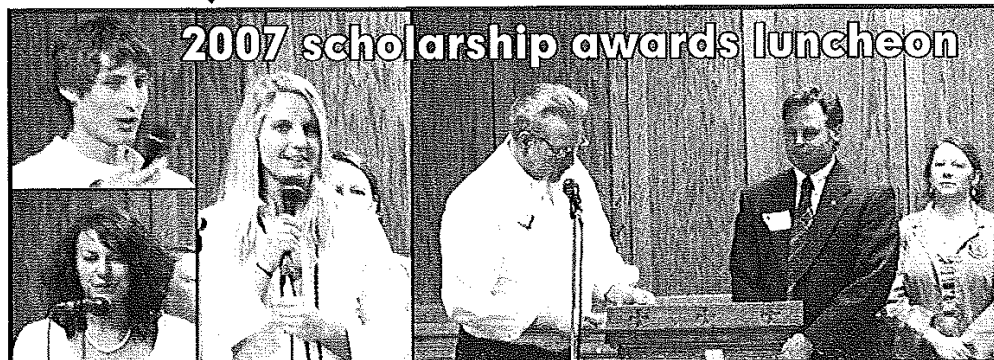


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Fifty-three 2007 graduates of Fergus Falls High School and Hillcrest Lutheran Academy received nearly \$45,000 in scholarships during the Dollars for Scholars awards luncheon in April. Special thanks to the following for their support for the luncheon: Fergus Falls Daily Journal, Quality Toyota, Security State Bank, Security Insurance, Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Posie Inn Floral.

Photos courtesy of The Daily Journal.

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## New scholarships awarded, created



Four new scholarships were among the 53 that were awarded at the Dollars for Scholars luncheon in April to members of the Class of 2007. The first-time scholarships were the Duffy Gerhardson Memorial Scholarship, the Fergus Falls Educators Scholarship, the John and Kim Erickson Scholarship and the Bremer Bank Scholarship.

The Duffy Gerhardson Scholarship was created with a \$10,000 pledge from Beverly Gerhardson Paulson and her husband, Lloyd, in honor of Beverly's brother, Rudolph "Duffy" Gerhardson, who died in 2006. He was a 1951 graduate of Fergus Falls High School and went on to work in the health care field in California as a projects coordinator and a hospital administrator.

The Paulsons have previously created memorial scholarships to honor Helmer Gerhardson and Gordon Gerhardson. The new scholarship will go to a student planning a career in health care.

Educators from School Districts 544 and 935 contributed \$28,000 for the creation of the Fergus Falls Educators Scholarship, which will be awarded annually to a student planning a career in education. Educators received the funds as the result of a lawsuit filed against the tobacco industry by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, the school districts' health insurer.

Employees who had Blue Cross coverage on a specific date were entitled to a

portion of the settlement, and the Fergus Falls Education Association chose to give its members the option of contributing their payments to Dollars for Scholars. Contributors included both teachers and staff members from District 544 and District 935, which is the Fergus Falls Area Special Education Cooperative.

The Erickson Scholarship was created with a \$10,000 donation from Kim and John Erickson, who was one of the charter members of the Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars board of directors.

The Bremer Bank Scholarship was established this year with a \$5,000 pledge "to provide community support to our local graduating high school students as they go on to higher education," said bank President Douglas Houska.

### Evenson Scholarship will honor golfer

Dollars for Scholars has received a \$5,000 pledge for the creation of the Fred Evenson Jr. Golf Scholarship, to be awarded for the first time in 2008 to a Fergus Falls High School student.

The scholarship was created in memory of the late Fred Evenson, an avid golfer and Fergus Falls businessman. Funds for the Scholar-level scholarship will be raised through the Fred Evenson Golf Tournament, which is held each summer in Fergus Falls. It will be awarded annually to a male or female high school golf team member.

**2008  
scholarships  
applications  
will be  
available in  
January**

## Eagles, service clubs continue their support for local students

### EAGLES BOOSTS ITS CONTRIBUTION

One of Dollars for Scholars' long-time supporters announced a major pledge at the April awards banquet. Fergus Falls Eagles Aerie 2339 made a \$7,500 contribution to Dollars, bringing the Eagles' contributions over the years to a total of \$57,500.

