



IPLAC Educational Foundation Dinner

July 14, 2026

The University Club of Chicago



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MENU

**Mesclun Field Greens with Fuji Apple, Pistachio Crusted Goat Cheese, and
White Balsamic Vinaigrette**

**Duet of Angus Beef Tenderloin and Cabernet Braised Short Rib, Vidalia
Onion Bread Pudding, and Thyme Roasted Market Baby Vegetables**

Black Forest Cake with Flourless Cocoa Sponge and Sour Cherry Preserves

AGENDA

Presentation of 2026 IPLAC Educational Foundation Scholarship Awards

Celebratory Dinner

IPLAC EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION 2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Emmanuel Girolamo Lane Technical College Prep High School **The Ronald J. LaPorte Memorial Scholarship Recipient***

Emmanuel Girolamo is a senior at Lane Technical College Prep High School, where he has been a stand-out student academically, while managing to also be well-rounded. He may be a senior now but starting in 7th and 8th grade, he attended the Lane Tech Academic Center and took high school courses while he was still in middle school.

Mr. Girolamo has outstanding academic credentials, including carrying an impressive, unweighted GPA of 3.7188 on a 4 point scale (and a weighted GPA of 5.0313) and a **perfect ACT score of 36!** His academic awards are numerous and include National Merit Scholar, Alpha Honors STEM Program Member, National Society of High School Scholars, the Principal's Honor Roll and the Golden Honor Roll.

While excelling academically, Mr. Girolamo still managed to contribute an impressive number of hours participating in volunteer community service activities. His efforts center primarily around helping youth and the less fortunate, including serving as a Junior Counselor during the summer for the YMCA, as well as in leadership roles, including President, for their Alpine Teen Club. For his efforts with the YMCA, Mr. Girolamo received both the Teamwork Award and the Respect Award. He has also served as a Middle School Tutor and as a Production Support Champion with Cradles to Crayons, distributing everyday essentials to children in need, among others.

While at Lane Tech, Mr. Girolamo also excelled in athletics, where he played Lacrosse, earning the MVP title for playing Offense, and wrestled, earning the LSA Resolutions Award for a Winning Wrestling Season.

Mr. Girolamo will attend the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and plans to major in nuclear engineering. He states, "I want to pursue a career in research because I'm motivated by solving problems that still do not have perfect answers, especially in sustainable energy. I'm interested in how we can produce and deliver clean, dependable power at a scale that meets real demand."

***The Ronald J. LaPorte Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of IPLAC's 108th President by his widow, Jill LaPorte. Mr. LaPorte was a highly regarded patent attorney, who worked for many years at Kraft Foods. He was a leader in both the scientific and legal communities. This scholarship is awarded annually by the IPLAC Educational Foundation to a student who excels in scholarship, leadership, service, and character.**

Sophiea Matsuk
William Howard Taft High School
The Ronald J. LaPorte Memorial Scholarship Recipient*

Sophiea Matsuk is a senior at William Howard Taft High School, where she has excelled both academically, athletically and in leadership.

Ms. Matsuk has maintained a cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.9574 (5.4043 weighted GPA). Her Class Rank is 3 out of a class of 906 and she has maintained a top 1% ranking throughout all 4 years of high school. She is a member of the National Honor Society, has been awarded Academic Distinction and is an Illinois State Scholar. She is trilingual in English, Ukrainian and Spanish.

In addition to her academic achievements, Ms. Matsuk has dedicated a significant amount of time to community service activities, where she has consistently shown herself to be a leader. She was a co-founder of the Robotics Business Team, the Team Captain of the Varsity Swim Team, a Volunteer Tutor at Tutor Chicago, a Student Election Judge for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners and a Team Lead at the After School Matters Health Science Program, among others. When Ms. Matsuk noticed a lack of females in her STEM classes, she set out to improve this disparity, especially for underrepresented groups. She works to make STEM more accessible and wants to ensure “it is as diverse and innovative as the communities it serves.” She states that her “community service is rooted in a commitment to mentorship and addressing both local and global inequities.”

After seeing her mother experience illness, she hopes to help expand patients’ choices and increase opportunities for intervention in earlier phases of illness. “Seeing how engineering can transform lives strengthened my commitment to advancing early diagnostic inventions. As a biomedical engineer focused on early detection technologies, I aim to expand access to preventative care by designing tools that are not only precise but also scalable and accessible across diverse populations.”

Ms. Matsuk will attend The Ohio State University in the Fall and plans to major in biomedical engineering. She is the first generation in her family to attend college.

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Yayra Tamatekou
Lindblom Math and Science Academy
The Ronald J. LaPorte Memorial Scholarship Recipient*

Yayra Tamatekou is a senior at Lindblom Math and Science Academy where she has excelled inside and outside the classroom. She will pursue an education and career in biomedical engineering. After college, she aspires to found a medical technology company and prosthetic manufacturing company that will provide inexpensive products to low-income communities and families.

Yayra Tamatekou is a diligent student, carrying an unweighted 3.96 out of 4.0 GPA (5.13/50.0 weighted GPA). Yayra participated as a member of the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) throughout high school and served as an Eagle Battalion Commander during her junior and senior years, planning and executing battalion activities. She was also the Team Captain during her sophomore, junior, and senior years of the Drumline, responsible for directing students and planning and creating enjoyable performances for pep rallies and games. She was also a Track & Field athlete during her freshman, sophomore, and junior years. She is a National Honors Society Member, a Horatio Alger Scholarship Recipient, and a QuestBridge College Prep Scholar. She also won First Place at the 2025 CPS Science Fair.

