The Ketner Emerging Leaders Scholarship was established in the early 1990s by Linda Ketner to reward students with a record of working to achieve social justice, to encourage students to become integrally involved in activities to promote social justice, and promote leadership that leads to social justice. The intent is to inspire and financially aid students who are actively engaged in creating and promoting social justice locally, nationally, and globally. It is Linda Ketner’s wish that through this scholarship, and the experiences that recipients have at the College, that Ketner Emerging Leaders will be change agents who identify social problems and devise steps to ameliorate those problems. Ketner scholars are not simply volunteers. They are change agents that are committed to making a positive impact locally, nationally, and globally.

Jody Bell

Growing up I was lucky enough to be fairly embedded in a vibrant immigrant community. I noticed what this community felt when the rhetoric around immigration changed in 2016 due to the presidential shift, and specifically noticed how children are affected by the legal status of their parents. So, when I was in high school I released In Case of Deportation, icodhelp.org, to support American-born children with undocumented parents/guardians, and inform them on how to prepare for potential parental deportation. Now, with the support of the Ketner Scholars and the institution at large, I would like to bring immigration resources to campus. I hope to create a safe space for students to discuss their status and combine this with outreach programs, bringing these conversations into the larger community to support younger children in mixed status families, or who are undocumented themselves. I am a rising sophomore at the College, studying International Business and Political Science, with minors in Business Spanish and Computer Information Systems.

Makayla Cook

As a biology major and Spanish minor, the relationship between health and activism is an inseparable intersection for me. The right to feel safe and in control of one’s body is what is at the heart of reproductive rights. Fighting for access to critical resources such as birth control, abortions, hormone therapy, STI testing, and comprehensive sex education is what I will continue fighting for in my senior year. This fall I will continue as president of CofC’s student organization Planned Parenthood Generation Action, part of Planned Parenthood’s 501(c)4 organization, to fight for these rights. Providing transportation to the one of only two Planned Parenthood clinics in South Carolina for our students is also a big concern. We will work harder than ever this fall semester to raise awareness, assist Planned Parenthood, and fight for legislature that protects these resources for everyone.
Marissa Haynes

I am a junior at the college double majoring in Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies with a minor in Spanish. My fascination with present and past societies along with my categorical love for humanity drive my passion for social justice activism, and one of my focuses in my work is the next generation of leaders. I've worked with children for many years, and I believe that because children are our future, they must be made a priority. I have goals to use my majors and minor to enter the field of social work and fight for those too often forgotten in the heightened political, economic, and social discussions throughout our country and the world. I truly believe in the power of education, and as a Ketner scholar, I hope to use this opportunity and training to not only grow as an activist but also to begin expanding my reach to the next generation of activists.

Kristen Graham

I am a Junior double majoring in Public Health and Women’s and Gender Studies. I have always been social justice oriented because of my care for others. However, my own identity as a black queer woman in the South helped me to see the vast disparities effecting black women and queer folks. I specifically work in racial justice, gender equity, and educational equity. Spring 2020 I worked on a new curriculum requirement that specifically addresses racial justice and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. As a Ketner Scholar, I plan to continue to be involved and to see these changes implemented before I graduate. This year I will be serving on many College committees to make sure that marginalized students have a voice and ensuring they are seen and heard. Through my work, I hope to be a part of real systemic change at CofC and the greater tri-county area.