



International Union of Police Associations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Statement of President Cabral Regarding I.U.P.A. Member and I.U.P.A. Family Member Being Awarded 2024 Union Plus Scholarships

The International is pleased to share that an I.U.P.A. member and a family member of an I.U.P.A. member have been awarded Union Plus Scholarships this year. The I.U.P.A. works hard to ensure that our members and their families enjoy the best benefits possible and this is one example of those important benefits paying off.

- Sophia Grace Finnegan-Ayala of Milwaukee. Finnegan-Ayala, whose father, Alex Ayala, is a member of I.U.P.A. Local 21, has been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship.
- Ashley Hope Smith of North Syracuse, New York. Smith, who is a member of I.U.P.A. Local 8, has been awarded a \$1,050 scholarship.

Ms. Finnegan-Ayala will attend Marquette University, where she will major in biomedical sciences on the university's pre-physician assistant (PA) track. Her goal is to enter Marquette's accelerated PA program in the fall of her third year. She participated in the Medical College of Wisconsin Apprenticeship in Medicine summer program last year and hopes to work in a hospital, specializing in oncology or obstetrics.

Ms. Finnegan-Ayala's father has been an I.U.P.A. member since 2002 and recently was named Milwaukee Police Union Vice President. "My father has been an unwavering advocate for his fellow officers," she said. "Witnessing his dedication to his profession has been a lesson in resilience and the broader impact that individuals can have on society through their chosen profession."

Sergeant Smith, who has been a police officer for nearly sixteen years, plans to begin online coursework toward a counseling degree this fall. She hopes to become a licensed counselor and wants to transition to full-time counseling when her police officer career concludes. She is a sergeant for the Town of Cicero [New York] Police Department (CPD), where she is

the department's Public Information Officer. She has been with the CPD since 2013 and was named the department's Officer of the Year in 2022. Ashley holds numerous certifications and licenses, and she works part-time with the Village of North Syracuse Police Department. She is part of the CPD Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Support Team, which provides counseling services to colleagues and their family members as well as citizens who contact the police department for service.

Sergeant Smith is a proud I.U.P.A. member, serving as a CPD Board Member and Secretary for New York State Union of Police Associations (NYSUPA) I.U.P.A. Local 8. "Unions are extremely important for protection and the overall fairness of making sure the contracts are followed as they should be," Ashley said. "I am happy that we have such a great union that has our best interests at heart."

The International joins with I.U.P.A. Local 21, I.U.P.A. Local 8, and all of the I.U.P.A. to congratulate these two impressive students on this achievement!

END

NOTE:

*Originally chartered in 1979, the **International Union of Police Associations** is the only chartered labor union that exclusively represents law enforcement personnel. The I.U.P.A. represents active-duty, rank and file law enforcement professionals and emergency medical personnel nationwide – including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The I.U.P.A.'s mission is to protect and advance officers' wages, benefits, and work conditions. Membership includes officers from agencies throughout the United States, including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.*

More information is available at www.iupa.org. Follow us on Twitter at [IUPA34233](https://twitter.com/IUPA34233).