

2015: Glory T. Zhou, Texas A&M University, Master of Public Health, Health Policy & Management

Our Dr. Charlena Seymour Scholarship was created in 2014 to recognize and reward exceptional women pursuing an advanced degree in Public and/or Environmental Health. Only in its second year, the 2015 scholarship turned out an overwhelming response. We had a total of 62 applicants from 8 countries, attending 23 universities in 21 states. We at the AEHS Foundation and Dr. Seymour herself were very moved, not only by the amount of response, but also by the incredible level of qualification of the applicants and their determination to be successful in the public and environmental health field in order to make the world a better place. Each had her own personal story and history of how she arrived at her choice to pursue an advanced degree in the field, many overcoming great adversity in their lives. All applicants had a strong dedication to high standards both academically and professionally, a commitment to helping her fellow human being, a vision of leadership, unique personal circumstances and experiences, and glowing references. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for our six-member national committee to come to a decision.

This year, we proudly award the Dr. Charlena Seymour Scholarship to Ms. Glory Zhou. Growing up in Zimbabwe, she witnessed a great deal of affliction from HIV and AIDS, and even lost a close family member to the disease. This helped prompt her to pursue an education in public and environmental health. She went on to excel greatly in school, graduating high school in the top 5 of her class and summa cum laude for her Bachelor's degree. She has also dedicated much of her time to working and volunteering in Zimbabwe and the United States. As she wrote, "My experience working in a developing nation where HIV and AIDS have redefined the very meaning of childhood has pushed me to dedicate my career serving for a higher purpose." Her references described her as not only an outstanding student, but also a very kind, positive, caring, hard-working, and highly motivated individual. She received her B.S. in Environmental Health Science from Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina, where she was voted the most outstanding graduate in the whole STEM School (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Additionally, the Environmental Health Science Program Director, Dr. Milton Morris, described her as "the most outstanding student who graduated from my program during the 26 years that I directed the program." Ms. Zhou is currently pursuing an M.P.H. with a focus on Health Policy and Management at Texas A&M University. In her words, "I believe my public health calling is to serve and empower communities and I am certain that the career path I have chosen...allows me to help a large number of people by advocating for effective policies that pertain to environmental sustainability and equitable health services."

We appreciate every applicant's interest in the scholarship and encourage them to continue applying to others, as they are well qualified. We wish them the best of luck in their education and career. A degree in Public and/or Environmental Health is an excellent one to pursue, and the world needs more people like these outstanding women!

We look forward to awarding this scholarship to more of these exceptional women in the years to come.

Sierra Pelletier, Program Assistant, AEHS Foundation, Inc.

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