

Meet the 2015 SRI Conference Scholarship Winners!

A group of long-time SRI industry professionals led by emeriti members of the First Affirmative Financial Network felt it important to increase the number of aspiring young professionals attending The SRI Conference on Sustainable, Responsible, Impact Investing. A scholarship program was designed and, within a month, they raised the necessary funds and attracted over three dozen outstanding candidates. Ten scholarships have been awarded.

It is a great pleasure to introduce you to the winners! We hope you will come meet them at The SRI Conference.



Sarah Bolthrunis holds a BA in Economics and Environmental Studies from the College of the Holy Cross. She expects to be awarded both an MBA from the Yale School of Management and a MEd from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies in the spring of 2016. Key to Sarah's motivation for applying for an SRIC15 Scholarship is "...to learn from and be inspired by the founders and current frontrunners in the SRI / ESG field... a field that is driven by individuals who are deeply motivated and passionate. Both of these characteristics make the conference a potentially invaluable experience, particularly for a student emerging as an SRI professional."



Cazzie Palacios Brown earned a BA in Psychology and Cultural Studies from the University of Redlands in 2004. She spent ten years driving growth in non-profit organizations and is looking to transition her career into sustainable finance, Cazzie is working on a dual masters degrees (MBA / MS) in Sustainable Finance and Strategy at the University of Michigan Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise. "I am eager to attend the SRI conference as I want to meet with experts on the front lines. I hope to deepen the conversation by becoming more fluent in finance and impact as I dive into my three years on campus."



Sloan Danenhower earned a BA in Economics from Colorado College. His reasons for wanting to attend The SRI Conference are summarized as follows: "I strongly believe in the power of the capitalistic system and also believe that we have a responsibility to use the force of this powerful system to benefit as many people as possible. I would be thrilled to have the opportunity to meet other professionals who could share wisdom about transitioning into the SRI field while also better understanding how I can use my skills for broader good."



Gary Grewal earned a BA from the University of California Los Angeles and subsequently a Masters in Financial Planning from The American College. Here's a summary of his reasons for applying for an SRIC15 Scholarship: "Attending The SRI conference, would allow me to further solidify my passion for investments that create a positive impact in our environment and society, while also fostering a financial return. I became a licensed financial advisor after graduating college as I knew I had a strong interest in personal finance and desire to help citizens in my community achieve financial independence."



Sarah Friedman Hersh earned a BA in International Studies at Kenyon College. She will complete her MBA at the Yale School of Management in May of 2016. Her interest in an SRIC15 Scholarship revolves around wanting "to be exposed to the highlights of leading organizations' current strategies and to speak to SRI professionals about how they craft their careers. In such a rapidly developing field, creating a strong network and learning what resources professionals use to stay informed will be critical to my own career. I see sustainable and responsible investing as a continuation in my career of helping people realize desired returns from their financial decisions."



Alexander Laitamki is a student at New York University working on a BA in Finance from the Stern School of Business. He explained his motivation for wanting to attend The SRI Conference this way: “Attending would be an unrivaled opportunity to gain insight into the industry as well as connect with professionals and learn firsthand about their experiences. I am very passionate about utilizing finance and business to create social change, and the SRI/ESG industry is the embodiment of those two passions.”



Ian Markowske is working on two graduate degrees at the University of Michigan: An MBA from the M. Ross School of Business and an MS from the School of Natural Resources and the Environment. He had previously earned a BA in Literature, Science and the Arts from the University of Michigan. He wrote, “I am passionate about pursuing a career in impact investing and know that exposure to the foremost thinking in the SRI/ESG space through this conference will help enhance my academic and professional growth. I am actively pursuing a career in SRI/ESG investment and worked in an impact investing firm focusing on Michigan social enterprise.”



Sophie Purdom is a senior at Brown University majoring in Environmental Economics. She was first introduced to SRI/ESG working as an intern with the Investor Network on Climate Risk. She is a member of the student team at Brown responsible for managing a \$150,000 portfolio. She articulated her desire to attend The SRI Conference this way: “I want to learn from and be inspired by the community that lives and breathes SRI as a profession and a belief system. I truly believe that SRI is the future of both financial investing and of sustainability solutions... Attending The SRI Conference will kick-start my career.”



Carolina Samudio-Ortega holds a BA in Business Finance from the University of Massachusetts and an MBA from the Suffolk University Sawyer School of Management. She attended the Financial Planning Program at the Boston University Center for Professional Education. Carolina would like to attend “because it is the great convening of SRI professionals in the field and it will be a great place to learn and connect with other SRI professionals. I would like to return to my organization and share what our colleagues are doing in this space and how we can potentially collaborate with others so that our impact as a community can be larger and more sustaining over the long term.”



Laura Teicher earned a BA in Studio Art and English Literature at the University of Rochester and an MBA from the Boston University Graduate School of Management. Her interest in attending The SRI Conference is based on her observation that “the most effective way to create change in the world is to work within existing systems of power, harnessing the force of business and the markets. Socially responsible investment sits at the nexus of my commitment to using business for positive impact and my growing career in financial services. Attending this conference would be the deep-dive opportunity I have been wanting.”

VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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