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LAFCU AWARDS \$3,000 IN LCC SCHOLARSHIPS TO HELP AREA WOMEN ENTER/RE-ENTER WORKFORCE

LANSING, Mich. — LAFCU awarded the 2014 WHEEL™ scholarships to Andrea Skrip, of Charlotte, Rachelle Koenigsknecht, of Fowler, and Lisa McGhan, of Williamston, yesterday at its main branch in west Lansing. Each received a \$1,000 scholarship to attend Lansing Community College (LCC) fall **semester 2014.**

The Women Helping Educate Every Lady (WHEEL) scholarship program was launched last year to help women who want to enhance their education to enter or re-enter the workforce.

“For the second year in a row, we found women with inspiring stories who will use the scholarships for real good in their lives and in our community,” said Kelli A. Ellsworth-Etchison, vice president of community and business development of LAFCU. “Ongoing education and training are necessary to keep pace with demanding careers and changing technology. We’re excited to help these women achieve their educational goals and hope they inspire the women in their lives, too.”

Andrea Skrip has already earned a general associate degree at LCC and will begin the two-year radiologic technology program. The 20 year-old was raised knowing that breast tumors run in her family, but it wasn’t until she discovered a lump during a self exam that she fully prepared herself for the worst possible scenario. Fortunately, she was diagnosed with a simple benign tumor, but the experience solidified her plans to become a radiologist.



Pictured left to right: The 2014 WHEEL Scholarship recipients - Rachelle Koenigsknecht, Andrea Skrip, and Lisa McGhan.

“Some people choose a career, and for others, a career finds them,” Skrip said. “I changed my career choice three times before radiology found me. I am grateful for the opportunity to complete the program and hope to inspire other women, like my sister, to stay ambitious.”

At only 29 years old, **Rachelle Koenigsknecht** is already pursuing a second career, this time in nursing. At 18, Koenigsknecht opened and operated a custom bakery. The successful business kept her very busy for eight years, but she has sold it to focus on her growing family.

"When I was young, I had two dreams," explained Koenigsknecht. "One was to own a bakery and enjoy the artistic side of decorating cakes. But, the other was to be a nurse because I love to help people. I sometimes ask myself ‘Why start college now?’ But, I inevitably return to my gut instinct telling me that this is the path I am supposed to take. The scholarship will help me train for my career in nursing.”

Already an LCC student, she will enter the nursing associate program in the fall and anticipates graduating in May 2016. She plans to continue her education to earn a bachelor of science in nursing.

Lisa McGhan, 24, is pursuing the prerequisite courses for a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at LCC before transferring to Spring Arbor University. Her interest in teaching was sparked when she was in ninth grade and began helping her mother at work. Her mother is a third-grade teacher. McGhan attended LCC after high school, but her education was derailed by the birth of her twin daughters, who are now her inspiration for returning to school.

“I am motivated to create a better future for my daughters and to be a good example of dedication, integrity, determination and hard work,” McGhan said. “The time to focus on my education is now because I would like to be student teaching when my daughters are beginning school. This scholarship will help make this happen.”

Ellsworth-Etchison explained why the program targets adult women: “This is a scholarship uniquely designed for women who need additional education to compete in a tight labor market, whether they've been downsized or have not recently been working. Because women are usually the parent who has taken time away from the workforce to have children or for other family reasons, it can be especially difficult for them to re-enter the workforce or to obtain additional education or certifications to advance in their present jobs.”

“We believe that the success of every individual contributes to a healthy economy, and that’s what we work for at LAFCU,” continued Ellsworth-Etchison.

Winners were determined by a one-page essay about the applicant's new career choice, why she wants to pursue it now and her inspiration for returning to school. Entries were judged on content and accuracy.

To be eligible, applicants had to live or work in LAFCU's service area, which includes the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee.

About LAFCU

Chartered in 1936, LAFCU is proud to be mid-Michigan's credit union, serving the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee. A recipient of the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Award, LAFCU takes pride in bringing value to the financial lives of its members, neighbors, families and community. Offering a comprehensive range of personal and business financial products, LAFCU provides services that include checking and savings accounts, auto and mortgage lending, business accounts and business lending. LAFCU serves 55,000 members, holds more than \$580 million in assets, and maintains eight locations throughout Greater Lansing and Shiawassee County. Anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in its designated counties is eligible to join. Members enjoy benefits, such as lower interest rates on loans, higher yields on savings, insurance discounts, preferred seating for LAFCU-sponsored events, and access to 28,000 surcharge-free ATMs through the CO-OP ATM network. LAFCU supports and enriches mid-Michigan by donating funds and employee volunteer hours to many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFCU's services, visit www.lafcu.com or call 517.622.6600.

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