

The Austin Michelle Cloyd Honors Scholarship

To Promote Social Justice

Purpose and Background

The Austin Michelle Cloyd Honors Scholarship enables outstanding Honors students to pursue a major extra-curricular activity aimed at promoting social justice. The goal of this scholarship is to enable exceptional students to apply their intellect, energy and compassion to a cause that improves the social, economic and/or political conditions of poor and powerless people. The proposed activity must be service-oriented and may, but need not, involve international travel.

Austin Michelle Cloyd was a freshman Honors student at Virginia Tech majoring in International Studies and Foreign Languages/French. She was passionate about social justice issues and felt great compassion for people, particularly children, who live in poverty. Austin was an officer in the International Relations Organization at Virginia Tech and a volunteer with Appalachia Service Project. She died on April 16, 2007, in Norris Hall on the Virginia Tech campus.

The Scholarship

Funding. This scholarship provides total funding of up to \$13,500 for the following uses:

- \$2,500 Internship experience (see below)
- \$5,000 Service activity between third and fourth years. Ideally, the funds will be applied directly to the costs of the activity (e.g. travel expenses and materials required to implement the activity). However, where a substantial commitment of the student's time is required to implement the activity such that the student must forgo summer employment, the funds may also be used to pay tuition, room and board during the fourth year of study at Virginia Tech.
- \$6,000 Tuition and fee scholarship for third and fourth years of study at Virginia Tech (\$3,000 per year)

Internship. Cloyd Scholars are encouraged to seek an internship with a public-service focus (e.g. U.S. Congress, United Nations, local charity, etc.) in the summer between their second and third years of study at Virginia Tech. University Honors staff will work with each Scholar to identify public-service internship opportunities that are consistent with the Scholar's unique goals and objectives. Because public-service internships often pay less than similar positions in the private sector, Scholars who take advantage of this aspect of the Cloyd Scholarship will receive a \$2,500 stipend.

Residence. The University will hold space for Cloyd Scholars to reside in the Hillcrest or Main Campbell Honors communities. Residence in one of these communities during the recipient's third and/or fourth year of study is encouraged, but not required.

Eligibility

All undergraduate students who are Honors eligible and have completed three semesters of study at Virginia Tech with a grade point average of 3.50 or above are eligible to apply for the Scholarship. As a condition of the Scholarship, successful applicants who are Honors-eligible but who have not yet enrolled in University Honors will be required to enroll. In addition, applicants should anticipate (1) continued enrollment at Virginia Tech for at least two full years after the Scholarship is awarded and (2) earning an Honors diploma.

This Scholarship is not restricted to students in any particular course of study. Students are encouraged to think broadly about how work within their chosen field of study can be applied to promote social justice.

Application Process

The application process is rigorous to ensure that Cloyd Scholars meet the high standards and objectives of this Scholarship. The process requires applicants to assess the future direction of their lives and to plan activities that will add significant value to their college education while simultaneously applying their education to help others.

Personal characteristics. This Scholarship program seeks to identify and engage students with outstanding ability, desire, and capacity to make a positive difference in the world. Successful applicants will exhibit intellectual curiosity, compassion for others, problem-solving skills, leadership skills, persistence, a record of achievement and a strong moral character.

Faculty mentor. Applicants for this scholarship must have a VT faculty mentor to assist in the application process. The duties of the mentor include acting as an academic advisor and a “sounding board” for the student’s ideas, reviewing and offering suggestions for improving the student’s portfolio, and assisting the student in identifying courses and/or other materials that will help the student prepare for the proposed service activity.

Portfolio. Application is made through the development of a portfolio. The portfolio is a collection of work and ideas of the student. Properly done, the portfolio will provide the selection committee with a portrait of the applicant, an overview of the proposed service activity, and an understanding of how the proposed activity fits with the applicant’s academic preparation and long-range objectives. The Cloyd Scholar’s portfolio remains a work-in-process until the Scholar graduates.

The portfolio must contain the following documents and be no less than 15 pages and no more than 25 pages (front only).

