

Plain Dealer & Sun

**Brown, McGuire named
2010 Lilly Community Scholars**



Derek Brown, Cinthia McGuire and Aaron Kreutzjans

Sharon Hamilton

The two Jennings County High School 2010 recipients of the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarships have one thing in common—they were raised by single mothers and want to repay them by getting a college education.

Selected to receive these prestigious scholarships were Derek Brown and Cinthia McGuire. The winners will receive their tuition for four years at any college or university in Indiana. They will also receive a stipend of \$800 a year to help pay for books.

"We had 36 excellent candidates this year," said Ruth Adrian from the Jennings County Community Foundation, the group that oversees the scholarship. "As a new initiative this year, the board elected to award a \$1,000 scholarship to the runner-up, Aaron Kreutzjans."

McGuire is the daughter of Elizabeth McGuire and at JCHS she has been active in several organizations including Student Council, National Honor Society, JCHS Choir, Peers Educating Peers, Spanish Club and Saturday Classics foreign language educator.

In addition, this busy young woman has been a four-year member of the JCHS girls soccer team and a varsity cheerleader. She has also volunteered at the Park Theatre Civic Centre, United Way Day of Caring, the Education Foundation and St. Mary's Youth Ministry. She has also completed mission trips to New Orleans and New York.

"I am extremely fortunate to have been adopted by my unmarried mother at the age of 21 months," McGuire stated. "As a single mother, she has sacrificed a great deal to provide me with the necessities, as well as many academic and athletic opportunities."

McGuire added that she also knows her mother hasn't been able to save money for a college fund and that has been her motivation to work hard in school in the hopes of receiving scholarship money.

Butler University is McGuire's first choice for a college with Indiana University coming in second. She plans to major in pre-dentistry and eventually earn a Doctorate in Dentistry so she can return

to Jennings County and begin a practice.

"I have benefited from many teachers and church leaders who have given of their time to work with me on mission trips and service projects," McGuire added. "From working in soup kitchens, to cleaning up a New Orleans neighborhood in the aftermath of Katrina, these projects not only reinforce the importance of service, but also made me keenly aware of my own blessings in life."

Derek Brown is the son of Teri Brown and he will be attending Purdue University where he plans to major in aeronautical engineering technology.

"Multiple children is difficult for any family, especially for a single mom and having twins means two bikes, two cell phones, two laptops and two college educations," Brown said. "My mom works hard to provide for our family and I love her for that. This is an opportunity to show my hard work has paid off and I can help my mother and my family."

Brown is referring to his twin sister, Olivia, who is also a senior at Jennings County High School.

At JCHS Brown has been a member of the Panther football team and track team. He has served as a coach for the homecoming powderpuff football team, is a member of the Student Council and the Panther PROS. He was selected as the 2009 JCHS Prom King and was a candidate for homecoming king this past football season.

"My career as an engineer will give me the financial stability to give back to my community, starting with the youth," Brown explained. "Growing up a minority in a predominantly white community has not been easy. There needs to be a place where minority children of all ages may go. A place for bonding, guidance, encouragement and advice."

Brown would also like to see our school corporation become a shining example to other school corporations, but he believes this will only happen with help and donations from alumni.

"I have big dreams for my life and my community," Brown revealed. "After school programs for children cannot create themselves overnight. It will take a lot of hard work, and I feel ready for it. My college education is my first and most important step."

Runner-up Aaron Kreutzjans is the son of Jim and Janet Kreutzjans and is one of the Top Ten students at JCHS.