Lisa Bednarz Awarded Reynolds Undergraduate Scholarship

The Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation Undergraduate Scholarship in Social Entrepreneurship has been awarded to Lisa M. Bednarz, a social work undergraduate planning to enter the master's program as an Advanced Standing student in fall '08. The scholarship includes up to $20,000 per year over two years of study for full-time students at NYU.

Bednarz said that her interest in healing and social work began at an early age, forming over the years as she accompanied her mother—a registered nurse—to a hospital near her hometown of Torrington, Connecticut. After several years, her mother's career at the hospital began to include case management and eventually a promotion to leader of the hospital's case management team, a group that included social workers.

As Bednarz became familiar with the day-to-day workings of the hospital, she began talking with the social workers. “I remember a social worker at the hospital telling me, “We help people when they’re at their worst,”” said Bednarz. “When I saw the discrepancies between what I had available to me and what those patients had, I knew I wanted to be a social worker.” After graduating from high school, she began volunteering at the same hospital, doing a variety of jobs.

Bednarz said that the many experiences and events she witnessed in the hospital sparked her interest in public health; she said her “two passions” were public health and palliative care. Last year, she interned at a hospice facility and found the experience to be “incredibly rewarding.” In terms of public health and policy, she is interested in doing research in a country such as South Africa, where the government is beginning to implement universal health care.

In addition to the monetary support, Reynolds Undergraduate Scholars take part in a full range of curricular and cocurricular activities pertaining to public service and social entrepreneurship.