



PLANTPURE
COMMUNITIES, INC.

PlantPureCommunities.org

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PLANTPURE COMMUNITIES ANNOUNCES 10 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Second round of scholarships for 2018

The nonprofit PlantPure Communities today announced that ten Group Leaders (GLs) of Pods (independent local groups connected to the PPC Pod Network) are the newest recipients of scholarships for the renowned Plant-Based Nutrition Certificate Program offered through the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies (CNS) and eCornell. These scholarships are being made available via a collaboration between PlantPure Communities (PPC) and CNS. The scholarships are aimed at building the capacity of community leaders carrying out impactful activities in their neighborhoods via the PPC Pod Network.

PPC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that works to build stronger, healthier, more sustainable communities through a wide range of research, policy, and program activities and by working with local nonprofits, governments, businesses, and other health and community-based organizations. The PPC Pod Network emerged out of the 2015 *PlantPure Nation* film with the goal of creating and supporting a grassroots movement by empowering a network of independent local groups (Pods) and people to promote the benefits of a whole food, plant-based lifestyle. Pods are comprised of like-minded people, working together to share the life-saving nutrition research that shows that a whole-food, plant-based diet is optimal for humans. To date, there are approx 500 groups across the globe with over 130,000 people involved in the Pod Network. Participation is free, and offers support and networking opportunities to everyone interested in learning, advocating and practicing a whole-food, plant-based lifestyle.

Ten exemplary leaders were chosen to receive this scholarship due to the commendable work they are doing and the impactful community goals they are planning for 2019. "We are so thankful to CNS for their partnership and for allowing us to offer this exceptional educational resource to our on-the-ground Pod leaders who are bringing the science of plant-based nutrition to their communities," said Jody Kass, PPC Executive Director. "CNS is pleased to support PPC's efforts to strengthen the Pod Network by offering these educational scholarships to active community leaders helping to share the science-based nutrition and health message. There is so much confusing information out there. It is crucial that this information reaches everyone, and especially those who live in food deserts, low-income, and other underserved neighborhoods where food borne chronic diseases are rampant," said Jenny Miller, CNS Executive Director.

The scholarship recipients represent a diverse group of local leaders who will be bringing evidence-based nutrition education back to their communities in Texas, California, New Jersey, New York, Michigan, Florida, Montana, and Pennsylvania. Two of the award winners are fluent in Spanish and another in Arabic. One leader is primarily educating college students while another is educating high school students. Meet our scholarship recipients:

Safura Osmani

Safura is the leader of [JAX Healthy Eating and Living Tribe](#) in Jacksonville, Florida, and within one year of starting her Pod she has over 250 members. She has promoted her Pod on a radio show every month, was on a local TV news broadcast, Buzz Media News, has been published in many blogs, writes bi-weekly newsletters with recipes, tips and resources, and posts on social channels twice a day with inspirational stories, recipes and tips. Safura stated, "I applied to the scholarship because my husband and I have an online social channel called [Jax Vegan Couple](#), where we educate, engage and inspire people to eat a whole-foods, plant-based eating lifestyle. We have been great fans of Dr. T. Colin Campbell for many years and recently met the whole family. We read *The China Study* and have been living a plant-based lifestyle for over 10 years. We live and breathe this kind of information and love to share it with others. What I will do with information I learn is to give free workshops."

Natasha Lantz

The [Northern Vegans](#) Pod in Negaunee, Michigan was founded several years ago and has an impressive following of over 1,000 people. Natasha is a co-leader amongst six others. The Pod hosts monthly restaurant dinners and potlucks, Vegan 101 educational classes, quarterly movie showings with attendance ranging from 20-250 people, they support a campus student group at the local University, and have began focusing on the PPC Restaurant Campaign through restaurant initiative meetings. The Pod is even regularly featured in the local daily newspaper and the campus newspaper in addition to a local news channel that covers the annual Thanksgiving potluck every year. Natasha stated, "I applied for this scholarship because having a certificate from the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies will make me a more knowledgeable and effective ambassador for plant-based living as well as increase my credibility with health care professionals, restaurant owners, and my clients. I plan to share the information that I learn in the course to improve the health and happiness of those in my family, Pod, client group, and greater community. I also plan to use the information to affect cultural/policy change in my hometown through various projects with restaurants and health care professionals."

Michelle Roberts

[Youth Vegan Revolution](#), the first youth Pod for high school students, is run by Michelle, and is located in San Diego, California. Although only forming this year, they have participated in the Climate March and brought The Human League to present to over 800 high-school students about veganism. Michelle plans to spread the Youth Vegan Revolution to other schools in the San Diego area by educating and recruiting teachers and administrators. Besides leading the Youth Vegan Revolution, Michelle is one of the organizers of the Healthing America movement in San Diego. Upon receiving this scholarship, Michelle stated, "As a single mother, I could not afford to take this course. I am excited to increase my knowledge in plant-based nutrition and to use this knowledge and certification to educate as many others as possible about the benefits of a whole-food, plant-based diet, especially the youth."

