

KOMEN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

2011 Scholarship Recipients

Kelsey Crow



Kelsey lost her mother to breast cancer when she was eight years old. She says that though the full weight did not affect her until junior high, she was then affected deeply and found herself less confident and more emotional than those around her. She overcame these trials and now describes herself as highly empathetic to others, drawing strength from Jesus Christ. "I love passionately and fight passionately," she says. Given the gifts of trust and freedom from her father, she says she has learned to stay organized and plan ahead, and she will use those skills to live a healthy lifestyle, being aware of and taking care of her body since she is at high risk for breast cancer in her future.

A self-proclaimed passionate idealist, she has plans to carry the breast cancer awareness banner to Boise State University where she plans to study communications and creative writing. She plans to engage students in breast cancer advocacy, the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® and programs such as Yoplait's *Save Lids to Save Lives* that support the life-saving work of Komen for the Cure. She has plans for a Facebook page raising funds for Komen as well as sporting events that donate funds for spectators who wear pink. She is highly motivated to play a part in ending breast cancer and encouraging those around her to do the same.

Stefanie Little



Stefanie's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer when she was four years old and passed away three years later. The years that followed brought tragic trials and challenges for immediate family members, and she says she was forced to grow up fast. Eventually receiving much-needed guidance and help, she excelled in school and discovered her passion for helping others. She says that although her mom lost the battle with breast cancer, she taught her that life is worth fighting for.

She is a sophomore at Cal State San Marcos and says choosing her degree in nursing was easy. "Ever since my mom's heroic fight, I have wanted to contribute to society and to sincerely help people," she says. "I want the chance to affect people's lives, and nursing will afford me that opportunity."

One of the ways this driven young advocate will contribute to society and impact the lives of others is through her volunteer work with Komen, a requirement after receiving a college scholarship from Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Excited about the possibilities, she looks forward to being creative in finding ways to have her voice heard. "In my opinion, it doesn't have to be something huge because every little thing someone does helps the bigger picture, which is to find a cure for breast cancer," she says.

Shayna McElveny



Writing the application essay for this scholarship was difficult for Shayna who referred to her mother's fight with cancer with descriptors such as "haunting memory" and "dark sunken horrors." Her mother was diagnosed when she was 3 years old and fought for thirteen years before losing the fight. She watched and learned about strength and grace.

"Cancer has done a lot of physical harm to people but what I have learned is that it cannot strip anyone from a life worth living," she says.

Active in the fight against breast cancer, she started her own breast cancer foundation, "Rae of Sunshine", in honor of her mother, Raelene. Her foundation funds Wigs for Kids, which provides wigs to children who have lost their hair from chemotherapy. She has also applied to work with Kids Konnected, which counsels and builds relationships with children whose family members have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Additionally, she has been involved with the American Cancer Society. She is a proven advocate in the quest to end breast cancer and help those affected by the disease.

When she completes her bachelor's degree in urban studies, she plans to pursue a master's in public health.

"With my degree I will be able to inspire new factors that may decrease the vulnerabilities that are causing breast cancer and strengthen the hope for a cure. With both of my degrees I will have the knowledge instilled in me to accomplish my goal of providing better health utilities for people with breast cancer," she says. "Overall I can be used as a means to create a better tomorrow for people across the world."

Neal Simon



Neal describes himself saying, "I am an individual who wakes up every morning knowing I am meant to change the world."

His mother fought breast cancer for five years, during which time she faced challenges financially and with health care access and insurance coverage. He believes that she would have lived if she had received the proper care. The determination to make an impact on health care led him to study microbiology at The University of Texas, and he hopes to be accepted into the school's College of Pharmacy in the future.

"It has been three years since my mother passed and I still cannot put a price on her value. I now dedicate my life to helping others avoid her experience, and I will work with Susan G. Komen for the Cure and other organizations to reach this goal."

As a Komen volunteer, he looks forward to providing volunteer events for students to serve in through local breast cancer affiliations. Events he has in mind include hospital visits to accompany patients undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatment, organizing lunch seminars on campus for breast cancer survivors and planning fundraising drives to assist in the search for a cure.

