The James H. Parke
Memorial Youth Scholarship Award

James H. Parke was the first Director of Voluntary Service and the founding father of the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC). The James H. Parke Memorial Fund was established in 1976 to serve as a source of funds for a VAVS Youth Scholarship. Organizations, volunteers, VA staff and others continue to contribute to the fund so that the efforts of student volunteers in the VA facilities can be brought to the attention of all Veteran Organizations and of the business and private community.

The board of directors of the James H. Parke Memorial Fund meets in the early spring of each year to establish the amount of the primary award. If the amount of the interest of the fund is sufficient, secondary scholarships may be offered. The scholarships may be used for tuitions and fees, books, supplies and/or room and board or other educational needs purchased through the school of the students’ choice. Scholarship winners receive detailed guidance from the treasurer of the Parke Fund.

Nominations:

Each medical center may nominate one VAVS youth volunteer for receipt of the award. Recommendations may be made by any VA staff member who acts as a supervisor of the youth volunteer. This recommendation should be discussed with the Chief, Voluntary Service, before submission to the Medical Center Director.

To be eligible, candidates must have completed 100 hours of regularly scheduled volunteer service as a VAVS youth volunteer during the calendar year of the award prior to August 15, and have not reached their 20th birthday. Youth volunteers who are currently in a college or university and meet the above criteria are also eligible for these awards.

The Medical Center Director nominates a candidate for the award by submission of the nomination to the Director, Voluntary Service, VA Central Office, by September 1. Nominations received after that date will not be considered. The nomination letter should summarize the volunteer service and background of the candidate and include: age, years of volunteering, number of volunteer hours, areas of service, and supporting organizations if any. The nomination must be accompanied by at least one letter from the utilizing service staff recommending the volunteer for the award. The letter should describe first-hand observations of the volunteer’s performance. Criteria on which candidates are evaluated for consideration of awards include: inspiration to patients through service performed, dependability, fulfillment and acceptance of responsibility, personality and pleasantness, leadership capability, appearance.

National Winner

The National Winner receives a plaque with a letter of agreement/commitment to the school of the winner’s choice. This presentation is usually made in mid-October at the Annual Meeting of the National VAVS Advisory Committee. All personal information for the award may be used by the Dept. of Veterans Affairs for promotion and publicity purposes. None of the information is required by law and is, therefore, disclosed voluntarily. A consent form to use the information is available in all medical centers and should be attached to the nomination package.

ENCLOSURE #33