

For Immediate Release

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Community Foundation Awards \$47,200 in Scholarships to Area Students

Washington, PA – The Washington County Community Foundation (WCCF) has completed its endowed scholarship cycle for 2008, awarding a total of \$47,200 from 29 permanent funds.

Two scholarship funds made first time distributions:

Linda LeFever Scholarship – After obtaining a graduate degree from Carnegie Mellon University, Linda LeFever worked as a Vista worker in Rochester New York and started a tool lending library and yard maintenance company. She moved to the Pittsburgh area to help renovate the E&O Brewery and later worked for the Washington County Council on Economic Development. She founded the successful Northside Community Development Fund in 2000, helping finance small businesses on the North Side of Pittsburgh. This Fund, created by family and friends in her memory, provides scholarship to worthy students of Washington or Allegheny counties attending the Heinz School of Carnegie Mellon University. Melissa Lawrie and Jonathan Scholl received the inaugural \$1,000 awards.



Linda LeFever

Ringgold Alumni Scholarship – This Fund, which provides scholarships to worthy graduating seniors of Ringgold High School, was initiated by the Monongahela High School Class of 1950. Since 1995 the Class had been awarding scholarships to graduating seniors of Monongahela High School and later to Ringgold High School. To ensure the perpetuity of the scholarship it was transferred to the Washington County Community Foundation. The Class hopes also that now that contributions are tax-deductible through the WCCF, more alumni will make contributions to increase the value of the award. The first scholarship to be awarded since the transfer was given to Michael Matta, who received \$250 to attend Penn State in Altoona.

An additional 27 permanent funds made distributions this year.

Black Family Scholarship – Meghan Brownlee from Avella received \$1,000 to attend Geneva College and Erica Moats from West Greene received \$1,000 to attend Waynesburg University. This fund was created by William and Sheila Black to provide scholarships to Avella and West Greene students who are majoring in agriculture, education or nursing. Bill and Sheila Black have dedicated their lives to helping educate young people. Bill is a retired vocational-agricultural and elementary teacher who worked most of his career in the Avella School District. Sheila is a retired school nurse from the West Greene School District.



Burgettstown Lions Club Scholarship – This fund was created by the Burgettstown Lions Club to provide three awards to Burgettstown seniors. The \$250 Mud Garcia Award was received by Morgan Lauff attending Slippery Rock University. The \$250 Harold Malone Science Award was received by Sally Dugas attending Slippery Rock University. And the \$500 Lions Memorial Award was received by Taylor Lescallette attending Georgetown University.

Megan J. Phillis Scholarship Fund for Academic Excellence – Receiving the \$500 award from this fund was Taylor Lescallette attending Georgetown University. The fund was created by family and friends in memory of Megan who died in a car accident at the age of 18 shortly after her graduation from Burgettstown High School. Megan herself was to receive multiple scholarships which would have fully paid for her intended four years of study at West Virginia University.

Rebecca Sarah Rogers Scholarship Fund – This fund was created by family and friends in memory of Rebecca who died at the tender age of 10. Even at her young age, Rebecca had decided that she wanted to become a teacher and so eligible recipients will be Washington High School graduating seniors pursuing a degree in education. The award of \$1,000 was presented to Aimee Steele attending California University.

Alice Boone Main Memorial Fund – A \$500 award was granted to Chelsey Sheppard to attend Bethany College. Mrs. Main returned to her high school alma mater of McGuffey after college and served both as the Federal Programs Coordinator and Elementary School Principal. After her untimely death, family and friends created this fund in her memory to provide scholarships to worthy McGuffey graduating seniors.

Arthur V. Ciervo Scholarship Fund – ReaLynn Forsyth, a Bethlehem Center senior, received a \$500 award from this fund to attend Washington & Jefferson College. One of the first in his family to graduate from college, Arthur Ciervo went on to become a successful journalist and public relations professional. One of his published works, *Always in a Hole*, is based upon his experiences of growing up in the small coal mining town of Richeyville. This fund was created by his family and friends in 1999 to honor him on his 70th birthday.

Barry Clark Barto Scholarship Fund – Christine McGee received this year's \$500 award to attend the Western Area Career & Technology Center. The fund was created in memory of Barry Barto, a standout athlete at Burgettstown who died in a car accident shortly after graduating from technical school. Eligible recipients will be graduating from Burgettstown High School and attending a career / technical school.

Buckholt Science Scholarship Fund – Christine Welling received this year's \$500 award to attend Dickinson College. Mr. Paul Buckholt, former educator in the McGuffey School District, created this fund in 2000 from the proceeds of the concession stand he operated at the school for many years. It benefits McGuffey students pursuing a degree in the sciences.

