



Press Release from Proven Winners®

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Proven Winners® Announces 2024 Scholarship Winners

Eight dedicated students will receive financial assistance totaling \$25,000.

[DeKalb, IL] – [Oct. 3, 2024] – As part of its mission to support the future of the green industry, Proven Winners® is proud to announce the winners of its 2024 scholarship program. The recipients were chosen for their passion for the industry and demonstrated excellence in their respective fields of study.

This is the 10th year Proven Winners has enjoyed helping horticulture students advance their educations. Once again, the applicants have impressed and inspired the selection committee. “We were blown away by the passion and ambition of this year’s Proven Winners scholarship winners,” says Kevin Hurd, vice president of product development. “Their dedication to improving lives through horticulture is truly inspiring.”

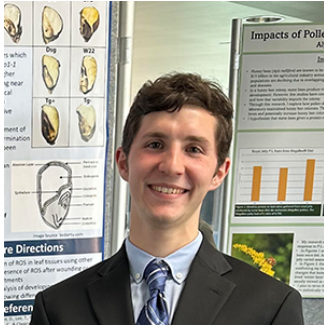
This year’s winners are:



Rick Schoellhorn - Proven Winners® Grower Excellence Scholarship
Patrick Veazie, North Carolina State University
\$5,000

“My goal in horticulture is to become a technical specialist where I can address problems at all levels of the supply chain ranging from stock plant production to rooting stations, or even commercial growers. Each of these stages presents its own challenges that need to be addressed in order to provide a premium final product to the end consumer.”

The Dr. Rick Schoellhorn – Proven Winners® Grower Excellence Scholarship is named in honor of the former director of new products who passed away in 2023. This scholarship memorializes Rick’s deep passion for horticulture, which he shared throughout his career as an educator, consultant, speaker and consummate plantsman. This scholarship honors his legacy by supporting future generations of growers who share his dedication to excellence and passion for horticulture.



The Ushio Sakazaki - Proven Winners® Plant Breeding Scholarship
Charles Colvin, The Pennsylvania State University
\$5,000

“Through continuous learning, hands-on experience and a passion for innovation, I aspire to be a driving force in developing new plant varieties that are resilient, beneficial to people and the environment, and contribute to the evolution of a sustainable and productive green industry.”

The Ushio Sakazaki – Proven Winners® Plant Breeding Scholarship is named in honor of the renowned plant breeder who is celebrated for developing many of gardeners' favorite plants, including the iconic Supertunia Vista® Bubblegum®. His contributions have not only shaped the horticulture industry but also brought a deeper connection to the natural world through his groundbreaking work. This scholarship honors his legacy and supports the next generation of plant breeders in continuing to explore and push the boundaries of plant innovation.



Proven Winners® Innovations in Horticultural Marketing Scholarship
Isabel Will, Virginia Tech
\$5,000

“I firmly believe that the successful marketing of plants transcends mere visual appeal. It involves capturing people’s interest by articulating the benefits and production processes that come along with the production of plants.”



Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Tyler Cebulskie, Cincinnati State
\$2,000

“Whether it be managing an ecological landscaping company or being the head of a sustainable native plant nursery, I wish to work at a place that focuses on growing and maintaining native and sustainable landscapes so that I can influence homeowners to be better stewards of the environment.”



Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Gabrielle Fernandez, Cuyahoga Community College
\$2,000

“I aim to pursue a career in landscape design or landscape architecture with a focus on creating public green spaces that support our local ecology and foster connection. After my firsthand experience seeing the impact these kinds of spaces have, I hope to make them an integral part of our public infrastructure and social connection.”



Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Joseph Fritz, Cuyahoga Community College
\$2,000

“My goal is to work as a landscape designer in a native landscaping company, where I will be able to advocate for the importance of functioning ecosystems in urban settings, while also showing how wild plants can be well-designed and aesthetically pleasing.”



Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Sadie Gerhardt, The University of British Columbia
\$2,000

“Using the platform of a public space with my career in horticulture, I would endeavor to educate members of the community that have access to their own garden space, whether that be a backyard or community garden plot, so that the biodiversity and gardening vigor of the overall community can be strengthened.”



Technical or 2-Year Post-Secondary Institution Scholarship
Sheila Grubb, Spokane Community College
\$2,000

“Several years ago, I started my small farm business, and my career goal is to provide a financial future for my son, also while promoting food system sustainability. I would like to create native and perennial gardens on my property, so my community can enjoy nature which promotes mental health.”

Applications for the 2025 Proven Winners Scholarship program will open in February of next year with a deadline of April 15. For more information, visit provenwinners.com/scholarship.



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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.