Patrick Putz, past president of the 860-member fraternal organization, said the community's youth are one of the top priorities of members. "Our biggest concern is to help them out," he said. "Education is a big (priority) for us."

### SERVICE CLUBS SCORE BIG

Fergus Falls Noon Kiwanis and Noon Rotary clubs continued their long-standing commitment to Dollars for Scholars through their support of the Buck-a-Bucket fundraiser.

Through the program, the two service clubs make contributions for points scored during the first half of home basketball games at Fergus Falls High School and Hillcrest Academy. For the 2006-07 sports season, Noon Rotary contributed \$616 for points scored by the Fergus Falls High School Otters, and Noon Kiwanis contributed \$500 for points scored by the Hillcrest Comets.



## It takes a TEAM effort

A letter from the president

David Schneeberger, President, 2005-07



There are a lot of ways to describe the work of Dollars for Scholars, but one of the best is the TEAM approach it takes to make the organization and its mission successful. Our goal is to provide as many scholarships as possible for students pursuing post-secondary education. To reach that goal, it takes more than a small group of individuals. It takes a whole team.

The first members of the team are the donors. Whether it be the individual donations or the named scholarship donors, each provides a piece in the puzzle. This year we were able to give away four new scholarships thanks to gifts from John and Kim Erickson, the family of the late Duffy Gerhardson, Fergus Falls educators and Bremer Bank. We also benefited from the generosity of the Eagles again this year when the organization contributed another \$7,500, bringing the Eagles' contribution over the years to \$57,500. We greatly appreciate all of the donations from every source as we work toward our \$1 million endowment fund goal.

The second members of the team are the counselors and administrators from Fergus Falls High School and Hillcrest Lutheran Academy. They work with the students in distributing the scholarship applications and provide assistance as the students move through the process. Both schools have been very supportive of the organization and are valuable team members.

The third group of members are the students themselves, along with their parents. The students take the initiative to complete the application and are able to see beyond the work it takes for the potential reward. Parents provide the support and encouragement that it takes to keep their sons and

daughters on task and focused on the final outcome. It is a tremendous experience to attend our awards luncheon and see the pride of these parents in their children's accomplishments.

The final team members are the volunteers who work as board members, assist with the selection process, help with the awards luncheon and assist in fundraising efforts. When all of the members of the team work together, the results are overwhelming.

At the 2007 awards luncheon we were able to give away 53 scholarships totaling \$44,792. From the first five scholarships in 1992 through those awarded this year, we have touched the lives of 407 recipients with a total of \$285,544. We have also seen a dramatic increase in the number of named scholarships, and we currently have 35 named donors.

As you can see, it takes a lot of teamwork to accomplish our mission. It's commonly said that there is no "I" in team. That is true, but remember that there are an "m" and an "e," which together spell "me." The reason I ask you to think about that is not because a team is all about me, but because it takes individuals to make things happen: If it's to be, it's up to me. As individuals we cannot make the organization successful, but with each of us doing our part — volunteering, educating, encouraging, supporting, donating — our combined efforts will enable us to accomplish our goals and fulfill our mission.

This is truly an example of a situation where the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. Together Everyone Achieves More: TEAM Dollars for Scholars. Thank you very much for being a part of our TEAM effort.



Please visit:

**www.ffdollarsforscholars.org**

**Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars**

**More information on Dollars for Scholars**

**Letters from scholarship recipients**

**Downloadable scholarship applications**

## Awards process Students earn points for grades, volunteering



By Connie Knapp

I'm sure many of you have questions about how we select the recipients for our scholarships. Let me explain the process.

Early each year, scholarship applications are made available at both Fergus Falls High School and Hillcrest Lutheran Academy, with the deadline for completing the scholarships typically in March.

Students return the completed applications (before the due date!) to their school counseling office and/or the teacher they have asked to complete their student appraisal section. Once the appraisal is done, the counseling office attaches each student's transcript to his or her application, and I pick up the completed forms.

I take the applications apart and sort them by sections, assigning each student a number and clearly marking each section with that ID number. The volunteers who review the applications are never aware of an applicant's identity during the review process.

The sections are: Work history; extra-curricular and community service activities; education and career goals; applicant appraisal; academic accomplishments; and unusual personal circumstances.

I recruit a committee of volunteers that consists of Dollars for Scholars board members and community members who often have little knowledge of the Dollars for Scholars process.

