



National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals dba Out to Innovate  
PO Box 91803, Pasadena CA 91109  
outtoinnovate.org

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2022-09-22: 2022 Out to Innovate Scholarship Winners Strassberg, Tu, Tun, Usman

PRESS RELEASE

"Out to Innovate Scholarships Awarded"  
Scholarships Awarded for LGBTQ STEM Students

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Sept. 22 2022

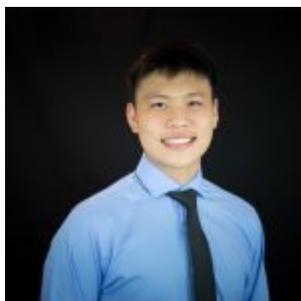
Out to Innovate Announces Scholarship Winners

Out to Innovate is proud to announce the winners for the 2022 Out to Innovate™ Scholarships, made possible by a grant from the Motorola Solutions Foundation.



**Emma Strassberg, 2022 Undergraduate Out to Innovate Scholar**

The winner of the 2022 Out to Innovate \$6000 Undergraduate Scholarship is **Emma Strassberg**. Emma is studying Environmental Science and Forestry Wildlife Science at the State University of New York Computer Science. Motivated by the many environmental challenges facing our world, Emma found a scientific home in conservation field research. She has studied a range of different animals including mammals, hellbenders, and bats. Emma plans to continue her education as a wildlife biologist through graduate studies. *"This scholarship is an amazing opportunity that helps ensure I'm able to conduct research, expand my education, and start working towards a graduate degree. I'm honored to have been chosen for this award and will continue working hard in the environmental field to help conserve our beautiful planet and make sure the LGBTQ+ community will always have a place here."*



**Kevin Tu, 2022 Undergraduate Out to Innovate Scholar**

The winner of the 2022 Out to Innovate \$3000 Undergraduate Scholarship is **Kevin Tu**. Kevin is double majoring in Physiology and Neurobiology and Economics at the University of Maryland, College Park. Kevin combines his passion and talent for science with a sense of urgency to help others. In response to the rural opioid challenges he witnessed growing up, he founded the non-profit Combating Overdoses in Rural Areas (CORA). Through CORA, Kevin has led educational campaigns, published research, and testified before the Maryland state legislature about opioid harm reduction in rural communities. Kevin has become a skilled



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bench scientist and has research experiences in a range of biology fields from neuropathology to genetics to cancer therapeutics. He intends to combine these passions as a physician scientist. *"I am so honored and excited to be a recipient of this scholarship, which will provide funding for me to attend an international conference to present my research on cancer biology and continue pursuing my passion for personalized medicine. Though it can sometimes feel isolating to be [a scientist and part of the LGBTQ+ community], I feel so comforted and grateful to organizations like Out to Innovate for their unwavering support of LGBTQIA+ students in STEM."*



### **Luis Tun, 2022 Graduate Out to Innovate Scholar**

The winner of the 2022 Out to Innovate \$6000 Graduate Scholarship is **Luis Tun**. Luis is working toward a Master's degree in Communications Data Science at the University of Southern California. Luis is a fierce advocate for health and education equity, for the LGBTQ+, low-income, immigrant, and Spanish-speaking communities. As a high school student, he worked as a medical assistant and student manager of a free healthcare clinic, often also serving as a translator for patients. Luis returned to the clinic as a college student, where he worked on their data systems and applied informatics to better demonstrate the clinic's essential work to funders. He has also led outreach campaigns to encourage other immigrant students and parents that college is within reach and, as part of a bilingual advocacy group named SALUD (Student Advocates Leading Uplifting Decisions), successfully lobbied the Board of Education to reduce the Advanced Placement test fee, which acted as a financial barrier for many low-income students. Luis leads by example as a proudly out gay man. He intends to work in the technology sector and use algorithms for social good. *"I'm excited to have been selected for the Out to Innovate Scholarship recipient. Being a first-generation and low-income [member of the LGBTQ+ community] and Latinx student, I have faced various educational and financial obstacles to pursue a post-secondary education. Receiving the support from organizations such as Out to Innovate will allow me to continue my education and become an advocate for underrepresented communities."*



### **Samantha Usman, 2022 Graduate Out to Innovate Scholar**

The winner of the 2022 Out to Innovate \$3000 Graduate Scholarship is **Samantha Usman**. Samantha is an Astronomy and Astrophysics PhD student at the University of Chicago. Samantha is fulfilling her lifelong dream to study the stars. As an undergraduate at Syracuse University and a masters student at Cardiff University, she tested and developed computational analyses to validate the detection of gravitational waves by the Laser Interferometer



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Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO). This significant contribution will enable discoveries for years to come. She now studies stars enriched with elements from previous stellar generations. Samantha serves as a role-model and mentor for other women and LGBTQ+ scientists. As part of this work, she noted the isolation for graduate students during COVID-19 lock-down in 2020 and created a social messaging server for LGBTQ+ graduate students at the University of Chicago which enabled a thriving supportive community that continues two-years later. *"I'm excited to accept the Out to Innovate scholarship! I look forward using this grant to attend conferences and connect with other LGBTQ+ scientists in the coming year."*

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#### **About the Motorola Solutions Foundation**

As the charitable and philanthropic arm of Motorola Solutions, the Motorola Solutions Foundation partners with organizations around the globe to create safer cities and equitable, thriving communities. We focus on giving back through strategic grants, employee volunteerism and other community investment initiatives. Our strategic grants program supports organizations that offer first responder programming and technology and engineering education, and align to our values of accountability, innovation, impact, diversity and inclusion. The Foundation is one of the many ways in which the company lives out its purpose of helping people be their best in the moments that matter. For more information on the Foundation, visit: [www.motorolasolutions.com/foundation](http://www.motorolasolutions.com/foundation)

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#### **About Out to Innovate**

Out to Innovate (formerly NOGLSTP) was established in 1980, incorporated in the state of California in 1991, and was granted IRS 501 (c) 3 nonprofit status in 1992. Out to Innovate is a professional society that educates and advocates for LGBTQ+ people in STEM. Out to Innovate presents educational symposia and workshops nationwide and fosters dialog with other professional societies, academia, and industry to facilitate diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Out to Innovate is an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is a sustaining member of the National Postdoctoral Association, a member of the Gay and Lesbian Leadership Institute Presidential Advisory Project's Coalition, a partner with the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, a partner of the Society for Women Engineers, and a founding member of the DiscoverE Diversity Council. For more information, visit the website at [www.outtoinnovate.org](http://www.outtoinnovate.org) or contact [scholarships@noglstp.org](mailto:scholarships@noglstp.org)