Elizabeth Tolrud is this year’s winner of the Bruce and Jacqueline Cook Scholarship. Elizabeth, the daughter of Michael and Carol Tolrud, was the valedictorian of her class at Owosso High School, President of the Youth Advisory Committee at the Shiawassee Community Foundation and President of the Model United Nations. She has been admitted to the Honors College at the University of Michigan and plans to pursue an education and career in the environmental field.

Scholarships Continue to Open Doors

The Cook Family Foundation annually recognizes the leaders and best among high school students in the greater Shiawassee region and helps them to attend the University of Michigan.

This fall, 21 area graduates are receiving scholarships to UM in Ann Arbor and, in an expansion of the Foundation’s scholarship program, another 13 are starting their college careers at UM-Flint with help from the Foundation (see page 2).

For over 40 years, the Cook Family Foundation has worked with the University of Michigan to make it possible and affordable for Shiawassee area students to get a college education from one of the top public universities in the world. For the last 16 years, Bruce and Jackie Cook have coordinated student recruitment efforts with the Foundation to award their own four-year, full-tuition scholarship.

Change is underway at the Cook Family Foundation with a revised vision and mission, new staff, and plans for the future. Read more at our website: www.cookfamilyfoundation.org
Off to Ann Arbor, and to Flint

The Cook Family Foundation works with students from 10 high schools in the greater Shiawassee region, as well as county residents that attend other high schools and home-schooled students.

In 2021, the valedictorians from five local schools are attending the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The Foundation provides a scholarship to any Shiawassee area student admitted to UM-Ann Arbor. This year, 21 students from Shiawassee high schools are scholarship recipients.

The Foundation has expanded its scholarship program to help academically talented students attend UM-Flint. This year, 13 students have met the criteria for admission to the Honors Program at UM-Flint and have been awarded a scholarship. The proximity and lower cost of UM-Flint makes it an attractive starting place for students who may choose to transfer to Ann Arbor to complete their undergraduate degree; other students may find the special programs and opportunities at UM-Flint best meet their educational goals.

The Cook Family Foundation serves as a resource for high school students interested in a top tier university education. In addition to personal counseling and assistance, the Foundation provides tours, online Zoom sessions, and support for the financial aid process. You can learn more about this process and find an online scholarship application on our website, or by calling Bruce Cook at 989-725-1621.

For more information on how to apply for a scholarship, visit our website at www.cookfamilyfoundation.org/scholarships/

Foundation Grows

An expansion of scholarship programs is only one of several steps the Cook Family Foundation is taking to prepare for the future.

Recently, the board revised and reaffirmed our mission and vision. Perhaps more importantly, we have adopted three values to guide our decisions.

1) Be Inclusive
2) Have Integrity; and
3) Make True Impact.

These values help us more clearly communicate to the community we serve, provide guidance to our grantees, and remind ourselves of our legacy and commitments. You can read more at www.cookfamilyfoundation.org/our-mission/

In addition, we have hired a new staff person to add capacity to our work. Kerry Dutcher, after many successful years in health care administration, has joined our long-time Associate Director Yvette Collard to better serve students, nonprofits organizations, and our community.
Despite the challenges of a pandemic, the Shiawassee Regional Education Service District (SRESD) has continued the Shiawassee Scholars program for the County’s most academically talented students in their high school careers.

With financial support from the Cook Family Foundation, the Shiawassee Scholars Program provides resources to academically talented high school students to reach their full potential. Students are identified in eighth grade by achieving the highest scores in the county on the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test). This year we have 53 students that are participating in the Shiawassee Scholar program.

Shiawassee Scholars participate in several programs to prepare them for a college education. Through high school, Scholars have the opportunity to attend in-person and online informational sessions regarding planning for college and career, get assistance with dual enrollment options and accelerated academic programs, practice their test-taking skills, and apply for a scholarship for a summer academic program.

Shiawassee Scholars 2021 Inductees
Graduating Class of 2025

Byron
Devon Bailey
Zerik Crawford
Emma Davis
Samuel McIntosh

Corunna
Jack Challender
Robert Donley
Logan Fox
Paul Galesk
Alexis Golab
Aidan Lavery
Emerson Massey
Alan Mrva
Aiden Nellis
Jaxon Strauch
Makani Tenorio
Dayne Zeeman

Durand
Isabelle Cooper
Joseph Maciak
Alison Walter

Laingsburg
Maris Brown
Kaitlyn Laing
Evelyn Logghe
Andrew Park
Felix Ramirez
Emily Rathka
Gavin Snider-Brown
Emma West

Morrice
Mackenzie Botimer

New Lothrop
Alexis Andres
Dalton Birchmeier
William Birkmeier
Stone Elkins
Olivia Gillett
Kyle Gillie
Rylee Handley
Victoria Henige
Matthew Hughes
Isabella Kanine
Ashlyn Orr

Owosso
Charles Agnew
Alice Banghart
Zayne Bentley
Simon Erfourth
Sophia Lawrence
Jordan Newman
Joshua Pearl
Delaina Peterson
Aiden Woodruff

Perry
Jocelyn Hessling
Will Loos
Hazel Stone

Salem Lutheran
Lydia Atkins
Grace Steiger

For more information on the program, contact Renee Dotson at the SRESD at dotson@sresd.org, 989-743-3471 or visit the Career and College section of their website at sresd.org
Several Sources of Support

The University of Michigan provides more financial aid than any other higher education institution in the State.

The Go Blue Guarantee is a promise of free tuition to any family earning less than $65,000 and the University bridges the gap between what any family is able to afford (as determined by federal eligibility rules, i.e. FAFSA) and the cost of attending the University.

In addition, UM provides several specific scholarships, such as the Donald Cook scholarship. Named after the Foundation's benefactor, a 1924 graduate of UM School of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LS&A), the scholarship provides $5,000 a year to a Shiawassee area student. The Cook Family Foundation is committed to helping students from the Shiawassee region receive the maximum amount of financial aid and scholarship support.

Jordan Hitchens, the valedictorian of Ovid-Elsie High School, is this year’s recipient of the Donald Cook Scholarship, which was presented by Tom Cook and Dr. Anne Curzan, the Dean of the College of Literature, Sciences and the Arts. She had significant academic accomplishments at her school, with AP and dual enrollment classes through Lansing Community College. She intends to eventually attend medical school in the future to study psychiatry. Jordan is an accomplished artist and has been President of the National Art Honor Society. She is the daughter of Miranda and Williams Hitchens.