



Today's students are encouraged to dive into collegiate life, but they aren't always prepared to address the stress and isolation that can accompany "the best years" of their lives. Elks scholar opportunities—like the Elks scholar service trips—can help provide support. This photo was taken at the inaugural service trip in 2015.

## STUDENTS ASK: ARE THESE "THE BEST YEARS?"

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ENF

SUPPORT THE GREAT HEART OF ELKDOM!

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

There's an epidemic on college campuses today. It's been all over the news; several studies and new books point to an increase in mental health issues among college students.

Over a recent five-year period, the Center for Collegiate Mental Health reported a 30 percent increase in students seeking appointments at counseling centers. Sixty-one percent of those students reported anxiety; 49 percent, depression; and 45 percent, stress.

In its fall 2018 survey of college students, the American College Health Association reported that 68 percent of the respondents had felt very sad in the past year, 63 percent had felt very lonely, 62 percent had felt overwhelming anxiety, 53 percent had felt hopeless, and 11 percent had contemplated suicide. Compared with the same survey 10 years earlier, these numbers represent increases of 6.6 percent, 5.9 percent, 26.9 percent, 13 percent, and a frightening 76.6 percent, respectively.

The October episode of the *Midday with the ENF* podcast—titled "The Best Years?"—explores the mental health epidemic and some of its causes. You can tune in at [enf.elks.org/midday](http://enf.elks.org/midday).

In the meantime, as an ENF donor, you should be proud that your donations are helping students navigate their college years. Through the Hoop Shoot, for example,

*see Best Years, continued on page 2*





#ElksFamily is more than just a hashtag—it's the friendships, communities and connections that grow from the ENF's scholarship programs and scholar opportunities.

*Best Years, continued from page 1*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2019:

**DECEMBER 3:**  
Giving Tuesday

**DECEMBER 31:**  
CIP Applications Close

2020:

**JANUARY 5-11:**  
Winter Elks Scholar Service Trip  
in San Diego

**JANUARY 31:**  
Legacy Contest Deadline  
(11:59 a.m. CT)

**MARCH 15-21:**  
Spring Elks Scholar Service Trip  
in Appalachia (Wheeling, W.Va.)

**MARCH 31:**  
2019-20 Fiscal Year Donation  
Deadline

**APRIL 16-19:**  
Hoop Shoot National Finals

**April 23-26:**  
MVS Leadership Weekend

we're helping children develop resiliency, a critical social-emotional competency that will help them deal with adversity when they transition to college.

While our scholarships reduce some of the stress associated with paying for the soaring cost of college, there are ancillary benefits as well.

We endeavor to be more than just an ATM for our scholars. We're not just writing checks—we are building a community. Our scholars join an Elks family, and we reinforce that connection and foster its growth through service trips, on-campus meetups, networking, side-by-side service with Elks, and other positive interactions with the membership. Our goal is to turn Elks scholars into champions of the Order, but this community we're building also fights feelings of isolation and despair.

A recent note from Gaby Haire, one of the top 20 Most Valuable Students from 2015 and a veteran of four Elks Scholar Service Trips, articulates what the Elks scholar community means to our scholars. She graduated in May, is gainfully employed, and just joined the Fidelity Club.

"It didn't take long for me to identify the Elks as one of the organizations to which I wanted to give," Gaby wrote. "My Elks scholarship and the service trips and friendships that followed have benefitted me in too many ways to list."

Just as your donations help our program beneficiaries in more ways than you know.



Elks at the Saratoga-Wilton Lodge take the meaning of “Elks Care, Elks Share” to new heights—the Seniors in Need Food Delivery program grew from a single Elk’s caring gesture into a shared community endeavor.



## ELKS PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE

Saratoga-Wilton, N.Y., Lodge No. 161 wants to end food insecurity among seniors in their community. With the help of a \$10,000 Impact Grant, the Lodge is well on its way to achieving greater community awareness and expanding its dedicated food delivery program.

The Seniors in Need Food Delivery program started in September 2017 when Ben Buffa, the chair of the Lodge’s Senior Outreach Committee, moved into a senior apartment complex and noticed some of his neighbors struggled to meet their own needs.

