



Current News

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The outstanding list of Cooperative scholarship recipients continues with the class of 2026

Twenty-six outstanding local high school students have been honored by Eastern Iowa REC with college scholarships this year. This is the 39th group of scholarship winners recognized by the Cooperative.

Since 1987, the Cooperative has rewarded 546 of the area's finest young adults from more than 50 different communities with a total of \$660,000 in scholarship funds.

The Cooperative awards four one-year, \$2,500 scholarships in each of the five districts to students planning to attend four-year colleges or universities. In addition, a one-year, \$2,500 scholarship is available in each district to a student planning to pursue a trade-related degree at a community college, technical school or line school.

In addition to the 25 four-year and trade school scholarships, the Cooperative also awards the "Bob Wiemerslage Memorial Scholarship" in memory of the late Cooperative division manager of accounting. The scholarship is awarded to a student who plans to pursue a degree in accounting.

This year's recipient of the "Bob Wiemerslage Memorial Scholarship" is Bryn Wright. She is the daughter of

Travis and Becky Wright of Morning Sun and is a graduate of Mediapolis High School. Wright plans to attend Wartburg College in Waverly, IA to study accounting.

"My long-term career goal would be to become a certified public accountant," Wright explained. "This allows me to take on higher responsibility and build new relationships with customers."

Heidi Barber of DeWitt and is a graduate of Central DeWitt High School. She plans to attend Iowa State University to pursue a career in cattle embryology.

"My goal is to pursue a career in cattle embryology, a field that plays an essential role in advancing genetics and herd productivity," Barber said.

Fuglsang is the daughter of Jason and Megan Fuglsang of DeWitt and is a graduate of Central DeWitt High School. She plans to attend the Concordia University in St. Paul, MN to study medicine.

"My career goal is to become an orthopedic physician assistant who helps people stay active, healthy, and able to perform their daily work safely and confidently," Fuglsang said.

Brockmann is the son of Tom and Molly Brockmann of Bettendorf and is a graduate of Pleasant Valley High School. He plans to attend Iowa State University to study agricultural engineering.

"When I think about my future, I see myself staying in the Midwest and pursuing a career as an engineer within a major agricultural company," Brockmann said. "I am excited by the opportunity to help design, test, and improve products that farmers rely on every day."

The District 2 college/university schol-



Aubrey Toohey

The District 1 college/university scholarship winners are Aubrey Toohey, Kalli Barber, Zoey Fuglsang, and Samuel Brockmann.

Toohey is the daughter of Chris and Jennifer Toohey of Long Grove and is a graduate of North Scott High School. She plans to attend Luther College in Decorah, IA and study nursing.

"Growing up, I had never really considered nursing as a possible option for my career," Toohey explained. "My goal is to graduate with my BSN and then work in the nursing field for a year or two before returning to school to obtain my master's degree. For my master's degree, I plan to specialize in family or pediatric practice to become a family or pediatric nurse practitioner."

Barber is the daughter of Curtis and



Bryn Wright



Kalli Barber



Zoey Fuglsang

arship winners are Isabelle Logue, Weston Dircks, Lillian Kraft, and Torsten Nixt.

Logue is the daughter of Johnathon and Brooke Logue of Lisbon and is a graduate of Mt. Vernon High School. She plans to attend St. Ambrose University to play volleyball and pursue a degree in industrial engineering.

“Industrial engineering particularly interests me because it focuses on analyzing complex problems and designing efficient, effective solutions,” Logue said.

Dircks is the son of Brad and Lisa Dircks of Lowden and is a graduate of North Cedar High School. He plans to attend Iowa State University and major in agriculture studies.

“I want to learn about new automation and technology in farming because that is what rural Iowa and Iowa agriculture are moving towards,” Dircks said.

Kraft is the daughter of Jason and Dawn Kraft of Moscow and is a graduate



Samuel Brockmann

of Wilton High School. She plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa and major in biology.

“Following the four years of undergraduate education, I plan to apply to graduate school,” Kraft said. “I have always dreamed of going into the health-care field because I love science and helping others.”

