

## 2001 HS Scholarship Winner (2 of 2 winners for 2001)



### Jennifer Marie Larson

Jennifer Larson (left) with NJCFSA Youth Trustee Beth Warren

As an ambitious woman, I have always aspired to prestigious careers such as architecture and forensic pathology. After several years of contemplating a medical career, veterinary medicine has captured my heart. My intense understanding, perception, and caring for animals compliments my adoration for medicine and desire to help those who cannot care for themselves. I anticipate the day I will be called "Dr. Jennifer Larson, D.V.M."

The fact that I have spent years debilitated with Chronic, Fatigue Syndrome, or CFS, has not once factored into my career choices. Many people, including a few of my teachers, have told me that my situation is "hopeless" and that I should scale down the difficulty of my classes and rigidity of my schedule, and choose a career that is less rigorous. However, I, being the stubborn person that I am, have repeatedly

refused to let go of my dream of becoming a veterinarian. I have no doubt in my mind that I can successfully complete my schoolwork and manage my illness in college.

Ever since my freshman year of high school, I have worked as hard as I could get my body to function so that I could excel academically and still have my friends and some sort of social life as I battled the fatigue that plagues my body. So, I have fought back against the CFS as well as against those who told me I would never make it and graduate with my class. And yet, here I am. The sand in the hourglass of my senior year is slipping away and graduation day is creeping nearer. In June, I will make my triumphant walk across the stage to accept my diploma, along with all of my friends and classmates. I am also preparing for my freshman year at the University of Delaware.

Although I know I will be a dedicated veterinarian one day, I am not foolish enough to believe that the road to my profession will be easy to tread. I will struggle at times; I am certain that there will be days when the CFS gets the better of me and will force me to stay in bed. Also, I know that I will need to make sacrifices to preserve my fragile health and stay on track. However, I am determined, and have faith that as long as I refuse to acquiesce to my disease, I will reach my goal.