

JDP Youth Scholarship – 2010 Recipients

Honoring the courage of LGBTQ Youth as they enter college.

The Joshua Dunning Powell (JDP) Scholarship is intended to help Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) students who are in need of financial support to defray the cost of a college education, which for many can seem an insurmountable obstacle to success. The Pride Center believes these students should not be further disadvantaged as they prepare for the future.

Background on Scholarship: With the recognition that LGBTQ youth often face tough and complicated challenges in their high school years, local philanthropist Joshua Dunning Powell approached the Pride Center in the fall of 2009 with a proposal to support and encourage LGBTQ youth in the Capital Region. In collaboration with the Pride Center, Mr. Powell founded the Pride Center Scholarship Program to assist LGBTQ youth by publicly recognizing the particular challenges they face and rewarding their successes. In 2010, six awards were given to local LGBT high school seniors, ranging in geography from Glens Falls to Hudson, and entering a range of colleges from Skidmore to SUNY Plattsburgh.

2010 Scholarship Recipients:

ANNA RAND

Anna is a 2010 graduate of Albany High School who will attend SUNY Buffalo. She will major in architecture and industrial design with the goal of eventually working for a service organization like the Peace Corp. Anna has been an activist on behalf of lgbtq issues both locally and outside of this region. She was a participant in "The Laramie Project" at Albany High School.

ALEXANDRIA SPELLER

Xandria is a 2010 graduate of the Harriet Tubman Free School who will attend Hudson Valley Community College. She will major in American Sign Language and intends to work as an ASL interpreter. Xandria has participated in a wide range of activities to educate people about the lgbtq community. She was a jumpstart leader with GLSEN and wrote and directed her own play in a production at her high school.

CHARLES FERRUSI

Charlie is a 2010 graduate of Hudson High School and will major in nutrition at SUNY Plattsburgh. He intends to become a health teacher and dietician. In high school he was actively involved in a range of groups that assist all students to feel "accepted, respected and safe." Those groups include the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) where he was a trainer. He was Co-coordinator for his school's Day of Silence, and he was a member of Students for Students as well as Students Against Destructive Decisions. He and another gay male student, a friend since kindergarten, were elected and reigned as Prom King and Queen of Hudson High School.

BENJAMIN BECHAND

Ben is a 2010 graduate of Averill Park High School and will attend Skidmore College. He will double major in biochemistry and vocal performance with the goal of becoming a pharmacist. He has been active both in his high school and in his community in educating people one on one and in groups about lgbtq issues.

CHRISTINA MERTON

Christina is a South Glens Falls High School graduate who will major in psychology at SUNY Oneonta. Her goal is twofold: to become a music psychologist and to open a safe haven for teens. She started the Gay-Straight Alliance at her high school and has worked with teen education through Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood.

ZACHERY O'FARRELL

Zach is a 2010 graduate of Saratoga Springs High School who will attend Hudson Valley Community College. His career plans are in formation, but he is committed to doing work that will help people. He was an active member of his high school's PRIDE Club and helped raise money for both AIDS research and GLSEN.