The Presidential Scholarship awards, created in 1995 by the Minnesota State University, Mankato Foundation Board of Directors, provide much needed financial relief to outstanding students who exhibit excellence in academics and service.

The scholarships are awarded to first year or transfer students who earned a composite ACT score of 26 or higher and ranked in the top 10 percent of their or her high school graduating class. Awards are in the amount of a $10,000 scholarship over four years and $5000 over two years (for transfer students).

The College of Business was proud to have eight presidential scholars in the 2002 graduating class, including Allyson Buckles, Austin Colby, Jessica Edge, Michael Fauver, Amanda Fude, Tara Gipson, Brian Holler, and Justin Sandmann.

"The Presidential Scholars are students who have already achieved at a high level. We compete with a number of institutions for these outstanding students," said College of Business Dean Scott Johnson. "The College of Business is extremely proud of our recent group of eight scholars who graduated this past spring."

The graduates appreciate the freedom the Presidential Scholarship allowed them during their years in college. "Because I got the scholarship, I didn’t have to work. I could concentrate on my studies and still have time to attend sporting events or theater events," explains Fauver. "I guess you’d say it made all the difference in the world."

Today’s challenging economic climate has left some of the 2002 graduates still seeking their first professional job. However, they all recognize that they have left the College of Business ready for the professional world. "The faculty prepares students for life beyond college," says Edge.

"They were so helpful," adds Fude. "The professors helped me through my courses, and helped me understand what I needed to get ready for the ‘real world.’"

The scholars look forward to using their degrees and developing as professionals. Edge is busy planning a December wedding, and Sandmann, who was married this summer, looks forward to one day starting a family in the Mankato area. It is clear the future is bright.

Colby best expresses the sentiments of all eight of the Presidential Scholars, "I want to say thank you to the Presidential Scholarship Program and to all of the professors in the College of Business for allowing me to reach my full potential. Any prospective students who are considering attending MSU couldn’t go wrong by doing so."

Sarah Wells: Third-Year Presidential Scholar

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What’s a typical day like for a college junior who is a double major in marketing and international business, as well as a college ambassador, sorority president and a Presidential Scholar? “Crazy,” laughs Sarah Wells, a Minnesota State University, Mankato student who is all these things and more.

Sarah has become a pro at time management since beginning college in the fall of 2000. Most days she has classes in the morning, followed by two to five hours of work in the College of Business Dean’s office. Following work, she tries to make it home for a bite to eat, but depending on the day, she’ll be back on campus to give a tour or attend an ambassadors or sorority meeting. "Good time management is really important. I carry everything I might need during the day, just in case I don’t make it home in between. My bag is huge," she says with a smile.

Like most students, Sarah says she has changed a lot in the first few years of college. Networking is one of the skills she’s acquired since beginning at MSU. The Ireton, IA native explains that coming from a town of 800 people, there was never a need to create new contacts or relationships. “Everybody knows everybody,” she says. “Here, I’ve learned how to talk to new people and start relationships with them.”

Sarah says the Presidential Scholarship has opened a lot of doors, allowing her to meet alumni and visit the president’s house. However, she most appreciates the program’s recognition of leadership and service, in addition to academic performance. "I think it’s really good that the scholarship isn’t just based on grades. They take other things into account," she explains. "It’s important that students know that if you can talk to people, if you can be a leader, if you can donate your time, people will notice and give you credit."