



## **Vermont student wins full college scholarship; one of five in nation chosen for honors**

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Philadelphia (July 21, 2009) – Lydia Ducharme, a student at the Hazen Union High School in Hardwick, Vermont, is one of five students in the nation who will receive full college scholarships from the Leonore Annenberg College Scholarship Fund. The value of the scholarship will depend on the cost of the student's college.

Other students chosen to receive the awards live in New York City, Philadelphia, Houston, and Boston. The awards were made in the students' junior year to allow them to select a college based on their aspirations and abilities, not finances. The all-expense scholarships cover tuition and fees, room and board, books, a laptop, as well as a modest stipend.

Now in its second year, the college scholarship program is part of the Leonore Annenberg Scholarship and School Funds, a three-pronged philanthropic initiative that targets young people who possess the potential to become the cultural and community leaders of the next generation. The awards focus on exceptional young artists, successful high school juniors who have faced serious challenges, and public elementary schools lacking essential resources for their students.

The program reflects the late Leonore Annenberg's lifelong commitment to public service, education and the arts, and her unparalleled efforts to improve the lives of the nation's youth.

"These awards provide opportunities for artistic growth and educational advancement to beneficiaries whose contributions will strengthen American cultural life and enrich our democracy. Their conduct and body of work will serve as a constant reminder of Leonore Annenberg's generosity and high standards," said Gail Levin, director of the program.

Despite having had few advantages, Ms. Ducharme has excelled in every way. A natural leader, she is Student Council President, plays three varsity-level sports, sings in a local choir, plays in the band,

volunteers in the school and community, and works part-time to help with family expenses and save money for her education, all while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average in some of the most challenging courses offered by her school. In addition to highlighting her outstanding academic, service, and leadership accomplishments – and her indefatigable work ethic – Lydia’s teachers also highlight her strength of character, caring toward others, and integrity in dealing with difficult situations.

Lydia credits her parents with helping her learn about “what a person had to do to make it in life”: after their separation, her father started his own business and built a house, and her mother pursued two careers and runs a household. Seeing her parents “work so hard for what they had in life, and even more so for what I had in life,” she wrote, made her want to make the most out of herself.

Students who were selected as Leonore Annenberg College Scholarship recipients last year, 2008, will be attending Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago and Tufts University this fall.

Visit [www.LeonoreAnnenbergScholarships.org](http://www.LeonoreAnnenbergScholarships.org) for more information.

#### About the Benefactor

*Leonore Annenberg* (1918-2009) served as U.S. Chief of Protocol during the first term of the administration of Ronald Reagan, a position that carries the rank of ambassador. She spent most of her life working toward the enhancement of cultural appreciation among American citizens. As chairman and president of the Annenberg Foundation, she also supported a wide range of institutions and organizations in the areas of education, health and civics.

She was a trustee and a member of the Acquisitions Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1991, she and her husband Walter H. Annenberg, a former Ambassador to the Court of St. James’s, donated their collection of more than 50 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, watercolors and drawings to the museum. The collection is acknowledged as one of the most distinguished private collections of its kind. She was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a member of the Trustee’s Council of the National Gallery of Art, and one of the managing directors of the Metropolitan Opera, to which she provided a partial endowment to continue its international radio broadcasts. She was a long-time trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, underwriting a new building for the Annenberg Public Policy Center and establishing the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics. She was also a member of the American Philosophical Society, the country’s first learned society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Mrs. Annenberg graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She received the National Medal of Arts from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy and the United Nations Association Global Leadership Award. Mrs. Annenberg was awarded honorary degrees from Brown University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Southern California, Brandeis University, and other institutions.