



January 20, 2011

To the Membership of the International Ship Masters Association:

My name is Cory Clay, and I was recently informed that I had been selected to receive the ISMA Cadet Scholarship Award. I wish that I could have addressed you in person, but unfortunately my class schedule and the costs associated with travel, are preventing me from doing so.

A little bit about myself, I grew up in the middle of the state of Michigan, a village called Roscommon. Right after graduation, I left to join the US Navy, and ended up serving as a Sonar Supervisor on submarines on the East coast. I served for four years before leaving the service. I decided to stay there, in Rhode Island, where I held a variety of jobs ranging from mundane sales positions to working for government contractors supporting the military's mission. As time went on, I slowly grew weary of sitting behind a desk, staring at a computer. I did my research, quit my job, and came to study here at Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

My goals when I came here were quite different than what I see myself doing at graduation. When I started, I had no intention of sailing on the Lakes. I wanted to be on the ocean, seeing the world again. I came out, though, for my first "sea project" on the *American Mariner* and had a great time. The people I worked with were patient and professional, answering my questions and explaining how and why things are done. I was happy to learn, picking up more in those 2 months than I had in my first year of training. I also spent last summer on the *Walter J. McCarthy Jr.*, and a short time again on the *American Mariner*, again building on what I had learned the year before. Having just completed my license exam and having written and passed pilotage on all lakes and rivers, I hope to be out there sailing as a mate this summer. My specific plan is to secure a spot with American Steamship, as they have treated me well and taught me a great deal over the past two years. As time passes, of course I hope to increase my knowledge and level of responsibility to upgrade my license, but at this point I am just going to focus on learning the job.

Now on to the point of this letter: I would like to give you, the membership, my most sincere thank you for the honor of being selected to receive this award. The support provided to this scholarship fund, which in turn is your support for maritime education, is deeply appreciated. I didn't want to single out any particular group, but reviewing the news section on the website, I saw an article about the 17 people who toured the Detroit Salt Mine in June. These people each contributed to the fund, and I'm sure that a portion of that has been awarded to each of the scholarship recipients. To them, and everyone else...thank you.

Respectfully,

Cory T. Clay

3<sup>rd</sup> Year Cadet, Great Lakes Maritime Academy