

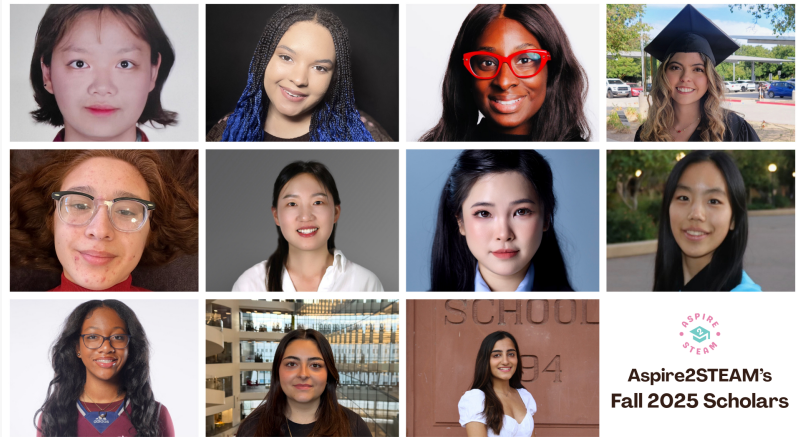
Aspire2STEAM Announces Eleven STEAM Scholarship Recipients for Fall 2025 Term

Student-run nonprofit total scholarships awarded tops 125

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[Aspire2STEAM.org](https://aspire2steam.org), a student-run U.S. nonprofit announced the names of eleven students who will receive scholarships and recognition under its Scholar Spotlight program. Scholar Spotlight is a unique scholarship program for young women and girls who desire to advance STEAM fields (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics), one which exhibits their innovations while connecting them with career opportunities.



From left to right, top to bottom: Doan Tran, Heavenly Bundy, Ima Essien, Isabelle O'Neill, Laura Ramirez, Le Shen, Zilin (Lamia) Ye, Lisa Fung, Mya Phillips, Samantha Serna Pemberthy, and Seerat Sandhu.

“It’s a time of transitions, that strange in-between of sizzling summer days on the beach and crisp autumn afternoons in the library,” said Cheryl O’Donoghue, who founded Aspire2STEAM in 2018 and currently serves as its Managing Advisor. “Yes, it’s back-to-school season, but students these days are facing far more difficult choices than what backpack to purchase. As artificial intelligence invades classrooms and education budgets plummet, the choice of whether to even commit to higher education is becoming increasingly difficult.”

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Madelyn Qayyum

“The future of the workforce is uncertain,” noted Logan

Williams, Communications Lead for Aspire2STEAM’s Students4Students program. “It’s the calm before the storm and it’s not clear what careers will be washed away by the technological flood racing our way. Students are rightfully afraid of the risks interwoven with tertiary education. They’re asking if their degree will secure employment, and that doesn’t even account for the hinderances involved in education itself. Legislature everywhere is shaping curriculum instead of

teachers, programs are bleeding funds, you've got thousands in loans, and somebody next to you is whizzing by with ChatGPT."

"But these are fears and observations," said Madelyn Qayyum, a high school senior who is Aspire2STEAM's Marketing Lead. "Fears are imaginary, and observations tell us what needs to change. If alarms are blaring, we don't need to put earplugs in; we need to address the cause of the alarm, which is what Aspire2STEAM is tackling right now."

The student-run nonprofit is currently combating tuition and underemployment for those most affected, women in STEAM, by awarding scholarships, recognizing young talent, offering professional opportunities and mentoring with industry advisors, and constructing a community that stands against discrimination and anti-intellectualism.



Aspire2STEAM provides educational scholarships to young underserved women pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

"There's no better time to tackle the problems plaguing education than back-to-school season, student by student," said O'Donoghue. "That's why Aspire2STEAM is pleased to announce eleven new scholars — one of our largest cohorts for a single semester — whose contributions to their communities and STEAM deserve celebration and recognition."

The scholarship recipients are:

- Doan Tran, an Electrical Engineering and Computer Science major at University of California, Berkeley. Her interest in STEAM stems from its "emphasis on innovation, hands-on research opportunities, and collaboration."
- Heavenly Bundy, a Journalism major at California State University, Dominguez Hills. She seeks to illuminate the untold stories in her community and lives by the belief that "with determination and imagination nothing is impossible."
- Ima Essien, an MBA (Master of Business Administration) candidate at the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business. She "leverages UN, venture capital, and nonprofit

experience to build innovative systems expanding women's access to health, capital, and opportunity.”

- Isabelle O'Neill, a Computer Science and Physics major with a specialization in Astrophysics at the University of California, Irvine. She also minors in Chicano/Latino Studies, and while she thinks “the combination might seem unconventional,” she sees “it as the perfect blend of science and advocacy.”
- Laura Ramirez, a music major at New Mexico State University. She also minors in Music History and hopes to “give peace and joy” whenever she plays piano and sings.
- Le Shen, an Interdisciplinary Engineering major pursuing her second master’s degree. She’s motivated by “the opportunities to delve into diverse fields, connect with peers who share my passion, and contribute meaningfully to society,” particularly regarding urban planning.
- Lisa Fung, a Computer Science and Electrical Engineering major at Stanford University. She believes her future work will serve “those vulnerable to outages and energy insecurity and prioritizes long-term sustainability over short-term gain.”
- Mya Phillips, an Aviation and Aviation Management major at Henderson State University. She knew she wanted to be a pilot the moment she took a discovery flight and has since “never looked back.”
- Samantha Serna Pemberthy, a Bioengineering major at Northeastern University. She plans to “contribute to cancer research, tissue engineering, and emerging fields like 3D organ printing.
- Seerat Sandhu, a Materials Science and Engineering major at Arizona State University. She’s excited to “explore the science behind advanced materials and focus on sustainable practices that can improve both energy efficiency and the environment.”
- Zilin (Lamia) Ye, a Business Administration major at San Jose State University. She's developed technology that connects students to support networks and she intends to “help more underrepresented groups access essential resources and mentorship.”

About Aspire2STEAM

Aspire2STEAM is an all-American, student-run nonprofit that provides the “STEAM” (Science, Tech, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) necessary to keep our nation prosperous. We accomplish this through two programs: 1) Scholarship Spotlight, a unique scholarship program for young girls who desire to advance STEAM fields, one which exhibits their innovations while connecting them with career opportunities, and 2) Students4Students, a groundbreaking program where students learn self-sufficiency and lead the nonprofit so students can ensure the wellbeing of other students while becoming entrepreneurially empowered.

The United States is currently facing a STEAM crisis: without your support in promoting STEAM careers, our country risks falling behind — but the future's hardly bleak. Visit our website, Aspire2STEAM.org, to learn how you can help fund our mission so today's youth can become tomorrow's trailblazers.

[Apply for a scholarship today!](#)

[Empower young professionals today!](#)

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