

WJA Foundation Announces 2021 Scholarship Winners

The Women's Jewelry Association Foundation (WJAF) is pleased to announce its scholarship recipients, all of whom are students in accredited programs focused on jewelry making and design, to receive a total of \$35,000 in scholarship funds for the 2021-2022 program year.

There are a total of five scholarship categories in which our 2021 winners have been gifted ranging from \$1,000- \$5,000; The Cindy Edelstein Jewelry Design Scholarship, the Gabriel Love Foundation Scholarship, Designer Category (based on designs by the student, includes CAD and drawings), Designer/Creator Category (based on images of finished pieces that are designed and created by the student), and Non-Designer Category (essay-based for those studying to be a gemologist, appraiser, watch-maker, bench jeweler, or retailer).

The Cindy Edelstein Scholarship, created to honor the legacy of long-time WJA Board member Cindy Edelstein, is awarded to Beth Zwiacher a student at the Gemological Institute of America. This scholarship is given in memory of Cindy, who was the jewelry industry's passionate advocate for jewelry designers entering the field. For that reason, the \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to emerging fine jewelry designers or artisans and memorializes Edelstein's tireless pursuit of educating, mentoring, and coaching these entrepreneurs. The recipient can pursue jewelry design, metalsmithing, or business courses, providing they are focused on improving their artistry and/or their designer jewelry business.

The Gabriel Love Foundation Scholarship has been awarded to Joanna Parrish, student at Bennet Street School. The \$5,000 scholarship was established and funded by the Gabriel Love Foundation of Gabriel & Co., the New York-based fine jewelry brand. It intends its WJA scholarship to provide funding for students who want to achieve professional growth within the jewelry industry, and seeks applicants who plan to use their careers in jewelry to improve communities and participate in charitable efforts.

The additional WJA scholarship winners of 2021 include:

Christiane Gozashti, Gemological Institute of America

Xinchen Li, UW Wisconsin

Barbara Salinas, FIT

Jennifer Foote, Academy of Art Institute

Allison Ice, University of Kansas

Sky Gilbert, Winthrop University

Naomi Chicoine, San Diego State
Amber Kimlick, University of North Carolina
Spriha Baid, Gemological Institute of America
Sarah Fam, Gemological Institute of America

Funds for WJA scholarships are raised through the association's annual Awards for Excellence Gala in which a number of individual member and corporate donations are given to establish generous sponsorship funds. This year, Awards for Excellence will center around WJA's 2021 organizational theme, *Building Resilience for Responsible Business*, with the goal of raising funds to continue its exceptional programming and charitable giving, including WJA's diversity, equity and inclusion events, and WJA Foundation's newest Responsible Sourcing & Sustainability Education Fund supporting the development of more responsible business leaders in our industry. The event will be held on Wednesday, October 20th, 2021 at The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers in New York City. To learn more about this event, please visit:

<https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/awardsforexcellence>

Future WJA membership grant opportunities open September 1st, 2021, and close October 31st, 2021.

Since its inception, the WJA Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, has awarded over \$500,000 to provide education, business support, and mentorship to jewelry and watch professionals.

Donations to the WJA Foundation can be made here:

<https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/foundation>

About the Women's Jewelry Association WJA's mission is to help women in the jewelry and watch industries advance and develop professionally through networking, education, and leadership development. For more information, visit www.womensjewelryassociation.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Emily Copeland

The Smithee Group

Emily@thesmitheegroup.com