



## MVS SCHOLARS FIND COMMON GROUND

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America's melting pot was on full display during the Most Valuable Student Scholarship's Leadership Weekend in Chicago. In its sixth year, the contest brought Top Finalists from small towns and big cities; from K-pop enthusiasts to deep-sea fishing fanatics; from first- to third-generation Americans; and from both coasts to share who they are and how they landed in Chicago.

The group jumped right into discovering and sharing their truths during a "Tell Your Story" workshop. Lifted by the support of their peers, each scholar told stories about their families, the adversities they've faced, and their hopes, dreams and goals. Their vulnerability allowed them to turn from strangers to friends in just a few days.

"Although we come from different backgrounds, we all found something we had in common with each other," says Tabitha Escalante, sponsored by Maumee-BG, Ohio, Lodge No. 1850. "I made amazing friendships that will last a lifetime."

On Friday, the finalists had a unique opportunity to have breakfast with the ENF's Board of Trustees before packing hygiene kits that they hand-delivered to veterans at a Chicagoland V.A. Medical Center. Many scholars noted that it was their first time visiting a V.A. medical center and said they were excited to volunteer with ones in their communities. The scholars and veterans played a game of charades, bringing lots of laughs and joy to the room.

*see Leadership Weekend, continued on page 2*





Emily Sanchez of Colorado squares off with one of the Foundation's investment managers during the final Ro Sham Beaux of the Biggest Fan ice-breaker at the breakfast with the ENF Board. Emily won with a classic Scissors Gambit. The group also played This or That.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**JUNE 30-JULY 3:**  
Elks National Convention  
in St. Louis

**AUGUST 5:**  
2020 MVS Contest Begins

**SEPTEMBER 1:**  
2020 Legacy Contest Begins

Scholars  
Anthony  
Bui of  
California  
and Minh  
Tran of  
Kentucky  
participate in  
a workshop.



*Leadership Weekend, continued from page 1*

"My favorite part of the weekend was watching the scholars play charades with the veterans at the V.A.," says John Kavula, the Elks Scholar Fellow. "Everyone was so happy to be there, and the smiles everyone had is something I'll always remember."

With Saturday came the culmination of the weekend: interviews with the national judges to determine who would be receiving the top awards. The scholars showed the judges why they were in Chicago, and six of them left with the top awards.

After the interviews were done, the scholars took a trip to the Willis Tower Skydeck. That night, the scholars sat back, relaxed and reflected during a dinner cruise along the Chicago River. Jake Mann, sponsored by Fort Myers, Fla., Lodge No. 1288, knows this will be the first of many weekends spent with his Elks family.

"I learned that the Elks community is something that I'll be a part of for the rest of my life," Jake says. "This weekend was just the beginning!"

While Leadership Weekend yielded the MVS top winners, that's not all it did. As one finalist put it, "Even though we're here because of the Elks scholarship, I haven't thought about the money. It's all about the people." Each finalist also left with an Elks family.



## We're pleased to announce the 2019 MVS Top Winners:

In third place, **SEAMUS HOOLAHAN**, sponsored by Anaconda, Mont., Lodge No. 239; and **ANN RAYMER**, sponsored by Farmington, Mo., Lodge No. 1765, will each receive \$30,000 toward their college education.

In second place, **RIO BONHAM**, sponsored by Durant, Okla., Lodge No. 1963; and **EMILY SANCHEZ**, sponsored by Longmont, Colo., Lodge No. 1055, will each receive \$40,000.

And in first place, taking home \$50,000 scholarships, are **VICTOR RAMIREZ**, sponsored by South Miami/Coral Gables, Fla., Lodge No. 1676; and **TABITHA ESCALANTE**, sponsored by Maumee-BG, Ohio, Lodge No. 1850.

Visit [enf.elks.org/Lead6](http://enf.elks.org/Lead6) to watch a short film about the weekend.

*For 2019-20, the Elks National Foundation allocated \$2.9 million to fund the Most Valuable Student scholarship program, which includes 500 four-year scholarships ranging from \$4,000 to \$50,000. For more information about the Most Valuable Student scholarship program, including eligibility and deadlines, visit [enf.elks.org/MVS](http://enf.elks.org/MVS).*



In a shot made for a metaphor, a group of scholars looks out from a glass box ledge on the 103rd floor of Chicago's iconic Willis Tower, the second-tallest building in the Western Hemisphere.



