

# Ford Scholar Alumni News

## Couple's Downsizing Journey Leads to Happy, Healthier Lifestyle

By **Holly Scholz**  
Editor

Have you taken the "100 Thing Challenge"?

Logan Smith grew up on a ranch in Siskiyou County, Calif., learning the value of living within his means and investing in a few quality items that would last.

But his wife, Tammy Strobel, took it to a whole new level with Dave Bruno's "100 Thing Challenge."

"Living in an expensive two bedroom condo in Davis, Calif., with two cars seemed too incongruent with those agrarian principles," explained Smith, a Ford Scholar from the Class of 1996. "So I suggested we try living with less to see how it felt to save a little money."

Strobel ran with the idea, eliminating so much personal stuff that she can fit all of her personal belongings into a backpack!

Strobel, a 32-year-old freelance writer and owner of rowdykittens.com, made national headlines in early August when New York Times reporter Stephanie Rosenbloom googled "simplicity and happiness" and found Strobel's blog.

They've been featured on MSNBC, AOL, NBC's Today Show and Yahoo!

"Who would guess that people are so hungry for stories of happiness through downsizing?" Smith said.

Smith, 31, recently earned his Ph.D. in physiology and is looking for work in medical research or teaching. They live in a sparsely furnished 400-square-foot studio apartment in northwest

Portland, Ore., with their two pet cats.

This "downsizing journey," as they call it, has not only eliminated a lot of clutter from their lives but financial debt and anxieties as well.

"Relief from the stress of daily living was almost exactly what I had imagined retirement felt like in old age," Smith explained.

But the journey hasn't always been easy.

"The cars were the most difficult item to give up," Smith admits. "Our culture has interwoven cars into the fabric of our social interactions."

Now, they hop on their bikes when they commute, and they feel healthier because of it. They have more spare time these days and enjoy bike camping, reading, cycling, picnicking and volunteering.

"I think a minimalist lifestyle fits with The Ford Family Foundation core values by removing distractions and helping us focus more on putting our values into practice," Smith said. "By reducing our expenses and need for material wealth, we have found that we can devote more time and money to our relationships and to our community."



*Tammy Strobel and Logan Smith (FS '96) choose bikes over cars for their simple lifestyle. (Photo by Russ Roca.)*

## FSAA Conference Planned for March 5-6, 2011

By **Michael Meyers**  
FSAA At-Large Board Member,  
2011 FSAA Conference Committee  
Chairperson

The 2011 Ford Scholar Alumni Association Conference will be held Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6, 2011, in Eugene at the Valley River Inn. All Ford Scholar alumni and their families are invited to attend. Invitations to the conference will be sent soon.

Ford Family Foundation board member and former president of the University of Oregon Dave Frohnmayer will be the keynote speaker at the conference. Frohnmayer will speak to alumni about service and leadership – why it matters, what we can do to get involved, and how we balance that with the demands of work, family and friends. Frohnmayer is a passionate, inspiring speaker, and he is really looking forward to addressing the FSAA. We are thrilled to have him as a guest at our conference.

The 2011 conference will provide opportunities for alumni to reconnect with each other, socialize and continue our commitment to service and leadership development. Foundation staff will also be on hand to lend their support and learn about the ongoing development of alumni and the FSAA.

In order to ensure that alumni receive all correspondence related to the conference and the FSAA, please go to the scholarship website, [www.MyFordInfo.org](http://www.MyFordInfo.org), and update your profile. Once you log on, click on "My Profile", then click the icon of the pad and pencil to the left of your name to update your contact information.

Questions or comments about the conference can be sent to [events@fordscholaralumni.com](mailto:events@fordscholaralumni.com). We hope you to see you there!

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Smith.

## A Note from the President

**By Andrea Smith**  
FSAA President

It hardly seems like only six months since our last newsletter. So much has happened in that time – some happy news and some sad, some exciting and some unexpected. More so than previous newsletters, this one seems to be an especially poignant story of life. People get married, babies are born. Some are finishing school, while others are making career decisions. There is a death in the family, and the circle continues...

I hope each person reading this will take a moment to reflect on the stories contained herein. We are all given a certain amount of time on this earth, and my wish

is that we would all use that time wisely. Encourage one another, look for possibilities, anticipate the best, and give of yourself. Maintain your integrity, be trustworthy and respectable, not just to others, but trust and respect yourself, too.

