

ROCKY NOW

SENIOR Sampler



Ian Turner and Rose Alfieri are this year's President's Cup winners.

Senior Sampler Photos: Dave M. Shumway, RMC



President's Cup Winners

Ian Turner

**RMC TOP GRAD FINDS
FUTURE IN FLIGHT**

It's tough to top a college career like Ian Turner had at Rocky Mountain College. The Hayden, Idaho, native came to Rocky because of his grandmother.

"I was looking for a school with an aviation program, and at the time I didn't know Rocky had one. My grandma found that out and told me," he laughed.

A trip to campus, a tour of the aviation facilities, and Turner was sold.

"I didn't even visit any other colleges," he said.

(Please see Ian Turner on back page)

Rose Alfieri

**HER CHOICES: GRADUATE
SCHOOL, PEACE CORPS?**

Maybe it's the spuds.

The State known for its potatoes can be proud that both of the Rocky Mountain College President's Cup winners hearken from Idaho, which is actually nicknamed for its gems.

Rocky got two of those gems when Rose Alfieri and Ian Turner arrived on campus in 2007.

Rose knows she can attend graduate school after being accepted into the Master's in Industrial/Organization Psychology at the University of New Haven in Connecticut, but doing that would come second after serving in the Peace Corps.

"If that (Peace Corps) doesn't work out, then I'll go to grad school," she said.

(Please see Rose Alfieri on back page)

SENIOR

Ellen Moak **PERFECT 4.0 AND PERFECT PITCH**

Ellen Moak knew about Rocky Mountain College from the time she was a little girl. Attending campus events was standard family fare since her dad, Mark, was a longtime professor of fine arts, and her mom, Rhett, became an art instructor. That's why she decided she needed to go farther afield when she graduated from high school and was selecting a college.

"Both my parents were teaching there, and I had wanderlust. I wanted to experience someplace different than Billings," she said. She initially landed at Pacific Lutheran University, but it wasn't long before this girl raised under bluebird Montana skies was tired of constant rain and gloomy weather in Tacoma, Wash.

"Coming to Rocky was truly humbling, but I discovered new things about the College that had always been right under my nose. It has a really diverse population of students, and the professors far exceeded my expectations," she said.

Ellen exceeded her own expectations, earning a perfect 4.0 GPA, which also earned her the prestigious 2011 Dean's Cup Award.

Some say that, in addition to the perfect academic record, this music performance major also has perfect pitch.

"To hear her sing, is to hear an angel," said RMC President Michael Mace after Ellen performed at a President's Christmas Reception in the Great Hall.

Answering her musical muse was not the only calling Ellen followed. A high school soccer player, she decided during her senior year in high school that it was time to focus on academics and not athletics. That changed when she transferred to Rocky.

"Coach (Richard) Duffy was kind enough to let me try out for the team, and I will forever be grateful for the experience. Performing is such a natural high, and I loved the chances I had to play soccer again," she said.

She also cherished her experiences with music, her travel abroad trip to Australia, and winning a second place for art in the annual student art and writing competition.



"Never mind that I had three immediate family members on the panel of judges," she joked. (With RMC Art Professor Jim Baken on sabbatical, Ellen's sister, Leah, joined mom and dad on the faculty.)

More seriously, Ellen discovered something about Rocky that she took for granted.

"It's an underestimated place. I never dreamed I could accomplish what I did here, and that's because Rocky builds confidence. Though people tell me I'm awesome, I'm not perfect, yet," she laughs. "But, seriously, I learned I am equipped to make my own happiness."

This summer Ellen will intern at Alberta Bair Theatre (ABT) with the director of marketing and box office operations, close to a stage she may dream of performing on, but also close to her interest in public relations.

"ABT provides a nice blend of both my love for performing arts and interest in public relations," she said.

She is also eyeing a trip to Italy in the fall, when RMC offers its first semester in Italy, taught by both her dad and Professor Baken. The semester involves close up study in Florence and Rome, with residence in a villa near Perugia, in the country's heartland.

"I have been given every advantage and opportunity in the world, thanks to my parents, but also my siblings, grandparents, professors, classmates, friends, and countless others who are responsible for my success. What little I have accomplished shows the magnitude of help I have had along the way," Ellen said.

She can always pay back the favors by singing, matching her perfect grades with her perfect pitch.



Miranda Ainslie **HARD WORK WAS NOT A STRANGER DURING HER COLLEGE CAREER**

It's one thing to be valedictorian of a high school class of 10 kids. It's another to graduate summa cum laude from a class of 150 college seniors. Miranda Ainslie accomplished both, with a 3.9 GPA, just shy of perfect, and without being a total bookworm.

"I wanted to show it wasn't about the size of the class, but how much work I could put in to reach my goals, no matter how big or small the class," she said.

