

The David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund

Prepared by Walter V. Cicha, Ph.D. - December 2004

Following is a brief biography of the late Dr. David T. Ryan, after whom the scholarship fund is named. A proposed mission statement for the fund also follows.

David T. Ryan (October 8, 1971 - June 29, 2004)

David Thomas Ryan was born on October 8, 1971, in the northern England city of Harrogate, the older of two children of Tom and Anne Ryan. In 1990, he graduated from nearby Ripon Grammar School with top honors, winning the school prize for physics. His former teacher Mr. John Saul recalls: "His academic record was faultless. David was unfailingly gentle and kind with everyone. He was modest, even a little shy, and always sensitive to the needs of others. He had an active sense of fun, but never at the expense of others. Integrity such as his is encountered only rarely." David also took up cycling seriously at the age of 15.

In 1993, David graduated from Oxford University at the top of his class of more than 200 with a First Class Honors B.S. degree in Physics, and won the ancient university's prestigious Scott Prize. He continued on in unusually brilliant fashion at Oxford University, and in 1997 earned his Ph.D. in Physics. In the words of a fellow Oxford graduate, "David was in the top 0.5 % of the top 1 % of all physicists in Great Britain." The fellow graduate continues: "Many a student in his position would have let this go to his head - but not David. It was in fact some weeks after he was awarded the prize before he told anyone. David showed great humility with others and was far more likely to help than to mock."

But it was not all work and no play for David during the Oxford years. He rowed for the university team, led the Oxford University Bicycling Club to a position of national prominence by winning individual and team competitions, and served his dues between classes as a very active member of St. Edmund Hall, the oldest college at Oxford (colleges at Oxford are akin to US fraternities).

Oxford Instruments funded part of David's graduate work and he joined the company after earning his Ph.D. in 1997. Not surprisingly, David's work progressed exceedingly well there and in late 2000 the General Electric Company took notice and recruited him. He moved from England to the USA in early 2001, where he joined the Magnetics and Superconductivity Lab at the General Electric Company's Global Research Center in Niskayuna, NY. He became a highly valued project leader and worked on a wide variety of important projects dealing with the development of new state-of-the-art magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) magnets and leading-edge superconductive devices.

In the early summer of 2004, David was the lead author on a major GE proposal that won multi-year, multi-million dollar funding from the National Institute of Health. He was chosen as the Principal Investigator on the multi-disciplinary and very high profile program, geared toward developing improved non-invasive medical diagnostic and therapeutic technologies. In October, David was planning to present no less than four technical papers at an international Magnetics and Superconductivity conference in Florida.

As in England, David's life in America included ample play. He continued to bicycle race and to increase his lifetime bicycling distance to well over 100,000 miles, he learned how to downhill ski (even winning a NASTAR medal in the spring of 2004), he hiked all over the ancient peaks of northeast USA, and he gradually took up running, finishing his first ever mile race in 5:38 (also in the spring of 2004). On September 11, 2003, he and a couple friends from New York (including myself) flew their bikes to Vienna, Austria and spent the next 10 days cycling across the Czech Republic and Slovakia in what became known as "The Tour de Prime."

Thirty-two year old David Ryan's inspired life and rapidly rising career at GE, which already had exceptional impact on the company and held much promise for the betterment of society, came to a tragic and sudden end on June 29, 2004 when he was killed by a speeding 18-year old motorist while on his regular Tuesday evening cycle along Riverview Road in Clifton Park. The driver was charged with manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. The case still remains unresolved. See www.davidryan.com for more information.