Note: A couple of people read this and asked if my doctor had just given me bad news. It's nothing like that, to the best of my knowledge at least. I'm just being introspective. Frankly, trying to give sage advice makes me feel old and just a little self-conscious, but I'm forging ahead anyway. I hope something in my measly little words will be meaningful to someone. I really do mean them from my heart. ☺

## FSAA Adds Seat to Break Election Tie

**By Eric Collins**  
FSAA Vice President

There were no hanging chads or drawn-out legal battles, but that didn't mean there wasn't drama surrounding the 2010 election of the Ford Scholar Alumni Association Board of Directors.

While President Andrea Smith and Secretary Marija Kovacevic Hobbs ran unopposed for their second terms and cruised to victory, the race for four at-large member spots was full of twists and turns.

The election was held online via electronic voting between March 5 and March 15. (If you did not receive notice of the election, the FSAA does not have your current e-mail address in its database. Please update your contact information on [www.MyFordInfo.org](http://www.MyFordInfo.org) to ensure you will learn of future elections.)

Five Ford Scholars were vying for four open at-large positions. After the votes from the 114 alumni who cast their ballots were counted, two candidates had tied for the

fourth at-large slot.

The FSAA has never dealt with a tie in a board election before, and so the board discussed and debated the options. Rather than holding a run-off election, the board decided to add an at-large member position. One justification was that the FSAA membership continues to grow annually, and the board should expand when necessary to ensure adequate representation. This move brings the number of at-large positions on the board to eight.

The newly elected members of the board are as follows:

**President:** Andrea Smith  
(Class of 1994)

**Secretary:** Marija Kovacevic Hobbs  
(Class of 1994)

**At-large members:** Cari Bauman  
(Class of 2002), Suleima Cortez  
(Class of 2005), Ellyn Canfield  
Nealon (Class of 2003), Ryan  
Tharp (Class of 2003), Olivia  
Yeung (Class of 2007)

Their terms run from September 2010 to September 2014.

## FSAA Fundraiser – Update

By **Andrea Smith**  
FSAA President

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who participated in our first fundraising campaign. Not only does your financial gift support the mission of the Ford Scholar Alumni Association, but each one is like a “vote of confidence” for our budding nonprofit organization. As we continue to grow, we hope to give you many more reasons to be a proud member of the FSAA.

Of course, if you haven’t made your contribution yet, I’m sure you’ll be shocked to know it’s not too late! 😊

Here are a few good reasons to help out now:

Donations to the FSAA are **tax-deductible**.

The FSAA is partnering with the Ford Institute for Community Building to provide both financial assistance and **volunteer resources** to support projects chosen by members of the Institute’s leadership classes. Past projects include: Park, playground and walking path renewal; food bank expansion; and creation of recycling centers and community gardens.

Your gift will help **develop the Ford Scholar Alumni community**.

Checks payable to the FSAA can be mailed to:  
The Ford Family Foundation  
Ford Scholar Alumni Association  
440 E. Broadway, Suite 200  
Eugene, OR 97401

To donate through PayPal, please visit us online: [www.ford-scholaralumni.com](http://www.ford-scholaralumni.com)

The FSAA invites you to **stay involved, stay connected and be a Scholar who gives back!**



The Scholarship Office staff serenaded Barb with their own silly version of Barb’s retirement song put to the tune of “Do Wah Diddy Diddy Dum Diddy Do.” From left: Tricia Tate, Ashley Stripling, Devon Dunkle, Sam Rennick, Dianne Olson and Dee Row.

## Counselor Barb Griesel Begins Her Retirement Journey

By **Holly Scholz**  
Editor

After 12 years with The Ford Family Foundation, Barb Griesel, our Scholarship Programs Counselor, retired at the end of May.

“It’s been an amazing journey,” Barb said at her retirement party on the evening of Thursday, May 27.

About 75 colleagues, co-workers, friends and family gathered at the Oregon Electric Station in Eugene to wish her “bon voyage.”

Barb’s husband of 38 years opened the evening with a little history of their early days.

“We met when we were 14 years old at the Josephine County Fair in Grants Pass,” Doug Griesel remembered. They dated on and off for eight years. “During the years we weren’t dating, she always found a way to counsel me – some in academics but mostly socially!”

