

## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

### SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS 2015 -2016

Four Scholarships were awarded for 2015-2016 academic year

One scholarship funded by the interest generated by CSUFWA account in the Endowment Foundation was awarded by the University General Scholarship Selection Committee. We will be informed of the recipient in order to invite him/her to the Fall Coffee.

Three additional scholarships worth \$1000 each from our EECU scholarship account were awarded to the following students:

**Alexandra Gallo** - *Alexandra is a Junior majoring in Political Science and Communications. Her family life was fractured at an early age by a father plagued by substance abuse but she was able to reach out and make friends who supported her and gave her security. At 18 she was homeless and lived with her friends on a rotating basis. Uprooting from her home in Hollister and coming to Fresno State proved to be another challenge. However she has been able to find a niche in this new community. By volunteering at the Bulldog Pantry, the Ronald McDonald House and Camp Kesem for children affected by cancer as well as becoming an Ambassador for the Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning she is realizing how satisfying it is to help other people. She plans to become a lawyer and represent young people who seek help as she did when she was younger.*

**Claudia Garcia** – *Claudia is a Junior majoring in the Nursing Program. She was born in Miami, the granddaughter of Cuban refugees and was brought up with a strong sense of responsibility towards family and community. Her immediate family faced many financial difficulties so she decided to work fulltime after high school to help support her family while taking classes at the community college. After her stepfather had a stroke she became his primary caretaker ensuring that he attended physical therapy sessions and organizing the family's finances. She was finally able to finish her Associate's degree at Consumnes River College and transfer to the Nursing Program at Fresno State. Her admiration of the nurses and the care they gave her stepfather during his recovery made her realize that nursing was the profession she wanted to join. She plans to work in the health care system to help heal others both physically and emotionally*

**Nicole Owens** – *Nicole is a Junior majoring in Sociology. She has turned her life around after a tumultuous period following the death of her father from a heart attack and her mother's severe bipolar disorder. Her loss at that time led to addictive behavior culminating in a short prison sentence and the loss of her son to Child Protective Services. Since then she has completed a rehabilitation program, regained full custody of her son and completed an Associate's Degree at Fresno City College. She plans to get her Bachelor's degree in Sociology at Fresno State followed by a Master's degree in Social Work. Her long term goal is to use her education and experiences to help individuals facing difficulties that leave them feeling helpless.*

**Melissa Frelka** – *Melissa is a Senior majoring in Mechanical Engineering. After a rocky start to her college career at UC Riverside where homesickness and becoming a mother adversely affected her grades, she turned her academics around at Reedley College. Now at Fresno State in the Lyles College of Engineering she has been invited to join two honorary societies based on her academic excellence. She has always been interested in learning how things work and is planning a career in the food industry, particularly in equipment design and production systems. Juggling an internship at Odwalla Inc., course work and motherhood has not been easy and she is justifiably proud of her ability to succeed in all three areas.*