

Chairs' Corner – January 2006
First among publics – 21st Century Rhodes Scholars

TO: UW Foundation, Campaign Cabinet, Deans, Development & Alumni Staff
FROM: William H. Gates, Chair, and Orin C. Smith, Vice Chair, UW Foundation

Dear Friends,

Allyssa, Elizabeth, Emma, Eliana. What a lovely flow of names. Perhaps they strike you as the perfect guest list for a nineteenth-century tea party. If so, think again. The names belong, respectively, to an Egyptologist, a scholar of the modern Middle East, a specialist in artificial intelligence, and a mathematician. These are the young women who have made the University of Washington first among public universities in the production of 21st-century Rhodes Scholars.

“Production” is probably the wrong word—these were clearly incredible people before they ever got to the UW—and the “first among publics” record will no doubt shift back and forth, given the small number of scholars. Nevertheless, it is a record worth boasting about. Even first-rate minds do not become Rhodes Scholars without first-rate nurturing and first-rate opportunities.

Our scholars, in chronological order, are:

- Emma Brunskill (from Edmonds), UW '00, physics/ computer science & engineering; '01 Rhodes Scholar; Oxford master's degree in neuroscience; now at MIT working on a doctorate in artificial intelligence.
- Elizabeth Angell (Mercer Island), UW '01, international studies/history ; '02 Rhodes Scholar; Oxford master's degree (with distinction) in Middle East Studies, with a focus on Turkey; now applying to Ph.D. programs.
- Allyssa Lamb (Redmond), UW '04, classics/Near Eastern languages and civilization; '04 Rhodes Scholar; will earn an Oxford master's degree in Egyptology this June; will continue in an Oxford or U.S. doctoral program.
- Eliana Hechter (Seattle), UW '06, mathematics; named an '06 Rhodes Scholar a few weeks ago; plans to earn an Oxford doctoral degree in math. (Some of you know Eliana as the daughter of our former UW colleagues Debra Friedman and Michael Hechter, now at Arizona State.)

Even this cursory look is revealing. First, double majors are the rule. Second, the UW departments that nurtured and honed these students range widely, from humanities to social science to math and science. Third, where are the boys?

But for each student, the really captivating story is in the details. If you have time, go to <http://www.washington.edu/research/atuw/rhodes.html> for the first three and to <http://uwnews.org/uweek/uweekarticle.asp?articleID=13834> for Eliana.

Here are some things you might notice. Three of the four students arrived on campus at the age of 14 or 15, through the UW's Early Entrance Program—one of the nation's oldest such programs, and still unique in many regards. All participated in the Honors Program. All took full advantage of the varied opportunities to do undergraduate research—as NASA Space Grant Scholars, Mary Gates Scholars, Goldwater Scholars, in work at Friday Harbor Labs, or through individual arrangements with faculty members, such as Allyssa's summer as an archaeologist in

Israel. All found routes to international experience: Allyssa and Eliana at the UW Rome Center, Elizabeth in Edinburgh through a UW exchange program, and Emma in Geneva as an intern at CERN, the world's largest particle physics center. All had close relationships with faculty mentors, who spotted them early, took the initiative to guide and encourage them, and now cannot say enough good things about them.

In other words, these students came to the UW with a tremendous hunger for learning and found, sometimes unexpectedly, exactly what they needed. We will give Elizabeth (from an interview in 2002) the last word: "I came to the UW for two reasons—the Early Entrance Program and the affordable in-state tuition. For the first two years, I thought it would have been nice to go to Harvard. Now I'm so glad I came to the UW. It's been an amazing experience."

This is the kind of experience all of you are helping to sustain.

Bill and Orin

Looking Back

- **Congratulations ... we have just completed the best December ever with \$103.9 million in total contributions!**
- As of December 31, 2005, our **total Campaign giving since July 1, 2000, reached \$1,627,978,488** toward our Campaign goal of \$2 billion.
- The December Report of Contributions Notes is attached and contains fundraising details.

Looking Ahead

- **Friday, April 28, 2006**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting. Washington Weekend April 27-29, 2006.
- **Friday, September 8, 2006**, Foundation Board Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee, 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, September 8, 2006**, Fifth Annual Recognition Gala, Suzzallo Library.
- **Friday, January 26, 2007**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, April 27, 2007**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting. Washington Weekend April 26-28, 2007.
- **Friday, September 7, 2007**, Foundation Board Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee, 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, September 7, 2007**, Sixth Annual Recognition Gala, Suzzallo Library.