



TOWSON UNIVERSITY
FOUNDATION, INC.

8000 York Road · Towson, MD 21252-0001 · t. 410 704-3278 · f. 410 704-4559 · www.tufoundation.org

February 22, 2017

Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum
c/o David Powell
Office of the Provost
Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

Dear Mr. Powell,

Towson University is so grateful for our Foundation scholarships, and our students understand and appreciate how their experiences at Towson University are enhanced by donor support. Because of funds like the *Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship*, we can offer students the support they need to succeed. I am pleased to enclose a profile and thank you message from the 2016-2017 academic year recipients:

- Sabina Aguon received \$5,000 in aid.
- Soheil Aliakbar received \$5,000 in aid.
- Devon Bordonaro received \$5,000 in aid.
- Paul Chavez Almonacid received \$5,000 in aid.
- Matthew Hendrickson received \$5,000 in aid.
- Hammad Imran received \$10,000 in aid.
- Anthony Panei received \$5,000 in aid.
- Scott Turner received \$5,000 in aid.
- Kathryn White received \$5,000 in aid.

Thank you again for this generous scholarship opportunity. We hope you are able to join us on Friday, April 7, 2017 for the Foundation Scholars Luncheon as we celebrate our scholarship donors and their recipients. Should you have any questions regarding this scholarship or the recipients, please contact me at 410.704.3425 or aarmstrong@towson.edu.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Armstrong".

Alison Armstrong '09/'13
Manager of Donor Relations

Enclosures

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Sabina Aguon
Major(s): COSC and Math

Class of 2018

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I originally came to Towson University as a Biology major. However, during my freshman year, I took a basic level Computer Science course with Dr. Taylor. As well as many other girls, she inspired me to try out something new, which led to my decision of switching my major to Computer Science. Being a male-dominant career, Dr. Taylor encouraged many women to take initiative by not letting ourselves be intimidated of societal norms. Overall, I will never regret my decision and will always look forward to those challenges I have yet to conquer.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite professor at Towson University is Dr. Dierbach. He is very knowledgeable and introduces topics that are taught beyond a course. Also, one of Dr. Dierbach's superior qualities is patience; he is always willing to assist and provides resources that help build a better understanding of the material.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson University so far?

I obtained an executive position in the Software Engineering Club. It helped me enhance my leadership, communication, and time-management skills. These skills built self-confidence, which is an essential quality to have in any working environment.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

I am Vice President of Public Relations for the newly established Software Engineering Club. We provide various projects ranging from game design, version-control, and web and app development.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

I aspire to serve the military by becoming a commanding officer in the field of cyber and electronic warfare. My academic experiences as a student and a mentor have augmented my interpersonal and leadership skills. I believe serving our country is the most honorable accomplishment I will ever achieve.

A thank you note from your student:

I am extremely honored to have been selected as a recipient of the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship. Thank you so much for your generosity. With this scholarship, I have been able to mitigate any financial barriers that heeded my academic success. Not only did it allow me to acquire more educational resources, but it also allowed me to contribute to the newly established Software Engineering Club. In addition to receiving financial assistance, this scholarship made me realize and appreciate all the accomplishments I have made throughout my academic journey. After recognizing my skills and achievements, I was able to develop a clearer understanding of what I hope to achieve in the near future, which is establishing a military career in Information Technology.

Sincerely,
Sabina Aguon

Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017

Soheil Aliakbar

Majors: Computer Information Systems, Information Systems

Class of 2017



Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose to attend Towson University for multiple reasons. It was a very cost friendly solution since it was an in-state institution. It was also only an hour away from my house, which gives me independence, but it's also close enough in case I need to travel home. Another reason includes I loved how TU has a small school feeling because of the small class room sizes even though it has over 20,000 students.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I admire my father and get my inspiration from him. At the age of 40, he traveled alone to the United States from Iran in order to give me and my brother a better opportunity. He now works seven days a week to support me to pursue my goals of obtaining a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite class is CIS 379 Systems Analysis and Design. This class really opened my eyes to the systems development life cycle and it helped me understand what career path I would like to take in the future.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

CoSMIC Scholar, SCS Desktop Associate at Towson University, Tech club member

What are your career plans/aspirations?

My mission is to understand, use, and teach the beneficial uses of technology in order to improve the lives of many people. Technology is quickly advancing forward, and I aim to follow it in the same direction. My goal of attending Towson University is to learn about making people's lives easier through more efficient practices by the use of technology and ultimately achieving a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems. I have chosen to pursue this career not only to advance my knowledge of technology, but also to make the world a better place, improving lives through technology.

