

# Scholars presented with \$15,000 in EGCA Awards

Seven worthy students received a total of \$15,000 in EGCA's 2010 Scholarship Program. The event, on June 9, also featured a special tribute to Mark Sjobom, and his late father, Chick Sjobom (See pages 12-14).

Trench Shoring Company once again hosted the annual scholarship and awards program, but in lieu of receiving a sponsor trophy, Trench Shoring Company requested that a donation in the company's name be made to Father Joe's Villages. In welcoming everyone to the Trench Shoring San Diego facility and acknowledging the Trench Shoring team that provided the manpower to change a busy trench shoring facility into a banquet hall, Trench Shoring Company president Kevin Malloy paid a moving tribute to the evening's special honorees, the Sjoboms: "Our families go back a long way, and long before we were competitors, we were friends. That friendship continues today," Kevin said.

Scholarship Committee Chair Rodger Fosbinder then introduced the members of the EGCA Scholarship Committee (see page 11) and explained their individual and collective dedication to ensure the success of this annual program.

Rodger also used some podium time to honor the dedication that special co-honoree Mark Sjobom showed over more than 30 years to the EGCA. "I can remember that at our annual golf tournaments, it was Mark who was out there first thing

in the morning, setting up the barricades and making things happen. At 10 p.m. that night, he was still on site, supervising the take-down of the barricades, if not actually doing the work himself. Mark, be assured that you and your family will always be in our thoughts and prayers."

Scholarship Committee member Rocky Qualin, of KPS Insurance Services, then gave a history of the EGCA Scholarship Program over the years, paid tribute to its original founders (See box, below), and outlined the awards to be made this year:

- Two \$1,500 scholarships for students enrolled in the Palomar College Diesel Technology Associates Degree Program;
- Three \$2,000 scholarships for an EGCA company employee or employee's immediate family member for the purpose of continuing education;
- Two \$3,000 scholarships for students enrolled in the San Diego State University Construction Engineering and Management Program

This year's program placed the 2010 EGCA Honoree Award segment just prior to the scholarship awards presentations, and it was Rocky who told the audience the basis for selecting the annual honoree: a person or persons whose career has made a significant and permanent contribution to the San Diego Construction Industry. He then invited to the



**Scholarship Committee Chair Rocky Qualin gave a history of the EGCA Scholarship Awards Program.**

podium Don Hubbard Jr., of Don Hubbard Contracting, and Tom Hogarty, of Hogarty Communications, to present that award. (See pages 12-14).

## AND THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The evening's first scholarship awards, in the amount of \$1,500 each, were presented to two Palomar College Diesel Technology students: Ron Fetterley and James Johnson. Fetterley could

## The Founding Fathers of EGCA's Scholarship Program

At this year's Scholarship Awards Ceremony, Scholarship Committee member Rocky Qualin, of KPS Insurance Services, recognized the EGCA Diamond Donors: those firms and individuals who donated \$10,000 or more to launch EGCA's Scholarship Awards Program. They are:

4 Point Construction/Rich Bowen  
Clairemont Equipment Rental Company/Ron Zagami  
D<sup>3</sup> Equipment Company/Chris DeNardi  
Hawthorne Machinery Company/Tom Hawthorne  
Hazard Construction Company/Tom Shaddox and Dave Randall  
Red Mountain Machinery/Owen Cowing

not attend the ceremony, but Scholarship Committee member Sam Clayton, Rancho Mesa Insurance Services, read Ron's letter of appreciation (See Box). The second \$1,500 Palomar College Diesel Technology Associates Degree Scholarship was awarded to James Johnson, who singled out EGCA's Netty Mansolillo "for constantly getting me to stay on track with getting the scholarship application paperwork done." He said the EGCA scholarship money would help him purchase his own tools "so I won't have to borrow from the other guys."

Scholarship Committee member Jim Burk, Sunstate Equipment, then awarded the three \$2,000 EGCA scholarships awarded to offspring of EGCA members, their employees, or their immediate family members who are seeking higher education. The first awardee in this category was Lindsay Shearer. Lindsay, daughter of Ameron International Water Transmission Group's Dennis Shearer, was graduating from high school that very evening and thus was unable to attend the EGCA event. In her absence, Ameron's Marvin Floyd accepted the award for Lindsay.