Counseling seems to have come naturally to Barb. She worked as a high school counselor before joining the Oregon Student Assistance Commission in March 1998 as a counselor with the Foundation.

“Everything she did was for youth and for kids,” her husband said. “She truly found her calling here.”

Doug tearfully concluded by dedicating the song “Wind Beneath My Wings,” sung by their daughter-in-law, to his wife.

Others in the gathering took to the mic, expressing their thanks to Barb.

“She has empathy for others,” Foundation President Norm Smith said, adding that she always has a smile and is sincere, warm and always there for people.

“Barb has been the heart of the scholarship program,” said Scholarship Awards Coordinator Dee Row, who has worked with Barb for many years. “Thanks for the solid rock foundation.”



# Milestones

## Class of 1995

### **Kate James**

Kate, her husband, Willie, and their daughter, Trinity, recently celebrated a new location for their family pharmacy, Broadway Apothecary. For the past four years, they have owned the Eugene pharmacy, specializing in making customized prescriptions for adults, children, and veterinary needs.  
<http://www.broadwayapothecary.com>

### **Ann Strahm**

Ann is the contributing author to the number one marriage and family text in the United States, *Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society*. She revised half of the book for the upcoming 11th Edition. (Lamanna, Mary Ann and Agnes Riedmann, with Ann Strahm. 2011. *Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society 11th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage.)

### **Joel Thompson**

Joel recently celebrated his 10th anniversary as a prosecuting attorney and will begin a new job in Helena, Mont., as an assistant attorney general in the Prosecution Services Bureau.

## Class of 1996

### **Kristin (Bailey-Chace) Dodge**

Kristin and Kelly Dodge welcomed a baby boy, Trevor Kieran Dodge, on June 24.

### **Donegal Fergus**

Donegal was recently hired as an assistant baseball coach at Seattle University. He and his wife recently welcomed their second child, Finnegan Joy.

### **Melanie Jones**

Melanie Jones received her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California, Davis in 2009. She was awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Notre Dame for 2010-2011.

### **Charity (Conger) Staudenraus**

Charity married John Staudenraus on June 26 at their church, St. Francis of Assisi, in Bend, Ore. Following their honeymoon in Ireland, they moved to the Portland area. Charity started a new position as an eighth grade science teacher at North Marion Middle School in Aurora, Ore.

## Class of 1997

### **Lisa (Taylor) Decker**

Lisa had her first child, a son, on April 6. George Patrick Decker was 8 pounds, 4 ounces and 22 inches long.

### **Jessica (Vance) Stanley**

Jessica and her husband are expecting a baby boy in October. He likely has a lung condition, congenital cystic adenomatoid malformation (CCAM). In most cases the outcome of a fetus with CCAM is very good, so the Stanley's are optimistic that it won't be a major health issue for their newborn son.

## Class of 1998

### **Javier Ayala**

Javier and his wife, Mitzi Ayala (FS 2000), now have two sons. Diego is 3 and Cruz is 1 ½ years old.

### **Amanda (Spear) Sparks**

Amanda and her husband welcomed healthy twin boys, Jon and Eli, this January.

### **Amanda (Rogers) Thorpe**

Amanda graduated from the University of Oregon School of Law in 2006 and began to practice at a Grants Pass law firm where she had worked as a law clerk. She had a daughter in 2008 and just became a partner at Hughes, Rote, Brouhard, & Thorpe, LLP in January. She maintains a general practice with an emphasis on litigation and family law.

## Class of 1999

### **Timisha Wilson**

Timisha recently became a member of the board of directors for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503, representing West Portland employees. She also continues to work towards her master's in social work at Portland State University.

## Class of 2000

### **Chad Dodds Colwell**

Chad graduated from Duke University in May with a master's in humanities and certificate of international development

### **Jennifer (Bell) O'Toole**

Jennifer earned a Master of Education in leadership and administration from Jones International University in December 2009.

### **Krista Schuchard**

In May, Krista received her J.D. from the University of Oregon School of Law.

## Class of 2001

### **Jenevieve Crawford**

In June, Jenevieve received her doctorate in veterinary medicine from University of California, Davis. She's in a small animal internship at a specialty and emergency practice in San Diego with rotations through internal medicine, surgery, cardiology, exotics and emergency.

