SMC students receive service awards

NOTRE DAME — The Office for Civic and Social Engagement (OCSE) at Saint Mary’s College has announced that three students from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend were recognized with unique service and volunteer awards. The award winners were recognized at a dinner on April 29.

Alma Bravo of South Bend, whose intended major is nursing, will receive one of five new annual awards. Bravo was honored with the Sister Maria Concepta McDermott Award for service in education. Sister McDermott (1913-1990) was an outspoken voice for the rights of the poor.

Bravo is a first-year student who, as a Citizen Scholar, receives financial aid assistance for hours she works in the community. Bravo works at Warren Primary Center in South Bend as a teacher’s aide in two English-as-a-New-Language (ENL) classrooms four days each week.

Bravo is a graduate of Riley High School and a parishioner of St. Adalbert’s Parish in South Bend. She is the daughter of Nicolas Bravo and Rafaela Najar Bravo.

Caitlin Brodmerkel of Fort Wayne, who is majoring in nursing and biology, will receive one of five new annual awards. Brodmerkel was honored with the Sister Olivia Marie Hutcheson Award for service in the health field. Sister Hutcheson (1917–2008) was a compassionate nurse, hospital administrator, builder and spiritual guide.

Brodmerkel has worked at the Sister Maura Brannick Health Center in South Bend, which serves those without insurance and provides critical health care to those with few resources, since her freshman year. Since returning, she has raised nearly $10,000 for the clinic in Uganda.

Brodmerkel is a graduate of Bishop Luers High School and a parishioner of St. John the Baptist Parish, Fort Wayne. She is the daughter of Myron and Eileen Brodmerkel of Fort Wayne.

Alicia Wilkins of Mishawaka, an elementary education major, will receive the Patricia Arch Green Award for her exemplary service to the community’s children through the College Academy of Tutoring (CAT) program at Saint Mary’s College. Green (1939-2004) graduated from Saint Mary’s in 1961 with an elementary education degree. She lived a life dedicated to serving others and believed in teaching by example.

Wilkins has given over 476 hours of her time to the CAT program over the past two years. She works as a teacher’s assistant at Lincoln Primary Center in South Bend and as a tutor at the St. Joseph County Public Library.

Wilkins also participates in the “12 Days of Christmas” initiative, the “Yes, We Can! Walk for the Hungry” and the Pen Pals program. Alicia Wilkins is a graduate of Penn High School and a parishioner of St. Bavo’s Parish in Mishawaka. She is the daughter of Tammy Wilkins.

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