

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:  
Jerry J. Sharell  
323.933.1234 x228

**POINT FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2009 SCHOLAR CLASS**  
***National Organization partners with corporations and individuals,  
benefiting over 140 individuals since inception.***

**LOS ANGELES, JUNE 9, 2009** Point Foundation (Point), the nation's largest scholarship-granting organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students of merit, today announced its 2009 Scholar Class, bringing the total number of individuals supported by the seven and a half year old organization to over 140 individuals.

"We started almost 8 years ago supporting just 8 scholars," said Point Co-founder Bruce Lindstrom. "I am thrilled of our progress and overwhelmed that we have had the opportunity to have helped nearly 150 students today."

Point received a record-breaking amount of applications this year: 2,463 submitted applications. Over the six month selections process, which includes an online application, submission of supplemental materials, a phone interview and an in-person interview in San Francisco, Point selected the new scholar class and is excited for the valuable contributions this year's diverse group of 11 undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate Point Scholarship recipients will bring to its Point Scholar community.

"We were impressed by the variety of backgrounds, achievements and accomplishments among the applicant pool, which undoubtedly represents the performance and quality of LGBT students nationwide," said Scholar Relations & Selections Program Director Vincent Garcia. "Once again, we are pleased with the diverse representation of gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and race and ethnicity among our new scholars and within our entire Point Scholar class. Additionally, new geographic regions are represented by our new scholars in this scholar class."

"In the last two years, we have received a number of calls from college admissions officers verifying individuals' status as a Point Scholarship Finalist in their admissions applications. This alone speaks to the nature of our highly competitive scholarships and the prestige associated with becoming a Point Scholar," commented Executive Director & CEO Jorge Valencia. "We are proud of all our scholars and equally proud of those individuals who make it to the finals, representing the top 2% of our nation's LGBT and straight ally applicants."

Point Foundation provides financial support, leadership training, mentoring and hope to LGBT individuals who are marginalized because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression. In June 2009, a total of 68 Point Scholars will be enrolled in their respective college or university and 72 Point Alumni will have continued on to pursue their life goals.

Point partners with a number of individuals and corporations in providing Named Scholarship awards which are created in the name of an individual or corporation.

Named Scholarship donors pledge a major gift of \$100,000, or \$25,000 per year for four years, to cover the costs associated with becoming a Point Scholar for four years.

Point is pleased to announce 11 Named Scholarships this year. Point Scholars awarded with Named Scholarships in 2009 include current Point Scholars, Ellen Adams (*HBO Point Scholarship*), Diego Arrango (*Greg Grosh Point Scholarship*), Ivan Bukta (*Time Warner Point Scholarship*), Carolina Cox-Orrell (*Time Warner Point Scholarship*), Kelsey Phipps (*Jonathan Lewis Point Scholarship*), and Lee Adam Wheeler (*Walter Decker Point Scholarship*). New, in-coming Point Scholars receiving a Named Scholarship are noted below with an asterisk (\*).

Additional individuals and corporations with current named scholarships include: Benjamin Archer (*Bob Fennell Point Scholarship*), Brittany Bjurstrom (*Time Warner Point Scholarship*), Corey Bohman (*Wells Fargo Point Scholarship*), Katie Fife (*Jan Aronson Point Scholarship*), Shaun Kasperbauer (*Casey Sakir Point Scholarship*), Geoff Mino (*Wells Fargo Point Scholarship*), Mikael Miller (*Wells Fargo Point Scholarship*), Matt Oertli (*Milton-Spidell Point Scholarship*), Melissa Robinson (*Allan Gilmour & Eric Jirgens Point Scholarship*), Brooke Sebold (*Calamus Foundation Point Scholarship*), David Seitz (*Wells Fargo Point Scholarship*), Lena Thompson (*Kevin Hummer Point Scholarship*) and Soraya Watkins (*University of Phoenix Point Scholarship*).

#### **Introducing the incoming class of 2009 Point Scholars:**

\*George Aumoithe, from Deerfield Beach, FL, is majoring in Africana Studies and with a minor in Gay and Lesbian Studies at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, ME. (*The Thomas & Sara Branton Point Scholarship*)

Lauren Beach, from St. Clair Shores, MI, is pursuing a Juris Doctor (JD) and a Ph.D. in Genetics at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in Minneapolis, MN.

Jeremy Bearer-Friend, from Providence, RI, is pursuing a Ph.D. in Policy, Organizations, Measurement & Evaluation at the University of California, Berkeley in Berkeley, CA.

\*Caeden Dempsey, from North Smithfield, RI, is in the Master's Entry Program in Nursing at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing in Baltimore, MD. (*The Paul Speirer Point Scholarship*)

Noah Exum, from Galesburg, IL, is majoring in Education and History at Macalester College in St. Paul, MN.

Lea Gee-Tong, from El Cerrito, CA, is an undergraduate at Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA.

\*Maggie Keenan-Bolger, from Detroit, MI, is pursuing a Master of Arts in Applied Theatre at City University of New York in New York, NY. (*The Dr. Joan Shelley W. Fernandez Point Scholarship*)

Andrea Knittel, from Ferndale, MI, is pursuing a Ph.D. in Public Health and a Doctor of Medicine (MD) at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI.

\*Ruben Ortega, from Albuquerque, NM, is majoring in Hospitality Administration at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. (*The Bryan Knapp Point Scholarship*)

\*Kyle Rapinan, from Shoreline, WA, is majoring in Law, Societies and Justice at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA. (*The Lawrence King/Jeffrey FashionCares Point Scholarship*)

Matthew Smith, from Aurora, CO, is pursuing a Juris Doctorate (JD) at Yale Law School in New Haven, CT.

In addition to a direct financial scholarship award, Point also provides leadership training and mentoring to its scholars. Through Point's Mentoring Program, all scholars are matched with mentors who are successful professionals in each scholar's respective field of study. Point also offers training in areas of leadership development, accountability, community service, public relations, advocacy and philanthropy.

Since its inception in 2001, Point Foundation has expanded into an organization with a staff of 12 full time and part time employees and an annual budget of \$2.5 million.

For additional information on Point Foundation, please visit: <http://www.pointfoundation.org>.

*Note to editors:* to schedule an interview with Executive Director & CEO Jorge Valencia or a Point Scholar in your area, please contact Communications & Special Events Manager Jerry J. Sharell - [jerry@pointfoundation.org](mailto:jerry@pointfoundation.org). Hi-res photos are also available upon request.

### **About Point Foundation**

Point Foundation (Point) is the nation's largest scholarship-granting organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students of merit. Point provides financial support, leadership training, mentoring and hope to LGBT individuals who are marginalized because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Point provides its scholars with the financial ability to attend the nation's foremost higher educational institutions, its mentors with the singular opportunity to become role models to exceptional students, and its donors with the rare satisfaction of directly investing their resources in future generations of leaders.

Point Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

###