



Press Release from Proven Winners®

For more information, please contact:

Kate Spirgen

B2B Marketing Specialist

Proven Winners®

kspirgen@provenwinners.com

779.222.0518

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Proven Winners® Announces 2023 Scholarship Winners

Four dedicated students will receive financial assistance totaling \$18,000.

[DeKalb, IL] – [Jan. 16, 2024] – As part of its mission to support the future of the green industry, Proven Winners® is proud to announce the winners of its 2023 scholarship program. The recipients were chosen for their passion for the industry and demonstrated excellence in their respective fields of study.

This is the ninth year Proven Winners has enjoyed helping horticulture students advance their education in the horticulture field. Once again, the applicants have impressed and inspired the selection committee. “This year’s scholarship recipients show us that the future of horticulture is bright,” says Kevin Hurd, Proven Winners vice president of product development. “We’re excited to follow their journeys and see their future contributions to the industry.”

This year, Proven Winners renamed its grower scholarship as the Rick Schoellhorn Grower Excellence Scholarship in honor of Dr. Richard Kent Schoellhorn, retired director of new products, who passed late last year. The scholarship memorializes Rick’s passion for horticulture as an educator, consultant, speaker and consummate plantsman.

This year’s winners are:



Proven Winners® Innovations in Horticultural Marketing Scholarship
Maci Carter, University of Delaware
\$5,000

“I have a passion for horticulture and an interest in marketing, which allows me to help my family’s produce and flower stand succeed. Through my experience working for my family business, promotional ideas and passion for flowers, I believe that I can make a difference in the horticulture industry. I plan to accomplish effective marketing of flowers, varieties and horticultural education for my family business.”



Rick Schoellhorn Grower Excellence Scholarship
Jackson Bobo, North Carolina State University Ph.D. student
\$5,000

“I would love to use my expertise in [substrates] to advance, upgrade and improve substrates to work more efficiently for plants and develop growing media that is more sustainable for the environment. I want to be a part of and manage teams of researchers, board members, and business developers in order to enhance the experience of consumers interacting with horticulture. It is my hope that through my work, large scale green industry corporations and the general public alike can be better informed horticulturists.”



Ushio Sakazaki Innovations in Plant Breeding Scholarship
Brooks Parrish, University of Florida
\$5,000

I plan to pursue a career in plant breeding for an ornamental horticulture company. There is no greater feeling than having a grower attend a breeding trial field day and light up when they see what is coming to market in the next year. All of this is to say, my goal in horticulture is to support nursery growers through my work in the lab producing new, vibrant flowering plants, and to ensure that there is always a young scientist excitedly waiting to do the same.



Proven Winners® Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Catherine Shook, Chattahoochee Technical College
\$2,000

My long-term vision is to open a center of horticultural therapy and action. I envision building a space in my community that reaches out, intertwining individual-based therapy, group therapy and classes that help people enjoy the benefits of gardening. I have a special place in my heart for people with learning differences. I would love for my therapy center to help those with special needs learn skills that can help them work on landscape crews. I want to develop horticultural programs that help individuals with limb differences use adaptive tools in adaptive spaces so that all individuals of all abilities can reap the benefits of working and healing in the landscape.



For information on the 2024 Proven Winners Scholarship Program, please visit provenwinners.com/scholarship. Applications are due by April 15, 2024.

###

Proven Winners is a global plant brand that introduces the industry's leading annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees, and houseplants to the market through a network of top propagators. It combines extensive experience, innovative thinking and world-class customer service to ensure professional growers and home gardeners have the most efficient tools and dynamic growing solutions for ongoing success. Look for Proven Winners products in garden centers throughout North America in their signature white branded container. More information about Proven Winners is available at provenwinners.com.