

Meet the 2024 GWC Scholarship Award 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's good to know that our efforts really do make a difference to real students. So, for starters, thanks to all the members who contributed to the success of this year's Azalea Sale. From the "heavy lifting" done by Charlie Leverett, Shay Campbell, Charles Gilliam and Mark Willis to the rest of us "best supporting actors," who 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 four scholarships in the amount of \$2,500.00 to a diverse group of NCSU Horticulture students. I'd also like to take this moment to thank the Clubmembers who served on this year's scholarship selection committee. In alphabetical order these were Marion Flint, Mary Gibson, Devon Hull, and Jennifer Midthun. So, let's meet the GWC scholarship award winners for 2024! In alphabetical order:



Jack Bobo is graduate student at NC State working on his PhD in Horticulture and Soilless Substrates. He began his horticultural journey at Texas A&M where he was inspired by brilliant scientists working to solve great problems and realized he wanted to be a part of that process. Jack currently works at the Horticultural Substrates Lab at NC State 45 hours a week. His research addresses questions including sourcing of material, root development, substrate toxicity and its impact on overall plant health. He hopes his work will inform and elevate large-scale green industry, corporations and the general public, transforming them into well-

informed horticulturalists.

Andrea Garcia-Guerrero is a rising sophomore working toward her degree in Horticultural Science. She selected this course of study because it combines the opportunity for academic learning with doing something she really loves, working with plants. She aspires to share the importance and beauty of plants within her community in a way that is creative and science-based. Andrea works part time in the NC State Book Store when school is in session and full time at the Food Lion in Apex during school breaks and throughout the summer.





Norma Hernandez-Cruz transferred last winter from Wake Tech (with an Associate's Degree in Science) where she supported herself through full and part-time work. Now at NC State, she is working part time as an intern at Sage Ecological Services. The granddaughter of farmers, and the daughter of avid home gardeners, Norma is excited to be pursuing a degree that will turn a hobby into a career path. She is interested in plant breeding and plant production.

Erica Wallace will be a senior in the coming year. Her focus is on Landscape Design and Urban Gardens. Erica is interested in sustainable design, sustainable food systems and community gardens. She hopes to create gardens that serve as art, improve the well-being of visitors and enhance the natural environment. Erica works 15 hours a week at the JC Raulston Arboretum and this summer will be one of their horticulture interns. Erica is the third of four college-bound sisters, so she says scholarships really help her family.



- \$2,500 Scholarships Each to
- Jack Bobo
 - Andrea Garcia-Guerrero
 - Norma Hernandez-Cruz
 - Erica Wallace