

Claire Crawford Receives 2008 Parent-Patient Leadership Award

The Parent-Patient Leadership Award recognizes an individual or group that has demonstrated exceptional service and leadership on behalf of individuals with cleft or craniofacial anomalies.

Claire Crawford, a junior at Starkville High School, was born with a cleft lip and palate. She decided that she wanted to give back to a community that had given so much support on her journey through nine cleft-related surgeries. Since she always took a stuffed animal into surgery with her for comfort, companionship, and something to channel her fears and pain into, she had the idea of purchasing Cleft Palate Foundation “Bears for the Kids”—teddy bears with stitches above the lip—to give to children going through cleft surgeries. Claire teamed up with CPF and has since raised more than \$13,500 for bears, cleft education, and advocacy.

Claire regularly presents to civic organizations, church groups, health care professionals, and other groups throughout Mississippi. She has also spoken at regional and international conferences.

In 2006, Claire co-founded the Operation Smile Student Association at her high school. Through her dedication and leadership, the students have raised more



Claire Crawford (second from left) with CPF President Gip Seaver (right), and parents, Douglas and Leigh Crawford.

than \$10,000 for Operation Smile, an international organization which provides children in developing countries with cleft surgeries. This money has been used to fund surgeries for more than 40 children. Claire attended the Operation Smile International Student Leadership Conference at the University of Limerick in Ireland this past

summer and in December, was one of two students selected to travel to the Philippines with an Operation Smile Medical Mission Team. She returned from her two week trip on March 2, 2008. Claire is truly an advocate for individuals, giving them a voice....and a bear.

Claire's parents are Leigh and Douglas Crawford. Douglas is a chemist at Mississippi State University, and Leigh is a social worker in private practice and teaches in the Social Work Program at MSU. Claire and her family sat on the Blessings in Disguise Panel during the Cleft Palate Foundation's Connections Conference in both 2006 and 2008.

Cooper Callaway, DMD, MS, and Adele Crudden, PhD, nominated Claire for the 2008 PPL Award.

Ryan Spivak Awarded Paul W. Black Junior Investigator Award



Research Grants Committee. He also received a cash award from the Paul W. Black Fund and this year's sponsor, Synthes, to support travel to next year's ACPA meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Ryan Spivak, MS, was awarded the 2008 Paul W. Black Junior Investigator Award for his presentation of *In Utero Delivery of Vially-Encoded TGF-beta 3 Rescues Cleft Palate in the TGF-beta 3 Knockout Mouse*. The award recognizes superior performance in the judged platform presentation session for Junior Investigators held during ACPA's Annual Meeting.

This competition is designed to encourage and support multidisciplinary research by investigators currently in, or recently graduated from, training programs dealing with cleft-craniofacial evaluation and treatment. All presenters are commended for their presentation as well as the faculty members who supported them. Entries are judged on the quality of the research, the clarity of the presentation and the presenter's ability to respond to questions and discussions.

Mr. Spivak was recognized and presented with a plaque at this year's Annual Luncheon by Dr. Richard Kirschner, Chair of the CPF