Logan McNear Wins Scholarship Competition

Norris City’s Logan McNear received a big boost to his post-Southeastern Illinois College educational career recently, when he was awarded a scholarship – known as the Blaudow – ATS Program in Technical Leadership in Manufacturing – to attend Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. McNear is the son of Robert McNear and Kim Hillyard.

The program is a partnership between the SIU-Carbondale engineering program and donor Richard W. Blaudow and his wife, Brigitte. Blaudow earned an electrical engineering degree from SIUC, and worked at Caterpillar, Inc., for 17 years before founding his own company, Advanced Technology Services, Inc. (ATS). ATS provides services for production equipment maintenance, industrial parts repair and industrial technology infrastructure support for manufacturers.

The program is designed to educate the next generation of technical leaders, and is specifically targeted to community college students who are transferring into the SIUC College of Engineering. Each student like McNear receives $14,000 in scholarship money, with $8,000 in the first two semesters and the remaining $6,000 for remaining semesters. Also included will be a 3-month internship with ATS that McNear will begin following his first year at SIUC.

McNear was selected for an interview with the Blaudows and SIUC faculty after submitting an application and cover letter. He later attended a banquet featuring Mr. Blaudow and several former program participants as speakers. The banquet also featured an interview session and a campus tour.

Two weeks later, he got a call from the Dr. Bruce DeRuntz – the scholarship’s coordinator, and an associate professor in SIUC’s Department of technology – telling him that he had been selected for the program.

“This is pretty exciting,” McNear said. “The banquet and interview process were really nice...it seemed like everybody involved already knew me. I got to spend time with several current program members, and they told me all about their classes and experiences so far. I can’t wait to get started.”

McNear learned about the program in his Calculus II class, one of his pre-engineering-track courses at Southeastern. His instructor in that class, Kim Martin, feels McNear will live up to this distinguished award.

“Logan is an excellent student, and really has what it takes to be successful in this field and this program,” Martin said. “From day one in pre-calculus his freshman year, to now, at the end of Calculus III, he has consistently demonstrated high levels of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.”

“We are certainly fortunate that Logan chose Southeastern,” Martin added. “He has been a real asset to our pre-engineering program and will surely continue to excel after transferring. What a great opportunity Mr. Blaudow and SIUC have provided for this top-notch community college transfer student.”

McNear, who finished second in his graduating class at NCOE High School and was awarded a Presidential Scholarship to attend Southeastern, is also grateful for his time at Southeastern.

“I’m definitely glad I came here,” McNear said. “I feel like I’m ready to move to the next level in the engineering curriculum. There are so many top students from area high schools that come to SIC – valedictorians and salutatorians – and it’s not an accident that they come here...it’s the real deal.”