



**CMSF**

**The Canadian Merit  
Scholarship Foundation**

The Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation invests in the future and well-being of our communities by investing in the potential of Canada's young people.

The Foundation identifies and supports talented students who show promise of leadership and a strong commitment to community service.

The Foundation works in partnership with 25 Canadian universities, whose generous donation of tuition for our selected scholars helps support them as they study on Canadian campuses. By selecting unconventional young people and encouraging them to put their talents to work, the Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation challenges them to be socially responsible, entrepreneurial and community-focused leaders — each positively impacting tomorrow's Canada.

CMSF also administers Canada's premier merit scholarship for college students: the Garfield Weston Merit Scholarship for Colleges. The W. Garfield Weston Foundation is the exclusive supporter of this unique program.

Make a donation to CMSF online! Your support allows us to enrich our program and steward the next generation of Canadian leaders.

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# Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation

Newsletter — Winter 2007

## 2007 national selections weekend

National selections weekend is the pinnacle of our year, which starts in the fall when hundreds of guidance counsellors and teachers in high schools and cegeps throughout the country sponsor roughly 1900 candidates for the Loran Award and the same number of candidates apply directly. Our volunteer assessors selected the most promising 270 sponsored candidates for interviews and our direct pool assessors selected an additional 50 for telephone interviews. In late fall, 27 regional selection committees and our direct pool committee further narrowed the field to 76 finalists.

The finalists invited to national selections at BMO's Institute for Learning were selected from an initial pool of 3,800 applicants. In our business plan we resolved to increase the value of finalist and provincial awards so that these awards continue to adequately recognize the quality and efforts of candidates who do not receive Loran Awards. This year, our committees granted finalist awards of \$3,000, up from \$2,500 last year, and provincial awards of \$2,000, up from \$1,500. These commitments increase our grants expenditures by \$60,000.

We made offers to 30 Loran Scholars (biographies are enclosed) and it continues to be apparent that the national selections experience is positive for scholars and finalist award recipients alike. Stephen Lake, the 2007 Morrison Loran Scholar, neatly sums up the mood: "It is truly an honour to have been selected for one of the Loran Awards," he says. "The sheer amount of talent that the group encompasses is amazing, and to be in the presence of such a group is humbling."

At national selections, Stephen met a fellow candidate involved in Habitat for Humanity, and this inspired him to volunteer as a carpenter for a new Habitat development being built in his community this summer.

Stephen, who describes himself as "one of those kids who would take apart a radio to try and build a robot," is hoping to enroll in Waterloo's mechatronics engineering program — which combines mechanical, electrical and systems engineering.



2006 & 2003 Loran scholars at the BMO IFL  
(photo credit: Mischa Bartkow, Loran '99)

On Friday, staff introduced finalists to the mentorship and summer programs, scholars' retreats and annual fora. And in our initial conversations with the newest class of scholars, it is clear that they are already thinking ahead about these opportunities. Robyn Hooper, a 2007 Weston Loran Scholar from Bowen Island, BC, is certainly not resting on her laurels. "It is such an honour to receive a Weston Loran Award. Financially, it allows me to focus on productive and meaningful experiences — giving back to the community or immersing myself in new learning opportunities." Robyn, a student at Armand Hammer UWC in New Mexico, is planning to return to BC next year and would like to focus on environmental issues at university.

As we have for the past few years, we held a forum on Friday for the first- and fourth-year scholars. Jim Coutts, chair of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, spoke to the first-year scholars about the value of working in both the private and public sectors. CMSF board director Kim Parlee and Lyle Schwartz (Loran '96), who spent summers working in Hong Kong and London, spoke to the same group about the private sector and the potential value of international work experience, respectively. We hope that early discussion of these aspects of the summer program will lead to productive summers.

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## From the Executive Director

Dear friends,

As always, national selections was an exciting weekend that saw volunteers, scholars, alumni, donors and staff reaffirming the value of both our awards program and our connections with each other.

I was glad to witness the strong bonds that have developed between our scholars. It is clear that they truly care for one another. They have a great sense of the responsibilities and challenges that come with the award.

### A new name for our award

For close to 20 years, the students who received our award have been known as CMSF National Scholars. To achieve wider national recognition, we undertook to choose a name for the program that would be more distinct and memorable, and that would speak to the values underlying our Foundation.

We began by surveying our alumni and scholars to find out the values and ideals they associate with our program. We interviewed members of the CMSF family, including alumni, donors and volunteers. From this consultation we created a list of potential names and then presented a shortlist to a group of stakeholders. Out of this process, we selected a new name for our awards. Now our beneficiaries will receive a Loran Award and will be known as Loran Scholars.

Why Loran, and what does it mean? Our rationale, and a technical explanation of Loran by Bob Cluett, accompany this newsletter.

### Our supporters

We welcome several new supporters to the CMSF family, including major individual donors from Vancouver and Manitoba. From Calgary, two new benefactors are Sunco Energy Foundation and an anonymous foundation. We also welcome Enbridge, which made a two-year commitment to partly fund the scholars' retreat. CHUM Limited is funding a Loran Award for Mark Godfrey, a 2006 scholar at U of T. And the Young Fund at Hamilton Community Foundation is funding one scholar per year for four years, the first being Afzal Habib, a 2006 scholar studying business at York.

I am happy to report that Torys LLP now provides the foundation with *pro bono*

legal services. And I am delighted to say that the foundation is the recipient of a generous endowment gift from the Future Leaders Fund at the Canadian Medical Foundation that will support one scholar every four years for the foreseeable future!