“A lot of people in their 80s to early 90s were having a hard time and were living close to the poverty line, maybe even below,” Buffa says. “A lot of them didn’t have transportation, and they didn’t have family members around to support them.”

*see Food, continued on page 4*



## GET CONNECTED ON YOUTUBE!

Over the past few years, we’ve produced dozens of incredible films showcasing the ENF’s programs—and 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 build stronger communities across the nation, and much more!

Follow these steps to subscribe:

1. Visit our channel at [enf.elks.org/YouTube](http://enf.elks.org/YouTube).
2. Log in or create a YouTube account using your email address.
3. Click “subscribe.”
4. Tap the bell to be notified when we post new content.

Stay tuned for brand-new ENF films premiering all the time.

## ASK THE ENF...

**Q** At the Opening Ceremony in St. Louis, the Grand Exalted Ruler [Mike Luhr] asked us to help restore the Pearl Harbor National Memorial. Where can I find more information on the project? If I donate, will I get credit?

—Curious in Culver City

**A** Dear Curious: Thank you for your interest in supporting the Elks’ Pearl Harbor Campaign! For this project, the Order partnered with Pacific Historic Parks, which oversees the memorial. The ENF will collect donations from the membership and write one check to Pacific Historic Parks on behalf of the Elks. Pacific Historic Parks will recognize one donor—the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks—with a plaque at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial.

Gifts to the campaign are tax-deductible contributions to the ENF and will be credited to each donor’s ENF record. However, due to the pass-through nature of this campaign, gifts will not count toward personal ENF recognition programs or per-member-giving calculations.

Learn more at [enf.elks.org/ph](http://enf.elks.org/ph) or make a donation at [enf.elks.org/phc](http://enf.elks.org/phc).

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

## A LASTING LEGACY

Scholarship-seeking season comes to an end on January 31 when the Legacy Awards application closes. Legacy Awards are available to high school seniors who are the children or grandchildren of dues-paying Elks who joined the Order on or before April 1, 2017, or are charter members of a Lodge that was instituted on or after April 1, 2017.

Each Legacy recipient will receive a \$4,000 scholarship distributed over the course of their college career.

Legacy scholars are required to serve with the Elks once per year. They can get involved by rebounding at a Hoop Shoot contest, assisting with Lodge-run projects or Community Investments Program grant projects. The chances for Legacy scholars to serve with their community and learn about the Elks are endless.

Timothy Wilbert, a 2019 Legacy scholar, volunteered with Louisville, Ky., Lodge No. 8—his sponsoring Lodge—and Frankfort, Ky., Lodge No. 530 to take veterans fishing.

“It is a great feeling to help others do what you love to do,” Timothy says. “Serving with the Elks taught me compassion.”

The deadline to apply for Legacy Awards is January 31, 2020, at 11:59 a.m. CT. To learn more, visit [enf.elks.org/leg](http://enf.elks.org/leg).

*Food, continued from page 3*

Buffa reached out to a local food pantry, filled bags of groceries for eight residents, and delivered the groceries directly to them. But, he saw a greater need beyond his apartment complex and decided to get the Elks involved. Today, 20 volunteers pack and deliver groceries to more than 120 seniors.

Twice a month, Elks volunteers call each senior to remind them to place their food order. Volunteers pick up the order forms and pack reusable grocery bags with goods, then they deliver them directly to the program’s community partners. They make follow-up calls, too, ensuring seniors have their needs met with each delivery.

“This program has made a huge impact in our community,” says Deborah McCabe Reedy, PER of the Saratoga-Wilton Lodge and a volunteer with the program. “Not only has it brought our members closer together, but it has also brought our community closer together. It’s an incredible feeling packing the food and delivering to those who really need it.”

The Saratoga-Wilton Lodge was one of 17 new Impact Grant projects in 2019. The Lodge uses the \$10,000 grant to purchase “senior-friendly” food, fresh produce and personal care items. The Impact Grant is just the start for the Lodge’s long-term vision for the program.

