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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Foundation Announces 2026 Lilly Endowment Community Scholars

Richmond, Ind. — The Wayne County Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship: Priya Hodges of Richmond High School and Abigail Lumpkin of Hagerstown High School. Priya and Abigail epitomize community involvement, academic achievement, exceptional character, and leadership.

“We are proud to recognize Priya and Abigail as Wayne County’s two recipients of the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship,” said Brian Schlepper, Director of Nonprofit Engagement. “We’re honored to award them this scholarship as they both exemplify the quality characteristics of Lilly Scholars. We look forward to following their educational paths.”

Priya is a senior at Richmond High School. She has participated in many extracurricular activities, including Girl Scouts, National Honor Society, student council, Green Club, golf, and volunteering with multiple community organizations. Priya plans to attend Purdue University to major in environmental and ecological engineering.

Abigail is a senior at Hagerstown High School. She is involved in various extracurricular activities, including National Honor Society, FFA, 4-H, HOSA, Tiger Ambassadors, and volunteering for the Economy United Methodist Church. Abigail plans to attend Indiana University East to major in nursing.

Each Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship provides full tuition, required fees, and up to \$900 per year for required books and equipment for four years of full-time undergraduate study leading to a baccalaureate degree at any eligible Indiana public or private nonprofit college or university. Scholars also join the Lilly Scholars Network (LSN), which connects them with resources and opportunities to lead on campus and in their communities. Both the scholarship program and LSN are supported by grants from Lilly Endowment to Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI).

In determining Wayne County’s Lilly Endowment Community Scholar nominees, consideration was given to academic performance, a personal insight and statement of plans essay, extracurricular involvement, and work experience. After narrowing the field of applicants, nominees were submitted to Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI), the statewide administrator of the program, for final selection.

“The caliber of applications we received this year was truly exceptional,” said Rebecca Gilliam, Executive Director of the Wayne County Foundation. “Our scholarship committee was impressed by the talent and dedication shown by students throughout Wayne County, and we’re excited to celebrate the students selected for the 2026 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship.”

Since its inception in 1997–98, Lilly Endowment has supported this program with tuition grants totaling more than \$505 million, benefiting over 5,400 Indiana students.

The program's primary purposes are:

- To raise the level of educational attainment in Indiana.
- To increase awareness of the beneficial roles Indiana community foundations play.
- To encourage and support Lilly Scholars' engagement with Indiana leaders to improve quality of life statewide.

About the Wayne County Foundation

Founded in 1979, the [Wayne County Foundation](#) was one of the first 12 community foundations in the state of Indiana. The 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.

About Lilly Endowment Inc.:

[Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in Eli Lilly and Company. The Endowment supports community development, education, and religion, with a special commitment to Indianapolis and Indiana.

About Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI):

Founded in 1948, [ICI](#) serves as the collective voice for Indiana's 29 private, nonprofit colleges and universities. ICI institutions employ over 22,000 Hoosiers and generate a local economic impact of over \$5 billion annually. Students at ICI colleges have Indiana's highest four-year graduation rates and produce 30% of Indiana's bachelor's degrees while enrolling 20% of its undergraduates.

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