



**For Immediate Release:**

May 18, 2023

Photos Available

For more information contact:

Michele Bresler, Public Relations chair

The Alumnae of Northwestern University

847/869-1010; 847-867-5412

mbreslernua@gmail.com

**THE ALUMNAE OF NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
AWARDS THREE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS**

**EVANSTON, Ill.** --- The Alumnae of Northwestern University has selected three recipients to receive its 2023 Graduate Fellowships for graduate-level tuition. The fellowships are awarded to full-time students in terminal master's degree programs who show promise of achieving distinction in careers that will serve the public good. Criteria for selection include quality of scholarship, leadership, community service, professional experience, and financial need.

The Alumnae Graduate Fellowship Committee's co-chairs, Barbara Spoerl and Maggie Lovaas, note: "The Alumnae is extremely proud to support these outstanding Northwestern graduates as they work to complete their master's degrees."

**Maya Blumovitz**, currently living in the Chicago area, pursuing a master's degree in computer science, with a focus on medical technology. She is on the Dean's List with High Honors. Maya came to Northwestern following a unique path. In her personal statement she shared the many moves her family made living in three countries and two states before she even started high school. While in Israel she served in the Military Intelligence Corps as a manager of Satellite Based Foreign Relations.

In the words of one of her Northwestern instructors, Sara Owsley Sood, "Maya is one of those students who make teaching an absolute joy, given the excitement and curiosity she exhibits toward learning, her incredible initiative, and her capacity to apply what she learns to the 'real world'. I have no doubt that she will take advantage of every opportunity and apply her knowledge to address complex challenges."

Professor Sarah Van Wart adds, "Maya is part of the Northwestern Computer Science Ethics Fellow Program, an initiative that came out of another course I taught called Computing Ethics and Society, which was supported by an Alumnae Curriculum Innovation Grant."

**Lyra Johnson**, from Brookline, Mass., will be pursuing a master's degree in public health, with a special interest in global health, maternal and child health, and reproductive health. She was on the Dean's List all quarters from 2018-2023. Lyra had several internships in her undergraduate years including at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Only 28 students out of hundreds of applicants nationwide were accepted.

Professor Sera Young notes, "Lyra ranks among the very best undergraduate students with whom I have had the pleasure of working with in my career as a professor. I invited Lyra to serve as a Teaching Assistant for my class, Biocultural Perspectives in Water Insecurity. This TA position is particularly challenging because the class is taught in partnership with the Northwestern Prison Education Program (NPEP), which means designing a curriculum that is appropriate for both Northwestern undergrads and those inside Statesville Correctional Facility. Lyra was clearly up to the task!"

**Yaritza Chavez**, from Springdale, AR, is pursuing her master's degree in engineering design and innovation. Her goal is to pursue design research to eventually work for non-profit organizations in the social impact sector. Her project experiences are strong and varied, including work with Procter and Gamble, Shedd Aquarium, Google, the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, and other entities.

In the words of one of Yaritza's recommenders, Amy O'Keefe, director of Northwestern's Engineering Design Innovation (EDI) program, "In addition to her academic acuity and technical expertise, Yaritza is among the most thoughtful and empathetic students I have had the pleasure of working with in my ten years at Northwestern. She is a first-generation college student with a strong commitment to family, friends, the Northwestern community, her cultural heritage, and social justice. Her emotional intelligence is truly exceptional. I am constantly impressed by the ways in which she approaches design challenges through the lens of her own lived experience."

The Alumnae of Northwestern University is an all-volunteer organization of women that raises funds for a wide range of projects to benefit the University while sharing the University's academic resources with the community through its Continuing Education Program, now in its 54<sup>th</sup> year. Founded in 1916, The Alumnae has given more than \$9.5 million to the university in the form of grants, fellowships, scholarships, endowed professorships, funding for special university projects, and summer internships. For more information, visit The Alumnae [www.nualumnae.org](http://www.nualumnae.org).

###