OUR MISSION

The HEAR Scholarship Foundation’s mission is to provide financial and mentoring support to Chicagoland High School graduates of need who have demonstrated academic excellence, commitment to community, and highest moral character in pursuing their dream of a college education.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear HEAR Family Supporters and Friends,

We are off to a very busy start this year. We selected our new Class of 2017 HEAR Scholars at the end of April. This proved a particularly difficult task, as we received over 500 scholarship applications. We officially welcomed 16 new scholars into our Class of 2021 at our Annual Scholarship Award Ceremony in early May. We also congratulated our Graduating Class of 2017, and were thrilled that so many of our HEAR Family and friends could join us. We are grateful for the committee member volunteers and the donors who make this program possible.

Our HEAR Feeds Volunteer Program has big plans for the second half of 2017. Once again, we are focused on hunger relief and community service, but this year we are also planning to combine Feeds’ efforts with our main mission, which is education. Feeds Directors Karoline Eigel and Jim Ziemba are hard at work making our long-cherished goal of tying all aspects of our mission into one a reality. Check our website and newsletters for updates!

Finally, we also welcomed Lucy Burne, our new Marketing and Communications Manager. Lucy is working with Vera on various projects and helping make the HEAR Foundation a visible entity in our larger community. We are thrilled she has joined the HEAR Family.

Should you have any questions or feedback, or are interested in joining one of our programs, please do not hesitate to reach out. Find out more about our plans for 2017 at www.hearfoundation.org, or send me an e-mail at bob@hearfoundation.org.

Thank you all for supporting our efforts.
Bob Wise, President
Dear Friends,

There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a talented young man or woman’s dream of a successful college career come to fruition despite considerable odds against them. It’s been a wonderful 12 months for the HEAR Family: The Class of 2016 graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.46. Two scholars have gone on to successful full-time employment, and the third is headed for graduate school - read more about Carlos's successes below! Our Class of 2017 has graduated, taking the number of graduated HEAR Scholars to 12! We are very proud of our scholars and cannot wait to see the places they will go.

May 2017 saw us exceed a cherished goal: with the incoming Class of 2017 our family of scholars exceeded 50, meaning we have now committed over $1,000,000 in scholarship funds. We could not have done this without your help and support.

With thanks,
Vera Pollina, Executive Director

The HEAR Foundation has been awarding college scholarships since 2011. Each scholar receives an award of $20,000 over a four-year period. This award is paid directly to the scholar’s college each semester to help cover tuition fees.

HEAR scholarships are given to exemplary students in financial need. In May, we celebrated awarding our 55th scholarship at our Annual Awards Ceremony. This year is particularly celebratory as we have exceeded our goal of 50 scholarships by 2017. This means that we have committed over $1,000,000 to help provide access to further education for some of the Chicagoland areas’ most vulnerable young adults. We also congratulated the Graduating Class of 2017, and recognized their commitment to succeed. We now have a total of 12 HEAR Graduates.

In the Fall of 2017 we will have 43 scholars in Higher Level education throughout the US. Many of them are attending top universities, including Harvard, Yale, Northwestern, Loyola, UIC, Elmhurst College, DePaul, Syracuse, Missouri, Marquette and Boston College to name but a few. We are also delighted to report that several of our graduated scholars have continued to (and in some cases finished) further education.
43 CURRENT SCHOLARS IN THE FALL

500+ ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR 2017

12 HEAR SCHOLAR GRADUATES BY 2017

$310,000+ NEW SCHOLARSHIPS TO BE AWARDED IN MAY 2017

CURRENT CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.46

OVER $1,000,000 COMMITTED TO HELPING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY SINCE 2011

WE ADDED 16 NEW SCHOLARSHIPS IN MAY 2017, MEANING A TOTAL OF 55 HEAR SCHOLARS HELPED IN SO FAR!
HEAR HONOR ROLL:  
TERM GPA - 4.0  

JULIANA TAMAYO (CLASS OF 2019)  
LYNN WEISHAUPT (CLASS OF 2018)  
TOMAS DILNYY (CLASS OF 2017)  
JILLIAN GOMEZ (CLASS OF 2021)  
ALLISON LEDWON (CLASS OF 2019)  
SAM VAN LOON (CLASS OF 2019) TERM GPA - 3.93  
ANDREA ZULETA (CLASS OF 2017) CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.9  
BRIANNA GUZMAN (CLASS OF 2019) CUMULATIVE GPA OF 3.84  

OUR SELECTION PROCESS  

We use a structured approach to identify every incoming class of HEAR Scholar. Above all, we maintain strong relationships with many college counselors and local organizations throughout the Chicagoland area including Chicago Scholars, Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund, Boys Hope Girls Hope and Evanston Scholars. This is where we currently receive many of our applications.  

