



2019 NEW LEADER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

TERRY ALLEN, 28, graduated from U.C. Berkeley with a Bachelor's Degree in Rhetoric. A few months after graduating, he was accepted into the White House Internship Program at the Travel Office of the Obama Administration. Shortly thereafter he received a Masters Degree from Columbia University in Education Policy and Social Analysis. Now in his fourth year of doctoral study in the Education Department of UCLA, he serves as a lead researcher for the Million Dollar Hoods Project, which maps the fiscal and human cost of mass incarceration in Los Angeles. The project documents how hundreds of millions of dollars are wasted every year on ineffective and inequitable law enforcement. Little did he know, he was born and raised in precisely a community that is the basis of the project. Terry's dissertation research focuses on the structural inequality in youth contact with law enforcement and school discipline. During his studies, he worked as a trainee at the U.S. Government Accountability Office and summer associate-adjunct researcher at RAND Corporation. Terry currently holds several other research positions on the campus of UCLA. In the following academic year, Terry will begin pursuing his JD at UCLA School of Law. This is his fourth New Leader Scholarship.

VIOLETA ALVAREZ, 30, BA, graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a Bachelor's in Political Science and a minor in Ethnic Studies. She grew up with a single mother who worked two jobs in order to take care of her and her two siblings. As a thirteen-year old, she began a history of drinking, using drugs and became involved with gangs, spending time in juvenile hall on several occasions. At seventeen, she dropped out of high school and at nineteen found herself in jail facing a long prison sentence. As a result of her incarceration, she vowed to forge a different path for herself and her son through education. Violeta tutored at San Quentin State Prison from 2014 to 2017 and is a member of several social justice organizations. She was the first full-time Program Director of Berkeley Underground Scholars--the first ever UC established organization serving formerly incarcerated and system-impacted students. She is now in her second year at UC Hastings College of the Law and plans to use her law degree to continue uplifting "underprivileged and minority communities." She is currently the Co-President of La Raza Law Students Association and a Staff Editor of the Hastings Journal on Crime and Punishment. This is her third New Leader Scholarship.

RICHARD D. BRIDGES, JR., 52, BA graduated from San Francisco State University with a major in Health Education in 2014. He then went on to receive a Master's in Public Health from San Jose State University in 2017. His goal is to use his graduate degrees to have an impact on others who have struggled with many of the same problems which led him to a "vicious cycle of recidivism, substance abuse, and hopelessness". While working full time and attending school, he has facilitated a bi-monthly group at a substance abuse treatment facility, working with those struggling with Hepatitis C. Richard spent his young adulthood in and out of the criminal justice system, ultimately turning to education in order to break the cycle. "I am compelled to be a champion for the betterment of humanity." is how he describes his own transcendence from addiction and hopelessness. Currently, Richard is enrolled in the second year of a doctoral education program at San Francisco State University. He is continuing his research on Hepatitis C. This is Richard's sixth New Leader Scholarship.

ANDREW CARRILLO, 20, is currently in his third year at San Francisco State University with a double major in Political Science and History. Andrew is one of five children and the first to attend college. As the son of teenage parents, Andrew was determined "to break the mold set for me as a Latino man coming from a low-income background". He excelled in high school and entered college with 22 credits. Fighting for those who have been institutionally marginalized is a central concern of Andrew's. His goal is to be a public servant, one who advocates for those with little ability to represent themselves. In that capacity, he interned for San Francisco Supervisor Norman Yee as a legislative intern advocating for seniors and also campaigning for universal pre-k. He plans to attend law school and study constitutional law while continuing his advocacy work. This is his first New Leader scholarship.

ABEL FERNANDO VALLEJO GALINDO, 27, is currently a senior at UC Berkeley studying Sociology. He immigrated to the United States with his mother as a political refugee from Oaxca in 1993. Knowing that his undocumented status would keep him from acquiring employment positions that would pay a living wage led to behavior that first put him in and out of juvenile hall and eventually in prison. At age seventeen, while in prison, he began to realize that only through education could he hope to change his life circumstances. With this profound change in attitude he attended and graduated from Santa Rosa Junior College. Following his graduation, he founded a club (which eventually became a center) providing a number of resources for undocumented students. He then went on to UC Berkeley and has become an outstanding student resulting in being awarded several highly prestigious scholarships. In his short time there, he has also co-founded a research cohort of formerly incarcerated students to “create opportunities for prospective students to gain research experience and see graduate school as a possibility”. He plans to attend law school following his graduation in order to be able to directly impact policies around the “convergence of immigration and criminal laws”. This is his first New Leader scholarship.

