



## OAR Announces Scholarship Program for Persons with Autism

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Arlington, VA- OAR is proud to announce the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program, established by OAR Board member, Ed Schwallie, and his family through a gift from the Schwallie Family Foundation. The intent of the program is to award three, \$3,000 scholarships annually to individuals with an autism spectrum disorder attending college or pursuing post-secondary trade, technical, or vocational training. Applications will be grouped in three categories: students attending four-year colleges, students attending two-year colleges, and persons with autism matriculating in trade schools or technical and vocational training programs. OAR will make an award in each category, assuming there are qualified candidates.

In establishing this program, OAR Board member Ed Schwallie said, "Having one adult son who has autism and another with Asperger Syndrome, my wife, Marge, and I believe strongly in the intelligence, ability, and potential of young men and women with the autism and Asperger Syndrome. This scholarship program is an opportunity to put that belief into action and make a positive difference for some young persons with autism and their families."

To be eligible, the individual with autism must be enrolled or accepted for admission on at least a part-time basis (6 credits) at a two- or four-year college or university, or be a full-time trainee in a vocational/training program that leads to a job, a job qualification, or a certification in a particular field. In addition to providing proof of a diagnosis on the autism spectrum and official enrollment at the school, college, or university, each applicant will be required to submit an essay application of no more than 1,000 words and a letter of recommendation from someone other than a family member. For this inaugural awards process, applications are due not later than September 28, 2007. For full details, please visit

<http://www.researchautism.org/news/otherevents/Scholarship.asp>.

The concept for the program was developed by OAR in collaboration with the Global Regional Asperger Support Program (GRASP) and the Schwallie family. The review panel will consist of at least three people to include: a member of OAR's Board of Directors, a member of the Schwallie family, and a representative from GRASP. The panel will recommend the most qualified candidate in each scholarship category to OAR Board of Directors for final approval. OAR will notify the scholarship winners and announce the awards in November.

In recognition of the significance of the inaugural scholarship awards, OAR and GRASP will invite the first Schwallie Scholarship recipients to be guests at GRASP's annual Awards Dinner to be held in New York City on December 9, where OAR President Dr. Peter Gerhardt will also be honored.

For more information on the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program, visit OAR's Web site, or contact Dr. Peter Gerhardt at (703) 243-9762.

**ABOUT OAR:** The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a national, nonprofit organization formed and led by relatives of children and adults with autism and Asperger Syndrome. OAR is dedicated to promoting research that can be applied to help families, educators, caregivers, and individuals with autism find much-needed answers to their immediate and urgent questions. Committed to the excellence in its services to the autism community, OAR funds applied research that will make a difference in individual lives; provides information that is timely, useful, and cost-efficient; and offers opportunities for the autism community to collaborate and make advances together.

In its first five years, OAR has awarded more than \$1,000,000 for applied research studies and published four community-friendly resource guides in its Life Journey through Autism guide series: *A Parent's Guide to Research*, *An Educator's Guide to Autism*, *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*, and *A Guide for Transition to Adulthood*.