



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Foundation Announces 2024 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Winners

The Wayne County Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship for Wayne County – Lorelai Guenther of Centerville High School and Olivia Dudas of Richmond High School. Lilly Endowment Community Scholars are known for their community involvement, academic achievement, character, and leadership.

“We are thrilled to be a part of this scholarship program and ensure students in Wayne County have the opportunity to participate,” said Rebecca Gilliam, Wayne County Foundation Executive Director. “This award removes the financial barrier to higher education and academic success. All the applicants were excellent, and we are so happy for the two recipients.”

Each Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship provides for full tuition, required fees and a special allocation of up to \$900 per year for required books and required equipment for four years. The scholarship is for full-time undergraduate students leading to a baccalaureate degree at any eligible Indiana public or private nonprofit college or university. Lilly Endowment Community Scholars may also participate in the Lilly Scholars Network (LSN), which connects both current scholars and alumni with resources and opportunities to be active leaders on their campuses and in their communities. Both the scholarship program and LSN are supported by grants from Lilly Endowment to Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI) and Indiana Humanities.

“I was honored to get to talk with each student about their accomplishments and high school experience,” added Kelley Cruse-Nicholson, Wayne County Foundation Nonprofit Relationship Manager. “All the applicants were exceptional in their own right and I am so happy for Lorelai and Olivia.”

In determining Wayne County’s Lilly Endowment Community Scholar nominees, consideration was given to Academic Performance, Future Plans, and Extracurricular and Work Experience by the LECSP Nominating Committee of the Wayne County Foundation. After the field of applicants was narrowed down, nominees were submitted to ICI, the statewide administrator of the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Program, which approves the final selection of scholarship recipients.

Lilly Endowment created the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Program for the 1998-99 school year and has supported the program every year since with grants totaling in excess of \$505 million. More than 5,200 Indiana students have received the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship since the program’s inception. The primary purposes of the Lilly Endowment

Community Scholarship Program are: 1) to help raise the level of educational attainment in Indiana; 2) to increase awareness of the beneficial roles Indiana community foundations can play in their communities; and 3) to encourage and support the efforts of current and past Lilly Endowment Community Scholars to engage with each other and with Indiana business, governmental, educational, nonprofit and civic leaders to improve the quality of life in Indiana generally and in local communities throughout the state.

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Founded in 1979, the **Wayne County Foundation** exists to foster and encourage private philanthropic giving, to enhance the spirit of community and to improve the quality of life in the Wayne County, Indiana, area now and for future generations.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. Although the gifts of stock remain a financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of [community development](#), [education](#) and [religion](#). Although the Endowment funds programs throughout the United States, especially in the field of religion, it maintains a special commitment to its founders' hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.

Since 1997, **Independent Colleges of Indiana** has administered the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Program statewide with funding provided by Lilly Endowment. Founded in 1948, ICI serves as the collective voice for the state's 29 private, nonprofit colleges and universities. ICI institutions employ over 22,000 Hoosiers and generate a total local economic impact of over \$5 billion annually. Students at ICI colleges have Indiana's highest four-year, on-time graduation rates, and ICI institutions produce 30 percent of Indiana's bachelor's degrees while enrolling 20 percent of its undergraduates.