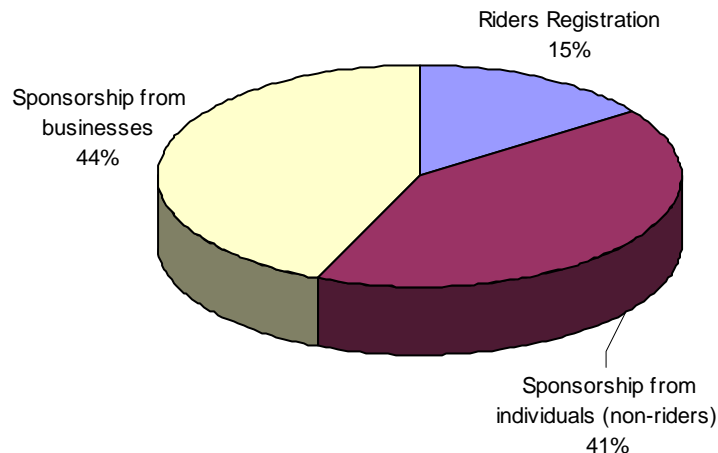
David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness (October 9, 2004)

On October 9, 2004, the Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club hosted the "David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness," which was organized by a group of David Ryan's friends and colleagues, led by close friend and fellow GE employee Dr. Walter Cicha (see www.davidtryan.com). The event, which started and finished on GE Global Research property, attracted over 250 cyclists, much media attention, and raised nearly \$25,000 in donations from the riders, from other generous individuals, and from sponsoring businesses in the Capital District. The General Electric Company was the single largest corporate sponsor (\$10,000) and David Ryan's family also sent an incredible \$10,000 donation from England.

The money raised was used to establish the "David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund." The pie chart below shows the breakdown of the donations, by the aforementioned three categories. It should be noted that the event costs were \$3600 and thus the fund currently holds just over \$21,000. It is strongly anticipated that the fund-raising event will be annual and plans for the October 8, 2005 ride already are underway.

Since 80 % of the money raised for the fund in 2004 came from two sources (the aforementioned \$10,000 donations) and because donations of this caliber cannot be expected in future years, it is anticipated that approximately \$5000 (after expenses) could be added to the fund from the ride in each subsequent year.

Sources for the David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund (2004)



Mission Statement for the Fund

The "David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund" is intended to honorably preserve the legacy of Dr. David T. Ryan by sponsoring a highly deserving student through his or her undergraduate career in one of the scientific disciplines, preferably physics, but including chemistry, biochemistry, molecular biology, microbiology, mathematics, computer science, and/or any of the modern hybridized scientific disciplines, including Nanotechnology and Biotechnology.

The scholarship will be available to a student entering his or her 2nd year of undergraduate study and upon meeting certain criteria (defined below), will be renewable up to and including the 4th year of the same student's study.

A "highly deserving student" must meet *at least* the following minimum requirements:

- Straight A student through high school and through first year of undergraduate studies

- Ranks in top 2 % of all students in first year undergraduate class of the candidate's chosen discipline (e.g. if Physics will be major in 2nd year, must rank in top 2 % of 1st year Physics class)
- Involved in university sports during 1st year - team or individual - either intramural or intercollegiate
- Possesses a completely clean record - no breaches of the law whatsoever

The student awarded the scholarship entering the 2nd year of undergraduate study must maintain his or her academic standing to be renewed for the 3rd year and it must be maintained in the 3rd year for the scholarship to be granted in the 4th year. If not, the scholarship money instead will be awarded to a different student who is entering the 2nd year of study and who meets the requirements outlined above.

Since the initial fund-raising event is anticipated to be annual with additional money for the fund almost certainly being raised each year, the following distribution of the fund is suggested:

- \$11,000 to be awarded for the 2005-06 school year
- Half of the total of the 2004 remainder plus the money raised in the 2005 ride to be awarded in 2006-07
- The 2005 remainder plus the money raised in the 2006 ride to be awarded for 2007-08

If this outlined 3-year program proves successful and mutually satisfactory to the participating university and to the original "David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund" benefactors (the Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club and the David T. Ryan Memorial Committee who organized the 2004 "David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness"), the 2007 ride and future rides will continue to raise money for the fund on a year-by-year basis. The student selection criteria will not change.

Finally, it is an **immediate priority** (before the end of 2004) to obtain tax exemption for the "David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund," to ensure that the sponsors in 2004 (and in future years) can deduct their generous donations from their taxes.