



CALIFORNIA SQUARE DANCE COUNCIL, INC. YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2003 SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION

JESSICA HORTON WINS FIRST CALIFORNIA SQUARE DANCE SCHOLARSHIP

On Saturday, May 8, 2003, California Square Dance Council Presidents Pat and Ave' Herndon had the pleasure of presenting the first ever Council-sponsored college scholarship to a California youth square dancer, Jessica Horton. The \$250 award was made during Council's quarterly meeting of association presidents at the Hyatt Hotel in San Jose, CA.

Jessica Horton is an 18 year old senior at Mira Loma High School in Sacramento, CA, and represents the Associated Square Dancers of Superior California (ASDSC). She began dancing at the age of 12 when her grandmother (longtime *Squarecaster* editor Lovina Jellesed) took her to the Square Generations family club under the tutelage of caller Bill Swayne. During her time with the club she has held several positions, including youth president of the club in 1998. She has served as a pivot point for Harvest Hoedown, escort for incoming officers at the ASDSC Inaugural Ball and helped with several fundraisers for the club. Jessica was also part of the winning square at the 1st State Youth Square Dance Competition in 2002. Currently she is a member of the River City Rugratz youth club.

In her application essay, Jessica told us that square dancing has taught her several lessons about life. First of all she said, "If you are overwhelmed just hold out your hand, someone's bound to come to your rescue." Her second lesson from square dancing was that "it is far better to work together and understand everyone is on your team and it's better to not let it break down because of one little mistake. Just laugh, smile, and don't be malicious or inconsiderate because the mistake could have been yours." Her third lesson was that, as a young dancer, "you are more prone to be judged by the first impressions. Whether you're at your first interview or your first square of the evening, you are judged on your appearance and your attitude, and that first impression will influence the people around you. Therefore, young adults need to work to understand those around them, and show their abilities, and the fact that they are more fun to be around than anyone else." Jessica noted that the final contribution square dancing has made to her life was that, "to go far and receive more out of life, you have to be challenged and learn different techniques to accomplish your goals so you will be more able to contribute to people around you." These are pretty profound words from a young lady.

Following an extended standing ovation from the members of Council, Jessica was presented with a plaque by the Herndons. Jessica plans to attend Sacramento's American River College this Fall.

In May of 2002 the California Square Dance Council honored a request by Council's Youth Advisory Committee to provide an educational scholarship to a youth square dancer from the state of California. Through private donations and the sale of State Convention grand prize tickets, Council currently has enough funds to offer the scholarship for the next three years. Fundraising efforts will continue so that the scholarship will be a permanent offering from Council. To be eligible for the scholarship, dancers must be at least a senior in high school, but not yet 21 years of age by May 1st of the year they apply, and have been dancing for at least one year. Complete applications are available on Council's website, www.squaredance.org, or you can request one via e-mail at CAYouthSqrs@aol.com or by calling (916) 549-2714.