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Lilly Announces Scholarship Recipients for Those Battling Severe Mental Illness

Program helps individuals with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and related schizophrenia-spectrum disorders reintegrate into society

INDIANAPOLIS, Oct 13, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Eleven years ago, April Taylor was a successful schoolteacher when bipolar disorder derailed her career and threatened to destroy her life. Now with the help of a Lilly Reintegration Scholarship, she has returned to school to complete a degree in the culinary arts, reclaim her life and embark on a new and promising career -- this time as a chef.

"My life is largely a success story today thanks to treatment which has controlled the symptoms of my bipolar disorder," said Taylor. "I was a teacher for ten years, but after living with my diagnosis I felt a new career path was more appropriate. I am now close to completing my degree with the help of the Lilly Reintegration Scholarship. I want to say thank you to the Lilly Reintegration Scholarship committee. Thank you for giving me a second chance. Thank you for giving me my life back."

Taylor is one of 54 recipients of the 2005-2006 Reintegration Scholarships provided by Eli Lilly and Company that allow patients with mental illness to pursue educational and vocational skills better enabling them to reintegrate into society, secure jobs and regain their lives. Now in its eighth year, Reintegration Scholarship funding assists with tuition, books and lab fees for those battling bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and related schizophrenia- spectrum disorders.

"With the tremendous strides that have been made over the years in the area of mental health treatment and services, more people than ever before have the opportunity to reclaim their lives," said Deirdre Connelly, president of Lilly USA. "For many who have had to put their education and careers on hold while learning to manage their symptoms, the Lilly Reintegration Scholarship is a second chance -- allowing them to obtain the education and skills necessary to become contributing members of society. We are pleased to have been able to help so many scholars over the past eight years; we are proud of all their accomplishments, and we look forward to helping many more in the years to come."

Of the 54 recipients for the 2005-2006 school year, 28 (52 percent) are previous winners who are successfully continuing their education. An independent panel of judges made up of nine psychiatric care professionals chose the winners. Levels of study have ranged from high school equivalency programs to graduate degrees, with the areas of endeavor including engineering, law, psychiatry, graphic design, social work, architecture, education and computer sciences. Winners are attending such schools as California Institute of Technology, Culinary Institute of America, Boston University and The University of Illinois. Since the program began in 1997, approximately 700 people have been awarded Reintegration Scholarships. Many are multi-year recipients, allowing them to continue and successfully complete their education.

"The diagnosis of severe mental illness doesn't mean the end of one's hopes and dreams. Newer medications address the symptoms of mental illness, thereby allowing patients to focus on continuing their lives and pursuing things like education which previously seemed out of reach," said Ralph Aquila, M.D., director of residential community services at St. Luke's/Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York and chairman of the scholarship judging panel. "Today, we have Lilly Reintegration Scholarship recipients attending some of the finest learning institutions in the country. When we began the program in 1997 we knew there were individuals battling mental illness who had the qualifications, skills and potential necessary to accomplish these goals and it's inspiring to see them succeed."

Lilly also announced that applications for the 2006-2007 Lilly Reintegration Scholarship are currently available to be downloaded at www.reintegration.com . Applications will be accepted until January 13, 2006. Recipients will be notified in July, 2006.

About Eli Lilly and Company

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