



Growing strong roots



BY STEPHANIE COLLINS

The Oregon Nurseries Foundation supports incoming or continuing college students who are preparing for careers in horticulture or related fields. Please join us in congratulating the Oregon Nurseries Foundation's 2024–2025 Scholarship Award Winners.

Students were evaluated based on academic achievement, nursery industry commitment, financial need and OAN affiliation. Scholarships are applied for during winter term and awarded by the ONF's committee each spring. The next cycle of applications will open in January. Applications are due by April 1, 2025.

Alexandra Geschwill has been awarded the Retail Chapter I Award for a second year. She is studying civil engineering with the intent of applying her skills to strengthen the infrastructure that supports the agricultural industry, with the possibility of giving back to the family business, OAN member **F & B Farms and Nursery**.



Alice Montgomery is currently a sophomore at Clackamas Community College in the landscape management program. Alice hopes to focus on their passion for trees and become a certified arborist. They have been awarded the



Clackamas/Ed Wood Memorial Award.

Ann Amato is a returning recipient of an ONF scholarship and currently works for OAN member, **Little Prince of Oregon Nursery**. She will continue her studies at Clackamas Community College to complete her associate degree in horticulture. Ann has been awarded the Nurseries Foundation Award.



Avery Lord will be returning to University of Southern California for her second year where she is studying occupational therapy. Growing up on an ornamental nursery, OAN member **Tree Frog Nursery**, >>





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ONF scholarship recipients

she has developed a passion for utilizing horticulture as a form of therapy and plans to incorporate the two. She has been awarded the Joseph H. Klupenger Award again for the upcoming academic year.

Benjamin Bailey has been awarded the Woodburn Nursery II Award and is currently a senior at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville. Ben is working on a degree in business and has been involved in the horticulture industry via **Smith Gardens**, an OAN member, where he has worked and held internships in various departments.



Brady Traeger will be a senior at Oregon State University and has been awarded the Willamette Chapter Award. He plans to help grow the family operations at OAN member **Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas** once he earns his degree in agriculture and food business management.



Brandon Withers has been awarded the Sid and Cindy Miles Memorial Award and will be a junior at Oregon State University. Brandon is studying agronomy with the intent to utilize his experience and education to provide advice and guidance to farmers to optimize their crop production. He spends his summers at Pratum Co-op where he is recognized at a young age as part of their Precision Ag Division.



Charles Colvin has been awarded the Clackamas Chapter Award and will be an incoming junior at Penn State University. Charles is vastly interested in plant genetics and has already mapped out his commitment of obtaining his Ph.D. once



his undergraduate studies are complete.

Chloe Hupp has been awarded the Bill Egan Memorial Award to apply towards her studies at Oregon State University, where she will be a junior. Chloe's parents own **Western Evergreen** and she is working towards the goal of having an event center situated on a small nursery where she plans on growing rare and unusual deciduous shade trees in root control bags.



Cierra Ridenour is the recipient of the Mt Hood I Chapter Award. Cierra is a horticulture major and will be an incoming junior at Oregon State University with the goal of owning her own small-scale nursery in the retail nursery sector.



Ellie Perkins will be a junior at Oregon State University pursuing a degree in horticulture and has been awarded the Emerald Empire Award. A returning recipient of an ONF scholarship, she continues to focus her studies on all aspects of horticulture, including floriculture and plant identification.



Emily Barnett will be an incoming freshman at Carroll College and will be studying accounting and strategic finance. Majoring in accounting will allow her to return to the family nursery, OAN member **Margie's Farm and Garden**, and apply her financial knowledge to enhance the business. Additionally, she is interested in marketing to add another level to her skills to bring back to the family business. She has been awarded the Retail Chapter



III Award.

Gabbie Schloe has been awarded the Nursery Employee Award for a second year and is entering her junior year at Oregon State University. She has spent many years at the family business, **Swan Island Dahlias**, and currently runs the social media for the business and growing customer following on several platforms.



George Pohlschneider is a recipient of the Woodburn Nursery I Award and will be an incoming freshman at Oregon State University. George will be majoring in business and attributes his interests and appreciation for new opportunities to his time at the family nursery, OAN member **Pohlschneider Nursery**.



Kennedy McConkey will be a senior at Oregon State University majoring in horticulture with an options focus on ecological restoration, turfgrass management, and urban horticulture. She has been awarded the Mt. Hood Chapter II Award. Formerly an employee of OAN member **Landsystems Nursery**, Kennedy hopes to continue her education and training with an internship opportunity through the Oregon Department of Forestry.



Makayla Rose has been awarded the Arthur Spada Memorial Award. She will be an incoming freshman at Corban University studying agribusiness. Makayla is the sixth generation, growing up on the family farm, Triangle Farms, which owns/operates OAN member **Silver Falls Seeds Co.** She plans to apply learned practices, marketing skills, and business strategies to carry



the family business into the future for further generations.

Miriam Millet is a junior at Brigham Young University – Idaho and is majoring in horticulture. She has been awarded the Royal Boltman Memorial Award and is highly interested in working with plant propagation and retail sales along with specializing in hydroponics greenhouse management and production. She ultimately wants to pursue owning her own business.



Ralph Pohlschneider has been awarded the Retail Chapter II Award. Ralph will be an incoming freshman at Montana State University >>



OREGON NURSERIES FOUNDATION

Join the ONF Committee

The ONF Committee is comprised of OAN members who serve a five-year term, with their fifth year as chair. Each year, we look to add a new OAN member to the committee.

If you are interested in being on this committee, please contact Stephanie Collins at 503-582-2001 or **SCollins@OAN.org**.

For more information about the ONF, please visit **www.OAN.org/ONF**.

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where he will be studying engineering with a minor in business to pursue a career related to agriculture. Ralph has aspirations of creating new technology and machinery for nurseries, including the family business, OAN member **Pohlschneider Nursery**.

Saiyen Wells is senior at Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo. Saiyen is studying agricultural and environment plant sciences, with the goal of applying his knowledge to advance sustainable farming practices, contributing to urban green spaces, and promoting environmental stewardship. He has been awarded the Larry Fitzgerald Memorial Award.



Xavier Tacker has been awarded the Nurseries Memorial Award; his fourth ONF scholarship. After completing his degrees at Oregon State University, he is now headed to University of Florida for graduate school where he will be focusing on plant breeding. Xavier has an impressive background in research and a passion for knowledge that is remarkable.



Congratulations, students!

The Oregon Association of Nurseries and the Oregon Nurseries Foundation congratulate each of these students on their impressive accomplishments thus far and wish them the best of luck as they continue towards building the future of a strong nursery industry.

The ONF committee is comprised



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Donate!

Our industry can't be prosperous without young people showing the initiative to learn, grow and enhance agricultural production.

The Oregon Nurseries Foundation (ONF) makes scholarships possible for students preparing for careers in horticulture and related fields. Awards can be sponsored by individuals and OAN chapters. Thanks to the generosity of donors, \$35,000 in scholarships were awarded in 2024. Your support and contributions help the students who will become the next generation of the green industry.

For more information on sponsoring a scholarship, contact Stephanie Collins at **SCollins@OAN.org** or 503-582-2001.



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*Stephanie Collins is the director of finance and administration at the Oregon Association of Nurseries. Contact her at 503-582-2001 or **SCollins@OAN.org***

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