Nixt is the son of Tyler and Stephanie Nixt of West Liberty and is a graduate of West Liberty High School. He plans to attend the University of Iowa to study nursing.

“Nursing is fascinating to me because it has the perfect mix of patient care, discipline, and hard work,” Nixt noted. “I want to work in a field where I am constantly making a lifelong impact to those who need it in some of their most nerve-racking moments of life.”



Isabelle Logue

The District 3 college/university scholarship winners are Clayton Dierickx, Alexis Pilgrim, Kensley Paul, and Cora Marine.

Dierickx is the son of Patrick and Tessa Dierickx of Muscatine and is a graduate of Durant High School. He plans to attend the Iowa State University and major in biochemistry.

“Biochemists are needed in all kinds of industries, and I am intrigued as to where I might end up after completing my degree,” Dierickx explained. “My passion points me towards research, possibly working for a seed or chemical company in order to develop seeds or chemicals that are safer for the environment, or in the medical industry researching better treatments for diseases, or even starting my own business so I can use my academic experiences to produce something that can help people.”

Pilgrim is the daughter of Jeff and Natalie Pilgrim of Blue Grass and is a



Weston Dircks

graduate of Davenport Assumption High School. She plans to attend Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, AZ to study forensic science or exercise science.

“If I choose forensic science, my goal is to become either a crime scene investigator or an autopsy technician,” Pilgrim said. “If I chose to study exercise science with an emphasis in pre-physical therapy my goal is to become a physical therapist.”

Paul is the daughter of Sam and Lisa Paul of Muscatine and is a graduate of Muscatine High School. She plans to attend Iowa State University to study agriculture communications.

“I would love to work at a local agriculture business in the future as a public relations/community outreach representative to connect with people and advocate for agriculture,” Paul said.

Marine is the daughter of Dan and Michelle Marine of Wilton and is a graduate of Wilton High School. She plans to



Lillian Kraft



Torsten Nixt

attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC).

“Because of the creativity, diversity, and the energy of the city, along with SAIC’s emphasis on experimentation and critical thinking, I knew instantly it was my path,” Marine noted. “Attending the number two art school in the world would help me thrive as an artist and educator.”

The District 4 college/university scholarship winners are Ava Christofferson, Owen Knox, Brooke McCleary, and Jesse Stultz.

Christofferson is the daughter of Josh and Melinda Christofferson of Conesville and is a graduate of Lone Tree High School. She plans to attend Truman State University in Kirksville, MO to study exercise science and compete on the track and field team.

“My goal is to become a certified athletic trainer,” Christofferson said. “My passion for athletic training stems from my love of sports and my desire to help



Clayton Dierickx

others stay active, healthy and confident.”

Stultz is the son of Timothy and Dawn Stultz of Ainsworth and is a graduate of Mid-Prairie High School. He plans to attend the Iowa State University to study engineering.

“After finishing college, I would like to work as a service engineer for an agricultural machinery company,” Stultz said.

McCleary is the daughter of Pete and Nicole McCleary of Fruitland and is a graduate of Louisa-Muscatine High School. She plans to attend St. Ambrose University in Davenport, IA to study nursing.

“My future goals are to become a pediatric nurse or possibly even a pediatrician,” McCleary said.

Knox is the son of Jason and Katie Knox of Ainsworth and is a graduate of Highland High School. He plans to attend The University of Iowa to study engineering.



Alexis Pilgrim

“Engineering aligns with some of my greatest strengths, such as thinking outside the box and strong problem-solving skills,” Knox said.

The District 5 college/university scholarship winners are Macie Wagner, Morgan Meyer, Byers Nealey, and Gabriel Zuniga.

Wagner is the daughter of Jared and Valerie Wagner of Danville and is a graduate of Danville High School. She plans to attend the Coe College in Cedar Rapids, IA to study nursing and play for the women’s basketball team.

“My long-term goal is to become a trauma nurse, and serve patients during their most critical moments,” Wagner said.

Meyer is the daughter of Tim and Michelle Meyer of Wayland and is a graduate of WACO Community High School. She plans to attend The University



Kensley Paul

of Iowa to study medicine.

