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COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENTS HONORED WITH ARTS SCHOLARSHIPS

Ventura County Community Foundation awards \$7,500 to emerging artists

CAMARILLO, Calif. (June 23, 2011) – Three local high school graduates were honored earlier this month with the Ventura County Community Foundation’s Young Artists Scholarship to allow them to attend the schools of their choice to develop their creative abilities.

Adrian Carcione and Trevor Mauk, both of Simi Valley, and Alexandra Phelps, of Ventura, each received a \$2,500 Young Artists Scholarship, established in 2009 in conjunction with VCCF’s ArtsLIVE initiative. They join the ranks of four previous Ventura County students who have received this award.

“These are the students we hope will come back to benefit their communities after honing their skills at universities and schools with the best arts programs,” said Hugh Ralston, president and CEO of the Ventura County Community Foundation.

Carcione, a 17-year-old pianist, will attend Moorpark College in the fall and hopes to transfer to the University of California, Santa Cruz, to pursue a degree in ethnomusicology, the study of music across cultures.

“In understanding all kinds of music, I can understand more ways of living,” said Carcione. “It also helps me to express my own feelings in an elegant way.”

For his senior project, Carcione composed an original piece. His first attempt at orchestration, he learned to arrange and expand his capabilities as a composer. He performed a segment of the 20-minute piece at Santa Susana High School’s winter recital, accompanying the symphony orchestra on piano.

After earning his bachelor’s degree, Carcione hopes to attend graduate school or enter the Peace Corps.

Mauk, also 17 and a classmate of Carcione’s at Santa Susana, has a background in music and photography.

“I look at the world with a photographic eye, and it helps me connect with people and my surroundings,” Mauk said.

Mauk served as president of the Instrumental Music Club, helping plan concerts and events, as well as the arts section editor of the school yearbook. He is also in Santa Susana's concert and symphony orchestras, is their first chair cellist and sings in the school's jazz choir. Outside of school, he is the lead singer and pianist in an alternative rock band, also composing music for that ensemble.

Mauk is set to attend the University of California, Santa Barbara, in the fall as a pre-communications major with a minor in music.

Phelps will attend California College of the Arts in San Francisco in the fall as an illustration major. The 17-year-old Foothill Technology High School graduate was an illustrator and photojournalist for Foothill's online newspaper, the Foothill Dragon Press, and she became the president of the Foothill High's chapter of the National Art Honor Society in her sophomore year.

Phelps guided the group from a 10-person crew to a 50-plus-member organization. Two of the projects she helped coordinate were in conjunction with The Empty Bowls Project to raise money for hunger eradication and The Memory Project, where students painted portraits for orphans in Third World countries.

"I really enjoy working with my community and giving back," Phelps said. "Art is everything. I've always had this inherent need to create."

The "Send Our Best to the Best" campaign is under way to raise \$375,000 to permanently endow the Young Artists Scholarship fund. Donors interested in contributing are invited to contact Ralston at VCCF, or make donations online at www.vccf.org.

VCCF invests the charitable capital that drives the philanthropic engines of Ventura County. Its portfolio performance ranks in the top 11 of all community foundations in the United States for long-term growth. With total assets of \$110 million, its mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, which it does through grantmaking, scholarships and training at its Center for Nonprofit Leadership. Visit vccf.org or call (805) 988-0196.

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