



## CI Student Named 2010 Goldwater Scholar

Camarillo, Calif., April 26, 2010 - CSU Channel Islands (CI) is proud to announce CI's first Goldwater Scholar, Ashley Bonneau. Ashley is a junior majoring in biology with an emphasis on cellular and molecular biology. Her faculty mentor is Dr. Nitika Parmar, Assistant Professor of Biology.

The names on the recently released list of 2010 Goldwater Scholars were culled from a field of 1,111 nominees from colleges and universities across the United States. From this field of nominees, considered the academic elite in the field of mathematics, natural science and engineering, 278 were chosen to be Goldwater Scholars. CI is the only CSU campus with a Goldwater Scholar this year.

The Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation is a federally endowed agency established to honor the late Senator Goldwater and was designed to support and encourage outstanding students pursuing careers in the fields of mathematics, natural science and engineering.

The Goldwater Scholarship is the premier undergraduate award in these fields and the selection process is exceptionally competitive. The award program was established to alleviate a critical current and future shortage of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians and engineers and provide a continuing source of gifted and committed individuals in those fields of academic study and research.

Dawn Neuman, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs said, "I am extremely proud of Ashley and our esteemed faculty member, Dr. Nitika Parmar. CI prides itself on placing our students first and Dr. Parmar has gone above and beyond in mentoring this fine young woman. We are fortunate to have the highest caliber students and faculty on our campus."

Each award winner receives an award of \$7,500 to be used for undergraduate tuition, fees, books, and room and board. Ashley Bonneau said, "The award was such a blessing for me because now I will have more time this coming fall to do all of my applications for graduate school without having to worry about money for tuition and other expenses. She stated, "I plan to go on for my Ph.D. in cellular and molecular biology.

"Right now my faculty advisor, Dr. Nitika Parmar and I are working on a research project utilizing RNA interference technology. The process deals with analyzing function of a particular protein and how it effects cellular growth. Abnormal cell growth is a major factor in cancer. We are trying to determine if we knock out this one substance will it stop growth or alter it in some way."

Ashley could not stress emphatically enough the importance of her faculty mentor Dr. Nitika Parmar. "You can't imagine, at least I could never have imagined, that a faculty member would spend so much time and effort to help her students. Everyone in the Chemistry and Biology Programs has just been so committed to the students," she enthused. "Dr. Parmar has made sure I apply for awards, written letters of recommendation and helped me pursue my goals. She has done more for me than I ever could have expected."

Dr. Parmar said she and Ashley worked for several weeks to develop a solid application and she was gratified to see the effort paid off. She was honored to nominate Ashley because she was totally deserving of this prestigious scholarship. "I feel so fortunate to have a student like Ashley in my lab. She joined in December 2008, and little did I realize I was signing on a student who would cheerfully come to do her experiments at 5 a.m., attend classes from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., finish up her data analysis from 7 to 9 p.m. and then work on her scholarship applications until midnight." She added, "We are privileged to have such students and I hope she will provide inspiration to her colleagues at CI."

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#### *CI Mission Statement*

*Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.*