

Interacting in a group hasn't always been easy for top Most Valuable Student Colin Norick, pictured here with fellow finalist Cynthia Lu of California at the scholar outing in Reno. But in Reno and at the Leadership Weekend, he clicked immediately with his #ElksFamily.



## COLIN NORICK: BORN READY

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Ask top Most Valuable Student Colin Norick if he's ready, and he'll tell you that he was born ready. He wasn't. Colin was diagnosed with severe autism when he was 2.

"He couldn't communicate," says his mother, Tara. "There was no recognition that we were human."

Years of intense therapy followed the diagnosis. Tara quit her job as an electrical engineer in New York City, and the family moved to Montana so that she could afford to spend time working with Colin when his therapists were not.

"Seven hours a day for months," Colin says of the therapy. "No breaks."

The idea was to help Colin surface, to make him aware that there were other sentient people around him. He finally broke through in second grade, while his classmates were singing the "12 Months of the Year" song, of all things.

"It was just this 'pop,'" Colin says. "I'm suddenly aware. I was thinking. I looked around. Everyone else around me was thinking. I wasn't the only one."

"I spent many, many years not knowing if Colin would be able to live on his own," Tara recalls, "much less be able to communicate, graduate high school, to head off to college, and to—certainly, a dream I didn't even entertain—to be on stage at the Elks National Convention giving a speech as the top scholar."

