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## **Aero Club Foundation to Award Six Scholarships to Washington, D.C. Area Students Pursuing Careers in Aviation**

The Aero Club Foundation of Washington is pleased to announce that it will award \$5,000 scholarships to six Washington, D.C. area students who demonstrate a passion for aviation with the intent to pursue an education and career in aerospace.

Recognizing the importance of advancing aviation education and preparing tomorrow's leaders in aerospace, the Aero Club Foundation established its scholarship program in 2017, with the goal of reducing financial obstacles for students to enroll in college or university aviation programs, technical school, or flight training programs. Since then, the Foundation's scholarship program has awarded \$65,000 in scholarships to 13 Washington, D.C. area public and charter school students. This year, the Foundation received a record amount of scholarship applications and will award the largest number of scholarships since the program's inception.

The 2023 Aero Club Foundation scholarship recipients are:



**Zoé Denito** is a second time scholarship recipient who graduated from Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, Maryland in 2022. She is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering at Capitol Technology University in Washington, D.C. As she completes her first year in college, Denito notes, "I am more than ever convinced that I am on the right path." She remains interested in learning more about sustainable solutions and aviation safety. Denito also appreciates her role in inspiring the next generation, especially young women of color, noting, "I want to show that studying in the field of STEM/STEAM can be possible."



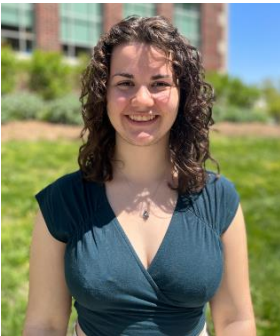
**Patrick Gilbert** graduated from W.T. Woodson High School in Fairfax, Virginia in 2022. He is currently pursuing his bachelor's degree in Aeronautical Science at Rocky Mountain College in Montana. Reflecting on his plans to become a pilot, Gilbert notes, "college has done nothing but solidify my plans and goals for the future. With the assistance of the scholarship funds from the Aero Club of Washington that I received last year, I successfully completed my first semester of college at Rocky Mountain College, where I completed my FAA Instrument Rating." Gilbert was honored for his strong academic achievements by making Dean's List. He has also started his Commercial Pilot Rating and has enrolled in the Intercollegiate Flight Team.



**Kaylin Leake** is currently a student at the University of the District of Columbia-Community College's Aviation Maintenance Program. She graduated from H.D. Woodson High School in Washington, D.C. in 2022. "As a little girl, I've always been fascinated with airplanes, but I never understood how they work," writes Leake. "I realized how strong of a passion it was when I flew an airplane for the first time as a student pilot when I was just 16... I knew nothing of a rudder, stabilizer, or the required knowledge to take off, fly, and land a plane." Leake aspires "to fly my own airplane in General Aviation, while having the ability and knowledge to perform maintenance and alterations on my aircraft."



**Clint Ngwa** will graduate from Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) High School in Washington, D.C. this June and he plans to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Ngwa was born in Cameroon and his passion for aviation started on his first flight. "When I moved to the United States four years ago, I envisioned myself becoming an international airline pilot in the future," writes Ngwa. He was so determined he only looked at high schools that would help him reach his dreams. Ngwa notes, "I choose to come to Phelps because it was an engineering school. Phelps made my passion for wanting to be a pilot even stronger and it showed me the numerous advantages and opportunities in aviation."



**Shae Stonemeier** is a second time scholarship recipient who graduated from Wheaton High School in Wheaton, Maryland in 2022. She is currently enrolled at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana and is pursuing her degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering. During her first year in college, Stonemeier immersed herself in various applications of engineering. She joined an electric vehicle racing team, mentored high school-aged girls through the engineering design process, and worked on numerous design projects within her engineering classes. As Stonemeier focuses her degree program, she hopes to enroll in the Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering (AAE) program as she is "... especially passionate about AAE because of the growing relevance of aviation and space travel worldwide."



**Liyat Tsehali** plans to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University after graduating from Francis L. Cardozo Education Campus' TransSTEM Academy in Washington, D.C. this June. Liyat is passionate about pursuing a career in aviation and dreams of becoming a pilot. As she looks forward to beginning her collegiate journey, she notes, "I am excited about the prospect of constantly building my knowledge and skill as a pilot, solving problems under pressure, and taking on the responsibility of ensuring the safety of crew and passengers." Liyat also realizes the unique opportunity to join a field predominately comprised of males. She states, "I am inspired by the increasing number of female pilots in recent years and believe that I can contribute to this trend. As a female pilot, I would serve as a role model for young women who aspire to join the profession."

"I am inspired by this year's slate of scholarship recipients and proud to support their dreams," said Yvette Rose, President of the Aero Club Foundation. "Breaking down barriers to entry by providing much-needed financial support for young people to pursue a career in aviation or aerospace helps encourage others to join our industry. This program would not be possible without our donors. A special thank you to our major donor, United Airlines for supporting our scholarship program and to all those who support the Aero Club Foundation of Washington."

Members of the 2023 Aero Club Foundation Scholarship Selection Committee included: Steve Morrissey, Chair of the Selection Committee and United Airlines; Andy Cebula, Airlines for America; Jana Denning, Professional Aviation Safety Specialists; Kate Hallahan, Team Hallahan; and Rachel Jackson, Raytheon Technologies.

The Aero Club Foundation looks forward to recognizing each scholarship recipient at an upcoming Aero Club of Washington luncheon:

May 24, 2023: Zoé Denito, Shae Stonemeier, and Liyat Tsehai

June 21, 2023: Clint Ngwa

July 27, 2023: Patrick Gilbert and Kaylin Leake

For more information or to register for an Aero Club luncheon, please visit [www.aeroclub.org](http://www.aeroclub.org).

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**About Aero Club Foundation of Washington**

Founded in 1995, the Aero Club Foundation of Washington fosters and promotes interest in the principles and development of aviation and aeronautics by establishing, sponsoring and supporting student educational programs at public and public charter schools in the District of Columbia. To learn about the Aero Club Foundation's educational outreach initiatives and events, scholarship program, or to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit [www.aeroclub.org/foundation](http://www.aeroclub.org/foundation).