



June 16, 1999

For Immediate Release

Recent honor graduate establishes scholarship with Commencement gift money

A University of Southern Indiana honor graduate from the Class of 1999 is establishing a scholarship with his graduation gift money to help history students who excel academically after overcoming a physical, financial, or academic obstacle. A history major, Dain Garrett of Carmi, Illinois, graduated summa cum laude in a class of over 1,200 students. He received his diploma from his wheelchair, a fact of life since he lives with a neuromuscular disease.

The scholarship idea came to him after he received the Senior Prize at the Honors Convocation for the School of Liberal Arts in March. Happy with the recognition, he was surprised to learn it was a cash award. Following Commencement, gift money came from friends and family. Dain, who excels in the classroom because of his ability to take in information, analyze it, and develop resolutions, decided the money could be put to good use as a scholarship. He established the Dain Garrett Merit Award and consulted with Dr. Donald Pitzer, his academic advisor, history professor, and friend, who helped him establish criteria for the merit scholarship.

The Dain Garret Merit Award will be an annual USI scholarship of \$200 for a history student who is excelling academically after overcoming a problem. It will be for use during a student's junior year and can be renewed for the senior year. The history faculty will choose the recipient. The first award will be made during the Honors Convocation in 2000.

An obstacle or problem might refer to a nontraditional student who works several jobs and raises his or her family while attending classes, or someone with comparable circumstances. It could be someone who has suffered a serious financial loss or a student who begins college without a strong academic background or a nontraditional student who goes back to school after a time away. The award would be appropriate if the student perseveres to achieve and maintain success. Learning and physical disabilities will fall into the category.

While a student, Dain, accompanied by his mother Connie, would enroll for nine hours a semester. He'd take classes at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and noon. Distance education classes in communication helped him complete University core curriculum requirements. His mother served as notetaker, reader, interpreter, and cheerleader.

Suzanne Nicholson, president of the USI Foundation, expressed appreciation for the scholarship. She said, "Can there ever be a recipient more deserving than the scholarship's founder? I can't imagine."

The son of Don and Connie Garrett, Dain graduated valedictorian from Carmi White County High School. He hopes to continue graduate work through distance education courses although a definite master's program or school has yet to be determined.

Contributions to the Dain Garrett Merit Award can be made to the USI Foundation through the university, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana.