

NICHOLS HUMANITARIAN FUND



27 Recipients

16 Countries

1 Award

2019 STUDENT RECIPIENTS

vanderbilt.edu/nicholsfund

About the Nichols Humanitarian Fund

Twenty-seven students have been selected to receive the Nichols Humanitarian Fund Award to pursue humanitarian projects during the summer of 2019. The award enables students to work with communities on humanitarian efforts including human rights, environmental conservation, immigrant and refugee rights, animal rights, adoption policy and practice, and mental health. These bright students will be studying in seventeen different countries including Ecuador, Indonesia, Morocco, Maldives, Switzerland, Netherlands, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Peru, Uganda, South Korea, Kenya, Vietnam, India, and Romania. The average GPA of the award recipients is 3.56.

Nichols
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Recipients

Gerrica Alexander

Algonquin, IL | Neuroscience & Cognitive Studies | '20

Gerrica is a junior double-majoring in Neuroscience and Cognitive Studies with a minor in Chemistry. This summer, Gerrica will travel with OACS Global Service Program to Morocco. She is very grateful for this extraordinary opportunity to experience Moroccan culture. In the country, she will partner with local non-governmental organizations focused on pertinent social issues regarding human rights and education. She is most excited to learn about the work of local activists in Rabat and what she can do to contribute to these causes.



Maria Loaiza Bonilla

Lakeland, FL | English | '21

Maria Loaiza is a sophomore majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing, in addition to pursuing pre-medical studies. This summer, she will be traveling to Quito, Ecuador through the Office of Active Citizenship and Service's Global Service program. She is very excited to work alongside local organizations and community leaders to increase reproductive health education in Quito. She hopes to gain a greater understanding of public health inequalities faced by many South American communities and to learn how to address these issues in effective, sustainable ways.



Jenna Collazzo

Media, PA | Neuroscience | '21

Jenna Collazzo is a sophomore on the pre-med track in the College of Arts and Science, majoring in Neuroscience and minoring in both Philosophy and Spanish. This summer, she will spend time in Paros, Greece volunteering at the island's only animal shelter. Jenna's job will include offering outreach to possible family adopters, and acting as an educational resource for donors and volunteers. By volunteering with this organization, she can help limit the number of starving animals, reduce the number of sick animals, alleviate the homeless population, and provide the basic care that the animals deserve.



Recipients

Ivana Dulanto

Cary, IL | Child Development | '21

Ivana will be traveling with the Global OACS Service Trip to Quito, Ecuador for six weeks. There, she will have the opportunity to support the indigenous population through volunteering at a local programs including a mobile kindergarten and a health education program. She is passionate about child advocacy, human rights, and Latin American culture. Ivana intends to pursue a career working in international NGOs after college and is so thankful for this amazing service and learning opportunity.



Ayden Eilmus

Sheboygan, WI | Anthropology & Philosophy | '21

Ayden is a sophomore majoring in Anthropology and Philosophy. This summer she will be spending six weeks in Quito, Ecuador with Vanderbilt's Office of Active Citizenship & Service to work with the Simon Bolivar Spanish School and Foundation. Ayden is excited to partner with local organizations and work alongside educators and public health specialists in order to better understand social and environmental injustice and their intersections in the region while fully immersing herself in Ecuadorian culture.



Joseph Ghianni

Nashville, TN | Law, History & Society | '19

Joseph is a senior majoring in Law, History, and Society. Born and adopted from Romania, he is interested in improving the lives of international adoptees and former orphans. Using the latest research on child development and guidelines from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Joseph will be meeting with leaders at the U.S. Embassy in Romania to discuss how to improve policy related to orphaned children and international adoption. Over the summer, he will also be going to a village south of Romania's capital in Bucharest to volunteer with an organization that helps orphaned children grow into educated adults.



Recipients



Leoncia Gillespie

Durham, NC | French | '20

Leoncia is a junior majoring in French and minoring in Women's and Gender Studies. Leoncia is a pre-nursing student hoping to work in the Women's Health field. Her interests include spoken word, praise dance, story telling, and religion. This summer, she will spend six weeks in Rabat, Morocco doing capacity building work with a non-governmental organization (NGO) through the Office of Active Citizenship & Service's Global Service Program. The NGO she will be partnering with works with matters like human rights, women's rights, and education. Leoncia is looking forward to engaging with her cohort, her host family, and the Rabat community.



Abhay Gupta

Moline, IL | Economics & Mathematics | '22

Abhay is a first-year from Moline, IL studying Economics and Mathematics with minors in Business and Computer Science. He will be spending three weeks in Lisbon, Portugal as a youth support volunteer. Abhay hopes to teach English to impoverished students by volunteering at both local centers and summer camps aimed at supporting disadvantaged groups in the community. He hopes to help in providing these students with the skills necessary to overcome the difficulties of their respective situations and thrive in an increasingly competitive world.



