

GLEF NEWSLETTER



Welcome!

*ELSIE DIDRICK
GLEF PRESIDENT 2020-2021*

SNEAK PEEK OF WHAT'S INSIDE:

*2021
AWARDEES*

*STORIES
FROM
PREVIOUS
AWARDEES*

Greetings! On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Grace LeGenre Endowment Fund, Inc. (GLEF), welcome to our first issue of the Alumna newsletter. One of our goals for the last couple of years was to reconnect with you, our former winners of the fellowship. This newsletter is a result of a suggestion from one of our winners. We hope that you will keep in touch with us.

At the time you received the award, your educational goals and professional dreams were awe-inspiring. Now we would love to hear from you about your accomplishments, professionally and personally.

The Board has been very busy developing a strategic plan to make this organization more efficient and ready for the 21st century. Keeping in contact with our winners would be important and your input would be very valuable to us as we work on how to communicate in this time of social media and be able to mentor these women as they enter the workforce. Also, Board Development is a must to make sure we continue with our goals and involve younger and more diverse members of the Board.

COVID has not slowed us down. Besides learning how to meet virtually, we have revamped the application and selection rubric. We had over 25 applicants and raised enough funds to be able to award four Fellowships ranging from \$1000.00 to \$2000.00

There is much work to be done and we would love your involvement. Keep in touch and onward we go.

GLEF 2021 AWARDEES

KIMBERLY C. CORRIE



It is an absolute pleasure to be selected as a recipient for the Grace LeGendre Fellowship for the second time. In 2019, this fellowship allowed me the opportunity to spend more time volunteering in the community with individuals suffering from severe psychiatric illnesses. I also was able to use the monetary award to participate in additional trainings that have furthered my career in the field of psychology. I am currently a full-time student graduating with my Master's in Social Work in May of 2021. Throughout my studies, I have interned at three psychiatric hospitals, and for the past two years, I have interned in Erie County Medical Center's Behavioral Health Department with adults diagnosed with severe psychiatric illnesses. After graduation, I intend to work in the field of psychiatric social work and have accepted a position to begin my career in this field. My career goal is to become an administrator in a psychiatric hospital to advocate and create policies to benefit individuals suffering from psychiatric illnesses and this fellowship will allow me to continue towards my goal after graduation. I am extremely grateful for the opportunities that this fellowship offers and thank each member of the committee for selecting me as a recipient.

CASSANDRA RAMPINO

I am very grateful for the New York Grace LeGendre Fellowship. As a Master's student at NYU's Silver School of Social Work, I am learning how to become a clinical therapist. After graduation, I plan to work at a mental health clinic in New York City to provide affordable psychotherapy to adolescents. Covid-19 has had lasting impacts on the youngest and oldest generations in our communities and it is of utmost importance that awareness and treatment plans are created to provide services to those who need it most.



GLEF 2021 AWARDEES (CONTINUED)

SHANNON POULOSE



Shannon Poulouse is a third-year medical student who will be part of the 3rd graduating class of the CUNY School of Medicine. In high school, she was accepted into the Sophie Davis Biomedical Education Program at the CUNY School of Medicine, a highly selective 7-year combined undergraduate B.S. and graduate M.D. degree program with a unique mission of service. Through her education, she continues her work in places of immense need in the inner city for her fellow New Yorkers on her pursuit to become a doctor who serves the underserved

JAMILIA HADIYA THOMPSON

In May 2019, Jamila graduated from Manhattan College with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering with minors in Environmental Engineering and Religious Studies. In order to expand her knowledge of construction management and develop the skills needed to take on the responsibilities of construction projects, Jamila enrolled in the Construction Administration Master of Science Program at Columbia University. Jamila is estimated to graduate in December of 2021. She is eager to complete her education and enter the workforce as a construction professional.



PREVIOUS GLEF AWARDEES

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

ALYCIA ASKEW (2014 NY CHIROPRACTIC COLLEGE)



After receiving the Grace LeGendre Endowment Fellowship I graduated from the Finger Lakes School of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine with a Master's Degree in Acupuncture and a Master's Degree in Herbal Medicine. From there, I moved back to my hometown of Greenwich, New York, and started my own business running an acupuncture clinic. I worked as a solo business owner and acupuncturist until the summer of 2020 when I hired my first two employees, a receptionist, and another acupuncturist. I am excited to be able to expand my business hours and to create jobs for other women in the community. I am so grateful for the boost that GLEF Fellowship provided to get me started on this wonderful journey.

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MARGARITA (RITA) VALKOVSKAYA (2020 MAXWELL SCHOOL, SYRACUSE U)

The GLEF award was very helpful in completing my Master of Public Administration from Syracuse University, Maxwell School (2020). I am continuing to pursue my interest in working directly for the federal government in regional policy analysis. I am currently working as a public sector consultant at Grant Thornton in Arlington, VA. I have been working from home from day one, and have yet to see my office or to meet most of my new colleagues, which has been challenging. I look forward to meeting them in the future.