A thank you note from your student:

I am writing to thank you for your generous Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship. I was very thrilled and appreciative to learn that I was selected as the recipient of your scholarship. I am a Computer Information Systems major with a concentration in Systems and minor in Mathematics. I plan to pursue a career in the Information Technology field upon graduating from Towson University. I am currently a senior and plan to graduate in the spring of 2017. I just accepted a software engineering position at SafeNet Assured Technologies and I am currently in the process of applying to various companies in order to obtain a full-time job post-graduation.

By providing the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on the most important aspect of school, learning as well as continuing my focus on my career. Your generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me.

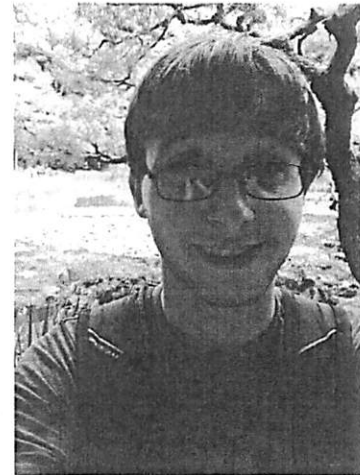
Sincerely,

Soheil Aliakbar

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Devon Bordonaro
Major: Computer Science

Class of 2018



Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I loved the fact that Towson University is not a huge school with huge class sizes. I think having classes where teachers know who you are is really important because you get more one-on-one time, which can really make or break your academic experience.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

My brother, Stefan, inspires me to do the best I can every single day. Stefan just graduated from Towson University and he is one of the most intelligent and hardworking people I know. He has always inspired me to try my best and to always put in 110% effort.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite course so far was Introduction to Computer Science II with Professor Iliana Zimand. She made the class in such a way where you were not just learning the material and doing mindless labs. She made everything relate in some way to working in the industry. She taught us uses for concepts that went beyond the scope of the classroom that enabled us to experiment and build our own things outside of the classroom. She was always pushing us to make sure we were not being sloppy with our coding and ingraining good coding habits in us to help us with future classes and with jobs in the future. I wish there were more classes I could take with her. She was not what people would consider an "easy" professor, and I really appreciated that. I am not looking for an easy course. I am looking to be challenged and to learn the material. She did an excellent job at both of those things.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson University so far?

My greatest achievement was being a recipient of the CoSMiC Scholarship up until last semester when the university stopped receiving it from the NSF. It was a great honor to be a part of the program, and I learned so much as a result. I am now extremely honored to be a part of the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum. I know it will be a tremendous opportunity, and I look forward to meeting everyone involved.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

I am currently an employee at Towson University's Student Computing Services. Outside of my classes, my primary job is to help students with their technical issues. I also am in charge of keeping the campus WEPA printers supplied and running.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

My career goal is to work a security position at the National Security Agency. After choosing Computer Science as my major, I later realized that I wanted to concentrate in security. I have always loved the idea of helping to make things as secure and resistant to attack as possible. There is an increasing need for that now since almost everything we do is over the internet. The internet is not going away, and its uses are seemingly infinite. However, we need to make sure that the sensitive data we put through the internet is secure and not going into the wrong hands. So, while the career sounds extremely rewarding

and intriguing to me, I also know it is a career that will not be going away any time soon. It is a field that will be needed more and more as time goes on and as we make more and more technological advancements.

A thank you note from your student:

Thank you so much for the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship. It absolutely means the world to me as it means I will be able to continue my career at Towson University without taking on a ton of student debt. With the loss of funding for one of the scholarship programs at Towson University, financial aid has been a little tough. However, the support I receive inspires me so much, and it means everything to me. I always try my hardest at what I do because I want to get the most of my education. There are students out there with the mentality to just get through school regardless of how well they do, but that is not me. I am a believer that you get out what you put in, and that applies to school too. You have to work hard and study to get the most out of it. The teachers can guide you on this path, but they cannot do it all for you.

This scholarship is giving me the resources necessary to stay in school and keep putting my best foot forward. I hope to finish my Bachelor's degree debt free so that I can get into a Master's program right out of college and keep bettering myself through education. I then hope to work with the National Security Agency to help develop even more ways to keep information as secure as possible. This scholarship is going to be a tremendous help in pursuing my dreams. I cannot thank you enough for giving me this opportunity. I look forward to meeting everyone involved with the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum and thank you again for supporting me. It really means so much to me and my future.

Sincerely,

Devon Bordonaro

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Paul Chavez Almonacid

Major: Electronic Business, Business Administration

Class of 2017

Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose to attend Towson University because they have a good business school and a big campus. I always wanted to join clubs and be in a big campus where I could meet new people.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I admire my parents because they are my inspiration. Everyday since I came to Towson University I always think of them. My parents are always influencing me to do my best in the things I do.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson so far?

My greatest achievement so far is being on the dean's list in the last three semesters. I had been on the dean's list since I transferred to Towson University, and I did not expect to do so well.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson?

