

Posse D.C. Celebrates First College Graduations

On December 21, 2004, Posse D.C. welcomed the first class of local students into the Posse Program at its inaugural Awards Ceremony. On that night, we honored the work, determination and spirit of those 20 high school seniors, recognizing their individual and collective accomplishments.

Posse D.C.'s founding director, Marcy Mistrett, also painted a picture of a day five years in the future "when we again convene, to celebrate with these students as they walk across their college stage, and receive their bachelor's degrees from these prestigious institutions."

PRESIDENT OSGOOD NOTED THE SPECIAL OCCASION AT THE FIRST DUAL-CITY POSSE GRADUATION

May 16–17, 2009 brought that wonderful vision to reality as Posse D.C. celebrated the graduations of Bucknell Posse 1 and Grinnell Posse 1. Bucknell President Brian Mitchell, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admissions Kurt Theide, and Judge Susan J. Crawford, chair of the board of trustees, opened the first Bucknell Posse Graduation Ceremony by recognizing the impact that members of Bucknell Posse 1 have had on the Bucknell community.

At Grinnell, President Russell Osgood highlighted some of the key accomplishments of the graduating Posse Scholars and noted the special occasion as the first dual-city Posse graduation ceremony at Grinnell College with graduating Posses from both Los Angeles and D.C.

During the open mic session at both ceremonies, family, friends and professors of the graduating Scholars spoke about the remarkable journeys each student took to arrive at this moment and celebrated the impact of their achievements.



(clockwise from left) Grinnell Posse 1 Scholars Kai Hill, Neo Morake, Sabrina Bardonnille, Jaysen Wright, Molly McArdle and Ebony Jacobs before the Grinnell College graduation ceremony.

Many of our graduating Scholars were also given awards and honors from their school and/or their academic department. Odinakachi Anyanwu, Bucknell Posse 1, graduated cum laude and was recognized with departmental honors in economics for his honors thesis, *An Institutional Analysis of the Factors that Hinder Small Business Development in Nigeria*.

Additionally, Odi was bestowed two university prizes, which are voted upon by faculty, staff, professors, deans, and the president. These included the University Prize for Men given to "the man of the graduating class who best represents the ideals fostered by Bucknell University," as well as The John R. Crossgrove Prize in Economics, which is awarded to "a senior majoring in business or economics who combines scholastic achievement in the business curriculum with exceptional leadership qualities in the campus community."

Molly McArdle, Grinnell Posse 1, was awarded the prestigious Joseph Wall Phi Beta Kappa Scholars Competition Award for a series of short stories she wrote and published. Emily Haley, Bucknell Posse 1, was awarded the Community Outreach Award, a student leadership award for her work with Catholic Campus Ministry and Community Harvest Soup Kitchen.

All of our graduating Posse Scholars

OUR GRADUATING POSSE SCHOLARS WILL NOW JOIN A GROWING NETWORK OF POSSE ALUMNI

will now join a growing network of Posse Alumni who are making significant contributions in the workforce, graduate school and in broader communities. ✨

Grinnell Scholar Wins Undergraduate Fellowship

Juan Garcia, Grinnell Posse 3, is an aspiring Russian and sociology double major who hopes to teach in either field in the future. Recently, he was awarded the prestigious honor of being accepted into the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program (MMUF).

The MMUF seeks promising undergraduate students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. who have demonstrated their commitment to diversity on campus. Only five students are selected each year, and Juan became one of the few lucky recipients. As a rising junior at Grinnell College, he has been an active leader on campus. He is a leader of Concerned Black Students (CBS) and an engaged member of Grinnell's LGBT group.

Juan first heard of the Mellon Mays program when several of his professors nominated him. All applicants underwent a competitive application process that included a writing sample and two essays that reflected personal goals and commitment to academia and diversity. "It



COURTESY BEVERLIE LORD

Juan Garcia, Grinnell Posse 3, will participate in the Mellon Mays Fellowship Program.

.....
 was intimidating, but rewarding in the end," says Juan.

The rewards of the program go beyond the monetary gift. Juan will be given a mentor for the remaining two years of college. During the academic school year and summer interim, they will work together on a research project of

Juan's choice and plan various activities that will further prepare him to be a professor. In addition to being assigned a mentor and participating in career-oriented activities, Mellon fellows receive stipends and are offered up to \$10,000 to repay undergraduate student loans upon completion of a Ph.D. in a Mellon-designated field.

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"At first I was a little uncomfortable about standing in front of large groups of people and feeling judged," Juan says. "But after going to a college as open as Grinnell and being accepted into Mellon Mays, I know I really want to be a professor."

Juan has already started his research project on immigration and will be working on it for the next two years. ✨

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