



For Immediate Release

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Nursing Student from India Wins “Make Your Mark” Scholarship

KANSAS CITY, MO – (April 4, 2008) – **The Lewer Agency, Inc.** announced today that **Kanchana Kularatne**, 30, a native of Sri Lanka, India, and a nursing student at Edmonds Community College, Lynnwood, Washington, has won the first prize in the **LewerMark “Make Your Mark”** scholarship program.

The Lewer Agency, providers of the LewerMark health insurance programs for inbound international students and Study Abroad participants, awarded the \$1,000 scholarship for the winning entry in the 2008 LewerMark "Make your Mark" essay-writing contest.

Ms. Kularatne was chosen the grand prize winner in the third annual LewerMark scholarship contest for her essay response to the question *"How will an international education help me make a difference in the world?"* The Lewer Agency received nearly double the number of entries this year, compared to last year.

Ms. Kularatne arrived in the U.S. to pursue an international education the day after the Sumatra Tsunami hit Sri Lanka.

"I was speechless and crushed to hear that Sri Lanka was one of the worst affected countries and that 35,000 lives were lost," she explained in her essay. "I felt hopeless and lost not knowing what I could do living thousands miles away. My immediate family was safe, but I can't even begin to say how I felt. My only sense of relief came from volunteering in fundraising organizations here in the U.S. which were helping all of the tsunami affected countries."

Her sponsor, Saerom Han, Intercultural Admissions Coordinator at Edmonds Community College recommended Ms. Kularatne for the scholarship. "Kanchana is a truly gift individual who cares about her community, Han wrote. "Kanchana is one of those who work daily to make her community better. She commits her time to volunteer at hospitals, communities and schools in Sri Lanka and EDCC, promoting cultural diversity and community development. I have no doubt that she will make a difference in this world."

Two special achievement awards were also awarded by the Lewer Agency. **Pratikshya Bhandari**, 19, of Nepal, a business major attending Lakeland College in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, won a \$500 scholarship. Ms. Bhandari was sponsored by Patrick Liu, Director of International Student Office at Lakeland College. **Mariana Aparicio**, of Colombia, who is double majoring in business and psychology at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, won a \$250 scholarship. Ms. Aparicio was sponsored by Barb Harrington of International Admissions at Loras College.