



The Hancock Award

"Campus and Community: Together for Good," launched in 2009, is a strategic and creative long-term exchange of resources among the City of Hancock, Hancock Public Schools, and Finlandia University. The innovative collaboration trades a long-term package of Finlandia University educational and recreational resources for two Hancock School District properties.

A notable component of Campus and Community is the "Hancock Award," a 12-year tuition award program which began with the Hancock Central High School (HCHS) Class of 2009. There are 43 Hancock Award students currently enrolled at Finlandia: 17 from the HCHS Class of 2009; 14 from the Class of 2010; and 12 from the Class of 2011.

One of the Hancock Award recipients, Lauren Hodges, graduates this spring with an A.A.S. in Medical Assistant; another, Jason Stromer, will complete his A.A.S. in Criminal Justice this summer.

Below are updates from four of the Finlandia University Hancock Award recipients. Please visit www.finlandia.edu/campus-community for more information about Campus and Community: Together for Good and the Hancock Award.

Jessica Heinonen



Jessica Heinonen, 21, Hancock, graduated from Hancock Central High School in 2009. Now a junior at Finlandia, and a sophomore in the university's Nursing program, Jessica plans to pursue a master's degree in nursing after she completes her B.S.N.

Two Finlandia classes Jessica has found particularly interesting so far are Substance Abuse and Pharmacology. She identifies assistant professor of nursing Judy Crotty as her favorite teacher.

"In my view, Judy Crotty is by far the best teacher at Finlandia," Jessica says. "I adore her! She is very understanding, intelligent, and she's always more than willing to help out with anything!"

Jessica works part-time as a CNA at Aspirus Keweenaw Home Health Services, Calumet. In her free time, she enjoys running, baking, and hanging out with friends.

Jessica is the daughter of Gordie and Sue Heinonen of Hancock. Her brother, Alex Heinonen, is a freshman Finlandia Hancock Award recipient majoring in Business.

Jared Korpela

Finlandia freshman Jared Korpela, 18, graduated from Hancock Central High School in 2011.

Jared enjoys working with numbers and analyzing various aspects of business, so he has chosen a major in Business with a concentration in Accounting.

After he completes his bachelor's degree, Jared plans to pursue a master's degree at Michigan Technological University. Eventually, he hopes to work for the I.R.S. in Minneapolis.

So far, Jared's favorite classes at Finlandia include a computer class, "because I feel we all need to be knowledgeable about computers," and an English class with assistant professor Mark Lounibos.



"He (Lounibus) made English interesting," Jared explains. "He's the only teacher who has been able to do that for me."

Jared works part time at his father's business, World of Wood, Hancock. In his free time, he enjoys playing hockey and fishing. He is the son of Mark and Thelma Korpela of Hancock.

Dylan Peterson



Freshman Dylan Peterson, 19, is a 2011 graduate of Hancock Central High School. He is majoring in Integrated Design at Finlandia because, "I have always been a good illustrator and creator of anything and everything."

Dylan is also a student-athlete on the Finlandia Men's Golf team. "It's been great so far; the competition is awesome," he notes.

Dylan feels that the best part about Finlandia is the Art & Design program as a whole. He says, "I just hope more 'artsy' Hancock grads realize what a (great) opportunity the Hancock Award is."

"Life drawing has been a blast," Dylan says of that class. "I have always been partial to drawing people and their many faces and feelings."

"My advisor, Rick Loduha, is great," he says, adding that all the Art & Design teachers are awesome.

Dylan works part-time at the Portage Lake Golf Course, Houghton. In addition to golf, he enjoys working out and playing guitar. Dylan is the son of Patty Markham Peterson, Hancock, and the late Glenn Peterson. His brother, Mitchell, is a junior Hancock Award student at Finlandia majoring in Business.

Michael Simila

Michael Simila, 21, is making the most of his time at Finlandia, taking full advantage of the opportunities coming his way. "I encourage others to do the same, because it's life," Mike advises. "Try things while you can. Who knows where it will take you!"

Mike graduated from Hancock Central High School in 2009. He is a junior Graphic Design major at Finlandia,

and president and founder of the Finlandia student CEO Club, a business networking club.

Mike is interested in, and good at, both business and art, and he has set his sights on a career in advertising and commercial art.

"I picked something I was good at and would like doing the rest of my life," he explains. He plans to move to a bigger city to pursue his career. Eventually, he wants to open his own graphic design business.

Mike expects to complete his B.F.A. in spring 2013, and then "stick around long enough" to finish his minor in Business at Finlandia.

"The Hancock Award really is a blessing," Mike says. "It gives a lot of students the opportunity to go to college at a low cost, which some may not have been able to do without this award. Finlandia is an overall great university; the teachers are always there to help you."

Mike's favorite teacher at Finlandia is Integrated Design professor Rick Loduha. "He's one of the most interesting people out there," Mike says of Loduha. "A lot of the time I would show up to his classes just to listen to him speak. He has such a different outlook on things."

Mike stresses, however, that he likes all the teachers at Finlandia. "In a smaller school, it's important to interact with faculty. I feel comfortable enough here that I could go to any of them for help."

Mike has a work-study position as a graphic designer for Finlandia Admissions, he works part-time as a sales associate at Dunham's Sports, Houghton, and helps coach the Hancock Central High School basketball team.

In his free time, Mike likes to have fun anywhere he finds himself. "I hang out with my friends, watch movies, play football, basketball, and baseball, and snowboard and mountain bike," he says.

Mike's parents are Mary and Michael Simila of Hancock. He is a member of the Church of the Resurrection, Hancock. Mike's cousin, Josh Jaehnig, recently graduated from Finlandia's Art & Design program.

