

## Ralphy Gardner, Criminology, Psychology, and Arabic, Class of 2023

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Written Spring 2022

*"... I saw the opportunities... [Arabic] opened for me and found it to be essential for a successful career."*

Ralphy Gardner, a third-year student from Todd County, is majoring in Criminology and Psychology on the Hill. But in addition to his coursework in these two areas, Gardner is also building his own language proficiency by majoring in Arabic as well.

Recently, along with five other WKU Modern Language students, Gardner received the chance of a lifetime: He was awarded the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship for study abroad. Gardner will use the scholarship to study in Amman, Jordan in the summer of 2022. This will give Gardner the opportunity to experience language and culture firsthand by being able to immerse himself in an environment where he can connect with dialects, customs, and new perspectives. This is one of the best things about learning a language, according to Gardner.

Gardner says that learning a language can require immense studying, because students are on their way to communicating in a new manner. Although it can be intimidating, Gardner recommends that students find resources in the language department that can help them acquire the language. He attributes his success in learning Arabic to his professors, Mr. Lhousseine Guerwane and Dr. David DiMeo, but has also found much support from interim department head Dr. Alex Poole. Gardner recommends any student considering second language study to seize the opportunity at the university level: despite any reservations a student may have regarding second language study, Gardner explains that the doors language can open are numerous and that the process of learning a new language is very worthwhile.