The Lavina, Mont., native -- the daughter of alumnus George, RMC '78, and Charlotte -- studied hard while earning her bachelor degrees in both business management and managerial accounting, and she also worked hard to finance her college studies. Miranda took a job at City Brew Coffee, first as a novice barista, but rising to assistant manager at one of the dozen store locations across Montana.

But it wasn't all work, Miranda said.

"I was a member of both Dr. Steven Hart's (RMC music professor) concert and chamber choirs. I had a wonderful work



study position in the Dean of Students office, and I got to be an RMC student ambassador," she said.

Miranda is grateful for each opportunity.

"At City Brew, I learned from a real pro, Abby Reno (daughter of City Brew owner, Becky Reno), who is a regional manager,

and Elly Langager (the Billings Heights store manager). In the Dean's Office, I worked with Teresa Rowen, who encouraged me to be involved on campus and was always supportive, and Kelly Edwards (RMC vice president of enrollment services) was won-



(Please see **Miranda Ainslie** on back page)

Joel Harris

MAKING HIS WAY WITH WORDS

Joel Harris told people at an early age that he wanted to be a writer. It didn't take him long to put his words into action.

Within weeks of graduating from Rocky Mountain College, the Fort Smith, Mont., native was realizing his dream. While studying for his graduate record examination (a standardized test used for graduate school admission), Harris has already had his byline on a front-page article in *The Billings Outpost*. The article, "African roots, American friends," is about two students at Rocky who are running marathons. It focuses on two of Harris' favorite things: running and relationships formed at Rocky, he said.

"I was home schooled most of my life, so I was used to solitary activities. I liked reading and running. But when I came to Rocky, I found those activities fostered great relationships," he said.

Some of his closest friendships were developed while he was on the cross country team.

"Those long, two-hour runs out on Zimmerman Park trails, where my teammates and I pushed ourselves to the limit, are cherished times," he said.

Cherished as well as the relationships he built with professors.

"The small class sizes suited me well. I thrived academically. To me, Rocky had an ivy-league-in-the-West feel to it, surrounded by great country with great classes and professors."

Harris double majored in literary studies and philosophy and religious thought, with almost a third major completed

in communications. He did all his work perfectly, scoring a 4.0 GPA and earning the coveted 2011 Dean's Cup.

He also chalked up running awards. In 2008, he won the MVR (most valuable runner) award; in 2009, he won the Hustler Award for "most dedicated hard worker"; and he won the Champion of Character and Coach's Award.

"I grew up in Fort Smith, out on the Crow Reservation on the banks of the Bighorn River, and since I was home schooled, I didn't really have teachers or classmates to talk over things I was interested in. When I came to Rocky, that's what I found," he said.

Now, armed with a summa cum laude degree, Harris looks forward to a career as a writer.

"I have always been a greedy collector of memories and stories, and I hope to develop that capacity. Even when I was a little kid, I consciously remember making an effort to remember interesting things that happened to me because I knew some day I could use them to write about," he said.



Tyler Kaufmann

RMC GRAD WINS \$20,000 SCHOLARSHIP TO DIVINITY SCHOOL

A Rocky Mountain College magna cum laude graduate has received a full tuition scholarship for the Master of Divinity Program at Drew University.

Tyler Kaufmann, who graduated May 7, credits winning the \$20,000 scholarship award partially for his work serving churches in Grass Range and Winnett while he was earning his degree in vocal music performance at Rocky.

"That's a large part of why I have this opportunity," he noted. "I think Drew looks to see what community service you've been involved with, as well as your academic achievements."

Drew University, located in Madison, New Jersey, is affiliated with the United Methodist Church.

Kaufmann, the son of Pete and Sherri Kaufmann of Elkhorn, Neb., said he looked forward to beginning his graduate school studies and his assistantship, which would involve serving a local church or non-profit.

"That hasn't been determined yet, but I'm eager to take on whatever I can do to help," he said.

While at Rocky, Kaufmann was vice president of the student body, won the music department's outstanding achievement award, earned the Billings Music Teachers Association (BMTA) Outstanding Musician Award, and maintained a 3.7 GPA.

It wasn't all work, Kaufmann said.

"I took advantage of all the free activities I could," he laughed.



He also was an avid participant in the RMC Outdoor Recreation Program, and helped build the climbing wall for future generations of students.

"I learned when I came here to take advantage of all the opportunities Rocky presented. That's what college is for, to explore the diversity of the world, and that's what I did," Kaufmann said.

Kaufmann was a leader on some of the Outdoor Recreation expeditions off campus, said Tim Lohrenz, RMC director of adventure recreation.

"He was energetic and enthusiastic, and really helped me out," Lohrenz said. "He also was instrumental in getting the first phase of our climbing wall built."

He was known for pitching in whenever he could help. "I even loved giving swing dance lessons," he said.

Kaufmann will take a few weeks to travel before heading to Drew. He wants to "see what glories the rest of Montana and the West have to offer."

Ian Turner

(Continued from front)

From the beginning, Turner excelled. Majoring in aviation management, with minors in business management and aeronautical science, he earned the outstanding aviation student award his sophomore and junior years, and the top graduate award his senior year.

