

The Lodi District Grape Growers Association presented four District 11 students scholarships, valued at \$7,000. Three two thousand dollar (\$2,000) and a one thousand (\$1,000) scholarships were awarded to four outstanding young men including Kevin Azpeitia at Santa Clara University, Zachary Feuerbach at American River Junior College, Andrew "Andy" Robertson at CSU Fresno and Gary Valente, also at CSU Fresno. The LDGGA Scholarship committee believes you will be impressed by the knowledge, experience and extra-curricular activities of these college-bound agriculture students.



**Kevin Azpeitia, Santa Clara University**

My name is Kevin Azpeitia, and I would like to thank LDGGA for awarding me with the \$1000 Jim Kissler Memorial Scholarship. It is an honor to receive it, and it will greatly help me in financing my college education. I have chosen to attend Santa Clara University in the fall, with an interest in Engineering.

From the time I was a young child, I have had an enormous exposure to agriculture in my life. Coming from a family that proudly boasts a long line of farmers, I have seen the lifestyle, benefits, and rewards that come from the Ag field. It is my greatest aspiration to be a part of this mission and create a future that I can enjoy and continue to carry on the agricultural heritage for at least one more generation.

I have worked the past six years at Camera Brothers, my family's farming operation. I have performed several sorts of tasks, such as operating forklifts, overseeing picking crews, irrigation, and tractor work. In this time I have learned and grown in the way my grandfather, Ray Camera, who started this business, did.

Since I was a small child, I have always been intrigued with how things work. I have built many different items over the years, from something as small as a battery-operated motor, to a hover craft suitable for an adult. I was chosen as one in nine finalists this past year in a national contest. My invention was automating hard top pickup covers, complete with actuators and a remote control.

I believe that a degree in engineering will best suit my abilities and ambitions. Engineering is a trade that is used in so many areas of farming, from packing operations, different types of tractors, harvesters, irrigation, and fertilization. I believe that I can use what I have learned and experienced in the past years working, and also a college education, something no one in my family has previously accomplished. I want to bring a new aspect to farming, using a post secondary education to an industry that bases its success on faith in the weather foremost, and constant diligence in the field.

I feel that with my background, family, and experience, I am poised for great success in this field. I hope that through a college degree I can have an impact on agriculture.



**Zachary Feuerbach, American River Junior College**

I, Zachary J. Feuerbach wish to express my appreciation to the Lodi District Grape Growers Association for awarding me the Jim Kissler Memorial Scholarship.

Throughout high school I have been involved in sports, community service, church, FFA and many other extra curricular activities. I started showing market animals at the Sacramento County Fair in the fourth grade and have continued doing that all the way through high school. However, once

I entered high school I decided to challenge myself with the task of raising a market steer. Besides the market animal projects that I have raised with the FFA, I also participated on the State Champion and undefeated Agriculture welding team. My teammates and I placed in the top three slots at every consecutive field day.

I began my athletic career when I was very young. I played soccer, baseball, and basketball for several years. After entering high school I played football all four years, earning the Coaches Award that goes to the hardest working, most selfless player on the team. On the side of playing football, I was an officer for two years in the Letterman's honor society which rewards high school athletes for participation and good grades.

High school presented me with the challenging situation of working two, sometimes three jobs at once. I worked for an elderly man in the country doing landscaping and yard maintenance. I also was a service technician at California Custom Trailers where I performed routine service inspections on trailers. The newest job that I have been working at for a long time now is a valet parker in downtown Sacramento where I work two to three nights a week. All of these jobs have taught me new skills that I will need to succeed in life and overcome future obstacles.

I wish to one day work as a certified welder at a repair shop or my own business repairing heavy machinery. I plan to do this by attending a junior college for two years then transferring to a four year university to receive my degree in business. I have learned throughout life that hard work and dedication will help me to reach my goals in life.

Thank you for your support of my college education.

**Andrew (Andy) Robertson, CSU Fresno**

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Lodi District Grape Growers Association for awarding me the Jim Kissler Memorial Scholarship.

I am involved in sports, FFA, my church youth group, community service projects, hunting and snowboarding. I began exhibiting market lambs in the 4-H division at the Sacramento County Fair when I was in the third grade and I have been active in the FFA throughout high school. I broadened my project experience by raising a market steer to exhibit at the county fair last year and reinvested my project funds to purchase and raise another steer for this year's fair. I also have a breeding beef project that consists of three commercial crossbred cows and their calves.

I began participating in organized sports when I was five years old. I played soccer, baseball and basketball for several years. When I entered high school, I played basketball my freshman year and football all four years at the freshman, JV and varsity levels. While playing varsity football, I was named honorable mention for All League two years in a row. I have been a member of the Letterman's Honor Society throughout high school.

Assisting my family with their cattle ranching operation throughout my life has helped me to develop a strong work ethic. My personal experiences, including raising and exhibiting my fair projects and being involved in a wide range of activities, have helped prepare me for my future endeavors and have taught me the importance of achieving the goals I set for myself. I have learned great responsibility and leadership skills that I will use throughout my life and help me on my path to success.

I hope to someday own or manage my own business, either in the field of agricultural real estate and/or wildlife management; operating a hunting and fishing guide service while also helping to build my family's ranching business. I plan to further the pursuit of my career and educational goals by attending CSU Fresno where I will be majoring in Agricultural Business Management. I know that attending college and obtaining a degree will help me to acquire a rewarding career as well as fulfill my dream of becoming self-sufficient. I believe that my chosen field of study will offer me the opportunity to explore the possibilities available to me for fulfilling my occupational goals.

Thank you for your support of my college education.



**Gary Valente, CSU Fresno**

Thank you for selecting me as one of your 2007 Scholarship winners. I am proud to receive the Jim Kissler Memorial Scholarship.

I have enjoyed my first year attending CSU Fresno. I am very active in the Alpha Gamma Rho National Agricultural Fraternity where I am the vice noble ruler for Commissary. I am also junior chairman of the FFA Field Day Committee assisting with all the activities to make the field day run smoothly. I also gained knowledge at my on-campus job at the Agricultural Operations department as a mechanic.

I recently was selected to receive my American Farmer Degree through the National FFA organization. My projects included a one-acre old-vine zinfandel vineyard, raising a herd of over 20 Boer/Nubian Cross meat goats and work experience for three farmers in the Lodi area.

I am looking forward to returning to CSU Fresno for the fall semester. I am majoring in agricultural education, in hopes of being an agricultural teacher at the high school level.

Thank you again for awarding me this scholarship.