



STONINGTON  
GARDEN CLUB

**NEWS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release**

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**STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS**

*Two Stonington High School Seniors Recognized for Interest in Environmental Sciences*

**STONINGTON, CONN. (September 25, 2023)** – The Stonington Garden Club (SGC) announced today that it has awarded scholarships to two Stonington High School (SHS) seniors who will be pursuing studies in Environmental Sciences (ES) in college. The \$1,000 scholarships were presented to Alayna Wooten and Molly Olson at the SHS Senior Awards night in June.

“The Stonington Garden Club is committed to educating and encouraging interest in conservation and the environment. These scholarship awards were created to recognize and support our high school seniors interested in environmental sciences,” said Laura Metzger, SGC Co-President.

“Today’s high school students are faced with a myriad of choices as they begin their college careers. We are proud to offer awards that recognize a focus on the environment and encourage further studies in this critically important field,” said Terri Brennan, Chair of the SGC Scholarship Committee.

The Club’s history with the ES department at Stonington High School has included providing funds for materials needed for their outdoor gardens, but the Club wanted to do more. Determined to help and encourage local high schoolers, the Club worked closely with the SHS Science Teacher and the officers of the SGC to establish a scholarship award for a graduating senior in the spring of 2017. Now in its seventh year, SGC offers two scholarship awards, an Environmental Studies Award (\$1,000) and an Environmental Awareness Award (\$1,000).



2023 Stonington Garden Club  
Scholarship Winners, Alayna Wooten  
(l) and Molly Olson (r)

**Scholarship Recipients**

*Alayna Wooten – Environmental Awareness Award*

Alayna took Environmental Science this year and intends on furthering her knowledge in this field as she goes on to college next year. She is a hard-working student both in the classroom and outside taking care of her garden and the garden at the high school. Alayna decided very recently to change her major to environmental science instead of just studying it on the side, and she is very proud of this decision. Specifically, Alayna wants to study to become a herbalist to educate

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people on the way that all-natural products can help them as they have helped her throughout her life. Alayna spends some of her time volunteering at different farms, gardens, and nature centers. She plans to continue volunteering and is hoping to spend her summer interning at the Yellow Farmhouse Education Center before starting college in the fall.

*Molly Olson – Environmental Studies Award*

Molly has always felt connected with nature and is very passionate about protecting our environment. Because of this, she plans on studying Environmental Science and Policy at Smith College in the fall. Molly's primary interest in environmental sustainability is focused on our food system. She feels there is a disconnect between the food that people buy and consume and where that food has come from. Since she was a little girl, Molly has helped grow a vegetable garden with her mother, and it has been not only a source of food for their family but also a way to learn to respect and connect with nature. For this past semester, Molly has been completing an internship with the Yellow Farmhouse Education Center. She leaves school early every other day to spend her afternoons planting and maintaining small garden plots that help with children's programs and donations to local food banks. Molly has also helped with curriculum writing for the Yellow Farmhouse's Farm to Culinary Classroom. Molly excelled in AP Environmental Science this year and is looking forward to continuing to grow her passion and connection to nature in the future.

**About the Stonington Garden Club**

The Stonington Garden Club is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization whose purpose is to educate and encourage interest in the environment and conservation, support community projects, and stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening. For almost 100 years, the club has had a lasting and positive impact on the community, and its members take great pride in the Stonington community and its environs. For more information or to inquire about membership, please visit [www.stoningtongardenclub.org](http://www.stoningtongardenclub.org).

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