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Gay/Lesbian Law Scholarship Awarded for Second Year

SAN FRANCISCO—Marty K. Courson of San Francisco, a third-year student at Golden Gate University School of Law is the winner of the Michael A. Zamperini/W. Clay Burchell Scholarship, designed to benefit lesbian and gay law students.

Now in its second year, the scholarship was established by a \$15,000 gift to the law school by Zamperini, an associate professor of law and director of writing and research there, and his partner Burchell, a former official with the federal government. In the past year, the endowment has increased to nearly \$20,000, with contributions to the fund coming from throughout the legal and local communities.

"We established the scholarship because we saw it as a positive way to provide financial support and encouragement for openly gay and lesbian law students and, at the same time, reward their academic excellence," Zamperini said. "Clay and I are extremely pleased that others are participating with us in this endeavor. We hope to see the endowment grow even larger." Last year the scholarship award was \$500; this year Courson received \$750. "As the endowment grows, the amount of the scholarship will increase," Zamperini said.

Courson, who is at the top of his class academically, spent the summer working for the California State Court of Appeal. Last year, his entry won "Best Brief" in the school's Appellate Advocacy Moot Court Competition. Courson also earned the American Jurisprudence Award for academic excellence in several subjects. He also was one of two students awarded the Phillip Burton Endowed Law Scholarship this year.

Before starting law school, Courson worked in the aerospace industry and remained deeply closeted. "Law school changed all of that," he said. "From the beginning, I met students and professors who

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refused to leave their sexuality in the furtive atmosphere of the closet. They have been a real inspiration to me." He also credits Zamperini and Burchell for establishing the scholarship. "I am very grateful for the scholarship and I think what Michael and Clay have done is tremendous. They really are leaders in the gay and lesbian community, and the scholarship is an enduring example of their leadership."

The scholarship is awarded annually to a gay or lesbian student in his or her final year at the Golden Gate University School of Law, and is based on overall academic achievement and academic performance in the writing and research courses.

Contributions to the endowment of the Michael A. Zamperini/W. Clay Burchell Law Scholarship are welcome. Call 415/442-7824 for information on how to contribute to the fund.

Founded in 1901, the Golden Gate University School of Law is located on the San Francisco Campus of Golden Gate University at 536 Mission St. The law school is approved by the American Bar Association. The university is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

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