



Annie Le earned recognition for her commitment to revitalizing the Vietnamese Students' Association and her academic achievement.

Le wins Asian American Scholarship

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The shock may still be wearing off for her, but to those who selected Annie Le, LSOE '07, to win this year's Asian American Scholarship, her commitment to Boston College's Vietnamese Students' Association (VSA) makes her entirely deserving of the award.

Le, who served this year as co-president of VSA, learned of her scholarship designation at a ceremony Friday amid slideshows and recognition of other Asian cultural club executive board members. The scholarship program, in its 10th year, awards a junior who has maintained a 3.3 GPA and has shown dedication to serving the Asian American community with a 75 percent tuition scholarship for his or her senior year.

Before presenting Le with the award, University President Rev. William P. Leahy, S.J., thanked the other four finalists for their own contributions to BC. "Thanks for making BC a welcoming place where everyone can be at home," he said.

In addition to serving on the board of VSA, Le has also acted as the assistant director of the AHANA Leadership Academy and received the Vietnamese Community of Massachusetts service award.

Professors on the scholarship award selection committee cited her revival of BC's VSA chapter as one of the key determinants in her recognition.

"Our strongest impression of Annie was how she revitalized the VSA, which was previously not

very active on campus," said professor Billy Soo. "She rejuvenated the organization and made them participative while doing well herself academically."

J. Joseph Burns, associate academic vice president for undergraduate programs, also credited Le's ambition to teach in the public school system as one of her most impressive qualities. "

"Annie was committed to teaching and bringing the fruits of her labors back to students," he said. "She's active in bringing together all the Vietnamese students from the Boston area."

"Teaching is something I've wanted to do since middle school," said Le. "I want to lessen the difference of educational opportunities for students - end the education gap that exists because of resource shortages." If more resources are not allocated to places currently lacking them, Le said, people won't receive educations or be able to go to college.

Le also encouraged people to take a closer look at the contributions Asian Americans are making to society.

"Asians take a lot of behind the scenes positions and their work is sometimes not noticed by others," she said. "But that's impacted by our culture - I was taught to be modest," she said.

Le expressed disbelief and modesty at being named the scholarship recipient because most of the work she did was behind the scenes, she said. "I always considered it unimportant, but when people put it into perspective, it turned out to be important."

"She's quiet, shy, but very committed to doing the right thing," said Burns. "She has the support of other students, and it shows."

While she will continue to be active in intercollegiate New England VSA events, Le has chosen not to serve on next year's executive board of VSA to pursue other opportunities, like planning a service trip to Vietnam. "It's just about being involved in something," she said. "It's on an individual basis - you don't have to be an officer to be involved."

The ceremony opened with words from Dr. Diane Fujino, a professor of Asian American studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Fujino has extensively studied the life and contributions of Yuri Kochiyama, an Asian American civil rights activist.

While the scholarship is currently not given in honor of anyone in particular, Fujino suggested that the award be named for Kochiyama.

"She is an example of Asian American activism and leadership who worked toward social justice and equality for all," said Fujino. "She is a role model for all Asian Americans and Americans alike." Many of the ideals embodied by Kochiyama are also apparent in the scholarship finalists, she said.

"Kochiyama has helped the Asian American community a lot," said Le.

"She has helped all groups attain education - and while having six kids. I don't know how she had time to do it all."

Le also recognized the achievements of finalists Whitnie Low, A&S '07, MyHanh Tran, LSOE '07, Lauren Tran, CSOM '07, and Lindsay Varquez, A&S '07.

"They're putting themselves out there and showing that BC is diverse," she said.

"In the end, AHANA students are also BC students - not just AHANA students at BC."

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