Columbia College Boasts Five Fellowship and Scholarship Winners This Spring

BY JASON HOLLANDER

Columbia College boasts five fellowship and scholarship winners this spring, far this spring whose impressive grades are matched by dynamic efforts in the classroom and beyond. The recipients have: interned in Hillary Clinton’s senatorial office; worked in a public pediatric HIV clinic; helped develop a hydrogenation catalyst to benefit the current generation of students.

Lavinia Lorch, assistant dean in the Scholarships and Fellowships Office, explained the process of applying for these awards can be almost as beneficial as winning. “They have a clear vision and be able to articulate that vision about where they want to go academically in life,” says Lorch. “It’s an opportunity to think about who they are. It’s a chance to shape the course of their lives.”

This spring’s winners include: Cyryn Habib, CC’03, of Belleveue, Wa., and Robbie Majzner, CC’03, of Morris Plains, N.J., have been awarded Truman Fellowships by the Harry S. Truman Foundation. The prize, offered to those who display outstanding leadership potential and who plan careers in government or public service, grants students $30,000 individually to pursue the last year of college and then up to three years of graduate school.

Habib is an English major also concentrating in computer science. A native of the Middle Eastern and Asian languages and cultures. Besides working as an intern in the Home office of Sen. Hillary Clinton, he has tutored peers on campus and is currently spearheading an effort to establish the student group Columbians Organized for Dis- ability Advocacy (CODA). The organization, which is in the process of gaining official recog- nition from the student council, will help disabled students on campus liaise more easily with departments like housing and health services.

Majzner, a pre-med major with a concentration in computer science, has volunteered as a HIV test counselor at Columbia, providing students with counsel- ing on risk reduction and sexual health. He also worked in a pub- lic pediatric HIV clinic at Belleveue Hospital last year where he found inspiration in the dedica- tion of the doctors around him, deciding public service “would be a good example to follow.”

Both recipients also have a concentration in computer sci- ence and medicine. Majzner is an avid tennis player and plans to pursue a career as a health care professional. Habib is also a tennis player and plans to pursue a career in the law. He says Barandes, a double major in math and physics, says he practi- cally grew up at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, being inspired to study the stars by the knowledge available in the astronomy halls of the Upper West Side institution. Starting as a Museum volunteer in 10th grade, he eventually worked on a project there that included sifting through lists of data to obtain information on objects in the Milky Way. The results were then applied to the creation of dig- ital 3-D computer models.

An actor since age 7, Barandes has appeared in a Yale student film and starred in a network television sit-com pilot a few years ago. Barandes, who now thinks of acting as “a good way to unwind,” is planning to study physics in gradua- te school, hop- ing to help unrav- el mysteries about the current evolu- tion of the uni- verse and what the future holds for it.

His fascination with math and science was “born out of experi- ences as a young child when his father would sit him down at the kitchen table and sketch out examples of the Pythagorean Theorem, concepts of trigonome- try and logarithms.” That sparked a curiosity I’ve never forgotten,” says Barandes.

Sharon, a biology major, has performed research at various centers including the National Institutes of Health in Maryland and currently interns part-time uptown in Columbia’s pharmacology department.

From left: Victoria Sharon, CC’03, Jacob Barandes, CC’04, and Mary Rozenman, CC’03 were all award- ed prestigious scholarships this spring.

She recently was a primary member of a research team that published a recent research on “Blood,” from a study on the characteristics of blood filtration among the sickle-cell trait. The work required her to analyze the blood extensively, paying careful attention to methods of storage and collecting it. Hoping to go to medical school and work in the medical research because of the “immedi- ate effects” it can produce. Sharon currently interned in a hospital with a focus on diabetes research.

Mary Rozenman, CC’03, of Great Falls, Va., has recently received both the Udall Founda- tion Fellowship, which includes a $5,000 academic grant and a scholar’s trip to Arizona, and the Pfizer Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which also provides $5,000 for research and a trip to a Pfizer facility. The Udall is a fellowship for students whose work has been influenced by the legacy and concerns of Morris K. Udall. The Pfizer fellowship is granted by Pfizer Global Research and Devel- opment.

A double major in biochemistry and Russian literature, Rozenman plans to write her thesis as a sopho- more on imagery and historical memory in Dostoevsky’s nov- els. She then turned her attention to chemistry, recently working with University Professor Ronald Breslow on the development of a water-solu- ble hydrogenation catalyst which may allow for chemical reactions normally carried out in toxic and hazardous organic solvents to be performed in water.

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Dan Rather for six years prior to her current assignment, and her work has taken her to 15 coun- tries in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. She has won numerous Emmy and other awards, including the Black Career Women Lifetime Achievement Award.

Presenters of the 2002 awards will be: Joel Conarroe, president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; Robert Decherd, chairman, president and CEO of A.H. Belo Corpora- tion; Karen Elliott House, presi- dent of the International Group of Pioneers, Inc.; Charles Osgood, anchor, “CBS News Sunday Morning” and “60 Minutes.”

Four prominent alumni of the Graduate School of Journalism received Columbia’s highest alumni honor on Friday, April 26, during the Journalism Alumni Association’s spring meeting.

Awarded annually for journal- istic excellence, a single out- standing journalistic accom- plishment and/or a contribution to journalism education, the 2002 Columbia Journalism Alumni Awards were presented in the Faculty Room of Low Library.


Gussow has written as a critic and essayist about the theater for more than 40 years. He is the author of seven books, including the biography "Edward Albee: A Singular Journey" (1999) and works based on his extensive interviews with major figures of the last decades with the playwrights Arthur Miller, Samuel Beckett, Tom Stoppard and Harold Pinter. His first book was “Don’t Say Yes Until I Finish Talking: A Biogra- phy of Farrar F. Zemack” (1971).

Kempe has spent almost his entire career abroad. He covered the rise of Solidarity in Poland, the ascent and fall of Mikhail Gorb-achev in Russia, wars in Afghanistan and Lebanon, the invasion of Panama, the reunification of Germany and the collapse of Soviet communism. He joined the New York Times in 1981 after two years at “Newsweek.” He is the author of three books, includ- ing “FALO, A Personal Search for the New Germany” (1999).

Week-Eckert has worked in tele- vision since graduating from Columbia. She was a producer of domestic and foreign news for The CBS Evening News with

Four Media Professionals Honored With Columbia’s Highest Journalism Alumni Award

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Pederson has overall responsi- bility for the opinion pages, super- vising the staff and content of the editorial, letters and Viewpoints pages. She joined the “Morning News” in 1973 and took charge of the editorial pages in 1986. She was named vice president in 1988. Pederson is a member of the Pulitzer Prize Board and is the co-author with Lee Smith of the book “What’s Next? Women Redefining Their Dreams in the Marketplace of Life” (2001).

Pool-Eckert has worked in tele- vision since graduating from Columbia. She was a producer of domestic and foreign news for The CBS Evening News with