

October 18, 2023

NC Small Grain Growers Association
Nikki Johnson
5961 US Highway 264 E
Greenville, NC 27834-5376

Dear Ms. Nikki Johnson:

We are honored to share the extraordinary impact that donors have had on the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS). It is no surprise that our vibrant community of students, faculty and staff continues to shine brightly in teaching, research and extension. Privately funded endowments are our college's beacon and provide extraordinary opportunities for our students. Scholarships help us prepare students to thrive in a diverse, global marketplace – and to pursue cutting-edge research on campus and on 18 research stations across the state. These investments not only help address financial burdens but also give students the confidence that they will continue on to successful careers.

For the 2023-24 academic calendar year, CALS was able to award over **850** scholarships, totaling more than **\$1.8 million!** In addition, student enrollment at CALS increased this past academic year. For the Fall 2023 semester, CALS has 3,790 students enrolled across the college.

Included on the following page(s) is the information we hope you find informative and enjoyable to read. The 2023-24 student scholarship recipients have taken the time to tell you a little bit more about themselves, as well as the impact scholarships have had on their educational journeys.

If you have any questions in regard to this letter or scholarship(s), please reach out to Catrina Moretz, Assistant Director of Stewardship and Communications, at (919) 513-3463 or at ckmoretz@ncsu.edu.

Once again, thank you for supporting our students and the future of North Carolina agriculture and life sciences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sluph" or "Sluphy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sonia H. Murphy
Assistant Dean
CALS Advancement

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garey Fox", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Garey Fox
Dean
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Aliyah Warris

Crop Science

Master's Student

Why NC State?

I decided to attend NC State because I was interested in pursuing a graduate degree in the agricultural sciences. NC State is one of the two North Carolina land-grant institutions with an excellent program. Growing up in communities that suffered from food insecurity and developing my passion for the sciences, I was driven to pursue a higher education in crop science.

Message of Gratitude

I am extremely grateful to be presented with this opportunity. Without this scholarship, I would not have been able to attend graduate school here at North Carolina State University. This scholarship will allow me to dedicate my time to graduate research in the Crop Science department without having to be employed to support myself.

Think and Do

In my undergraduate years at UNC - Greensboro, I served as the head officer and president of the Beta Beta Beta Biology Club. I organized local stream clean-ups, tree-plantings, mentorship of undergraduate students and helped to start a local community garden to help the food insecurity in the surrounding areas. The biology club is still active at the university today.

NC STATE
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College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences

NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Jackson Chandler

Crop and Soil Sciences

Senior

Why NC State?

I grew up on two different NC State agricultural research stations, where I gained an affection toward working in agriculture. This made choosing to go to NC State an easy decision, and I am majoring in agronomy.

Think and Do

For the past two years, I have worked as an undergraduate research assistant for the soybean extension team under Dr. Rachel Vann. This past summer, I continued working for the program and expanding my knowledge and experience in agriculture.

Message of Gratitude

I am honored to be selected for this scholarship. This scholarship will help me pursue my academic endeavors to be able to graduate next spring. Your support will allow me to come out of school with less debt, and for that, I am sincerely grateful. The money I saved will go toward my savings for my first home.

NC STATE
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NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Jenna Taylor

Crop and Soil Sciences

Junior

Why NC State?

Once I decided I wanted to be in ag, NC State was the only option that was perfect for me! Not only is the Crop Science program one of a kind and the perfect match for me, it is also super close to my hometown so, I am still able to go home and visit my horses, family, and local 4-H club! NC State has helped me make friends that will last a lifetime and that has allowed me countless hands-on experiences working with row crops and I couldn't be more thankful for that!

Think and Do

I love to help out with STEM summer camps at my local community college and have been doing so since my junior year of high school. Since becoming a student at NCSU I have become heavily involved in the NCSU Agronomy Club. I was elected to be the club president for 2023 and have enjoyed creating more opportunities for the club and department to work together and get to know each other on a more personal level. Next semester I hope to offer more opportunities and experience for our club to reach out and help the local community learn more about agriculture.