SEDERIC GRANT, 27, graduated from UC, Berkeley, with a major in Public Health and is committed to becoming a dentist, working with underserved populations. Coming from a family of seven, raised in circumstances in which he was exposed to the issues of poverty, he has devoted himself to caring for children raised similarly. Sederic has continuously involved himself in campus leadership and athletics while on the Berkeley campus. He was also active in the Berkeley Scholars to Cal Program and mentored both middle and high school students as well as participating in the UC Black Recruitment and Retention Center. He is focused on the dilemma of foster care youth “aging out” at age 18 and losing their Medicaid coverage. Though planning to become a dentist, he is still intent on addressing this seriously neglected problem. Sederic spent a year as a Research Assistant at Highland County Hospital in Oakland, gathering and analyzing data in the Emergency Department in preparation for his doctoral work in dentistry. He spent a summer studying physics at the University of Sussex in order to strengthen his background in the health sciences and then enrolled in a year-long academic preparatory program for dentistry at UCSF. Sederic is now in his last year in dental school at UC, San Francisco. This is his sixth New Leader Scholarship.

MCARTHUR HOANG, 40, is currently in his senior year at UC Berkeley studying Sociology. His family moved to the United States as refugees from Vietnam and were among the group referred to as “boat people”. McArthur’s early life was a difficult one, filled with hardship and grave poverty, resulting in considerable trauma. These early life experiences eventually placed him in the foster care system until he aged out at eighteen. As a foster alumnus, he feels that he “must help those that are left behind”. He serves on the advisory board of the Pivotal Foster Youth Org in Santa Clara County and on campus is a member of the Underground Scholars, a student organization of those who were formerly incarcerated. Importantly, he began a class called NavCal to help non-traditional students “acquire social and cultural capital” in order to become effective in realizing their educational goals. Mac plans to pursue his Ph.D. in Sociology in order to continue his advocacy work in foster care. This is his first New Leader scholarship.

RANDELLA JONES, 21, is in her senior year at San Francisco State University majoring in Music. She has a strong desire to give back to her community as a music educator and believes that while coming from a low income family that she still had incredible opportunities which have prepared her for this role. Randella is very cognizant of the stark disparity that income makes in being given an art and music education. First as a student and then as an instructor, she has been concerned with providing access to music education for young students from low income backgrounds. Randella has used the model of an El Sistema Program based on the Venezuelan Fundacion Musical Simon Bolivar Mission of providing an opportunity to alleviate the harm due to living surrounded by violence through access to a musical education. Her goal is to “become a primary school music educator”, obtain her doctorate education and go on to teach at the college level. This is Randella’s first New Leader Scholarship.

NAZINEEN KANDAHARI, 24, BA, graduated magna cum laude from the University of California, Berkeley with majors in Public Health and Molecular & Cell Biology, and an emphasis in Infectious Diseases. Nazineen is committed to serving the underserved, particularly refugee and multicultural communities, through medicine, research, and public health advocacy. She is passionate about resolving health inequities and improving reproductive and sexual health. Nazineen is currently the Senior Project Coordinator to a research project collaboration between UC Berkeley and a predominantly Latino church; she recently received an award from the American Public Health Association for producing novel culturally-sensitive health promotion and health education materials. Nazineen also conducted qualitative research at Kaiser Permanente’s Division of Research to improve the healthcare experience for historically marginalized patients; she is published in Contraception journal for her project titled, “Exploring young

women's decisional needs for contraceptive method choice: A qualitative study." Upon graduation, she received the Departmental award of Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher for her contribution to molecular genetic research on delaying the effects of aging and age-associated disease. She is the recipient of numerous scholarships from institutions including Palo Alto Medical Foundation and Women Health Care Executives. She is currently in the prestigious UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program pursuing her Medical Doctorate and Master's Degree in Health and Medical Sciences and is part of the Program in Medical Education for the Urban Underserved, a five-year track at the UCSF School of Medicine for students committed to promoting social justice through medicine, community-based work, and policy change. This is her third New Leader Scholarship.

KATIE LY, is currently finishing her last year at UC Berkeley studying Political Science and Ethnic Studies. Katie's goal is to attend graduate school in Public Policy and help elevate the voices of LGBTQIA+ people, Southeast Asians, and women within the political and policy sphere. Much of her fierce determination to help create a more representative generation of public service leaders has come from the fierce determination generated by her mother and the communities she strongly identifies with. Katie wants to pursue a Master's degree in Public Policy and use her acquired knowledge to apply to public service work in keeping with her goals. Katie is particularly concerned about making an impact on the policymaking world as an individual from several underrepresented communities. This is her first New Leader Scholarship.

