

BUILDING COMMUNITY



Kids' Chance scholarship recipients from left to right are Zsofika Wigney, Randi Johnston and Kayla Johnston. In the back is Bob Shiprack, president of the Kids' Chance board of directors.

Kids' Chance gives scholarships to kids of fatally injured workers

Kids' Chance of Oregon, a non-profit that provides post-secondary and trade school scholarships to children of Oregon workers who have been severely or fatally injured in a workplace accident, handed out scholarship awards Sept. 27 at a fundraiser auction and reception. Since its formation three years ago, the program has awarded \$64,550 in scholarships.

From 2010 to 2014, there were 136 fatal occupational injuries in Oregon. Another 69 workers suffered injuries that resulted in permanent disability, taking them out of the workforce. There are no records of how many children were affected, but it was reported that in 2013, the average age of the fatalities was 42 years old — the prime years of parenthood.

"These types of events can profoundly impact families. The likelihood that they cannot afford further education after high school increases significantly," said Bob Shiprack, president of the board of directors of Kids' Chance of Oregon. "Kids' Chance makes it possible for more students to continue their education."

Scholarship recipient Zsofika Wigney attested to that at the awards reception. Wigney, who has Tourette's syndrome and aspergers, lost her father to a workplace accident in 2012. With help from Kids' Chance, she attends Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon. Her major is English, but she hopes to someday go to medical school.

"Because of Kids' Chance, I have no loans to worry about," Wigney said. "Thank you for taking a chance on me. I prom-

ise not to let you down."

Oregon is the 27th state with a Kids' Chance chapter. Its 12-member board of directors is comprised primarily of professionals with experience in workers' compensation-related industries. In addition to Shiprack, a retired executive director of the Oregon State Building Trades Council, labor is represented on the board by Bob Tackett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

Shiprack and Tackett encourage Oregon labor unions to become more involved in Kids' Chance of Oregon and to help raise funds for future scholarships.

For more information about Kids' Chance of Oregon, visit their website at www.kid-chanceoforegon.com.

This year's scholarship recipients are:

- **Ariannah Jimenez:** \$11,700, University of Oregon
- **Zsofika Wigney:** \$6,250, Clark Honors College/ University of Oregon
- **Kayla Johnston:** \$4,630, Lower Columbia College
- **Randi Johnston:** \$4,200, Lower Columbia College
- **Alannah McMaster:** \$3,000, Mt. Hood Community College

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