The volunteers are divided into groups, and each group reviews one specific section of the applications, rating scholarships according to Scholarship American guidelines. Students can earn up to a specific number of points in each section. A student who has a 4.0 GPA will get more points than someone with a 3.8 GPA in the academic section, for instance, and the student who has been a leader in school and community activities will earn more points in the community service section than someone who has not been as involved.

Once the applications have been scored in all areas, a spreadsheet is created with the total scores and the applications ranked. The first scholarships awarded are the named scholarships, which sometimes have special criteria attached. For example, the Anna Nelson Memorial Scholarship is designated for a student who has been involved in the High School band program.

We have been very fortunate to see a significant increase in the number of scholarships that we have been able to award in recent years. Our goal is to someday have an endowment large enough to award scholarships to all students who apply.

If you have any questions regarding the scholarship selection process or would like to be a part of it next spring, please contact me at [connie.knapp@fergusfalljournal.com](mailto:connie.knapp@fergusfalljournal.com).

*Connie Knapp chairs the Dollars for Scholars Scholarship Selection Committee.*

## Thanks to our donors

The Fergus Falls community believes in investing in the education of young people. We are fortunate to live where citizens understand that education must be a top priority and that our young people need help affording education beyond high school. The generosity of individuals, businesses and organizations has helped Dollars for Scholars grow. We are grateful to our donors, who are listed below. (Donor list as of Sept. 1, 2007.)

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Richard & Mary Beck  
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Steve & Linda Brue  
Ralph & Eula  
Brynelson  
Century 21 Vista Inc.,  
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Mr. & Mrs. William  
Colbeck  
Keith & Kimberly  
Dickelman  
James & Sharon  
Donahue  
Steven C. Emerson  
Eric & Lisa Farnberg  
Fergus Falls Wrestling  
Club  
Gay & Carol Folden  
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Dr. Patricia Grinager  
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Mark & Catherine  
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Hendel  
David & Bertha  
Huberty

David & Darlene  
Johnson  
Lana & Timothy  
Johnson  
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Kilde  
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& Linda Kao  
Ben & Peggy  
Underwood  
Thomas & Kathleen  
Uvaas  
Roland & Betty Viger  
Linda Wolfe  
Loren & Rita Woolson

# 2007 Dollars for Scholars Scholarship Recipients



**Alecia Baker**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Fergus Falls Education Association  
Minnesota State University, Moorhead



**Erin Beske**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Damien Jacklitch Memorial  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Edward Bjorgum**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Mark Olson Rotary  
Concordia College, Moorhead



**Andrew Bremseth**  
Fergus Falls High School  
VFW Good Citizen  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Heather Briesse**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
University of Minnesota, Morris



**Calvin Brue**  
Hillcrest Academy  
Edna Dierich Hagen  
Northwestern College, St. Paul



**Emily Christenson**  
Hillcrest Academy  
Dollars for Scholars  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Rebecca Cole**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Theodore Paulson Memorial  
Minnesota State University, Mankato



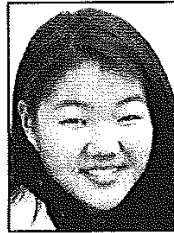
**Kathryn Crabtree**  
Hillcrest Academy  
VFW Good Citizen  
Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach, Fla.



**Nicholas Ekren**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Ottertail Coaches  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Kacey Franklin**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
Concordia College, Moorhead



**Lora Fuchs**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Joan & Gordon Bakken  
University of North Dakota, Grand Forks



**Jennifer Gard**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Bechtel Memorial  
Bethel University, St. Paul



**Jason Grimm**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Helmer Otto Gerhardsen  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Kim Grugel**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
University of North Dakota, Grand Forks



**Karl Haataja**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Mary Beth Wedum  
Jamestown College, Jamestown, N.D.



**Brady Haggstrom**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud



**Lindsay Hanson**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Sample Memorial  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Katherine Hohman**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Eugene Eckhoff  
University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse



**Paige Holte**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Nathan Jensen**  
Hillcrest Academy  
Dollars for Scholars  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Caitlin Johnson**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Lake Region Healthcare  
University of Minnesota, Duluth



**Jami Johnson**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Service Food Market  
Bethel University, St. Paul



**Jessica Johnson**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Art Scholarship  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Grant Kress**  
Fergus Falls High School  
Dollars for Scholars  
Mid America Nazarene University, Olathe, Kan.