Sonia Jeon

Iowa City, IA | Neuroscience & Violin | '20

Sonia is a junior in the College of Arts and Science, majoring in Neuroscience and Violin Performance. Having a passionate interest in global health inequities, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, she is grateful to have the special opportunity to work with an NGO in Uganda for eight weeks this summer. During her stay, she will be living and working with rural community members who are passionate about raising awareness for healthy hygiene practices and disease prevention. She hopes to utilize music to increase community engagement in the various health workshops and ultimately leave a sustained impact on the village.

Recipients

Bohan Kim

Carrollton, TX | Neuroscience | '20

This summer, Bohan will be heading to Delhi, India to work with children who have learning disabilities. He will join a team of English teachers to equip the next generation to become successful in the workplace. Bohan's passion for a mentorship-based education greatly aligns with this opportunity to explore and help address inequalities and injustices around the world on an individual level. He hopes to use this experience to inform his future career as a physician, practicing in countries where healthcare is still developing and changing.



Eva Kim

Tenafly, NJ | Child Development & Psychology | '20

Eva Kim is a junior studying Child Development and Linguistics. This summer, she will be in Seoul, South Korea, working with transnational Korean adoptees through an organization called Global Oversees Adoptees' Link (GOA'L), which emphasizes connecting adoptees worldwide. She hopes to conduct interviews with the staff and adoptees to publish a short documentary on their experience in Korea as transnational adoptees. Her ultimate goal is to help raise awareness on what the organization does and the relevant social problems that exist in Korea.



Ashwin Kumar

Dallas, TX | Computer Science, Neuroscience, & Math | '22

Ashwin is a freshman studying Computer Science, Neuroscience, and Applied Math. This summer he will be working on behalf of Project RISHI, Vanderbilt to help improve the educational system of Pamulaparathi, a village near Hyderabad, India. With the generous award from the Nichols, he will build on previous works by providing desks, biomass stoves, and athletic/play equipment to local schools. He is very excited to learn directly from the community and promote sustainable growth and development.



Recipients



Marguerite Manning

Milwaukee, WI | HOD & Public Policy | '21

Marguerite is a sophomore from Milwaukee, WI double majoring in Human and Organizational Development and Public Policy Studies with a minor in Spanish. She is passionate about social advocacy and is excited to be spending the summer in Rabat, Morocco working at NGOs focused on human rights, women's rights, and immigration. Marguerite hopes that this service experience will help her gain a deeper understanding of the impact of various social issues in different cultural contexts, and she is extremely grateful to the Nichols Fund for supporting her on this trip.



Anna Maynard

Fairview, PA | Human & Organizational Development | '20

Anna is a junior majoring in Human and Organizational Development. This summer she will be traveling to Cusco, Peru to participate in an initiative with the goal of helping children without homes in Cusco. Anna will address the needs of children experiencing homelessness including teaching English, computer skills, and social skills, as well as improving their mental and physical development. She also plans to complete a four day trek to Machhu Picchu on the Incan Trail to immerse herself in the language and culture of Cusco.



Ameenah McKnight

McKinney, TX | Psychology & MHS | '21

Ameenah McKnight is a sophomore majoring in Psychology and Medicine, Health, and Society. She is passionate about investigating mental health in a global context and exploring the implications of identity on one's mental health experience. This summer, Ameenah will be working in Mombasa, Kenya at a Gender Based Violence Recovery Centre. She will be providing care to survivors of sexual violence under the care of other counselors and mental health professionals. She is excited to expand her knowledge on mental health care to a new population and immerse herself in the culture of a new city.

Recipients

Mahek Mehta

Ellicott City, MD | Economics & Computer Science | '20

Mahek is a junior studying Economics and Computer Science and minoring in Medicine, Health, and Society. She will be traveling to Quito, Ecuador to teach English in underprivileged elementary and middle schools. She is eager to witness the impact of Spanish colonization and institutions that have bred inequality for centuries firsthand. A strong proponent of the doors the English language can open for intellectually curious youth, Mahek is hopeful that she can make a lasting impact on her students thanks to the Nichols Humanitarian Fund.



Evelyn Mulyono

Pontianak, Indonesia | Computer Science | '22

Evelyn is a freshman majoring in computer science. She currently serves as the outreach chair of APO and is a freshman representative for Vandy Fems. Indonesian born and raised, Evelyn will be headed home this summer to teach refugees how to code and knit. In Indonesia, it is illegal for refugees to work and it's extremely difficult to receive adequate education since Indonesia serves as a transit point. This service opportunity melds together her passion for community service, through helping these refugees obtain economic independence, and her passion for computer science.