Hard to say who was more thrilled by the news: Legacy Scholar Olivia Bradshaw of Texas (center) or her grandfather and sponsor, James Zinecke.

## 2019 LEGACY SCHOLARS ANNOUNCED!

The Elks National Foundation is proud to present the class of 2019 Legacy Scholars.

Olivia Bradshaw, sponsored by Arlington, Texas, Lodge No. 2114, says:

"The Elks Lodge means a lot to my family, especially my grandpa, so this was a very exciting scholarship for me to receive. My grandpa has always supported me, and now the organization that he supports, supports me too! Having the recognition of the inspirational, charitable, and positive family of the Elks will follow me as I strive to become just as kind and exceptional as my grandpa and the whole Elks community."

Visit [enf.elks.org/2019Legacy](http://enf.elks.org/2019Legacy) to see the list of 2019 Legacy Scholars.

*For 2019-20, the Elks National Foundation allocated \$1.2 million to fund 300 Legacy Awards scholarships for the children and grandchildren of Elks. Learn more at [enf.elks.org/Leg](http://enf.elks.org/Leg).*

Spotlight Grants shine the light on two important societal issues: literacy and veteran homelessness. Both have long been popular choices for Community Investments Program projects, as evidenced by this photo from Bartlesville, Okla., Lodge No. 1060's reading program, funded by a Gratitude Grant.



## ELKS SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

### SPOTLIGHT GRANT DRIVE

The spotlight is on the CIP's new Spotlight Grant! If you're attending the Elks National Convention, you can shine, too! The ENF is holding a Spotlight Grant Drive and asking Convention attendees to bring a pack of new socks for veterans experiencing homelessness or a new or gently used children's book to promote literacy. Your Lodge will then be entered into a raffle to double the value of its Spotlight Grant to \$4,000.

To enter the raffle, you must donate your item at the ENF booth during Convention. The items will be donated to organizations in the St. Louis area.

Visit [enf.elks.org/StLouis2019](http://enf.elks.org/StLouis2019) to see the ENF's Convention schedule.

As the Community Investments Program expands, we remain committed to our primary mission of investing in Elks communities through grants that energize the membership, encourage former members to return to the fold, and gain the notice of people who want to be part of an organization doing big things.

In 2019-20, we debuted our newest grant, the Spotlight Grant! Every Lodge can use this \$2,000 grant to shine a light on two important issues: family literacy and homelessness among our nation's veterans. For the first time, the CIP will give your Lodge the project plan—there are seven to choose from. The Lodge must pick a plan and implement it.

"Our hope is that by eliminating a barrier to participation, the Spotlight Grant will eventually encourage more Lodges to apply for Beacon Grants," says Lou Sulsberger, Chairman of the ENF Board of Trustees.

#### Literacy

As U.S. teachers will tell you, especially in low-income areas, students are reading below grade level. There are four project plans to target literacy.

Louisiana, Mo., Lodge No. 791 will partner with the Green Country Library to sponsor the Imagination Library, which was launched by country music star Dolly Parton. Parton and her foundation foster a love of reading among preschool children by providing them with a free book every month from birth to the age of 5. The premise is simple: kids who read succeed.



### Veteran Homelessness

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, on any given night, nearly 38,000 veterans are experiencing homelessness. Each with a different story, they all share a common pledge: to support and defend this country. In partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Elks has pledged to help end veteran homelessness and ensure that every veteran has the safe, stable home they deserve. There are three project plans to target veteran homelessness.

Elks at Temple, Texas, Lodge No. 138 are partnering with Lee Crossley Veteran's Community. It's a community of 26 eco-friendly homes specifically for veterans with disabilities and veterans transitioning into permanent housing.

As veterans move into the homes, the Lodge will host housewarming parties, giving the formerly homeless veterans a meaningful welcome to the community.

*The Elks National Foundation is offering Spotlight Grants of \$2,000. To find out more, visit [enf.elks.org/SpotlightGrants](http://enf.elks.org/SpotlightGrants).*



Dover, Del., Lodge No. 1903 has been using its Beacon Grant to provide Welcome Home kits to veterans transitioning out of homelessness.



Nevada City, Calif., Lodge No. 518 uses a Beacon Grant to provide "life packs" to homeless veterans in the area. Spotlight Grants will provide additional resources for Lodges fighting to end veteran homelessness.



