

ENRICHING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE, PAYING IT FORWARD

By Melea Reicks Licht

For many students, receiving a scholarship not only supports them financially, it gives them that extra boost of confidence needed to take advantage of all the opportunities college presents.

Alyssa Swan is such a student. As a Dean's Leadership Scholar she receives financial support for working at least 10 hours per week in an area related to her major.

"Our scholarships come from someone who believes in us and in the college," she says. "Being selected as a Dean's Leadership Scholar was fantastic. It was like someone saying, 'Here you go, you can do this!' The donors believe in CALS and they believe I can make an impact and that helps me go that extra mile."

Make that miles. Swan, a junior in animal science from Milwaukee is an officer in the ISU Horseman's Association and a member of the Pre-Vet Club. She also is a member of National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Alpha Lambda Delta / Phi Eta

Sigma and Alpha Zeta honor societies as well as the University Honors Program.

She has worked as undergraduate research assistant in Matthew Ellinwood's lab since her freshman year (see story on Ellinwood on page four). Swan worked as an animal caretaker and assisted Ellinwood with a surgical procedure related to his genetic research on the mucopolysaccharidoses diseases.

Swan continues to work in the lab, but is now leading her own project researching cat coat color genetics. She believes this project has the potential to advance the future genetic research potential of the cat colony.

"I don't think I ever would have been adventurous enough to attempt under-

graduate research my freshman year if it hadn't been part of my scholarship. Because of my work with Dr. Ellinwood, I've really been able to begin to figure out what I like to do and how to plan [for my future]," she says.

Swan has an externship at Wisconsin Equine Clinic and Hospital this summer—an opportunity she says she might not have been able to take if she had not received a scholarship, because the job is unpaid.

She benefitted so much from her scholarship she's already looking for ways to pay it forward.

"I see myself becoming a donor in the future because these scholarships have improved my experience tenfold," she says. ☐



Photo: Barbara McBrean

Scholarship recipient Alyssa Swan helps groom the horses at the ISU Horse Barns as part of a service project with the ISU Horseman's Association. Swan says receiving a scholarship allows her to participate in service activities and gain research experience rather than working to finance her education.

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