Dear friends of the Samuel Huntington Award,

Two years ago two young women, Karina Weinstein (2002) and Colleen Kinder (2003) met in Chile and were chatting about their work in Argentina and Cuba respectively, and found out that they were both Samuel Huntington Award winners! Mark Arnoldy (2010), is back from his public service in Nepal and is continuing to work on rural health in that country through an organization started by a doctor in Boston. He has connected with Vivek Murthy (1997), who trained women to be rural health workers in India and is now a doctor at Boston’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital. They discovered that they are both past winners of the SH Award! In each case, these remarkable young people have made connections that are both personal and professional, and they continue to support each other’s work in public service. David Milner (1990) started Funds for a Community’s Future to help inner city college students in Washington D.C. He is now engaged in alternative energy development where he made a connection with Larry Reilly (Treasurer of our Fund) to further his work. Now that our past winners number 51, we have a wonderful network of people who are connected to the Samuel Huntington Fund and it’s a joy to hear of these on-going relationships. Sometimes we set up mentors for current winners so that they can communicate with someone who has ‘been there and done that’ and they have reported how helpful these contacts are.

Changes in the Committee and Other News

Don Goodwin, one of our founding members, has withdrawn from the Committee. Don was Treasurer of our organization from its beginning and a wise voice managing our investments and selecting award winners. His counsel and advice will be missed. We have added Peter Flynn, President – FERC Regulated Businesses at National Grid, and David Milner, former Samuel Huntington Award winner, to the Committee. We welcome them both to a very rewarding experience.

We have just finished reading all this year’s applications from 57 students attending 37 different colleges all over the USA. The word is spreading far and wide and we continue to be humbled by the accomplishments of these young people and their drive to help make our world a better place.

As always, we thank you for your encouragement and support.

Jennifer Huntington
Chair
Reports from 2011 Winners

As described below, last year’s winners are now hard at work creating projects and services in three different neighborhoods around the world.

HIV and AIDS in Tanzania

Cory Rodgers is raising chickens in Tanzania, working with people living with HIV and AIDS. Soon after landing, he made several adjustments to the agriculture part of his proposal: he added a water storage system, consisting of tanks and gutter drains, to provide a continuous water supply for the chickens; included a milling machine for cheaper feed; moved to a more urban location in Manzée incorporating new urban agricultural techniques such as sack gardens for the raising of crops. In addition, he has moved forward with two local HIV/AIDS organizations to provide entrepreneurial training and other support for the participants in his project.

Mentoring in Appalachia

Kelsey Tackett renamed her project “Successful Women and Appalachian Girls or “SWAG” and now has 26 seventh grade girls and sixteen mentors participating in her program of workshops and mentoring. Speakers have included Miss Kentucky, a local pharmacist, social workers, and mentors discussing their careers. Workshops have focused on goal setting, positive communication, gardening, relationships, disaster relief, scrap-booking, time management, team building, and the importance of grades. Although funding cuts for after school transportation have presented problems, Kelsey reports that the workshops and speakers “continue to inspire girls to be their best and to try harder in building positive relationships.” She intends to continue and strengthen the SWAG program next year.

Youth Program in Brazil

Aicha Cisse, moved from Columbia University, to Morro dos Prazeres, one of Rio de Janeiro’s poorest shanty towns, where she is teaching English and organizing a network of English teachers for the future. She reports that she is teaching separate classes to younger and older students, which are meeting two to three times per week. She also provides support for remedial classes and other school activities, and has identified several potential teachers to assume responsibility for the English program in the future.
Reflections from a prior award winner

We often include a letter from a former Award winner to report on the continuing progress of their project and their life. For this issue we have asked Angela Lee Duckworth for a letter. She won a Public Service Award in 1992 for a Summerbridge project in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her Letter follows:

By: Angela Lee Duckworth
Samuel Huntington Award Winner, 1992

It’s been twenty years, but I remember in lucid detail my interview for the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award. I was at the time a senior at Harvard, intent on creating a tuition-free academic enrichment program for low-income elementary school children in Cambridge. My classmate Philip King and I had both spent the prior summer as teachers in a program called Summerbridge in New Orleans and San Francisco, respectively. Previously, we had each devoted ourselves to public service. But neither of us had experienced anything like Summerbridge (now called Breakthrough), which tasks high school and college students with the responsibility of designing and teaching their own classes to younger students. We had a vision of what the program could be but lacked the support to turn this dream into reality. Recognizing that the program would require full-time leadership, I jumped at the opportunity to apply for the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award.

My interview with the Huntington Committee felt more like a conversation than an evaluation. Question after question challenged me to examine the logic of my plans and, just as important, what motivated me to pursue what was by all measures a risky, complicated venture. To the last question, I recall answering by paraphrasing Isaac Bashevis Singer: Two things are important in life: a genuine interest in people and kindness; kindness is everything. In hindsight, I see that the Huntington award itself is an institutional embodiment of the same principle. There is genuine interest in the young people who apply for the award and the many people whom award winners hope to reach. And every project funded, no matter what the particulars, facilitates kindness. Truly, what could be more important?

Now a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, I study how grit, self-control, and other dimensions of character develop in children and, in profound ways, influence their achievement and well-being. My research today is in every way an extension of the passion I had as a twenty-two year old in whom wise and generous supporters took genuine interest and showed inestimable kindness. Thank you.

Angela Lee Duckworth
The Samuel Huntington Public Service Award

Samuel Huntington Award winners honored:

As reported in prior newsletters, many of our Award winners continue to excel with their public service and personally.

This year, Tashi Zangmo (1999), who created a foundation to continue her work for the Buddhist nuns in Bhutan, and Sadiqa Basiri (2009), who started a community college for women in Afghanistan, both received the Mary Lyon Award from Mount Holyoke College. The Mary Lyon Award is given to a young alumna who has been out of the College fifteen years or less, who demonstrates promise or sustained achievement in her life, profession, or community, consistent with the humane values that Mary Lyon exemplified in her life and inspired in others.

Over the last three years, “Let’s Get Ready, founded by Jeannie Lang Rosenthal (2000) to provide SAT test training for inner city youth, has been awarded $400,000 by the Goldman Sachs Foundation and another $500,000 from the Chase Community Giving’s American Giving Award. Sadiqa Basiri (mentioned above) received a Dianne von Furstenberg Award ($50,000) to continue her work at the first women’s community college in Kabul, Afghanistan. Mark Arnoldy’s new organization, Nyaya Health (Mark is executive director), was named a “Standout Organization” by the non-profit evaluator GiveWell for its “unusual transparency” in fund-raising and management. Finally, last year’s award winner, Cory Rodgers (2011), has been named a Rhodes Scholar and will attend Oxford University following his year of public service.

Thank you to our Supporters!

The Samuel Huntington Public Service Award was begun by Sam’s friends in 1989 to honor his memory. Since that time, we have awarded 51 graduating college seniors more than $500,000 to implement public service projects of their own design anywhere in the world.

We express our sincere appreciation to all of you that have supported the fund in the past and ask that you please do keep the Huntington Fund in mind as you consider your charitable giving. Thank you for your consideration! For your convenience, a pre-addressed envelope is enclosed with this newsletter.

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