

Good Afternoon,

We welcome you to this very successful Fall Conference, and to the culmination of hard work, persistence, and visionary creativity.

In 2000, OSPA's tenuous financial status presented the opportunity for the board to rethink ways in which to raise money for the long established practice of contributing to the NASP Minority Scholarship. The first scholarship raffle was held in November 2001. Each year thereafter raffle contributions, participation, enthusiasm, and donations have increased. Our cumulative contributions to NASP have amounted to _\$_____, and were second only to the Psychological Corporation.

At Spring Conference 2006, an executive board member suggested that we create an OSPA Scholarship to recognize an Ohio School Psychology student. The work was tedious, demanding, but fruitful and OSPA's relationship with The Columbus Foundation prepared the way for this moment. Our collaboration established investments, scholarship operational guidelines, and the framework for recipient selection.

Last spring five students submitted applications for review. In June, the prescribed selection committee – two OSPA executive board members and three

university representatives - had the daunting task of selecting our first recipient. We had five excellent applicants. The decision was difficult, but the committee concurred on one individual. Let me introduce you to our first OSPA Scholarship recipient.

This individual pursued an undergraduate degree in Psychology and graduated Magna cum laude while receiving departmental honors. In pursuit of a graduate degree, the recipient was drawn to school psychology because of an interest in special education comingled with psychology. As an undergraduate and now as a graduate student, this individual has demonstrated interest in research and as a research assistant has worked to interface computer software with research procedures.

The received recommendations from a practicum supervisor, an employer and a university trainer noted fine qualities such as an excellent work ethic, leadership, and extraordinary understanding and compassion while working with disabled individuals. During the practicum experience, the recipient demonstrated good consultative skills, enthusiasm, a thirst for knowledge and a desire to be of assistance to those in the school setting. Consistent across letters of recommendation was the acknowledgement of a good analytical mind, which integrates knowledge and contemporary experience. In addition, adjectives like tireless, committed, and self-motivated were used to describe our recipient. Recent election as president of the university cohort and efforts to act as

an ambassador to our profession exemplify leadership potential. Our recipient has juggled all of this while meeting the needs as a spouse and parent of two children.

Lastly, I want to quote from the recipient's submitted essay. "I find the ability to use vast, multi-disciplinary knowledge for the betterment of a child's life to be particularly rewarding.... I look forward to defying statistics, and aiding children in defying the expectations of failure placed upon them. I hold a great amount of optimism for the profession, and in the professionals, I will work alongside, in completing the goals necessary to improve young lives. I believe this, above all, is the defining characteristic of an effective School Psychologist – the ability to stay optimistic."

On October 16, 2008, \$1,000 was deposited at the student's university bursar office for incurred educational expenses. OSPA wishes our recipient the very best in his pursuit of a career in school psychology. It is my boundless pleasure to introduce The University of Toledo student, Ryan P. Taylor, as the first recipient of the OSPA Scholarship. Ryan.....