Christy Hartman

Christy is a new leader of the Pod [Friendswood WFPB group](#), in Friendswood, Texas. She started in April 2018. A wide range of ages attending Pod events, from teenagers to retirees. Christy has even teamed up with other Pods in the Houston area to co-host events. Her leadership and dedication to the whole-food, plant-based movement has attracted a local magazine to publish a story about her and her plant-based life. In Christy's words, "I'm excited for this course to give me a more academic-level understanding of plant-based nutrition, because you can never over-understand something. And I'm hoping for that to translate into my having a better ability to explain it to others. I believe experts should explain important things, so when asked an in-depth nutrition question I usually refer people to one of my trusted experts. But now that I'll have a somewhat formal education in the matter, I'll feel more comfortable explaining it myself."

Anthony Masiello

Anthony is the leader for [Anthony's Plant-Based Potluck](#) Pod, in Hampton, New Jersey and he hosts his monthly meetings at an outdoor setting at Ethos Health Farm. With this new new plant-based focused destination, his group is growing fast and now has over 460 people. Anthony is also working with a local organization to bring nationally recognized speakers to his area about the value of whole-food, plant-based diets and lifestyle. In addition to leading the Pod, Anthony is also a mentor for three other group leaders through the PPC Mentor Program. Anthony says, "I'm excited to learn the science and finer details behind eating a whole-food, plant-based diet, and to gain the knowledge and credibility that comes with this prestigious eCornell certificate program, so I can more effectively help others to understand the value and take steps toward transforming their own health with a whole-food, plant-based diet and lifestyle."

Diana Sanz

Diana is the co-leader of the [Plant Powered Queens](#) Pod in New York City, a group that has grown to over 230 members within its first couple of months. With members from different cultures and ethnicities, Diana's fluency in Spanish and English will be a big help. Diana, and her co-leader Enrica, have often teamed up with the nearby Pod, Plant Powered Manhattan, to co-host events. Upon receiving the scholarship, Diana stated, "The scholarship will provide me with crucial tools to continue spreading the health and wellness message through the proven healing benefits of a WFPB lifestyle, backed by the extensive science based research that Dr. Campbell has kindly made available to those fortunate to embrace it. Through Plant Powered Queens, I plan to bring the WFPB message to communities in Queens, as well as through the Facebook platform. I also plan to speak with others in a more informed and empowered capacity thanks to this course."

Linda Eliason

Linda Eliason, and the [Rocky Mountain Montana](#) Pod in Billings, Montana, has over 160 members despite being located in "cattle country." Through Linda's connection to the nearby private college, the Pod has educated the students about whole-food, plant-based eating via documentary viewings and educational classes. The classes included information on how students can cook whole-food, plant-based in their dorm rooms. In addition to educating the college students, the Pod has hosted monthly potlucks as well as a symposium which 100 people attended. Linda stated, "I want to feel that I have the right to share what I know and learn more of what I don't. I hope to be re-energized in my own effort in living a WFPB lifestyle. I feel that through earning the certificate I will obtain the education necessary to more confidently share with those in our Pod and others."

Jacquelyn Rummel

[McKinney Pure Plants](#), located in McKinney, Texas is a relatively new Pod led by Jacquelyn. Jacquelyn has been very active online and has created a following of over 120 people. Pod meetings will commence in January of 2019 and she is looking forward to having the Plant-Based Nutrition Certificate to increase her nutrition knowledge and credibility. Jacquelyn said, "I have been WFPB for 14 months and it saved my life. I honestly do not think I would be here now had I not changed my diet so I am convinced of the lifestyle. I created a Facebook page, Snap Pea Sheep and am very engaged with other FB pages around food. I hear so many questions and hear of so many struggles. People want guidance when they make this change! It is difficult to do alone. I want to share my story and help people in their transition to this lifestyle."

Leslie Muckleroy

[H.O.P.E \(Healthy Options for Plant-Based Eating\)](#) is a new Pod, located in Jourdanon, Texas, founded by Leslie. Having only formed a couple of months ago, she has had a couple meetings and has big plans for the future. This included a

holiday chef-prepared meal where a vegan chef will do a five course dinner cooking demonstration and dinner service. Leslie has the privilege of hosting her Pod meetings at an entertainment venue, which is a private house with a large kitchen and entertaining space. In addition, Leslie and her Pod are participating in the PPC Restaurant Campaign. Upon being awarded the scholarship, Leslie said, "I'm so excited to have this opportunity to participate in this course. I have wanted to learn for several years, but with two daughters in college the tuition was out of reach. I applied because I know that with knowledge, I will be able to help people in my community via our new plant-based potluck group, HOPE. I read comments and questions on social media frequently related to cooking healthy food. Food choices are very confusing. With the information I learn in the course, I want to be a resource to those who are seeking to know more as well."

Brittany Jaroudi

Brittany is a co-leader for the [Pittsburgh Plant-Based Support Group](#), which has over 500 members. The Pod meets monthly and she has taught several cooking demonstrations and created a [YouTube channel](#) to help their Pod members and community. In addition, Brittany is organizing to encourage local restaurants to participate in the PPC's Restaurant Campaign and is working to bring PPC's Oasis to her community. The local Pittsburgh Magazine published a story about the Pittsburgh Plant-Based Support Group. Brittany stated, "I want to gain a better understanding of how to explain whole-food, plant-based lifestyle to the people I am helping in my community. I would love to have the opportunity to really understand the science and share my knowledge with my community, Pod, and the world. I believe in the WFPB lifestyle will change the world. It has changed mine."