

Chester County
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Youth Philanthropy Award

honoring young, emerging philanthropists under age 35, who give time, talent and treasure, and inspire others to give

Anne Hawkins of West Chester

West Chester teenager Anne Hawkins has been instrumental in establishing a public library in the Honduran community of La Entrada with the help of her church, Westminster Presbyterian in West Chester. Hawkins learned about the plight of the children of La Entrada and decided to make getting books to them her Girl Scout Gold Award Project. “My Girl Scout Award went from hobby to career before I even got out of high school,” Hawkins says.

In return for Hawkins providing over 1,000 books and funding the library for three years, the mayor of La Entrada signed a contract to provide a building, water, electricity, and internet service. When the library opened in August 2006, Hawkins was treated as a local celebrity and was interviewed by television and radio stations.

Now in her first year at Hofstra University, Hawkins plans to continue her fund- and book-raising, hoping to replicate the Library Project of La Entrada in other underdeveloped communities around the world. “I am looking for other towns, wherever they may be, that are ready to take on the responsibility of a library,” Hawkins explains. “I will raise the money to open the library, buy the first 1,000 books, and sustain it for three to five years, so long as the town is able to absorb the cost into their municipal budget after that initial period.”

“My experiences in Honduras has changed the way I’ve looked at money,” Hawkins admits. “I’ve learned that money has the power to do good. Even rather modest resources, when spent appropriately, can go very far to make a difference in people’s lives.”