



Third Annual PEG Scholars Announced

The following students are recipients of the fourth annual Phoenix Education Grant (PEG) scholarships, benefiting from the generous donations made to the PEG endowment since its establishment in 2001:



Matthew Davis is a freshman at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, who plans to study astrophysics. Active in the burn community, he attended Camp Susquehanna, was selected as their Camper of the Year, and represented the camp at the International Association of Fire Fighters National Children's Burn Camp in 2000. He has also been an active volunteer in his local community and a lifelong Boy Scout, recently earning the rank of Eagle Scout. Upon completing his education, Matt hopes to continue to "give back to the community that has given and influenced me so much."



Elizabeth Dideon, who was also a 2004 PEG scholar, completed her bachelors in social work from Pennsylvania's Shippensburg University in May, then entered Temple University's Social Work Master's Program in July. This additional degree will allow her to be eligible for the Pennsylvania licensure required to

work in a hospital setting as a clinical social worker. Liz, who is currently working in a part-time social work position in the burn unit of Lehigh Valley Hospital, hopes that the completion of this additional education will result in her "dream job" as a hospital social worker in the hospital's burn unit. (To learn more about Liz, see the Profile on page 18 of this issue.)



Lindsey Jacobson is currently a student at Central Michigan University (CMU), where she is pursuing a bachelor of science in athletic training, after which she plans to attend CMU's physical therapy program and earn a doctor of physical therapy degree. Lindsey has been an active volunteer through service at her church and in her community. During high school, she attended Great Lakes Burn Camp, where she returned as a counselor this year. Lindsey's ultimate career goal is "to work as a part-time physical therapist and work part-time as an athletic trainer in an area high school."



Vanessa Latour is a junior at New Jersey's Monclair State University, where she is studying art education. Vanessa has been active in "social, scholastic, and community activities," and has often used her artistic

talent to benefit others. She has worked as an “art-tracker,” someone who takes step-by-step instructions to create a painting for someone who is physically unable to do so themselves and she has provided art lessons to preschool children enrolled in the Headstart program. For the past few years, Vanessa has also volunteered at the burn camp sponsored by West Penn Hospital. Her “paramount aspiration” is to “become an art educator, a profession that would encourage me to use both natural and acquired artistic talent to guide and strengthen others.”



While pursuing a double major in biology and psychology at the University of New Mexico (UNM), **Lenora “Miki” Mathes** still finds time to enhance the lives of others. Miki volunteers annually at Champ Camp, the

Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation retreat that she herself attended as a camper. She also volunteers for an “all-issues” crisis hotline center at UNM. Lenora will complete her degree in May, which she hopes will lead to her acceptance into a medical program. “My hospital experiences have offered me the opportunity to meet some wonderful medical staff and I too wish to join the medical world,” she explains. Her ultimate goal is to become a forensic pathologist, which she estimates will require “at least 12 years of post-secondary education.” “However,” reports Miki, “I’m up for the challenge.”



Caterina Saracino, also a PEG recipient in 2003 and 2004, is in her third year at Hobart and William Smith (HWS) Colleges. She has just completed the architecture program and is continuing to study geosciences at the

college. She hopes these studies will allow her to attain her dream of creating “sustainable designs.” She explains, “As an architect, I will be able to help people realize their dream of a perfect house, building, or landscape.” Caterina is an active volunteer through

her college, most recently traveling to Virginia’s Pocohontas State Park in March to clean up hurricane destruction. She also volunteers at local soup kitchens, Habitat for Humanity, and Neighbors Night, which provides food and safety for disadvantaged children. Her favorite volunteer effort is working each summer at Our Special Camp burn camp, the same program she attended as a camper. She also finds the time to participate in coed kickball and intramural soccer, and is a member of the HWS cross-country team.



Paul Terrell entered the Community College of Baltimore County as a freshman this fall. He has been active in church, school, and community activities. Paul has represented his high school in track and field events, has

conducted voter registration drives, and has taught computer skills to senior citizens at his church. He has been a camper at Mid-Atlantic Burn Camp and was selected last year to participate in that camp’s cooperative program with Full Potential Motorsports, where he was one of three teens who served on the pit crew of a sports car race team, performing maintenance on the car during the race weekends and at garage sessions between races. Paul was also one of three young burn survivors featured in *The Book of Image Enhancement for Burn Survivors* and its companion video. He plans to pursue a career in the fire service.

ABOUT THE PEG PROGRAM

PEG scholarships are awarded annually to burn survivors to assist them in furthering their education at an accredited college, university, or trade school. Applicants must be a high school senior, have earned a GED, or be enrolled in a college, university, or trade school. They must have also demonstrated academic achievement; have been accepted to an accredited college, university, or trade school; and be willing one day to help another burn survivor further his or her education. Additional information on applying for a PEG scholarship can be found on the Society’s website, www.phoenix-society.org, by clicking on “About Us,” then “Key Programs.”



This story is an excerpt from The Phoenix Society’s *Burn Support News*, Fall Edition 2005, Issue 3. *Burn Support News* is a quarterly publication that contains articles on the emotional, psychological, and social aspects of burn recovery.