most importantly my siblings and me. No matter how much my parents struggled, they always found ways to give back to their family in the Philippines who were less fortunate. I strive to be successful in my career and hopefully be able to repay them twice as much as they gave to me.
Kevin Mendoza
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Advertising
May, 2019

**Joel & Barbara Zelnick Scholarship**

- Strategic Media Planner for Zenith the ROI Agency
- Media Director/Creative Director for The Sandage Project
- Personal Realtor Assistant at Marci Berner Properties
- Diversity & Inclusion Council Member
- Experiential Learning Scholarship Recipient
- Dean’s List
- Fluent in Spanish & Conversational in German, French, Portuguese, and Italian

*I chose LER/Human Resources because I hope to enhance people's understandings of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues by allowing them to interact with others from different cultural backgrounds and participate in trainings to enhance their cultural competency.*
AbbVie Scholarship

- Strategic HR and Talent Acquisition Intern at Hillel International
- Communications Intern at Shorashim
- Communication Research Assistant at UIUC
- Psychology Research Assistant at UIUC
- Chapter President at Sigma Delta Tau
- LAS James Honor Scholar
- Dean’s List
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude

One of the most significant reasons that I chose to pursue Human Resources is because of the opportunity for growth. When I say ‘growth,’ I’m not referring solely to my personal and professional growth, but also to helping develop and support the organization and its employees. With the generosity of this scholarship, I am able to broaden my skills and knowledge, which, in turn, will allow me to make positive impacts on organizations and their people.
I am grateful for this award because it has given me the opportunity to pursue my goals of furthering my education. Being a part of this program will provide exceptional experiences that will help me make a positive impact in the field of Human Resources.
Helena Radovanovic
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Community Health
May, 2021

Polaris Scholarship

• Carle Experience Intern at Carle Foundation Hospital
• Personal Trainer at the ARC at UIUC
• Consultant Analyst and Team Member at Claro Healthcare Case Competition
• Patient Services Representative Intern at Promise Healthcare Frances Nelson Health Center
• Vice President of Professional and Academic Growth for the Future Healthcare Executives
• Dean’s List

As a first-generation college student, working towards a graduate degree means being the first for many things in my family. To be recognized by a company after pushing myself outside of my comfort zone to achieve my goals is an incredibly rewarding feeling and motivates me to continue with pride and even more grit.
I am so grateful to have received the Patricia Menzel Memorial Scholarship! Recently, I lost a loved one and understand better now than ever the importance of keeping that individual’s spirit alive. That is why I am so honored to be able carry-on Patricia Menzel’s legacy through my educational experience here at LER and into my future career in Human Resources.
Pearlman Family Leadership Scholarship

- Marketing Coordinator for Visit Lake County, Illinois
- Social Media Coordinator for Fraternity & Sorority Affairs at UIUC
- Vice President of Operations and Judicial Board Member for Panhellenic Council at UIUC
- Member of Student Alumni Ambassadors at UIUC
- Sisterhood Development Chairwoman for Phi Mu Fraternity
- Dean’s List

Kelli Smith
Mundelein, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Recreation, Sport, & Tourism
May, 2021

What inspired me to pursue this program is my desire to learn more about the leadership roles people take on when working collaboratively in a professional setting and how those roles can allow for the most productive work environment. Additionally, I have a passion for making a difference in how workplaces prioritize mental health resources and promoting a positive work life balance as a Human Resources professional. I am beyond grateful for the support from the Pearlman Family and feel confident that LER is the best place for me to continue to develop my skills.
Being awarded this scholarship is an unbelievable honor! I look forward to advancing my knowledge of the Human Resources function and the role that I will be able to play in workers and organizations successes, both large and small. Thank you to Stephen and Kimberly for your generous donation, your gift is an inspiration and I hope to be able to do the same in the near future.
Jazmin Tejeda  
Chicago, IL  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
History & Political Science - International Relations  
May, 2021

**Boeing Scholarship**

- Acting Associate Director of The Program in Arms Control and Domestic and International Security (ACDIS) at UIUC
- Co-Founder and President for Planned Parenthood Generation Action
- Digital Marketing and Outreach Intern at Ruth Wyman LLC
- Membership Director at Illini Undergraduate Journal of History
- Dean’s List and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society Member
- Fluent in Spanish

I chose to study human resources because it is important for organizations to take care of their employees by listening to their concerns and understanding what every person brings to the company. I have always wanted to be involved in that process because I have a passion for justice and community engagement. Fundamentally, I believe all organizations are a community and everyone in a community deserves a chance to be heard.
Nash Kamat Family Fellowship

- Intern at Illinois Human Resources – Strategic Initiatives
- Intern at Channing Capital Management LLC
- Vice President at Illinois Promise
- Representative for Illinois Student Council on Family Relations
- 2019 America Reads/America Counts Tutor of the Year
- BNAACC Emerging Student Leader Award
- Illinois Promise Rising Scholar Award

Ta’ah Tompkins
Hazel Crest, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Social Work
May, 2021

