

# Your “seedling” from the samara foundation June 2009

## Samara 2009 Scholarships

2009 marks the tenth year of Samara's scholarship program! This year we awarded scholarships of \$750 each to four Vermont high school seniors who have worked for the elimination of homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity.

Samara Foundation scholarships are made possible through the generous support of its donors. This year three organizations in particular partnered with Samara to make these scholarships possible: KeyBank Foundation, Gay & Lesbian Fund of Vermont, and Vermont Gay Social Alternatives.

The Scholarship Committee recommended and the Board approved the following awards for 2009:

**Jared Jurentkuff:**  
Lunenburg  
Saint Johnsbury Academy



Jared resides in one of the most remote and notably conservative towns in the Northeast Kingdom according to his Career and Education Outreach Counselor. Jared came out while a high school junior and has had to face many personal trials as an openly gay student. He states that these trials have "helped me to strengthen my voice and to understand my role as an educator." Jared has set clear goals for himself, among them to be the first person in his family to obtain a college degree.

Jared has been accepted to and plans on attending the Culinary Institute of America in the fall.

**Jennifer Johnson:**  
Newport  
North Country Union High School



Three years ago, Jennifer and a friend started a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at their school. Jennifer was the president for two years. "The foundation for the GSA entailed a great deal of dedication, hard work, and persistence from its pursuers," states the recommendation from a school staff member. "(Our) GSA is an organization that is not widely tolerated and accepted in our school community."

Jennifer attended the first GSA conference in Burlington and participated in its Youth Pride parade. Jennifer has been a strong ally and organizer for the GLBTQ community.

She has been accepted to and plans on attending Randolph College in the fall.

**Matthew DiMasi:**  
Winooski  
Winooski High School



Matthew has exhibited strong leadership and organizational skill while in high school.

Last year he took the initiative to organize the Day of Silence at his high school, speaking to the entire student body about why this was an important witness to make.

"Because of Matt DiMasi's leadership on the Day of Silence, a surprisingly large number of students and faculty participated..." states his high school English teacher.

Matt says, "I am bisexual and I want to lead the fight to cause this world to be more accepting."

Matthew has been accepted to and plans on attending Clarkson University in the fall.

**Shannon Dychton:**  
Huntington  
Mt. Mansfield Union High School



Ella Kaplan, Education and Outreach Manager at Outright Vermont, states, "I have been struck by Shannon's leadership and her ability to create change. She has fearlessly made her voice heard as a queer youth in rural Vermont..." Shannon has participated on Outright's Speakers Bureau for the last three years. Her attempts at trying to start a GSA at her high school have been frustrated by lack of interest from her fellow students. Shannon hopes to continue her work with Outright while attending college at the University of Vermont.

**Giving to Samara?**

**By Check:** Make check to the Samara Foundation. Mail to PO Box 1263 Burlington VT 05402

**Gift of Stock:** Email [liz@samarafoundation.org](mailto:liz@samarafoundation.org) for more information

**By Credit Card:** Visit [www.samarafoundation.org](http://www.samarafoundation.org) and click donate at the bottom of the screen



**Who's in it?**

The Vermont Gay Guide ([www.vtgayguide.com](http://www.vtgayguide.com)) is Samara's online interactive directory of everything LGBT. The VGG mission is to connect everybody and everything LGBT and LGBT-friendly in the state, creating a virtual LGBT family online. Check it out.

In the coming months, we thought you'd like to know what new businesses have joined the ranks of Samara's business alliance by listing in the Vermont Gay Guide. But first, we have some catching up to do! Here are the businesses that have signed up to list with the Vermont Gay Guide since its start one year ago through May.

If you'd like to list your business, service or organization please call Matt

at 802-860-6236 or email him at [matt@vtgayguide.com](mailto:matt@vtgayguide.com)

American Flatbread  
Artful Things  
Bright Horizons  
Carman Brook Maple & Dairy Farm  
Casey Family Services/Vermont  
Church Street Marketplace  
Clean Yield Asset Management  
Coaching Center of Vermont  
Coldwell Banker Redpath & Co  
Common Ground Center  
Comprehensive Care Clinics  
Conley Country  
Democracy Fest Inc.  
Denise Vignoe  
Dog Tired Studio  
Donna Lescoe Justice of the Peace  
Dynamic Energy Therapy  
Earth Asset Partnership  
Earthdeco  
Edward R. Langlois, LICSW  
Electrolysis By Kathy  
Ellen Schecter, Ph.D.  
Evolution Physical Therapy and Yoga  
Flynn Center for the Performing Arts  
Gene Richards  
Gensburg, Atwell & Broderick  
GetEducated.com, LLC  
Glen Events  
Greg Trulson  
Hampton Inn and Event Center  
Jace Sheppard Vermont Tech Guy  
Jan Salzman  
Karen Pike Photography  
Katie's Jewels  
Kimbell Sherman Ellis

Langrock Sperry & Wool LLP  
Lund Family Center  
Marsala Salsa  
Montgomery & Merrill PC, Certified  
Public Accountants  
Moose Meadow Lodge  
Mortgage Financial, Inc.  
Northwestern Mutual Financial  
Network  
Red Wagon Plants  
Remax North Professionals  
Rev. Raymond Archbold  
Robert L. Keith, PhD  
Seven Days  
Sovernet Communications  
Spruce Mortgage Co.  
Stowe Realty  
Strong House Spa  
The Silver Screen  
TouchChi Partners LLC  
Vermont Designworks  
Vermont Gay Tourism Association  
Vermont Mozart Festival  
Vermont Tech Guy  
Vermont Works for Women  
Vet 2 Pet Mobile Veterinary Services  
Wake Robin Life Care  
West Hill House B&B  
White House Inn  
Zutano, Inc.