### **Mike Martell**

Mike recently finished his Ph.D. in economics from American University.

## Class of 2002

### **Joy Agner**

After graduating from Pacific University, Joy spent a year on a Fulbright fellowship in Guatemala working with returned refugees. Her research opened her eyes to the human rights issues related to development projects and natural resource extraction. Continuing this interest, Joy co-led summer service trips to Ghana for two years, exploring community development and problems related to gold mining. In the winter, she worked in Alaska at a college preparatory high school for Native Alaskans. Currently, Joy is pursuing a master's degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in occupational therapy.

### **Kari Aleshire**

Kari graduated from Seattle University in June with an educational specialist degree in school psychology and a master's degree in school counseling. She is now working as a school psychologist at the elementary level in South Kitsap School District in Washington state.

### **Lindsay Horgan**

In June, Lindsay graduated from New York University with a master's in teaching Spanish and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). She teaches Spanish and English as a Second Language at a high school in Bronx, N.Y.

### **Mando Navarro**

Mando accepted a teaching position in Madrid, Spain, after being laid off as an English teacher in Livermore, Calif., due to state budget woes.

## Class of 2003

### **David Bednar**

In May, David received a Master of Science in entomology from North Carolina State University. His research involved predation of termites by an invasive ant species and the resultant competition with a native ant species. He immediately started his Ph.D. in forest entomology, studying the mechanisms of host plant resistance in Fraser fir (Christmas trees) to the balsam woolly adelgid.

### **Jennifer (Lee) Garrett**

Jennifer graduated from the University of Oregon with a Bachelor of Arts Magna Cum Laude in history, political science and religious studies. She married her high school sweetheart, adopted a dog, and started graduate school at the University of British

## Milestones

Columbia in Vancouver, B.C., pursuing a master's in library and information studies. Jennifer hopes to return to Oregon as an academic librarian and give back to her hometown community by enriching the education and lives of its blossoming students.

### Class of 2004

#### **Toni Cravens**

In May 2009, Toni graduated from California State University, Sacramento with a master's degree in mathematics. She promptly moved to Hawaii and lives on the Kona side of the Big Island. She teaches at West Hawaii Community College and recently became an official faculty member.

#### **Ivo Dimitrov**

Ivo received a Fulbright Award to the European Union, allowing him to study historical reconciliation in Barcelona, Spain, as he finishes his master's in European governance through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

#### **Crystal Hess**

In May, Crystal and Matthew Rogers became engaged. They plan for a July 2011 wedding after a trip to Hawaii this November.

#### **Jesús Ramírez**

Jesús recently graduated from Oregon State University with a Bachelor of Science in human development and family sciences. He's finishing an internship with the OSU-SMILE

program through the Professional Managerial Internship in State Employment (PROMISE) Program at Oregon State. After this internship, he will take a year off from school to work and apply for graduate school at Seattle University, Portland State University and Azusa Pacific University.

### Class of 2006

#### **Timothy Chance**

In August, Timothy spent two weeks in Guatemala and Belize. He hiked through the jungle in Tical and got to see many of the ancient Mayan pyramids. He also took a few days of intensive Spanish classes while staying with a host family in San Pedro. In Belize, he visited the island of Caye Calker. He's now working as a volunteer coach for junior varsity and varsity football at Hood River Valley High School.

#### **Robert Russell**

In the spring, Robert attained a bachelor's degree in psychology from Portland State University. Shortly thereafter, he returned to Thailand to teach English at a secondary school in Central Thailand. He hopes to begin graduate studies in the fall of 2011 to begin work on a Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. He would like to someday be part of a non-governmental organization committed to helping refugee populations in the United States acclimate culturally and linguistically to their new home.

## ASPIRE Volunteer Opportunities

**By Christina McClelland**  
**Mentoring Committee Co-chair**

Interested in giving back to the community and like working with youth?

Consider mentoring a current high school student by participating in the ASPIRE program (**A**ccess to **S**tudent assistance **P**rograms **I**n **R**each of **E**veryone).

There are volunteer opportunities available to e-mentor a current student, with a focus on how to be successful and get to college. ASPIRE provides each volunteer with a two-hour initial training and program curriculum to follow throughout the school year. The average weekly commitment is about 15 minutes via e-mail for one academic year.