"I cannot imagine receiving a better education to provide the foundation for entering the aviation field, whether at an airport or in an airplane, than I got at Rocky. I also got a well rounded liberal arts education."

He earned the highest senior award, the President's Cup, which is based on academic achievement and service to the College and community.

Along the way, Turner, who graduated summa cum laude, also won the Association of Airport Executives Scholarship and an internship at the Bismarck, N.D., Airport, a significant opportunity to help toward his goal of someday managing an airport or a general manager of a flight based operation (FBO).

Rose Alfieri

(Continued from front)

Part of the reason might be that Rose believes strongly in reaching out to help others.

It's why her spring break was spent volunteering at an orphanage in Tijuana, and touring homeless facilities in San Diego. It's why she participated in RMC's Students in Free Enterprise, where she could help the Billings Food Bank during the annual "Canstruction," where food cans are used to build sculptures that heighten community awareness and help replenish shelves. It's why she served as a resident advisor in campus housing.

"If I had any advice to give other students, it's to get involved and make meaningful connections," she said. "It's a privilege to be able to help others."

Rose earned the President's Cup Award partly because of her community service, but also because of her academic accomplishments. Double majoring - in psychology and business management - she just missed having a perfect 4.0 GPA.

"Only a 3.95," she smiled.

But she graduated summa cum laude, and in addition to the College's highest award, she also won the highest award from the psychology department.

Shy and soft spoken, Rose is nevertheless competitive.

"That's why I double majored. It will increase my success in competitive job markets," she noted.

She was also a competitive participant in other activities at Rocky, challenging herself with strenuous outdoor adventures like whitewater rafting, hiking, and ice climbing -- which she found "very cold, but fun, and now it's cool to be able to say I did it."

Rose also discovered plenty of fun, from dress up dessert outings when she and her friends went out for dessert because "we needed an excuse to dress up," she laughed.

She also relished pizza and bowling nights, Buffalo Wild Wings Tuesdays, trips to Red Lodge, squirt gun wars in Anderson Hall, Bluegrass Breakfasts in Molt, and hiking to the Rims over Billings at all hours of the night to see the vast cityscape stretching to the mountains. An "over the pond" adventure to Ireland with Assistant Professor Shelby Jo Long-Hammond was also memorable.

"Rocky offers many different activities, and it's worthwhile sampling as many as you can. There is something for everyone here," she said.

"I report for work the week after graduation," he said.

Wherever Turner eventually lands, he'll maintain close ties to his alma mater.

"I cherish many moments I was at Rocky. The first outdoor recreation trip I went on was one of those times. We went atop the Pryor Mountains to see ice caves and wild horses. Another trip to Bighorn Canyon during spring break was memorable, as was a trip to the Little Belt Mountains," he said.

Turner credits his parents, Diane and Steve Turner, for their support, but also lauds the scholarship he received, the faculty and staff who encouraged him, and "the campus community."

"I was told the more involved I was, the more I would enjoy it, and that was true. I developed close personal relationships with people who challenged me and helped me succeed," he said. "This is a small, close-knit campus, but it's a huge community when it comes to networking and finding opportunities."



Will You Help?

We hope you have enjoyed reading our Senior Sampler 2011 which is, as advertised, just that -- a sampler of just some of our outstanding graduates. While we haven't always had space in our publications to feature more of our exceptional graduates, many of you made sure there was always space for them at Rocky Mountain College. As always, Rocky Mountain College is here for its students, but they are here because of you. Thank you, alumni and friends, for giving back. You've made space for all our graduates in your heart. If you would like to continue to support future graduates, we welcome your contributions to the RMC Scholarship Fund. Please use the return envelope enclosed with this issue to send your contribution to further the future careers of our students.



Miranda Ainslie

(Continued from front)

derful when I worked in Admissions as a student ambassador," she said.

The word "work" comes up often when talking with Miranda, but to her, work means accomplishing something of value.

"Professor Scott Severance announced in his entrepreneurship course last fall that if we learned anything from his course, it would be the value of time management. That was a valuable lesson, and it taught me there was plenty of time in a day to get done what I needed to do, and still have fun," she said.

Managing her time paid off. During her college career, Miranda earned the Mary Alice Fortin Trustee Scholarship, the Mid-Rivers Communications, Inc., Scholarship 2009, the Montana Circle of Success Grant 2009 and 2010, and the Billings West Rotary Club Scholarship 2010.

"When you have those organizations and people behind you, you want to succeed and you learn how important it is to help others," she said. "You also want to work hard as a way to thank all those donors who make such a difference."

Miranda has no intention of slowing down now that she's obtained her degree. While continuing to work at City Brew, she'll take a closer look at graduate schools, but also scout job opportunities working in foreign markets.

"I read that experience is the hardest teacher because she gives the test first and the lesson afterward," Miranda said. "Well, I'm excited to take her tests."