In the Fall, Ms. Tamatekou will attend the University of Michigan, majoring in biomedical engineering.

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Miguel Mendez
Walter Payton College Preparatory High School
IPLAC Scholarship Recipient Given by Matthew & Michelle Kelly

Miguel Mendez is a senior at Walter Payton College Preparatory High School and an American success story. Raised by a single immigrant mother in Little Village, a neighborhood defined by its vibrant Mexican culture, but also gang violence, Miguel made a deliberate choice to succeed in a STEM field that could not be more different from his neighborhood.

He has excelled academically, maintaining a 3.98 out of 4.0 unweighted GPA (5.41 weighted GPA). His extracurricular activities are also impressive. He interned at Femi National Accelerator Laboratory, ran cross country and track for four years wherein he set a few records and received multiple awards, and achieved notable success in the Payton Science Olympiad and robotics team. Miguel authored an article on quantum computers in his science writing/communications course. He is conversant in multiple spoken and computer languages, including English (fluent), Spanish (native), Mandarin (HSK 3), Python, MicroPython, and AutoCAD and AutoDesk Fusion.

Building community has mattered most to Miguel Mendez. In particular, he has served as Events and Outreach Director for the Chicago Association of Student Engineers (CASE). With CASE he actively worked on building a community for aspiring engineers, particularly those without existing connections in STEM. By bringing students together, he has endeavored to create an environment that fosters lasting bonds, lifts each other up, and redefines what is possible.

Miguel intends to major in computer science and electrical engineering at Stanford University in the Fall. He is the first in his family to attend college.

Alex Sellis
Lane Technical College Prep High School
IPLAC Scholarship Recipient Given in Honor of Paul Juettner

Alex Sellis is a senior at Lane Technical High School where he has excelled inside and outside the classroom. He is pursuing an education and career in engineering, and to that goal explains, “humanity as a whole is powered by the work of thousands of engineers over the course of history. The way to improve the world around us is to engineer something greater so that future generations can later build upon it.”

Alex Sellis is a brilliant student, carrying an unweighted 3.98 out of 4.0 GPA (5.14 weighted GPA) and *a perfect 36 ACT score*. In addition, Alex has been a member of the Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (JROTC), where holds a leadership position in a program having over 200 participants. As a JROTC leader, Alex has organized volunteer events, aided underclassmen, and conducted academic competitions. Furthermore, he has been on the Lane archery team, and has painted several murals around the school. In addition to academics, JROTC, athletics and art, Alex works part-time as a children’s baseball coach and as a waiter at a Mexican restaurant. He also manages to find time to volunteer at the American Legion and a local soup kitchen.

In the Fall, Mr. Sellis will attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, majoring in nuclear engineering. His goal is to research ways to make nuclear energy production safer, more efficient, and more environmentally friendly.

Cadence Bagdade
Lane Technical College Prep High School
IPLAC Scholarship Recipient

Cadence Bagdade is a senior at Lane Technical High School where she has excelled inside and outside the classroom. She will pursue an education and career in medicine. In her words, “For as long as I can remember, I have always been drawn to science.” And as she continues her studies, she plans “to combine [her] love for organisms with [her] passion for chemistry by studying biomedical sciences.”

Cadence is a terrific student, maintaining a 4.0 GPA all four years of high school. She is an AP Scholar with Distinction, a member of the National Honors Society, a member of the FIRST Robotics Team and winner of the FIRST Robotics Creativity Award. She is a tap dancer, receiving recognition for best choreography. She is a volunteer at Rush Oak Park Hospital, at community service projects through the National Honors Society, and at the Mount Prospect Fire Department. She is also a teacher and first aid advocate, having organized a First Aid Fair at her high school to spread knowledge and awareness of basic first aid for laypeople and having created a Stop the Bleed certification program teaching students how to care for an arterial bleed and ultimately save lives.

Her junior year AP English Language and Composition teacher shares that, “Cadence is a thoughtful, collaborative, and resilient student who will bring both grit and compassion to her pre-med studies in college.”

In the Fall, Ms. Sellis will attend the University of Arizona, majoring in biomedical sciences under a pre-med track.

Chloe Nam
Northside College Preparatory High School
IPLAC Scholarship Recipient

Chloe Nam is a senior at Northside College Preparatory High School, where she has excelled inside and outside the classroom. She is most interested in chemical engineering focused on sustainable energy and environmental solutions and hopes “to use science to tackle environmental challenges and contribute to a more sustainable future.”

Chloe Nam is an exceptional student, ranked first in her class of 267, earning and maintaining a 4.0 GPA throughout high school, and achieving *a perfect 36 ACT score*. Chloe is a National Merit Scholarship Winner, a U.S. Presidential Scholar Candidate, a National Top School Recognition Award Winner, a College Board National Recognition Program Winner, and an AP Scholar with Distinction, among other recognitions and awards.

She is also an artist and musician. Since 2021, she has been the Principal Flute in the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, performing at CYSO concerts five times a year, including two community concerts and two chamber concerts. During her senior year, she served as the Co-President of Girls Who Code, teaching students JavaScript, 3-D printing, and laser cutting. She is also proficient in Python, C++, HTML, and CSS programming languages and has achieved bilingual proficiency in the Korean language.

In the Fall, Ms. Nam will attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, majoring in chemical engineering.

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Please donate to the IPLAC Educational Foundation to support future scholarship awards. Please use the QR code below or mail checks to P.O. Box 472, Chicago, IL 60690, c/o Paul Juettner.



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