



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**7 Montana Students Among 108 Student Leaders Honored with  
Pride Foundation Scholarship Awards Totaling \$438,000**

**SEATTLE, WA**— Today, Pride Foundation announced scholarships to 108 students from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington totaling \$438,000—the largest total award in the organization’s history. Seven students from Montana were among those honored. They received a total of \$28,950.

Pride Foundation is the largest source of scholarships to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students in the country. These scholarships, which range from \$3,000 to \$14,000, seed the next generation of leaders in the LGBTQ community and support remarkable students who are engaged in a range of studies that will benefit the LGBTQ movement and the world.

Students supported include:

**Gabriella Blatt** grew up on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation and will be attending Yale in the fall. Her long-term goal is to enter public service.

**Michelle Knerr** is an aspiring rural veterinarian who lives on a ranch in Lewistown.

**Libby Wittman**, originally from Montana, will be pursuing an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering with a minor in Chinese at Central Washington University.

“These scholarships provide vital support to students who have often had to overcome enormous hurdles, both societal and financial,” said Pride Foundation CEO Kris A. Hermanns. “I look forward to seeing their impact on our community and our world. I am thrilled that Pride Foundation has the ability to provide substantial support to enable these students to achieve their dreams.”

Since its inception in 1993, Pride Foundation’s scholarship program has awarded more than \$4.8 million to 1,292 individual scholars.

Recipients are leaders in the LGBTQ community and they either currently live or grew up in the Northwest. This year's scholars hail from every corner of the region—from North Pole, Alaska to Kalispell, Montana, and Sherwood, Oregon and include native peoples from the Blackfoot and Cherokee nations, students of Irish, Jamaican, and Korean ancestry, as well as Latino/a/x and African American students, and refugees from the Middle East who now call the Northwest home. Their ages range from 17 years old to nontraditional students in their 50s.

The scholarship has proved life-changing for students like Gabriella Blatt. “Winning the scholarship is a huge deal to me, as I never thought I'd have the courage to come out,” said Gabriella. “I love how the Pride Foundation acts as a catalyst for this type of courage across Montana and the Northwestern United States. I'm looking forward to helping support the foundation in the future.”

The press and members of the public can meet these inspiring Montana students from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at Missoula's Zootown Brew, 121 West Broadway Street. Register to attend [here](#).

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Founded in 1985, Pride Foundation is a regional community foundation serving Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Its mission is to inspire giving to expand opportunities and advance full equality for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) people in the Northwest. Learn more at [www.pridefoundation.org](http://www.pridefoundation.org).