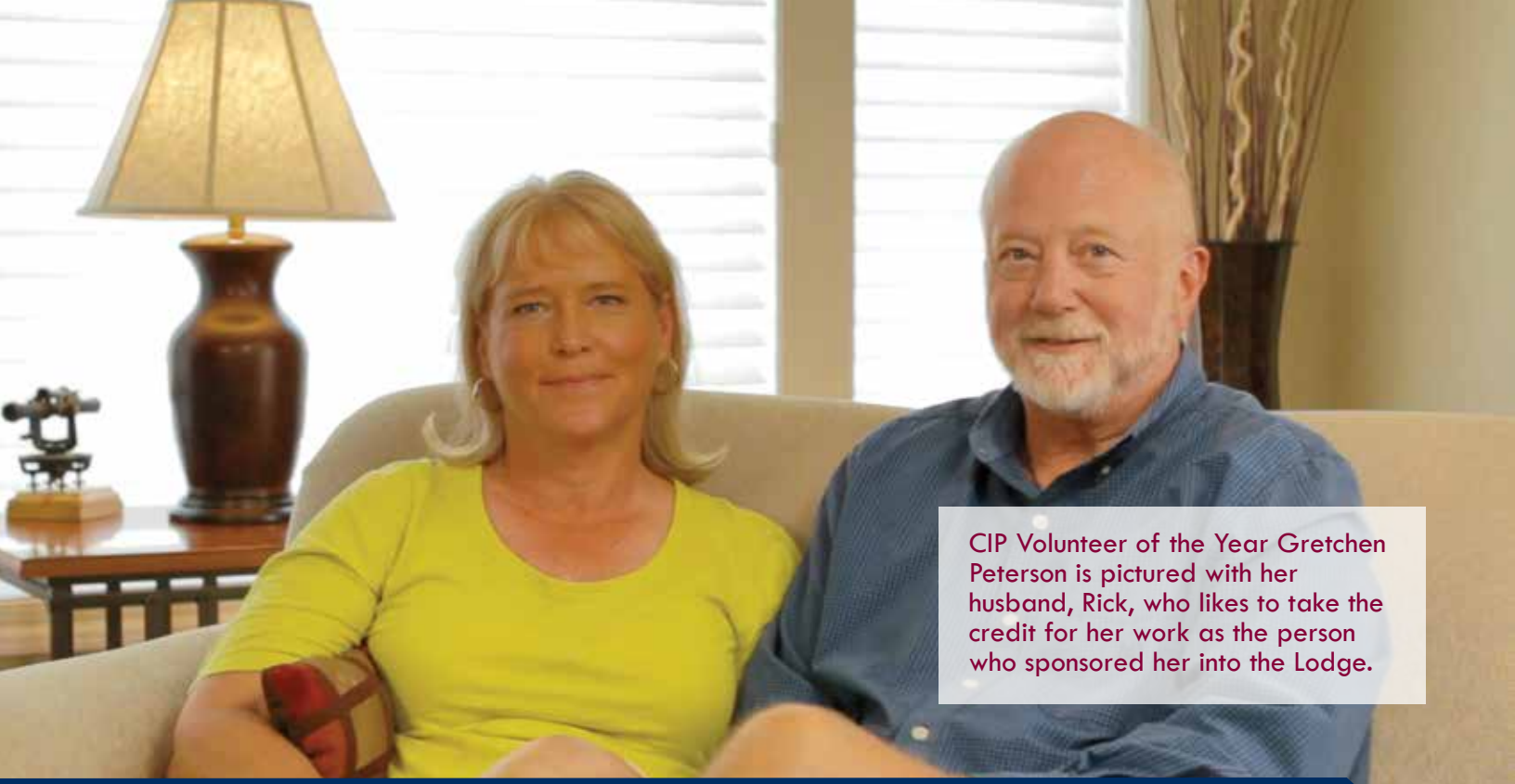
*see Born Ready, continued on page 4*



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CIP Volunteer of the Year Gretchen Peterson is pictured with her husband, Rick, who likes to take the credit for her work as the person who sponsored her into the Lodge.



## DO GOOD THINGS TOGETHER

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**OCTOBER 31**  
2018 Impact Grant  
Announcement

**Emergency Educational Grant**  
Application Deadline

**NOVEMBER 27**  
Most Valuable Student  
Scholarship Applications Due  
Online at 11:59 p.m. Central  
Time

**JANUARY 7-13, 2018**  
Winter Elks Scholar Service Trip  
in Santa Monica, Calif.

**FEBRUARY 2, 2018**  
Legacy Awards Application Due  
Online at 11:59 a.m. Central  
Time

Not convinced one person can make a difference? Sometimes all it takes is something as simple as a pot roast.

Hopkins, Minn., Lodge No. 2221 helps veterans transitioning from homelessness with supplies for their new place through their Welcome Home Vets project.

“When making deliveries, we call the veteran before we come by,” says project volunteer Pat Wright. “This gentleman was so excited, he kept saying that the first thing he was going to do in his new kitchen was make a pot roast.”

Wright and the other volunteers decided to pick up the ingredients for a pot roast dinner on the way.

“He was just thrilled beyond belief,” Wright says.

The driving force behind this and myriad other stories of impact is the Lodge’s grants coordinator, Gretchen Peterson. Peterson was named the 2017 Volunteer of the Year for the Community Investments Program and was honored at the Convention in Reno this past July.

Peterson has been instrumental in securing CIP grant funding for her Lodge since 2012, including all five grant opportunities for two years running.

“Our Lodge has invested a lot in ENF programs,” Peterson said when she accepted the award. “I’m here representing my Lodge and all of the hard work they’ve put into these projects.”

From packing supply bags for homeless teens through the Teaming Up for



Teens Impact Grant project, to running a veterans' Christmas project and stocking food at a food pantry with the help of local youth, Peterson and the Hopkins Lodge put in the hard work to make a difference. She knows how to harness the power of CIP grants to cultivate community awareness of her Lodge.

Peterson has advice for Elks who want to do the same with CIP grants.

"There's a lot of need out there—find something that resonates with your Lodge, apply, and speak with your heart."

You can be that one person who makes the difference in your Lodge. Visit [elks.org/cip](http://elks.org/cip) to get started. Pot roast not included.

*The Elks National Foundation allocated \$12.53 million this year to fund the Community Investments Program. CIP grants offer Lodges opportunities to serve the community in ways that will raise the Lodge's profile, energize the membership, encourage former members to return to the fold, and gain the notice of people who want to be part of an organization that's doing great things. To learn more, please visit [elks.org/CIP](http://elks.org/CIP).*



## SOPHIE ACES RENO

Sophie Phillips knows how to hit her mark! This year's Getty Powell Award Winner sank 24/25 on the court at the Hoop Shoot National Finals in Chicago. At the Elks National Convention in Reno, Sophie went 1/1 on the mound, throwing a perfect strike for the ceremonial first pitch during Elks Night at the Reno Aces, an affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks. Next up for Sophie: a trip to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts, for the 2017 Enshrinement Ceremony!

## ASK THE ENF...

**Q** I heard that my kids automatically get scholarships since I'm an Elk. And, if I pass away, you will pay for their college tuition. Where can I find more information about these fabulous programs?  
—Curious in California

**A** Thanks, Curious!  
You're correct that our scholarship programs are fabulous, but as to how, your information is a little off.