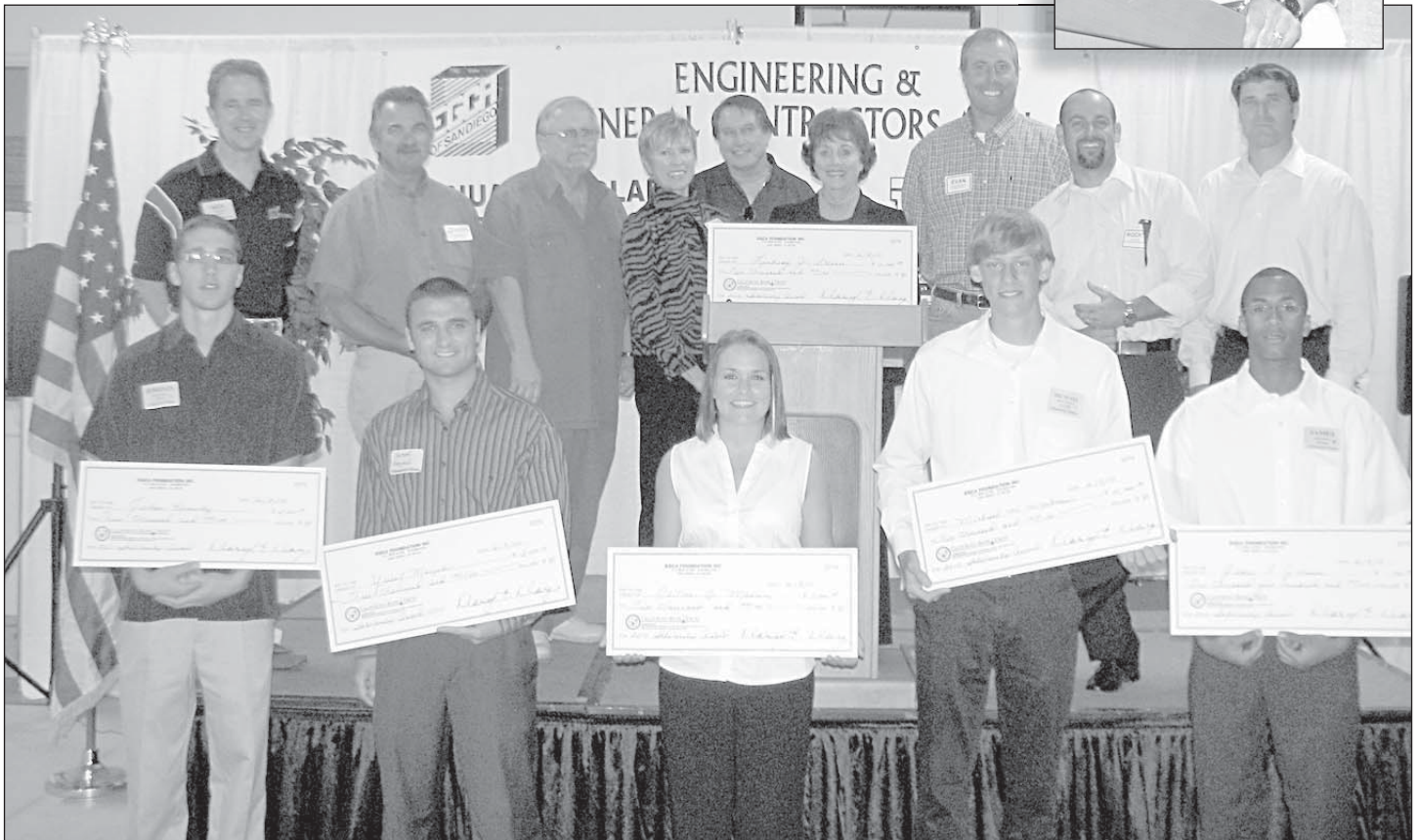
Next, Sunstate Equipment's Jim Burk  
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**Above, \$3,000 scholarship winners Jordan Kennedy and Yousef Masjedi with EGCA President Mike Shaw (center).**



**Right: Ken Walsh, San Diego State University College of Engineering professor, who was an ex-officio member of the Scholarship Committee.**



**Five of the seven scholarship winners are pictured, backed by members of the 2010 Scholarship Committee. Winners, from left: Jordan Kennedy, Yousef Masjedi, Caitlin Manning, Michael Houtman and James Johnson.**



Two of the three \$2,000 scholarship winners are Michael Houtman and Caitlin Manning, pictured with Jim Burk (center), Scholarship Committee member.

