



Rogue Community College

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **RCC students win Soroptimist award**

Rogue Community College students comprise eight of 10 students receiving Women's Opportunity Awards from Rogue Valley Soroptimist clubs.

More than \$12,000 will be awarded to heads of household who are working on educational programs at RCC and Southern Oregon University. The following are winners from Rogue Community College:

- Sandra M. Lawyer of Medford is the Soroptimist International (SI) of Ashland Club's first-place winner. She will receive \$2,000. The mother of five children and currently employed as a licensed practical nurse, she is working toward an Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer degree (AA/OT) with an emphasis in registered nursing.
- The Ashland club's second-place winner is Jessica Smithson, who is working toward an AA/OT in nursing. Jessica hopes to earn a Bachelor of Science degree to become a registered neonatal nurse. She has a 3-year-old daughter and lives in Grants Pass. She will be awarded \$1,500.
- Marie A. Hogan is the SI Medford club's first-place winner and will receive \$1,000. She is pursuing an Associate of Science degree and plans to transfer to SOU and major in psychology. She hopes to get a master's in social work and pursue a career as a personal counselor. She is a single mom of two teenagers and lives in Grants Pass.
- SI Medford's second-place winner is Amy Marie Ruiz, who is working on an AA/OT. She wants to become a special education teacher and plans to attend SOU. She is a single mom with a young son and will receive a \$500 award.
- The first-place winner for SI Rogue Valley Sunrise Club is Crystal L. Eddlemon, who lives in Medford. She will be awarded \$2,000. Crystal is completing her prerequisites toward a bachelor's degree in human services. A single mom with two children, she hopes to be an advocate for women in domestic violence and alcohol abusive situations.

**(more)**

- Rebecca J. Madden is the SI Rogue Valley Sunrise club's second-place award winner and will receive \$1,000. She is working on both a juvenile corrections certificate, which she will receive in June, and an AA degree in criminal justice. She is the mother of three children and lives in Grants Pass. She wants to work with teens.
- Rachel M. Burnett of Medford will receive a \$1,000 first-place award from SI Rogue Starlight Club. She is completing the requirements for an AA degree in art. She plans to pursue advanced degrees in art and eventually teach at the college level. Rachel is a single mom with two children.
- Rachel L. DeRose is SI Rogue Starlight's second-place winner and also will receive a \$1,000 award. She is working on toward an AA degree in criminal justice and hopes to continue her studies at SOU, earning a degree in criminology and criminal justice with an emphasis on forensics. She is the single mother supporting two children and lives in Medford.

Soroptimist is an international organization for business and professional women. Since 1972, the Women's Opportunity Award has been a signature program of Soroptimist Clubs throughout the Soroptimist International of the America's (SIA) Federation. The program gives cash grants for women to improve their employment status by gaining additional education and skills and is designed to assist women who provide the primary financial support for their families.

Most of women who receive awards have overcome the obstacles of domestic violence and/or drug abuse in their families or other hardships to go on to try better their lives through education.

Winners may use the award to offset any costs associated with their efforts to attain higher education – including books, childcare and transportation. Local club first-place winners go on to compete for additional awards at higher levels of the Soroptimist organization.

For more information about the Women's Opportunity Awards, Soroptimist projects and membership, contact Kathy Garrett Canape, (541) 482-6288.

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