

# The HAMMIESPHERE



Alexander Hamilton Scholars' Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 3 | Fall 2021

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Sponsors



(Pictured top, from left to right: Mikala Lain ['15], Kelly Herrington, Elias Olson, Bre Legan ['13], George Cox, Jonny Louangrath; Bottom: Carolyn Cox, Lynell Engelmyer, Angela Hedwall)

Can you believe this is the first time we've had the entire team together since 2020? It was a special opportunity to reconnect and wish our Marketing & Volunteer Manager Bre Legan ('13) well on their journey as a Trinity Fellow & Master's Degree Candidate in Social Justice & Communications at Marquette University.

Are we connected on social media?  
Don't miss out on exciting scholar  
news, program updates and ways to  
support Hammies!

   @hamiltonscholars

Alex asks





## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy Fall, Hamilton Community!

Our third quarter of 2021 sees our team concluding three very successful virtual Leader Weeks with our Scholars — Seattle Leader Week — College Readiness/Transition for 2020 Scholars, New York Leader Week College Application/Welcome for 2021 Scholars, and International Leader Week Global Citizenship/Cultural Humility for 2019 Scholars.

As we enter fall — a time of transition — foliage changes, sunlight shifts, shirts are traded for cozy sweaters, and schools go into full swing as their fall term starts. This fall also has seen a continued rise in hate crimes, our front-line workers continuing to navigate the realities of COVID-19 & the Delta variant, as well as Hurricane Ida, and forest fires — my hope for all of our communities is a safe return to their campuses, continued access to vaccinations, and resources to navigate precarious times.

- We welcomed new Alumni Board members
- We refreshed our organizational values

- You helped us exceed our June Gala goals, raising \$262K

### Our Scholars are always so inspiring:

- 2013 Hammie and former team member, Bre Legan, was selected as a Trinity Fellow at Marquette University as they start their Master's degree in Social Justice & Communication
- 2014 Hammie and Alumni Board Treasurer, Kenneth Brown, has begun his Masters in Higher Education and Student Affairs at Indiana University
- 2015 Hammie, Nereyda Luna, published their first book and led a spectacular session on Cultural Relativism and Humility for our 2018 Hammies
- 2015 Hammie and Program Director, Mikala Lain, completed Seattle Works Agents of Change Program
- 2016 Hammie and former AHS intern, Lona Nguyen, has started her Masters in Education Policy & Social Analysis at Columbia University, Teachers College
- 2017 Hammie, Trinity Nguyen, was selected as a Mattel Intern
- 2019 Hammie, Bukola Rinola, was selected as Emerge Scholar Intern at Oak Street Health

May each of you find safe ways to connect with those you care about in fellowship and lifelong learning. May you find joy in both the small and large moments and transitions of fall.

All my best,

Angela

Dr. Angela Hedwall

## SPOTLIGHT / AHS STAFF

### Elias Olson

Communications & Data Coordinator



We welcomed Elias Olson this past April as AHS' Communications & Data Coordinator; Olson, a recent graduate from Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA, brings his background in public relations, journalism and data analytics to AHS at the perfect time to guide our organization in expanding brand awareness through hard data and metrics.

"From writing for local newspapers to marketing in the small business world, I've been eager to find my place where I can make a difference," Olson said. "AHS' focus on closing the opportunity gap through access to higher education drew me in."

Olson shared that his own educational journey took a radical turn for the better thanks to Running Start, a Washington State dual-enrollment program that allows high school juniors and seniors to take college level classes at their local community college.

"I thought I wanted to be a lawyer," Olson said. "I wasn't sure what I wanted to do or who I wanted to be — being a lawyer seemed like a good default."

Through Running Start, Olson participated in student government and the school newspaper at Olympic College (OC) in Bremerton, WA — where he found his love for writing and communicating to students. Soon enough, Olson's default plan changed, just in time for him to graduate with his associates degree and his high school diploma.

With a better idea of his educational path, Olson began his final two years of school to complete his Bachelor's Degree in Journalism with a Concentration in Public Relations.

Through the mentorship of my high school counselor and the opportunities available at OC, I found my path in life. It made the difference between being saddled with a mountain of debt and being able to pursue my passion.

Now, at AHS I can pay it forward.

Since joining AHS, Olson brought livestreaming to our Annual Gala Fundraiser, participated in three virtual Leader Weeks, and is codifying our social media metrics to guide new platform specific strategy.