Education has maintained a specific importance to me throughout my entire life. My mother prioritized my education and always told me that I can utilize my abilities to create the life that I dream of. I am so grateful to the Nash Kamat Family and this fellowship for bringing me one step closer to my dreams as well as making my mother proud.
Melissa Wiley Scholarship

- Student Assistant at California State Polytechnic University
- Server at Yard House Restaurants
- Server Team Lead at Red Robin Burgers & Grill
- ESL Writing and Speech Teacher
- Member of the Forensics Speech & Debate Team
- Lambda Pit Eta Honor Society Member
- President’s List and Dean’s List

William Tremayne
La Verne, CA
California State Polytechnic University Pomona
Communications
May, 2021

Being a first-generation college student, it is like a dream come true to be given the opportunity to do my best in the LER program. I hope to grow and develop into a leader that the school, my sponsors, and my family can be proud of.
UnitedHealth Group Scholarship

- Client Delivery Manager at Vertical Trail
- Senior Consultant at Strive Consulting
- Co-Chair for Women in Tech & Lean In committees at Strive Consulting
- Agile Delivery Lead at Northern Trust
- Program Lead at Health Care Services Corporation
- Certificate in Prosci Change Management and Scrum Master

I am grateful for this scholarship because it is helping me to reinvent my career after 10 years in the workforce and pursue something I’m passionate about. I chose human resources because it’s a dynamic, challenging, people-focused field that is aligns with many of my interests and values, such as inclusion, communication & innovation. I am inspired to be the best I can be through those around me—my peers, professors, mentors—who have supported me and cheered me on through my professional journey thus far.
Raytheon Scholarship

- Pre-K Teacher at Bennett Family Childcare center
- Barista at the PSU Starbucks
- Day Camp Counselor at the YMCA
- Crew Leader and Dance Captain for the Bounce Dance Organization
- Dean’s List
- Fluent in Chinese

Effie Yi
Plano, TX
Pennsylvania State University
Human Development & Family Studies
May, 2020

Since the pandemic hit us unexpectedly, I believe all of us have been through a hard time with our job and life for the past year and a half. As for me, I had a hard time figuring out and changing my career path, and I'm very grateful to have received this award so that I can step back into school to further my studies. I'll cherish this learning opportunity at the LER program and make the most out of it!
LER Scholarship

- Tedx Talk on the importance of pronouncing students’ names correctly
- Graduate Assistant at the Illinois Leadership Center
- Captain of the Speech and Debate Team
- Internal Communication and Project Manager at the Illinois Foundation
- Transfer Ambassador at UIUC
- Dean’s List

Ushna Zamir
Schaumburg, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Communication
May, 2021

I'm so grateful that I can focus more closely on my studies and stress a little less about the finances thanks to this scholarship!
Being awarded the scholarship has granted me a honorable recognition of my past accomplishments, and thus empowers me with confidence to thrive in my future career, both in academia and in business sector.
LER Scholarship

- HR Business Partner-Engineering Intern at Tesla
- Lead Office Administrator at Stratford Schools
- Volunteer HR Recruiter at Unity Care Group Inc.
- Pre-Kindergarten Teacher at Challenger School

Harveen Chawla
Stockton, CA
University of California, Riverside
Foreign Language and Literature
June, 2017

LER found value in my past experiences, and I am grateful for having received the LER Scholarship as it has allowed me to have confidence in myself while I navigate this new journey.
Polaris Scholarship

• Benefits Analyst Intern at Emerson
• Engagement Coordinator at HomeGoods
• Illini Transfer Ambassador Student Coordinator for UIUC New Student Programs
• Research Intern at the Cline Center for Advanced Social Research
• LAS 102 Teaching Intern
• Recipient of the Welch Travel Scholarship
• Member of Pi Sigma Alpha

Lauren Gerdes
Amboy, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Political Science
May, 2020

Through a career in human resources, I hope to serve as an employee advocate and strategic business partner. This award has helped tremendously with funding for my MHRIR degree.
UnitedHealth Group Scholarship

• Human Resources Intern for Marmon Holdings
• Human Resources Intern for the University of Illinois Foundation
• Mock Interviewer at the Career Center at UIUC
• Coordinator of Internal Affairs at the Career Center at UIUC
• President of the Undergraduate Society of Human Resource Management
• Professional Development Committee Chair for Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society

Valerie Hebenstreit
Bloomington, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Industrial/Organizational Psychology
December, 2020

I am grateful for this award because it is a constant reminder whenever I’m struggling that others recognize my potential to do great things within HR and the professional world. I am lucky to have this opportunity to achieve a higher education at a place like LER with some of the most talented people I’ve ever met. This award has allowed me to proudly be the first in my immediate family to pursue a master’s degree and I will never forget the experiences that the UnitedHealth Group Scholarship made possible for me.
LER Scholarship

• Graduate Human Resources Intern at Core-Mark
• Graduate Assistant for the Department of Economics
• Communication and Social Media Intern at Franciscan Ministries
• Web Writing and Social Media Intern at WPGU Radio
• Peer Advising Intern at the Communication Advising Office
• Marketing Intern for the Pygmalion Music Festival
• Vice President of Membership and Leadership Nominating Committee for Pi Beta Phi
• Director of Recruitment at the Arts in the Ike

