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# OUR DONORS ARE BRINGING AMAZING ENGINEERS TO ILLINOIS

The Engineering Visionary  
Scholarship Initiative

**2020 REPORT**

1993

WITH  
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THE CAMPAIGN FOR  
**ILLINOIS**

**YOU  
HELPED  
RAISE OVER  
\$105 MILLION  
IN ENDOWED  
UNDERGRADUATE  
SCHOLARSHIPS  
FOR GRAINGER  
ENGINEERS!**



## Thank you!

**T**hank you for helping us exceed our goal of raising \$100 million in commitments, supporting the future of engineering innovation and leadership through the Engineering Visionary Scholarship (EVS) Initiative. Your undergraduate scholarship support helps bring the best students with diverse perspectives to The Grainger College of Engineering. Our students hold the possibility of creating world-changing technologies and insights and continue our 150-year tradition of innovation.

\$5.8 million in scholarship funds were awarded in the 2019-2020 academic year. Your support of the

Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative has allowed us to be more flexible and strategic with our scholarship support, allowing us to distribute larger awards to our recruited and current students. Additionally, your generosity has allowed us to grow a more diverse campus and enabled us to offer scholarships to a broader community of scholars including more first-generation and transfer students, and students from the state of Illinois.

In this report, you'll meet current EVS recipients, a recent alumna, and former EVS awardees who have graduated and are improving our world. You will also learn how your philanthropic support has inspired our students and alumni during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020 continues to be a challenging year for all of us. However, in the face of uncertainty, we have risen to serve our students and our remarkable global network has allowed us to encourage and support one another.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rashid Bashir'.

**Rashid Bashir, Dean**

Grainger Distinguished Chair in Engineering

Your generosity ensures our doors are open to deserving scholars, like those we feature in the following pages. These students and alumni leave us better equipped to solve tomorrow's grand challenges.



**Jeremy Quinteros**  
**Grainger Engineer, 2022**

**Current EVS Recipient**

*I am a first-generation college student in my family, and I greatly appreciate the support I've been given to accomplish my goals.*

I know that The Grainger College of Engineering is world-renowned for its high level of achievement and quality, and I felt a degree from here would open doors that otherwise would be inaccessible to me. Knowing that there are people who believe in my success, that they would help me financially has made me more confident that engineering is the career path for me. Receiving an Engineering Visionary Scholarship has allowed me to spend less time working and worrying about finances. I can focus on getting better grades and participating more in clubs that interest me, like Project Code, a student organization focused on professional development, as well as technical skills development related to coding and programming.

I wanted to become an engineer because I love learning about how and why the world works the way it does, and I always wanted to make my own impact on the future of technology. Electricity and electronics are an important aspect of the modern world and I wanted to help advance it further. I would love to work at a company working on machine learning or artificial intelligence. Working at companies like Tesla, YouTube, or Google that are leaders in the field of technology would be my dream job.

My message for aspiring engineering students who may also be the first in their families to attend college is: You are not alone. The university is full of wonderful, supporting communities for everyone and you are sure to find where you fit in if you make the effort and explore. For many students, your families and yourselves have likely worked hard and sacrificed much to get to where you are, and as aspiring engineering students, your hard work will surely make an impact in the future. For now, be proud of what you have achieved and where you stand and continue to work hard so that you may turn from aspiring engineering students into aspiring engineers.



**Dana Yun**  
**Grainger Engineer, 2022**

**Current EVS Recipient**

*My parents moved to the United States to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I was born and raised here, so the University of Illinois is my home.*

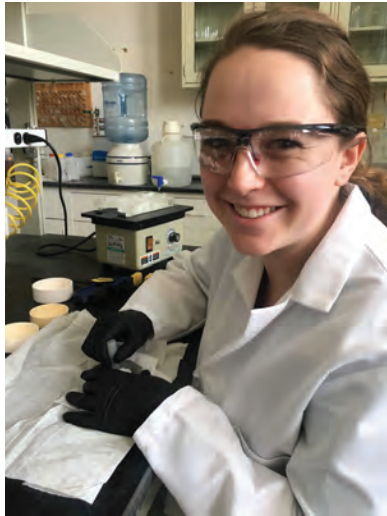
Receiving scholarship support has allowed my family and I to stay out of debt and focus on my future. It has allowed me to focus on my academic studies and pursue projects that I am passionate about. Through these experiences, I have been able to learn so much more about the field I am in, the available opportunities, and what I want to further pursue.

My current direction is to dive into humanitarian research; water desalination, sustainable materials, and other projects that contribute to a greener world! The climate crisis is the number one issue facing our world and solutions are urgently needed. I hope to contribute to this effort that our entire species is fiercely tackling.

