



NAC Internal Release

For internal release only
June 17, 2022

NAC Awards Seven Academic Scholarships

Austin, TX — The National Academy of Construction has awarded academic scholarships for the third consecutive year to deserving students. Seven highly talented recipients were selected by the NAC Scholarship Committee.

“The Academy scholarships are one of the most important investments we can make,” said Wayne Crew, NAC President/CEO. “The students get the support they need, and the industry sees better prepared entry-level participants who are eager to contribute.”

The scholarships provide funding for undergraduate and/or graduate students pursuing a bachelor’s or master’s degree in engineering or construction, or a closely related field, and who desire a career in the industry. Applicants must be juniors or above, have a high GPA, are advancing toward a degree in construction or a construction-related program, and demonstrate exceptional leadership as well as participate in extracurricular activities. This represents the third year the Academy, through the work of the Scholarship Committee, has awarded financial aid to college students.

NAC also supported scholarships this year through a relationship with the ACE Mentor program, using proceeds from the 2021 auction. Those additional scholarship recipients have been chosen and more information will be provided at a later date.

The seven recipients of the 2022 NAC scholarships have been invited to the NAC Gala, to be held in Scottsdale, AZ, October 6-8.

The 2022 Scholarship Recipients



Nanette Giron raised her family and then returned to UT-El Paso to complete her civil engineering degree in construction engineering management. She has taken advantage of opportunities involving both classroom and real life experiences. Nanette has been involved in contract work through the university as a health and safety trainer, visiting local construction sites to train workers with her bilingual skills on topics such as heat illness prevention, fall protection, and excavation hazards. Her internships have included assignments at the Texas Department of Transportation and at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, CO. She currently is researching energy efficiency strategies and construction safety in offsite factory building technologies. Her future plans aim at contributing to energy conservation and innovation as well as community sustainability and safety.



Kevin Lewis is a senior at Georgia Tech and is planning to graduate with a degree in civil engineering in May 2023. Originally from Long Island, NY, he has an older brother and a younger sister. He stays active at Georgia Tech in the classroom, in Greek life, and on the field. Kevin has been the vice president of his fraternity, Sigma Nu, and is the captain of the club lacrosse team that recently reached the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association national finals. His internships have included work with Brasfield & Gorrie, Robins & Morton (both based in Birmingham, AL), and Swinerton (with 19 offices coast to coast). In working alongside project managers and superintendents at each company, he discovered his passion for construction. His goal is to complete his civil engineering degree and join the construction industry in a project management role and to continue to contribute and to learn.



Kristen Moore, from Plainfield, IL, is now pursuing a master's degree in construction engineering management at the University of Illinois-Chicago. She earned a degree in biological sciences while playing Division I women's basketball at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. At UKMC, she not only maintained a 3.0 GPA, but served as basketball team captain for three years. She earned multiple academic awards and endowments. Her focus upon graduating, however, pivoted from the world of medicine to construction. Her life's philosophy has always held that education is important and opportunities are presented to those who work hard. Her desire in pursuing her construction engineering management degree is to build infrastructure that will be part of history as well as her own legacy. She is interning with Turner Construction on the President Barack Obama Presidential Library. Kristen hopes to be a project manager and eventually own her own firm.



Alexander Moreno is a senior at Columbia University, pursuing a degree in the construction management and the structural engineering fields. He is active in the Engineers Without Borders club at Columbia, where he serves as chapter vice president and led a design and construction team for a 100,000 liter water storage tank in rural Morocco. In 2021, he began an internship with Amtrak and oversaw progress on schedules and budgets for various projects. He also wrote the project charter for the \$200M renovation of Penn Station into the Empire Station Complex. He interned with Whiting-Turner, inspiring his interest to be in the field, and with Stacy and Witbeck. He mentors other Columbia students through the university's ASCE student chapter. His long-term plans call for managing transit projects nationwide or developing infrastructure policy.



Matthew Mottesheard is a junior studying construction engineering at North Carolina State University. Passionate about the construction industry from a young age, he has maintained a 4.0 GPA while participating in both the ASCE student chapter, as its public relations chair, and in the academic chapter of Construction Alliance, which consists of the AGC, CMAA, and NAHB. He leads NC State's marching band trombone section and is a member of the pep band. He serves as a University Ambassador, giving weekly tours of the NC State campus. Matthew is a member of the Tau Beta Pi National Engineering Society and Chi Epsilon International, the Civil Engineering Honor Society. His current three-rotation co-op experience at Brasfield & Gorrie (Birmingham, AL, headquarters) has enabled him to work with different supervisors, giving him insight into the industry's professional aspects. He aspires to be a project manager and work into senior leadership roles. The ultimate goal: own his own nationally recognized company.



Jeana Papagno began her college career at the College of Southern Maryland, earning a business administration associate degree before transferring to Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI, to study construction management. At RWU, she has flourished in the classroom and in such student groups as AGC, Construction Management Club, Residential Construction Club, Sustainability Club, and Women in Construction Club. She is a volunteer with the Appalachian Service Project (ASP), which has helped shape her career goals and inspired her to change lives through construction work. Her ASP trips have allowed her to experience different cultures, helped her learn construction skills, and showed her the true meaning of community. Her internship at Whiting-Turner in the Greenbelt, MD, office, gives her the opportunity to learn about commercial construction. Her goal is to work on projects that change lives and provide benefits to those who need it most.



Jaime Ramos is a senior studying construction management at Cal State-Fresno and is a member of the Honors Program in the Lyles College of Engineering. A native of Modesto, CA, Jaime is the first in his family to seek a college degree. The valedictorian of his high school class, he reluctantly enrolled in the civil engineering program at CSU-Fresno, following a suggestion from his father, who worked in construction. It was a study abroad experience in Armenia, however, that provided him the personal insight and the courage to switch to construction management. In addition to research into Revit apps and volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and the Bluebeam User Group, Jaime has had three internships that provided his path forward: to be a design/build project manager for multifamily construction. His future beyond the industry may include work as a professor of engineering.

The Scholarship Committee Efforts

The Scholarship Committee solicits student applicants with recommendations from NAC members, professors, and other university personnel. The initial three recipients were recognized in 2020. Last year, NAC provided five scholarships. This year, the committee evaluated 17 applicants from across North America before selecting the seven described above. These applicants were supported by recommendation letters from 17 NAC members.

“I want to thank our NAC membership for providing letters of support for these students,” said Edd Gibson, Scholarship Committee chair. “I also want to thank NAC’s Scholarship Committee for its dedicated work in choosing these students and in working with the ACE Mentor program on its selection process. It is not an easy job, as we have a large number of deserving applicants, more than the resources available. Our industry is in good hands in the future as you can tell from these recipients. NAC is making a difference through this program.”