Dear Friends and Supporters of the E. Catherine Barclay Award,

We hope this letter finds you well! We would like to introduce you to Caitlin Graham, our most recent award recipient. Caitlin spent the 2011-2012 academic year studying at the Université François Rabelais in Tours, where she took courses in International Business and the commercialisation of wine. She has since graduated from the University of Calgary, where she just completed her final semester of a Bachelor of Commerce degree in International Business with a minor in French. Here is what Caitlin recently had to say about her experience of living and studying in France:

“What is there not to say about my year in France!! I wanted to take away as much as possible during this year and I think that I was pretty successful with my aspiration. My year in France provided me with the opportunity to do so many things and to meet so many wonderful people. I will never forget the friendships that I was able to make with people from all around the world. I loved meeting people from Spain, Italy, Germany, England, Ireland, Scotland and the list goes on and on... It was so interesting to learn all about the different countries, including their norms, beliefs and, of course, their cuisine. Sharing meals with friends and family seems to be one of the most common ways for people around the world to come together and celebrate. I can officially say that I have had true Italian pasta prepared by a wonderful Italian girl, a real Spanish tortilla made with Spanish love and care, the infam-ous French crepes complete with Nutella and bananas, a won-derful English style afternoon tea, and a delicious German brunch with what seemed like a never-ending supply of food.

I was a little nervous going over to France, to say the least... I knew that it was going to be an amazing opportunity to speak French but, I wasn't too sure what else to expect. I had so many questions; what were the French people going to be like, how would the classes differ from the schooling I knew back home, would I be able to figure out the trains, ”

Continued on next page
“could I actually converse in French in a real-life situation... However, once I actually got to France, all my questions were answered. The French people were wonderful. The classes were definitely different but, the different style was refreshing. I missed a train or two (or three) during my year but, the wonderful thing about France is that there always seems to be another train on its way. Finally, speaking French. When I first arrived, trying to think, speak, and listen to French all day was exhausting! However, when I was nearing the end of my year, I was reflecting and I was so amazed at how far I came in one year. At the start of the year, I could remember time when I would kindly avoiding my French friends because I did not have the energy to converse with them! However, at the end of the year, my French friends were probably the ones who were kindly avoiding me because they couldn't get me to stop talking!! hahah I was no longer nervous or self-conscious to speak French. I was not afraid to put up my hand in class, to ask the baker for a fresh "demi-baguette," or to go to a friend's house for dinner party that was sure to be filled with speaking, listening, arguing, agreeing and thinking in French and this makes me so happy and proud.”

The deadline for applications for the E.C. Barclay Award for the upcoming academic year has just passed, so we are anxiously awaiting word from the University's selection committee to find out who the next recipient will be.

Meanwhile, fundraising efforts continue towards our goal of being able to send a young person to France every year. We are very excited to announce that a small group of past recipients has formed to champion a fundraising project to this end. If you are inspired and would like to participate, please let us know! If you have any stories about Cathie Barclay, about hostelling, or about your own international exchange experiences, we would love to hear them. And lastly, we would like to offer you the opportunity of receiving future correspondence via email. If you would prefer this for your convenience, environmental purposes or otherwise, please send us a brief email at srossi@mtroyal.ca Otherwise we continue to be reachable via mail at: 4816 22 Ave. NW Calgary, AB T3B 0Y5.

With our very best wishes,