

Nantucket Garden Club Scholarship Awards 2025 Report

The Scholarship Committee met via calls and emails in early May to review the applications. The members of the committee are Caroline Tucker, Peg Congdon and Debbie Carter.

The Nantucket High School requires our decisions to be reached by Mid-May so that the school can announce the grants in time for graduation and to publish the awards in the Inquirer and Mirror. The NGC Scholarship Committee elected to award our annual amount of \$25,000, in addition to an additional \$4,000 donated to us by the Ernst & Elfriede Frank Foundation- which came to us through Eva-Maria and Jeph Tausig. This donor wishes to remain anonymous. To date, the total awards equal \$29,000 to three 2025 graduates of NHS and to 4 previous NHS graduates who are enrolled in college as follows:

High School Recipients: \$13,000

Elijah Holland-Elijah was granted \$6,000 toward his tuition at William and Mary College where he will be entering as a freshman this Fall. There he plans to pursue a degree in Environmental Studies or Marine Sciences. Elijah is a model student having been inducted into the National Honor Society and scoring the elusive “5” on his AP Biology exam. He is also an Eagle Scout with Nantucket’s Troup 97 where he worked on a project creating signage for local anglers, working with the Nantucket Land Bank. Elijah has also been working with a William & Mary Professor during this school year, researching the disease affecting Nantucket Bay Scallops.

Emma Marshall- We granted \$6,000 to this outstanding high school graduate who will be pursuing a major in Biochemistry at Boston College. Emma is an excellent student, finding herself on the Principal’s list every quarter of her high school experience. She is a member of the National Honor Society, and volunteers at the Nantucket Food Pantry and mentors low-income Island children as a tutor through the Learn to Be program. Emma was very active at NHS as co-president of the ASL Club, a member of the Psychology Club and a member of Student Council. During her summer last year, Emma worked with Mass Audubon as a Youth Environmental Steward. We are so proud to be a small part of Emma’s college experience and have great hopes for her future.

Katherine Borneman- Katherine will be attending the University of Maine in the Fall. We have awarded her \$1,000 toward her studies with her goal of studying Environmental Studies. She has a great love for Nantucket and all that it has done to foster her love of nature. Katherine has worked with the Nantucket Island Safe Harbor for Animals helping as a cat socialization volunteer. We wish her all the best in making the most of her college experience and bringing her studies back to us here on Nantucket.

College Recipients: \$16,000

Evan Belanger-Evan was awarded a \$5,000 award, and this is his second year in receiving a grant from NGC. He is an outstanding student, studying at Montana State University as a Fish and Wildlife Ecology and Management major. His goal upon graduation in 2026 is to find work that will help to ensure the preservation of terrestrial, marine and avian species and resources for Nantucket and beyond. Evan has worked with the Harbor Masters of Nantucket for the past 3 summers and has distinguished himself as a strong asset to that department. We are very pleased to offer this candidate our support again this year.

Claire Martin-This was Claire's second year applying, and was granted \$5,000 towards her college tuition at Wheaton College where she is studying Environmental Sciences with a focus on ecology and biological components of the field. Claire has a deep appreciation for the need to protect our planet, stemming from her love and fascination of the ecosystem we have here on Nantucket.

Celia Almodobar-This is Celia's third year as a recipient, earning \$1,000 this year to supplement tuition at Montana State University where she continues her studies in environmental studies. During the summers Celia has worked at the Nantucket Boat Basin and continues to work hard at her studies, showing great enthusiasm and a tough work ethic.

Eli Fuller- This will be his third award, for \$5,000 to the University of Vermont Rubenstein School of Environmental and Natural Resources with a major in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, along with a minor in Geospatial Technology. This past year he has worked as a Peer Mentor to Other students and was elected to the Rubenstein's Student Advisory Board. Eli has also taken on the additional responsibility of acting as a Teacher's Assistant for an Environmental class. Eli maintains an excellent GPA and has continued his work on Nantucket as a Hatchery Technician. We are thrilled to once again to support.

Susan Rein received the instructions with contacts and mailing addresses for each of the recipients and has sent the rewards.

We welcomed several of the scholarship awardees at our meeting in July, and they all expressed deep appreciation for their awards.

NEXT YEAR

Scholarship has an approved budget increase of \$30,000 for 2026. It is advised that the new Chair get on the agenda for the first board meeting and make a push for another increase. The club has made substantial progress in fund-raising and we therefore think that Scholarship funding should increase in line with earnings.