2009-2010 PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM (PSP) ANNUAL REPORT

Dr. Dale E. Wheeler, Director

May 7, 2010

**Overview:** Since 2000, the Appalachian State University Prestigious Scholarships Program (PSP) has

continually supported enrichment activities and has provided opportunities for Appalachian’s most

promising students. This year, the program focused on three major areas, the AIM High

program, APPetite for Life, and support for the submission of competitive scholarship applications.

AIM High: In July 2009, ~165 students were invited to participate in the AIM High program. The application can be found at <http://www.honors.appstate.edu/psp/application/PSPapp0910.pdf>

The criterion was 30-60 semester hrs and a minimum GPA of 3.85. Around 60 students completed

the online application to participate in the program. Seven meeting were held throughout the year.

APPetite for Life: APPetite for Life is a program that brings faculty and students together for

conversations about preparation for graduate school and scholarship opportunities.

A total of six APPetite for Life events were held throughout the year.

Prestigious Scholarship Support: Seven external scholarship applications were completed and submitted.

 These included a Marshall Scholarship application, four Fulbright Grant applications, an NSF

 Graduate Research Fellowship Program application, and a Goldwater Scholarship application.

**AIM High**

Rising sophomores with GPAs of 3.85 and higher were invited to join AIM High during the summer 2009. Of the ~165 invitations, ~60 students opted into the group. During these meetings, students were presented with information pertaining to the requirements and opportunities during their time at Appalachian to make their graduate school applications more competitive. Topics included the personal statement, active involvement in research and creative activities, letters of recommendation, resumes, funding opportunities for research projects, and appropriate scholarships.

Seven meetings were held through the year.

September 8, Table Rock Room, Introduction to AIM High

October 20, Price Lake Room, Scholarly Activities and Faculty Mentors

November 10, Price Lake Room, Personal Statements and Prestigious Scholarships

 January 19, Price Lake Room, Graduate School

February 16, Price Lake Room, Resumes, Cover Letters, Letters of Recommendation

March 23, Farthing Auditorium, CNN Security Analyst, Peter Bergen spoke about

Osama bin Laden

April 7, Honors Spring Info Feast, Legends, Scholarships and Important Honors Information

Following the October, November, January, and February meetings, follow-up meetings were held the next day at 1:00p and 4:00p for students who were unable to attend the Tuesday evening meeting. Usually, 5-8 students attended the Wednesday meetings.

September 8, 2009 - Introductory Meeting and Banquet - An overview of the program and requirements were presented by Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones, Director of the Heltzer Honors Program. (About 65 enthusiastic students attended)

October 20, 2009 - The presentation began with Dale Wheeler discussing the importance of undergraduate research, effective ways to identify opportunities for undergraduate research, funding opportunities and the responsibilities of students once they have committed to a project. The importance and responsibilities of a faculty mentor were discussed. Students were given the assignment to identify a potential faculty mentor by the November 10th meeting. (About 45 students attended)

November 10, 2009 - Students were asked to have identified their faculty mentor by this meeting. Several students had comments about their experiences, both positive and negative, and many had questions. Next, Dale Wheeler gave an overview of nine prestigious scholarships. They included the Boren, Fulbright, Goldwater, Hollings NOAA, Marshall, Mitchell, Jack Kent Cooke, Truman, and Udall Scholarships. Information concerning deadlines, references, GPA requirements, the number of applicants and funding rates, year in school eligibility, award amounts and benefits, and majors most likely to apply for each scholarship was given. The second half of the meeting involved the importance of personal statements. Angel Wood from the Career Development Center provided information to the group about what should go into the statements and how to make it personal. (About 40 students attended)

January 19, 2010 - Angela Mead (Heltzer Honors Program), Kornelia Galior (senior chemistry honors student), and 2 other panel members answered questions from students about what to expect in graduate school. Discussion topics included preparation for graduate school applications, expectations for admission, stipends and assistantships, and realistic goals while in graduate school. (About 25 students attended)

February 16, 2010 – Angel Wood from the Career Development Center spoke to students about résumés, cover letters, and letters of recommendation. The meeting only lasted 30 minutes due to the heavy snow falling that evening. (Only 10 students attended since many thought the meeting was cancelled due to the inclement weather)

March 23, 8:00pm, Farthing Auditorium, CNN Security Analyst, Peter Bergen spoke about Osama bin Laden. Bergen’s talk was titled “Obama’s War: Global Terrorism and the Urgency for a Stable Afghanistan” and was presented by the University Forum’s Distinguished Lecture Series. All Aim High students were encouraged to attend. Attendance was not taken.