### Ron Fetterley's Letter of Acceptance

Dear EGCA Members:

I wish I would have been able to attend tonight, so that I would have had an opportunity to meet all of you and been able to thank you all in person.

Being awarded this scholarship is a monumental achievement for me. Not only will this scholarship relieve a burden from me and my family financially by aiding me to pay for classes, especially with all of the recent tuition increases, but more importantly, I feel like all of my hard work and achievements have been recognized by the industry that I want to be a part of.

Honestly, I feel that this is the most important part of what this scholarship means to me. It makes me feel like I have found my calling, and makes me confident that I have chosen the right career path for myself. I can't really put into words how proud being awarded this scholarship has made me, and how grateful I am for what all of you at the EGCA have done for me. Once again, I want to thank all of you, and I hope you all have a great evening.

*Sincerely,  
Ronald Fetterley*

## A Special Thanks and Congratulations to all who participated in the EGCA June Membership & Annual Scholarship Awards Meeting

### 2010 Industry Honorees:

Chick Sjobom and Mark Sjobom

### Scholarship Winners:

- Ron Fetterly - Palomar College Diesel Technology Associates Degree Scholarship
- James Johnson - Palomar College Diesel Technology Associates Degree Scholarship
- Lindsay Shearer - EGCA Scholarship for EGCA members/employees/member's immediate family
- Caitlin Manning - EGCA Scholarship for EGCA members/employees/member's immediate family
- Michael Houtman - EGCA Scholarship for EGCA members/employees/member's immediate family
- Yusef Masjedi - SDSU Construction Engineering & Management Program
- Jordan Kennedy - SDSU Construction Engineering & Management Program

*Thank you, Trench Shoring, for doing such a wonderful job sponsoring this special event!*

## Saluting EGCA's 2010 Scholarship Awards Committee

As part of the evening's proceedings, Rodger Fosbinder, who for the past four years has served as chairman of the EGCA's Scholarship Committee, introduced his committee members, each with a personal comment.

He explained how the committee met on a monthly basis to devise rules for the competition, formulate essay questions, review and short-list the applications and finally, to conduct finalist interviews—giving up a portion of several weekends to do so.

Rodger's committee consisted of:

John Anderson, Vadnais Corporation  
 Jim Burk, Sunstate Equipment  
 Sam Clayton, Rancho Mesa Insurance Services  
 Kathy Columbus, Traffic Control Service  
 Jason Donnelly, Trench Shoring Company  
 Evan Gronquist, J.S. Cole Company  
 Tom Hogarty, Hogarty Communications  
 Netty Mansolillo-EGCA  
 Rocky Qualin, KPS Insurance Services  
 Amy Quintero, Trench Plate Rental Company

Rodger noted that EGCA President Mike Shaw, Executive Director Debbie Day and San Diego State University's College of Engineering professor Ken Walsh—though not formally on the Scholarship Committee—participated on one or both of the selection committees.

# Tribute to Chick and Mark Sjobom

*Bob Johnson, a long-time employee and friend of the Sjobom family, wrote this tribute to Chick and Mark and asked that it be shared at the June 9 awards event, where Mark and his dad, the late Chick Sjobom, received the EGCA Honorees Award. Scholarship Committee member Tom Hogarty, Hogarty Communications, read the following heartfelt observances from Bob Johnson to an attentive audience.*

My wife, Sandy, and I grew up in western Colorado, and ran three businesses in Grand Junction. Our area saw a massive boom, tied to oil shale development, beginning in 1977. That boom crashed in May of 1982. By late 1987, we had exhausted all of our resources in trying to keep our businesses alive.

A call to a dear friend and business associate led to a meeting with Mark Sjobom. What was a very traumatic and disruptive time in our lives was about to take a dramatic turn for the best.

My words here will be inadequate in describing the kindness, generosity, and true friendship given freely by the Sjobom family over the past 23 years.

