

PORTRAITS *of* H

The six student winners of the Charles E. and Sue K. Young Awards for 2007 are recognized for their extra



William Thomas Clarke

Senior, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
Seeking answers and treatments for inherited diseases

While many undergraduates dream of one day becoming medical researchers who can cure or tame disease, Tom Clarke is already well on his way toward realizing that ambition. A Howard Hughes Undergraduate Research Scholar and recipient of a prestigious Marshall Scholarship, Clarke is working in the laboratory of Assistant Physiology Professor Rachelle Crosbie. There, Clarke has helped with research on the genetic disorder of ciliary dyskinesia, which causes respiratory illnesses and infertility; and on Duchenne muscular dystrophy, which usually results in death by the late teens.

“My research work has been the most exciting experience of my collegiate career, and has reinforced my decision to use the science of medicine as a physician to develop novel therapeutic tools for treating inherited human diseases,” said Clarke.

John J. Pennington

Student, Musicology
Amplifying marginalized musical voices

disadvantaged childhood, eight years in the Army, and being both a person of color and a transsexual give Pennington an unconventional perspective on education and research.

“I always make sure to include a variety of voices and viewpoints every time I teach,” Pennington, who won the Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award for 2005–06. “That way I can incorporate the histories of marginalized people that I myself never learned about in school.”

Pennington’s dissertation is on the Lieder Harmonists, a diverse German vocal group that included Jews and flourished just as Hitler came to power. Pennington, who plays the banjo, sings and composes, learned about the group while he was in Germany as an Army intelligence analyst.



Excellence

Photographs by Collin Erie Class of 2007

Ordinary talent, commitment and achievement.



Jennifer Pfeifer

Graduate student, Psychology

Mapping the neural basis of identity

Pfeifer is among just a few people in the country who are conducting research in the emerging field of developmental social neuroscience, according to Matthew Lieberman, one of her half-dozen academic advisors. Working in the Ahmanson-Lovelace Brain Mapping Center, Pfeifer uses magnetic resonance imaging and other tools to examine the social cognitive development of children and teens.

“My goal is to understand how the neural systems that support self and social perception develop and affect adjustment, achievement, attitudes and developmental disorders,” said Pfeifer, who received a master’s degree in developmental psychology from UCLA in 2003. “Identities are not solely about our unique qualities, but also about what connects us with others. Because identities bloom in the transition from childhood to adolescence, it’s the perfect time to examine their neural foundations as well as their effect on developmental outcomes.”

Hrayr Khanjian

Senior, Linguistics

Using mathematics to analyze language structure

Coming from a bi-cultural family and a high school that taught Armenian language and culture, and learning some French and Turkish, all have helped Hrayr Khanjian appreciate language and linguistics. At UCLA, he has combined that background with his research interests. A former mathematics major who works part time as a math tutor, Khanjian is applying mathematical techniques used by Linguistics Professors Edward Keenan and Edward Stabler to the study of grammatical structures in Central West Greenlandic, a dialect of Greenlandic Eskimo.

“I like how languages have multiple levels of structure that are not immediately evident,” said Khanjian. “There are tiers of structure in intonation, sound, word, phrase,

