



News Release

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Scholarship Enabled Century College Student to Pursue Academics, Band Gigs and Princess Appearances

A scholarship from the Century College Foundation has allowed Vanessa Hendrickson of Cottage Grove to keep wearing many hats: college student, rock band member, beauty pageant winner and waitress.

“It is a full life,” said Hendrickson, 21, who is thinking about becoming a lawyer or a professional musician. “Winning the scholarship made all the difference.”

The Century College Foundation this year awarded 109 scholarships worth \$132,500 - a significant increase over a year ago when 92 scholarships worth \$112,950 were awarded.

Hendrickson had been thinking about stopping out of school until she received the letter notifying her that she had received the Ritt Family Scholarship. “I just had to go back to school then,” she said.

Hendrickson was thrilled to meet the Ritt family members who donated the money for the scholarship at the Century College annual scholarship dinner on Oct. 29. She thanked the Ritts for their generosity and told them how the scholarship impacted her life.

A 2006 graduate of Park High School, Hendrickson has played guitar since she was eight years old, and she currently plays guitar and sings in a rock band called Trinity with her two sisters, Jade, 18, and Amber, 17. The three write all their own music (hard rock) and do all their own booking. They get most of their gigs from their My Space web site: www.myspace.com/trinitymusic3. They have played at the Whiskey Junction blues bar, the Tracaderos nightclub, The Rock nightclub, the Dinkytownner and the Varsity Theater. In the summer of 2007, they won first place at the Lumberjack Days Festival in Stillwater, and in July 2008, they won first place in the Depot Coffee House Battle of the Bands, which landed them a gig at the 2008 Minnesota State Fair.

Band practice usually takes place in the basement of the sisters' home in Cottage Grove. (The neighbors have only had to call the police once due to volume.) Jade sews many of the costumes.

Their first CD is being recorded in January 2009.

Hendrickson is also the reigning Miss Cottage Grove princess 2008-2009, and she frequently attends parades and charity events. In addition, she works part-time as a waitress at Applebee's in Cottage Grove, and plays in the contemporary worship service every Sunday at Rose of Sharon Lutheran Church in Cottage Grove.

Hendrickson is earning top grades at Century, where she is taking classes in English, philosophy, sociology and communications. "All my professors are great," she said. "My goal when I graduate from Century is to go on to either law school or music school."

