

Oregon and southwest Washington students were among 75 recipients of scholarships awarded in May by the Pride Foundation and the Greater Seattle Business Association.

These two Seattle-based organizations together distributed \$139,000 in scholarships for the 2001-2002 school year based on potential, financial need and community involvement. Each student demonstrates a commitment to the civil rights of all people and, in particular, supports the dignity and rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Among this year's scholars is Marian Paul, a senior at Marylhurst University in Portland who is studying printmaking and painting. She sees challenges not just as a lesbian artist but as a female artist. She says the common perception is that women aren't serious about their work.

"I like to think that being gay is as much a part of my art as it is of me, and I want people to know through my art that I am gay," says Paul, who uses geometric patterns to convey different aspects of her sexuality. "I want to show that I'm a square peg in a round hole."

Paul plans to pursue a master's degree in printmaking in order to teach and influence more people through the arts.

Although Lee Kandu lives about an hour from Portland in Castle Rock, Wash., she is a first-year law student at Taft University in Santa Clara, Calif.

"I think the reason the Pride Foundation and I connected is the fact that I'm in rural Cowlitz County," Kandu says. "I've been doing paralegal and tax work for migrant workers, and there's no one else in Cowlitz County who does this work."

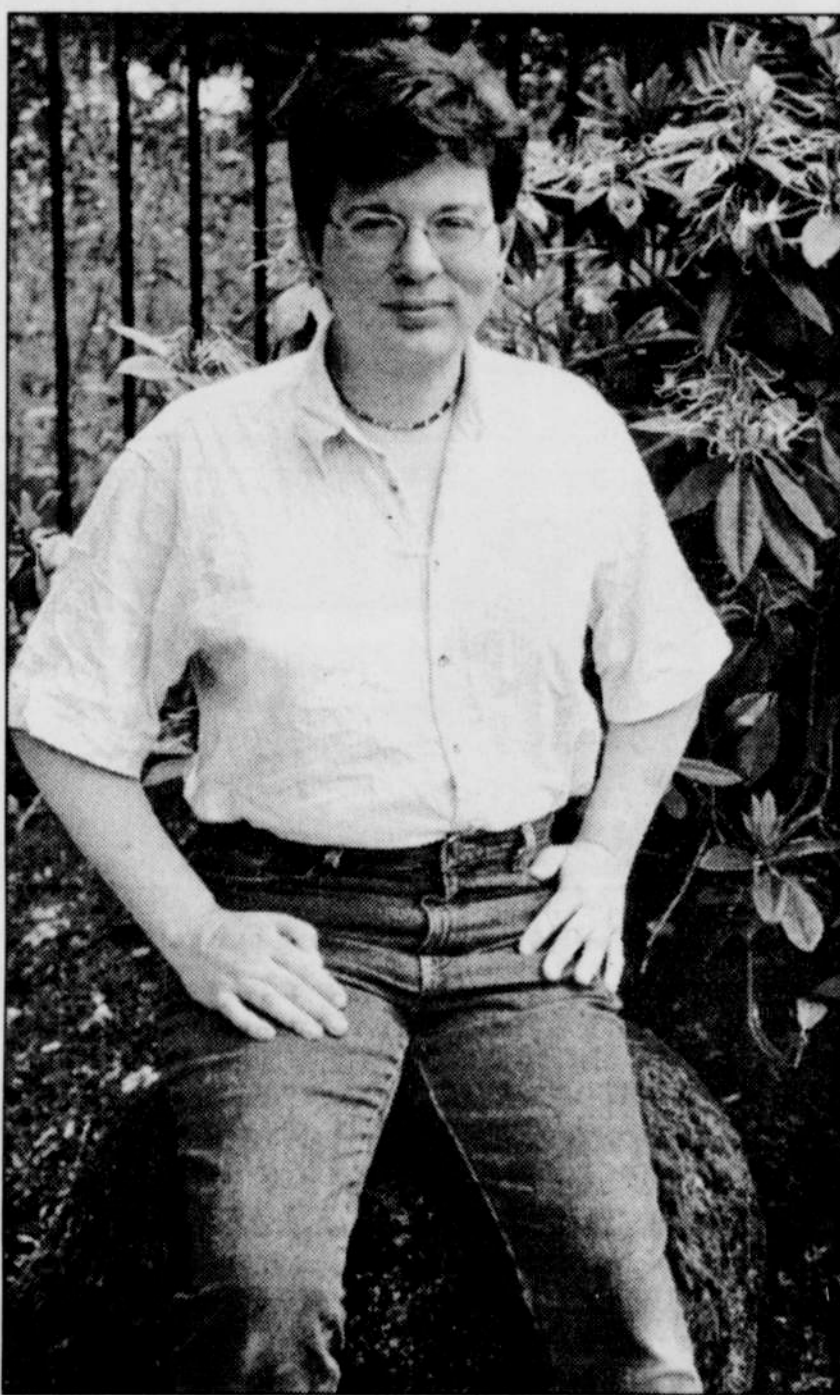
With distance learning, Kandu says she has independence to study alternative cases. Immigration law for gay men and lesbians, for example, is different from for straights. She sees her specialization as an advantage over her peers and a benefit for a community with a growing population of migrant workers and immigrants from Latin America.

