Launching to New Heights

Alexa Anderson MY ’20

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“Coming to Yale was a big shift,” said Alexa Anderson MY ’20, who hails from Hawaii. “The First-Year Scholars at Yale (FSY) program was central to helping me feel comfortable and succeed here.”

FSY makes the transition to college easier for low-income students, those from under-resourced high schools, and those who are the first in their family to attend college. Selected students come to Yale for six weeks during the summer before their first year. They take classes and live together in a residential college with FSY counselors, guides to Yale’s academic resources who help new students learn what to expect in their first year.

“FSY gave me the confidence to push myself academically and to remember that I belong here,” Alexa said.

The summer before her junior year, Alexa returned to the program as a counselor. “We want the new students to realize that professors and deans want to talk with them,” Alexa said, “and that it’s okay to ask for help. This is a place that wants all of its students to succeed, and makes their success a priority. I’m happy to open doors for my peers, the way others opened those doors for me.”

A musician who plays the piccolo in the Yale Precision Marching Band, Alexa is also an astrophysics major. “I’ve always loved outer space, ever since I was a child,” she said. “I’m excited by the potential to contribute knowledge to the field one day. I plan on doing a Ph.D. after graduation.”

“I couldn’t imagine my college experience without FSY,” Alexa said. “It’s a great way to launch into Yale, where there is no ceiling to what we can do.”

Donors make it possible for exceptional students like Alexa to attend Yale, regardless of their financial circumstances. To learn more about ways to support these students, please visit giving.yale.edu or call 800.395.7646.