April 7, Honors Spring Info Feast, Legends, Scholarships and Important Honors Information

All AIM High students and freshman, sophomore, and junior Heltzer Honors students were invited to attend the Honors Spring Info Feast. Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones spoke to the students about important upcoming Helter Honors events, AHA!, the international component of the university Honors degree, and future plans for the program. Dale Wheeler spoke to the group about the scholarship website, upcoming scholarship opportunities, prestigious scholarship opportunities for undergraduates while still at Appalachian, and the importance of participating in scholarly activities or undergraduate research. (Around 70 students attended)

**APPetite for Life**

APPetite for Life is a program that brings faculty and students together for conversations about preparation for graduate school and scholarship opportunities. Faculty hosts were also encouraged to bring a graduate student or two from their program area to bring their perspective to the conversations. A total of six APPetite for Life events were held throughout the year and ~$1400 was spent on these events.

October 7, Geology, hosted by Dr. Andy Heckert and Dr. Kristan Cockrill, at Bistro Roca

October 27, Political Science, hosted by Dr. Adam Newmark and Dr. Jeff Holcomb, at Char

February 24, Music, hosted by Dr. Nancy Schneeloch-Bingham and Dr. Lisa Runner, at Primo’s

March 1, Business, hosted by Dr. Joseph Crazier and Dr. Al Harris, at Red Onion

March 18, Foods and Nutrition, hosted by Dr. Travis Triplett and Dr. Melissa Gutschall, at Char

March 30, English, hosted by Mr. Joseph Bathanti, at Cha Da Thai

**Scholarship Applications**

Seven students completed and submitted scholarship applications. The Fulbright application submitted by Marcus Taylor was recommended by the U.S. Fulbright committee, but did not receive funding from the host country. The PSP staff provided support to ensure that complete and competitive applications were submitted and all requirements were fulfilled by the posted deadlines.

**Fall 2009**

Mary Elizabeth (Beth) Compton Marshall Scholarship

John Edmonds Fulbright Grant

Marcus Taylor Fulbright Grant (application recommended to Brazil)

Meredith Casper Fulbright Grant

Rachel Dolfi Fulbright Grant

Alex Bentz NSF Graduate Fellowship

**Spring 2010**

Ashley Kanupp Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

Assistance for the Fulbright Scholarship applicants included assembling faculty teams to interview and provided suggestions to the candidate for improvement. Two interview committees were used this year. Members of the committees included, Nancy Wells, Brent James, Roger Winsor, Shari Galiardi, Alexandra Hellenbrand, Nicole Caldwell, and Dale Wheeler. Dr. Dale Wheeler. The PSP Director also wrote a summation of the faculty comments included with each Fulbright application.

**Award winners:** Stephanie Schaffner applied in 2008-2009 and was awarded a **Fulbright** to Bulgaria in the summer of 2009.

**AIM High Travel Grant Activity**

In the Spring semester, AIM High supported Annemarie Anglim to attend the Appalachian Studies Association conference held in Georgia in March for $209.

**PSP Website**

Throughout the year, the website was periodically updated to reflect upcoming events and approaching deadlines.

**Graduate Assistant**

This year, I was fortunate enough to have a Nicole Caldwell as a graduate assistant. She worked 20 hours a week throughout the year. She was responsible for organizing and advertising the AIM High meetings. Responsibilities included ordering food through the ASU Food Services Office, reminding AIM High members of upcoming meetings through email, Facebook and Twitter. Nicole was also responsible for organizing the six APPetite for Life events described earlier in this report. She also helped with the design of the new PSP brochure. Nicole was a member of a Fulbright interview committee and was responsible for keeping the PSP website updated.

**PSP Brochure**

For the first time in at least 8 years, the PSP brochure was updated to reflect the current program. AIM High, APPetite for Life, and scholarship support are highlighted in the brochure along with pictures from this past year.

**Honors Advising**

In June, October, and March, I advised students entering or currently enrolled in the Heltzer Honors program. I met with about 40 students in June, 40 students in October, and about 25 students in March.

**Goals**

It is a continuing goal of the PSP Office to increase the number of students who apply for and obtain prestigious scholarships. Current active recruiting for both Fulbright and Goldwater Scholarships occurred this year in an effort to generate future applications. These are good programs to focus on since both fund about 20% of applications submitted. The AIM High program is now appropriately focused on rising sophomores to advise them in a timely manner on goals for submitting competitive graduate school and prestigious scholarship applications. This summer 2010, invitations will be sent to rising sophomores with GPAs of 3.75 and higher to join AIM High. Monthly meetings will be held throughout the 2010-2011 AY.

APPetite for Life will have the majority of the events in the fall semester. Faculty from departments not previously represented will be invited to participate. The AIM High travel grants will continue with the goal of having several students attend professional meetings. The GA position will be better utilized this next year by having increased overlap in office hours and greater oversight on goals ands accomplishments.

Dale E. Wheeler

Prestigious Scholarships Program Director

Heltzer Honors Program