2010 Scholarship Recipients

Jaylyn Gramer



“I may only be one person, but I will make a huge impact on the breast cancer movement.”

This is the vision of Jaylyn who supported her mother’s battle against breast cancer for 7 years until the age of 14 when it stole her mother away. In her mother’s honor, Jaylyn wants to destroy breast cancer and help others find their way through the devastation. As a Komen volunteer and business student at Texas A&M University, she plans to design and sell t-shirts to raise funds and awareness. Her plan is to start a campus club

where students write uplifting letters to breast cancer patients, encouraging them to stay strong in their fight.

Catherine Llewellyn



“Never, never, never give up.”

A famous quote by Winston Churchill, evermore profound when Catherine’s mother shared these words of inspiration. Supporting her mother through a 9-year battle with breast cancer that was tragically lost in 2005, Catherine strives to be an example of strength and courage for others affected by this devastating disease. As a Komen volunteer and psychology student at Virginia Tech., Catherine hopes to continue to share her story and lead by

example, demonstrating that every effort in the fight against breast cancer makes a difference.

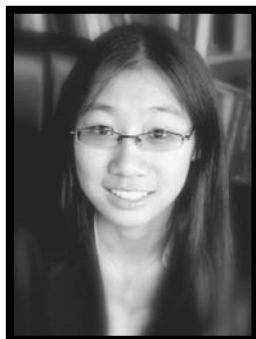
Ryan Mannix



For years his mother’s breast cancer diagnosis was the “elephant in the room;” the life-threatening concern on everyone’s mind that no one would dare discuss. But it was within the last days of his mother’s life where Ryan understood his mother’s vision to stay present and appreciate life for what you have. As a Komen volunteer and mechanical engineering student at the University of Connecticut, Ryan plans to raise awareness and organize fundraisers on campus to help find a cure for this terrible disease. Recognizing the importance of community in working through an unbearable situation, Ryan wants to educate and comfort others

through a diagnosis.

Mon Yuck Yu



As a 13-year-old junior high student, Mon Yuck helped her father fight his two year battle with breast cancer the best way she knew how: with love, support, and compassion. When she received the midnight phone call that her father had passed, it was the persistence and resilience of her parents that inspired her to push forward to achieve her dreams. As a Komen scholarship recipient and sophomore at NYU, Mon Yuck hopes to bring her father's spirit and bold optimism to share awareness with the male and ethnic populations on campus and in the New York City community.

2009 Scholarship Recipients

Samantha Muilenburg



Samantha was only 9-years old when she lost her mother to breast cancer. From her mother's passing, she decided not only to welcome life's opportunities, but to look for them and challenge herself with them. Samantha is deeply passionate about filmmaking and has made numerous films for non-profit agencies, some of which have garnered awards. She is currently a Komen volunteer and Film & Television Production student at New York University. She is a self-proclaimed media activist and dedicates her free time volunteering at the Greater New York Komen Affiliate.

Lin Ling



When Lin's mother passed away before her freshman year of high school, she realized that it was her job to take hold of life's reigns and if she could, reach out to those fighting a harder battle. Lin lives by the motto supplied by her mother's fight against the disease: "No regrets. Live life to the fullest."

As a sophomore and business student at New York University, Lin also serves as a volunteer at the Komen Affiliate in New York City.

Asmina Trigonis



In May 2001, when Asmina was only 9-years old, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. After her mother, Asmina's best friend, finished several treatments it appeared she was cancer-free. Two years later, during a routine check-up, the doctors discovered that the cancer had returned. Soon after, Asmina's mother passed away. Inspired by her mother's strength, courage, and zeal for life, Asmina was not content to sit on the sidelines of the breast cancer movement; instead she decided to honor her mother's memory by encouraging and supporting those affected by breast cancer, and to aid in the search for a cure.

As a Komen scholarship recipient and education student at UNC-Chapel Hill, Mina devotes her spare time volunteering at the Komen North Carolina Triad Affiliate.