This scholarship not only alleviates some of the financial pressure of continuing my education, but it also serves as a constant reminder that the faculty and staff at LER believe in my abilities as a student and a future HR professional.
I am extremely grateful for this recognition at the School of LER. As a part of this premiere program, I am motivated to progress every day as a student and as an individual. With the continuing support from my family, my peers, my professors, and my mentors, I am humbled to have this wonderful opportunity to work with and learn from others as I move forward with my career goals.
LER Scholarship

• HR Recruitment Intern for Soulsight & Engine Shop
• Student Engagement Program Assistant for Student Success and Retention at the University of Northern Iowa
• Resident Assistant for the Department of Residence at the University of Northern Iowa
• Chair – Teambuilding and Recognition Committee for the Student Life Team
• Chairman/Chair of Finance for the Varsity Men’s Glee Club
• Certificate in I-0 Psychology

I have come to learn that my close friends and family are who inspire me to be the best that I can be. Watching my friends from my undergraduate college go on and get full-time positions in places that they enjoy always brings a smile to my face, and pushes me to achieve that type of success for myself. Understanding that all of the things that we are accomplishing were once dreams is also what helps to keep me inspired, and to hopefully inspire others.

Damond Jones
Cedar Rapids, IA
University of Northern Iowa
Psychology and Sociology
December, 2020
What inspires me to be the best I can be is knowing that there are opportunities of growth everywhere I go. Whether it’s listening to colleagues/classmates/mentors around me, experiencing new things, or learning from my mistakes, there is always something to be learned and something to take away. The people I have met and the classes I’ve taken at LER has heavily shaped who I am as a professional, and with this scholarship, I’m excited to be given the opportunity to further develop into the best HR professional I can be.
• Human Resource Generalist Intern at Ingredion Incorporated
• Customer Care Technical Support Agent at MeShare Incorporated
• Amazon Product Stream Live Chat Specialist at EP Technology Corporation
• Marketing Intern at Illinois Online
• Research Director at I-Opener

A year ago, I didn’t know anything about Human Resources. A couple classes and an internship later, I can say that it’s exactly where I want to be. Thank you to Boeing for taking a chance on me and helping me get the education I need.
Alex Michaud
Wheaton, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Psychology
December, 2020

I am grateful for this scholarship because it demonstrates the care and appreciation that Patrick Walsh and other LER alumni have for students in our program. This scholarship is an exemplar of the investment put into students’ success during their time with the School of Labor and Employment Relations and into their ensuing careers.
LER Scholarship

- Human Resources Co-Op at Pratt & Whitney
- Human Resources/Recruiting Intern at Watson Dwyer Inc.
- Vice President of Risk Management for Delta Gamma Fraternity
- Director of Philanthropy for Delta Gamma Fraternity
- Order of Omega- National Leadership Honor Society
- Student Society of Human Resource Management

Every day, I am inspired to be my best through my enduring passions of influencing change and helping others. With this, I am eternally grateful for this award, as well as the LER program as a whole, for supporting me in my pursuit of a career that seamlessly blends these two lifelong passions.
As a first-generation college graduate and the first in my family to pursue a Master’s degree, my parents have instilled the importance of hard work in me from a young age. I am incredibly grateful to LER for this generous scholarship that will allow me to continue my education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. I look forward to strengthening my skillset and learning from my incredible peers as I work to become a successful human resources professional.
LER Scholarship

• HR Business Partner Intern at L3Harris Technologies
• Office Assistant at Spytek Aerospace Corporation
• Performance Member for the Marching Illini and Athletic Bands
• Piccolo Marching Section Leader for the Marching Illini
• Active Member of the Sigma Alpha Iota International Women’s Music Fraternity

My experiences this past summer allowed me to experience the various facets of HR and further solidified my passion for the field. I chose HR because of the direct impact it has on employees’ lives and how effective HR practices can push business forward. Early on in my undergraduate career I knew that LER was the graduate program for me. I am so grateful for the generous scholarship I have received so that I am able to complete this dream with less financial stress.
I am grateful to receive this scholarship because it improves my study conditions and inspires me to study harder. I am planning to use this scholarship to buy a new computer, which can effectively improve my learning efficiency. Furthermore, this scholarship boosts my confidence and improves my motivation to learn. I want to prove the merit of the scholarship with my grades. In a word, this scholarship means a lot to me, and I really appreciate it.
LER Scholarship

• Eaton HR Summer Intern in Kearney, NE
  • Master Training Plan Project Lead
  • Training Qualification Matrix Project Lead

• Human Resource Office Student Work-Study at Cornell College
• Quantitative & Qualitative Content Tutor at Cornell College
• President of PSI CHI (International Honor Society of Psychology)
• Dean’s List

Payton Wellbaum
LeClaire, IA
Cornell College
Human Resources and Psychology
May, 2020

I am so very grateful for this award because of the opportunity it gives me to forge my path in my HR career: to be the best that I can possibly be. Whether it be taking useful content away from my classes or listening to peers' testimonials of the experiences they have had, I believe that this all-encompassing education will aid me in my dream of finding the best fit for people and being able to give back in any and all ways possible, in both my field, and others.