

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation establishes new scholarship



Hinds students Andrew Thomas, left, and Wyatt McClaskey are recipients of a new scholarship provided by the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. Standing are Ray Neilsen, co-trustee and chairman of the foundation, and Trish Oba, program officer, Quality of Life Grants.

The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation Scholarship for Students with Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) has been established at Hinds and awarded for the 2014-2015 academic year. The scholarship is providing full in-state tuition and fees for two students, Wyatt McClaskey of Clinton and Andrew Thomas of Pearl, for the remainder of their studies at Hinds.

A supplemental support fund has also been established by the Neilsen Foundation in the Hinds Foundation office to reduce barriers for Neilsen Scholars' academic success. This supplemental fund supports needs related to the students' spinal cord injury, such as caregiver services, adaptive equipment or assistive technology and subsidizes other costs such as housing, child care and/or transportation.

The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation was established in 2002 as a private foundation dedicated to research to develop treatments for spinal cord injuries and quality of life programs for people living with SCI.

Craig Neilsen lived with a high level spinal cord injury for 21 years until his death in 2006. He was a visionary with an entrepreneurial spirit who led his companies

with inexhaustible passion. While he worked hard and was grateful for what he had, he always remembered others who were experiencing challenges similar to his own. He developed the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation to contribute in a

significant way to SCI research and to offer those with SCI the quality of life they deserve.

Mississippi Methodist Rehabilitation Center is working with Hinds to identify potential applicants and to assess their needs.

"Hinds Community College is about providing an affordable, accessible and quality higher education for all people," said Hinds Community College Foundation Coordinator Betty Carraway. "The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, along with the Mississippi Methodist Rehabilitation Center, are dedicated partners in that effort, and we are very grateful for their support of our students."

For more information about how to apply for the 2015-2016 academic year, please contact Jamy Dickson, coordinator of disability services, 601.857.3386, jedickson@hindsc.edu. «