We do offer scholarships exclusively to the children and grandchildren of Elks, but they're available through a competitive, merit-based contest. Only the top 300 applicants will receive scholarships in this year's Legacy Awards competition.

We also offer up to \$4,000 per year in college assistance for the children of deceased or totally disabled Elks through our Emergency Educational Grant program. These scholarships are not intended to cover the entire cost of college, however.

Get the facts at [elks.org/scholars](http://elks.org/scholars) or ask your Lodge Scholarship Chair for newly updated materials regarding our scholarship programs.

Have a question for the ENF? Email us at [enf@elks.org](mailto:enf@elks.org).



From left: Trustee Frank Garland of Washington chats with Tara, Colter and Colin Norick at the donor event in Reno. Colter was an MVS finalist in 2015.



## CONTESTS KICK OFF

**L**ike the shirt says, Elks scholars are Elks family. Here, scholars enjoy a barbecue during the Convention in Reno and forge relationships that wouldn't be possible without their ENF scholarships—scholarships that are helping them realize their academic dreams.

Next spring, we'll welcome 800 new scholars into the Elks family through the Most Valuable Student and Legacy Awards scholarship contests, which kicked off September 1. Encourage high school seniors in your life to visit [elks.org/scholars](http://elks.org/scholars) for more information and applications.

*Born Ready, continued from page 1*

Colin will take his \$50,000 scholarship to Stanford in the fall, where he plans to study cognitive science and computer science. But first, he spent the summer interning with the Department of Defense in Maryland. What could make a once-in-a-lifetime experience like that even more special?

"He was joined by his lovely older brother," answers brother Colter, who was one of the finalists at the second Leadership Weekend in 2015. He's now a rising junior at Duke. "It has been a great adventure before his first year at college."

"We are renting an apartment," says Colin. "He cooks for me. He does the dishes."

"I make sure he gets up for work in the morning," laughs Colter. "Honestly, Colin and I are the best of friends. It's been an awesome experience to spend his last high school summer together."

Of course, it wasn't always rainbows and unicorns for the two brothers. Colter had to participate in Colin's therapy and frequently struggled to relate to a brother who couldn't communicate.

"Colter would come to me and say, 'Mom, he is such a bad brother!'" recalls Tara.

"Autism isn't something you are ever cured from," Colin says. "I learned through my therapy—what is right, what is wrong, how to act and when to act. ... I still think in generally a different way than other people."

"I just want to thank the Elks," Tara says. "The opportunity that you have given these young men, to move forward with their lives and impact the world, and the example that you set with the good work that you do for kids, for veterans, for the homeless—I just can't tell you how grateful I am."



Director Jim O'Kelley (left) and Colin Norick share a laugh during the live recording in Reno of the *Midday with the ENF* podcast. In addition to the Noricks, episode 38 featured 10 other guests. Tune in at [enf.elks.org/midday](http://enf.elks.org/midday).

"Going to two of the best colleges in the U.S., meeting so many cool people at the Leadership Weekend, the opportunities that have opened for us," adds Colter. "None of that would have been possible without the Elks."

"I've relied on other people for a large portion of my life," concludes Colin. "I wouldn't be here today without other people, and I couldn't go to college without the Elks."

Tara still worries about her kids, but they're the typical worries of a parent. Colin wasn't born ready, but he's more than ready now.

Tara wipes tears from her eyes. "It is almost more than my heart can bear."

*The Noricks were guests on the special 38th episode of the Midday with the ENF podcast, which was recorded at the Elks National Convention in Reno. Listen to the complete interview at [enf.elks.org/midday](http://enf.elks.org/midday).*

## NEW YEAR, NEW GOAL

National President Malcom J. McPherson, Jr., of New Jersey announced the new per-member-giving goal at the Convention in Reno. He raised it by 10 cents to \$4.75. In 2016-17, we set a new per-member-giving record at \$8.151.

## CELEBRATE #ELKS150 THROUGH SERVICE

The Elks have been serving communities for 150 years—what better way to celebrate than through service?

The sesquicentennial festivities kicked off at the Elks National Convention in Reno and will continue throughout the year, culminating at the 2018 National Convention in San Antonio.

Here's how we will celebrate through service:

### ANNIVERSARY GRANTS

This year, the Foundation will help Lodges do even more to serve their communities through a one-time grant opportunity. The \$1,500 Anniversary Grant can be used as a standalone project or to supersize another grant project.

### 150 FOR 150

In honor of the Elks' 150th anniversary, we're bringing 150 Elks scholars together at the Elks National Convention in San Antonio.

