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STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

Two Stonington High School Seniors Recognized for Interest in Environmental Sciences

STONINGTON, CONN. (August 2, 2021) – 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 Joanna Chomowicz and Trevor Hultgren in June 2020.

“We are so grateful to Elisa Whitman at Stonington High School, who is now teaching four environmental sciences courses, for her continued encouragement of her students,” said Michelle Kutz, Chair of the SGC Scholarship Committee. “We are thrilled to support the youth in our community determined to pursue these studies,” she added.

“An important component of the mission of Stonington Garden Club is to educate and encourage interest in the environment and conservation. This is why we offer these awards to recognize and support our youth interested in the environmental sciences,” said Deb Dodds, SGC President.

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, Kutz worked closely with Elisa Whitman and with the officers of the SGC to establish a scholarship award for a graduating senior in the spring of 2017. Now in its fifth year, SGC offers three awards, an SGC Environmental Studies Award (\$1,000), an SGC Environmental Awareness Award (\$1,000), and an SGC Business Plan Award (\$500), the last of which was not awarded this year.

“Today’s high school students approach life beyond graduation in such varied ways, and we are proud to offer awards that recognize these different paths,” said Kutz.

Scholarship Recipients

Joanna Chomowicz was presented the Environmental Studies Award by Deb Dodds on June 7th in the Learning Garden at Stonington High School. Joanna understood at a young age that our polluted planet impacts the way people live when she witnessed families in Peru creating homes from trash. She realized people around the world and at home need assistance, and it starts with education and experiences. She helps her neighborhood garden club



SGC members Dorie Singer, Diana Beck, Deb Dodds, and Michelle Kutz with SHS Teacher Elise Whitman (third from left) and scholarship recipient Joanna Chomowicz (fourth from left).

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keep things clean and green and also takes advantage of our area's natural resources such as ocean swimming and forest hiking. She appreciates the beauty of nature and knows it takes work to keep it that way. She intends to become a teacher to help the next generations understand the need for sustainable living to help preserve the Earth for us all. She will attend Lesley University in the fall.

Trevor Hultgren was presented The Environmental Awareness Award by Michelle Kutz on June 8th also in the SHS Learning Garden. As a young boy, Trevor learned about the magic of growing plants for pollinators, food, and enjoyment. He had the opportunity to learn from his grandfather the joys of digging in the dirt and the patience needed to nurture flora and fauna all around us. Trevor dovetails his passion for the environment with his engineering mind and plans to help preserve towns and waters by pursuing studies in Environmental Engineering and/or Sustainable Business at The University of Vermont.



SHS Teacher Elise Whitman (left) and SGC Member Michelle Kutz (right) with scholarship recipient Trevor Hultgren (center).

About the Stonington Garden Club

The Stonington Garden Club is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to educate and encourage interest in the environment and conservation, to support community projects, and to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening. Club members are a diverse mix of dynamic women and men who share an interest in learning more about their gardens and in helping one another. Community projects include the COMO Children's Garden, the Lighthouse Garden, Borough Post Office flower beds, Wayland's Wharf rain garden, wreaths for the Stonington Historical Society's Deck the Walls, floral sales at the COMO's Stonington Fair, and its popular triennial "Gardens by the Sea" garden tour, which will be held June 10-11, 2022. The club awards annual scholarships to Stonington High School seniors and funds Naturescapes, a field trip program for all Stonington 3rd graders. The club also provides grants to more than 20 organizations involved in conservation and the environment. For almost 100 years, the Stonington Garden 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.

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