Looking ahead, Olson welcomes his first intern later this September as he takes over management from former Marketing & Volunteer Manager Bre Legan ('13).

### A closer look:

Favorite thing about working from home?

My dogs, Beau and Pete, sleeping at my feet during meetings





# PROGRAMMING

## Updates

This summer, Leader Week sessions, internship support, and making Hammie connections packed Hamilton Scholars' Programming! Staff coordinated three impactful virtual Leader Weeks for rising high school seniors, college first-years, and college second-years.

31 Hamilton Scholars attended New York Leader Week to gear up for the college application season; together they formed lifelong bonds as a cohort, and learned from our advisors, speakers, and alumni. We're SO excited to welcome them to the HamFam and can't wait to watch them grow!

"NYLW was an opportunity to share our authentic selves to our peers," A 2021 Hammie shared. "It truly bolstered an inclusive and safe space to learn about the college admission process while also learning about ourselves."

"The #1 message I took from NYLW is there are people out there who love, support, and care about me and want to help me succeed in life," another 2021 Scholar shared. "I can't express how grateful I feel for finding people who care about my authentic self."

Other updates from our Programming team:

- Financial literacy, cultural humility, mental health, and AHS Personal Development Plan workshops were a hit with our other cohorts.
- Ahead, Programming gears up for a FULL year of tailored conference calls and supplemental series relating to professional development, DEI, and our five curriculum pillars: transition, heritage, empowerment, financial literacy, and leadership.
- Building off the momentum from summer Leader Weeks—staff is hard at work ensuring we support Hammies in all areas of their lives as they transition to in-person and hybrid classes. Next, we'll reconnect the 2018 cohort (i.e., college sophomores) for Texas Leader Week in November!
- The HamFam is reconnecting far and wide—with students and alumni meeting up all over the country in Seattle, New York City, Washington, Houston, San Francisco, and more! Our strength and connectedness are as strong as ever.

## Internships

We've supported 7 Hamilton Scholars with \$14,867 for their independent internships this summer! These Hammies gained valuable experiences as we funded their internships in laboratory research, DEI curriculum, sexuality education, or legal support services for undocumented asylum-seekers.

Our partnerships hosted Hammie interns too, like JUMA Ventures (Josue '19), New York Historical Society (Ashley '19), and Mattel (Trinity '17). Also, summer program intern (Munahil '18) and Rainier Scholar intern (Donaji) assisted in summer operations by mentoring younger Hammies, facilitating bonding sessions, providing mental health resources, and updating curriculum for increased accessibility. We're so grateful for their support this season!

Looking forward, the Hamilton Communications team is onboarding our first social media marketing intern this autumn, Paulina Lopez-Castillo! Paulina will bolster communications content and social media—while providing vital perspective to staff operat

## Emergency Fund Breakdown

Between June 1 and August 25, AHS released \$6,060 to six scholars to assist with DACA applications, accessible technology, secure housing, and medical bills.

<b>Q2-Q3</b>	<b>\$6,060</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$15,378</b>

<b>DACA applications</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Accessible technology</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Secure housing</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Medical bills</b>	<b>17%</b>





## Hammie News

### First Self-Published Book Nereyda Luna, 2015



Nereyda ('15) recently self-published their first book, *Sidewalk Daydreams*. The book is a meditation on Luna's trans feminine experience through poetry, prose, and photography.

"This radically narcissistic zine implores you to question the ways you may have been indoctrinated into white supremacist logics, while also bringing you into a trans femme's imagination," Luna shared. "This zine welcomes you to the liminal space trans feminine people reside in between life & death, destruction & creation!"

### Pursuing a Master's in Higher Education and Student Affairs Kenneth Brown, Jr., 2014

2014 Hammie, Kenneth Brown, Jr. is pursuing a Master's in Higher Education and Student Affairs at Indiana University. During his program, he will also serve as a Graduate Supervisor for Diversity Education working on diversity initiatives in IU's Residential Life Department.

This program is consistently ranked one of the top student affairs programs in the nation, and we



could not be more proud of Kenneth for his passion and dedication to equity in education!

"College was a transformative time for me. I know it is and can be for thousands of students out there. I want to be a part of that," Brown said. "The field is undergoing a shift with new modes of learning, asking themselves how can we better serve students in the future. I want to be a part of that. I want to help and pour into others the same way folks have poured into me."