“To accomplish our goals, we need [to] recruit additional volunteers, partner with a fourth food pantry, partner with at [least] two more senior apartments, and reach out to other Lodges to help them understand the critical need to reduce food insecurity,” Buffa says. “We also look forward to working with any Elks Lodge interested in creating a similar program in their community.”

*The Elks National Foundation helps Lodges serve their communities in significant and ongoing ways by awarding Impact Grants of up to \$10,000. To find out more about Impact Grants and the Community Investments Program, visit [enf.elks.org/ImpactGrants](http://enf.elks.org/ImpactGrants).*



**Ben Buffa, center, assesses farm-fresh produce from one of the program’s 18 community partners. For the Saratoga-Wilton Lodge, these partnerships are just the start.**





Mother-daughter duo Paula and Kaylee King know how to sink a basket. Paula (left) won a Hoop Shoot National Championship in 1991. Twenty-eight years later, she watched Kaylee strive for the same title at the 2019 Hoop Shoot National Finals.

## HOOP SHOOT FAMILY TRADITION

The year is 1991. Paula King, an eighth-grader from Ellington, Missouri, stands in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts. There, the Elks Hoop Shoot National Finalist looks upon the exact spot her name would later be inscribed after she wins a National Championship.

Fast-forward 28 years—Paula sits on the sidelines at the 2019 National Finals in Chicago, watching her daughter Kaylee shoot one shot after another.

“It’s a lot of pressure, but I want to do as good as her—or better, because I’m really competitive,” Kaylee says.

She fell a little short, finishing third with a 23 and four out of five in a shootoff.

“I was very proud of her,” Paula says. “I’d always told her stories about how neat it was when I shot in the Hoop Shoot growing up, and for her to actually experience it herself—I don’t think you truly get the full effect until you actually do it yourself.”

Wayne Bower, a 2019 National Finalist, got the full effect of the Hoop Shoot just two weeks after his father, Jacob, saw the sign for the local contest in their area recreational center.

“The Elks Hoop Shoot was like a religion in our family,” Jacob says.

Jacob is the youngest of five boys, all of whom competed in the Hoop Shoot; his oldest brother competed in the National Finals before Jacob was even born. Jacob’s father, who died when Jacob was 3 years old, encouraged his older sons to participate.

They continued their father’s legacy, ensuring that Jacob was ready to go when the time came. He competed every year, from the time he was 8 years old, and he went on to win the National Championship in 1997.

*see Tradition, continued on page 6*



Jacob Bower, a 1997 Hoop Shoot National Champion, and his son, Wayne, a 2019 Hoop Shoot National Finalist, prepare for their moment on the big screen at their Griteo interview.

## GRITEO DEFINED

**grit** \grit\ *noun*

A blend of passion and persistence.

**video** \ˈvi-dē-ō\ *noun*

Films showcasing the ENF’s programs, such as the Hoop Shoot.

**Griteo** \grit-ē-ō\ *noun*

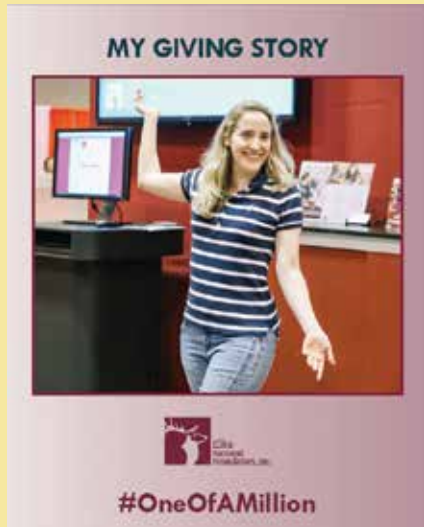
A video about grit, featuring one or more Hoop Shoot National Finalists.

The latest round of Griteos includes a story about father-and-son sharpshooters Jacob and Wayne Bower of Nampa, Idaho. Jacob won the Hoop Shoot National Championship in 1997. He was back at the Finals last April to cheer on his son, Wayne.

