

CME Group Foundation Scholars

2024-25 School Year

Nube Aguilar

Nube Aguilar will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Finance. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from Von Steuben Metropolitan High School. Her interests are running/hiking and cooking. Her career goal is to enter the commercial real estate world.



Aaron Alexander

Aaron Alexander will be a senior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Computer Science and Advertising. He grew up in Chicago and graduated from Jones College Prep High School. His interests include playing music, travelling and cooking. His career goal is to become a software engineer and an eventual startup founder.



Johnny Barrios

Johnny Barrios will be a graduate student at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Accounting and Finance. He grew up in Cicero and graduated from J. Sterling Morton East High School. His interests include real estate. His career goal is to innovate the financial services industry to create a world of prosperity for all.



Mya Bragg

Mya Bragg will be a senior at DePaul University, majoring in Computer Science. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from King Jesuit College Prep High School. Her interests include playing pokemon and Yu-Gi-Oh. Her career goal is to become a software engineer.



Cristian Brenes

Cristian Brenes will be a senior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Agricultural Accounting. He grew up in Rolling Meadows, Illinois and graduated from William Fremd High School. His interests include running, playing soccer, watching movies, and forensic accounting. His career goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant and work in public accounting.



Emmanuel Buabeng

Emmanuel Buabeng will be a senior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Computer Science.



Tristan Caldwell

Tristan Caldwell will be a junior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Information Sciences. He grew up in a Chicago suburb and graduated from Plainfield East High School. His interests include creating digital 2D and 3D artwork, animations, game development, and digital music composition. His long-term goal is to obtain a career in IT that will allow him to develop and manage web applications and data management systems that make people's work and lives easier and more enjoyable.



Camila Crespo

Camila Crespo will be a junior at Stevens Institute of Technology, majoring in Business and Technology with concentrations in Finance and Information Systems. She grew up in North Bergen, New Jersey and graduated from Paramus Catholic High School.

Her interests include traveling, reading, and art history. Her career goal is to pursue an MBA and work globally.



Issac Deleon

Issac Deleon will be a senior at DePaul University, majoring in Finance. He grew up in Chicago and graduated from Lincoln Park High School. His interests include basketball, football, biking, and running. His career goal is to become a personal financial advisor.



Ebuka Egbunam

Ebuka Egbunam will be a senior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Computer Science. He grew up in Lagos and graduated from City Pride School. His interests include HIIT workouts, teaching and coding. His career goal is to eventually be a leading computer scientist and an educator.



Ali El-Hindi

Ali El-Hindi will be a junior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Accounting with an undeclared double major. He grew up in Melrose Park and graduated from West Leyden High School. His interests include playing and following basketball, weight lifting, expanding his knowledge of the world of business/accounting, and getting involved with extracurriculars/volunteer work. His career goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant and work as an auditor at an accounting firm after completing the 150 credit hours required to sit for the Certified Public Accounting exam by May 2026. He is considering pursuing a JD/MBA dual-degree program after completing his Bachelor's Degree to combine his interests in law with his professional aspirations in the business world.



Aylin Erdal

Aylin Erdal will be a sophomore at Stevens Institute of Technology, majoring in Business & Technology. She grew up in Green Brook, New Jersey and graduated from Watchung Hills Regional High School. Her interests include finance, python coding, hybrid training, nutrition, podcasts and fashion. Her career goal is to dive deep into the finance world and make an impact on the financial decisions of people that will bring them ultimate success.



Olamiji Fabamigbe

Olamiji Fabamigbe will be a junior at University of Illinois Chicago, double majoring in Information & Decision Sciences and Management. She grew up in Markham, Illinois and graduated from Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora. Her interests include trying different foods, watching movies, and playing volleyball. Her career goal is to be a technology consultant and her long-term goal is to start her own business.



Leslie Gonzalez

Leslie Gonzalez will be a junior at Northern Illinois University, majoring in Computer Science. She grew up in Montgomery, Illinois and graduated from Oswego High School. Her interests include running, gaming, and reading. Her career goal is to become a software developer.



Michael Gonzalez

Michael Gonzalez will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Finance and Business Analytics. He grew up in Orland Park and graduated from Carl Sandburg High School. His interests include running, reading, and watching football. His career goal is to work in commercial banking post-graduation.



Shria Halkoda

Shria Halkoda will be a sophomore at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Computer Science. She grew up in the northern Chicago suburbs and graduated from Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. Her interests include connecting with others over shared passions for cars, couture, media, finance, and social entrepreneurship. Her career goal is to build her skillset as a machine learning engineer at an industry-forward tech company before taking the leap to start her own ML solutions firm servicing the small businesses in her community.



Feisal Hassan

Feisal Hassan will be a senior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Computer Science. He graduated from Innovations High School in Chicago. His interests include software engineering, economics, and sports. His career goal is to solve problems as a software engineer.



Babak Hatami

Babak Hatami will be a junior at DePaul University, majoring in Finance. He grew up in Edgewater, Chicago, and graduated from Lane Tech High School. His interests include weightlifting, investing, and investment club. His career goal is to become a financial analyst, leveraging his skills and interests to contribute to the financial sector and make informed investment decisions to help underprivileged communities improve their financial well-being.