### Our board and staff

I am very pleased to welcome six excellent new board members: Wendy Cecil, Purdy Crawford and Gilles Patry, who joined us very recently, and Terry Nickerson, Kim Parlee and Fred Wright, who joined us in September. Wendy Cecil has extensive experience in the private, charitable and post-secondary sectors, including four years as chair of University of Toronto's Governing Council. Purdy Crawford is counsel at Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt, Chancellor Emeritus of Mount Allison, and has served as a governor of both McGill and University of Waterloo. Gilles Patry is the president and vice-chancellor of the University of Ottawa, and succeeds Peter Mackinnon as the university president on our board. Terry Nickerson, who takes over from Kevin Markle as treasurer, is the retired CFO of ATI Technologies. Kim Parlee is a reporter and host at BNN - Business News Network, and brings to us her media savvy and experience. Fred Wright is our West coast champion, a friend of Burgundy Asset and a partner at Capital West Partners. We look forward to working with them to achieve the goals of our business plan.

As the number of scholars and the program have grown, we have added a third program officer to lower the scholar-to-staff ratio. Ted Aubut is primarily responsible for the summer program, Meghan Henry is primarily responsible for the mentorship program and Kim Dupré is primarily responsible for selections. Claire Barcik leads the program team. I am pleased to say that we have also increased the number of alumni on staff to two, with the addition of Chris Cowperthwaite (Loran '99) as executive assistant, replacing Jesse Helmer, who was promoted to manager of external relations.

All of these many changes point to the continuing evolution of our program. This is an exciting time to be a part of our organization, and I thank you for your continuing involvement.

With warmest best wishes,



# Dance entrepreneur fuses Russia and Sophocles in the city of brotherly love

“I still vividly remember my interview for the Merit Scholarship,” says Rebecca Davis. “David Crombie asked me why I was so motivated to start a dance company. I told him it was just something that I had to do. And he said, ‘well then, you’ll do it.’ This was the first time someone had affirmed my dream so strongly – and needless to say, it had a huge impact on my confidence and determination.”

Having set her sights on a career in dance at a young age, Rebecca has approached her dream of creating a professional dance company with the methodology and precision you’d expect of someone trained in classical ballet.

After graduating from high school in North Vancouver, Rebecca enrolled at the Schulich School of Business at York University, seeking a rigorous program where she could learn the entrepreneurial skills she’d need to launch a successful business. But it was a CMSF summer in Siberia that proved to be a turning point in her dance and arts management education.

“That first international summer was incredible. One reason I chose the program in Siberia was because it was one of the few places I could study in Russia that didn’t have a Russian language requirement. I lived with a family and ended up falling in love with the country and its culture. What I particularly loved about Russia was that although the daily life is so difficult, people have a profound respect for the

values of friendship, family, history and the arts.”

Once back in North America, Rebecca began Russian language studies and transferred to Temple University in Philadelphia. “Although I had to graduate early from the CMSF program, I still remain very connected to my peers at York and other Loran scholars.”



Rebecca Davis, Loran '00. (photo credit: Ann Marie Casey)

She returned to Russia in the summer of 2002 on an internship with Stage Holding Russia (the producers of the first commercial musical in Russia). Two years later, she won the Business Plan Competition at Temple for her proposal to develop a dance company

in Philadelphia. It was an exciting time for Rebecca – she not only won the prestigious annual competition, but also a Fulbright Scholarship, which enabled her to spend 10 months in St. Petersburg immersing herself in the structured and rigorous Russian approach to choreography.

Returning to Philadelphia, she started the Rebecca Davis Dance Company, based on her award-winning business plan. The RDDC launched its first production, *Antigone*, in March 2006, with choreography by Rebecca, original music by a composer she’d met in Russia and numerous dancers she’d worked with in St. Petersburg. In May 2006, the Company moved into its permanent studio and began its pre-professional training program for youth aged 12 through 18. As part of its commitment to opening up dance to as many people as possible, the RDDC offers scholarships to students who wouldn’t otherwise be able to afford the training programs.

“My passion,” says Rebecca, “is constructing new stories around physical movement. I want to make this art form more accessible to more people – and I think a good way of doing this is to combine literature and social issues or historical events with dance. Dance can communicate important ideas, but it needs to be educational, not preachy. I think it’s time for new constructions in dance, and I know that I can achieve this.”



Rebecca leads a pre-professional ballet class at the Rebecca Davis Dance Company’s studio in Philadelphia. (photo credit: James Hamilton)

## About this newsletter

With each year, CMSF’s network of scholars, alumni, volunteers and supporters continues to expand throughout Canada and around the world. Our goal with this newsletter is to inform and inspire the extended CMSF family.

If you have comments on this newsletter or ideas for stories or themes for subsequent issues, please e-mail them to [newsletter@cmsf.ca](mailto:newsletter@cmsf.ca).

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**National selections**

continued from front page

Two Loran mentors, playwright and mathematician John Mighton and human rights lawyer Pearl Eliadis (who also delivered the keynote at Friday's dinner in honour of the first- and fourth-year scholars) spoke to the fourth-year scholars in a panel discussion about the transition from undergraduate studies. Mark Schaan (Loran '97), who works for the federal government as a senior policy analyst, moderated the panel.

In the afternoon, fourth-year scholars presented to first-year scholars on their on-campus and off-campus activities and projects.

We wish the newest class of scholars the best and look forward to helping them as they strive to meet the expectations of the committee members who selected them. Welcome to the family.



Following his talk on the importance of working in both the private and public sectors, Jim Coutts, chair of the Nature Conservancy of Canada and former advisor to two prime ministers, speaks with David Vlemmix, a 2005 Weston Loran Scholar and business student at UWO. (photo credit: Mischa Bartkow, Loran '99)