Please contact  
alyse.b.stone@state.or.us for more information and/or check out the ASPIRE website at [www.AspireOregon.org](http://www.AspireOregon.org).

## Scholarship Office Welcomes New Advisor

**By Holly Scholz**  
**Editor**

Shamra Clark joined The Ford Family Foundation Scholarship Office in Eugene when she began as scholarship advisor on July 7, following Barb Griesel's retirement at the end of May.

"She's an advocate for Scholars," Director of Scholarship Programs Sam Rennick explained. "She helps students make smooth transitions to college, addresses academic concerns, and provides overall guidance and support."

Alumni in transition may benefit from a visit with Clark. She can advise alumni on graduate school options and provide career guidance.

"Shamra has jumped in with both feet, from connecting with Scholars and families at the summer conferences to making presentations at various scholarship events," Rennick said.

Clark earned a bachelor's degree in

English with an emphasis on secondary education from the University of Detroit Mercy in May 2003. She earned her master's degree in community counseling at Oakland University in Michigan in May 2008.

Clark worked as assistant director of admissions at Marygrove College in Michigan before moving to Oregon two years ago to take a job as a financial aid counselor in the University of Oregon Financial Aid Office. She worked with low-income, high-achieving students at the UO.

Now, Clark is part of the Ford Family.

"It's the perfect job for me," she said. "I really wanted to reach out to the ones who needed a helping hand."

Rennick said that Clark's counseling background and financial aid expertise make her the perfect fit for her scholarship advisor role.

Although her family is elsewhere, she says her work "family" keeps grow-



*Scholarship Advisor Shamra Clark*

ing. Clark, who is 30, sings with the Eugene Opera and occasionally acts in plays and training videos.

But the best thing about moving to Oregon, Clark says: "I love that I relearned to ride my bike. I was 12 years old when I last rode a bike!" She often rides to work, and she enjoys trying organic and vegetarian foods. "I just feel healthier all around."

## Tree Planted in Anne Leavitt's Memory

Anne Leavitt, the former director of scholarship programs, passed away from cancer on April 11, 2010, at age 66.

Leavitt, a long-time dear friend of The Ford Family Foundation, embraced lifelong education and scholarship. She would take time away from her busy schedule at the University of Oregon to serve as an interviewer for the Ford Opportunity Program since it was established in 1996.

After Director of Scholarship Programs Bart Howard retired in 2005, the Foundation was fortunate to have Leavitt join its staff, where she enjoyed her relationship with scholarship recipients and colleagues.

Leavitt received her Ph.D. and Master of Science from the



Brad Leavitt plants a tree in honor of his late wife, Anne Leavitt, as Donna Wolford and Tom Gallagher from the Roseburg office look on.

University of Oregon and her Bachelor of Arts from Smith College in Massachusetts.

She worked for McKenzie High School in Blue River as a career and college planning counselor for eight years. Her children attended McKenzie schools, and she loved rural communities.

In 1984, Leavitt took a position at the University of Oregon overseeing student affairs and became the dean of students in 1999. She became vice president of student affairs in 2001 and filled that role until leaving the university in June 2005 to join the Foundation. She worked as director for three years until retiring in the spring of 2008. Sam Rennick became the director the following fall.

Leavitt's husband, Brad Leavitt, had the honor of helping plant a dogwood tree in her memory outside of the Foundation office in Roseburg. "We thought it was an appropriate way to remember her," Rennick said.

Leavitt's warmth, energy and intelligence will be greatly missed.

## Thank you, Mentors!

By **Christina McClelland**  
Mentoring Committee Co-chair

A special thank you to all 112 alumni who have participated in the mentoring program over the past two school years!

Your willingness to serve as a resource for current Ford Scholar students is greatly appreciated. As our program continues to expand, we look forward to making even more meaningful connections within the Ford Scholar community.

We still need mentors for this current school year! Please consider mentoring a new Ford Scholar and sign up today by taking our online survey at [http://www.fordscholaralumni.com/mentoring/program\\_survey.html](http://www.fordscholaralumni.com/mentoring/program_survey.html)

Ford Scholars and alumni are also utilizing Facebook and LinkedIn. Look for those groups to stay even more connected.

