Teen Receives Golden Eagle Award
NorthWest Arkansas Community College Honors Amanda Dias-Jayasinghe

BENTONVILLE, Ark. (November 15, 2011) – NWACC student Amanda Dias-Jayasinghe, who is also a 10th-grader at Bentonville High School, has been named the Golden Eagle Award recipient for November.

Amanda, who is in her fourth semester at NWACC, is taking four classes at the community college in addition to taking five AP classes at BHS – calculus, statistics, physics, biology and world history.

“I am very impressed with Amanda’s abilities to juggle a full schedule at college as well as at high school,” wrote Heidi Migliori, a secretary in the NWACC science department, who nominated Amanda for the honor. Migliori is acquainted with Amanda because of her friendship with the student’s parents.

“Amanda has drive and determination to get ahead,” Migliori wrote. “She has two goals in life at this time – graduate from NWACC and be valedictorian at Bentonville High School.”

The Golden Eagle Award was presented during the Nov. 14 NWACC Board of Trustees meeting. Students may be nominated for the Golden Eagle Award by an instructor, administrative staff person or a student organization adviser. Each candidate must have at least a 3.0 grade point average in a minimum of six credit hours of class and demonstrate social awareness, personal development, a diverse interest and involvement in varied activities, interpersonal communication skills and a commitment to education.

Amanda, 15, has a 4.0 grade average at NWACC. In addition to Migliori’s recommendation, she also was nominated by two instructors at the college.

Instructor Patti Staugh said that Amanda was her top student in seventh-grade pre-AP math studies.

“She is a wonderful example of a perfect, diligent student, always striving to do her very best and going the extra mile at all opportunities,” Staugh said.

Dr. Theodore O. Ekechukwu said Amanda is exceptional in all aspects of her endeavors and deserving of the Golden Eagle recognition.
In addition to her academic pursuits, Amanda spends much of her free time volunteering for various community organizations.

She has served as a volunteer at the Bentonville Public Library, working at the summer reading desk, where she encouraged children to develop the habit of reading and assisting them in setting goals of how much reading they should do each week. She has volunteered at the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank, where she helped organize the offerings for easy access and assisted representatives from nonprofit organizations in making healthy food choices. She also helped bake desserts at the Samaritan Community Center to be used for meals the center was serving.

“It gives me a lot of happiness,” she said, “to know that I have helped someone else.”

The Golden Eagle Award recipient is the daughter of Tamara and Andrew Dias-Jayasinghe of Bentonville.

NorthWest Arkansas Community College is a comprehensive, public two-year college that serves and strengthens the community through learning for living. NWACC’s service area is defined by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education as Benton and Washington counties in extreme northwest Arkansas. The commitment of NWACC to life-long learning can be seen in the quality of instruction it offers, and the variety of programs it has designed to move students into the job market in a minimum amount of time, enrich people's lives, and prepare them to further their education. For more information, visit www.nwacc.edu.

Cutline:
Amanda Dias-Jayasinghe, left, stands with Dr. Becky Pancitz, NorthWest Arkansas Community College president, prior to the presentation of the Golden Eagle Award on Nov. 14.

Name line:
Amanda Dias-Jayasinghe received the Golden Eagle Award from NWACC.