“My career goals consist of becoming a family medicine doctor in a rural area,” Meyer explained. “Growing up in a tight-knit community has allowed me to see the importance of accessible, high-quality healthcare, especially in rural areas.”

Nealey is the son of Matthew and Jill Mutchler of West Burlington and is a graduate of Danville High School. He plans to attend The University of Iowa to study engineering.

“My passion for both mathematics and LEGOs made me realize I wanted a career that had both design and mathematics,” Nealey said. “This led me to decide that I wanted a career in mechanical engineering.”

Zuniga is the son of Telly and Carol Zuniga of Columbus Jct. and is a graduate of Columbus Community High School. He plans to attend Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls, IA to study sports management and play for the



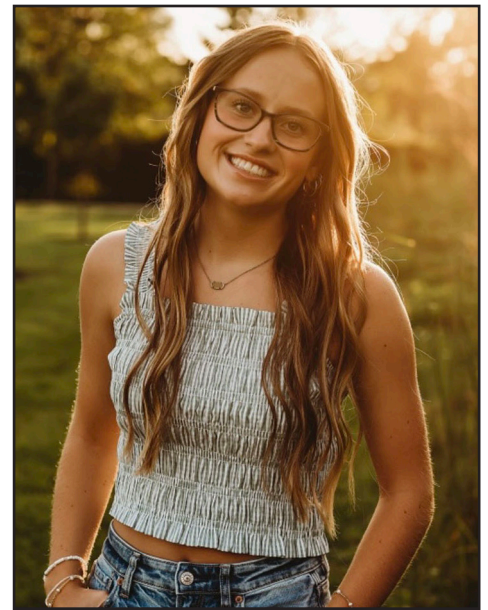
Cora Marine



Jesse Stultz



Owen Knox



Brooke McCleary

football team.

“I plan on obtaining a Liberal Arts degree and then will transfer to a four-year college where I can go into sports management,” Zuniga said. “Sports management can also be an inroad to coaching or working with a particular professional team.”

The 2026 trade school scholarship winners are Lucas Burken, Kennedy Simpson, Robert Jones, Hailey Wellington and Taylor Morrison.

Burken is the son of Jeremy and Lindsey Burken of DeWitt and is a graduate of Central DeWitt High School. He plans to attend Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, IA to pursue a degree in industrial maintenance technology.

“This degree will give me the technical knowledge and hands-on skills needed to work safely and effectively in industrial and agricultural settings,” Burken said. “After completing my degree, I plan to work in the field to gain real-world experience and continue learning from professionals who already work in the industry.”

Simpson is the daughter of Cory and Bambi Simpson of Atalissa and is a graduate of West Branch High School. She plans to attend Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, IA to study nursing.

“I am fully committed to my education and becoming a nurse that can help give back to my community and impact the lives of others,” Simpson said.

Jones is the son of Josh and Megan Jones of Muscatine and is a graduate of Wilton High School. He plans to attend Northwest Iowa Community College’s lineman program in Sheldon, IA.

“My biggest goal is to build a career in the power line utility industry where I can help provide reliable power to com-



Ava Christofferson

munities while continuing to grow my own skills and knowledge,” Jones said.

Wellington is the daughter of Tony and Cristin Wellington of Conesville and is a graduate of Columbus Community High School. She plans to attend Northeast Iowa Community College in Peosta, IA to pursue a career as a veterinary technician.

“I care deeply about the safety and well-being of animals and I want to help free them of their pain so they can get back with their owners,” Wellington said.

Morrison is the daughter of Donald and Robin Morrison of Letts and is a graduate of Louisa-Muscatine High School. She plans to attend Southeastern Community College in West Burlington, IA to study agriculture business.

“My career goal is to become a horse trainer here in southeast Iowa,” Morrison said. “I want to own my own business



Macie Wagner

eventually and train horses.”

All 2026 Eastern Iowa REC scholarship winners will be recognized at this summer’s district meetings.





Morgan Meyer



Byers Nealey



Gabriel Zuniga



Lucas Burken



Kennedy Simpson



Robert Jones



Hailey Wellington



Taylor Morrison

Current News



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