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Muter Outdoor Fund Announces 2023 John A. Muter Memorial Scholarship Recipients

The Muter Outdoor Fund is pleased to announce its sixth annual cohort of John A. Muter Memorial Scholarship recipients. The scholarship program, launched in 2018, recognizes college undergraduates who are committed to engaging new audiences and new generations with Michigan's natural resources and rich outdoor heritage. The program was established in memory of the late John Muter, an avid Michigan sportsman, who passed away in 2016 after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

The four winners were selected from a highly-qualified pool of 30 applicants, representing 14 Michigan colleges and universities. Recipients were selected based on their clear passion for Michigan and its outdoor opportunities as well as their demonstrated commitment of introducing others to those opportunities, such as fishing, hunting, camping, boating and wildlife watching. The winners each received a \$1,000 scholarship to support their 2023-2024 academic expenses.

Our four recipients for 2023 include:



Taylor Gross

Oakley, Michigan • Lake Superior State University

Taylor is a two-time recipient of the John A. Muter Memorial Scholarship and is going into her senior year at Lake Superior State University (LSSU) where she is majoring in fisheries and wildlife management. Taylor is an active member of the LSSU Fisheries & Wildlife Club and currently serves as its secretary. She has also worked for the Center for Freshwater Research and Education on campus as a student ambassador and hatchery worker. Taylor gained a wealth of natural resource experiences while working for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) as a short-term worker in the Fisheries Division and as a student assistant for the Wildlife Division. After she graduates, Taylor hopes to return to the MDNR to work as a fisheries technician.

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Kyle Martin

Ypsilanti, Michigan • Eastern Michigan University

Kyle is a senior at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) where he is majoring in environmental science and minoring in both biology and zoology. This will mark his third year as team captain of EMU's Track & Field program. He also serves as the lead Honors College Marketing & Student Outreach Fellow on campus. Kyle partnered with five other undergraduates to develop the EMU Chapter of the Sierra Club which tackles environmental issues on campus, advocates for local sustainability initiatives, and hosts events to spur appreciation for the outdoors. Last summer, he completed internships with the Huron River Watershed Council and Michigan Sea Grant. He is currently working on his honors thesis which investigates the breeding ecology of wood frogs and several species of salamanders. After graduation, Kyle intends to attend graduate school to continue his studies in ecology, evolution and organismal biology.



Samuel Szilagyi

Auburn, Michigan • Alma College

Samuel is going into his senior year at Alma College where he is majoring in biology and minoring in environmental science. Samuel has been passionate about the outdoors since he was three years old when his grandfather first started taking him hunting and fishing. His passion project is called *Casting for a Cause*, an event he founded that introduces mentally and physically-impaired individuals from ages 15 to 25 years old to fishing. This annual event provides participants with meaningful first-time experiences in the outdoors while also raising disability awareness. Samuel hopes to work as a conservation officer for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources after graduation and plans to continue his *Casting for a Cause* program for many years to come.

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Audrey Wright

Quincy, Michigan • Northern Michigan University

Audrey is going into her senior year at Northern Michigan University (NMU) where she is majoring in outdoor recreation leadership and management. Audrey first developed an interest in environmental education after working as a seasonal interpreter at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Previously, she has volunteered at Van Riper State Park and with the NMU Conservation Crew assisting with trail maintenance and trash clean-ups. Audrey is also a member of the Organization of Outdoor Recreation Professionals and helps plan group camping trips to connect with others in the field. She has also worked at Olympic National Park and just completed an internship as a program coordinator for Cottage Grove Parks and Recreation. Audrey looks forward to an exciting career as an interpreter after graduating.

About the Muter Outdoor Fund

The Muter Outdoor Fund is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established to provide scholarships, grants, and programs that promote outdoor recreation and celebrate Michigan's natural resources and rich outdoor heritage. Its first program, the John A. Muter Memorial Scholarship, recognizes college undergraduates who, like John, have demonstrated their commitment to introducing new audiences to fishing, hunting, and other forms of outdoor recreation in Michigan. Since its inception in 2018, the Muter Outdoor Fund has awarded \$22,500 in scholarships to undergraduate students in Michigan. The application for the 2024 scholarship is now available at www.muteroutdoorfund.org. The Muter Outdoor Fund has also helped support the Saginaw Bay Nature Festival spearheaded by the Rotary Club of Pinconning and Standish since 2019.

To learn more about the Muter Outdoor Fund and how you can support their activities, please visit their website www.muteroutdoorfund.org or e-mail at muteroutdoorfund@gmail.com.

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