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# James Karam Scholarship Fund Awards Twelve SouthCoast students

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## Twelve SouthCoast students awarded \$60,000

Twelve SouthCoast students awarded \$60,000 in UMass scholarships through the James Karam Scholarship Fund

*Scholarship fund recognizes local students' academic achievements and community engagement*

BOSTON – The James J. Karam Scholarship Fund has awarded scholarships to a total of twelve current and incoming University of Massachusetts students from the SouthCoast Region, including Greater Fall River, New Bedford, Fairhaven, and Dartmouth. These students will be attending UMass Amherst, Lowell, Boston, and Dartmouth. The scholarships awarded this year totaled \$60,000, providing \$5,000 per student, and can be awarded to these students on an annual basis.

The students from the SouthCoast region have distinguished themselves through their community engagement activities and their strong academic performance throughout their high school and college careers.

Business leader and former University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees Chairman James Karam and his wife, Janis Karam, established the James J. Karam Scholarship Fund in 2013 to recognize distinguished SouthCoast students. Jim's daughter, Alyssa Karam, has been actively involved in the process and will lead this initiative in the decades to follow.

"Each year we are impressed with the achievements of these inspiring and talented scholars. It's always an incredible reminder of how transformative a UMass education really is," Jim Karam said. "I am honored to be a small part of their academic careers and have no doubt of their future success. Our family is extremely proud of this scholarship initiative, but most importantly, we are very proud of the accomplishments of these incredible students throughout their academic years at various University of Massachusetts campuses."

This scholarship program was first awarded to 4 students in 2014, and with this latest selection of 12 students for 2023-2024, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of this scholarship program supporting students at all 5 UMass campuses. To date, the scholarships awarded have exceeded \$300,000.



UMass President Marty Meehan praised the Karams' dedication to access and affordability at UMass.

"These scholarships are creating new opportunities for deserving students and expanding access to a world-class UMass education, which are fundamental to our work in advancing the university's mission," said President Meehan. "We're so grateful to Jim and Janis Karam for their longstanding commitment to UMass students."

This year's scholarship recipients are:

- Lucas Bastista – Lucas is a junior at UMass Boston studying economics and anthropology and is a graduate of Dartmouth High School.
- Brayden Bergeron, Fall River – Brayden is a senior at UMass Amherst studying computer engineering and is a graduate of BMC Durfee High School.
- Sarai Benitez, Fall River – Sarai is a sophomore at UMass Lowell studying engineering and is a graduate of BMC Durfee High School.
- Tiago Boia, South Dartmouth – Tiago is a senior at UMass Dartmouth studying marketing and is a graduate of New Bedford High School.
- Heather Cachia, Dartmouth – Heather is a sophomore at UMass Dartmouth studying interior architecture and design and is a graduate of Dartmouth High School.
- Madeline Cisneros, New Bedford – Madeline is a sophomore at UMass Dartmouth studying crime and justice studies and is a graduate of New Bedford High School.
- Joshua Correia, Westport – Joshua is a senior at UMass Amherst studying psychology and English and is a graduate of New Bedford High School.
- Damaris Fratus, Fall River – Damaris is a junior at UMass Dartmouth studying nursing and is a graduate of BMC Durfee High School.
- Nathaniel Klein, Fall River – Nathaniel is a senior at UMass Lowell studying pharmaceutical science and is a graduate of Bishop Connolly High School.
- Savanha Laroche, Fall River – Savanha is a senior at UMass Dartmouth studying nursing and is a graduate of BMC Durfee High School.
- Adam Souza, Fall River – Adam is a sophomore at UMass Amherst studying managerial economics and is a graduate of BMC Durfee High School.
- Athena Xifaras, Fairhaven – Athena is a senior at UMass Amherst studying psychology and art and is a graduate of Fairhaven High School.

Originally from Fall River, James Karam graduated from UMass Dartmouth in 1971 before becoming the President and founder of First Bristol Corporation in 1975. First Bristol Corporation has developed retail shopping centers, hotels, and office buildings throughout southern New England. In addition, Mr. Karam co-owns the WSAR and WHTB radio stations.

For 10 years, Mr. Karam served on the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees, including four years as Chairman. During his time on the Board, Mr. Karam played a leading role in initiating a multi-billion-dollar capital plan across all five UMass campuses and the creation of the University of Massachusetts School of Law.





Left to right: Adam Souza '26, Tiago Boia '24, Nathan Klein '25, Heather Cachia '26, Joshua Correia '23, Kyle Neves '23, Lucas Batista '25.

Missing from photo: Athena Xifaras '24, Brayden Bergeron '24, Savanha Laroche '24, Madeline Cisneros '26, Damaris Fratus '25, and Sarai Benitez '26.