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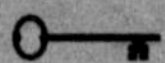


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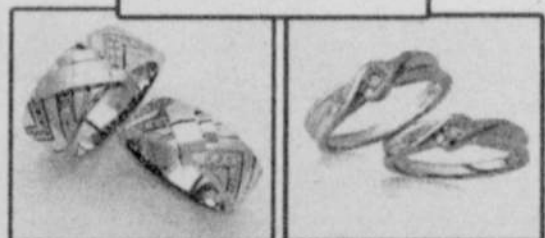
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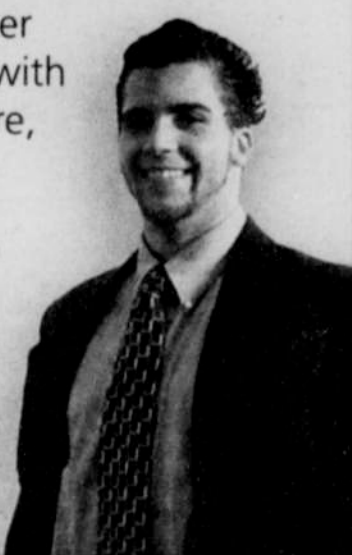
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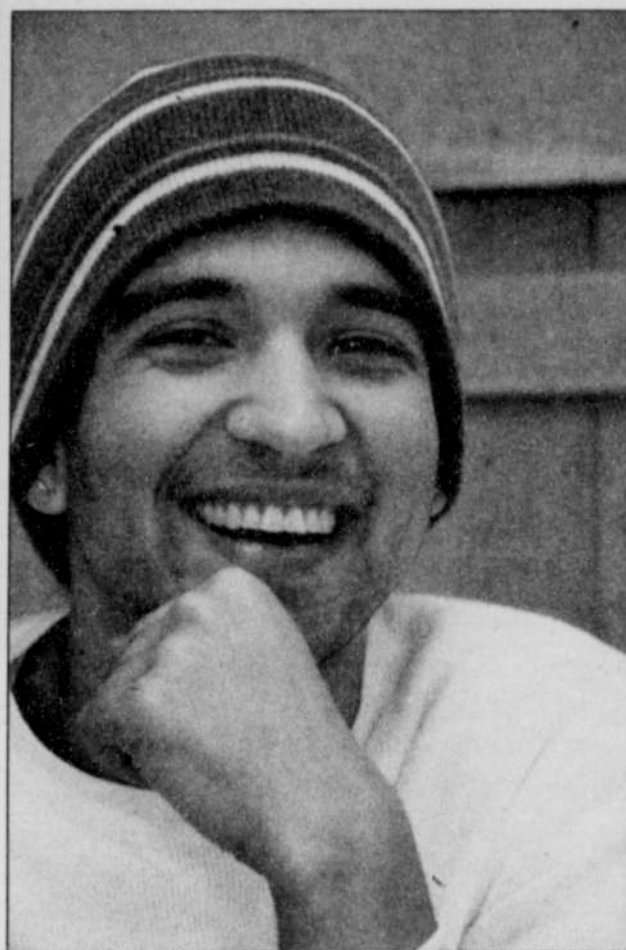
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## northwest



Christopher "Cree" Gordon and Allison Parker got a boost from the *Just Out* scholarship.

## Two Paths to Progress

*Just Out* scholarship winners announced

by Jaymee R. Cuti

**S**uckers for tradition, *Just Out* is again celebrating its anniversary by awarding scholarships to two high-achieving recipients.

The scholarship program, distributed through Equity Foundation, began in 2006 to honor and assist queer students and the children of members of the sexual minorities community in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

As *Just Out* celebrates its 24th anniversary, it also congratulates scholarship winners Christopher "Cree" Gordon, who received \$1,000, and Allison K. Parker, who received \$2,000.

Gordon moved to Eugene just over two years ago from Louisiana. In January, Brother to Brother lured him to Portland with a job as an administrative assistant. He resigned from the organization Oct. 26.

Gordon moved to Oregon primarily for a "change of scenery."

He had been living on the streets in Louisiana since his stepfather kicked him out of the house. A friend heading west told Gordon there were good resources for homeless youth in Eugene.

The 22-year-old's life changed three weeks after he arrived. Enticed by a voucher for \$10, Gordon agreed to take an HIV test. He was not prepared for the positive result.

Gordon began attending University of Oregon and jumped into the HIV prevention sector with gusto.

"I became a speaker in schools, which led me to doing bigger things. I worked on the 'Who's Positive' campaign and traveled around America with HIV-positive youth on a prevention tour," said Gordon.

Gordon won the Colin Higgins Youth Courage Award in 2006 and a Pride Foundation Scholarship.

He transferred to Portland State University and is leaning toward earning a degree in social service. Since moving to town, Gordon has volunteered for Cascade AIDS Project's Teen to Teen peer mentoring program.

"Ideally I would love to be a housewife, but I'll probably continue to work in nonprofits that work in

bettering the queer community. I really like the non-profit sector, whether advocating for queer people or HIV prevention or with people who are HIV-positive because I'm HIV-positive as well," said Gordon.

At 18, Allison Parker is in her third year of college at University of Washington, majoring in economics.

She graduated high school early through the Running Start program.

Parker, who has spent most of her teen years volunteering for various organizations, is looking ahead to a possible master's degree in nonprofit organization management.

"I'm definitely interested in promoting diversity, maybe by working for somewhere like the [American Civil Liberties Union] or a queer allies movement," said Parker. "Diversity and poverty are my causes that are really close to home."

Parker says she has experienced some discrimination because she has two moms, Dana Parker and Valerie Beauprey.

"It has been a little bit of a problem with my peer group, but obviously family is No. 1 and I've always stuck by them," she said.

Parker's extensive volunteer work has included designing Web sites, presentations and fliers for organizations through the Nonprofit Network of Southwest Washington. She has worked with a hospital in Vancouver, Wash.; The Arc of Clark County; the Piano School for the Blind; and Silver Buckle, a youth equestrian therapy organization.

"I was home-schooled, so I had a lot of time and knew I wanted to contribute in my community," said Parker. "It started with me volunteering with an animal rights group, and I wanted to do more and more. It makes me feel involved with my community, meet a lot of great people, have fun supporting the causes I believe in and gain experience for the future." 10

For more information about the JUST OUT SCHOLARSHIP FUND visit [www.justout.com/scholarship.aspx](http://www.justout.com/scholarship.aspx).