**Kaila Kugler**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Kyle LaPorte**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Otter Tail Power Co.*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Anna Larson**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Andrew Lee**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Eagles Aerie #2339*  
Carleton College, Northfield



**Danielle Lindblom**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Bechtel Memorial*  
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis



**Molly McDougall**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*John & Kim Erickson*  
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis



**Luke Money**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Eleanor Keane Johnson*  
St. Olaf College, Northfield



**Lexi Moon**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dorn & Co.*  
Minnesota State University, Moorhead



**Deveny Moore**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Bremer Bank*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Jenna Moses**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Fergus Falls Educators*  
Minnesota State University, Moorhead



**Michelle Piekarski**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Bank of the West*  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Lois Quam**  
Hillcrest Academy  
*Dr. Frank Veden*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls (Fall 2008)



**Andrea Rader**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Gordon Gerhardson Memorial*  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Samantha Revering**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Jamestown College, Jamestown, N.D.



**Jeffrey Risbrudt**  
Hillcrest Academy  
*Park Region/Otter Tail Telcom*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Sophie Russell**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
North Dakota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Emily Schlepp**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State University, Fargo



**Krista Shaikoski**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Katelyn Sperling**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Amanda Stenstrom**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



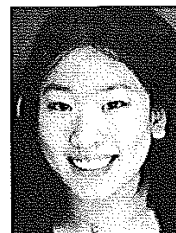
**Nathan Thom**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



**Kai Thorstad**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Robert Block*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Christopher Tonsager**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Dollars for Scholars*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Audrey-Lorraine Valentine**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Otter Tail Corporation*  
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls



**Anna VanWechel**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*ITT Corporation*  
Minnesota State University, Moorhead



**Holly Walen**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Anna Nelson Memorial*  
Hamline University, St. Paul



**Crista Weiss**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Rudolph "Duffy" Gerhardson*  
Minnesota State University, Moorhead



**Joseph Wood**  
Fergus Falls High School  
*Beverly Gerhardson Paulson*  
North Dakota State University, Fargo



## 2007 Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars

*Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars was established in 1991 with encouragement and contributions from numerous alumni and area businesses. Scholarships have been awarded each year since 1992. Scholarship recipients are selected according to Dollars for Scholars guidelines, with some scholarships having additional criteria.*

### LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS

*Legacy donors have contributed \$25,000 or more to create a named scholarship that is awarded annually.*

#### Bechtel Memorial

Lillian Bechtel began teaching at Fergus Falls High School in 1944. Her husband, Edward, was principal at FFHS until his retirement in 1970. This scholarship was created in the fall of 2003.

#### Eagles Aerie #2339

The Eagles Aerie #2339 established a scholarship in 1995 to assist students with their post-secondary education. The organization has made ongoing donations since that year.

#### Fergus Falls Educators

In 2007, members of the Fergus Falls Education Association and fellow School District 544 and 935 educators created this scholarship, which is designated for a student planning a career in education.

#### Sample Memorial

The Sample family established this scholarship in memory of Alexander K. Sample and Thomas Sample, a farmer who understood the need for community support for education. The scholarship has been awarded annually since 1992.

#### Dr. Frank Veden

Dr. Frank Veden was a dentist who practiced for many years in Fergus Falls and left his estate to fund a wide variety of projects that benefit Fergus Falls. The first scholarship was awarded in 1999.

### HERITAGE SCHOLARSHIPS

*Heritage donors have contributed at least \$10,000 to create a named scholarship that is awarded annually.*

#### Gordon and Joan Bakken

Gordon and Joan Bakken are lifelong community residents known for their support of many projects that have improved the community. The scholarship was first awarded in 1992.

#### Bank of the West

The Bank of the West Scholarship was established in 1998 to reflect the bank's support of graduating seniors in their quest to continue education beyond high school.

#### Robert Block

Upon his retirement as superintendent of the Fergus Falls School District, Mr. Block's colleagues and friends established this scholarship in 1997 to recognize his contributions to the school district and the community.