This year, the successful implementation of an online application system meant a more streamlined process. We received over 500 initial applications, approximately 50% of which were fully completed. As part of their application students must submit essays, high-school transcripts, and teacher recommendations. Of those that met our application criteria (a minimum GPA of 3.0, possess excellent character, impeccable work ethic, a demonstrated commitment to service, and a proven financial need) 30 were selected for an interview with a carefully selected review panel.  

The final, and without doubt most difficult phase was selecting the successful applicants to become the HEAR Class of 2021. These students were celebrated (along with our graduating scholars) at our Awards Ceremony on May 11th.
This year the HEAR Foundation was in the fortunate position to be able to offer 16 scholarships to deserving High School students in financial need. This means we have now awarded 55 scholarships to outstanding students of excellent academic standing, and committed over $1,000,000 to help provide access to further education for some of the Chicagoland areas’ most vulnerable young adults. In 2018, the HEAR Foundation is hoping to add 20 scholars to its’ Class of 2022.

2017 will also see five more HEAR Scholars graduating from higher education, bringing our total number of graduated scholars to 12. We hope to see more of these graduated Scholars continue to give back via our HEAR Mentoring Program, which offers support and guidance to our Freshman and Sophomore classes. Our Mentoring program follows the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, as developed by The National Mentoring Partnership.

We continue to develop our internship program with prominent Chicagoland companies. As awareness of our Foundation increases and our relationships continue to develop, so too do our opportunities to expand this important aspect of our program. We hope that these internships continue to offer potential career and networking opportunities.

Of course, the HEAR Foundation also continues to organize social events. Our recent Annual Awards Ceremony was the perfect opportunity for new scholars to meet each other, and for existing supporters and friends of the Foundation to reconnect. We also organize events for our scholars and mentors (including quiz nights, sporting outings and team building sessions) where they can meet each other, and share experiences, challenges, successes etc. We are currently finalizing plans for a summer team-building event for our new Class of 2021 scholars.

All that we do ensures that the HEAR family continues to grow, and a strong bond between all involved forms and strengthens.

If you (or anyone you know) are interested in supporting this part of our program, please reach out to us via: info@hearfoundation.org.
So many of our scholars have deserving stories to tell. Here are just a few that highlight the achievements that we are all so proud of.....

Tomas and Ivan are the HEAR Foundation’s first set of twins to receive scholarships. Both were awarded a Cesaroni Family Scholarship, both attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and are graduating this year.

Tomas will graduate with a major in Economics and a minor in Business. He has consistently been one of our most academically successful scholars with a combined cumulative GPA of 3.94, a HEAR Foundation record! Tomas has been busy applying for full-time positions that match his interests and program of study/coursework. He has talked to and interviewed with several companies for potential job opportunities.

Ivan will graduate in December 2017 with a Bachelor’s degree in Nuclear, Plasma and Radiological Engineering. He has been accepted into a summer research team on campus in the field of Probabilistic Risk Analysis (PRA). In addition to studying he will play his final rugby 15s season in the fall as forward captain, and has also been enjoying Olympic weightlifting!

Nubia has just completed her sophomore year studying Television, Radio & Film with a minor in Philosophy. In addition to studying, Nubia also hosts a 2-hour music show and enjoys sharing an eclectic mix of music tastes with her audience.

In the fall, Nubia will be studying in London. She is particularly excited for her History of Music: Black British Music Class. We wish her luck in her next adventure!
DONOR REPORT | JUNE 2017

PEOPLE AND PROFILES CONT'D

KELLY CANOY
University of Illinois
Class of 2019

Kelly will be a junior in the fall majoring in Kinesiology. She is on a pre-occupational track with hopes to work with special needs children once she graduates. In addition to her studies, she is a part of the Illini Service Club - a student run non-profit organization on campus. They train service dogs to provide assistance to people with physical disabilities free of charge. Kelly is also in the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority and plans to study in Europe in her Spring 2018 semester.

