

Accolades

■ *Laura Caramanica, R.N., Ph.D.*, assistant professor of medicine, was elected president-elect of the American Organization of Nurse Executives. The organization provides leadership, professional development, advocacy and research to advance nursing practice and patient care and to promote nursing leadership excellence and shape public policy for health care.

■ *Arthur J. L. Cooper, Ph.D., D.Sc.*, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, was an invited speaker at three recent meetings. He presented: "13N as a Tracer for Studying Glutamate Metabolism" at the Sixth Aegean Meeting on Neurologic Therapies and Symposium on Glutamate Dehydrogenase and Human Disease, held in Crete in May; "γ-Glutamylamines as Indices of Neurodegeneration" at the Gordon Research Conference, "Transglutaminases in Human Disease Processes," held at Davidson College in North Carolina in July; and "α-Ketoglutarate as a Biomarker for Primary Hyperammonemia" at the 14th International Society on Hepatic Encephalopathy and Nitrogen Metabolism held in Val David, Quebec, in September.

■ *Michael Gewitz, M.D.*, professor and vice chairman of the Department of Pediatrics and physician-in-chief of Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center, was elected chairperson of the Council on Cardiovascular Disease in the Young by the American Heart Association. The Council's mission is to improve the health of children and adults with congenital heart disease and cardiovascular disease acquired during childhood through basic science and clinical investigation, epidemiology, clinical practice and education programs.

■ *Rudolph Taddonio, M.D.*, '71, clinical professor of orthopedic surgery and of neurosurgery, received Stamford Hospital's Physician Recognition Award for demonstrating commitment to the hospital's Planetree philosophy of patient-focused care.

■ *Gary M. Williams, M.D.*, professor of pathology and professor of clinical public health, participated as an invited expert panel member and gave a presentation, "Initiating Effects of Methyleugenol in Rat Liver," at the meeting of the Food Extract Manufacturers Association of the United States, held in Istanbul in September.

One of a kind student receives prestigious scholarship

Andrew McAllister, who began working toward his M.P.H. in health policy and management with an emergency preparedness certificate this summer in the School of Health Sciences and Practice's distance learning program, has an ace up his sleeve. Andrew recently got word that he had received a 2010 Jack Kent Cooke Graduate Scholarship. The program provides up to a total of \$50,000 to assist students reach their academic and professional goals. For Andrew, who made it this far with grit and hard work, the scholarship represents the key to a future he's been preparing for his whole life.

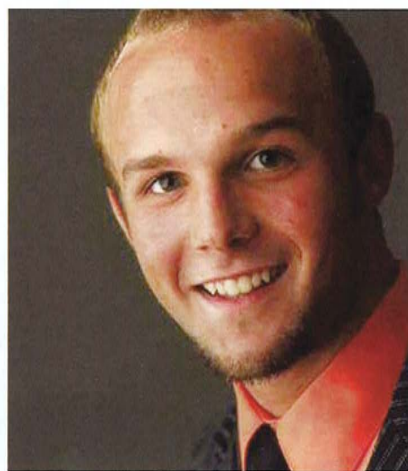
Mr. McAllister is one of 11 children, all homeschooled. The family frequently went on the road, singing at churches, community and civic events, performing for shut-ins and at nursing homes. Community service was an essential part of his education—he cared for children in a women's shelter, served meals to the homeless, sang gospel songs to prison inmates and helped build houses through Habitat for Humanity. At the age of 15, he began studies at Southwestern Community College near his home in Franklin, North Carolina, graduating concurrently with a high school degree and an associate's degree in arts.

Mr. McAllister has visited 14 countries, and spent significant time working in hospitals and orphanages in Kenya, Ethiopia and Peru. This fall he also began volunteering with an organization working with street children in Santiago, Dominican Republic.

"While I originally moved to the Dominican Republic to work with street children, I was recently asked to accept a year-long contract to work as a full-time third grade teacher in a bilingual school in Santiago while I complete my graduate studies," he explained. Mr. McAllister is taking a full course load through the SHSP distance education program, but the program's flexibility allows him to travel and gain international experience without missing a beat in his education.

Andrew received his first Jack Kent Cooke undergraduate transfer scholarship in 2007. This earlier award provides \$30,000 a year for up to three years to help exceptional community college students with financial need make the transition to four-year colleges and universities. He then attended University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he majored in international studies, global health and environment and Latin American studies. He was a dean's list student at UNC, was named a Public Service Scholar, and is currently working toward a Diversity Advocate Certificate from the university. He even received varsity letters as a member of the cheerleading squad.

When asked why he thinks he was chosen for the Cooke scholarship, Andrew replied, "As a child I dreamed of being able to travel and help people around the world. Even though I was not privileged financially, I believed in my dreams and have worked hard to bring them to fruition. My work in underprivileged communities at home and abroad has been an important part of receiving the scholarship. I chose New York Medical College because the school seems to be aligned with my goals. The fact that it is an accredited institution that offers the option to take classes online fits in with my plans."



Andrew McAllister, a distance learning student in the School of Health Sciences and Practice, is working toward his M.P.H. degree while teaching third grade in the Dominican Republic.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation was established in 2000 through the will of prominent businessman, sportsman and philanthropist Jack Kent Cooke, who overcame financial obstacles to achieve tremendous success. A self-made billionaire, Mr. Cooke was a Canadian entrepreneur and former owner of the Washington Redskins, the Los Angeles Lakers and the Los Angeles Kings.

When he died in 1997, Mr. Cooke left the bulk of his fortune to establish a foundation dedicated to supporting individuals of exceptional promise—those who work hard, stay

focused, and defy the stereotype that poverty precludes high achievement. Most of the 2010 Graduate Scholars come from humble beginnings and many have faced challenges along the way.

"The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation has changed my life dramatically," said Mr. McAllister. "It enabled me to focus on studies and volunteer activities during my undergraduate years and is allowing me to work and travel during graduate studies. It's a wonderful feeling to be empowered through a scholarship, to be able to achieve my dreams, no matter how unrealistic or unattainable everyone has told me they are."

The 2010 Class represents the ninth consecutive year the foundation has provided graduate scholarships, with the total number of alumni of the program now at 206. All the Cooke Scholars have distinguished themselves academically during their undergraduate careers and all share a strong commitment to community service. In addition, this year all the Graduate Scholars were previous Foundation Scholarship awardees.

After earning his M.P.H. degree, Mr. McAllister plans to apply to Officer Candidate School in the Coast Guard. He hopes to work in environmental or search and rescue operations and eventually pursue a doctorate in health policy and social justice.

"We are very proud to have Andrew McAllister in our program," said Annette Choolfaian, R.N., M.P.A., professor and chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management. "He has many experiences for someone so young, and a lot to give. We are sure that he will make significant contributions in our field." ▲