

The Austin Michelle Cloyd Honors Scholarship

To Promote Social Justice

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2009 Cloyd Scholar: Bryan Murray
2009 Finalist: Jennifer Porter
2008 Cloyd Scholar: Jeni Lamb

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 Optional **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 In the summer between their second and third years of study at Virginia Tech, Cloyd Scholars are encouraged, *but not required*, to seek an internship with a not-for-profit public charity (i.e. I.R.C. 501(c)(3) organization), a governmental entity (e.g. U.S. Congress), or a not-for-profit intergovernmental agency (e.g. United Nations, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, etc.). Because such public-service internships often pay less than similar positions in the private sector, Scholars who choose to take advantage of this aspect of the Cloyd Scholarship will receive a \$2,500 stipend. Scholars who choose other

types of summer employment are not eligible for this stipend. This optional aspect of the Scholarship is intended to mitigate financial impediments that might otherwise prevent Cloyd Scholars from gaining useful public service experience.

Residence. Cloyd Scholars are encouraged, *but not required*, to reside in Honors Housing (Main Campbell or Hillcrest). Students should make housing decisions independent of the scholarship process and follow the normal application process for upperclassmen Honors housing. (Mr. Blackwell will provide more information later this fall concerning housing applications.)

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 final 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. If applicable, a description of the optional internship experience.
5. Description of a proposed service activity that, in some meaningful way, will improve the social, economic or political conditions of poor and powerless people.
6. Endorsement from the faculty mentor.
7. Signed statement that all work in the portfolio is the applicant's own creation.
8. Current Course of Study Planner detailing how the student's prior and future coursework relates to the proposed service activity.
9. We must receive an electronic copy of your final portfolio to send to committee members who live out of the area. Typically, this will be a .pdf file. If the file is huge, please provide it on a disc. Some elements of a portfolio may be difficult to reproduce well in electronic form, so plan accordingly.

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 and former winners. For the 2009-2010 process, applications will be reviewed by Jennifer Lamb, 2008 recipient. 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 Mr. Michael Blackwell, 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 University Honors. The preliminary 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 is well-designed, feasible, helps others and will also add 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. Final 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 2009

16 – Information meeting

21 - - October 2 – Schedule appointment with Mr. Blackwell to discuss application process. (I will probably schedule one or two event in this time period to help explain the process of creating a portfolio in greater detail.

October

2 – Deadline to declare intent to apply for scholarship with Mr. Blackwell. Successful applicants will stay in regular touch with their Honors Scholarship adviser. Please keep Mr. Blackwell informed of your progress and ask his help with any roadblocks you encounter.

16 – *First draft of personal statement.* Please consult with your advisor and/or the University Honors staff for assistance. You are welcome to discuss your personal statement with any member of University Honors.

21 – Presentations by former sophomore scholarship winners. This year's presenters will be John Helveston and Tory Smith (Horton), Jennifer Lamb (Cloyd), and Rehan Dawood (Gough). Presentations will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the Hillcrest Dining Room (Hillcrest 143).

30 – *First draft of trip proposal and ideas.* Again, meet regularly with your faculty advisor. You should schedule appointments as necessary with previous winners and/or finalists.

November

13 – *Second draft of personal statement.* Begin visualizing your finished portfolio.

20 – *Complete updated curriculum vitae.*

30 – *First draft of portfolio due by 12:00 p.m.*

December

Applicants to be sent on to the preliminary round will be notified in early December. Honors staff and previous winners will review their portfolios and provide feedback for the final portfolio before the end of the term.

February 2010

1 – Final portfolio due by 12:00 p.m.

2-5 – Faculty on preliminary committee to review portfolios

8-12 - Preliminary interviews.

15-19 – Students will meet with previous Cloyd Scholars and finalists and/or Mr. Shrader to discuss their candidacy.

26 – Dinner for all sophomore scholarship finalists at 6:00 p.m.

27 – Final Scholarship Selection. Recipient announced at the end of interviews.