Left: Kelly on campus at U of I

BRIANNA GUZMAN
St. Louis University
Class of 2019

Brianna just completed her sophomore year majoring in Speech Pathology. During the year, she was lucky enough to travel around Europe. She experienced several different countries including Spain, Italy and Prague. Brianna said of her recent adventure “My time abroad has been life changing and I am grateful for the experience. This has been something I have wanted to do since freshman year in high school and through hard work it finally happened!”

Brianna’s sister Andrea was recently selected as one of the new Class of 2021 HEAR Scholars in a blind interview, making them our first sister team to be awarded HEAR scholarships. Both will be attending St. Louis University in the fall.

Brianna at the John Lennon Wall in Prague
PEOPLE AND PROFILES CONT’D

ALLISON LEDWON
Northwestern University
Class of 2019

Allison has just completed her sophomore year majoring in Journalism. During the summer, she will be part of a Fellows Program at the Big Shoulders Fund, working on a marketing plan for an elementary school.

Her work at PAWS Chicago will shortly be featured in their summer magazine, and she has also recently had a story published on the Medill news service site. She has just finished her first year as resident assistant at NU, and will be returning to the position in the fall. She was recognized as the community builder of the year on her staff.

VERONIKA MATSUK
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Class of 2020

Veronika just completed her freshman year majoring in Biology at the College of Letters and Science. This summer she is part of a lab within the Molecular and Environmental Toxicology Center in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Her research is focused on understanding how genetic and environmental factors cause craniofacial birth defects such as cleft lip and palate.

DAN TRYBA
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Class of 2020

Dan just completed his freshman year also majoring in Biology at the College of Letters and Science and says that his first year of college life was unlike any other in his life so far! Along with his studies, Dan is also a member of the Wisconsin Fishing Team, The Badger Business Professionals and Badgers for Special Olympics. Through the summer, he will be working hard to save up money for sophomore year and spending time with his friends and family.
Our Annual Awards Ceremony gave our many donors, supporters, friends and scholars (both new and existing) an opportunity to meet or reconnect with each other.

After an initial welcome by HEAR President Mr. Robert Wise, we once again welcomed Commissioner John Daley as our Keynote Speaker. Dr. Ray Pollina then congratulated our graduating Class of 2017 and officially awarded our Class of 2021 their scholarships. We welcomed them into the HEAR Family and introductions were made to individual award donors. It was a wonderful, celebratory affair and we were delighted that so many of our family could attend.

In December 2016, Scholars, Mentors, and HEAR Directors celebrated a great year at our annual Winter Social and strengthened our internal bonds as the HEAR Family of Scholars. We are always particularly happy when our graduates come out for our events, and this year was no exception. The event was a great opportunity to check in with our scholars in person: there is no substitute for a face-to-face conversation. It also afforded our Scholarship Chair Dr. Ray Pollina another chance to show off his bowling prowess!

We are in the process of finalizing both our summer social and our new scholar welcome event. News and photographs of these events will be on our website and will feature in our regular Newsletters.

PLEASE SAVE DECEMBER 9TH FOR OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW!
After successfully completing their degrees, a number of our graduated HEAR Scholars have gone on to further education. This is a great moment for the entire HEAR Family to realize the difference our efforts can make.

Carlos Montero was just accepted to the University of Illinois School of Medicine! We are so proud of Carlos and all that he has achieved. This is a fantastic accomplishment for him, and one that will change lives! Carlos Montero, University of Illinois Chicago Class of 2016.

Andrea Zuleta graduates in June in International Studies and Political Science and starts a one year Master's program at the Kellogg School of Management! Andrea's cumulative GPA is 3.63. Andrea Zuleta, Northwestern University Class of 2017.

Missy Vela (Class of 2015) successfully graduated from Loyola University Chicago's School of Social Work in May with a Master's Degree in Social Work. She couldn't be more excited and we couldn't be prouder! She has accepted a full-time position at North Shore Senior Center as a Case Worker. Missy also still attends many HEAR functions.

Said Missy recently: "I will earn my Master's degree and shortly after I plan to become a licensed social worker. Currently, on top of my hectic school schedule and my amazing internship at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital Older Adult Services, I have been applying for jobs. I want to continue working in the field of aging and I have realized that my options are endless. I am most attracted to positions where I will be able to build more long-term relationships with clients. Over the course of my education, I have been able to achieve more than I ever thought possible. Very soon I will be proud to say that I have earned a MSW thanks to the continued support I feel I have received over the course of being a HEAR Scholar."

Missy Vela, Loyola University Chicago, MSW, Class of 2017.