

Rotary International Global Grant Scholarship

Our District 5170 Candidate: McKenzie Lynch



Mckenzie Lynch is from the Bay Area and graduated from Stanford University in 2018. Throughout college she took classes at Stanford's Graduate School of Education, volunteered at the Haas Center for Public Service, and majored in Art History. She has combined her passion in service work, education, and the arts to work and pursue research in the field of Art Education. She loves her current job as the Academic Programs Coordinator for Stanford's Art Museum, the Cantor Art Center. In this role she interfaces with Kindergarten through 12th grade students and teaches current Stanford students to be museum tour guides. In addition to teaching, she conducts

interdisciplinary research projects with students and faculty, collaborating with departments across the university and at other institutions and organizations. As a member of the museum's Diversity, Equity, Access and Inclusion team, she works on projects to improve accessibility in the arts with recent initiatives ranging from a hackathon to collaborations with the Blind Posse, a bay area community of blind and low vision folks, and the EPACenter, a creative youth development organization in East Palo Alto.

Before working at Stanford's Cantor Arts Center, throughout high school and college McKenzie gained experience teaching math, language arts, and ESL (English as a Second Language) to kindergarten through adults at Bay Area nonprofits, including: Peninsula Bridge, an organization that empowers low-income students to achieve college and career success through support and educational opportunities; 826 Valencia, a creative writing center dedicated to supporting under-resourced students with their writing skills, and the Immigration Institute of the Bay, an organization that provides affordable immigration legal service, education, and civic engagement opportunities. As a Stanford student she enjoyed working as the Managing Editor of Photography for Stanford's Newspaper, being a tutor and mentor to elementary and middle school students at Ravenswood Reads and the East Palo Alto Stanford Academy, giving art lessons to people of all ages at Stanford Sierra Camp, and teaching English during a quarter abroad in Florence, Italy. McKenzie is also an Irish dancer and plays the Mandolin whenever she can.

After graduating, McKenzie provided curriculum development and teacher training for Art in Action, a Bay Area organization that provides art education and supplies to schools whose arts funding has been cut and for the Education Department of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco: the de Young and Legion of Honor. While interning at these organizations she worked as an after school teacher for schools throughout the Bay Area with nonprofit EDMO, teaching STEAM (Science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) classes with an SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) focus before landing in her current role at Stanford's Cantor Arts Center.

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Throughout all of these experiences, McKenzie saw firsthand the importance of basic education and literacy in making a difference in not only her students' lives but its ripple effect on families and communities. By infusing her lessons with creativity from the arts, she's been able to teach key developmental and literacy skills in a memorable way that not only meets common core standards but fosters repeat engagement and cultural empathy. Next Fall she will be using her unique perspective from the arts to explore the connection between written and visual literacy at University College London's Institute of Education, rated world number one for Education in the QS World University Rankings. She is excited to research visual literacy in early learners but is especially interested in the potential impact visual thinking strategies can have for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners and learners with disabilities. Studying abroad will expose her to teaching methodologies used around the world and she hopes to work at a global literacy organization after completing her masters with the career goal of bringing accessible visual teaching techniques for basic education and literacy to schools and organizations around the world.

McKenzie wants to thank all of the Rotarians she has met throughout this process for their incredible support and for sharing their inspiring stories of Rotary's impact on their lives. She is especially enthusiastic about speaking with Rotary clubs as a Global Grant Scholar and hopes to be a future Rotarian one day!