

ST. PAUL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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Scholarship Earners are Named by The Thomas and Elsie Deeley Foundation

Bristol, CT – June 17, 2025 – Four scholarship earners from St. Paul Catholic High School have been named by the Thomas and Elsie Deeley Foundation, a not-for-profit private foundation established by their two children in 1996 to memorialize the “helping hand” approach they learned from their parents. The foundation grants annual scholarships for deserving graduating seniors planning to attend college.

These scholarships are based on the belief that personal involvement with recipients creates a tangible bond between the student and the donor. Each recipient is assigned at least one former scholarship earner as their mentor throughout college and beyond. Hopefully, this bond will encourage the scholarship recipients to offer personal support to someone else after they graduate by “paying it forward” – in the form of mentoring and/or financial assistance.

This year the awards total \$114,000 over four years and the recipients are as follows:

Makayla Bloom from Waterbury, is receiving a scholarship to attend Sacred Heart University, where she plans to major in Political Science and become a lawyer. Her mentor will be Ireland Gilmore, who graduated from UConn in just 3 1/2 years, obtained her Master's in Guidance, and is a Resident Director of Centennial Hall at Western Connecticut State University. Ireland was instrumental in helping the Deeley Foundation establish its mentorship program. A second mentor will be Erin Brown. Erin is a previous Deeley Scholarship recipient. Erin is working at SHU as the Student-Athlete Support Services Coordinator. While an undergraduate at CCSU, she was the Captain of the Women's Swim and Diving Team. She recently completed her Master's in Counseling at CCSU with a specialization in Student Development in Higher Education.

Acyrreh Ramirez a Torrington resident, is receiving a scholarship to attend the University of Central Florida, where she plans to major in Political Science, become a polyglot lawyer using her Japanese and Chinese language skills, and work for the United Nations. Her mentor will be Valerie Moore Coles, the first Thomas and Elsie Deeley Foundation scholarship recipient. Valerie graduated from Fairfield University with a double major in International Business and

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Management Information Systems. She studied abroad in Japan during her junior year, speaks Japanese, and worked for the United Nations for almost 6 years before becoming a Vice President at International Turbo Systems for 12 years. Recently, she began working as a Program and Management Analyst at the U.S. Department of Justice.

Lauren Kozlak from Burlington is receiving a scholarship to attend Marist College, where she plans to major in International Studies. Her mentor will be Dylan Bird a St. Paul class of 2023 graduate, who is now a student at Saint Lawrence University majoring in International Studies.

Nick Rieger a Southington resident, is receiving a scholarship to attend UConn, where he is majoring in Aeronautical Engineering. His mentor will be Marcus Concepcion a 2023 graduate of St. Paul, who is currently a student at Worcester Polytechnic Institute majoring in Aeronautical Engineering.

Mr. James J. Cooper, St. Paul President says, "We are excited to continue our partnership with the Thomas and Elsie Deeley Foundation and greatly appreciate their generosity in helping our graduates achieve their college aspirations. Congratulations to the scholarship recipients for this year!"

Photo Attachment: (L-R) Makayla Bloom, Acyrreh Ramierez, Lauren Kozlak and Nick Rieger

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St. Paul Catholic High School, established in 1966, is a coeducational secondary school of the Archdiocese of Hartford, serving 400 students from over 30 communities in central Connecticut, Columbia, China, South Korea and Vietnam. Our vision, to be a truly great Catholic high school, is achieved by living our core values of Faith, Character, Community, Excellence, and Service.