

VFP Chapter 93 Peace Scholarship Awardees Thank-You Notes

2021 – September – Rachelle Hale – \$500 Scholarship

Rachelle is a student at Arcadia University with an International Studies Major with a minor in Pre-International Peace and Conflict Resolution

Many people live their lives day by day without taking a moment to think about all they have to be grateful for. They forget to take a deep breath, open their eyes, and appreciate all the small things that bring them joy, especially in a world filled with a multitude of struggles and pain. I will admit that I can occasionally be one of those people.

It is easy to get caught up in a daily routine and lose sight of all I have to be grateful for. A lot of privileged people in first world countries do not realize how fortunate they are, as each day they express their trivial complaints. For those who live in third world countries, their outlook on the situation would differ greatly. As someone who has access to freedom, healthcare, and adequate food/water supply, I believe it is important to be more aware of what is going on outside of the United States with people who are suffering and lacking basic human rights.

Growing up I was always a bit uncertain what it was I wanted to be once I grew up and graduated from high school, but I always knew that it had to do with helping others and making the world a better place in any way possible. As a child, I have always had the dream of making a difference in the world and spreading love and peace. Looking back at my younger years, my fondest memory of making a difference was in Elementary school. I remember looking forward to Halloween because even though it meant dressing up to go trick or treating, I was able to carry my cardboard UNICEF collection box with me to trick or treat for UNICEF. It wasn't until my graduation from high school, two part time jobs, looking into the peace corps, and a couple flights across the world that I had finally made my decision to attend higher education with a path towards International Studies and International Peace and Conflict Resolution.

Studying abroad in Ireland is a step in my journey towards peace and conflict resolution. While abroad in Galway, Ireland I will be attending the National University of Galway taking classes such as Human Rights Advocacy, Children's Rights, Social Issues and Policy Responses, International Relations, Development and Change. In taking these classes I hope to create a better understanding for my future career in spreading peace and resolving conflict. I think that conflict majorly impacts refugees and that is where I see myself working in the future creating a voice for them to be understood rather than feared.

Especially with the current situation in Afghanistan, I think creating peace and resolving these issues of conflict and oppression are important in making refugees feel safe and secure, especially when fleeing to lands unknown to them. I hope to be a part of a new generation focused more on the wellbeing of everyone, reaching to make an impact not solely through violence or war, but through peaceful negotiation.

2017 – September - Teresa Azzam - \$1000 scholarship

From Rochester Hills, Michigan, Teresa will be attending law school at Case Western University, chosen as that institution has an international focus on peace and justice work. She hopes to work eventually for the Department of State or with a related Non-governmental organization, on refugees, working to create safe environments that people can return to. Related to refugee issues, while at Michigan State University, she was a founding member of two related organizations: Empowered Arab Sisterhood and Students for International Refugee Awareness.

2016 – August - Sophia Bouwsma - \$1000 scholarship

From Grand Rapids, Michigan. With a degree in music, Sophia will attend the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont where she has been admitted to the Graduate Certificate in Conflict Transformation and Peace Building Program. Ms. Bouwsma will travel to Sri Lanka during 2017 in fulfillment for her certificate.

2010 - Amanda Munroe – \$500 Scholarship

Dear Friends at Veterans for Peace

With my first year of graduate school in Georgetown's Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution program officially behind me, I wanted to write you to thank you once again for your support of my studies and endeavors for peace.

Over this spring semester, I've developed my personal and professional skills in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, not only through classes but also through extra-curricular activities.

The scholarship from Veterans for Peace allowed me to purchase books and supplies for my studies¹

, made possible a particularly interesting research project in one of my courses, and helped me finance weekly transportation to a south-side DC Public school where I lead an exciting conflict resolution skills building program called Dance4Peace.

In addition to the activities the scholarship helped me pursue, I was a research assistant this year for Georgetown University's Office of the President Initiatives Team. Our team identifies projects for the university that capitalize on its grounding in social justice. We strategically plan and "incubate" social engagement programs around the world. Because of my position on this team, I received the unique opportunity to chair a student committee assisting in the organization of an international peacebuilding conference to be held at Georgetown in September 2011. (I am also happy announce that I have submitted two proposals – one for an essay and one for a poster—that have been accepted for presentation at the conference).

In general, this semester has helped me gain confidence in the use of my studies in the field of conflict resolution as I look toward crafting a career. In my Conflict Resolution Skills class this past semester, for example, I worked on a three-person team that analyzed a real-life conflict and developed a framework for its management; interviewed three Peace Education practitioners; and created my own Career Vision Portfolio in which I outlined objectives and a strategic plan for a future career in training and consultation in Peace Education.

Finally, and perhaps most excitingly, I received a prestigious summer fellowship for field research in Peace Education. As one of three recipients from the international sport and peacebuilding organization Generations For Peace, I will be spending the summer interviewing peace education academics and sport for peace practitioners in Germany and France. Using my fluency in the languages and familiarity with the cultures, I am working to record promising practices in program design and implementation of sport projects pursuing peace. The particular activities I am investigating focus on the successful integration of immigrant and refugee populations in the European context. Our research team plans to evaluate promising practices in all aspects of theory, design, training and evaluation. Eventually, our work this summer will become a published resource that practitioners all around the world can draw on for theory and practice.

If you are more interested in my/our research, please check out our blog, updated twice weekly this summer: sportandpeace.wordpress.com. Also, if you are interested in any of the other projects I mentioned above, like Dance4Peace (www.dance4peace.org), Georgetown's international peacebuilding conference (www.georgetown.edu/CRInitiative) or Generations For Peace (www.generationsforpeace.com), please do not hesitate to contact me.

Again, thank you for your encouragement of my endeavors, I sincerely appreciate the support.
In Peace, Amanda Munroe