On that first phone call, Mark was aware of our financial situation from his visit with our mutual friend. If we agreed to come for an interview, Mark offered to pay one-half of our fuel—plus meals and lodging in San Diego. After the first visit, where Mark and Sheryl gave us a tour of all Allied Barricade/Trench Shoring facilities and San Diego County sights, we accepted their job offer. When we returned two weeks later to find a house to rent and schools for our two children, Chick gave us full use of his office and phone.

Mark and Chick called me into Mark's office and asked how the search was going—and for an honest answer about our financial situation. Mark then took Sandy and me to the bank, introduced us to the bank president and opened an account in our name with a sizable deposit so we could rent a decent house and make utility deposits. Sheryl even sat at our rental house so the SDG&E and

*Continued on page 14*



Mark and Sheryl Sjobom and Mark's sister, Peggy, with Ginny and Chick Sjobom in a photo from the 1990s.

## Two very special men

In preparing the special tribute to Chick and Mark Sjobom, presented during EGCA'S seventh annual Scholarship Awards Program in June, EGCA's Netty Mansolillo and EGCA Magazine editor Tom Hogarty (Hogarty Communications) interviewed two of the Sjoboms' long-time employees, Mike Hayet and Gus Mayoral. Mike is the branch manager for Traffic Control Service Inc./Allied Trench Shoring Services, and Gus is assistant branch manager. Both joined the company, then known as Allied Barricade Company, in the mid-1980s.

In the 1960s Allied Barricade Co., as it was then called, was located in a very small location—where Parkway Plaza is now, in El Cajon. It had a small warehouse and a small yard. The company did a good portion of the trench-plate side of the business in the parking lot because there was insufficient room in the warehouse.

One of their earliest recollections as new employees in the 1980s was that Mark and Chick worked as hard as their employees. Gus said that when he was hired, "There was a stack of (trench plate) stuff that had to be taken care of. For three months straight, Chick was out there. I said to myself, 'Man, that old guy is handling this stuff just like we are!'"

How hard was the work? Mike recalls that he lost 40 pounds in the first three months he worked for the company. "It was a lot of hard labor."

Gus agreed with Mike when he said, "Mark and Chick were really hard workers. They would be out there with you, even though they were management. It didn't matter how hard you were working. You never felt you were working harder than somebody else. It was fantastic. It was very easy to work hard for this company."

Among Gus's memories, he recalled: "When Chick would have little issues once in a while, he would go into the warehouse and start cutting the rails for shoring with the big old saw...It was the noisiest thing imaginable. You could hear the eeeeeeeeyahhhhhh, and everyone within earshot would know that Chick was having a bad day."

And legend has it that Chick, returning

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# 2010 EGCA Honoree Award winners: Mark and Chick Sjobom

Each year, the Engineering and General Contractors Association honors individuals who have made a significant impact on San Diego's construction industry. This year, the EGCA Honorees Award was presented, during the annual Scholarship Awards dinner, to Mark Sjobom and his late father, Chick.

Chick, 82 when he died on New Year's Eve 2001, was "a master at customer service," as noted by Don Hubbard Jr., of Don Hubbard Contracting, in his award presentation remarks. "He always said that if someone wanted something, 'you never said no to an order.' Chick and Mark built their business on service to the customers—and lots of hard work," Don said.

He recalled how he and his dad first became Mark's and Chick's customers: "Chick used to travel up from Allied's East County location to pay us a visit. We were in Encinitas at the time. He'd say, 'I know you are using another supplier, but if you ever need something, and you can't get it, call me.'" That very opportunity soon presented itself. Don needed material delivered to a Hubbard jobsite by 7 a.m. the next morning. His regular supplier couldn't get it there until 10 a.m. Don called Chick: "The stuff was there when we needed it. It was all that we needed, and it was there on time." Don Hubbard Contracting was an Allied Barricade customer from then on.

Don also told a little of the Mark Sjobom story: "a Vietnam vet...two years...in the jungle, with the bullets flying. Thanks for your service to our country." After returning from the service, Don continued, Mark went back to school, taking some business classes and having the urge to go into business for himself.

"His dad had told him, 'Whatever you do, don't go into the barricade business!' He took that advice, kind of," Don said, explaining that in 1974, Mark started Trench Shoring Service, which concentrated pretty much on shoring. However, on one of his first deliveries, the contractor asked Mark if he could supply barricades for around the ditch. The next couple of contractors asked the same question.

