

## Our Unbelievable 2023-2024 Scholarship Recipients



**Amanda; Pikes Peak State College**

*Bio written by Gayle Krzemien*

Amanda has earned college credits at Front Range Community College and Pikes Peak State College in the field of Multimedia Graphic Design. She has taken courses such as Digital Photography, Design & Color, Adobe Illustrator, Introduction to Multimedia, and Web Design. She is currently emphasizing Web Design and development. Her GPA is 4.00 and she is Phi Theta Kappa. Besides pursuing her academic courses in her chosen field, she has already developed a business where she creates designs for skateboards and longboards. One of her favorite quotes is, "Art speaks where words are unable to explain." One of her instructors stated that she is a gifted, and dedicated artist and student. She consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of her. Amanda also has a background in serving others, whether it be medical care or emotional support, her passion to be a positive member of her community is apparent.



**Kailene; University of Colorado-Colorado Springs**

*Bio written by Kathleen Borrelli*

Vastly appreciating and valuing education, first generation college student, Kailene Black, works three jobs in order to stay in school. A learning assistant to Dr. David Weiss in Chemistry/Biochemistry, Kailene is first author on their research concerning the impact of course loads on student performance. This pre-med student is a member of the Pre-Health Society and Chemistry/Biochemistry Club. She's in the Chancellor's Leadership Class where she volunteers 70 hours a semester of community service. The Springs Rescue Mission Foot Clinic

benefits from her aid. Kailene works in an assisted living facility where she is a certified QMAP, allowing her to dispense medicine. She's also an Admissions Front Desk Head and Student Ambassador at UCCS. Kailene is involved in Cool Science, which helps youngsters go through the scientific process. Kailene has always been interested in pursuing a medical path, but watching the trauma team and other care givers tend to her grandmother during cancer treatment, solidified her desire to become a doctor.



**Avrianna; Pikes Peak State College**

*Bio written by Cyndy McBee*

Avrianna had never considered a career in the healthcare field until she spent five years taking care of her great-grandmother who had dementia and needed 24/7 care. She lived with her great-grandma and grandma during those five years, got married and had three children. Her great grandma died in 2019 and she began the process of becoming an RN in labor and delivery and eventually a lactation consultant to help moms and babies navigate breastfeeding. Avrianna says, "it takes a village and mine is determined to help me achieve my goal". Her days are filled with being a wife, mother of three school-aged children, an employee of a local hospital and a student at Pikes Peak State College maintaining a 3.65 GPA. Her pharmacology professor stated, she is a "self-starter, timely, prepared and shows professionalism in her interactions with faculty." AAUW is proud to help Avrianna achieve her dream of becoming an RN!



**Ella; Pikes Peak State College**

*Bio written by Cyndy McBee*

Ella received an AAUW scholarship in 2022 that enabled her to have a successful year in nursing school. She has now finished the first half of her nursing classes! Ella had the opportunity to complete clinical rotations at

both major healthcare systems in Colorado Springs, as well as with Children's Hospital Colorado. She chose to apply for a CNA position in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and has been working in the NICU. Ella is excited to graduate and earn her BSN. She plans to work as an RN at Children's Hospital in Colorado Springs after graduating. Ella said, "I know my final year will be challenging, but I am ready to embrace the challenge. I cannot thank the AAUW members enough for assisting me in my journey through nursing school. The scholarships I have received have allowed me to work seasonally, rather than full time, and focus on my schoolwork. I am so excited to give back to my community and learn everything I can as a nurse! Thank you all so much again, Ella Hall. "