Message of Gratitude

Thank you for offering this scholarship and providing me with the chance to continue my education with much less stress. By being awarded this scholarship I am able to focus less on working and more heavily on my academic studies and my club officer position. To me this scholarship is an opportunity to work less and enjoy my studies more, thank you!

NC STATE
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and Life Sciences

NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Isayara Valverde-Vindas

Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems

Senior

Why NC State?

I was raised in a rural town in Costa Rica. Because it was such a small town, my mother worried our opportunities in life would be limited, so she decided to move to the United States where opportunities were almost everywhere. Moving to Hillsborough, NC helped me figure out who I wanted to become and what I wanted to do in life. Thanks to my high school my love for agriculture started to blossom and flourish. I was able to join FFA. When it came time to choose a university to apply to I knew I wanted to go to a school that had an emphasis on agriculture. I knew NC State would be the right choice for me. And I have never been happier with that decision. I have learned so much in the past four years at NC State and once I graduate I will be so excited to use what I have learned to help make the world a better place for us all. My love for helping people and my desire to work in the agricultural sector were one of the main reasons I decided to major in Crop and Soil Science. With this new found knowledge I hope to be able to help fix the world's problem of food insecurity and bettering the lives of those around the world. I hope to do great things with this major later in life.

Think and Do

During my time at NC State I hope to help the community around me. While I learn from the classes I take, I wish to use that knowledge and help find solutions for problems within the community at NC State and even far beyond. I want to be able to do good while I am a student at State because I know they care for their students and have the resources and staff to help them all succeed.

Message of Gratitude

Words can not describe the overwhelming feeling I had after receiving the news I had been selected to receive this scholarship. Thank you for being such a wonderful donor and providing students like me the chance to achieve their academic goals and dreams. Because of you I will be able to complete my last year at NC State without any financial burdens. Not only do I thank you but also my friends and family who know about my desire to earn my degree and fulfill my dreams of working in agriculture in the near future. Once again, I thank you for this great gift you have given me. I truly appreciate it.

NC STATE
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NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Garrett Johnson

Crop and Soil Sciences

Junior

Why NC State?

I am a junior majoring in crop and soil sciences with a concentration in agronomy. I am minoring in agribusiness management. I grew up on a small family farm in Johnston County that taught me a lot about agriculture and the importance of a strong work ethic. It has been my dream from a young age to attend NC State. I appreciate this school's strong passion for agriculture and being able to connect with professionals in my home state. NC State is a wonderful institution, and I am enjoying my time as a student. Growing up on a small farm sparked my interest in farming and seeking the best practices to be successful in agriculture at NC State felt right.

Think and Do

My degree from NC State will prepare me to contribute to my local farming communities by helping farmers with precision agronomics and crop consulting as an agronomist.

Message of Gratitude

I would like to say thank you to for this scholarship and the opportunities it will provide. This generous gift will assist me in achieving my educational goals in agronomy at NC State University. With this degree I can help farmers be successful through recommendations based on sound agronomic practices I learn at NC State. I am very thankful to be the recipient of this award and I appreciate this support.

NC STATE
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NC Small Grain Growers Association Scholarship

Mercedes Ledbetter

Agricultural Education

Freshman

Why NC State?

I graduated from Southern Nash High School and in my free-time I love to read and spend time with my family. Many of my family members attended NC State University and my parents actually met there! My grandpa, uncle, and dad were or still is an agriculture teacher, which has been a large influence in my life. Having been in FFA and taken most of the agriculture classes provided to me, I learned that I have a passion for teaching people about agriculture and how important it is. NC State is the top school in the state for agriculture and I believe that going here will set me up for success.

Think and Do

In high school, I was involved with Beta Club, FCA and FFA. In middle school, I joined Girl Scouts and was heavily involved through high school. I play the electric bass on my church praise team and I am the president of our youth group as well as a member of the church council and church park committee. All of these activities are things I love to do and have given me countless opportunities for service, learning and growth.

Message of Gratitude

Thank you so much for the opportunity to receive this scholarship! I am beyond grateful for your support and investment in my future. This scholarship will not only help me gain the education needed to become an agriculture teacher in North Carolina but also relieve some of the financial stress associated with college. Thank you once again for your generosity, I will not let you down!

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