# Sallie Mae Boosts LGBTQ Community College Scholarships With $100,000 Grant



### Sallie Mae Steps Up: $100,000 Boost for LGBTQ Community College Scholarships

**Newark, Del.—** In a significant move to support LGBTQ students, The Sallie Mae Fund has contributed a generous grant of $100,000 to the Point Foundation. This vital funding is aimed squarely at helping LGBTQ students access and succeed in community colleges.

This grant not only provides financial aid but also extends to cover Point Foundation’s mentorship, leadership, and professional development initiatives. This holistic approach is critical given the unique challenges that LGBTQ students face in the pursuit of higher education. From financial hurdles to mental health struggles and discriminatory experiences, the road to academic success is rife with obstacles for many in our community.

“Our partnership with The Sallie Mae Fund will be instrumental in helping LGBTQ community college students both access and succeed in higher education,” said Jorge Valencia, Executive Director and CEO of the Point Foundation. “Supporting community college students is more important than ever, as more students turn to community colleges in pursuit of skills that will help them build a better future.”

The Point Foundation’s Community College Scholarship program is known not just for its financial backing but also for its community-building initiatives. Scholars are connected to a broader network of LGBTQ students and leaders across the country, fostering a vital sense of support and belonging. The scholarship program has grown exponentially since its inception in 2017, when it first awarded 25 scholarships.

Among the newly selected scholars benefiting from The Sallie Mae Fund’s support are:

* Aleya McDonald from El Cajon, CA, attending Grossmont College
* Amelia Glaz from Rocklin, CA, attending Sierra College
* Andres Acebo from Sacramento, CA, attending Cosumnes River College
* Avery Whitman from Bangor, ME, attending Eastern Maine Community College
* Dahlia Hanson from Portland, OR, attending Portland Community College
* Elliot Polevoi from Astoria, OR, attending Clatsop Community College
* Gabriel Trousset from Oceanside, CA, attending MiraCosta College
* Jacoby Spicer from Rochester, NY, attending Monroe Community College
* Laney Eddington from El Cajon, CA, attending Cuyamaca College
* Laurah Hester from Springfield, OH, attending Clark State College

Kathy Edwards, Chief Diversity Officer at Sallie Mae, highlighted the personal significance of this contribution, stating, “As a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community, this contribution is personal for me and aligns to our mission to power confidence as students navigate their unique journeys. That unique journey is especially true for LGBTQ+ students who often face significant obstacles in accessing and completing college. I couldn’t think of a better way to recognize and celebrate Pride Month, but even more so, I’m especially grateful that the impact and reach of this contribution will be felt for years to come.”

Since 2020, The Sallie Mae Fund has contributed a total of $350,000 to bolster Point Foundation’s efforts. These funds have undoubtedly paved the way for countless LGBTQ students to not only attend college but to thrive in environments that foster personal and academic growth.

Point Foundation, the largest scholarship-granting organisation for LGBTQ students in the U.S., has consistently empowered promising LGBTQ students to realise their academic and leadership potential despite the myriad obstacles they face. This partnership with Sallie Mae is yet another chapter in their ongoing efforts to create equitable educational environments for all.

For those interested in how institutions and funds like these are making a real difference, the results of these contributions underscore the importance of continued support. Every scholarship awarded is a vote of confidence in the potential of an LGBTQ student, helping them to break barriers and build a future where they can thrive.

In a world where LGBTQ individuals frequently face systemic barriers, initiatives like these are a lifeline, offering not just a means to an education but a community and a future.