Twenty years from now you will find me standing on the deck of a research vessel wearing rainboots and covered in seawater. I’ll be searching for the deep-sea lander I sent down eight hours ago, surfacing from 11,000 meters. Our mission was to collect specimens of carbon isotopic composition in the everchanging hadal environment. Maybe I’ll be holding binoculars in one hand and a long sampling device in the other, searching for whale feces. I could be studying the ecological significance of whale fecal matter that circulates nutrients to promote phytoplankton proliferation and carbon sequestration. No matter what career I ultimately pursue,my contributions to the underwater world will fulfil these four topics I believe are essential to achieve change.

**Whole picture perspective.** I strive to understand and preserve the global ocean network. This requires a worldly perspective and ecologically-minded approach to research; encom passing both human and organismal relationships. My goal is to achieve preservation of humanity through promoting ecological success in the face of our rapidly changing earth. My research will not just focus on using science to protect a species, but it will involve practical techniques to engage local communities in conservation efforts for the wellbeing of the ocean and people. By achieving this, I hope to convey the message that we are all connected to the ocean.

**Connect to protect.** “The oceans deserve our respect and care, but you need to know something before you can care about it.” . I will use part of my time as a scholar to connect people to the ocean’s beauty. I will spend a portion of my time as a Rolex scholar in areas without an ocean coastline as-well as those that rely directly on the ocean to educate and instill the same passion and respect for the ocean my mentors instilled in me. Clear communication of complex scientific work, such as showing people a deceased whale with trash in her stomach will lead to people questioning the implications of plastic consumption. The health of people directly depends on the health of the ocean. I hope to empower people to protect valuable resources through sustainable fishing. An inclusive message to a broad audience is an effective tool for turning research into action, and that is how we create change.

We cannot rely on our political leaders alone to lead the change, we as society must be the , change. The activist in me hopes to create a cascading effect through motivational and informational talks that I will give throughout my scholar period to inspire activism in others. . Through the Scholarship I will connect with organizations around the world that work with coastal communities to provide resources for implementing change.

The harm that scientists, divers and other in the oceanographic community contribute to while doing their work to protect it can never be fully redressed. Diving is a privilege and traveling to and interacting with the ocean environments places stress on it. common commercial travel contributes to carbon emissions increasing, environmental stress. Therefore, eco-friendly principles will guide my travels. I would also like to spend time educating people about ecotourism. For example, Oslob, Philippines has overcome poverty through establishing whale shark tourism, in turn protecting the whale sharks from finning. The goals I have established for my Scholarship year will help me to deepen my empathy and develop skills in science communication

**Learning from the ocean.** As I write this, the Australian wildfires have destroyed over 12 million acres of land and continue to burn. I am devastated by the current state of our planet. Yet, I look to the ocean for wisdom and inspiration and I am filled with hope for the future. We have achieved change in the past. Humpback whales were hunted almost to extinction in the 1960s, but thanks to the Endangered Species Act, populations have rebounded worldwide. If human impact is reduced, nature is bound to fix itself; therefore, nature may hold the most effective answers to conservation. just consider the holobiont-coral symbiosis. Through evolution the holobiont- coral xxx NOW EXPLAIN THE RELATIONSHIP

I believe that learning about the ocean is only important if we also learn ***from*** it.

Not only does the ocean provide us with life lessons, but nature has established the most efficient methods for ecosystem sustainability. We can learn how to save the ocean from the ocean itself.

**Promoting respect and hope.** News of its constant devastation coupled with political failures terrify me. For activism we also need hope, because without hope, nothing is worth fighting for. I will gain guidance and wisdom from leaders who have come before me, and redouble my energy and inspiration.

The ocean connects all beings through the air we breathe. Respecting this force of nature is about respecting each other and learning what we can control. It is about understanding how individuals can contribute to the success of everyone. Whales live in pods to ensure the health and safety of all members, especially the young. Can’t humans work in this way, too? We must change the way we treat the earth’s resources.Or else we will leave to the next generation, a world that threaten their survival. .

I am humbled by the size of whales, the complexity and vastness of the ocean, and my small place in the world. Together, I hope to unite our own species in a shared responsibility to protect our blue planet.