

Nicole Jo Awarded Aspire2STEAM Scholarship

College freshman and aspiring founder of a social enterprise startup has sights set on the creative industry

DES MOINES, IOWA, USA, September 30, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "There is so much about Nicole Jo that fascinated us," said Cheryl O'Donoghue, CEO at

[Aspire2STEAM.org](https://www.aspire2steam.org). "She's an accomplished and thoughtful human who taught herself English, gives generously to her community, and is

an accomplished artist, musician, and business student. We are excited that she has begun her studies at Wellesley College and happy to award her an ASPIRER scholarship with the funds we've received from our wonderful donors."



Nicole Jo, Aspire2STEAM Scholarship Recipient

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Nicole Jo

“I’m so grateful to have been given this opportunity to enter college with the doors wide open to me with the help of this scholarship,” said Nicole Jo. “I look forward to spending the next four years at this extraordinary women’s college and to build confidence as a young woman pursuing both STEM and the arts. Outside of academics, I’ve loved involving myself in the creative arts—specifically theater, visual arts, and even music as I’ve recently learned to play the bass guitar.”

Nicole grew up surrounded by artistic influences. Her parents immigrated to the United States from South Korea where they both attended a trade school for visual artists. Shortly after they arrived, Nicole was born. Because her parents only spoke Korean, she was on her own when it came to receiving support in school, especially to learn the English language.

Nicole turned her own experience in learning English into a meaningful way she could be of service to others. For the past few years, she has worked as a volunteer English as a Second Language tutor for adult English learners. Most of her students come from a working-class Hispanic immigrant background. She enjoys tutoring, especially since it gave her an opportunity

to learn students' stories. "Every Wednesday night I heard stories about how they started their own bakery business or worked 80-hour weeks as a construction worker," said Nicole. "Other times I'd listen to their stories of how they escaped a life of trauma and poverty through immigration."

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons Nicole learned from being a tutor was the language of empathy and identity, which she has applied to better understand herself and how she can contribute to the world around her. Said Nicole, "More than strengthening the bridge between two languages, teaching ESL has taught me that I am not the teacher, I am the student of my students."

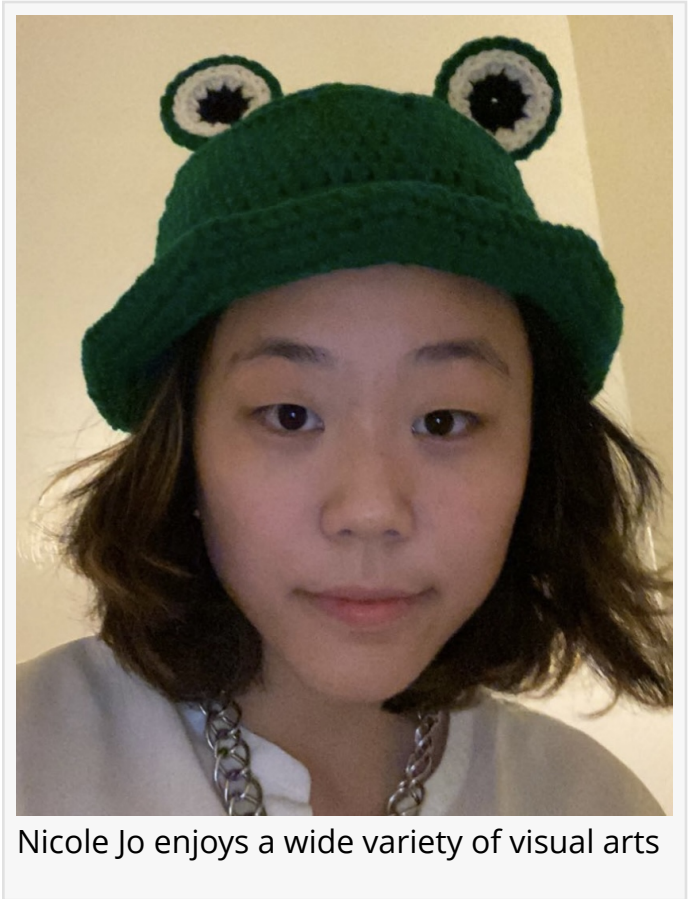
Nicole plans to use her Wellesley education to chase her career pursuits and not be afraid to enter a male-dominated field. She hopes to explore key topics within her gender and other issues that shape who she is and will become. "I have aspirations to be a business executive in a creative industry, and I want to set it up as a social enterprise so that it can be ethical and sustainable."

In high school, Nicole created her own social entrepreneurship plans with her peers to set up potential business opportunities within her local community. She created a plan for a startup called Dinesure, which would serve as a software to address the needs of dietary restricted diners to find options safe for their allergy needs. She and her team placed 1st in the DECA Regionals for Marketing. She was also a National finalist in Quarter Zero's start-up competition and placed 2nd in TiE Young Entrepreneurs (TYE) Boston Regionals.

When Nicole is not in the classroom, she's working on visual art projects or acting in the theater. She is also a musician, having played piano for over ten years, performing regularly for her peers and school. She has earned eight Scholastic Art Awards (two Gold Keys, five Silver Keys, and an Honorable Mention) and was a Piano International Music Competition Winner. She was also a 2020 National Unification Advisory Council Golden Bell Quiz Competition finalist.

Nicole is pursuing a bachelor's degree in economics (pre-business) and plans to graduate in 2025.

ABOUT...



Nicole Jo enjoys a wide variety of visual arts

Aspire2STEAM.org (formerly known as Mission Sisters Who Work) is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We provide scholarships and mentoring to young women and girls who are working hard— aspiring—to achieve careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math...and they could really use a hand up over the incredible barriers of student debt and rising education costs, and the real, ever-present opportunity barriers that still keep them out of most male-dominated industries. These young women are doing their part, let's help them by doing ours.

[Donate](#) now. Your kindness is a catalyst for change and empowerment for the young women and girls we serve.

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