This last Spring semester, I was able to study abroad in Madrid, Spain. I had never been to Europe and always dreamed about studying abroad; this scholarship made it possible for me to consider this option. As we know, COVID-19 hit Europe early so students were required to evacuate in mid-March. Still, I was able to spend half of my program in Spain and am extremely grateful for those short two and a half months. Taking myself out of the physical space of my daily habits helped me re-evaluate the way I live my life. Especially going to a country where the culture emphasizes relaxation and interpersonal relationships, rather than the 24/7 work culture of the USA. This new perspective helped me to see a new potential reality and I will be applying these experiences as I move forward. Although my adventures were cut short, I am still so appreciative for the opportunity and for all the lessons learned.

My family is incredibly grateful for my scholarships and how they have allowed me to shape my college experience. I have an amazing support system through my family and the incredible friends I have made at this school. Thank you for the significant role you have played in this phase of my life.





**Julia Brodecki**  
**Grainger Engineer, Alumna, 2020**

**Recent EVS Recipient**

*Being a woman in STEM, I understand some of the barriers present in my field of study. However, I have also seen how the scholarships I received set me up for success and how philanthropy can have a significant impact on increasing diversity and inclusion at The Grainger College of Engineering.*

The scholarship support I received removed much of the stress surrounding my financial experience at college. During my senior year, I participated in additional academic research. I received a small semester stipend for my research however, most of my time was unpaid. My scholarship support ensured I did not have to give up research time for additional work hours. I had a wonderful experience at Illinois, and I am very grateful for the benefits I received because of philanthropic support.

Post-graduation I had planned on starting as a product development engineer at 3M in June. My start date has now been pushed back with the potential for further delay depending on how the COVID-19 situation evolves. I am now even more grateful for the support I received through my Engineering Visionary Scholarship as this scholarship helped me graduate debt-free and so this delay in start date will not place a significant financial burden on me.

Reflecting on my time at Illinois, I am very proud of all the work that The Grainger College of Engineering has done to promote diversity amongst its students and faculty. Many strides have been made to help encourage women and minorities in STEM and these fields are slowly becoming more diverse. However, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to create long term equality in the field of engineering. I have directly benefited from funding intended to help promote female enrollment and have very fond memories of attending the dedication of the Quintessential Engineer statue which serves as a physical manifestation of the college's goal to promote female engineers. I am very grateful to the men and women who have helped pave the way for my success and I look forward to the opportunity to help the next generation of female engineers learn to do the impossible.

## How has your support made a difference?

Prior the EVS Initiative which started in 2013, The Grainger College of Engineering was only able to offer scholarship support to less than 1% of incoming freshmen. **In the upcoming 2020 fall academic year, more than 15% of incoming freshmen have been awarded scholarship aid.**

Endowed EVS support has allowed the college to increase our largest average scholarship offer **from \$15,000 per year for four years to \$20,000 per year for four years.** This support makes an immense difference in the lives and finances of students and their families and often are the reason they choose to attend Illinois.

**Thanks to you, our community of alumni and friends, larger scholarships can be distributed more consistently to students every year.** Engineering Visionary Scholarships will last into perpetuity, allowing alumni and friends of the college to continue to donate to EVS funds and help generations of Grainger Engineers.

## Where are EVS recipients now?

Since 2013, Engineering Visionary Scholarships have made a Grainger Engineering education more accessible, have helped recruit and retain the most promising students, and have prepared alumni for success in their fields.



**Savannah Goodman**  
Grainger Engineer, Alumna, 2014

### Former EVS Recipient

I am currently leading the Modeling & Simulation team at Blueprint Power, a company that unlocks new revenue for real-estate owners by transforming their buildings into power plants and connecting them to energy markets. My team is developing the optimization and machine learning models that enable Blueprint's platform to intelligently operate on-site energy assets in order to maximize revenue in various on-site, utility level, and wholesale energy markets.

My scholarship helped fund my international travel to Uganda, during which I learned all about local water and energy issues, which I would not have been able to fully grasp without going to the country and talking with local people directly. Ultimately, this experience incited my passion for global energy access and has led me to pursue a career focused on distributed energy resources and microgrids.

While my studies at Illinois were focused on environmental resiliency, the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly made me think a lot more about the need for resilient cities, college campuses, health care systems, workplaces, etc. This crisis has strengthened my perspective on the critical need for philanthropic support of technology and policy development to help make these systems more resilient. I am very proud to be a Grainger Engineering alumna. I believe that The Grainger College of Engineering truly sets up its students for success by teaching them the fundamental engineering principles, providing them opportunities to apply those learnings through class projects and extracurriculars, and giving students the self-confidence to go out into the real world and make an impact.



