

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Kyle Dahilig becomes UOG's first Udall Scholar**

Kyle Dahilig, a University of Guam student majoring in integrative biology, is one of 55 students in the nation to have been named a 2022 Udall Scholar. Dahilig was selected for the scholarship program in May from a pool of 382 candidates across 181 institutions. He is the first student from UOG to be named a Udall Foundation scholar.

The scholarship program, honoring Morris Udall and Stewart Udall, awards scholarships to college sophomores and juniors who are committed to issues related to the environment or to Native American nations. Students are selected based on commitment to their careers, leadership potential, record of public service, and academic achievements.

“This scholarship spotlights the dedication and unwavering support from all my mentors who have guided me to enact change [...],” Dahilig said.

He will receive up to \$7,000 to cover academic expenses for the 2022–2023 academic year and access to the Udall Alumni Network, which includes more than 2,000 alumni from the Udall Foundation’s fellowship, internship, and scholarship programs.

Aside from meeting all the requirements, Dahilig said he applied for the scholarship because it was an opportunity to network and highlight the environmental work in Guam and the region.

In August, the scholars will attend the program’s orientation in Tucson, Ariz. The five-day conference will allow the scholars to work together on a case study and connect with Udall alumni and professionals working on environmental and tribal issues.

Dahilig serves as the president of the UOG Green Army, as a youth ambassador for the Guam Green Growth initiative, as the youth representative for the Guam Regional Transit Authority's Board of Directors, and on the environmental committee of the Guam Youth Congress. He also works on campus as an ecosystems evaluations research associate.

He was also accepted last year into the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program through University of California, Santa Cruz — a selective multi-year undergraduate research experience designed for students with potential to make sustained contributions as innovators and leaders in the field of environmental conservation.

After graduation, Dahilig said he aspires to earn a Ph.D., become a faculty member at UOG, and serve as an expert in ecosystem service. He said he is also considering law school because of his desire to strengthen environmental policy for Guam and the region.

“My overarching goal is to protect tropical biodiversity while promoting sustainable development driven by collaborative decision making and community support within Guam and across Micronesia,” he said.

This summer, he will be conducting research on plant-soil systems at the University of California, Santa Cruz, to understand their relation to invasion ecology.

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**Photo captions:**



1: University of Guam student Kyle Dahilig in White Mountains, Calif., as a part of the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program through the University of California, Santa Cruz, in July 2021. Dahilig was selected in 2021 for the multi-year environmental research program and, as of May, has been named a Udall Scholar as well. Both programs recognize and support students with leadership potential in addressing environmental concerns.



2: University of Guam student Kyle Dahilig, front row, second from right, and his fellow Doris Duke Conservation Scholars explore the aftermath of the Dolan Fire in July 2021 in Big Sur, Calif. Dahilig was selected in 2021 for the multi-year environmental research program and, as of May, has been named a Udall Scholar as well. Both programs recognize and support students with leadership potential in addressing environmental concerns.



3: University of Guam student Kyle Dahilig, front row, second from left, with his Doris Duke Conservation Scholars cohort on Aug. 9, 2021, at Blue Oak Ranch in California. Dahilig was selected in 2021 for the multi-year environmental research program and, as of May, has been named a Udall Scholar as well. Both programs recognize and support students with leadership potential in addressing environmental concerns.

*Photos courtesy of Kyle Dahilig*