Rogue Scholar recipient named

For Tami Williamson, the past few weeks have been a pleasant blur: full of good news and financial help for college.

First, the Rogue Community College Foundation named Williamson the 2014 Rogue Scholar recipient. The $2,000 scholarship is given annually to the top-scoring applicant among those seeking RCC Foundation scholarships. Established in 1987, the scholarship is funded entirely by the RCC Foundation Board. It is awarded to one second-year student on the basis of academic achievement and a minimum 3.5 GPA.

Next, Williamson discovered she is a recipient of the Ford Family Foundation ReStart scholarship, making her one of 46 out of 511 applicants from Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif., chosen for the award. Eleven other RCC students received the renewable Ford Family scholarship, which covers up to 90 percent of each student’s unmet financial need for college per academic year and can cover graduate school.

“I’m still shocked. It hasn’t set in yet,” said the 27-year old, who has earned a 4.0 GPA. “What it means is not having to worry about tuition and not having to rack up huge debts,” she explained. “And it’s a huge boost in self-belief to know they see something in me.”

Inspired by her dental hygienist’s dedication, Williamson’s goal is to become a dental hygienist. She likes the aspects of helping patients while educating them on prevention and care. Williamson came to RCC to take prerequisites and will continue her studies at Rogue next year. She is aiming for entry into OIT’s highly competitive dental hygienist program.

Williamson’s grandparents raised her from age 13 after both parents died from drug abuse. “I looked at that and did not want to follow that path,” she noted. A 2005 graduate of Hidden Valley High School, she worked at local grocery and department stores for more than seven years before deciding to return to school. The first in her immediate family to attend college, she’s also the incoming vice president of Phi Theta Kappa, RCC’s honor society.

Williamson says she’s grateful to RCC counselor Joe Momyer for helping her strengthen interview skills, which helped her win the scholarships. “It was a really good week and definitely changed the way I feel about myself,” she said. “I felt that I had someone in my life for the first time who believed in me,” the quiet, self-effacing Williamson, smiling.

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“The Rogue Scholar Scholarship is always a joy and an honor to award,” said Robyn Martin, RCC Foundation coordinator. “The students put such an incredible effort into their applications, and with Tami achieving only three points away from a perfect score, she is certainly a wonderful representative of what this scholarship embodies.”

Williamson also received the Peter J. and Wilma Tashnovian Scholarship and the Carpenter Foundation Scholarship.

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