Father and son Sjobom discussed the matter. At the time, Chick was with another barricade supply company. By the end of Mark's first month in business, he had traffic safety equipment to go with the shoring—and not one, but two companies were in business from then on.

Don noted Mark's devotion to EGCA, proven in so many ways over the years: his participation in any event to give hands-on support as needed, his guidance and the wisdom he brought to his many years of service to the EGCA board.

"Mark, I wish you were still in the business," Don said of the man who had "retired" last year.

Following the award presentation, Mark Sjobom, always a man of few words, came to the podium.

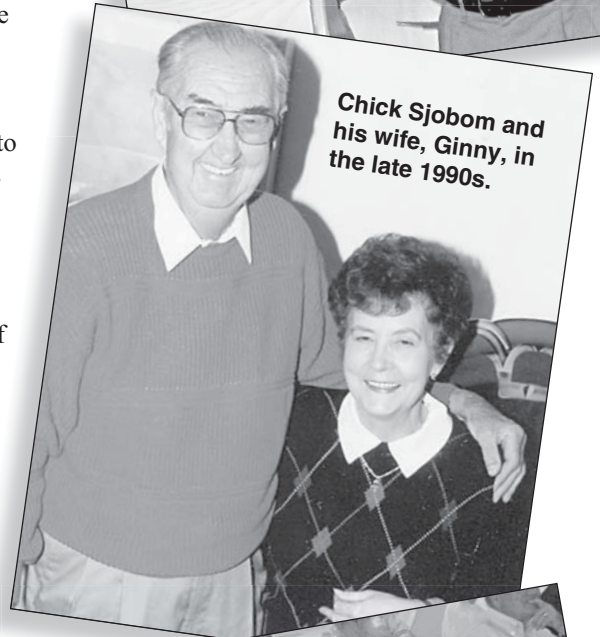
"Tonight is about the future, and the young people who are receiving the scholarships," he said. "We are awarding the future of our industry. These young men and women will need to have purpose and direction, along with the education, to take us into the next generation. Our forefathers gave us the freedom to pursue our dreams, and God gave us the purpose and direction to achieve those dreams."

He closed by saying that his own life was now at a crossroads. "I can honestly say that the past 62 years have been great, and I look forward to the next 62 years, to see what the future holds. I want to thank you, and I know my dad would want to thank you for this honor tonight."

Don Hubbard Jr. presents the EGCA Honorees Award to Mark Sjobom.



Chick Sjobom and his wife, Ginny, in the late 1990s.



Mark Sjobom and his grandson, Trevor. Wife Sheryl on right.



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## TRIBUTE TO MARK AND CHICK

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Sheryl, Mark and Leslie Sjobom.

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### RECOLLECTIONS

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*Continued from page 12*

by car from a business trip to Texas to check on material for the then-new Arrowboards, drove back home to El Cajon in two days straight.

The company's workload in the mid-80s when Gus and Mike joined the team, was extensive and diversified. The company did everything from delivering shoring and traffic control to setting up lane closures and road closures. It serviced the equipment—barricades, lights, hydraulic shoring, truck fleet—and it built its own barricades and signs. Through it all, Mark and Chick “were right there with us, working side by side with us,” Gus said. The company also manufactured about 75% of its shoring inventory back then.

When Gus was hired, he filled out an application (March 1985), and Mark came in and asked him two questions: “How are you feeling?” and “Are you ready to go to work?” Gus answered “OK, man. Let's go!”

Gus said the company had 10 employees then. When Mike started a year, later the employee count was up to a dozen. Chick hired Mike right out of high school. Chick knew Mike's high school auto shop teacher from high school, and the company was looking for a service mechanic. Mike's teacher recommended him to Chick.

The interview was brief. Mike said Chick looked to be “about 11 feet tall.” Chick asked Mike, “Can you be here tomorrow?” Mike said yes, and it was off to the races. Mike was hired on a part-time basis, but within three weeks, he became a full-time employee.

Mike said, “Chick and Mark were really great people. They treated us well, as did other members of the Sjobom family—Ginny (Chick's wife and Mark's mom) and all the family.” Gus agreed.

*Continued from page 12*

phone people could start our service.