During their interview, Jacob reflected on the tough lessons the Hoop Shoot teaches.

“The great thing about this competition is the losing, too,” he says. “I think that teaches you so much. ... The day after I lost [one year], I shot 500 free throws.”

Watch Jacob and Wayne’s Griteo at [enf.elks.org/grit](http://enf.elks.org/grit).



Emulate Erika, a 2006 Legacy scholar and Fidelity Club member whose giving story we recently featured on Facebook, and tell us what makes you #OneOfAMillion.

## ONE OF A MILLION

In October, we launched our One of a Million Giving Story series on Facebook to celebrate friends like you.

Why One of a Million? The Elks National Foundation wasn't built by a small number of people donating large sums of money. It was built by a large number—more than 1.5 million!—donating mostly small sums of money. Over the years, your donations have totaled nearly \$270 million!

We'd love to hear from more of the million. To share what inspires you to support the ENF visit [enf.elks.org/ooam](http://enf.elks.org/ooam).



Wayne Bower, pictured with his mother, Rachel, is the next generation practicing the family religion. He continued the family legacy at the 2019 Hoop Shoot National Finals.

*Tradition, continued from page 5*

“It was an amazing experience,” Jacob says. “I remember as a kid, I loved collecting the trophies.”

Like his father, Wayne loved his Hoop Shoot experience. As he advanced, he had the opportunity to travel to Portland, Oregon, and Chicago—places he'd never been.

Reflecting on their respective successes as National Champions, Jacob and Paula agreed the Hoop Shoot taught them invaluable life lessons—ones they hope Wayne and Kaylee learned, too.

“It teaches hard work, a good work ethic, learning how to deal with things under pressure,” Paula says. “It just teaches kids life experiences that you don't always get to do, especially when you're from a small town.”

*The Elks have been developing gritty kids through the Hoop Shoot program for nearly 50 years. For 2019-20, the Elks National Foundation allocated \$1.1 million to fund the program. For videos, news from the court, and more information about the Hoop Shoot, visit [elks.org/hoopshoot](http://elks.org/hoopshoot).*



Jacob Bower loved collecting Hoop Shoot trophies—including his own championship trophy. Now he'll have to make room for the ones Wayne collects, too.



# FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

We salute the following members of the 2019-20 Foundation Fellowship who contributed \$1,000 or more to the Foundation from April 1, 2019, through October 16, 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 ENF Trustee; > Denotes John F. Malley Society;  
\* Denotes Fidelity Club; # Denotes Loyalty Club; < Denotes Named Scholarship donor)

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## JOIN THE CLUB

Once Jim O'Connell started donating to the ENF, he just couldn't bring himself to stop. O'Connell joined the Elks 35 years ago, and he has been supporting the programs he cares about for the past 28 years—making him one of the longest-running members of the Loyalty Club.

"I started donating to the ENF because the amount of scholarships they give out is very impressive," says O'Connell, a member of Billerica, Mass., Lodge No. 2071.

For O'Connell, membership in the Loyalty Club—which is based solely on consecutive annual giving, regardless of donation amounts—means he gladly shows his dedication to the ENF's mission to build stronger communities.

"I stand proud as a supporter of the ENF," O'Connell says.

Beyond being a committed donor, O'Connell dedicates his time to the Lodge in other rewarding ways, like delivering Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas presents to families in need.

"I like when we give back to our community," O'Connell says. "[We're] an organization that is like family to others."

Visit [enf.elks.org/LoyaltyClub](http://enf.elks.org/LoyaltyClub) to learn more.

A 501c3 public charity, the Elks National Foundation helps Elks build stronger communities through programs that support youth, serve veterans, and meet needs in areas where Elks live and work. **Heartbeat** is the Elks National Foundation's official newsletter. For more information about featured *Heartbeat* articles or to suggest items to be included in an upcoming issue of *Heartbeat*, please contact the ENF at 773/755-4728 or [enf@elks.org](mailto:enf@elks.org).

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## STAY CONNECTED!



Open this issue of *Heartbeat* to read about how the Elks are working to end food insecurity ... and much more!

