McGowan scholar announced

January 28, 2009

Aisha Acres, a second-year MBA student, has been named as the 2008-2009 William G. McGowan Scholar. Acres was selected from among a highly competitive group of both undergraduate and graduate Freeman School students who submitted an application, essay and supporting credentials for consideration of this award. For the past two years, the Freeman School has had the distinction of being a recipient of a scholarship grant for business students made possible through the generosity of the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund Inc. This scholarship is awarded each academic year to one student pursuing a degree in business.

Originally from Trinidad and Tobago and interested in strategic management, Acres selected the Freeman School to complete her MBA studies. Initially encouraged to come to New Orleans by her brother, a current Tulane School of Medicine doctoral student in cellular and molecular biology, Acres has found her tenure at the Freeman School to be one of the best decisions she has made in building her academic portfolio in business and preparation for the next step in her professional career, including her own possible doctoral studies in international relations.

During the summer of 2008, Aisha interned with the Idea Village, a local independent non-profit organization co-founded by Freeman School BSM alum Tim Williamson. Made up of a group of entrepreneurs, innovators and professionals with diverse backgrounds, the Idea Village uses the wide array of career paths and levels of experience of its members, many of whom have either personally started or participated directly in starting and growing businesses. "The Idea Village internship was an incredible opportunity," says Acres, "and my participation in strategy and blank slate brainstorming sessions at the Village was an especially fantastic experience in building my creative business skills and to develop my own innovative approaches to problem solving."

In addition to her current business studies at the Freeman School, Acres has become extremely fond of New Orleans, both for its culture and its weather, which she says reminds her of her home country in the West Indies.

The McGowan Scholars Program, established by the McGowan Charitable Fund, provides select colleges and universities with scholarships to help students wishing to pursue a business education. The Program is based on the personal experience of William G. McGowan during his college days. Though admitted to Harvard Business School to study for an MBA degree, he did not have sufficient funds to complete his studies. Through a merit-based award that provided the funds necessary to earn his business degree, William G. McGowan launched a very successful business career. The McGowan Scholars Program continues Mr. McGowan's legacy by encouraging the pursuit of business and by acknowledging the academic achievements of promising students.

--Suzanne Lossi