



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2010 Health Professions Scholarships awarded to local students with career goals set on medicine and nursing

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, August 26, 2010 – The August meeting of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Board of Directors opened with the presentation of the hospital's annual Health Professions Scholarships.

Erin Fernhout and **Victoria Sawatsky** were the proud recipients of this year's awards. Each was awarded a cheque of \$1,000 while members of their families and the Board recognized their outstanding achievements.

Erin Fernhout graduated from Cobourg District Collegiate Institute West in 2009 with her graduating class's highest overall marks in university biology, university chemistry and university exercise science—courses that prepared her well for her current studies. She is set to enter her second year at McMaster University this fall, in the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program.

In addition to maintaining a strong grade-point-average in her first year of university, Erin volunteered weekly in Hamilton at a children's after-school program and assisted at a long-term care facility, helping patients with dementia. Erin established herself as an active Cobourg volunteer prior to being accepted at McMaster, amassing hundreds of hours as a student volunteer both at the Hospital (with the NHH Auxiliary and the NHH Foundation) and beyond, including Rotary's Interact High School Club, CDCI West's Annual Community Christmas Dinner and the Waumer Walk for ALS. Among the local awards Erin received in recent years for her volunteer efforts are the Lieutenant Governor General's Award for Community Service, the Town of Cobourg Distinguished Civic Award for Community Service and the Dixie Mikel Award.

Upon completion of her undergraduate degree, Erin intends to attend medical school to become a pediatrician. She hopes to one day return to work in the west Northumberland area.

Victoria Sawatsky graduated from Cobourg District Collegiate Institute West in 2008. As noted in her scholarship application, "I was introduced to the Hospital and all of the medical services through the medical technology course that I took while attending the CDCI West. From that experience, I was convinced to pursue a career in the medical profession."

Also a student at McMaster University in Hamilton, Victoria will enter her third year of study toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing this fall. After obtaining her degree, she

hopes to work at a community hospital—possibly NHH—travel to countries in need of medical support and pursue the Nurse Practitioner’s program.

In addition to her academic work and clinical placements, Victoria has kept very active at McMaster. A volunteer with Environment Hamilton, Victoria participated in clean-up and brain-storming activities for various environmental causes. She attends a local church, sports events, nursing functions and fund-raisers. In October 2009 she ran the Good Life half-marathon in Toronto, earning a silver medal in the “under two-hour” group. She rounded out her athletic interests by playing on McMaster’s women’s rugby team, the McMaster Marauders, ranked third in the province last year.

Prior to attending McMaster, Victoria was recognized locally with the Clay Elliott Scholarship (2008) and the Lou Rinaldi Citizenship Award (2008), both recognition for the same community service, positive attitude and involvement she has carried with her into her university life.

Created in 2003, the primary purpose of the NHH student scholarship program is to provide financial assistance to students from west Northumberland who are pursuing a career in the health care sector. By supporting local students early in their academic studies, NHH’s secondary goal is to encourage them to consider the Hospital for career placement when the time comes to select an employer in the future.

In addition to being enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a full-time study program, applicants are evaluated on the basis of their academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, a testimonial explaining their interest in the field and two written references.

John Hudson, Chair of the NHH Board of Directors, congratulated both recipients on their achievements. “Talented and motivated individuals such as the local women we are recognizing tonight are required each year to meet the growing demands in health care. Through this scholarship program NHH aims to encourage students from our area to pursue careers in one of the many rewarding health care fields. We extend our best wishes to Erin and Victoria for a successful and enjoyable year. We look forward to the day they graduate from their programs, and sincerely hope they consider west Northumberland and Northumberland Hills Hospital when the time comes to seek employment.”

For further information, please contact Jennifer Gillard at 905-377-7757 or jqillard@nhh.ca.

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto. The acute care hospital delivers a broad range of services, including emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, complex/long-term care, rehabilitation, palliative care and obstetrical care. A variety of ambulatory care clinics are also offered at NHH. In addition to these, NHH also sponsors a Community Mental Health Centre and an Assertive Community Treatment Team. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs close to 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East LHIN. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca.