

The Queer Foundation Scholar

Publication of the Queer Foundation, Seattle, Washington
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November 2009: 3



The 2009 Queer Scholars

With the help of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and a number of its members, information about the Queer Foundation's High School Seniors English Essay Contest is reaching more students in more parts of the U.S.

This past year several NCTE members also served as a preliminary screening committee, advancing nineteen essays to the second and final round of judging by a national committee of six queer writers, scholars and activists.

The essays of the three scholarship recipients are now posted on the QF website: <http://queerfoundation.org>, where the essays of previous recipients may still be found. The Queer Foundation encourages teachers to bring the essays to the attention of their students and, as appropriate, to use them as part of their curriculum.

As in previous years the members of the final selection committee enjoyed the privilege of reading a number of excellent essays. Many of the student authors revealed a sincere interest in and a profound awareness of queer history; most are encouraged by what they perceive to be an increasing willingness on the part of their peers, queer or not, to take a stand against injustice. All are aware of the many

challenges they and their contemporaries will still face.

I present here a very brief and incomplete description of the three scholarship recipients, listed alphabetical order.

● **Jade Donigan.**

Mr. Donigan graduated from Sandpoint (Idaho) High School, where he first developed an interest in theater arts, both as an actor and a theater manager.

He is currently living with family members in Portland, Oregon, while attending Portland Community College. After attaining Oregon residency he plans to transfer either to Southern Oregon University in Ashland (with its renown theaters) or Portland State University in order to pursue a degree in theater arts. He also hopes to earn a major or minor in Spanish.

After completing his undergraduate studies, Mr. Donigan plans to join the Peace Corps. Although he would eventually like to pursue a career in the theater, a realist, he has a back-up plan: to go on to earn either a teaching license or a Ph.D. in order to teach either theater arts or Spanish at the high school or college level.

● **Hannah Kapp-Klote.**

Ms. Kapp-Klote grew up in Lawrence, Kansas, the relatively liberal city on a hill surrounded by miles and miles of corn fields. Active in human rights work since she was twelve, she admits that growing up in Lawrence with a supportive family, the help and encouragement of an older mentor who is the executive director of a human rights coalition in Kansas, and a supportive community have all made her activism possible.

Debunking stereotypes of another kind, Mr. Kapp-Klote is a techie who has used technology to reach out to queer teens lacking in the support she has enjoyed.

Currently enrolled at Grinnell College majoring in political science, she eventually intends to earn a law degree and to work for social justice and international human rights, possibly for a non-profit, the U.S. government or the U.N.

She also hopes to use technology to expand the reach and effectiveness of the human rights agency or organization she eventually works for.

● **Calen P. Winn.**

Mr. Winn is from Vashon Island, Washington, where he was extremely active both at Vashon Island High School and in the local theater company, both as an actor and as a production manager.

He also served as a volunteer for the Vashon Youth & Family Services agency. The program's director credits him with always being the first to volunteer when the agency needed help with problems involving queer youth.

Mr. Winn is currently attending Western Washington University. His dream is to establish a career on Broadway while still volunteering for a queer

organization, dividing his time between New York City and Seattle.

All three of the recipients were described by one or more of their teachers as possessing extraordinary talents and a deep social conscience. All three have been out and proud members of their family, their school and their community. With their proven writing skills, they will no doubt make a lasting and positive contribution to society. We wish them well.

Ray Verzasconi, editor

The Queer Foundation depends upon the generosity of donors to continue and to expand the current scholarship program. Donations (tax deductible to the extent allowed by law) are welcome and should be sent to:

Queer Foundation
3213 W. Wheeler St., #145
Seattle WA 98199

Checks should be made payable to the Queer Foundation.

To contribute on-line, visit the QF website:
<http://queerfoundation.org> .

Past scholarship recipients are encouraged to keep the Queer Foundation updated on their academic and professional careers. Those enrolled in an accredited college or university will continue to receive \$100.00 if we publish their updates, payable to their college or university.

Send materials to:
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