

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The George and Nancy Axinn International Scholarship



ABOUT THE AWARD

Professors George and Nancy Axinn endowed this scholarship to support graduate students who wish to pursue careers in international development. Recipients must be enrolled as graduate students in the Department of Community Sustainability (CSUS) and must focus their studies and careers on international development. Preference is given to international students. Each year one Axinn Scholar will be selected, assuming that qualified candidates have applied. Self-nominations are possible.

ABOUT PROFESSORS GEORGE AND NANCY AXINN

George and Nancy Axinn were personal and professional partners for over 60 years. Over their long careers, the Axinns distinguished themselves as scholar-practitioners who were deeply committed to rural development in developing nations. As educators, they mentored countless graduate students and were admired for their deeply nurturing brand of guidance. George and Nancy were awarded the 2006 *Distinguished Rural Sociologist Award* by the Rural Sociology Society, the first time the award had been bestowed jointly.

The Axinns arrived at Michigan State University in 1953. Over 31 years they served together on several long-term overseas assignments and helped establish MSU's reputation as a uniquely international land grant university. In 1960 George began coordinating the MSU/University of Nigeria program. During 1965-1967 the Axinns relocated their family to Nigeria and became immersed in international education. From 1976-1978 they served in Nepal, where they served as members of an MSU team at the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science. They returned to Nepal again in 1983, remaining through 1986, where Nancy worked for UNICEF and several Nepali organizations and George served as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative to Nepal. The Axinns also served in India between 1989 and 1991, where George continued to represent the FAO and Nancy worked with the Ford Foundation, the FAO, and other UN organizations.

After returning to East Lansing, George joined the Department of Resource Development and became deeply involved in the graduate program. In 1991 George officially retired, but neither he nor Nancy stopped working. In 1997 they jointly published a textbook entitled *Collaboration in International Rural Development*. In addition, George launched one of MSU's first web-based courses, *International Rural Community Development*.

George continued to teach his online course from his home in Tucson, Arizona until Spring 2009. George passed away March 8, 2010 and Nancy followed fewer than seven months later, in September. Each spring the Department of Community Sustainability honors the graduate student who most emulates the spirit of George and Nancy's work in international development.

ELIGIBILITY

Each year one Axinn Scholarship will be awarded, provided that qualified candidates have applied. Eligible applicants include currently enrolled CSUS PhD and MS students (and, if applications are received and processed early enough, new applicants to the CSUS PhD and MS programs). Applicants may be nominated either by a faculty member or by the student. Priority is given to international students.

All students are encouraged to apply, but preference will be given to those who have not been previously awarded this endowed scholarship.