Burgettstown Jr. Sr. High Student Council Leadership Scholarship Fund – A \$300 award was granted to Amy Jane Matchett to attend Washington & Jefferson College. This fund was created by the Burgettstown Student Council, under the direction of former advisor Ms. Mary Elaine Lozosky, with contributions received from Burgettstown alumni, faculty, administration and local businesses.



Catherine M. Taylor Scholarship – This fund was established in 2006 by her son, Ted Taylor, as a lasting memorial to her and provides two \$500 scholarships to graduating Peters Township High School seniors who are a member of the Future Business Leaders of America and/or a member of the Advanced Placement Spanish Class. Receiving the awards this year were Kelsey Gallagher attending the University of Notre Dame and Stephanie Shultz attending Seton Hill University. Mrs. Taylor is a former teacher at both Taylor Alderdice and Baldwin Whitehall.

Charles Pappas Sr. Scholarship Fund – This fund was created in 2001 by a bequest from former Burgettstown School Board President and community leader, Mr. Charles Pappas, Sr., to provide an annual scholarship to a Burgettstown senior. This year a \$1,500 award was granted to Scott Weaver to attend Penn State University.

Clyde J. Tracanna / Washington Rotary Club Educational and Vocational Fund – Awards of \$1,000 each were granted to Vanessa Rendine (Trinity High School) attending Duquesne University, Leeann Danley (McGuffey High School) attending Waynesburg University, and Megan Engle (Washington High School) attending the University of Pittsburgh. This fund was transferred to the Foundation in 2001 by the Rotary Club of Washington to support scholarships to high school seniors in the Club's service area. The fund memorializes Clyde Tracanna, a former president of the club who was very active in supporting scholarships for students.

Curtis Wachter Scholarship Fund – Curtis Wachter spent his brief life capturing the images of joy and sorrow that he viewed through his camera lens. An award-winning *Observer-Reporter* photographer, Curtis was only 25 when cancer took his life and the promise of a brilliant career. This scholarship, established by the photography department of the paper and his family and friends, is awarded to promising high school graduates from any Washington County high school who intends to study photography or photojournalism in college. Receiving this year's \$500 award was Wiley Abbas from Washington High School who will attend the New York School of Visual Arts.

David O. and Sarah F. Johnson Family Education Fund – Initiated by the children of Mr. & Mrs. Johnson, this fund provides an annual scholarship to a graduating senior from McGuffey High School. Marriles Saut, attending the California University of Pennsylvania, is the recipient of this year's \$1,000 scholarship. Both Mr. and Mrs. Johnson were very active in the McGuffey School District. David, who worked for the Coen Oil Company, served on the McGuffey School Board for 17 years. Sara worked for the district for 25 years.

D. Jack Gaido, Sr. Memorial Fund – Initiated by the family of Jack Gaido, this fund provides an annual scholarship to a graduating senior from Chartiers Houston and one from Trinity who are studying business, medicine, or theology in college. Christopher Carter (Trinity) attending Geneva College and Brian Willebrand (Chartiers Houston) attending the Penn State University each received \$1,000 awards. D. Jack Gaido, who grew up in Meadowlands and graduated from Chartiers Houston, attended technical school after his tour of duty in the U.S. Air Force. He worked as a computer technician for RCA and Unisys. Mr. Gaido believed strongly in the value of post secondary education and saw to it that each of his six children received college degrees.

Dr. Paul Pipik Fund for Study in the Health Sciences – A \$750 scholarship was awarded from this fund to ReaLynn Forsyth of Bethlehem Center High School to attend Washington & Jefferson College. The fund was



created by Dr. Pipik's children who currently live throughout the country. Dr. Pipik grew up in Brownsville before resettling in Chicago where completed his medical degree. He worked for over 30 years in several hospitals in the Cleveland area, serving as Chief Surgeon at both Deaconess Hospital and Parma Hospital.

Elizabeth Plumer Memorial Scholarship – This fund was created in 2003 by family and friends in memory of Ms. Plumer, a former teacher at Trinity High School who herself was a life-long learner. The fund provides scholarships to Trinity seniors pursuing a teaching degree. Janeen Berry received a \$200 award to attend Southeastern University.

John & Sophie Choratch Fund – This fund was created by a bequest from Sophie Choratch in remembrance of the victims of 9-11 and provides scholarships to children whose parent works or volunteers as a first responder in Washington County. Receiving awards from Ringgold were Dorian King attending Pittsburgh Technical Institute and Heather Baka attending the Mercy School of Nursing. Canon-McMillan students receiving awards were Joseph Wasik attending Robert Morris University, Emily Ellis attending California University, and James Tilger attending La Roche College. Other students receiving awards were Hilary Byers from McGuffey to attend Wheeling Jesuit University, Bruce Carlton from Fort Cherry to attend Carlow University, Kacey Simpson from Chartiers-Houston to attend West Virginia University, and Jeromey Shipley from Charleroi to attend the Community College of Allegheny College. Each recipient received a \$2,000 scholarship. Valued at approximately \$800,000 this is the largest fund of the WCCF.

