

## **2012 Awards Ceremony for Maryland Students of German**

**Baltimore, MD** - "I am so excited," Sharon Brown exclaimed as she stood beside Katrina Griffin, her German teacher at North County High School in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Frau Griffin had encouraged her to apply for the AATG Chapter Summer Study Award and Sharon was about to be presented with this generous and prestigious award.

The annual Awards Ceremony presented by the American Association of Teachers of German Maryland / DC Metro Chapter and the German Society of Maryland was held recently in the Adlersaal of Zion Lutheran Church in Baltimore. Deborah McGee Mifflin, AATG Chapter Testing Chair, Pastor Holger Roggelin of Zion Church, and Claudia Bornholdt, President of the AATG Maryland / DC Metro Chapter all expressed greetings to the assembled students, teachers, parents and friends. Klaus Brodersen of Goethe-Institut in Washington congratulated the students for their high achievement in the study of German and explained how studying English has greatly enhanced his life and enabled him to have an international career. Andrea Schrammel of the Austrian Embassy greeted the entire audience in her native Austrian dialect and extended congratulations to the students on behalf of Austria.

A wider variety of awards were given out this year with funding from more different sources than ever before. Six college-level students majoring in German were granted

\$ 800. Awards. Monika Lemke, a student at McDaniel College, as well as Arthur Paul Massaro III, Lawson Ota and Jason Wong of the University of Maryland College Park received awards from the German Society of Maryland. The Baltimore Kickers Club funded two \$ 800. scholarships for Jessica Gross and Scott Hines, also students at the University of Maryland College Park.

The German Society of Maryland has also established another scholarship for a Maryland high school student. This year's scholarship was made possible by a generous donation from Gerhard Meinzer, German Society Board Member. The recipient is Leah Dignan of Fallston High School in Harford County. She will participate in the Summer Study Program sponsored by the AATG in cooperation with the German PAD (Pädagogisches Austauschdienst). Leah will live with a German family, attend classes at a German high school, and go on field trips and group excursions to places of interest. Francis Daniel O'Neill, a student of Jack Innes at Loyola Blakefield High School in Baltimore, received a scholarship funded at the national level of AATG to participate in this AATG/PAD Summer Study Program. He was recognized for his achievement after Leah Dignan received her award. The Maryland / DC Metro Chapter's Summer Study Award went to Sharon Brown, a student of Katrina Griffin at North County High School in Anne Arundel County. The annual Langenscheidt Award was presented to Joannes Valkenberg, an exchange student from The Netherlands at Calvert Hall High School.

As a musical interlude a country music group entertained the audience with a lively repertoire of well-known Appalachian songs. Immediately thereafter certificates, prizes and checks were distributed to the high schoolers who had achieved test scores on the AATG National German Test (Level 2, 3 or 4) that were higher than the scores of 90 % of the students in the U.S.A. who took the test and to those whose scores were higher than the scores of 85 % of the U.S.A. test takers. Testing Chair Mifflin called each student to the stage to receive certificates of merit, prizes and checks. She was assisted in congratulating each student and distributing materials by Claudia Bornholdt, Klaus Brodersen, Andrea Schrammel and the newly elected president of the German Society of Maryland, Tom Werner.

During the reception held after the ceremony *Amerika Woche* had an opportunity to interview Dr. Mohamed Esa, a past president of the AATG Maryland / DC Metro Chapter. In the early 1990's Dr. Esa was one of the initiators of this awards program for high achieving students of German. On this occasion he said: "It pleased me very much to see how effectively the chapter's testing chair, Deborah McGee Mifflin, organized this event and how smoothly she and all the other program participants transitioned from one part of the ceremony to the next. The ceremony gave wonderful recognition to many fine students and will certainly motivate them to continue studying German."

Mary Upman