

Continued Erika's Story...

Since attending the University of North Texas, Ms. Symonette has worked as a teacher assistant in the Department of Applied Gerontology, and a research assistant in the Department of Educational Psychology. In 2008, at the BiNational

Meeting on Gerontology in Guadalajara, Mexico, Erika presented on loneliness and social engagement on cognitive function among older adults. Recently, in 2009, at the Texas Public Health Annual Meeting, she presented a poster on disaster preparedness for nursing homes.

Ms. Symonette is passionate about research and policies that directly impact the safety and well-being of older adults. As a proud recipient of the TAGS/Janet Pacatte Memorial Scholarship, she is able to expand her studies and research skills and further reach out to the community.

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**TAGS/Janet Pacatte Memorial
Scholarship
2009 Recipients**

- Min Cole
- Sudong Kang
- Eunkyung Kim
- David Sanders
- Daniela Simmons
- Erika Michelle Symonette

A few scholarship recipients stories...

Sudong Kang, ABD

Sudong Kang, originally from Seoul, Korea came to study gerontology at UNT. He chose the College of Public Affairs and Community Service's applied gerontology program because it would allow him interdisciplinary study to understand the bigger picture about current and future health care issues. Sudong is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Gerontology from the Center for Studies in Aging at the University of North Texas.



Sudong applied for the TAGS/Janet Pacatte Memorial scholarship as a way to further his education and he realized he could develop his knowledge in public policy and various community-based programs for the elderly. Without the scholarship, the chance to study for his Ph.D. would not have been made possible. With the scholarship, he was able to develop his own research for Korean seniors in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

With only seven doctoral programs in Gerontology throughout the nation, aging issues are now international concerns not only in the United States. The University of North Texas is reaching out to international students and allowing them the chance to study and become a leader for the United States and their home country.



Min Cole, ABD

Min Cole is originally from Beijing, China. She holds a Masters degree in Sociology from Peking University and a Master of Science in Applied Gerontology and is now a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Gerontology from the Center for Studies in Aging at the University of North Texas.

The reason she chose to become a Gerontologist is because the last three years of working in the government China, she was heavily involved in the Social Gerontology training program supported by United Nations Gerontology Institute in Malta and became extremely interested in Applied Gerontology. After she got her MS in Applied Gerontology in 2002, she focused on Long-term Care, Senior Housing and community based services for the elderly. She started to practice in Southern California and in 2006, came back to UNT to continue her PHD programs in Applied Gerontology with the support of the scholarship from the department. Now she is ABD and working on her dissertation in her research in China. She plans to graduate Spring 2010.

Without the scholarship, Min would not be where she is at today in her career. As a professionally trained and educated private consultant in Applied Gerontology, she bridges the gap between theory and applied practice of caring for older adults, aging research studies, and related services to the elderly. Mr. Bao Ku Li, former Vice Minister of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and President of the China Aging Development Foundation, has stated that Min Cole serves as an ambassador between China and the United States in the field of Aging Services.



Erika Symonette, M.S.

Ms. Symonette is a second year doctorate student in the Department of Applied Gerontology with a research focus on disaster preparedness among African American elders and other vulnerable populations. Today, Erika focuses her career on expanding research projects involving the evaluation of health-related materials. Erika holds a M.S. degree in Health Education from Howard University and prides herself on research conducted on the impact of social activity on psychological well-being among African American elders.

Continued on the back.