#### Dorn & Co., Inc.

Larry Dorn is an FFHS graduate who returned to his hometown after college to establish the Dorn & Co. investment securities firm. The scholarship has been awarded annually since 1992.

#### John and Kim Erickson

This scholarship was created by Kim and John Erickson, who was one of the charter members of the Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars board of directors. It was awarded for the first time in 2007.

#### Helmer Otto Gerhardson

Beverly Gerhardson Paulson and her husband, Lloyd, created this scholarship in memory of her father, who was a 1927 graduate of Fergus Falls High School. The scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2006.

#### Rudolph "Duffy" Gerhardson

Beverly Gerhardson Paulson and her husband, Lloyd, created this scholarship in 2007 in memory of her brother, a 1951 Fergus Falls High School graduate who worked in health care. The award is designated for a student going into a health care field.

#### Edna Dierich Hagen

Edna Dierich Hagen's love of children was apparent during her 45-year teaching career and in the scholarship donation she bequeathed prior to her death in April 2004. This scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2005.

#### ITT Corporation

In the early 1990s, two FFHS science teachers were awarded a \$10,000 grant from ITT for scholarships for students interested in math or science. In 1999, the grant funds were transferred to Dollars for Scholars.

#### Eleanore Keane Johnson

Eleanor "Babe" Keane Johnson was a lifelong resident of Fergus Falls who wanted young people to have the opportunity to continue their education beyond high school. The scholarship was established in 2002.

#### Lake Region Healthcare Corporation

Lake Region Healthcare Corporation is a charter donor to Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars. This scholarship is awarded to a student planning to enter a health care field.

#### Anna Nelson Memorial

Anna Nelson was a proud Otter and an enthusiastic percussionist in the band programs at FFHS, graduating in 2002. After her death in a car accident in 2004, a scholarship was created in her memory, with the award to be given annually to an FFHS student who has participated in the school's band program. This scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2005.

#### Mark Olson Rotary

Mark Olson is a former president of both Security State Bank and the Fergus Falls Noon Rotary Club. In June 2002, he was appointed a governor of the Federal Reserve System. The Noon Rotarians created the scholarship in 2003.

#### Otter Tail Corporation

Established in 2006, Otter Tail Corporation's scholarship provides support for graduating local high school students as they go on to higher education.

#### Otter Tail Power Company

A scholarship has been awarded each year since 1992 in the name of Otter Tail Power Company. Additionally, many Otter Tail Power employees have contributed their professional expertise to Dollars for Scholars.

#### Ottertail Coaches

Ottertail Coaches established a scholarship to demonstrate its interest in and support for the community's young people. The recipient must be an FFHS student.

#### Beverly Gerhardson Paulson

Beverly Gerhardson Paulson, an FFHS Class of 1948 graduate, and her husband, Lloyd Paulson, have sponsored a scholarship each year since 1992. The recipient must be an FFHS graduate.

#### Theodore Paulson Memorial

Dr. Elmer Paulson established this scholarship in honor of his father, Dr. Theodore S. Paulson, a 1904 graduate of FFHS. The recipient must demonstrate outstanding accomplishments in English.

#### Service Food Market

Service Food is a charter member of Fergus Falls Area Dollars for Scholars and a valued supporter of our community youth, both as an employer and in a variety of other endeavors.

#### Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 612 Good Citizen

VFW Post 612 established the VFW Joe Robertson Good Citizen Scholarship in 1997 to honor Robertson, an FFHS social sciences teacher and VFW member. Two Good Citizen Scholarships are awarded each year.

## Scholarships

### SCHOLAR SCHOLARSHIPS

Donors who have contributed at least \$5,000 to the foundation have established Dollars for Scholars Scholar Level Scholarships. These scholarships are named by the donor and awarded annually.

#### The Art Scholarship

In 1997, area artists donated their work for a silent auction. The proceeds were dedicated to sponsoring a scholarship for a graduating senior who intends to study visual or performing arts.

#### Bremer Bank

The Bremer Bank Scholarship was established in 2007 to provide community support to local high school graduating seniors as they go on to higher education.

#### Eugene Eckhoff Memorial

Eugene Eckhoff was a beloved FFHS teacher of English, creative writing and literature. His family and colleagues established this scholarship in 1995 to honor his memory.

