

# Scholar's stellar success

*Cortney Timmons garners Truman and Udall scholarships*

Neatly tucked into southeastern Oklahoma, the rural community of Byng boasts only 1,100 people, but one Oklahoma State University scholar of distinction calls this small town home.

Byng native Cortney Timmons, a biosystems and agricultural engineering senior, has earned two of the most coveted national academic awards — the Truman and the Udall scholarships.

"Networking is one of the reasons why I started applying for these different scholarships," Timmons said. "I go into every scholarship without any expectation."

The middle child of Steve and Lisa Timmons developed a passion for agriscience and a desire to help others and the environment in her junior high environmental sciences courses. This passion endured into her college years.

"Cortney wants to make a difference in the world," said Ron Elliott, BAE department head.

Timmons said her true motivation is to make the world a better place to live. One of the ways she has

advanced this motivation is by starting a tailgate recycling program at OSU. This program started as an idea based on a University of Missouri program, which was founded by a student Timmons met when she received the Udall.

The recycling program started during the 2007 football season with students giving bags to individuals who are tailgating. The bags then are collected and taken to Habitat for Humanity to benefit its outreach program.

"A lot of people would say her biggest success would be the Truman Scholarship," said Jeremy Cowley, Timmons' fiancé and agricultural education teacher at Edmond High School. "She would say her biggest success would be her tailgate recycling."

Timmons' drive was not gained overnight.

"My parents instilled in me a good work ethic," Timmons said.

As a senior in high school, she and three teammates won a state championship at the science fair, which earned her an opportunity to go to Japan. Lisa Timmons said her daughter wanted a state championship banner to be put on the Byng's school gym wall.

Timmons participated in more than science research projects during her high school years. She was active in basketball, student council and FFA.

After high school graduation in 2004, Timmons served the Oklahoma FFA as the southeast district vice president. Kent Boggs, Oklahoma FFA executive secretary, said Timmons was a team player. He said she never wanted the lime light and was always working toward the betterment of the group.

"She never seems to have a bad day," Boggs said.

While an FFA officer, Timmons became involved with student organizations in her field of study at OSU. Timmons said she tries as much as possible to help others achieve excellence. Her BAE research mentor agreed.

"You can rely on her to make sure other groups are working together," said Glenn Brown, BAE professor.

Brown said Timmons participates in class discussions and is one of the leaders in the classroom. Elliott said Timmons remembers what it is like to be a freshman and mentors the other students.



BRIAN WOMACK

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*Cortney Timmons plans to attend graduate school after graduation in May 2009.*



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*Cortney Timmons sorts recycled objects as part of the OSU tailgate recycling program she helped start.*

“Cortney has a natural leadership ability,” Elliott said. “She has appreciation for what people are going through.”

Lisa Timmons said her daughter tries to do as much as possible to help others achieve excellence.

“From the time she was little, she has always been very sensitive to other people’s needs,” Lisa Timmons said. “She is definitely caring.”

Her passion for others will carry her to the next step in her education.

After Timmons and Cowley marry in June 2009, she plans to attend graduate school, but she is undecided on where to earn a master’s degree in environmental engineering related to agriculture.

“I have always wanted to go to grad school,” she said.

This year, Timmons is applying for a Marshall Scholarship, which means she would study in the United Kingdom for two years. Only 40 U.S. students who graduate from a four-year institution receive this award each year.

Timmons said OSU is “near to her heart” and she will not forget the people or the education. OSU has provided her with an opportunity to grow and be competitive, and

the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources has helped her become a better student.

“I think it is just incredible what we have in our college,” Timmons said. “It’s the best in the nation.”

No matter where life takes Timmons, her passion, drive and work ethic will be instrumental to her success. •  
*By Brian Womack, Hinton, Okla.*

### *Truman and Udall Scholarships*

The Truman Scholarship honors Harry S. Truman, who was the 33rd president of the United States. The \$30,000 scholarship for graduate education is awarded to college juniors based on their academic achievements and public service.

The Udall Scholarship honors Congressman Morris K. Udall’s 30-year legacy of public service. The \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to 80 college sophomores or juniors who demonstrate commitment to careers related to the environment, tribal policy or health care.