Chick reminded me of my late father, and he and I bonded immediately. Chick was a great mentor.

He introduced me to contractors and public agency personnel as we attended numerous meetings of various associations, including his favorite—the EGCA. His credibility with customers paved the way for any future success I was to have in the San Diego market.

Shortly after I joined Allied Barricade/Trench Shoring Service, Chick and I went to a meeting with SDG&E to go over our capabilities to handle our new contract as their shoring and steel plate provider. In an “oh, by-the-way” statement as we were leaving, I mentioned I could provide workzone traffic control and flagger training. Within the hour, SDG&E's safety office was on the phone setting up training for all SDG&E district offices.

Mark and Chick liked this new addition to our customer service capabilities and encouraged me at every opportunity. Mark worked with EGCA to have these courses given through the organization. Many successful classes followed with the capable help of EGCA staff.

Later on, at an EGCA board meeting, there was an agenda item offering “Competent Person” and “Confined Space Entry” classes. Board member Mark Sjobom offered “Bob Johnson can do that.” When I pointed out my expertise was in work zone traffic control and that I knew next to nothing about the underground business, Mark said “That's OK, NUCA has a train-the-trainer program...in northern Wisconsin...in mid-December.”

Mark and Chick knew these classes would help the EGCA, and the credibility of these efforts would help the company. The result: a successful program that lasted several years.

Mark and Chick pioneered the idea of a vendor member hosting a meeting of the EGCA by providing catering and meeting facilities, with all proceeds going to support the organization.

In 1992 when Chick and Mark sold the two companies to Traffic Control Service, Inc., Mark and Sheryl came to Sandy and me and offered to help us to purchase a house. Their generous loan enabled us to buy a Lakeside home in a favorable market.

Thirteen years later, the equity in that home allowed us to begin the next phase of our lives.

Here's a name from the past: Frank Lunati. When Frank “retired,” it was Mark who recognized the value of Frank's knowledge of the San Diego underground contracting business. Mark was well aware of the respect Frank commanded in the market and how valuable an asset he would be to both companies.

It took a lot of “talking” to get Frank to see it our way. He did not perceive his ability to be a “salesman.” This turned out to be one of our best moves.

Several years after his passing, we still miss Frank.

Over the years, Chick told me many fascinating stories of his life. Some had to do years before when Chick as a teenager spent one summer hitchhiking around the mid-west working on farms and other odd jobs.

My favorite story involved his going home on leave with an Army buddy, who later became his brother-in-law. It was on this trip he met Ginny, the love of his life.

Chick loved coffee. I like coffee, usually freshly brewed from fresh ground beans. Chick loved hot, fresh brewed coffee...warm coffee...cool coffee...cold coffee...yesterday's coffee—it didn't matter to him, as long as it was coffee.

Sandy and I are blessed to still count the Sjoboms—Ginny, Peggy, Mark, Sheryl, Kim (and Joel Voss), Nick (and Kristen) and Leslie—as close personal friends. Our lives are better for knowing the Sjoboms. We believe the construction industry in Southern California is better from the selfless contributions made by Chick, Mark, and the entire family.

Thanks, EGCA, for recognizing the contributions of Chick and Mark.

*Bob and Sandy Johnson, Eckert, Colorado*

## SCHOLARS

Continued from page 11

presented \$2,000 scholarships to Caitlin Manring and Michael Houtman. As Caitlin's parents, John and Kelly, and her sister, Corey, beamed, Jim listed Caitlin's many academic and community achievements and then did the same for Michael Houtman. Michael's dad, Walt, who works for Hawthorne Machinery Company, enjoyed a nice pre-Father's Day gift as he basked in the glow of his son's efforts.

Finally, it was up to EGCA president Mike Shaw, of Perry & Shaw, to present the two \$3,000 Scholarships for students enrolled in SDSU's Construction Engineering and Management Program. The recipients, Yusef Masjedi and Jordan Kennedy, each accepted their awards with gracious comments.

Said Mike, "Both had exceptional grades and exceptional accomplishments. Yusef is in his junior year at SDSU while Jordan is in his sophomore year there."

It was Jordan whose comments perhaps best summed up what the EGCA Scholarship Awards Program is all about. In accepting his scholarship, he said, "Without your help and support, this would not have been possible. I am very grateful for the opportunity."



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