



2013-09-024: Winners of 2013 Out to Innovate™ Scholarship Announced: Williamson and Brinton

PRESS RELEASE

WINNERS OF OUT TO INNOVATE™ SCHOLARSHIPS ANNOUNCED

Professional Organization and Private Foundation Team Up to Award Scholarships to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students Pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Careers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

By Rochelle Diamond

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PASADENA, Calif.—The National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals (NOGLSTP) proudly announced today the winners of its annual Out to Innovate™ Scholarships, funded by the Motorola Solutions Foundation through its Innovation Generation grant program. Recipients are Mateo Williamson, senior at the University of Arizona, Tucson, and Samuel Otis Brinton, graduate student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

The scholarships are awarded to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) programs who are either lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) individuals or an active ally of the LGBT community.

“These scholarships are designed to promote academic excellence and increase visibility of talented LGBT students in STEM career paths,” said Rochelle Diamond, NOGLSTP chair and a research biologist at Caltech. “The selection process was extremely difficult and the voting closer than ever. Each applicant set an example of academic excellence, community involvement and pride in STEM education. We

commend the winners on their accomplishments and know that their futures will be bright.”

Williamson is a transgender pre-medical student of microbiology as well as Spanish translation and interpretation. A native Arizonan, his dream is to become an LGBT-friendly family physician for underserved populations in southern Arizona and especially along the U.S.-Mexican border. He actively works on both sides of the border to address social justice issues such as religious persecution of LGBT people, spiritual abuse and the devastation of faith-based conversion therapy, minority health disparities, and immigrant abuse.

“When I came out a year ago, my early experiences as a transgender person led me to fear that I would be marginalized and never fully accepted within society, much less the scientific community,” said Williamson. “But this support from the NOGLSTP community has affirmed to me that the world really is changing, precisely because of the kind of advocacy work that this organization does. I am incredibly grateful to have this support in order to finish strong in my degrees and be successful and to pass on that same hope to other LGBT students by being a visible advocate.”

Williamson also attends the Catholic Newman Center at the University of Arizona, Tucson, and has a fondness for Ignatian spirituality. He is involved with Catholics for Marriage Equality and Dignity USA, and dialogues with members of the Catholic hierarchy to advocate for the safety, respect and well-being of LGBT people in Catholic churches, schools and service agencies.

Brinton is a bisexual student who is pursuing a doctorate in nuclear science and engineering and a master’s degree in technology policy. Prior to MIT, he graduated from Kansas State University (KSU) at the top of his class. He also organized the first gay pride march in Manhattan, Kan. and challenged the City Commission to add sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes under its civil rights ordinance.

An advocate for conversion therapy survivors, Brinton is working to end the persecution of youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, and asexual. He also co-founded NuclearPride, an organization dedicated to supporting the LGBT community in nuclear science and engineering, and is the newly elected student director of the American Nuclear Society as well as the first out member of its board of directors.

“Receiving the Out to Innovate Scholarship is one of the greatest honors I can imagine,” said Brinton. “As one of the few scholarships available to the LGBT science and engineering community, it provides a foundation on which students like me can express both their passion for research in science as well as their passion for bringing LGBT issues to the forefront of their technical fields. When I co-founded NuclearPride, I did so because I felt alone. This scholarship has provided me with a voice to say that we are not alone, and together we can change the technical fields we represent to include the many diverse voices of the LGBT and allied community.”

These ground-breaking scholarships for LGBT and ally students in STEM fields are not possible without the commitment and generosity of the Motorola Solutions Foundation’s Innovation Generation grants program. Innovation Generation is a part of the foundation’s larger commitment to engaging youth in STEM education. Beyond funding, NOGLSTP will receive ongoing support from foundation employee volunteers, who will act as mentors, tutors and experts in STEM careers.

As the embodiment of pride in LGBT and STEM communities, each scholarship applicant and winner are offered a complimentary student membership in NOGLSTP and complimentary registration to its 2014 Out to Innovate™ Summit, a two-day career summit for LGBT students, faculty and professionals in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to be held at Georgia Tech in November 2014. The winners will also receive a travel scholarship to the event.

For more information, contact Rochelle Diamond, chair@noglstp.org or 626-484-7022, or visit <https://www.noglstp.org>.

About NOGLSTP

The National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals (NOGLSTP) was established in 1980, incorporated in the State of California in 1991, and granted IRS 501(c)3 nonprofit status in 1992. NOGLSTP’s mission is to educate the scientific and general communities about the presence and accomplishments of LGBT individuals in STEM professions. NOGLSTP presents educational symposia and workshops nationwide, and fosters dialog with other professional societies, academia and industry to facilitate diversity and inclusion in the workplace. NOGLSTP is an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a participating professional society member of MentorNet®, a sustaining member of the National Postdoctoral Association, a member of the Gay and Lesbian Leadership Institute Presidential Advisory Project’s Coalition, and a founding member of the E-Week Diversity Council. For more information, visit www.noglstp.org, or contact

Rochelle Diamond, chair, at chair@noglstp.org or Amy A. Ross, Ph.D. program coordinator, at rossa@caltech.edu.

About the Motorola Solutions Foundation

The Motorola Solutions Foundation is the charitable and philanthropic arm of Motorola Solutions. With employees located around the globe, Motorola Solutions seeks to benefit the communities where it operates. The company achieves this by making strategic grants, forging strong community partnerships and fostering innovation. The Motorola Solutions Foundation focuses its funding on public safety, disaster relief, employee programs and education, especially science, technology, engineering and math programming. For more information on Motorola Solutions Corporate and Foundation giving, visit www.motorolasolutions.com/giving.