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Thompson Earns \$2,500 PTK/AACC Scholarship

Jackson, MS – Keri Thompson, a student at Labette Community College is one of 20 healthcare students nationwide who will receive a \$2,500 Frank Lanza Scholarship. Thompson is a member of the Tau Theta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. PTK is the national honor society of the two year college.



Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), with the generous support of CAE Healthcare and L-3 Communications, Inc., have awarded \$50,000 in scholarships to the 2014 Frank Lanza Scholars. Twenty community college students were selected to receive up to \$2,500 each for completion of associate degrees.

The Lanza Scholarship program targets part-time, full-time and international students who have completed 50 percent of their course work toward an associate degree in nursing, emergency medical services or respiratory care programs offered by regionally accredited community colleges. Phi Theta Kappa membership is not part of the application or judging criteria; however, the majority of the 2014 recipients were Society members. A panel of independent judges selected the recipients by application based on academic and leadership endeavors as well as community service.

"Funding provided for these scholarships is critical to helping community colleges students meet the high cost of completing these rigorous health-related programs," said Phi Theta Kappa's Executive Director, Dr. Rod A. Risley. "Healthcare is among the top majors for today's community college students and also for our Phi Theta Kappa members, so it's important that we help these students complete their degrees and become a vibrant part of the economy."

Thompson, of Girard KS, is majoring in Nursing and is very active at LCC in organizations like PTK, SGA as the President, Campus Activities Board as President, Kansas Association of Nursing Students: Vice President, the Green Committee, C3 Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Student Advisory Board, and as a Student Life work study. Thompson also spends time volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House in Joplin, SEK Humane Society, American Red Cross, Million Meals Kansas, and St. Jude Children's Hospital.

"Receiving this scholarship will mean completing my college degree without financial barriers," said Thompson.

Frank Lanza served in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Korean War. He was a member of the board of directors for the Coast Guard Foundation and received the 2003 Distinguished Corporate Leadership award from the Soldiers', Sailors', Marines' and Airmen's Club. Lanza was also a member of the board of governors for the Aerospace Industries Association and the American Italian Cancer Foundation. A philanthropist, he and his wife supported a variety of charities through a family foundation.

Lanza founded L-3 Communications in 1997, a global aerospace and defense company that has grown to \$15 billion in annual revenues and employs approximately 66,000 people worldwide. With its corporate headquarters in New York City, L-3 is a leader in C3ISR systems (command, control, communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), aircraft modernization and maintenance, government services and specialized products that serve the military, homeland security, aviation and other commercial markets. L-3 customers include the U.S. Department of Defense, other U.S. government agencies, allied foreign governments and commercial customers. Under his leadership as chairman and CEO, L-3 became the nation's sixth largest defense contractor – comprised of more than 73 operating units, among them Medical Education Technologies, Inc. (METI), now known as CAE Healthcare.

In honor of Lanza's visionary business leadership and generous commitment to charitable causes, Lou Oberndorf, founder and retired Chairman of METI, initiated the endowment of the Frank Lanza Memorial Scholarship, which was funded by L-3 Communications, METI (now CAE Healthcare), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Oberndorf and his wife, Rosemary, also recently established the Oberndorf Lifeline to Completion Scholarship.

Based in Washington, D.C., AACC is the primary advocacy organization for community colleges at the national level and works closely with directors of state offices to inform and to affect state policy. AACC represents almost 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 11 million students. Community colleges are the largest and fastest-growing sector of U.S. higher education, enrolling close to half (43 percent) of all U.S. undergraduates.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, headquartered in Jackson, Miss., is the largest honor society in higher education with 1,285 chapters on college campuses in all 50 of the United States, plus Canada, Germany, the Republic of Palau, Peru, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the British Virgin Islands, the United Arab Emirates and U.S. territorial possessions. Nearly 3 million students have been inducted since its founding in 1918, with approximately 131,000 students inducted annually.