

# PBF scholarships: Supporting the communities that support us

**T**HE PORTLAND BUSINESS FORUM began its annual college scholarship program as a way of giving something back to the communities that support our businesses. Scholarships are awarded in the amount of \$750 each and are open to students in the top 50 percent of their class at West Linn, Tigard, and Lake Oswego high schools; a business major is *not* required.



PBF member Yvette Weeks presents a 2008 scholarship to Lake Oswego High School student Kristen Kirkpatrick.

Since beginning its scholarship program, PBF has provided more than 40 scholarships totaling nearly \$30,000 for deserving students.

Scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate an “entrepreneurial spirit” — the aptitude for some day owning and operating their own business. Students qualify for PBF scholarships through a combination of academic excellence, work experience, and an essay that they submit with their application. PBF awards scholarships without regard to race, religion, gender, disability, or any other legally protected status.

## Evaluation and selection

Scholarship applications are evaluated by a committee of PBF members, taking into consideration the following factors:



PBF's scholarship program hit *especially* close to home in 2005 with the presentation of a \$750 check to Benjamin de Fiebre by PBF member Lynn Wolf. De Fiebre volunteers his time training guide dogs, such as the one used by Wolf's husband, Hal Long.

- **Educational and career aspirations.** PBF gives preference to applicants with business-oriented educational goals, including any course of study that would help the applicant establish his or her own business, or work in a senior decision-making capacity for an established business.
- **Work experience and entrepreneurial spirit.** Has the applicant shown an ability and desire to make a positive and creative contribution to the workplace? PBF gives preference to applicants whose experience demonstrates the potential and aptitude for business ownership.

- **Leadership and academic potential.** Does the applicant exhibit the qualities of good leadership and decision-making, such as might be required of a future business owner or manager? In evaluating an applicant's academic potential we look not just at current grade point average, but at the applicant's overall progress and improvement over the entire course of the high school experience.



PBF members Christopher Hawley and Eleanor Suman present a 2006 scholarship to Tigard High School student Andrea Kellas.

- **School and community participation.** Does the applicant show an ability and desire to “give back” something of value to the communities of which he or she is a member? In evaluating this component, we look not just at quantity of involvements, but at the quality and ultimate contribution of each involvement to the greater good.
- **Financial need.** All other factors remaining equal, PBF gives preference to applicants with the greatest financial need.

**PORTLAND BUSINESS FORUM**  
**Never business as usual.**