1. Cover letter written by the applicant detailing why s/he is applying, the rationale for including particular items in the portfolio and a statement of long range goals and plans.
2. Curriculum Vita
3. Personal statement of no more than 1,000 words
4. Description of a proposed service activity that, in some meaningful way, will improve the social, economic or political conditions of poor and powerless people.

5. Endorsement from the faculty mentor.
6. Signed statement that all work in the portfolio is the applicant's own creation.
7. Current Course of Study Planner detailing how the student's prior and future coursework relates to the proposed service activity.

In addition to these required documents, portfolios may include other material that, in the applicant's judgment, would help the Selection Committee assess the applicant's worthiness for the Scholarship. However, as noted above, the total length of the portfolio may not exceed 25 pages. Additional items that applicants might wish to add include:

- Papers written by the applicant
- Artistic works created by the applicant
- Photographs of the applicant's prior work
- Notes from the applicant's journal, diary, or research logs/journals
- Letters or other evidence documenting the applicant's work

For additional guidance in creating a portfolio, please see the Assistant Director of University Honors.

Selection Process

The selection process is comprised of three stages—staff review, preliminary interviews, and final interviews.

Staff review. Applicants will submit draft portfolios for review by the Honors staff. Applicants will be notified of problems that must be addressed before submitting a final portfolio. Once a final portfolio is submitted, further changes are not allowed. Applicants should notify the Assistant Director of University Honors if their record of accomplishment changes after submitting a final portfolio.

Preliminary judging and interviews. Portfolios will be judged by a committee of faculty appointed by the Director of University Honors. The faculty committee will review all portfolios using the following criteria:

- Does the applicant demonstrate the personal characteristics described above?
- Does the applicant propose a meaningful service activity that will help others will also adding value to his or her college education?
- In the judgment of the committee, will the applicant complete the service activity in a manner appropriate to be designated a Cloyd Scholar?

After reviewing the portfolios, the committee will select a small group of applicants to be interviewed to further assess the above criteria. During the interview process, applicants can expect questions concerning any item in the portfolio, current world, national, or state events, or their education. After conducting these interviews, the faculty committee will, at their discretion, select the finalists.

Cloyd Scholar Awards Committee. Applicants put forth by the faculty committee will undergo an additional interview by the Cloyd Scholar Awards Committee. This committee may consist of Virginia Tech faculty and citizens from outside the University. Members will be selected on

the basis of their achievements and their representation of the ideals espoused by this scholarship program. Following the final interviews, the Committee will select the Cloyd Scholar appointed for that year. The Committee's decision will be final and will be announced immediately after the Committee adjourns.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 2007

12 & 13 – Information Meetings concerning the Austin Michelle Cloyd Scholarship

17-28 – Schedule appointment with Mr. Shrader to discuss application process. Call 231-4591 to schedule; no appointments via email. Appointments cannot be made on Tuesdays.

October

1 – Deadline to declare intent to apply for scholarship

11 – Presentations by former sophomore scholarship winners. This year's presenters will be Brad Shapiro (Class of 1954), Elizabeth Traut (Horton), and James Mills (Gough).

A mentor meeting will be held by Dr. Terry Papillon at 4:00 pm. Applicants and their mentors are urged to attend. Please RSVP to rbshrade@vt.edu by October 8.

Reception held at 4:30 pm with presentations beginning at 5:00 pm.

Keep Mr. Shrader informed of your progress throughout the month and ask for help as needed!

November

Keep developing your portfolio!

30 – Turn in preliminary portfolio to Mr. Shrader by 5:00 pm

December

Before you leave for break, schedule an appointment to review the portfolio

January 2008

Work to complete the portfolio

February 2008

1 – Final portfolio due to Mr. Shrader by 5:00 pm

4-8 – Faculty on interview committee to review portfolios

11-15 – Preliminary interviews.

18-22 – Students will meet with a member of University Honors to discuss their candidacy.

March 2008

14 – Scholarship selection dinner at 6:00 pm for all finalists

15 – Scholarship selection and announcement of winner

