



Class of 1969 Scholarship Fund



In the East Reading Room, my favorite study spot.

Matthew Monroe '27

Ormond Beach, Florida • matthew.d.monroe.27@dartmouth.edu

AREA OF ACADEMIC INTEREST: Biology concentrating in ecology.

HIGH SCHOOL: Spruce Creek High School

OUTSIDE INTERESTS: Theatre! Gardening! Generally, spending time with a wide array of people and making new friends.

“I think it is, overall, very emblematic of the wider culture at Dartmouth, merging hard work with connection and experience.”

Dear Members of the Dartmouth Class of 1969,

I can't thank you enough for your extreme generosity in providing this scholarship.

My name is Matthew Monroe, and I'm headed into my second year at Dartmouth. I'm originally from northern Florida and was raised by a single mom. I always dreamed of going to college to become a math teacher, botanist, or occasionally an anthropologist (plans change!), but coming from a low-income background, I never really considered an Ivy League education as a possibility until the very end of high school.

The summer before my senior year, I learned about Dartmouth's financial aid policies, academics, and the incredible community which I'm sure you experienced over the course of your time here. My mom is originally from New England and has a family friend who lives in New London, so we ended up coming up to visit her and tour Dartmouth. On that tour, I fell in love with the beautiful campus and amazing environment, and I decided I wanted to apply early decision to Dartmouth. Even before being accepted, I was overwhelmingly nervous and excited. A month before early decision results were released, I made a paper chain with 30 links. Every morning, I would remove one of these links and write down something I planned to do once I was a Dartmouth student. I'm something of a superstitious person, and I've found that a great way for me to build confidence in something is to picture it as if it has already happened. I kept up with my chain calendar, and on December 16th, 2022, I broke off the final link and wrote “I am a Dartmouth student”. That afternoon, after rereading all of the things I'd written down, I opened my acceptance letter.



Class of 1969 Scholarship Fund

Over the course of my first year at Dartmouth, I used those little notes as a checklist. Some, like “Hike the Appalachian Trail” were finished very quickly (thank you first-year trips!). Some like “become a campus tour guide” took a bit longer to achieve. I haven’t finished everything, but these little notes have given me a ton of guidance on how to make the most of my time at Dartmouth and do all the things I was excited about when actually being a Dartmouth student was just a dream. I’ve had an absolutely electric first year of college, and I can’t wait to see what happens over the next three years of my time here. But the truth is that none of this would be possible for me without Dartmouth’s financial aid programs and the generosity of donors like you. I cannot thank you enough for making these incredible experiences attainable for me and for the many other low-income students who have had their lives changed by the College and by you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Sincerely,
Matthew

THE DARTMOUTH EXPERIENCE OF Matthew Monroe

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF POST-DARTMOUTH?

Right now, I’m planning on heading straight into a PhD program after finishing my degree. I love Dartmouth’s rural environment, but I’d love to go to a city for graduate school, maybe Boston or somewhere on the West Coast, just to try it out. In the long term, I want to become a professor. Scientific research and teaching are two huge passions of mine, and I think it’s a perfect career as far as merging those two areas. Where a lot of people see the process of earning a PhD and then completing various postdoc positions as a downside of the process, it’s something I’m honestly very excited about. I want to be able to move around and experience as much of the world as I can before I settle down and lock myself into my long-term career. It’s definitely a little daunting imagining the long journey ahead, but I’m very excited to see where it takes me.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT YOUR DARTMOUTH EXPERIENCE SO FAR?

I’m a campus tour guide, and an element common to every tour is the “Why Dartmouth” speech we give at the final stop. I always rattle off academics, financial aid, and environment as the major factors that led to me choosing Dartmouth, but I (and some other tour guides as well) prefer to use the time to talk about what we’ve found since becoming Dartmouth students that have made us want to stay. I always talk about the community, and it really is my singular favorite thing about Dartmouth. There is so much love here, so much compassion, and so many amazing relationships to be formed. It’s palpable just walking around campus. You see people crowding up around every free table, talking and laughing, even studying time together while studying or working on projects. It’s so easy to meet people here and so easy to make incredibly deep and powerful friendships. I think the school’s environment encourages this. We focus on academics, but we try not to take anything too seriously. We have a very strong work-hard-play-hard culture, and being a smaller school, we have the opportunity to easily bump into people over and over.



Class of 1969 Scholarship Fund

During winter term of last year, I discovered a really cool room. It's a small classroom and library in Moore Hall, on the fourth floor. If you are familiar with the building, it's the room behind the gigantic window. It's beautifully decorated, with a vaulted ceiling, an ornate wooden table, and a massive chandelier. It's locked most of the time, but during finals week, the school leaves all the classrooms open to give ample study space. My friends and I decided to camp out in the Moore window room all week and sit together while we studied and completed our final projects. We encouraged our friends to bring anyone who might be interested in studying with us, and at times, we had more than 20 people packed in, all working hard on finals. It was one of my favorite experiences of college, getting to meet a ton of new people, and spend some amazing quality time with my friends while we worked. I think it is, overall, very emblematic of the wider culture at Dartmouth, merging hard work with connection and experience.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS.

I love Pine Park, especially late at night. I'm a very social person and try to surround myself with friends as often as possible, but sometimes it just gets to be a little too much and I need to take a breather. Pine Park is one of my favorite spots to do that. It's so calm and serene, and I feel deeply rejuvenated after a long walk along the river or stargazing on the exposed hills. It's a great place to hang out with people, chat, relax, and enjoy nature.

This past winter, I had a mild frostbite scare in Pine Park while I was going sledding (I thought my thin cotton gloves would cut it in 10-degree weather, classic Floridian slip-up) and ended up going to the Dartmouth Outing Club house to warm up. My hands ended up being totally fine, and I had the chance to explore a new location I'd never seen before. I ended up buying a better pair of gloves, and from then on, I was better equipped to handle the beautiful winter scenery in Pine Park. I haven't had as much free time to head out there this summer, but I'm hoping once the weather gets a little cooler and I have a bit more free time, I'll be able to get back out to my favorite spot.

IS THERE ANYONE AT DARTMOUTH WHO IS SERVING AS A ROLE MODEL OR MENTOR FOR YOU?

I'd say my greatest role model at Dartmouth has been Sophie von Fromm, a post-doc in the biology department. She was one of the professors for my Global Change Biology class last term, and this summer, I've been working full-time as her research assistant. I'm very interested in research and teaching as a career, and I'm hoping to become a professor down the road. Working together alone in an isolated room in the lab meant we had a lot of time to talk and get to know each other. Sophie told me about the academic journey that led her to Dartmouth and has given me a lot of very honest and important advice about the process of becoming a professor. She's inspired me with stories of her various projects around the world and given me incredible guidance on all parts of the research processes, from lab work, data manipulation and creating figures, and paper writing. She even gave me the opportunity to attend a major conference with her. She's been an incredible mentor, and I genuinely cannot think of a better way to be spending my summer. I also just got offered an extended contract with the lab I've been working in, so I'll have the chance to continue working with and learning from Sophie and our PI next year. It's been amazing so far, and I can't wait to find out what else she has to teach me.