2008-2009 PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (PSP) ANNUAL REPORT

Dr. Dale E. Wheeler, Director

May 7, 2009

**Overview:**

 In July 2008, 315 students were invited to participate in the PSP Scholars Group. The criterion was 30-90 shrs and a minimum GPA of 3.85. One hundred thirty two students completed the application and were invited to participate in the program. In May 2009, 48 of these students received co-curricular credit for their participation as PSP Candidates and eleven students completed the requirements to advance to PSP Applicant status. In addition, four external scholarship applications were completed and submitted, and nine research and travel grants were funded. Stephanie Schaffner was awarded a Fulbright Grant for study abroad in Bulgaria and Alex Bentz received honorable mention for her Barry M. Goldwater application.

Since 2000, the Appalachian State University Prestigious Scholarship Program (PSP) has continually supported enrichment activities and has provided opportunities for Appalachian’s most promising students. This year, the program again focused on three activities. First, students who had demonstrated high academic achievement were invited to join the PSP as Prestigious Scholar Candidates. Second, information and assistance was given to undergraduate and graduate students who applied for external prestigious scholarships. Third, PSP research and travel grants were offered through the Office of Student Research (OSR). The continuing mission of the PSP includes all three of these areas and remains focused on supporting our best students to actively participate in research, service learning, international, and scholarship opportunities.

Revisioning and development for the 2008-09 PSP occurred during the spring 2008 semester. The program retains the three areas of focus as listed in the opening overview.

**PSP Scholars Group**

The Scholars group is now divided into two tiers; Candidates and Applicants. PSP Candidates are essentially first year members. Candidates were invited to attend all of the PSP meetings and maintain a 3.75 GPA. During these meetings, students were presented with information pertaining to the requirements and opportunities to complete scholarship and graduate school applications. Topics included the personal statement, active involvement in research and creative activities, letters of recommendation, resumes, funding opportunities for research projects, and appropriate scholarships.

Six meetings were held through the year.

September 17, 2008 - Introductory Meeting and Banquet; ~100 enthusiastic students attended. An overview of the program and requirements were presented.

October 22, 2008 - The presentation began with a reminder about personal statements and the deadline of November 19th to identify a faculty mentor. The program presentation was given by Ms. Angel Wood from the ASU Career Development Center. (34 students attended)

November 19, 2008 - Students were asked to have identified their faculty mentor by this meeting and have worked on their personal statements. The speakers were Professor Nicole Bennett (chemistry) and Professor Alan Utter (Director of the Office of Student Research). Professor Bennett spoke about the importance of undergraduate research, the responsibilities of undergraduate research students, the opportunities for research students, and the role of the faculty mentor.

Professor Utter spoke about funding opportunities for undergraduate research projects. Three funding opportunities included research assistantships while conducting the research project, research funds to cover the cost of supplies, equipment, and travel costs associated with the research project, and travel funds for expenses related to attending professional conferences to present research findings.

(27 students attended)

January 21, 2009 - Sandra Krause from the ASU Graduate School spoke to students about what to expect in graduate school. Preparation for the applications, expectations for admission, stipends and assistantships, and realistic goals while in graduate school. (13 students attended)

February 18, 2009 – Scholarship informational meeting. Boren, Fulbright, Goldwater, Hollings NOAA, Marshall, Mitchell, Jack Kent Cooke, Truman, and the Udall Scholarships. Deadlines, References, GPA requirements, typical applicants, # and % of awards, and benefits were presented. (13 students attended)

March 18, 2009 - Personal Statements – students were asked to bring drafts of their statements with questions and discussion for improvements. Dr. Leslie Jones Director of the Heltzer Honors Program, Ms. Angel Wood – Career Development, students from the Writing Center, and Angela Mead, Advisor for the Prestigious Scholars Program all assisted with this meeting. (10 students attended)

April 15, 2009 – Annual Recognition Banquet - 11 students were recognized for their PSP accomplishments during the 2008-09 academic year.