I was in the Laso club, and I volunteered in serving food on the past three Noche Latina events. I also volunteered in a local church and served food to elders. This was an event with Laso. I also volunteered in Towson University First Friday's. I helped clean a garden at a local children's center, and organized and installed computers at the University library.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

My career plans are to get my bachelor's degree on my two majors and get a master's degree later. I chose marketing and e-business because I want to be on the business and technology field. When I took my first marketing course I was engaged because marketing can have different fields, like marketing research or digital marketing. I chose e-business because internet and technology are the future.

A thank you note from your student:

I want to thank the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum for this scholarship. What this scholarship has meant to me is that it is a great opportunity to study more. This scholarship will help me pay my tuition for the fall semester. My family and I are thankful because it helps us afford tuition. My future plans are to take my courses, pass them, and to do my best. I always learn new things in all my classes and I always gain new experiences. Having a good education helps me to improve one's life. Receiving this scholarship helps me know that there are people who can make a difference to someone and their education.

From me and my family, thank you Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum.

Sincerely,
Paul Chavez Almonacid

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Matthew Hendrickson
Major: Computer Science

Class of 2017

Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose Towson University because the program looked interesting and the class sizes are relatively small, which affords student's more opportunities to form relationships with the professors.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I admire those who create things and use technology to improve people's lives. To that end, maybe Bill Gates is the most inspiring person to me.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

Principles of Computer Organization (COSC 290) with Dr. Lu has been my favorite class so far. Learning about computers was fascinating and reaffirmed my decision to choose Computer Science.

Have any of your TU experiences significantly influenced your life and/or goals?

The best professors I have had have made me rethink my path. I was a Computer Information Systems major and changed to Computer Science because I want to do software engineering.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson University so far?

My greatest achievement so far is not exactly related to my major. Completing a 35 page research paper on the ethical implications of patent trolling for ENGL337 was one of the most satisfying things I have ever done. I spent many hours researching and writing, and I think I ended up making some unique points on the subject.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

Outside of class, I have an internship with UPS in Software Quality Assurance. I have also been exploring automation with python. I plan on taking what I learn back to my internship to help implement process improvements that allow our team to accomplish more.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

I want to go into software engineering because I want to build things. After graduation, I plan on taking a software development job at UPS. I would eventually like to start my own company.

A thank you note from your student:

I very much appreciate this scholarship. This will allow me to complete my degree without worrying about my financial situation. This alleviates a significant source of stress, and I am very thankful for the stability this scholarship will give me. During my senior year, I plan on continuing to accomplish a lot in class, and I would like to complete a major project before I graduate.

Thanks again,
Matthew E. Hendrickson

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Hammad Imran

Majors: Information Technology, Business Administration

Class of 2017

Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose to attend Towson because I really liked the campus and they offered my major. The IT/Computer Science department is very nice and that attracted me to come to Towson. The people at Towson are also very nice.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I find my parents to be a source of inspiration. They came from nothing and worked hard to make something of themselves. They also cared for us through rough times, and I am forever grateful for them. My motivation to succeed is to make my parents happy.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite class is Project Management. It is my favorite because I feel like that is what I am going to be doing for my future career. I am very organized and can lead, so I believe that will be my future.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

I am a part of Towson Tech Club and work as a Student Network Technician and a Student Security Analyst on campus.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

I want to become a project manager or go into cyber security. I chose this path because it is what interests me most.

A thank you note from your student:

Thank you so much for the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship. It will help me to pay for school and books. This money will allow me to keep pursuing my education, and I am grateful for any financial help I can get.

Sincerely,

Hammad Imran

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Anthony Panei

Major(s): Computer Science, Mathematics

Class of 2019



Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

Several people recommended TU to me. I planned to pursue a career in Computer Science and was interested in going to a college with a marching band. I was also attracted to the campus and its security.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

My father has been an inspiration to me and is always there for me if I need advice or have questions.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite class so far would be Discrete Mathematics (MATH 263). The professor I had, Dr. Goode, was amazing and taught the class so well. Writing proofs was fun and interesting to me, like solving puzzles.

Have any of your TU experiences significantly influenced your life and/or goals?

Being a member of the TU Marching Band has been an amazing experience for me, and I believe it has made me a better person. I have made many new friends and learned about the importance of teamwork and communication.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

Marching Band
Symphonic Band
Pep Band

What are your career plans/aspirations?

My career goal is to be a software engineer for the Department of Defense. I'd like to use my technical skills to assist the country's military forces.