### Pursuing Master's Degree in Education Policy and Social Analysis Lona Nguyen, 2013



2013 Hammie, Lona Nguyen, is pursuing their Master's Degree in Education Policy and Social Analysis at Teachers College, Columbia University.

"I've been able to reach out to anyone I've meet

in the program as both a scholar and a former employee in order to get help and advice for my future plans," Nguyen said. "I never thought Ivy League was ever a possibility, but George has helped push me for over a year now to reach above and give me advice on how to push through and put my strengths forward. Bre, Lynell, Mikala, George, and Alexandra Woods are just the more recent members that have helped me personally through conversation, resume, and application assistance and they couldn't be more helpful!"

### Trinity Fellow & Master's Degree Candidate in Social Justice & Communications Bre Legan, 2013



2013 Hammie and former AHS Marketing & Volunteer Manger, Bre Legan, attends graduate school this fall at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI.

Legan joins a cohort of 12 servant leaders from across the country as part of the fully-funded Trinity Fellows Program, as they pursue a Master's of Arts in Communication with a focus on social justice and advocacy.

Their fellowship matched them with Agricycle Global, a Milwaukee-based organization that they'll be working with over the next two years; Agricycle's vision is eliminating extreme

rural poverty through intentional, low-barrier technologies that empower communities.

### Shine a spotlight

Have exciting news to share? Did you hear about a fellow Hammie's amazing accomplishment? We want to celebrate you! Fill out the spotlight form on our website so we can share the news to our entire community!

[hamiltonscholars.org/spotlight](http://hamiltonscholars.org/spotlight)



### Emerge Scholar Summer Intern at Oak Street Health Bukola Rinola, 2019

2019 scholar, Bukola Rinola, is interning this summer as an EmERGE Scholar at Oak Street Health! Bukola works with clinics and internal partners to address items needed for OSHA (Occupational



Safety and Health Administration) compliance.

"I can't wait to be a part of the wonderful team this summer," Rinola said. "This is only the beginning to my public health journey and experience in helping improve patient and health care workers' health and safety."



## #AutismAcceptanceMonth Employee Spotlight, Warner Media

Vincent Garcia, 2012

2012 scholar, Vincent Garcia, was featured in an employee spotlight earlier in the year during #AutismAcceptanceMonth with Warner Media.

"Living with autism contributed to who I am today,"



Garcia said. "I developed resilience at an early age by improving my learning strategy to excel in school, practice communication skills when doing extracurriculars, and be comfortable solving problems on my own."

[Read more of his conversation.](#)

# DEVELOPMENT

## Employee matching

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match any charitable contributions made by their employees and/or retirees and/or spouses. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, please check with your Human Resources team. If your company is eligible, request a matching gift form from your employer, and send it completed and signed with your gift, and we will do the rest. Your dollars can easily be doubled or tripled!

Some local Seattle employers that do donation matching: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft, Google, Bank of America, King County Employee Giving Program, Amgen, Boeing, Chase, Deloitte, Disney, Morgan Stanley, Paccar, and Verizon.

## Did you know?

There are several ways you can monetarily support AHS passively at no cost to you by selecting AHS as your "Charity of Choice" on these websites:

- Amazon Smile — [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)
- Give with Bing — [bing.com/give](http://bing.com/give)
- Fred Meyer Community Rewards — [fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://fredmeyer.com/communityrewards)

This year we featured multiple Hammie-made items and services including, from top to bottom, Bre Legan's ('13) handmade postcards, Erika So's ('09) Happiness Coaching, and Tyra Edgehill-Parker's ('17) art prints.



## Annual Leadership Gala

Thank you for truly Supporting Scholars Through Community during our Virtual Auction & Fundraiser in June. Your participation in the auction and Raise the Paddle donations helped us raise **\$262,988!** We're looking forward to meeting in-person next summer and cannot wait to see you there!

Your generosity ensures Hamilton Scholars are able to continue receiving leadership and financial literacy training, mentorship, counseling, support with college scholarships and financial aid navigation, internship opportunities, conference calls, accessibility during Virtual Leader Weeks this summer, and direct emergency funding for scholars in crisis due to COVID-19.



# SPONSORS

Our important work is made possible with the generous support of organizations, including:

Morgan Stanley



Alexander Hamilton Scholars' is a Seattle-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit empowering high-achieving, underserved students to succeed in college and career. Our vision is to build leaders of character who will improve our nation and our world through their service, innovation, and excellence. Our five-year program provides these students with a comprehensive network of support and guidance as they transition from high school to college, and college to career.

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