KRISTI LANE (2018 SUNY AT BROCKPORT)

I am a physical education teacher in the Hilton Central School District. This is my second year full-time teaching in the district. I coach multiple sports, this year includes JV girls swimming, modified swimming, varsity indoor track and field, varsity outdoor track and field. COVID-19 impacted all of these professional duties. We started the school year in a hybrid learning model where I taught both PE online and in-person to K-8 students. I also was and still am coaching every day following all COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety of all. I used my award to pay for my education and related educational expenses such as books.

PREVIOUS GLEF AWARDEES WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

L'OREAL DEMATTEIS KRASNOW (2011 PACE UNIVERSITY)



To catch you up, 10 years ago I was trying to finish up grad school, so I was able to use the scholarship money towards my last year of school. I graduated from Pace University in May 2012 with a combined BBA/MBA in Public Accounting and got married in November 2012. I started my career at Ernst & Young in Stamford and transferred down to Orlando in 2014 after a great opportunity presented itself with a top client of the firm. On a personal note, in the summer of 2013, my husband (aged 30 at the time) had a heart attack and had to have a quadruple coronary bypass. He was going through heart surgery and cardio rehab while I was trying to complete the CPA exam; with him as my cheerleader, I passed while he was in the hospital. Moving to Florida where his parents were retiring was a blessing for us and he hasn't, thankfully, had any complications since his initial heart surgery.

I left EY in 2017 after the birth of our first son, Kenneth, and took a position as Assistant Controller for the US Operations of Mattamy Homes. Mattamy is a Canada-based company but the US operations have grown over the past 5 years to represent 50% of revenues. My second son, Kayden, was born in August 2018 and brought even more joy into our lives. In October 2020 I left Mattamy for a more technical (challenging) accounting role as a Senior Accounting Manager for Universal Engineering Services. I wanted to make sure I wasn't becoming complacent, despite all of the chaos in my personal life with two young children and navigating a pandemic. Thankfully, working in the construction industry, my husband and I did not have any loss of work due to Covid. We've had several family members in NY contract the virus, but luckily all have recovered well. I was able to spend more time with my kids while working from home and even took them both out of daycare for a few months at the start of the pandemic. That was a lot of work (and chaos), but I'm grateful for the additional time I was able to spend with them while they're both so young. They are both back in school (daycare), and Kenny is graduating from Pre-K in May and getting ready for Kindergarten in the fall.



PREVIOUS GLEF AWARDEES

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

KAMIE FIELDS

(2016 MEDAILLE COLLEGE, BUFFALO)

I am pleased to have the opportunity to share in the first issue of the GLEF newsletter. I had the privilege of having been selected as a recipient of a scholarship offered by the NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund to help further my graduate studies a few years back.

The money and support I received allowed me to purchase textbooks and other incidentals that are a rather large expense attached to higher education. I was thrilled to have been selected for the scholarship. A big part of this honor was in receiving recognition as a "mature" student, having taken a leap of faith to change the direction and path of my life.

I had decided at age 45 to further my education and completely change careers. A few life-changing events were the catalyst for my choice to leave the field of veterinary medicine and pursue a career in counseling and therapy. It was and still is my dream and goal to work with those who are trying to find their voice or simply navigate the mysteries of their lives.

I completed my graduate studies in 2016 at Medaille College in Buffalo NY. Graduating with a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Earning the degree was not the end of my journey but only the beginning as I still needed to complete 3000 clinical hours working in the field before I would be able to take the New York state licensing exam for mental health counselors.

I began my clinical work after graduation with Transitional Services in Buffalo. I worked as a resident counselor in a group home for those with severe mental illness. After a year of commuting an hour each way to work in Buffalo, I found a new position closer to home. I took a position as a mental health clinician working at The Resource Center, where I continue to serve the individuals in my community.

Finally, in July of 2020, I was able to complete my clinical work and sit for the licensing exam. All of this occurring in the middle of the COVID 19 pandemic! The pandemic has changed our way of life in so many ways. We find ourselves living and working in unprecedented times.

My workday was turned on its end. I no longer met my clients face to face in my office but spent my day dialing the phone (I felt like a telemarketer) to conduct their therapy sessions through what we now call telehealth. I noticed feeling drained at the end of my days of phone therapy. My throat sore and my emotions raw. My patients were facing the fear and anxiety that COVID brought but so was I, and how did I keep my fears and uncertainties separate from my clients? It was exhausting at first. But now a year later I am in awe at the resiliency of the human spirit and our ability to adapt.

I am grateful and thankful to everyone who supported and believed in me, including the GLEF award committee. I will close with this quote from Benjamin Franklin, "An education is something that is never wasted."