It is a continuing goal of the PSP Office to increase the number of students who apply for and obtain prestigious scholarships. Active participation in the application process must begin during the sophomore year. In July 2008, the PSP invited 315 students with GPAs over 3.85 to become Candidates for 2008-09. To complete the requirements of the program and rise to the Applicant level, Candidates must complete several requirements. This list includes identifying a faculty mentor to oversee a research project and assist with obtaining funding for the project, establishing a current resume, creating a well-written personal statement and identifying which scholarship is most appropriate for their career goals. This year, 11 Candidates completed these requirements by the end of their first year in the program and are now PSP Applicants and mentors for the incoming class of PSP Candidates. A copy of the PSP Candidate Invitation which includes the list of requirements to become a PSP Applicant is located in Appendix A.

 PSP Applicants will be in their second or third year in the program and actively working towards the completion and submission of a prestigious scholarship. PSP staff will work closely with Applicants to ensure that a competitive application is submitted. Applicants will also be required to attend designated PSP meetings as mentors to first year Candidates about the application process.

**Scholarship Applications**

This year there were 38 inquiries for twelve different scholarships. (See Appendix C) Four students completed and submitted scholarship applications. Stephanie Schaffner was awarded a Fulbright Grant for study abroad in Bulgaria and Alex Bentz received honorable mention for her Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship application. The PSP staff provided support to ensure that complete and competitive applications were submitted and all requirements were fulfilled by the posted deadlines.

**Fall 2008**

Daniel Brookshire Marshall Scholarship

Stephanie Schaffner Fulbright Grant

**Spring 2009**

Alex Bentz Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

Camille Hesterberg David L. Boren Scholarship

Assistance for the Fulbright Scholarship applicants included assembling faculty teams to interview and provided suggestions to the candidate for improvement. The interview committee was Ms. Nancy Wells, Dr. Joan Woodworth, Dr. Anatoly Isaenko, Ms. Angela Mead, and Dr. Dale Wheeler. The PSP Director also wrote a summation of the faculty comments included with the Fulbright application.

 The PSP Director also participated in decisions related to internal scholarships such as the Appalachian Honors Association (AHA) international travel grants, the Whitney Hunter Honors Scholarship, and International Studies Scholarships. The Director also read applications for out-of-state tuition wavers for honors students.

**PSP Research and Travel Grant Activity**

 The PSP research and travel funding continued to function well through the support of the Office of Student Research (OSR) website and staff. No major changes occurred to the funding requirements or the application and funding process from the previous year.

 From May 2008 through March 2009, the PSP funded nine of the fourteen applications that were received. Seven of the applications were funded from the 2008-09 budget for a total of $3,917. Eleven of the proposals had research components and three included funding for international travel.

 Bookkeeping for the PSP grant expenditures was maintained by personnel in the Heltzer Honors Office. A detailed list of these proposals is located in Appendix B.

**Other Activities**

 PSP Website reconstruction and improvement – Throughout the spring and summer 2008, Zack Underwood and Dale Wheeler designed and constructed essentially a new website from scratch. Links to scholarship websites, information about scholarship opportunities, PSP meeting dates, scholarship deadlines, minutes from past meetings, and general information about completing a scholarship application are now a part of this website. In addition, potential PSP candidates can obtain application information and download an editable pdf application form. In July 2008, letters were sent to potential PSP Candidates directing them to the new website.

 In April 2009, Fulbright informational workshops were held to encourage students to begin the application process early. Four students attended these workshops.

 **Problems**

 The major problems center on the need for additional time allocations to this program. Additional personnel and release time for the Director would allow more time provided for student support. Currently, there is insufficient time for follow-up to the PSP meetings which would give students an incentive and support to work on scholarship objectives. Keeping the website current has been tough. The need for additional informational workshops would strengthen this program by creating an effective timeline for students to complete applications. The program is also in desperate need of an updated brochure to advertise our program.

**Goals**

A 20 hr/week GA position has been offered as support for the program starting in the fall 2009 semester. The GA will be able to coordinate planning the PSP meetings, update the PSP website as needed, design a new brochure, assist in editing scholarship applications, and meeting with students for follow-up conversations concerning assignments throughout the year. Having this GA position will allow the Director to hold additional PSP meetings to increase attendance, to have follow-up meetings where students can get feedback concerning their scholarship portfolios, and develop informational meetings about important prestigious scholarships. Having the time devoted to workshops, additional PSP meetings, and follow-up contacts with the students will grow this program into a one which creates more support and resources for the students. This ultimately will lead to a greater number of scholarship applications and more scholarships being funded.