That's right, we'll have 150 Elks scholars in San Antonio, serving in the name of the Elks and meeting their Elks family from across the country.

Share your 150th anniversary celebrations using #Elks150 on social media.



## SCHOLARS LEAD THE WAY

“Before this service trip, my definition of ‘Elks family’ was a vague network of students scattered around the country who were fortunate enough to win some money,” shares 2017 Most Valuable Student scholar Stephanie Royer. “Now, I realize that my Elks family is a tangible, visible community of like-minded students pursuing their dreams along with the Elks lending their support and leading the way in service.”

Stephanie and 15 other Elks scholars led the way through a week of service in Chicago this past June.

The Summer Elks Scholar Service Trip was devoted to individuals—primarily veterans—experiencing or transitioning out of homelessness. Service activities ranged from making and serving meals at a shelter to organizing a warehouse of furniture for families exiting homelessness. Throughout the week, the scholars packed more than 700 hygiene kits for veterans in need; served as personal shoppers for more than 150 veterans visiting the Jesse Brown V.A. food pantry; and handed out clothing to more than 500 veterans attending the Chicago Standdown, a biannual citywide event where dozens of organizations

provide services to veterans in need.

**The scholars pack comfort kits for homeless veterans in the Grand Reception Room of the Elks Veterans Memorial.**



**The scholars prepared, served and enjoyed a pasta dinner with homeless guests at a shelter managed by Breakthrough Urban Ministries.**

The week was bookended by #ElksFamily dinners. A visit to the Elks Veterans Memorial immersed the group in the Elks’ rich history of serving veterans. Then, to celebrate a week of learning, serving and connecting, the scholars headed to the Brookfield, Ill., Lodge No. 1510 for food and fellowship on the last night of their trip.

“What I have come to know and love about the Elks family has only been reaffirmed and strengthened through the service trip,” reflects Eric Kim, the 2014 top MVS male winner. “That Elks scholars come together to serve veterans and create meaningful, long-lasting relationships is truly special and unique to the Elks.”

*Visit [enf.elks.org/scholarservicetrips](http://enf.elks.org/scholarservicetrips) to learn more and watch a short film about the trip.*

**W**ant to read more about Elks Scholar Service Trips? Check out the blog post by Jenna Johnson, the Elks Scholar Fellow who plans, organizes and leads them. You’ll find it here: [enf.elks.org/jenna](http://enf.elks.org/jenna).



Aloha! ENF staff participated in a luau during a site visit to Kerrville, Texas, Lodge's Impact Grant project. Senior Associate Colleen Muszynski (left) is pictured with project managers Marilyn Ketcherside and Ronald Holm. The project serves people with mental illness living at the Junction House.



## KERRVILLE BRIDGES THE GAP

Serving adults with mental illness has often been a bridge too far for Impact Grant projects, but Kerrville, Texas, Lodge No. 2081 has been bridging that service gap since 2015.

The Lodge provides social opportunities and support for more than 40 residents of the Junction House, a HUD apartment complex that serves individuals with mental illness. The Kerrville project is the only one of its kind.

The residents, stellar Elks volunteers and visiting ENF staff threw on flower leis, ate some barbecue, and listened to live music at a recent luau to celebrate and learn more about the project's incredible accomplishments. ENF Senior Associate Colleen Muszynski was impressed by what she saw on the site visit. "It was clear I was stepping into a community," she said. "The Elks made this happen."

Lodges looking to secure up to \$10,000 for a large-scale service project had until September 8 to submit an Impact Grant application. The 2018 class will be announced on October 31.

To read more about the Kerrville Lodge's project and learn about Impact Grants, visit [enf.elks.org/ImpactGrants](http://enf.elks.org/ImpactGrants).

**BYO ukulele!** Musicians entertained Junction House clients and case managers at the luau. Kerrville Lodge's Impact Grant provides social opportunities and support for the 40 residents of the home.



## OUT OF THE LOOP?

Did you miss the Convention in Reno? No worries. Visit [enf.elks.org/2017films](http://enf.elks.org/2017films) to watch the nine films shown at Convention. Catch the introductions of the top scholarship and Hoop Shoot winners, the Leadership Weekend and Hoop Shoot Finals recaps, the Volunteer of the Year profile, special sesquicentennial promos, and more!



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## IN THIS ISSUE:



Contests Kick Off



Scholars Lead the Way



Kerrville Bridges the Gap

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