



Deshae Lott Ministries Inc

Meet the 2011-2012 Recipients of CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries **Outreach Program Scholarships**

Park McArthur **Recipient of a \$1500** **CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries** **Outreach Program Scholarship**

CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Program Scholarship Committee is pleased to award a scholarship to **Park McArthur** for the second year in a row. Park was invited to a second year in the Independent Study Program of the Whitney Museum in New York City. Park received her Bachelor of Arts from Davidson College in North Carolina with a major in Studio Art and a minor in Chinese Language. She graduated summa cum laude with a Master of Fine Arts in sculpture from the University of Miami in 2009.

In her original application to the scholarship program, Park wrote, “As one of the most recent revolutions in America, disability rights and disability culture are still gaining traction as sources of activism, pride and creative activity. My work as an artist is resolutely situated within this wider context of civil and cultural revolution.”

She continued that she wanted “disability and considerations of mobility to join the cultural conversations. I hope to create new visual and linguistic metaphors that are powerful, inclusive and complex.” Though she concedes that this was a loftier ambition than could be accomplished in a year, she has made impressive strides in that direction. In her year-end update in fulfillment of the 2010 scholarship requirements, she writes, “My individual focus on topics of disability encouraged the Whitney Program to devote a seminar this spring to disability studies...”, a historical first for the Whitney. In addition to her work at the museum, she affiliated with a collective of women who all identify as disabled and work as activists on that front. The five of them presented a March workshop entitled, “Disability + Justice: Creating Interdependent Social Movements” at this year’s Left Forum, seeking to prioritize issues of race, class, gender and sexuality within the disability community, and to ask how all groups working for social change can make their events, agendas and spaces more accessible to the wide spectrum of physical ability.

Park has Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy, and requires assistance with mobility, personal hygiene and grooming, meal planning, food preparation, eating, transportation and housekeeping. She writes, “My life and perspective are shaped by the physical limitations of my degenerative disease. Therefore, studying and documenting my personal mobility in relation to social constructions of human mobility has become a political and personal project.”



Park McArthur, second-time scholarship recipient



Rebecca Parten
Recipient of a \$1000
CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries
Outreach Program Scholarship

Rebecca Parten, recipient of a \$1000 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Fund Scholarship, is pursuing a Masters of Social Work from the University of Michigan, with a concentration in Community Organizing in Health. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Communications from University of Michigan at Dearborn.

Rebecca has Multiple Pterygium Syndrome, Escobar Variant. The result is short stature, vertebral defects, joint contractures and webbing of all her joints, making it impossible for her to straighten her limbs or stand upright. Her kyphosis, or rounding of the back, causes respiratory insufficiency, so that she requires constant oxygen support as well as BiPap support at night. She requires assistance with all activities listed on the scholarship application with the exception of written and spoken communication, including: mobility, transferring and position changing; bathing and personal hygiene; toileting; dressing and grooming; meal planning, food preparation and eating; administration of medications; routine medical procedures; breathing, clearing secretions and respiratory treatments; transportation, housekeeping, seeing and hearing.

Rebecca writes that her purpose in seeking a Masters in Social Work is to "gain the skills necessary to help others be the best they can be." She continues, "Growing up with a very apparent and physically limiting disability has given me a unique opportunity and passion to use my experience to help others." Her studies in Communications have included coursework in legislative politics and experience in community organizing with an emphasis on disability awareness. As a sophomore, she founded an organization on campus called the Alliance for Disability Awareness, through which she gained experience in event planning and public advocacy. She produced the organization's newsletter and designed and maintained its website, presented reports on disability issues throughout the area, and spearheaded three campus-side events. She also discovered her love for community organizing while working on a project for one of her Communications classes in which she was required to develop an action plan for an awareness campaign. This included developing a legislative strategy, crafting legislation, and developing a communications arm of the project to connect to voters. Her professors praise not only the quality of her work in all her endeavors, but also the spirit in which she approaches it.

Her career goal is to work either in an outpatient clinic specializing in cardiology or oncology, or in a community center serving people with disabilities. "In either setting," she says, "I hope to be able to help individuals find resources within their communities, conduct presentations, , and perhaps do some legislative advocacy work."

Philip Soen
Recipient of a \$750
CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries
Outreach Program Scholarship

The third recipient of a 2011-2012 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Program Scholarship is **Philip Soen** of Jackson, Mississippi. If his name and face seem familiar, they are indeed! He was last year's recipient of the first-ever CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Quality-of-Life Grant. Philip is pursuing a Master of Divinity at Reformed Theological Seminary. He plans to pursue a PhD in Old Testament studies and eventually become a college professor. He is married to Emily and they have one child, Anastasia, born in May 2009. Philip was born and raised outside of Chicago, IL, but he and Emily now live in Clinton, MS, near Jackson.



Philip, Emily and Anastasia Soen, Christmas 2010



At the age of 4, Philip was diagnosed with a degenerative neurological condition called Charcot Marie Tooth (CMT). CMT affects the peripheral nervous system, impairing strength and control in the lower legs and arms. By the age of 15, Philip was completely wheelchair-bound. He can no longer stand nor move his fingers or hands. He needs assistance with mobility, transferring and position changing; bathing and personal hygiene; meal planning, food preparation and eating; transportation and house-keeping.

Philip writes, "As I seek to understand the truth of Scripture and apply it to every circumstance in my life, I become a better person who can love his friends, look to learn from new friends, and reconcile broken friendships. As I exercise my vocation I am able to live out a definite function within my community, which provides for my family and relates to my community. Finally, as I pursue my vocation with my disability, I am able to embody positive proactive behavior to other people. Modeling is not my exclusive mission, but it is certainly a delightful benefit of seeking to obtain my mission. "

2011 Scholarship Recipient Philip Soen