Joseph P. Femiani Memorial Scholarship – Samuel Rogers-Melnick of Peters Township High School was this year's recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship to attend Duquesne University. The fund was created in 2003 by John and Barbara Campbell and Joseph and Shirley Hardy to celebrate the life and good works of their friend Joseph Femiani. Mr. Femiani spent the better part of his life reaching out to those in need, particularly children. He is best known for initiating the Watchful Shepherd program which protects children from abuse and domestic violence.

Judge Charles G. Sweet Fund – Derek Illar attending the University of Pittsburgh's School of Law received this year's \$200 scholarship. This fund was created by David Sweet in memory of his father, Charles Sweet, who served as President Judge in Washington County for many years. Judge Sweet was also very active with local charities including serving as the President of the local United Way.

Kerns Family Scholarship Fund – Created by Mary Kerns Meek in 2005, this fund provides an annual scholarship to a McGuffey student who is a member of the Future Farmers of America who intends to pursue a career in agriculture. Courtney Cowden received this year's \$1,000 award to attend Penn State University. Mrs. Meek, who grew up on the family farm which had been in the family since the early 1800's, was a County Extension Agent for West Virginia University. Mrs. Meek died in 2007. This was the Foundation's 100th permanent fund.

Margaret Pitek Ciervo Scholarship Fund – RaeLynn Forsyth received this year's \$500 award to attend Washington & Jefferson College. Mrs. Ciervo, formerly of Denbo, PA, had dedicated most of her life to being a devoted wife and mother. However, she did find time to work several years as a Licensed Practical Nurse in State College. She was also very active in charitable causes, including the delivery of clothing and furniture to



poor families, supporting programs at a homeless shelter, and helping Vietnamese families get settled in the United States. The fund was created in 2000 in her memory to provide a scholarship to a worthy female graduate of Bethlehem Center.

Kirk C. Moninger Fund – Jarrett Lonich received a \$200 award to attend Washington & Jefferson College from this fund. The years following a tragic car accident proved to be very difficult for both Kirk Moninger and his family. Twice, his parents were told their son, who had slipped into a coma, was not expected to live. Sadly, after surpassing everyone’s expectations regarding his recovery, Kirk took his own life. The Fund provides scholarships to Trinity seniors who are members of the National Honor Society and the Trinity Varsity Golf or Lacrosse teams, as these were important components of Kirk’s high school years.

Ronald T. Miller II Scholarship Fund – Sara Taylor, attending the University of Notre Dame received this year’s \$1,000 award from the fund. While attending Peters High School, Ron Miller was active in sports and worked part-time at a retail golf store. After graduating with honors, he entered Virginia Polytechnic Institute, where he was studying mechanical engineering. He sustained critical injuries in an automobile accident while home on break. The fund provides scholarships to Peters Township seniors pursuing an engineering degree.

Sprowls College & Post Graduate Scholarship Fund – This fund was created in 2005 in memory of Duane Sprowls, a former teacher at Fort Cherry, and Lou Rae Sprowls White, a business professional. The scholarship, created by their daughter, L. Dawn Haber, is awarded to a graduating senior of Fort Cherry who displays a passion for the humanities, and may be renewed through graduate school. Receiving this year’s \$1,000 award was Michael Liebert to attend Washington & Jefferson College.

Washington County Music Education Fund - A \$300 award was granted to Cory Chamberlin from Canon-McMillan to attend Bethany College. This fund was created by the WCCF Trustees with proceeds of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra concerts it has hosted in Washington County. Eligible students will either be attending a summer music study program or majoring in music in college.

Washington County Visiting Nurses Association Scholarship Fund – Awards of \$1,000 each were granted to nursing students Jodi Gasper attending Duquesne University, Paige Orlandi attending Waynesburg University, Emily Zozula attending West Liberty State College and Jordan Crosen and Robin Corso, both attending West Virginia University. This fund was created by the former Visiting Nurses Association of Washington.

Initiated in late 1995, the WCCF has grown its grant-making endowment to more \$5 million and cumulatively has awarded more than \$1,000,000 in grants and scholarships. In addition to post-secondary scholarships from permanent funds, the WCCF also awards K-12 scholarships for financially needy students to attend non-public schools through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program of the Commonwealth. To learn more, please contact the Foundation office at 724-222-6330 or info@wccf.net. You may also visit the website at www.wccf.net

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