## FSAA Mentors 2008-2010

Aimee Reynolds	Cari Bauman *	Jared Tesch +	Lynnette Leonard	Sara Ekelund Higgins *
Alan Hafner	Carly Bodle+	Jenessa MacDonald *	Margaret Bowyer	Sarah Francois-Bouton *
Alizum Eberstein * +	Celeste Miller +	Jenevieve Crawford	Marija Kovacevic Hobbs	Sean Babcock *
Amanda Blake +	Chandra Varney	Jennifer O'Toole * +	Matt Benjamin	Shane Adamson
Amy Lewandowski	Christina McClelland *	Jennifer Zeigler *	Michael Clark *	Shannon Mack +
Andrew Barrow +	Colleen Bauer	Jenny Sumner	Michael Meyers *	Shaun Robinson
Angela Williams +	Daphne Seaver	Jeremy Jones	Michael Nelson +	SreyRam Kuy * +
Anna Seitz	David Carne * +	Jeremy Myrland +	Michelle Boss Barba	Stacey Pelster *
Anna Tester * +	Dean Defrees	Jeremy Riel	Mike Martell	Stacie Pickler
Annah Geist	Dharma Tamm	Jeri Greenberg *	Miriam Cervantes-Valdez *	Stephanie Schulz * +
Annika Mosier	DJ Burrows +	Jessica Robins +	Nancy Nelson Walker *	Stephen Cruise
Anthonette Guy +	Donegal Fergus +	Jessyca Banks	Nathan McLaughlin +	Steven Cheung
April George	Eric Krause +	Jill Brown +	Nicole Duncan	Tammy Jabin +
Ashley Page +	Eric Mortinson	Kara Ansotegui	Nicole Nicklow	Ted Hilton Walker
Ashley-Rose Freeman +	Erica Workman	Katherine Schwinler +	Nina Winegar-Thurston	Theresa Logan * +
Benjamin Matts +	Erin Bailey * +	Kelsey Richmond	Patricia Cortez	Tyler Norby * +
Brennan Sheehy	Erin Dougherty *	Kevin Richards +	Phoebe Skinner *	Vicki Pronovost
Brett Cattani	Erin Rumer	Kris Newport	Rachel Prickett	Vicky Zancanella (Waddell) *
Brian Eberhardt	Geoff Winkler +	Lanie Nguyen +	Rebecca Duby +	Warren Manning
Brian Gustafson +	Graciela Gaona	Lawrence Gillespie Jr.	Rochelle Warner	Wayne Bund
Bright Nichols-Stock +	Hannah Dorr +	Leana Dickerson	Ryan Farnsworth +	
Bryan Schlieff	Heather Pachall	Lisa Decker	Sam Allen	
Buzzy Nielsen	Helen Oppenheimer	Logan Smith	Sara Brownell	

\* denotes mentored both years  
+ denotes mentored two Scholars per year



# Balancing Parenthood and Work Proves Worth Beyond Measure

**By Stacey (Martell) Pelster**  
Class of 2002

I cannot count the times I have reflected on my past college experience and thanked The Ford Family Foundation for their generosity in my life.

Because of the scholarship as well as hard work and determination during my time in college, I actually came out ahead of the game by being completely debt free! I was propelled into married life a month after graduating from Pacific University in 2006 and became pregnant right away with my first daughter.

I had planned to enter graduate school to pursue my master's in Spanish and teach basic language classes at the university (through a graduate assistantship while earning my degree), but as luck would have it, being pregnant and going to school did not agree with me! Through the short time I was there, however, I learned that what I really wanted to do was teach. So, with the Ford Scholarship helping to pay for my fifth-year tuition, I went back to school and in 2008 received my master's in teaching Spanish for middle and high school students.

My husband and I were pretty well set for being such a young couple. With him working as a skillful electrician, and me teaching, we thankfully have not had to worry as much about finances.

For the past two years, I worked as a substitute teacher so I could raise our daughters and teach at the same time. Our beautiful, smart little girls are such loving kids.

Additionally, my husband, Ben, and I became foster parents, and have made a home for a number of children and teens since we began



*Stacey Pelster, Class of 2002*

almost two years ago. Our house is definitely a bustling center of activity!

