



Saint Viator Students Win Scholarship Named for Army Pfc. Will Newgard

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Donald Calmeyn (left) and James Thomas pose with Kaki Newgard, mother of the late Army Pfc. Will Newgard.

Two Saint Viator graduates were among this year's winners of a memorial scholarship set up through SALUTE, Inc., in Arlington Heights, and dedicated to the memory of Army Pfc. Will Newgard.

The 20-year old serviceman --- who grew up in Arlington Heights and graduated from Hersey High School --- was killed in Dec. 2006 by a roadside explosive device while on duty in Baghdad.

But his commitment to serving his country continues through the college scholarship created in his honor.

Recent Saint Viator graduates Donald Calmeyn of Wheeling and James Thomas of Palatine both received \$1,000 scholarships, along with Jessica Mueller, an Elk

Grove High School graduate.

Calmeyn plans to attend Illinois State University, while Thomas will head to the University of Iowa and Mueller to Northwestern University.

They earned their awards for their outstanding academic records, as well as an essay detailing the role of service and sacrifice in their lives.

Newgard's mother, Kaki, serves on SALUTE's board of advisors and she works to find ways to support its mission to meet the financial, physical and emotional needs of military members, veterans and their families.

Scholarships, she says, are an extension of that patriotic mission, by reaching out into the community and empowering young people.

At SALUTE's signature event, its 5K and 10K run held over the Memorial Day weekend in Arlington Heights, the organization drew more than 900 participants, the majority of them young adults, who learn more about their work with military families.

SALUTE's founders, Will and Mary Beth Beiersdorf of Arlington Heights, continue to raise funds for a variety of programs, including sending veterans to a paralympic sports camp this summer sponsored by the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

Other long running programs they support include providing financial assistance to Illinois veterans' hospitals through the Forgotten Veterans' Program, the Wounded Warrior Laptop Program, and the Nightingale Program, which aids families of injured military personnel while they are hospitalized at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

"We never want to forget those who worked to guarantee and secure our freedom," says Will Beiersdorf, a former Naval reservist. "America would not be where it is today, without these heroes."