

# Ohio Literacy Resource Center GED Scholars News Brief

Spring Semester

May 2003

## WHAT'S NEW

- University Orientation Class
- Mentoring Program
- Technology Workshops
- Fall 2003 Stipends Awards

## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING SCHOLARS!

- Kimberly A. Jewell, '03
- Xsais Mwanaidi, '03, *magna cum laude*
- Caren Pagel, '03, *summa cum laude*
- Kimberly Patterson, '03
- Guo Zhu Wang, '03

**Did you know...** this year, 50 GED graduates were accepted to the Kent campus.

If you serve adults that have their GEDs or are working toward obtaining their GEDs and would like someone to come speak to them, please contact us. Many of our scholars have expressed an interest in speaking with students about their college experience.

For questions or more information regarding this news brief and the GED Scholars Initiative, you may contact: Sandra Golden, Project Director at (330) 672-5351 or (800) 765-2897 extension 25351 or email at [sgolden@literacy.kent.edu](mailto:sgolden@literacy.kent.edu).

## RPM International, Inc. Scholarship Luncheon

On Monday, March 17, 2003 **KSU President Carol Cartwright, Randy McShepard**, Director of Community Affairs, RPM International, Inc., **Dean David England**, and **Chuck Rickard**, Interim Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and other distinguished guests attended a luncheon to award two \$4000 scholarships and to recognize graduating GED Scholars.

The GED Scholars Initiative was developed to address and support the needs of GED graduates attending the Kent and Stark campuses at KSU. Since its inception, Fall 2002, many partnerships and collaborations have been made within the University community and with local community agencies.

**Dr. Nancy Padak**, KSU Distinguished Professor and Principal Investigator for Ohio Literacy Resource Center (OLRC), **Dr. William Kist**, Assistant Professor and Project Coordinator at the Stark Campus and **Marty Ropog**, Director, OLRC, welcomed

and presented the scholars with words of encouragement and their well-deserved scholarships and gifts. **Brian White** (Geography and Education), Project Assistant, **Scherita Jordan** (Criminal Justice Studies), and **Joyce Kammoun** (Math and Political Science), GED Scholars, provided their assistance at the luncheon by welcoming the guests and acknowledging the graduating GED Scholars.

**Caren Pagel**, '03 who is a Art History major (Kent campus) was selected to receive one of the scholarships and a palm pilot to use as she continues her future education endeavors. **Kathleen McLaughlin** majoring in Educational Studies (Stark campus) was selected to receive the other scholarship and a laptop computer. **Caren** has graduated summa cum laude and plans to spend her summer in Florida before going on to graduate school. **Kathleen** will continue her studies at the Stark campus. They both have been a great asset to the development of the GED Scholars Initiative. They have offered

their insight and advise on how we can best support GED Scholars.

We also celebrated and acknowledge our graduating seniors. **Xsais Mwanaidi** '03 (Pan African Studies), magna cum laude; **Caren Pagel**, '03 summa cum laude, and **Kimberly Patterson** '03 (Psychology and Sociology).

These students have been supportive of the Initiative since its inception. Kimberly began an internship in our office Spring 2003 and provided a wealth of information in the development of the mentoring program, creating an on-line and paper resource library in the GED Scholars Computer Lab/Study Room. Both Kimberly and Xsais were members of the Mentoring Committee.

On behalf of the GED Scholars Initiative, *we wish all the graduating scholars continued success!*

## KSU Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Supports the GED Scholars Initiative

Two GED Scholars received an additional \$2000 scholarship as a result of support from Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Many thanks to **Conni Dubick**, Associate Director of Student Financial Aid and **Chuck Rickard**, Interim Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs for making it pos-

sible. This financial support was greatly appreciated during times when there has been many budget cuts in education. The scholarships awarded to two students Spring semester 2003 matched the RPM International, Inc. Scholarship. The scholarships will also be awarded again during the Spring semester

2004. Two students who are enrolled in at least 12 credit hours during the Spring Semester, have maintained a 3.00 or higher GPA, and have completed at least one semester of coursework at KSU will be selected to receive \$4000 and a laptop computer. The scholarship application will be sent to students in Fall 2003.

**University Orientation:** If you are a new scholar at the Kent campus, you may want to consider registering for this 1 credit hour course. The purpose of the course is to assist you in making the transition to the University.

**Mentoring Program:** The mission of the GED Scholars Initiative Mentoring Program supports GED graduates attending KSU, ensuring they receive beneficial, on-going support and guidance by encouraging community building and promoting a positive, successful learning experience.

**Technology Program:** The GED Scholars Initiative Technology Program supports GED Scholars attending KSU's Kent and Stark campuses with technology training and computer support.

**Stipend Awards:** This mini financial assistance will be awarded to selected incoming and current scholars attending the Kent and Stark campuses. More information about the stipends will be available in June.

## Stark Campus Bridge Program Canton City Schools Adult Basic and Literacy Education

### What is Bridges and who is eligible for the class?

This class is designed for adult students (age 18 and older) who have a high school diploma or a GED, but need to brush up on reading, writing, math, and/or study skills in order to:

- Attend college or a technical school
- Improve skills for employment
- Prepare for an entrance exam for education or employment

The class is intended for students working at a high school level in reading and math.

### Class Schedule

Summer Session: May 13-August 14, 2003; 9:00 a.m.-12 noon Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The class is located in the KSU-Stark/Stark State Library on the lower level. Students will have an opportunity to brush up on reading, writing, math, and study skills.

**Registration:** Register in the Adult Learning Center inside the Stark County District Library (715 Market Ave. N, Canton)

The Bridges class is free and all materials are provided free of cost.

**For more information please call (330) 456-9590**

# MEET A GED SCHOLAR

## Al Watson

**Majors:** Bachelor of Arts, Psychology and Sociology

**Graduation Date:** December 2003

**Residence:** Akron, OH

**Born:** Connecticut

As the oldest child in a dysfunctional home, I got my GED to go into the service at age 17. I had a very bad attitude toward authority figures. I left home with very little self respect and self value. I had very little respect toward the educational system. I was a school jock and did little to apply myself in most areas of study. I did not think that I would ever need college or that it would make any difference in my life.

I was married, divorced, married again, and then widowed by age 25. Though I had had some well paying jobs, despite my educational level, nothing seemed to last. I

am sure that was due mostly to my own personal problems. I bounced around the country doing different things from working on cotton farms, light industrial, male exotic dancer, to a roadie for rock bands.

But in 1995, my life took a drastic turn. I found myself in prison for possession of a firearm. Prison was somewhere I never thought I would be, just like college. While behind the barbed wire fence in a cold, concrete 4 by 6 foot cell, I got smart and started taking college courses. I had to take many pre-college level classes to get up to the college level. Once I was released from prison, I continued my education.

Now, I am one semester away from graduating with a double major. It has taken six long, difficult years of hardships to get here. I have worked full time, attended school full time, and helped to raise my children. I was blessed with a great support network to prod and push me to keep going. My battle cry is, "I

have too much invested to not finish." So for those who read this, it is hard work, but it can be done if you want it bad enough. You only have to do two things: decide how bad you want it, and what you're willing to do to get it.

**Goals:** Graduate degree.

**Aspirations:** To make a better future for those that will come after me.

**Areas of interest:** To work with troubled teens and build a camp for teens.

*If you would like to contribute to the GED Scholars Fund, please make your check payable to Kent State University and mail to the Ohio Literacy Resource Center, Research 1 Building, 1100 Summit Street, Kent, OH 44242.*

Ohio Literacy Resource Center

Enhancing Adult Literacy

<http://literacy.kent.edu>