Dale E. Wheeler

PSP Director

Heltzer Honors Program

Appendix A

**Prestigious Scholarship Program**

**Candidate Invitation**

**2008-2009**

 Congratulations! You are invited to participate in the Appalachian State University Prestigious Scholarship Program (PSP) during the 2008-09 academic year. This invitation is offered as recognition of your excellent record of accomplishment and your potential to continue to excel in college and beyond. The PSP offers motivated students an opportunity to compete for national scholarships, research grants, and/or other programs that will lead to admission in nationally or internationally recognized graduate programs. Your participation will include experiences to guide you through the sometimes fierce application and selection process associated with prestigious scholarships and graduate program applications. In addition, the PSP will also prepare you to be a more informed citizen of the community and the world.

The PSP program is comprised of both Candidates (first year participants) and Applicants. Your first year in the PSP will include meetings and events to inform you of effective ways to prepare for the application process and opportunities to apply for prestigious scholarships. As a first-year PSP Candidate, you will have certain responsibilities to maintain your status in this elite group. Completion of the *responsibilities* listed below will maintain your active status and you will receive co-curricular credit for this year of membership. A list of the 2008-09 PSP meeting dates can be found on our website.

As a PSP Candidate, you also have the opportunity to become a PSP Applicant. Candidates must complete all 5 of the *requirements* listed below by the end of the first year in the PSP. Upon completion of these requirements, you will be invited to join the select group of students who are actively applying for a prestigious scholarship.

 Please read the Prestigious Scholar Candidate Responsibilities and Requirements.

If you are interested in becoming a Prestigious Scholarship program Candidate and agree to the responsibilities listed below, complete the application form available online at <http://www.honors.appstate.edu/prestigiousScholar.htm> and submit a completed copy to the PSP Office. Be sure to print a copy for your records.

 Additional information about the Prestigious Scholars Program can be found at the program website.

***Prestigious Scholar Candidate Responsibilities***

* I agree to maintain a minimum 3.75 G.P.A.
* I agree to keep my email address and contact information current.
* I agree to check my email and campus mailbox on a regular basis.
* I agree that if I decide to no longer participate in the PSP, I will inform the PSP office of my intentions. Contact either Dr. Dale E. Wheeler wheelerde@appstate.edu, PSP Director, or Ms. Angela Mead meadad@appstate.edu PSP Advisor; Room B-5 in East Hall, 262-2580.

***Prestigious Scholar Candidate Requirements: to be completed PRIOR to becoming a PSP Applicant***

* Attend at least three meetings, information sessions, or programs sponsored by the Prestigious Scholarship Program (PSP) during the 2008-2009 academic year and to be an active participant at these events.
* Identify a prestigious scholarship and/or other program that meets your career goals. A statement explaining your choice is also required.
* Develop a current life goals statement appropriate for a general scholarship application.
* Update and maintain a current resume.
* Identify a faculty mentor to assist with a) a scholarly project\* and/or b) completing your scholarship application.

 \* Funding for scholarly activities is available through the Office of Student Research.

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Print Name Signature Date

**APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (PSP)**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION**

**2008-2009**

**Please complete this application and submit a copy by Friday, July 18, 2008 to Dr. Dale E. Wheeler at** **wheelerde@appstate.edu****.**

**The first PSP meeting will be Wednesday, September 17 at 5:00p in the Price Lake Room of the ASU Student Union. It is very important that you attend this meeting. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this meeting.**

**Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **Last First Middle**

**ASU Box #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address (one you use on a regular basis) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone # you can be reached during the school year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Expected graduation date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cumulative G.P.A.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (3.85 minimum)**

**Class (Soph., Jr., Sr.)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Intended or declared major(s)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **minor(s) or concentration(s)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you have a faculty mentor? \_\_\_\_ If so, in what department is this faculty member? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you have a current resume’? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you planning to attend graduate school? \_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Have you written a personal statement for a scholarship application? \_\_\_\_\_\_**

**What are your likely career goals:**

**Explain how you will benefit from your involvement in the Prestigious Scholarship Program and how this program will benefit from your involvement.**

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**I have read and agree to the required responsibilities for active participation as a Prestigious Scholarship Program Candidate.**

* I agree to maintain a minimum 3.75 G.P.A.
* I agree to keep my email address and contact information current.
* I agree to check my email and campus mailbox on a regular basis.
* I agree that if I decide to no longer participate in the PSP, I will inform the PSP office of my intentions.