



## Will to Win: Merck Scholarship Supports Students' Ambitions



(NAPSA)—Between academics, athletics, and after-school activities, high school can place a lot of demands on today's teens. Add a chronic condition like asthma to the mix, as one in six high school students say they do, and it's that much harder for teens to reach their goals academically, in sports and while pursuing their passions in the arts and in their communities.

To celebrate their accomplishments and recognize the hurdles they've overcome to reach them, 10 students from across the country are rewarded for their success each year through Merck's Will to Win Scholarship Program. The scholarships recognize high school seniors with asthma who excel in academics, the performing arts, visual arts, community service, athletics and science.

One particularly remarkable example of such success is Victoria Petry of Corbin, Ky., who was one of the scholarship recipients in 2010. Petry was always interested in singing and acting, and she had a knack for taking an audience's breath away. When diagnosed with asthma at age 9, however, she began to notice the effects of her asthma while involved in plays at school. Despite this, she remained dedicated to performing and overcame the challenges associated with her asthma.

Today, Petry is an accomplished actress who has performed in

numerous musicals and other plays, including "The Wizard of Oz," "Hello Dolly," and "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." She is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in performing arts at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo., and she is using the Will to Win scholarship to help pay her tuition.

"I really want to do theater after I finish college—I'd like to direct or do something technical," Petry said. "This opportunity gave me the drive to keep pursuing my goal. It was kind of a mental pick-me-up to receive financial support for my drive to be an artist."

Petry said she has also considered returning to her hometown and opening a theater there to give the art form back to her community.

"The funds Merck provided through the Will to Win Scholarship have made funding my college education much easier," Petry said. "I'm very grateful for the support and I highly recommend eligible students apply for it."

This fall, \$50,000 in scholarships will be awarded to 10 students. All scholarship winners will be required to supply documentation of U.S. citizenship, acceptance into an accredited college and enrollment in college for the fall 2011 semester.

To apply for the Will to Win Scholarship, students should review the information, applications and entry rules at [www.willtowinscholarship.com](http://www.willtowinscholarship.com).