

FOREIGN PRESS SCHOLARSHIP FUND HONORS AWARD RECIPIENTS

By Randy B. Hecht

“All good reporting is the same thing: the best obtainable version of the truth.”

With that single sentence, bestselling author and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Carl Bernstein summed up the importance of the journalist’s work. The keynote speaker at the Foreign Press Association’s annual scholarship awards dinner, he began his remarks by stressing the importance of mastering the skills necessary to do that work well. “The values we get at the beginning of our apprenticeship in this craft are what sustain us,” he said as he congratulated this year’s scholarship winners on their achievements.

The event was held to honor those achievements. However, it unexpectedly took on another dimension when New York City Deputy Mayor Edward Skyler announced that the city was honoring the FPA itself. Mayor Michael Bloomberg had signed a procla-



Photo by John Rizzo

mation declaring that day, May 13, 2008, Foreign Press Association of New York Day. FPA president Alan Capper and executive director Suzanne

Adams accepted the proclamation. The organization is particularly grateful to have received this tribute as it commemorates both its 90th anniversary year and the 15th anniversary of the establishment of its Scholarship Fund.

Following the speeches, attendees had a chance to get to know this year’s scholarship award winners. Anup Kaphle, the first prize winner, was accompanied at the dinner by his parents, Loka Nath and Tara Kaphle, who were in New York on their first-ever trip outside their native Nepal. Having just completed his master’s degree at the Columbia Graduate School

of Journalism, he will work this summer as a fellow at News21, a national multimedia initiative of the Carnegie and Knight foundations, for which he will report and produce multimedia stories about immigration and the 2008 presidential election.

“The awards dinner was a great way for me to meet some of the best in the business and interact with them. My parents said they were amazed at how much encouragement and honor young students get in the United States,” Kaphle said. “I hope to use the scholarship money to travel to Democratic Republic of Congo to work on a multimedia project on the ongoing violence. I feel that the violence in Congo has been vastly overlooked, and I hope that through multimedia, I can show what



Carl Bernstein

Photo by Mika Horelli

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AWARDS DINNER

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the conditions are really like.”

The organization awarded two second-prize scholarships. In accepting his

is at work on her PhD in medieval history.

Finally, awards were presented to the two third-prize winners. Lam Thuy Vo, who was born in Germany to Vietnam-



Deputy Mayor Edward Skyler and Suzanne Adams

Photo by John Rizzo

award, Iraqi Mariwan Hama-Saeed recalled his four colleagues at the Institute for War and Peace Reporting who were killed in the line of duty since 2003. Despite that personal knowledge of the risks journalism presents, Hama-Saeed, who just completed his master’s degree in journalism at the University of Colorado at Boulder, may return to Iraq to work, though he is being considered for positions in New York and Washington, DC. He and his wife, journalist Tiare Rath, are also weighing the option of a move to Maldives, where Rath has been offered a Fulbright Scholar teaching position.

Vinod K. Jose, also a second-prize winner, has graduated from Columbia and expects to return to Delhi by end of the summer. He hopes to have the opportunity to cover India’s elections next year for national media. In addition, he is doing some foreign correspondence on a freelance basis and working on a book proposal about South Asian politics. He attended the awards dinner with his wife, Saumya Varghese, who

ese émigrés, was the evening’s third Columbia graduate. Now a videographer at the Wall Street Journal Online and a web producer for News 21, she hopes to use her scholarship money to fund future reporting on the impact of the HIV epidemic in Vietnam.

Adeola Eunice Odalele, also a third-prize winner this year, is enrolled at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism in New York City, where her studies are concentrated on business and economic reporting. She expects to complete her studies in December and plans to return to her native Nigeria to begin a career in broadcast journalism.

The evening concluded with drawings for two door prizes donated to the FPA by British Airways and American Airlines, both of which are strong supporters of the Scholarship Fund. Each airline donated a pair of airline tickets. Their generosity helped to end a memorable evening on a celebratory note.

SINCERE THANKS

The overwhelming success of the FPA Scholarship Fund is due entirely to the support of our corporate Contributors. We are extremely grateful for your continued dedication to this outstanding program.

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LETTERS FROM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

FROM ANUP KAPHLE

I am very grateful for the award that I received. It is not only a financial help but also an inspiration for me to go out to places and write stories that have gone underreported in the media.

FPA's commitment to helping and honoring international graduate students of journalism not only motivates young reporters like me but also brings us together at an event like yesterday where we could share our ideas with veteran as well as aspiring international journalists.

Thank you so much again for the recognition and putting together such a wonderful event in our honor.