Our trips offer Elks scholars a window into a lifetime of service.

## SPRING BREAKERS

Portland, Oregon, may not be the first spring break destination that comes to mind. But if you ask the 12 Elks scholars and alumni who spent their spring break learning, serving and connecting in the Pacific Northwest, they will always remember the time they spent in Portland.

Although they came from all over the country and most were in Portland for the first time, the scholars instantly formed bonds that will last for years to come.

The variety of service the scholars engaged in helped form those bonds by teaching them about different issues the Portland community faces and providing a sense of accomplishment after a hard day's work.

After serving for a week, the group traveled to Milwaukie-Portland, Ore., Lodge No. 142 for a night of food, fellowship and fun.

To watch videos from the week, visit [enf.elks.org/Portland2019](http://enf.elks.org/Portland2019).



Contest Manager Vern Larson of South Dakota (from left) had the best seat in the house as Anthony Thompson of Ohio, Blake Whitley of Virginia, and Cameron Elwer of Ohio battled for the coveted Getty Powell Award for best overall male shooter. Anthony won the matchup of perfect scores.



## WITH PERSISTENCE, EVERYONE'S A WINNER

Aiden Karo raced up the stairs at Roosevelt University's Goodman Center, site of the 2019 Hoop Shoot National Finals on April 27, and then back down. His father cheered him on as he turned and did it again. And again.

Sponsored by Clifton Park, N.Y., Lodge No. 2466, Aiden was filled with nervous energy. The 10- to 11-year-old boys contest was about to begin, and he had worked hard to get back to Chicago.

In last year's Finals for the 8- to 9-year-old boys, Aiden missed only one shot to finish in a three-way tie for first ... only to lose the shoot-off and place third. He was back, but so was the boy who beat him—Anthony Thompson.

Up the stairs. Down the stairs. Dad cheering.

An hour and a half later, Anthony was making the winner's rounds while Aiden and his father were back in the stairwell. His father gently cupped Aiden's face in his hands while Aiden fought back tears. He had missed three shots and finished in a tie for sixth.

This is how the Hoop Shoot season ends for most Finalists. Everyone wants to become a champion during their six years of eligibility, and many Finalists, like Aiden, return year-after-year for one more shot at the title.

While the main event is the contest, the weekend offers much more for the Finalists and their families. When they begin arriving on Thursday, they're greeted by volunteers and Elks staff.



New Regional Director Brandon Wilkins of Colorado congratulates his silver shooter, Molli Kalsbeck of Nebraska. She hit 10 of 10 shots to break a four-way tie for second in the 10- to 11-year-old girls division.

That night, Hoop Shoot attendees did what Elks do best—give back to the community. At Hoop Shoot Assists, the Finalists and their families tied 100 no-sew blankets, which were then donated to V.A. medical centers in Chicago.

The contests began early Saturday morning, each more thrilling than the last. There were nine shoot-offs total to sort the podium. In two cases, Finalists had to be better than perfect to win. In both the Boys 8-9 and 10-11 contests, two Finalists sank all 25 shots.

Like Aiden, every Finalist entered the Goodman Center hoping to walk out with one of the six gold medals. While most Finalists go home empty-handed, all of them—those who won and those who didn't, those with eligibility remaining and those who have aged out—leave with a fierce determination to do better next year.

The end is just the beginning of another journey, and every fall season is a chance to start over. Up the stairs, down the stairs. And again.

*More photos on the following page.*



Why reinvent the wheel? Yinuo Wang of Florida and the other Finalists ran into the Goodman Center to the Alan Parsons Project's "Eye in the Sky."



The Hoop Shooters' trading cards are always a big hit. Here, Dierks Kegler of Kansas shows off his collection. See all the 2019 Finalists' trading cards at [elkshoopshoot.org](http://elkshoopshoot.org).