William Ileka

William Ileka will be a junior at DePaul University, majoring in Computer Science. He grew up in Lynwood, Illinois and graduated from T.F. South High School. His interests include programming, robotics, and gaming. His career goal is to become a software engineer.



Nataly Jimenez Cruz

Nataly Jimenez Cruz will be a junior at Stevens Institute of Technology, majoring in computer science. She grew up in Lodi and graduated from Lodi High School. Her interests include exploring new places and working out. Her career goal is to become a machine learning engineer, creating inclusive technology that solves real-world problems.



Hemam Kassahun

Hemam Kassahun will be a sophomore at DePaul University, majoring in Computer Science. She grew up in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and graduated from One Planet International School. Her interests include sightseeing, shopping, spending time with family and friends, and volunteering with students. Her career goal is to gain experience working as a business analyst and tech consultant, with the ultimate aim of transitioning into entrepreneurship to innovate and create solutions that bridge the gap between technology and business needs.



Michael King

Michael King will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Accounting. He grew up in the East Garfield Park neighborhood and was homeschooled through high school. His interests include music, reading, exercising, and studying the Japanese language. His career goal is to work as an audit accountant and eventually to transition to financial consulting for small businesses.



Brenda Leyva

Brenda Leyva will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Computer Science. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from Roosevelt High School. Her interests include cybersecurity, program management, volleyball, and photography. Her career goal is to pursue an MBA and lead as a security program manager.



Alyssa Lopez

Alyssa Lopez will be a sophomore at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Finance and Data Science. She grew up in De Pue, Illinois and graduated from De Pue High School. Her interests include hiking, crocheting, and reading. Her career goal is to work as a financial analyst and return to school to do a PhD in finance.



Blythe Madera

Blythe Madera will be a sophomore at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Accounting and Data Science. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from Whitney Young Magnet High School. Her interests include reading, listening to music, playing board games, and spending time with her siblings. Her career goal is to become a CPA working in one of the Big Four.



Daniel Martinez

Daniel Martinez will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Finance. He grew up in Chicago's Belmont Cragin neighborhood and graduated from Noble ITW David Speer Academy. His interests include bowling, running, traveling, and spending time with friends and family. His career goals are to explore paths in consulting or finance to help serve clients in a growing business world.



Luis Miranda

Luis Miranda will be a sophomore at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Finance. He grew up in Chicago and graduated from Lane Tech College Prep High School. His interests include trading assets such as stocks, commodities, currencies, and options. His career goal is to become a full-time trader and market analyst.



Noah Munoz

Noah Munoz will be a junior at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, majoring in finance and information systems. He grew up in Streamwood, Illinois and graduated from Elgin High School. His interests include going to the gym. His career goal is to find fulfillment somewhere within the finance field working with technology.



Brianna Negron

Brianna Negron will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, majoring in Information Decision Sciences with a concentration in Business Analytics. She is also pursuing a minor in Economics and a minor in Math. She grew up on the southwest side of Chicago and graduated from John Hancock High School. Her interests include writing, traveling, and all things film-industry related. Her career goals are to use her data analytics and research skills to measure mental health patterns in hopes of finding the most effective treatments for patients and to run her own business.



Natalie Ramirez

Natalie Ramirez will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, double majoring in Accounting and Finance. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from Thomas Kelly College Prep. Her interests include going to concerts/festivals and exploring the city. Her career goal is to become an auditor.



Lylli Rodriguez

Lylli Rodriguez will be a senior at University of Illinois Chicago, double majoring in Accounting and Information Decision Sciences. She grew up in Wood Dale and graduated from Fenton High School. Her interests include photography, running, and strength training. Her career goal is to become a CPA.



Farheen Saiyed

Farheen Saiyed will be a senior at Loyola University Chicago, majoring in Finance and Information Systems and Analytics. She grew up in Chicago and graduated from Northside College Prep High School.

Her interests include playing volleyball, traveling, fashion and beauty, linguistics, and artificial intelligence. Her career goal is to explore technology consulting, corporate finance, and data analytics for publicly traded companies.



Enrique Santillan

Enrique Santillan will be a senior at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, majoring in Finance. He grew up in Chicago and graduated from Whitney Young Magnet High School. His interests include soccer, guitar, and chess. His career goal is to work in banking.



Fiker Yonathan Shimels

Fiker Yonathan Shimels will be a junior at DePaul University, majoring in Accounting and Data Science. She grew up in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and graduated from Ethio-Parents' High School. Her interests include guitar, piano, drums, soccer, basketball, cooking, gardening, reading and chess. Her career goal is to become a CPA and make a significant contribution to the field of accounting and analytics.



Thomas Zaborenko

Thomas Zaborenko will be a junior at DePaul University, majoring in Mathematics. He grew up in Glenview and graduated from Glenbrook South High School. His interests include history, chess, and pickleball. His career goal is to create and lead a financial technology start-up that addresses unique challenges in the finance industry.