Linh Nguyen

Hanoi, Vietnam | HOD & Communication | '22

Linh is a proud first-generation college student from the capital of Vietnam. During her time at Vanderbilt, she will pursue a double degree in the fields of Communication and Human and Organizational Development. Thanks to the support from the Nichols Humanitarian Fund, Linh will be traveling back to Vietnam in the summer to utilize her scholarship to aid her student-led organization, Sustainable Agriculture and Social Enterprise. This organization's mission is to improve health care and educational access in Ban Lien, an impoverished region in Vietnam.



Recipients

Salsabila Nurnidajat

Chattanooga, TN | Political Science & Cinema & Media Arts | '21

Salsabila Nurhidajat is a sophomore from Chattanooga, TN. She is studying Political Science and Cinema and Media Arts. This summer, Salsabila will work with multiple local organizations in Rabat, Morocco through the Office of Active Citizenship and Service's global service trip. Through this experience, she hopes to broaden her knowledge on social justice and human rights.



Emem Okpokowuruk

Charlotte, NC | Medicine, Health, & Society | '21

Emem is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Science who plans to major in Medicine, Health, and Society and minor in Spanish. She serves as a Spanish Hall Representative in McTyeire Residence Hall and is a member of African Student Union. She will be traveling to Quito, Ecuador as a part of OACS Global Service Program to work alongside the Simon Bolivar Spanish Immersion School & Foundation and other local agencies to create sustainable development in the areas of public health and education. Emem hopes to work with children in her future career to make an impact on the next generation.



Riya Patel

Lawrenceberg, TN | Neuroscience | '21

Riya Patel is a sophomore with a sincere passion for developing solutions to health issues in various parts of the world. This summer, Riya will travel to Pamulaparathi, India, where she will implement several service projects that will allow for the sustainable development of this village. In the past, Project RISHI has worked to solve issues surrounding health, water, and education. This summer, we hope to expand on these projects further while also creating a plan to develop a solution for issues surrounding electricity.



Recipients

Anna Sonju

Denver, CO | Biology | '20

Anna is a junior majoring in Molecular and Cellular Biology and minoring in Spanish. This summer, she will be traveling to the Maldives with the Maldives Whale Shark Research Program (MWSRP), which dedicates its efforts to the conservation of the endangered whale shark species in the surrounding waters and greater Indian Ocean. Anna will be doing hands-on research and data collection, such as snorkeling to measure sharks and take I.D. shots. She is very excited about the opportunity to work with marine scientists and learn more about marine conservation through this program and hopes to apply what she learns from this experience to her personal and professional life afterwards.



Bethanie Stauffer

Salisbury, NC | Chemistry & MHS | '22

This summer, Bethanie will be travelling to Morocco for 6 weeks with Vanderbilt's Office of Active Citizenship and Service. While in country, Bethany, along with the rest of her cohort, will live with Moroccan families in Rabat and work with local organizations chosen by OACS community partners. During the trip, she will learn about the culture, language, and history of Morocco through seminars and guest speakers. Upon return, she will be able to apply the lessons she learned from working in Rabat to her time at Vanderbilt.



Zhannan Yin

Wuxi, China | Philosophy | '21

Zhannan is a sophomore majoring in Philosophy. With an academic focus on social and political philosophy, she is passionate about investigating the human rights movements in both Western and non-Western contexts, especially post-colonial contexts. This summer, she will be working in Rabat, Morocco at the Moroccan Association of Human Rights. She will apply her academic skills towards societal realities so as to raise awareness about the local human rights violations. Through this experience, she hopes to dive deeper into the construction and politicization of "human right" as a Western notion.



Recipients

Dora Duru

Los Angeles, CA | Vanderbilt University Law School '20

This summer, Dora will be working with Civitas Maxima in Geneva, Switzerland. Civitas Maxima facilitates the documentation of international crimes and provides legal representation to forgotten victims of such crimes. Dora will assist the organization in their efforts to document and collect evidence of international crimes. She came to law school to engage in work that helped others and looks forward to using and building her legal skills to help give a voice to victims.



Alexander Preve

Charlottesville, VA | Vanderbilt University Law School '20

This summer, Alex will be working with the Commission for International Justice and Accountability. CIJA is a non-profit/non-governmental organization dedicated to conducting criminal investigations and analyzing evidence of atrocity crimes. Alex will work with experienced attorneys to write briefs documenting the alleged criminality of individuals and entities in various conflict and post-conflict zones worldwide. Alex hopes to pursue a career in international criminal law and looks forward to the experience he will gain in this field over the summer.



Michelle Thiry

Philadelphia, PA | Vanderbilt University Law School '21

This summer, Michelle will be working with the Irish Centre for Human Rights in Galway, Ireland. The Centre is an institution dedicated to the study and promotion of human rights and humanitarian law. Michelle will assist with research regarding gender and migration. Her long-term career goal is to improve human rights through enacting policy change and this internship will provide her with valuable experience in researching and writing.



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