#### Fergus Falls Education Association

The FFEA created this scholarship in 2006 with money raised in its fall variety show and through teacher contributions. The award is in honor of past and present FFEA members and is intended for a student going into education.

#### Gordon Gerhardson Memorial

Gordon Gerhardson, FFHS Class of 1952, worked his way through higher education and became a troubleshooter for nuclear power plants. His sister, Beverly Gerhardson Paulson, established this scholarship in his memory in 2001.

#### Damien Jacklitch Memorial

Damien Jacklitch, a musician and athlete who graduated from FFHS in 1999, died in a car accident in 2002. In 2003, a benefit reunion concert in his memory helped to fund this scholarship.

#### Otter Tail Telcom/ Park Region Telephone

This scholarship was created in 2006, the company's 100th anniversary year, to reflect its continuing support of local students. Highest priority goes to students pursuing careers in telecommunications or technology.

#### Mary Beth Wedum

Mary Beth Hagen Wedum is a 1953 graduate of Fergus Falls High School with a strong interest in education. She is co-chair of the board of the Minneapolis-based J.A. Wedum Foundation.

## Where are they now?

We contacted Fergus Falls Dollars for Scholars scholarship recipients from 1997 to ask them where their education and life have taken them in the 10 years since high school graduation.

**JESSICA HAWS BLEESS** earned degrees in biology and psychology from St. Olaf College in 2001 and completed her master's degree in physician assistant studies at Augsburg College in 2005. She is a physician assistant in urologic oncology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. She and husband Adam married in 2005.

**JEFF FITZKAPPES** earned a degree in religious studies in 2001 from Macalester College (he also studied at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland). He has worked in youth ministry and is also working toward his master's degree in Christian thought at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul. He is currently doing youth ministry for students in grades 7-12 in Mankato. He and his wife have two children.

**JASON GLYNN** attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and earned his undergraduate degree in medical engineering in 2001 and his M.D. in 2004. He is currently in his orthopaedic surgery residency at the University of Minnesota until 2009, and he then plans to complete a year of fellowship training prior to returning to Fergus Falls to join the Fergus Falls Medical Group. He and his wife, Cassie, married in 2006.

**RYAN JOHNSON** earned his undergraduate degree in liberal studies from the University of Montana in Missoula in 2002, and he completed his master's degree in liberal arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, Md., in 2005. His passion is specialty/Fair Trade coffee, and he is currently the DC-area customer relations representative for Counter Culture Coffee Roaster of Durham, N.C. He was also the 2005 Southeast Regional Barista Champion and serves on the U.S. Barista Championship Committee.

**IRENE KAO** completed her undergraduate degree in English and psychology from the University of Minnesota in 2000 and her master's degree in college student personnel from the University of Maryland in College Park in 2003. She is currently assistant dean of students at Macalester College and plans to continue working in higher education or pursue a doctorate or law school in the future. She has a son, Miles, and was named the best new professional by the American College Personnel Association in 2005.

**SONJA GEDDE MODESTI** graduated from Concordia College in 2001 with a degree in English education and communication and from the University of Nevada-Reno with a degree in speech communication and rhetoric in 2007. She is currently a Ph.D. student in the Education Department at Colorado State University. She has taught English/speech for seven years in grades K-12 in public schools, and she is also a professor in the Communication Departments at both Colorado State University and Front Range Community College. In addition, she teaches fitness classes, travels nationally to lead fitness workshops, serves as director of contemporary worship and music at a Lutheran church and teaches private music lessons.

**BETSY STRINGER** graduated from the University of Minnesota-Morris in 2001 with a degree in biology. She graduated from veterinary school at the University of Minnesota in 2005, and she is currently pursuing post-graduate training in zoological medicine at Indianapolis Zoo in Indianapolis, Ind. Following a two-year internship, she will complete a three-year residency. Her special interest is endangered species conservation.

**LUCINDA HOUGE VERSTEEG** graduated from Concordia College with a nursing degree in 2002. She is a registered nurse and clinical educator in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare in St. Paul.

**KRISTY WALDRON** earned her AA degree from Fergus Falls Community College in 1999 and her elementary education degree from Minnesota State University, Moorhead in 2002. She expects to complete her master's degree in curriculum and instruction from St. Catherine's in 2008. She has been a Title 1 math teacher in Fargo for four years, and she and her husband have a 1-year-old daughter.

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