**Nick Rivera**  
Grainger Engineer, Alumnus, 2015

### Former EVS Recipient

I currently work as an Asset Management Analyst at IFM Investors, an Australian Infrastructure Investment Firm. I essentially function as an internal strategy and operations consultant, working to improve operations within our portfolio companies and working across our portfolio on initiatives like Safety and Diversity & Inclusion.

I believe those who experience success have an obligation to help others experience success. I have been fortunate enough to pay my experiences forward to Illinois, because I personally have benefited much from my time there. I have contributed my time to Illinois through recruitment and mentorship efforts and serving on the Knights of St. Patrick selection committee, as well as by giving financially to a college scholarship fund. I expect these contributions to continue to grow as I grow in my career.

Something I have prided myself on is having the opportunity to be a person of color who has contributed to The Grainger College of Engineering and the Illinois campus. My favorite memories have been those where I felt like I could meaningfully contribute to the student experience of those in underrepresented communities. Illinois certainly made that possible.

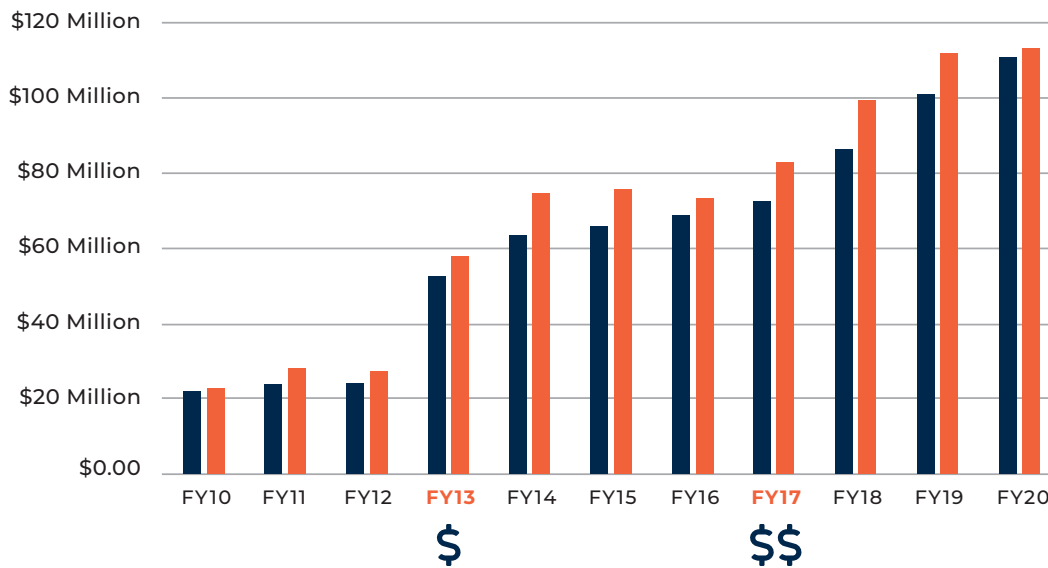
The COVID-19 crisis flipped the world on its head and exposed severe shortcomings in the world's ability to effectively address global health crises. Grainger Engineering's response further proves that Grainger Engineers are among the most innovative in the world, and the Carle College of Medicine will make Illinois a global leader in public health innovation. The pandemic certainly has strengthened my perspective on philanthropy to the college and the ability of Grainger Engineering students and alumni to rise to the challenge.

## You have prepared future generations of engineering students for success!

Your participation in the Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative and the availability of matching funds through The Grainger Matching Challenge has propelled our endowed scholarship growth.

Notably, pooling investments of alumni and friends to Engineering Visionary Scholarship funds has resulted in the highest growth of endowed scholarship support - making Engineering Visionary Scholarships the most flexible form of financial aid and having the greatest impact on our students.

### Endowed Scholarship Growth



- FY Fiscal Year
- Principal Investment
- Market Value
- \$ Start of EVSI
- \$\$ Start of The Grainger Matching Challenge

Our alumni, friends, and corporate partners have given from around the globe and represent 16 countries.



You have shown your generosity through diverse giving vehicles and prepared The Grainger College of Engineering to better serve our students and future leaders.



The longevity of Engineering Visionary Scholarship funds and their ability to accept contributions into the future, ensure that the best minds will be recruited and equipped for success, far into the future.

**Thank you for supporting  
The Grainger College of Engineering  
and our students!**



**Grainger College  
of Engineering**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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