

MEETING NOMINEES FOR THE NAPIER AWARDS

This year's nominees from the Claremont Colleges for the Napier Awards for Creative Leadership will be introduced at Pilgrim Place's festive February 10 Napier Awards banquet and program. Also that evening, the two students chosen as recipients of the \$10,000 Awards will be publicly announced.

Here are brief sketches of the ten students who are this year's nominees (with their Pilgrim Place mentors indicated in parentheses).

Kimberly Chung - Harvey Mudd (Steve Smith) Kimberly's vocational commitment to a medical career and her years growing up in Taiwan have led to a strong interest in Taiwanese indigenous people's use of traditional medicines derived from plants. With urbanization, deforestation and drug patent laws increasingly affecting the availability of those plants, it is not clear how the tribes' medical needs will be met in the future. For her Napier project, Kimberly is proposing to spend several months living among three indigenous tribes. In conjunction with the government's Council for Indigenous People, she will develop recommendations for improving medical conditions among the tribes.

McKenzie Floyd - Scripps (Chris Chase) McKenzie will be the first Scripps student to graduate who has declared a major in Art Conservation. She spent her junior year in Florence, Italy, studying various facets of this field. While there she met a scholar who is establishing a new art conservation school in Malta. For her Napier project, McKenzie wishes to accept an invitation to assist in developing the new school. Her special interest is to generate financial aid that will allow Maltese youth from low-income families to attend the school. McKenzie believes that the school will contribute significantly to the Maltese people's gaining access to their rich cultural heritage and seeing to its long-term preservation.

Emily Kawahara - Pitzer (Jim Lamb) Emily's skill in creative writing and a semester in Nepal have combined to provide the focus of her proposed Napier project. She wishes to develop creative writing as an integral part of the Nepali educational system. The several dimensions of the project include her teaching the subject in an English class at the innovative Rato Bangala school in Lalitpur; publishing a collection of short fiction stories by her students; and designing lesson plans for the teachers who will continue the subject after her departure. Emily believes that these steps can contribute significantly to initiating interest in creative writing in Nepal, which in turn can heighten the people's awareness of their cultural tradition and lead to their sharing it widely with people of other traditions.

Hannah Michahelles - Pitzer (Wendy Bayer/Jane Harmes) Hannah's major in Theater for Social Change reflects the convergence of two key streams of her experience: longtime involvement in all aspects of theater – acting, directing, writing, teaching – along with commitment to utilizing the power of theater to shape and re-shape lives. That involvement and commitment are evident in her Napier project proposal to work with two San Francisco Bay Area theatrical groups to engage foster-care and inner-city youth in writing and producing plays that give them voice and support in portraying the dehumanizing conditions in which they often live. "I hope," says Hannah, "I can inspire these kids...to become activists in their communities, advocating for the change they wish to see in the world."

Courtney Miller - Pomona (Stan E. Moore/Joann Lamb) A vocational commitment to the public health field, together with study and internships in Latin America, have given Courtney a strong interest in providing safe drinking water for rural populations in Peru. "It is a fact," says Courtney, "that 884 million people on earth do not currently have access to safe drinking water," and many of them die from diarrhea and other waterborne diseases. For her Napier project, she wishes to initiate and manage a pilot program for the production and distribution of ceramic water filters in the Puno region of southern Peru. Working closely with local groups, she intends to help them take the key initial steps leading to the eventual establishment of a small, locally run factory for making the filters.

Celia Neustadt - Pomona (Teresa Wilson) Her enrollment in a Baltimore inner-city magnet high school gave Celia an intense exposure to major social and economic shifts under way in that American urban center. She has become especially interested in the problematic changes that made Baltimore's Inner Harbor area a major tourist destination. For her Napier project, Celia proposes to recruit and train a team of ten high school students who will conduct interviews among people who were excluded and otherwise negatively impacted by this "commodification" of the area. They then will confront tourists in the Inner Harbor with the results of the team's research and work toward establishing a permanent space for local Baltimore youth there.

Felicia Palmer - Scripps (Donna Ambrogi) Felicia's engagement with her Jewish tradition has been evident in several realms, most notably in her leadership of synagogue music. An accomplished singer and a student of Jewish music, she proposes for her Napier project to work with the Durban Progressive Jewish Synagogue in Durban, South Africa, to help it establish an enduring music program within the congregation. This task will involve her in creating a volunteer choir and teaching them both new and traditional Jewish music. Felicia also intends to introduce them to the bonding power of music by arranging interfaith musical events with other religious and ethnic groups in Durban.

Allison Ritter - Pitzer (Susan Craig/Mary Gindhart) Allison's extensive experience in cross-cultural communication has led her to propose a Napier project that she wishes to implement in Kyrgyzstan, formerly a part of the Soviet Union and now also known as the Kyrgyz Republic. The particular focus of her project will be an effective conflict resolution program among marginalized youth, which had been funded by US AID but is losing its funding in February 2012. Allison's plan is to revitalize the Youth Theater for Peace program by working with its local leaders to discover viable means of ensuring its continued work in the future among the Kyrgyz people.

Shengwei Sun - Scripps (Mary Gindhart) A dual major in Politics/International Relations and Gender/Women's Studies – along with deep roots in China and several productive internships – have pointed Shengwei to her proposed Napier project. She intends to facilitate a first-of-its-kind conference at Huazhong University of Science and Technology, in central China, on the theme of Women and Development. She will use her contacts with Chinese scholars and grassroots activists to bring the two groups together to shed light on the "unrelenting theme" of gender inequality and discrimination in Chinese life, as well as to create networks and strategies for future action. "For millions of Chinese women," Shengwei says, "this is...a living reality of daily struggle."

Angie Tyler - Claremont McKenna (Joann Lamb) Angie's junior year in Dakar, Senegal, gave her a rich experience leading young girls, ages 9-14, in such afterschool activities as arts, athletics, personal leadership, and English. For her Napier project, she wishes to return to Dakar in order to ensure that program's survival and long-term impact, by such steps as connecting it with local female empowerment organizations. With fewer than half of the girls in developing countries who are enrolled in school completing five years of education, Angie believes this program can provide a major boost to the girls' continued education, their escape from poverty, and the eventual realization of their highest potential.

-Paul Minus