



December 12, 2025

Scholarship Committee Report for 2025 Annual Meeting of the Michigan Chapter SWCS

The Michigan Scholarships in Conservation Program aims to be a strong and continuing activity of the Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The program offers Michigan Chapter SWCS members an opportunity to assist the Michigan Chapter and the Soil and Water Conservation Society by supporting the education of future soil and water conservation professionals.

Scholarships are meant to encourage qualified students at a Michigan college or university to enter the field of natural resource conservation, and to prepare them for such careers through an organized program of study at an institution of higher education offering training in appropriate areas. Awards are based on interest in conservation as evidenced by scholastic ability and participation in conservation activities.

The 2025-2026 Michigan Scholarships in Conservation was awarded to Emma Thompson, a junior from Grand Valley State University (GVSU), majoring in natural resources and environmental management with an emphasis in ecological restoration. Emma has significant leadership and conservation experience, including roles as President of the GVSU Student Chapter of the Society of Ecological Restoration and Treasurer of the GVSU Soil Judging club. She also has worked with natural resources related companies, including the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Pierce Cedar Creek Institute.

Last year's winner (2024-2025) was Elizabeth (Liz) Kelley, a senior (at the time) from Hope College majoring in Environmental Science with an emphasis of hydrology and water conservation.

Please see the chapter website for a highlight of this year's Scholarship in Conservation award:

[Michigan Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society - Scholarships \(miglswcs.org\)](https://miglswcs.org)

The Scholarship Committee responsible with reviewing this year's applications and selecting a recipient includes Steve Schaub (Michigan Chapter Past President), Daniel Kesselring (Chapter Secretary), and Zachary Curtis (Committee Chair, Michigan Chapter Incoming President). The Chapter plans to offer a student scholarship for the Fall 2026-Spring 2027 academic year. A call-for applications will be made in late summer or early fall 2026.

Finally, for the second consecutive year, the Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society organized a 'Giving Tuesday' fundraising drive to help support the Scholarships in Conservation program. This year, \$250.00 was donated. Thank you to all contributors!

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