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### **EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION RHODE ISLAND TRUSTEES GRANT SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS**

The Eastern States Exposition (ESE) Trustees Scholarship is offered annually to students residing in New England who have participated in ESE’s youth programs. This year’s recipients of a \$650 scholarship from the state of Rhode Island were Morgan Pattison, Emily Myers, Liam Cotter, Ethan Vieira, Sophia Stalnaker, Elizabeth Lavery, Theresa Katin, Emma Horan and Devon Cranston.

As a not-for-profit corporation committed to providing year-round opportunities for the development and promotion of agriculture, education and industry, it is a critical piece of ESE’s mission to support youth who are equally dedicated to academia and agriculture.

Applicants must be accepted to, or attending, a two- or four-year accredited higher education institution, and candidates may be required to interview.

Morgan Pattison, of Little Compton, R.I., attended Portsmouth High School and is now enrolled in Wheaton College. She plans to specialize in bioinformatics. Pattison was a member of the Portsmouth Patriots, which is the marching band at Portsmouth High School. She previously perform in the Rhode Island Day parade at The Big E.

In addition to marching and concert bands, Pattison was an active member of the varsity swim team, the philosophy club, volunteered along with the band at various community events and is a lifeguard in the summer.

Emily Myers, of Hope Valley, R.I., recently graduated from Narragansett High School. She is now studying agricultural education at the University of Rhode Island. She hopes to one day host her own 4-H club. In her spare time, she tends to a vegetable garden, as well as hay and corn fields

and maintains cattle and poultry. She works various jobs, including as a sales associate at Tractor Supply.

Myers has participated in the 4-H New England Center Talent Show, 4-H Grilled Cheese Contest, dairy shows, cattle shows, the Milk Shake Contest and more throughout her six years participating in ESE programming at The Big E. She has served on various agriculture leadership boards, including as president and vice president of her local FFA chapter.

Ponaganset High School alumnus, Liam Cotter, of Chepachet, R.I., now attends Murray State University, where he studies agriscience and agribusiness. As an avid member of the FFA, Cotter participated in the FFA Landscape Design Contest at ESE in 2022 and 2023.

Cotter is a versatile student with a background in choir, theater and soccer. He works as a stable hand at three barns and as a pet groomer after school. His free time is spent riding and showing horses. He hopes to contribute to the future of the farming industry by sustainably and efficiently managing a farm in a manner that takes climate change and limited resources into account.

Ethan Vieira, of Portsmouth, R.I., graduated from Portsmouth High School in July. He now studies computer science at URI. In 2022 and 2023, he performed as a percussionist with his high school marching band, the Portsmouth Patriots, on Rhode Island Day at The Big E.

Vieira was a part of his school's engineering club and the robotics competition team. Last summer, he interned at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, where he worked with a group of peers to design, build and program robots that performed various underwater tasks. He hopes to use his computer science degree to become a video game developer.

Sophia Stalnaker, of Middletown, R.I., is a graduate of Middletown High School and now attends Florida State University, where she studies Psychology. As a member of the Middletown High School Band, she played the piccolo, saxophone, flute and drums, as well as conducted. The Middletown High School Band brought their talent to The Big E in 2022 and 2023.

In addition to her time in the band and noteworthy academic scores, Stalnaker was an active member of the greenhouse club, student government and her local parish. She also works as a babysitter and as an administrative assistant at Narragansett Engineering. She aspires to be a social worker or family counselor.

Elizabeth Lavery, of Portsmouth, R.I., previously attended Portsmouth High School. She is now a student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she majors in business management and French & Francophone studies. As captain of the drumline in the Portsmouth Patriots marching band, Lavery performed at The Big E three times.

In high school, Lavery was a director and sound technician in the drama club, secretary and treasurer in her school's chapter of the International Thespian Society, a vibraphone player in the jazz band and a proud member of the Language Honor Society. She plans to work in international relations or become a French teacher.

Theresa Katin, of Portsmouth, R.I., is a graduate of Portsmouth High School and now studies acting, theater and playwriting at Pace University. She also performed with her high school marching band in The Big Parade on Rhode Island Day at The Big E.

Katin was president of her high school's creative writing club, a member of the drama club and earned her black belt in martial arts. She works as an assistant librarian at Portsmouth Free Public Library and was once a tutor. Her vocational calling is to become an actor, particularly in the theater circuit.

Emma Horan, of Coventry, R.I., previously attended Coventry High School and now studies at the University of Rhode Island. Her goal is to work as a professional writer or analyst for an international media outlet. In her youth, she gave many public presentations in The Big E's New England Center. She also exhibited swine, dairy goats and beef at the Fair.

In high school, she was involved in an orchestra, audiovisual club, student council, drama club, French competitions, rifle team and recycling club. She is a former 4-H club president and current volunteer. She has experience in numerous food service and veterinarian roles, as well.

Devon Cranston, of West Greenwich, R.I., is an alumnus of Exeter West Greenwich Senior High School and is currently enrolled in Plymouth State University, where he majors in music education and digital music composition and production. He would like to teach music and compose music.

Cranston is no stranger to the Fair; he has attended The Big E since the age of nine for musical performances, public speaking presentations in the New England Center, marching in The Big Parade and participation in listless 4-H and FFA shows and competitions.

Cranston was an active member of the drama club, wind turbine club, wrestling team, volleyball team, National English Honor Society, his local chapters of Best Buddies, the horticulture program and several community organizations, including his parish. He works at a restaurant and for his family's construction and renovation business in his free time.

ESE extends congratulations to all recipients and wishes career success to each applicant. ESE's mission statement emphasizes the importance of education, so it is vital that it continues to support the academic accomplishments and vocational endeavors of youths in New England.

The Big E is America's only multi-state fair celebrating the rich history, culture and traditions of the six New England states. As the principal event of Eastern States Exposition, The Big E has presented the finest livestock; agriculture; innovative commercial, industrial, and artistic developments; and the highest caliber of varied entertainment to the people of the northeastern United States for over a century. The 17-day event has grown to become the largest fair in the Northeast.