

# ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*Developing environmental solutions through research and education.*

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS 2002 FRANCOIS FIESSINGER Ph.D. SCHOLARSHIP TO UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA STUDENT

**Washington, D.C.** - During its fall meeting held on August 25 in Houston, Texas, the Environmental Research and Education Foundation's (EREF) Board of Directors awarded its 2002 Francois Fiessinger Scholarship to Mira Stone Olson, a Ph.D. student enrolled at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Mira Olson was born in Buffalo, New York. Her interest in environmental studies stems from “the complicated interplay between the environment and its inhabitants and surroundings.” Her studies have been based on an analysis of the overall ground-water system, the transport of contaminants and bacteria, and the response of bacteria to the contaminants. Her Ph.D. research focuses on ground-water remediation, examining how chemotaxis (the movement or orientation of an organism along a chemical concentration gradient) affects the transport of bacteria for bioremediation through low permeable materials.

Ms. Olson received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and a B.A. in Environmental Science and Engineering from Rice University (Houston, Texas) in 1998, and a Masters in Civil Engineering (Environmental) from the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, Virginia) in May 2000. She is also an athlete, linguist, and accomplished violinist.

“Seventy-nine scholarship applications were received and the process was very competitive,” said Michael Cagney, EREF president. “We are pleased that a hydrologist is this year’s recipient because Francois Fiessinger worked for the French company Lyonnaise des Eaux for more than 20 years,” he added.

Ms. Olson is the first Francois Fiessinger scholarship applicant to receive the highest rating from each of EREF’s Scholarship Committee members, as well as the highest combined rating by professors submitting recommendations. She joins EREF’s current scholars, Mr. Alexander Orlov (Cambridge University, London, United Kingdom), Mr. Richard Statom (Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado), and Dr. Molly Costanza-Robinson (University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona).

Scholarships are awarded by EREF to recognize excellence in Ph.D. or post-doctoral environmental research and education. Awards are given in memory of Francois Fiessinger, P.E., Ph.D., a graduate of Rutgers University who was a founding director of the foundation. He passed away at age 53 on March 11, 1997.

The Environmental Research and Education Foundation is an independent public charity; its funding base is derived from donations from corporations and individuals who are committed to EREF’s mission to develop environmental solutions for the future.

For more complete information on the EREF, go to its website [www.erefndn.org](http://www.erefndn.org) or call 703.299.5139.

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