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## UWCK Opens Final Year of Marine Science Educational Advancement Scholarship

**Florida Keys** – United Way of Collier and the Keys (UWCK) is now accepting applications for the final year of its **Marine Science Educational Advancement Scholarship**. This initiative supports Monroe County residents pursuing degrees in marine science and marine technology-related fields, reinforcing UWCK's commitment to sustainability and conservation in the Florida Keys.

Now in its fourth and final year, this scholarship has played a vital role in advancing local education and environmental stewardship. In the 2024-2025 academic year alone, UWCK awarded \$28,000 in scholarships to 6 recipients, bringing the total number of scholars supported to 16. Since the program's launch in 2022, **nearly \$70,000 has been invested** in the academic pursuits of Monroe County residents.



*2024-2025 Grant Recipients During a UWCK Meet-and-Greet Event.*

This scholarship is part of a larger initiative made possible by a \$3.5 million grant from the United Arab Emirates in 2020, dedicated to innovative reef restoration and education efforts.

A dedicated Scholarship Committee will review applications based on academic achievements, career goals, extracurricular involvement, references, and financial need. Recipients may reapply annually throughout their educational journey. Through this initiative, UWCK continues to foster local talent and strengthen the workforce supporting reef restoration, including efforts like NOAA's Mission: Iconic Reefs.

"As we enter the final year of this scholarship, we are incredibly proud of the impact it has made," said Jessica Dockery, Reef Revitalization Project Liaison at UWCK. "It has been inspiring to watch our recipients grow in their careers."

One of those recipients, Robert Saylor (24-25), has seen the need for reef restoration firsthand. "Working in the dive industry, I witnessed the devastating effects of coral bleaching, which motivated me to return to school and complete my degree," he said. "This scholarship from United Way of Collier and the Keys is making that possible."

Applications are open now through April 24th. For more information or to apply, visit <https://uwcollierkeys.org/marine-science-scholarship/> or contact Jessica Dockery at [jessica.dockery@uwcollierkeys.org](mailto:jessica.dockery@uwcollierkeys.org).

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About United Way of Collier and the Keys: United Way of Collier and the Keys (UWCK) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the education, health, and economic mobility of our neighbors in Collier and Monroe Counties. Through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts, UWCK addresses critical social issues and works towards driving positive, sustainable change to build stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.