

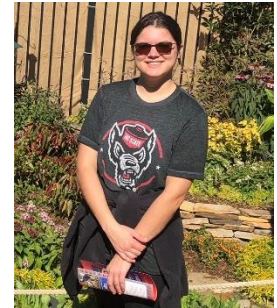
Meet the 2023 GWC Scholarship Recipients!

by Christine Elliott, Scholarship Chair

One of our favorite GWC moments each year is the awarding of scholarships to hard-working and remarkable NCSU horticulture majors. After all the months of hard work preparing for and conducting our annual Azalea Sale, it is good to know that our efforts really do make a difference to real students. Once again, thanks to all the members who contributed to the success of this year's Azalea Sale. From the "heavy lifting" by Charlie Leverett, Mac and Vivian Williamson to the actual lifting by the rest of us, we moved and sold a lot of beautiful plants! Our efforts are an investment in the horticulture industry and in the young people who are its future. Thanks to the incredible work of our members on the Azalea Sales for the last two years, we are delighted to be able to provide five scholarships in the amount of \$2,500.00 to a diverse group of NCSU Horticulture students.

So, let's meet the GWC scholarship award winners for 2023! In alphabetical order:

Taylor Carpenter is a raising sophomore who is taking heavy class loads each semester with the goal of graduating in three years. Like many of us, she got her start in the garden working with her dad growing vegetables and her mom selecting and growing flowers. Science was her favorite subject in high school, so the field of horticulture was a natural choice for her. She will work full time this summer at the Carrollwood Farms in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, while taking on-line classes.



Jerry Haozhe Yu grew a taro plant on the balcony of his home in Shenzhen, China as a kid. Since that time, plants of all sorts bring him joy. It is his dream to work at the intersection of biology, ecology and culture of plants through a breeding career. He believes this will mean working as a geneticist, a conservationist, an entrepreneur and an educator. He hopes to contribute to the challenges of sustainability, feeding and clothing the people of our planet. Jerry works part time at the Controlled Environments Horticulture Lab.

Lauren Staley is a raising senior who transferred to NCSU a year ago from Alamance Community College, where she had already committed herself to the field of horticulture. She was drawn to the field due to the many opportunities it offers for professional growth and creative expression. She is particularly interested in exploring innovative techniques to improve plant growth and health through experimenting with alternative soil compositions, discovering new approaches to plant propagation and exploring safe methods of pest control. The Think and Do philosophy of NCSU was a natural match for Lauren.



Ethan Jenkins is a recent graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture Science from NCSU, who now is working toward his M.S. in both Horticulture Science and Horticulture Marketing. He has a strong interest in plant production and management. Ethan was raised on a farm in rural southeast North Carolina where his father and grandfather were farmers. His goal is to return to the family farm and establish a nursery to help bolster the agricultural economy of Columbus County and provide a source of plants for residents in the surrounding areas. He works as a graduate research assistant at NCSU and on his thesis as a part of the assistantship program.

Brandan Shur also is a graduate student working toward his M.S. in Horticulture, having graduated with a B.S. in Horticulture from NCSU. He got his start working on the family peach farm in Mount Airy, North Carolina. There he learned management of the harvest, how to operate equipment and control disease. He sought advice from experts to improve the quality of their crops. In his time at State, Brandan has taken on many leadership roles and has expanded his vision to include working toward a PhD. His goal of bringing a more 'Hands-on' approach to teaching, perhaps using his family peach orchard as a place for students to experiment and learn. Brandan is a research assistant in the Horticulture Substrates Lab and NCSU. He also had a side business growing fruit trees and vegetable flats for sale.