Ed. Note: At Graduation on May 20th, Anup was the recipient of three prizes. He won the Henry Taylor Award, which comes with a travel grant, given to the best international student. He also won the New Media workshop award for his interactive workshop class and the Louis Winnick prize for the best story from the Reporting and Writing Seminar

FROM VINOD K. JOSE

Once again I reiterate how important the FPA award is to me. I consider it both as a recognition and encouragement. My past reporting experience in South and South East Asia, particularly in Burma, allowed me to grow as a journalist. And now with the FPA award I feel like a clock that has just been wound up to keep up its steady momentum.

I must thank the Selection Committee, particularly Suzanne Adams, for organizing an excellent award ceremony. The FPA gala by itself was such a big exposure—from the senior journalists who spoke, like Carl Bernstein, to the judges who introduced the award recipients, and the ballroom full of senior journalists clapping and congratulating...., all made it a highly rewarding moment in my life. The inspiration and enthusiasm the occasion provided surges within me. I repeat my word of thanks to all the wonderful hearts at FPA.

FROM MARIWAN HAMA-SAEED

Almost five years ago when I decided to become a journalist, I never thought of being rewarded for it. The only thing I was thinking about was to do my best so that people can get the best quality of news. I'm still thinking the same and it will never change. But I can't express the happiness and the joy I had when I was notified that I would get the award. It was one of the greatest recognitions of my work.

The event will be an unforgettable memory in my life. I was absolutely surprised and honored by that great crowd. I never expected such an incredible reception. I owe myself to journalism and all the people who care for what I do and what I will be doing in the future. Thanks very much to the Foreign Press Association.

FROM LAM THUY VO

I'm very grateful for this recognition and honored to have been selected along with such an admira-

ble and talented group of students. In the future, I will do my best to live up to your expectations and try to dig out the stories that need coverage.

I hope to be able to report on a rising HIV epidemic among injecting drug users in Ho Chi Minh City, the re-socialization of people who discover they have the disease and the general conception of the disease in an emerging developing country. Your contribution will help to realize my plans. And for that I thank you very much.

Ed. Note: Lam was honored with a Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship as one of the five top students in the class.

FROM ADEOLA OLADELE

Yesterday was a very significant day in my life. I felt celebrated, and I met a lot of great people I otherwise wouldn't have met.

I am very privileged to have been one of the winners. The FPA gave me a reason to smile and to hope for a great future. The scholarship is a major step in my life, a means of making a difference in my country.

I'm really looking forward to going to Nigeria this summer; it will be a great reunion with my family and friends after 5 years. Thanks again for the privilege.



MESSAGE FROM MITJA MERSOL



Photo by John Rizzo

To be with my FPA friends again after so many years was a touching moment for me. It was nice to see the young recipients of our Scholarship Fund Awards whose presence assures us of the FPA's promising future. Suzanne, I admire your energy and enthusiasm. The evening at the Roosevelt Hotel showed your skill and love for the FPA. Carry on.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

By Suzanne Adams

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to our members who served as judges to ensure the success of the FPA Scholarship Fund Awards Program. We have noted that each year brings more submissions from students than previous years.

The major requirement in the application process was for each student to submit an OP-ED article of 750 words in which they were asked to discuss the following topic:

There is a rapidly growing consensus that Global Warming will have calamitous implications for the 21st century. Having been exposed to this

subject as students of journalism, how do you view coverage of this in the United States? Equally important, how is this issue being addressed, or ignored, by governmental decision makes and the media in your country?

For the many hours they spent reading, re-reading and evaluating applications from students at graduate schools of journalism in the United States, I offer my sincere thanks to the Scholarship Awards Committee.

**Bill Blase
Alan Capper
Yolanda Gerritsen
Randy Hecht
Ernest McCrary**

GONE FISHING

The Editorial Staff of the FPA wish all of you a wonderful summer holiday.

The next issue of the newsletter will appear in September.

REMINDER

If you have not paid your dues for the current year, we urge you to do so. June 30th is the deadline for payment.

Your membership is the strength of our organization.

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CHRONICLE

By Suzanne Adams

I was saddened to learn of the death of **Dixie Reynolds-Doreau**. Dixie was 102 years old. I had the pleasure of visiting her a few years ago in Newport, RI. A charming, witty and gracious lady.

Congratulations to **Roberto Socas** on the marriage of his son John to the lovely Jennifer Holmes. A delightful couple.

Exciting news from **Tony Vaccaro**. ABC-TV is preparing a retrospective of the work of this brilliant photojournalist. Keep is informed as to when it will be aired.

IMPRESSUM

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E-mail, snail-mail or phone corrections to Suzanne Adams; fpanewyork@AOL.com Web-site: www.nyforeignpress.org

Editorial Staff:
Suzanne Adams, Agnes Niemetz, John Rizzo