**Stephanie; University of Colorado-Colorado Springs**

*Bio written by Mo Sigler*

While Stephanie's dream was always to become a doctor, life circumstances provided obstacles and interruptions to her education. Due to sudden family hardships, at the age of 16 she dropped out of high school, earned a GED, and completed a medical assistant program at a vocational school. Her resilience helped her to leave a manipulative religion that discouraged Stephanie from pursuing higher education. The birth of her daughter four years ago ignited a fire in her to leave an abusive marriage and to seek a better life for the two of them. Working as a medical assistant for 13 years kept Stephanie in the medical field and she is now on track to complete her BSN in May 2024 with the plan to immediately enroll in the Doctor of Nursing Practice at UCCS. In addition to working as a medical assistant, Stephanie is a certified Spanish interpreter and intends to become certified as a medical Spanish interpreter. During her clinicals, when she hears a patient and nurse using a Spanish interpreter, Stephanie offers to care for the patient. The patient is instantly relieved to have a fluent Spanish-speaking nurse. Imagine how well she will serve both the Spanish and English-speaking patients when she is a Doctor of Nursing Practice!



**Ermelinda (Linda); University of Colorado-Colorado Springs**

*Bio written by Debi Levin-Stankevich*

Linda is a non-traditional student who is extremely proud of returning to school after 10 years. She is working towards a BA Degree in Social Work and plans to enter the Advanced Standing Master's in Social Work program immediately after earning her BA. As the daughter of immigrant parents, she often took on roles of advocate, interpreter, and caregiving at an early age. She states that this life experience has engrained in her a quality to meet people where they are in life and to facilitate helping people to meet their needs and thrive in life. She is passionate about social justice and advocating for under-represented and underserved people and communities especially the Latino community and women. Linda also works full time at the Southern Colorado Health Network, a non-profit agency, that offers services to people living with HIV. Prior to this job she worked at another non-profit called Voces Unidas for Justice. This program offers services to Latinas who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault.



**Hayden; Pikes Peak State College**

*Bio written by Kathleen Borrelli*

Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis three years ago, Hayden feels grateful for the strength it has given her to find her purpose. This life altering experience, both physical and emotional, created a desire for Hayden to understand and improve the healthcare system. She feels more like herself now than ever and has learned how to take something bad and turn it to good. Having been a nanny in Boulder, Hayden has always enjoyed working with children, so her goal is to become a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and then get a Master of Science in Nursing with a specialization in Pediatric Primary Care. She'd like to work in the NICU. This polite young woman wants to advocate for children and try to make parents feel better when their child is sick. She understands if parents are being difficult, it's probably because it's the worst day of their lives. Dealing with her own health issues in a wholistic manner, has given Hayden a broad perspective in understanding various health needs for her patients.



**Marissa; University of Colorado-Colorado Springs**

*Bio written by Gayle Krzemien*

The Margaret Baptist Memorial Scholarship recipient this year is Marissa, a student at UCCS with a major in biology. Her overall GPA is 3.59. Her goal is to go to medical school, become a doctor, and specialize in pediatrics and surgery. Her passion for healthcare is fueled by her own experiences with limited access to healthcare and especially wants to address the healthcare disparities that affect underserved communities. She is a member of the UCCS Chancellor's Leadership Class, which is one of the most competitive scholarships at UCCS. She is also interested in gaining experience through connecting with health professionals in her community, volunteer work, and actively seeking out mentorship and research opportunities. She plans to continue to learn and develop her leadership and professional skills through the Chancellors Leadership Class, (CLC), the Reisher Scholars Program, and the University Event Ambassador Program.

### **The Margaret Baptist Memorial Scholarship**

**2023-2024 is the second year the Margaret Baptist Memorial Scholarship is being awarded.** This scholarship is sponsored by AAUW member Annabel Widney in honor of her dear friend, Margaret, who passed away in 2021. Margaret Baptist was a long time AAUW Colorado Springs Branch member who was passionate about AAUW and AAUW scholarships. Her passion stemmed from the fact that she received a national AAUW scholarship that helped her in completing her master's degree in social work. Margaret's contributions to our branch include her years of service on the scholarship committee and her participation in creating the branch's first book club 20 years ago, initially named Adelante ("ahead") that was later renamed "Exploring Lives and Cultures." Margaret stated, "We need to understand other people."