



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MISSOURI COURAGE SCHOLARSHIP STARTED IN POSITIVE RESPONSE TO HATE**

*Raises \$12,000 in 12 days to support Missouri kids*

(St. Louis – July 27, 2015) We are proud to announce the **Missouri Courage Scholarship**. On July 13, two weeks after the Supreme Court handed down the marriage equality decision, *The Salem News* in Dent County Missouri reported that their County Commission voted unanimously to lower flags at government buildings once a month for the next year to protest, “the U.S. high court’s stamp of approval of what God speaks of as an abomination.” This Dent County action quickly gained national attention, and under strong pressure from the negative media, they rescinded the order just days later, though the damage was done and a message of hate was sent to LGBT youth in that community and across the state.

In response, Jacob Wilson, a native of Dent County, started the Missouri Courage Scholarship for students who are helping improve their communities on behalf of LGBT people and other marginalized groups. Wilson’s goal was to raise one thousand dollars for each month Dent County planned to lower their flag. **With support from people as far away as Brazil, and many across the country from Missouri to Florida to New York to California, the Courage Scholarship was able to raise \$12,000 in just 12 days!**

The donations and support will fund two annual Courage Scholarships that will acknowledge, affirm, and reward the courage of a graduating senior from Salem High School, and a graduating senior from another part of Missouri (open to all graduating high school seniors in Missouri), who have demonstrated their willingness to work for change in their community to advance the lives of LGBT people and other groups who have historically faced discrimination.

All graduating seniors who have worked to advance the dignity and equality of the LGBT community, the lives of people of color, religious minorities, women, immigrants, and people with disabilities will be considered. We believe the advancement and inclusion of any marginalized group is essential to the empowerment of all who have been marginalized.

The Missouri Courage Scholarship was founded and is chaired and administered by Jacob Wilson; it is co-chaired and co-administered by Geneviève Steidtmann, a long-time LGBT rights advocate from St. Louis, Missouri.

Missouri Courage Scholarship Fundraising Page: [tinyurl.com/CourageScholarship](http://tinyurl.com/CourageScholarship)

Missouri Courage Scholarship Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/CourageScholarship](http://www.facebook.com/CourageScholarship)

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