

PIEDMONT SECTION AND AATCC FOUNDATION WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE TEXTILE EDUCATION

By Scheryl McDavid, Publications Director

In October 1963, the Charles H. Stone Foundation generously added the AATCC Piedmont Section as a beneficiary and recipient of disbursements it makes annually to 15 charities. The scholarship was originally set up to help students attending North Carolina State University (NCSU) and Clemson University, studying what was affectionately called "Chem. & Dye."

Recently, the AATCC Piedmont section signed an agreement with the AATCC Foundation, whereby the funds for this scholarship were transferred to the Foundation for managing and to help it grow through better exposure and additional matching donations from both AATCC and the AATCC Foundation. The new arrangement will also assist in building a Foundation scholarship at Clemson University, in addition to the existing scholarship in place for NCSU.

Unlike many scholarships, the Stone Scholarship is not based strictly on academics but is intended to help students who need financial assistance and have an interest in contributing to the textile industry. The fund was originally intended to help students who either maintain membership in AATCC or are the sons and daughters of AATCC members and, specifically, have been members of the AATCC Piedmont section. This activity will continue now under the auspices of AATCC Foundation through a new scholarship committee.

At the NCSU College of Textiles, the award process begins each fall with a review by the Stone Scholarship Committee of a list of nominated students. The committee personally inter-

views each nominee at the NCSU campus to determine financial need and to choose the two best candidates for the year. Eligible students must be rising juniors or seniors participating in a textile chemistry curriculum—known today as "Polymer & Color Chemistry"—and must have a 2.85 overall GPA. The awards are given at a rate of \$4,000 per student, for a total of \$8,000 given in awards annually. This procedure will now continue under the Foundation.

Student interviews take place on Sunday afternoons at 1:00 p.m. in a non-threatening format and focus on questions about family background. Typical questions may include: Are your parents working? Are you working and attempting to support yourself? If so, are you working in textiles? What extra curricular activities have you participated in during high school and college?

"The interview sessions benefit the students beyond determining the award winners," says Scholarship Committee Chair Kermit Holshouser. "The committee has two mill professionals and two chemical sales professionals and each student is given the opportunity to ask as many real-world questions about careers in textiles as they want. This might be their first opportunity to find out what working in textiles is really about." The selected nominees are then submitted for confirmation by the Foundation Board of Directors.

The Nominating Committee of the Foundation's Charles H. Stone Scholarship (Piedmont Section) is made up of members from the AATCC Piedmont Section: Billy Gardner, Boehme

Filatex; Wallace Ammons, Saunders Thread; Bobbi Tremain, Retired, Catawba Charlab; and Kermit Holshouser, Hickory Yarns. The committee also works with members from the former AATCC Palmetto Section (now officially part of the Piedmont Section) including: Lee Lemere, Perry Plastics Inc. and Gary Lickfield, Clemson University. These two segments will combine their efforts in 2007.

"For almost 30 years the Stone Scholarship funds have rested in a stock account without much movement," says Freddy Miller, president of Hickory Yarns Inc. "Recently, through the involvement of interested committee members, the funds were successfully re-invested and have grown to almost \$200,000, allowing an increase in the number of scholarships awarded."

In fact, the venture has been so successful that the AATCC Foundation hopes to award a third scholarship in 2007 and a fourth in 2008, and may be able to move into textile programs at other schools.

The AATCC Piedmont section also gives scholarships, from its own funds, to deserving freshmen and sophomores. Those young recipients are eligible for nomination for the Stone Scholarship when they rise to the junior and senior levels.

If you would like to learn more about the Charles H. Stone Scholarship and how your section can partner with the AATCC Foundation, contact Perry L. Grady, AATCC director of business development; telephone +1 919 414 9260; e-mail gradyp@aatcc.org.

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