A thank you note from your student:

I want to sincerely thank you for your charitable donation. It means a lot that someone was willing to give their hard-earned money to scholarship-seeking college students. This is a huge help for me and my family! I am currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, specializing in Software Engineering. With this degree I plan to get a job with the Department of Defense as a software engineer. I personally believe that a TU education will allow me to pursue such a career path because of the academic excellence it has demonstrated. Furthermore, I plan to do my best in school and to maintain a high GPA by absorbing as much information as I can from the courses I take. This scholarship is allowing me to do my best in my studies with much more ease financially. I truly appreciate your gift.

Respectfully,
Anthony Panei

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Scott Turner
Major: Computer Science

Class of 2017

Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose Towson University because it had all the resources and reputation of a large school while still maintaining the comfort and friendliness of a small school.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite professor is Dr. Mangle because he is able to take whatever the course matter is and relate it to how you could use the idea to become an entrepreneur. He continues to push me past my comfort zone in entrepreneurship, even though over a year has elapsed since I was enrolled in his class.

Have any of your TU experiences significantly influenced your life and/or goals?

When I arrived at Towson University I had no idea what I wanted to major in or what I wanted to accomplish. After getting connected to clubs and professors my freshman year, I was able to figure out that I knew I wanted to go into computer science, specifically working with analytics.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson University so far?

My best moment was taking a walk around campus by myself on a Friday afternoon and seeing how both the campus and myself have grown so much over the past few years in some ways, and remained the same in other ways.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

I have been involved in housing and residence life as well as Cru.

What are your career plans/aspirations?

I plan to explore the field of Software Development with an interest in analytics and optimization. I chose this area because it gives me the same excitement and satisfaction as finishing a really good book or finishing a hard math problem.

A thank you note from your student:

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your extremely generous scholarship. With this boost, I will be able to spend my initial years in the workforce focusing on what I love, rather than on paying down debt. I always speak wonderfully of the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum to the younger students I meet who are interested in IT/CS, and it means even more to be able to tell them that not only does this scholarship help with finances, but that the experience of attending a meeting with dozens of CIOs is one that can inspire and push you to hone on your goals. Thank you, once again, for helping me to make my education more affordable.

Sincerely,
Scott Turner

**Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum Scholarship
2016-2017**

Kathryn White
Major: Information Technology

Class of 2017

Why did you choose to attend Towson University?

I chose Towson University for its Information Technology program. A lot of Maryland schools only have Computer Science or Information Systems, but I specifically wanted to study IT. I find that the IT major provides more training in networking and internet concepts and protocols. These are important for any job in the IT field.

Whom do you admire and find a source of inspiration?

I find inspiration in my female coworkers at Carroll County Public Schools. There is a high percentage of females in our IT department at CCPS, this is not the norm, and I find it inspiring. I often look to them for advice with my future career in IT.

What is your favorite class and/or professor?

My favorite professor is Professor Tavakolan. I had her for both Intro to Computer Science and Fundamentals of Networks, and she was very helpful in both. Professor Tavakolan is a caring professor and provides you with the necessary tools to succeed.

Have any of your TU experiences significantly influenced your life and/or goals?

My work experience at Student Computing Services in Cook Library helped me get my current job with Carroll County Public Schools. At SCS I was able to gain both helpdesk and printer maintenance experience. I now use these skills in my current job.

What has been your best moment or greatest achievement at Towson University so far?

My greatest achievement at Towson University was getting a job at SCS. Typically SCS only hires at specific times per year and only accepts online applications. I instead took my resume to both the SCS booth at the career fair and to the SCS office itself. By asking for the manager, I was able to schedule an interview and got the job. I am proud of myself for being aggressive because, if I had not, I would not have gotten the job.

What are your extra-curricular activities at or beyond Towson University?

- Helpdesk/field Technician at Carroll County Public Schools
- Tech Club at Towson University
- Associate at TSS Photography Carroll County

What are your career plans/aspirations?

I aspire to be a systems administrator. I enjoy the Linux environment for its simplicity and hope to work with it on a daily basis. However, I am trying to keep my options open. I know that I want to be in IT, but IT is a vast field that I look forward to exploring. I will continue to research different jobs by talking to mentors in my field. Recently I have done a lot of technical writing and training at work, and I have

enjoyed this aspect of my job. This has sparked an interest in the field of technical writing, and I hope to involve this in my future career.

A thank you note from your student:

Thank you for your generous scholarship. I am honored to have received this award. Due to this scholarship, I am able to take more courses and graduate early in December of 2017. It is thrilling to graduate early because I have been itching to break into the IT field full-time. This scholarship gives me the opportunity to meet with professionals in my field, this alone is worth its weight in gold. I look forward to meeting the members of the CIO Forum and networking with as many IT professionals as I can. Networking with professionals in my industry will allow me to make connections for jobs that I may not have gotten on my own. Through these networking events, I hope to improve my communication skills and gain mentors that I will look to as I start my career in IT.

Sincerely,

Kathryn White