

**Niswonger Foundation Board Update**  
**Thursday, February 18, 2021**  
**Scholarship and Leadership**

**Scholar Updates**

**Recent News**

- Winter Training was held on December 17-18, 2020. The text was “*The Other Wes Moore*” by Wes Moore. Although held virtually, the depth of the conversation and contributions made by each Scholar were impressive.

**Academic Achievement**

The following Scholars maintained a 4.0 gpa for the Fall Semester 2020:

- Derek Driskill (Carson-Newman University, freshman, education)
- Mabel Olson (Tennessee Tech, freshman, electrical engineering)
- Sarah Douthat (University of Tennessee-Martin, junior, public health)
- Aubrie Strange (Sanford University, junior, public relations)
- Rithvik Vutukuri (Tulane University, junior, neuroscience)
- Emily Ellison (University of Tennessee, senior/doctoral student, veterinary science)
- Brittany Church (Austin Peay University, senior, biology/chemistry)

**Service Achievement**

- Service Learning has been modified during the pandemic. With the traditional methods of volunteering being unavailable, the Scholars were encouraged to find individual ways to serve. Our “shining star” with community service for fall semester was Levi Blazer (95 hours).

**Summer Training**

The tentative agenda for Summer Training is as follows:

Outdoor Challenge (Sophomores/Juniors)	July 18-21
Challenge Picnic	Sunday, July 18
Bahamas (Freshmen/Sophomores)	TBD
Freshmen Orientation	Monday, July 26
Training Week	July 26-30
<b>*Senior Dinner</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 27</b>
<b>*Board Luncheon</b>	<b>Wednesday, July 28</b>
Annual Day of Service	Thursday, July 29
Normandy Trip (Seniors/2020 Graduates)	August 14-23
New York City (Juniors/Seniors)	December 11-14

*\*Board Members and Spouses especially encouraged to attend.  
Additional details regarding training week will be provided at the May Board Meeting.*

### **Scholar and Scholar Alumni Updates**

- The Directory of Scholars was completed and mailed in January.
- Please see included Scholar and Alumni Scholar news updates

### **NISWONGER SCHOLAR UPDATES**



**Levi Blazer** (Belmont University, Senior) is working with the Tennessee Department of Health and their Health Communications team during his spring semester.



**Sam Hensley** (East Tennessee State University, Freshman) was selected as a member of his university's SGA Senate.



**Erica Seal** (East Tennessee State University, Sophomore) was included on the Dean's List for the Fall 2020 semester at ETSU.



**Macy Noe** (Vanderbilt University, Freshman) was appointed to the Undergraduate Honor Council at Vanderbilt.

## ALUMNI SCHOLAR UPDATES



**Dr. Katie Baker** (Class of 2007) and her husband, William, welcomed their son, Holston, in November.



**Sam Brashears** (Class of 2017) was a member of a research group that recently had their work published in *The Journal of Clinical Investigation*. The title of their work is “Stressed Erythrophagocytosis Induces Immunosuppression During Sepsis Through Heme-mediated STAT1 Dysregulation.” The article can be viewed here: [www.jci.org/articles/view/137468](http://www.jci.org/articles/view/137468)



**Dr. Jessica Burchette** (Class of 2006) and her husband, Darrin, welcomed their son, Perry, on January 12<sup>th</sup>.



**Ben Fox** (Class of 2009) accepted the position of head coach at Maryville College, in Knoxville.



**Elizabeth Jones** (Class of 2013) assumed a new position at Eastman Chemical Company as a Technical Service Representative for Acetate Tow.



**Adriana Penalba** (Class of 2010) was married to Dustin Fillmore in October.



**Ian Sams** (Class of 2011) has accepted a position with the White House administration. He is joining HHS as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs to manage HHS communications on the COVID response.



**Lillie Seal** (Class of 2015) became engaged to Dakota Taffer, in December.



**Dillan Shults** (Class of 2018) made his first home purchase, in December, in Parrottsville.



**Alex Smyth** (Class of 2015) and his wife, Macy, welcomed their son, James, on December 29<sup>th</sup>.



**Todd Skelton** (Class of 2010) and his wife Kim, welcomed their second child, in December. He serves on the Board of Directors of Legacy Parks Foundation and the Bays Mountain 50<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration Committee. He was selected for Leadership Knoxville Class of 2021.



**Madeline Standbridge** (Class of 2018) was elected Student Government Association Liaison for Quillen College of Medicine, Co-Leader of the Family Medicine Interest Group, Co-leader of the Addiction Medicine Interest Group, Co-leader of Students for Health Equity, and as the Community Service Representative for the Student National Medical Association (SNMA).



**Kayla West** (Class of 2013) has been promoted to the Assistant State Opioid Treatment Authority. She will be working under the Medical Director for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health in the Department of Clinical Leadership.

