Two Leaders In The HIV Community Become HIV League Scholars

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The HIV League, a nonprofit organization working to empower the HIV Community through scholarship, wellness, and education, just selected their first two Scholars to receive an HIV League Scholarship. Nicole Begay, a graduating senior from Mountain View High School in Mesa, Arizona is continuing her Fashion Design educational career, while Kristefer Stojanovski, a doctoral student at the University of Michigan, will be continuing his studies in health behavior and health education.

The HIV League Scholarship is the only national-level scholarship for students living with HIV, and it aims to build the leadership, knowledge, and skills of each HIV League Scholar. The HIV League couldn't be happier with their first two Scholars since both Nicole and Kristefer have already shown an unlimited amount of potential as leaders of their local communities, the global community, as well as the HIV Community. Please read more about them below along with visiting www.hivleague.org to learn more about The HIV League and their scholarship for students living with HIV.

Nicole Begay

My name is Nicole Begay, I’m eighteen years old, and I live in Mesa Arizona. I am so honored to receive this scholarship since I have always had a dream of going off to college to study the arts. My wish and utter most desire is to major in Fashion Design and continue helping people. I love designing modest clothing for women that is trendy and cute. I have gone to school for fashion design already and have competed in competitions where I won Gold in state and Silver at nationals. I am starting my own business helping people by upcycling (creative reusing) and fixing clothes. I recently put on a fashion show where I designed a collection based off of Main Street Disney and won Third place.



I am so proud to be doing what I do and pursuing my dream of becoming a designer. It has been a struggle throughout these past four years of high school, but I have learned how to stick with what I love no matter what people say and to be determined, motivated, and persevere through anything. I believe that anyone can do anything as long as they put their best efforts forward and never give up. No one can stop me from pursuing my dream except for myself.

Kristefer Stojanovski

Kristefer Stojanovski is a second-year doctoral student in health behavior and health education at the University of Michigan. Kristefer has extensive experience conducting academic and applied research in public health, mental health, and criminal and social justice. His current research focuses on structural causes to mental and sexual health among sexual, gender, and ethnic minorities, in the US and internationally. Kristefer's long-term goals are to change societal and research narratives and discourses about HIV and sexual health. For example, while research indicates that young, men who have sex with men of color are at "higher risk of HIV;" Kristefer aims to reframe such understandings to correctly identify why the "higher risk exists." He believes that programs, interventions, and policies do not adequately meet the needs of persons of color subsequently creating their "higher risk of HIV."

Prior to his doctoral studies, Kristefer worked as a consultant with county and state governments in the United States, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and other non-governmental organizations in the Balkans. He was also a former Fulbright grantee to Macedonia. He has a dual master of public health in epidemiology and health management and policy.

Mr. Stojanovski is ecstatic to be continuing his education as an HIV League Scholar. He hopes to leverage the scholarship in order to address issues of stigma and advocate on behalf of persons living with HIV. Outside of his educational and research pursuits, Kristefer enjoys Crossfit, traveling, reading, and coloring in his adult coloring book!

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