

## Family Creates Shelby Jane Seyburn Foundation in Honor of Late OU Graduate

Inspired by their daughter's memory, the parents of an Oakland University graduate and psychology major who was killed last June in a car crash on I-75 have established the Shelby Jane Seyburn Foundation as a way to keep their daughter's legacy alive while continuing to support the research she was passionate about at OU.

"Shelby was a kind, generous, passionate, strong and intelligent person," said Marc Seyburn, Shelby's father. "It was her passion for the Posttraumatic Growth lab at Oakland University that inspired us to create the foundation. Shelby had a vision for the PTG program, and we wanted to help support that vision because there are so many people that could be affected by this research."

Posttraumatic Growth, or PTG, is defined as the positive psychological changes that can occur through the struggle with traumatic experiences, with the idea that human beings can be changed by their encounters with life challenges, sometimes in radically positive ways.

"The current direction of health psychology is to help people to be more resilient," said Kanako Taku, Ph.D., an associate professor of psychology at OU and Shelby's mentor. "But Shelby and I discussed that while that may be good, if we help people to continue struggling instead of bouncing back quickly, then there may be a

deeper or broader sense of personal growth."

According to Taku, Shelby joined the PTG lab in the fall of 2015 and specialized in the study of PTG in adolescents. "She had always been interested in this particular age group and found that there are numerous areas with undiscovered information," Taku said.

Prior to her death, Shelby Seyburn worked in the PTG Lab for two years, and spent the last year as lab manager.

"Shelby was my mentor in the lab," said Velinka Marton, a junior at OU. "Between school and family, she was spread in so many different directions, but she always made sure everyone else in the lab was doing OK. She was a very nurturing and loving person."

As a member of Dr. Taku's lab, Shelby was able to become a published author and speak at national conferences. She also helped establish the "Teen Parent Program" within the Department of Psychology. The program is designed to reach teen parents through a psychoeducation that encourages them to think about PTG and build social support.

"Pontiac has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in Michigan, and Michigan has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the U.S.," said Whitney Dominick, a third-year Ph.D. student at OU who worked with Seyburn in the PTG lab. "This is a major problem because teen parents are much more likely to drop out of high



school early, not be able to find a stable job, and they're also at risk for pre-term births, postpartum depression and posttraumatic stress symptoms. Shelby really wanted to focus on how we could help these teen parents."

According to Dominick, the goal of the Teen Parent Program was to foster a sense of social support. "Shelby wanted the teen parents to connect with each other and be able to have that social support with each other, the school staff and with us on the research team at Oakland University.

Initially funded by a \$1,500 Community Engagement Grant from

the College of Arts and Sciences, Dominick said the Teen Parent Initiative will be able to continue thanks to the generous support of the Shelby Jane Seyburn Foundation. "I think Shelby would love it," she said.

Currently, the program has only been implemented in one school in the Pontiac area, but with funding provided by the Shelby Jane Seyburn Foundation, Dr. Taku is hopeful it can be expanded to other areas.

In addition to funding PTG research at Oakland University and helping to expand the Teen Parent Program, the Shelby Jane Seyburn

Foundation will also help fund undergraduate and graduate student travel to regional, national and international conferences via "travel grants." The grants are specifically targeted toward students in the Oakland University Psychology Department that are participating in a research lab and desire to attend a professional conference to present materials.

For more information about the Shelby Jane Seyburn Foundation, or to make a donation, visit [shelbystrong.life](http://shelbystrong.life). To learn more about OU's Department of Psychology, visit [oakland.edu/psychology](http://oakland.edu/psychology).

## Runner with Rochester Ties Wins 2018 Boston Marathon

Desiree Linden won this week's Boston Marathon, becoming the first American woman to do so since 1985. She overcame a driving rain, grueling winds, and temperatures in the 30's to win the marathon of marathons.

Linden, a veteran long-distance runner, competed in the 2012 and 2016

about our community," said Mayor Bryan K. Barnett in a statement. "We couldn't be more proud of her. She's a determined and accomplished athlete, an Olympian, and now, the first American woman to win the Boston Marathon in 33 years! She never gives up."



Olympics. This was reportedly Linden's sixth time competing in the Boston Marathon. In 2011 she finished second by just two seconds. She came in fourth in 2017. Linden trains with the Hansons-Brooks project based in Rochester Hills.

"Des represents everything good

Linden received the City of Rochester Hills' Community Excellence Award in 2016. When asked about her training, she shared that the Paint Creek Trail was one of her favorite spots. "It's an amazing surface to go out there and log a ton of miles," stated Linden.

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