LARRY McDANIEL JR., 36, received his Bachelor's Degree from UC, Berkeley, majoring in Sociology, with an AA degree from Peralta College. As he saw many of his friends falling victim to the challenges which face poor minority communities and finding himself struggling to survive, he vowed to dedicate himself to helping those coming from similar backgrounds. At Berkeley, he joined a student-run organization "Spread the Word" which assists underperforming minority youth through mentoring and advocacy. He became the president of the organization, a testament to his leadership skills. Larry earned a Master's Degree in Higher Education at the University of Pennsylvania and is pursuing his doctorate in Higher Education and Organizational Change at UCLA. He aspires to become a university professor, using his own background as a means of reaching out to students who have been similarly discouraged. Following his own struggle over a 10-year period in community colleges, he is acutely aware of the struggles of Black children "growing up in economically neglected neighborhoods". He plans to engage in research which effects policy changes in social structure with a particular emphasis on "racial identity for community college transfer students of color who attend historically and predominantly white universities". This is his fourth New Leader Scholarship.

IFECHUKWU OKEKE, 23, is currently a junior at UC Berkeley studying Molecular and Cell Biology and Neurobiology. She immigrated from Nigeria at the age of 16 to pursue a better education and entered community college following her immigration to the United States. She has also played a central role in helping her younger brother immigrate to the United States as well and has assumed his guardianship. Due to the decline of her mother's physical health, this was deemed the best role for her to undertake. After years of rejection from educational institutions due to her immigration status, she was accepted in 2016 to San Jose State University. She dealt with periods of homelessness and hunger while starting her college career and worked to attain financial support while focussing on her higher education goals. She wants to pursue an MD/PhD to work directly with marginalized communities. Ifechukwu is concerned with the racial injustice that she believes is practiced in medicine and intends to focus on this issue in her own medical training and research. This is her first New Leader scholarship.

ABDULLAH PUCKETT, 46, is pursuing his doctorate in cultural anthropology at UCLA and was awarded the prestigious Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship. He majored in Political Economy and Interdisciplinary Studies and received his BA from UC Berkeley. On his own from the age of sixteen, he was imprisoned from 1999 through 2014. Inspired by the election of Barack Obama in 2008, he saw that real change in our systems was more than a theoretical possibility. He saw that "when ordinary people come together, we can make extraordinary things happen". Initially, he was inspired to become a community organizer like President Obama but began to realize that many more avenues were open to him through his studies. His mother went to school at the age of 47 and earned a doctorate in Pharmacy in part to inspire and demonstrate to her children what was possible through education and determination. This is his third New Leader Scholarship.

GABRIEL SANTAMARIA, is studying Molecular and Cell Biology as well as Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley. As a Nicaraguan immigrant, he grew up in predominantly immigrant and Latino communities; thus, he has first-hand experience with the consequences of the environmental and structural inequalities that nurture so many societal ills faced today. These experiences have instilled in him a duty to work towards eliminating health and structural inequalities in his community and beyond. As an academic, his research has centered on topics such as bone regeneration to the effects of social stigma on school-aged children. He has contributed to peer-reviewed articles, designing and running experiments in wet labs, statistical models applied to state-wide populations, and community-based participatory research. As an advocate for healthier communities, violence prevention, and increased access to education, he has developed multiple community-based organizations in the Bay Area, working directly with the populations he aims to serve as a future physician. Recognizing the life-span issues of health, he does not limit himself to working with youth but works with elderly and disabled patients as well. He is able to do this while simultaneously maintaining the highest academic standards. This is his second New Leader scholarship.

ARIANNA M. WOOD, 24, is currently in her first year at UCLA's Graduate School of Nursing. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a BS in Health Education. As the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, at age 16, Arianna saw first hand the power of an inequitable immigration system to remove her father from their home. The loss of their home forced her family to become homeless for the duration of her high school years which deeply affected her future goals. As a student in the Metro Academy at San Francisco State, her "lived experiences" were reinforced and supported by learning about the realities that minority communities face. These experiences have led to her determination to bridge the "relationship between social injustice and health outcomes." She plans to devote her career to creating programs that are focused on the social determinants of health that cause health disparities and health issues among minority communities. This is her second New Leader scholarship.