## 2019 HOOP SHOOT NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

### 8- TO 9-YEAR-OLD AGE-GROUP:

**BLAKE WHITLEY**, sponsored by Richmond, VA, Lodge No. 45

**BREE BESONEN**, sponsored by Copper Country, MI, Lodge No. 404

### 10- TO 11-YEAR-OLD AGE-GROUP:

**ANTHONY THOMPSON**, sponsored by Lebanon, OH, Lodge No. 422

**YINUO WANG**, sponsored by Boca Raton, FL, Lodge No. 2166

### 12- TO 13-YEAR-OLD AGE-GROUP:

**CAMERON ELWER**, sponsored by Lima, OH, Lodge No. 54

**JAMISYN STINSON**, sponsored by New Lexington, OH, Lodge No. 509

### GETTY POWELL WINNERS:

**ANTHONY THOMPSON**, sponsored by Lebanon, OH, Lodge No. 422

**JAMISYN STINSON**, sponsored by New Lexington, OH, Lodge No. 509





Keynote speaker Kendall Coyne Schofield (left) really scored with the Finalists. She handed out the trophies (to Gabby Bradley of Alabama here) and stuck around afterward to sign autographs and pose for pictures with her Olympic gold and silver medalists.

New Yorkers Thomas Goodelle (from left), Aiden Karo and Giovanni Schillaci bonded along the road to Chicago. They're pictured below at Guaranteed Rate Field for Friday night's Finalist Fest.



Hard work and intense focus helped Aiden Karo of New York return to the National Finals after his heart-breaking loss in the shoot-off for last year's national championship in the 8- to 9-year-old boys division.





## SON OF A PREACHER MAN

It might have been around the time he was learning to walk, or maybe when he was putting his first string of words together, that Stephen Barker learned from his father, a preacher, and mother that one of the most important things he could do in life is give back.

When Barker met his late wife, Sue, he knew they were soulmates because of their shared compassion toward the world. After joining Carmichael, Calif., Lodge No. 2103, supporting the Elks National Foundation became their cause.

“When we saw how important the ENF was, we decided that’s our tie,” Barker says.

Barker became a member of the John F. Malley Society and a silver-level donor. He’s had incredible moments with Elks, like attending the ENF Donor Event with his wife in 2017. He’s also relied on the Elks during hard times.

“When my wife died, I got so much comfort from the Elks,” Barker shares. “So much.”

Today, he enjoys spending time with his granddaughter, Ellie. Barker is also excited to catch up with everyone at the 2019 Elks National Convention and says, “See you in St. Louis!”

*Leave your legacy. For additional information about ENF planned giving, please visit [ENFPlannedGiving.org](https://enfplannedgiving.org). To discuss planning a gift to the Elks National Foundation, please contact Kate Keating Edsey at [KateE@elks.org](mailto:KateE@elks.org) or 773/755-4866.*



Stephen and his late wife, Sue, enjoyed the ENF’s donor event at the 2017 Convention in Reno. When Sue passed away, he drew comfort from the Elks.

## SUBSCRIBE TO SEE ELKS IN ACTION

Throughout the years, we’ve made dozens of incredible films showcasing the ENF programs—but there’s always more to share! Stay connected by subscribing to our YouTube channel to watch Elks scholars share what #ElksFamily means to them, see Elks in action building stronger communities across the nation, and so much more!

All you have to do to subscribe is:

1. Create a YouTube account using your email address.
2. Visit our channel at [enf.elks.org/YouTube](https://enf.elks.org/YouTube).
3. Click “Subscribe.”
4. Click the bell to be notified when we post new content.

And stay tuned for a few brand-new ENF films premiering at the Elks National Convention!



**SUPPORT THE GREAT HEART OF ELKDOM!**

Visit [enf.elks.org/HBSpring](https://enf.elks.org/HBSpring), and your online donation will be put to work immediately in Elks communities!

## ASK THE ENF...

**Q**

What’s the best way to stay connected and up to date on all things ENF?  
—ENF Fan in El Cajon, California

**A**

Dear ENF Fan:

We’re so glad you want to stay connected with the Elks National Foundation. We post news stories, videos, photos, infographics and more on our social media channels. Our Facebook page is updated daily, and we also have YouTube, Twitter and Instagram pages. To stay connected, visit [enf.elks.org/Social](https://enf.elks.org/Social).

Have a question for the ENF? Email us at [enf@elks.org](mailto:enf@elks.org).

# FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

We salute the following members of the 2018-19 Foundation Fellowship who contributed \$1,000 or more to the Foundation from April 1, 2018, through March 31, 2019. To learn more about the Foundation Fellowship and to view the benefits for each level, visit [enf.elks.org/fellowship](http://enf.elks.org/fellowship).

( + Denotes deceased member; \* Denotes Named Scholarship donor; ^ Denotes ENF Trustee)

## CHARITY (\$10,000)

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John J. Williams

## HOPE (\$5,000)

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