"There's such a great deal of homophobia in the culture," Kandu says. "So if they are gay or lesbian, they tend not to talk about it. But people are coming out slowly. Ultimately, people from places even like Portland will want to go to an immigration lawyer that is more sensitive to their needs."

Jonathyn Kraig is a junior at the Art Institute of Portland studying interior design. He has put himself through high school and college without the financial or emotional support of his family. At 29, he thinks he is finally on the path to self-discovery, fulfillment and acceptance as a black gay man.

PRIDE AND PROMISE

Scholarships provide regional students with more than financial support by Timothy Krause



Marian Paul's scholarship will help her pursue a master's degree in printmaking

At first, Kraig was scared to follow his impulse to study interior design because of the gay stereotypes. Even though he was out, he says it was a difficult decision to make, further complicated by a surprising lack of role models.

"All the instructors I've had in interior design have been white, female and heterosexual," Kraig says. "That's been a challenge in terms of looking for mentors. To find someone that's openly gay and an interior designer and good—that's really hard."

Kraig's search for a mentor has encouraged him to see beyond stereotypes with a desire to offer a positive contribution of his own for future students.

Shane is a bisexual and transsexual man who asked *Just Out* not to reveal his last name because of the legal discrimination trans people still face. He is a sophomore at Portland Community College studying environmental engineering with plans to transfer this fall to Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

"I am excited that Portland has taken a small step in the direction toward civil rights for trans people with its new city ordinance," he says. "The next important step is nondiscrimination in terms of the health care of trans people. Many trans people have to go without medical care or insurance coverage and often have to lie to their providers in order to receive basic care."

Kristina Armenakis, a junior at University of Oregon in Eugene majoring in English literature and women's studies, says one of her long-term goals is to be a professor of queer or women's studies. A basic desire to help people has kept her busy through event planning, public speaking and networking on behalf of the queer community.

Armenakis also serves as executive director for Amethyst Holistic and Healers Foundation, an alternative health care organization. Although not exclusive to sexual minorities, she does embrace the connection.

"I want to make health care safe and bridge the gap," she says. "I want to make it accessible."

This fall Alex Tinker of Portland also will attend University of Oregon, where he will study to become a his-

tory teacher. He identifies as straight but credits his lesbian parents with a strong, positive influence on him.

"I have two parents, and one of them isn't male," he says simply. "It's not weird. It's just the way it is."

Tinker has been heavily involved in Love Makes a Family, a nonprofit organization run by his mother, Bonnie. As a volunteer, he has participated in various ballot measure campaigns and school issues.

"I've been taught values," Tinker says, "and that this is a worthy cause. The big

marker [of success] for me is making people more generous, more open, more accepting."

Parke Humphrey-Keever also identifies as a heterosexual with lesbian parents. He says his most important challenge has been opening up to others. This includes, for example, letting friends know when derogatory comments about homosexuality are not appreciated.

"As my parents are two women, it has been a challenge to gain acceptance from peers," Humphrey-Keever says. "I have become shy to opening up about my family situation because I have been hurt by it in the past. I attempt to make friends with those who I trust. Then, I feel as though I can open up without being ridiculed. I also make sure to have a close relationship with my parents."

Humphrey-Keever has volunteered for a variety of community organizations, including Phoenix Rising and Human Rights Campaign. His plans include attending Oregon State University in Corvallis to study engineering for a possible career in robotics. One of his post-college aspirations is to mentor children who have grown up with a similar family situation.

The Pride Foundation and Greater Seattle Business Association scholarships provide not only financial assistance but also encouragement and respect for students who often do not have the support of their families, churches, schools or communities. Steven Oliver, Pride Foundation grants and scholarships manager, says the very existence of these programs tells these kids that someone believes in their potential for success.

This year's recipients echo that sentiment.

"To me, it's a source of personal pride," Paul says.

Tinker offers, "It's recognizing that I've done something to help the sexual minorities community."

For Kraig, the award's optimistic message was affirmation that he's capable of doing even greater things. "I was just able to tell the truth of who I am, where I've been and where I want to go," he says. "To receive the award based on the truth of where I was at felt really good."

"To me, it's a source of personal pride"

—Marian Paul

For more information about PRIDE FOUNDATION scholarships call 206-323-3318 or visit www.pridefoundation.org. The

GREATER SEATTLE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION can be reached at 206-356-0794 or www.the-gsba.org. Although the organizations collaborate on the scholarship program, each has its own guidelines and eligibility requirements.

TIMOTHY KRAUSE is a Portland writer and editor.

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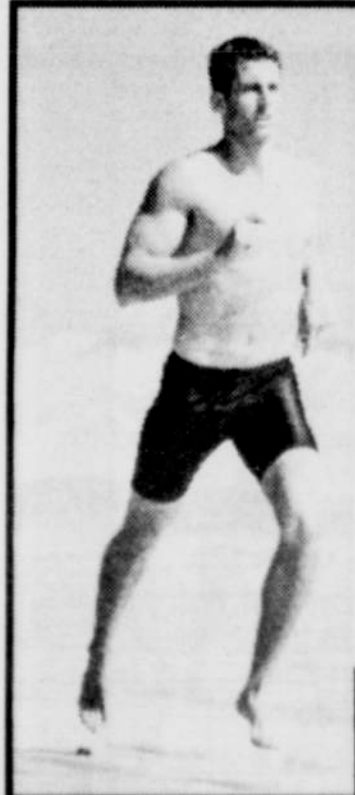
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