

Irene Keyes Memorial Fund Scholarship

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What a great year! We had so many applications! Finally, our message has reached many area college women. This year we are supporting two young women to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)!

Meet Marissa Zuleta, a student at Marist studying Social Work, was just elected president of the Social Work Association. Marissa has already established herself as an active, socially conscious young woman with great leadership potential. She has interned at an “Intercultural Drop in Center” in Dublin, Ireland. Marissa, as a Fulfillment Fund Scholar, has counseled at-risk high school students, sharing her own experiences. She participated in training at the Family Services Sexual Violence Prevention Department. She is involved with the Center of Civic Engagement and Marist Campus Ministry, which has given her the chance to volunteer at Clinton Middle School and The Pines at Poughkeepsie. Marissa says that “immigrant issues are a passion of mine.” Her professors observe her “passion for helping communities of all kinds” and her “strong social justice agenda.” When I met her she was so excited and grateful for this opportunity.

We are also pleased to introduce Ashley Clark-Bryant, a Biology major at Marist College, who was recently appointed as a Resident Assistant. Ashley has been developing her leadership strength since high school. As President of the NAACP Youth Council in 2013-14, Ashley established an after-school program at the Nepperhan Community Center in Yonkers. She was selected for the Eileen Fisher Leadership Program which promotes leadership through self-empowerment, connection with others and activism in their communities. She has facilitated her own workshops. At Marist, Ashley is a member of the Student Academic Council representing the School of Science. For three years she has helped 7th grade girls experience different STEM fields focusing on medical fields of interest and doing experiments. She has facilitated workshops with Air Force personnel in education outreach and substance abuse awareness programs. Ashley’s goal is to be a Physician Assistant in Pediatrics. She is described as “one of the most genuinely motivated students on campus.” We were pleased to meet this bright, articulate and pleasant young woman.

Assisting these two young women in developing their leadership skills and empowering them through NCCWSL is a great pleasure and a very worthwhile way to honor the memory of our former branch President and friend Irene Keyes.

Special gratitude goes to the committee members Betty Harrel, Mary Lou Davis, Mary Coiteux, and Pat Luczai.