As most of the country experienced, the recession hit us for a while, and we had to tighten our belts while Ben was out of work for a good month, but once he returned to work, we got off again on the right foot. About that time I received a long-term substitute position at Glencoe High School in Hillsboro, Ore., teaching two upper-level Spanish classes. Funny enough, I am an alumna of Glencoe, so it was wonderful to be teaching at the school I attended. I finished the school year with an offer of a job teaching my own classes the next year. What a wonderful surprise to be asked to come back and teach on a regular basis!

I teach at Glencoe and have a lot of enthusiasm for my profession. I enjoy seeing young people learn and achieve success, and knowing I am a part of the process that helped them get to that point.

It has taken a while to get my career off and running, but I can say that this journey has only been possible thanks to The Ford Family Foundation and its generosity!

# Volunteering with Girl Scouts Leads to Dream Career

**By Cassi Ross**  
Class of 2004

I want to extend my warm gratitude for the possibilities Ford has provided me in my life path. I grew up in a very low-income family in a small town in eastern Oregon. Despite adversity, Ford saw my drive and passion for learning! I am the first and only person in my entire family to have graduated from college.

During college, I volunteered for Girl Scouts Beyond Bars (GSBB) and fell in love with its mission, values and results. The program's purpose is to reconnect incarcerated women with their young family members.

After graduating from Willamette University, I began working for the Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington, recruiting, retaining, managing and training adult volunteers. After a year working with the Girl Scouts, I was promoted to the position of program coordinator for GSBB, where I coordinate volunteers. I provide them with concrete work history grounded in social justice, which focuses on the eradication of classism, racism and sexism. In addition, I meet, guide and support the incarcerated women to reduce recidivism. I also help promote healthy life decisions for youth family members, including attending college (despite their low-income status).

This was and is my dream position, and I would have never thought it possible. Ford encouraged us to volunteer and advocate. I never could have imagined the passion and happiness that an inspirational career could bring to the value of my life. THANK YOU! And to those still searching – go forth with hope and conviction defined by your moral being and before you know it, your destiny within this world will produce itself.

## Changes Planned for Gerald Bruce Award

By *Sam Rennick*  
Director of Scholarship Programs

Gerry Bruce was a special individual who achieved much and made a significant difference in the lives of others.

A friend of Kenneth Ford's, Bruce was an original member of The Ford Family Foundation Board of Directors. He was an entrepreneur, a risk taker, and an involved citizen who exemplified the Foundation's core values of integrity, stewardship, respect, independence and community.

Shortly after his death in 2002, the Gerald E. Bruce Community Service Award was created to honor his memory and recognize those exceptional alumni with an array of accomplishments and life experiences that reflect Bruce's values.

Only a handful of nominations for this prestigious award were received in 2009 and 2010. Concerned that the accomplishments of those nominated did not meet the threshold necessary to receive the award, the selection committee has not selected a recipient in the past two years.

The nomination process is being revised for 2011 to better identify outstanding individuals for consideration and, hopefully, increase the number of candidates for the award. The selection committee, working in partnership with the FSAA, hopes to finalize these changes in the next few months.

Please be thinking about your fellow Ford Scholar classmates who are making a difference in their communities and the world. We want to honor them, as well as Gerry Bruce.

## Keeping Connected

Learn more about the Ford Scholar Alumni Association online by visiting <http://www.fordscholaralumni.com>.

**Update your contact information** by logging in to <https://www.MyFordInfo.org>, or by contacting the Scholarship Office directly:

The Ford Family Foundation Scholarship Office  
440 East Broadway, Suite 200, Eugene, OR 97401  
Call toll free: (877) 864-2872  
In Eugene: 541-485-6211  
E-mail: [fordscholarships@tfff.org](mailto:fordscholarships@tfff.org)

### Find us on Facebook!

- **Ford Family Foundation Scholarship Recipients** – Student Group/Community Group, 104 members. Privacy type: Open - All content is public. Administrator is Angela Leach (creator). This group is for all recipients of any scholarship from The Ford Family Foundation. Ford ReStart, Ford Opportunity, Ford Scholars, and Sons & Daughters are all welcome. (Search "Ford Recipients")
- **Ford Scholars** – Organizations/Community Organizations, 378 members. Privacy type: Closed - Limited public content. Members can see all content. This group is open to current Ford Scholars and alumni who have completed the program. (Search "Ford Scholars")

