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Glasgow student awarded Boren Scholarship

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TRISTAN SHAW



WKU undergraduate Tristan Shaw of Glasgow, has received a David L. Boren Scholarship sponsored by the National Security Education Program (NSEP) to fund study abroad in China.

Shaw is a student in the Chinese Flagship Program and will complete his Capstone Year in China with Boren Scholarship funding.

He is a fourth-year international affairs and Asian religions and cultures major and the son of Beverly Reece and Kenneth Shaw. At WKU, he has been an active member and officer of the Tennis and Badminton Clubs. He received a U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship in 2016 that funded intensive language study in Xi'an, China. He plans to pursue a career in the Department of State or Defense working to implement multilateral, multicultural solutions to current and future policy conflicts.

NSEP is a major federal initiative designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of U.S. citizens with foreign language and international skills. NSEP's Boren Awards program provides scholarships to U.S. undergraduate and fellowships to U.S. graduate students to acquire language skills and experience in countries critical to the future security and stability of our nation. In exchange for funding, Boren Award recipients agree to work in the federal government for a period of at least one year.

“The National Security Education Program,” according to Dr. Michael A. Nugent, NSEP Director, “is helping change the U.S. higher education system and the way Americans approach the study of foreign languages and cultures.”

This year, the Institute of International Education, which administers the awards on behalf of NSEP, received 794 applications from undergraduate students for the Boren Scholarship and 221 were awarded; 300 graduate students applied for the Boren Fellowship and 120 were awarded. Boren Scholars and Fellows will live in 38 countries throughout Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East. They will study 33 different languages. The most popular languages include Arabic, Mandarin, Russian, Portuguese, Japanese, Swahili, and Korean.

“To continue to play a leadership role in the world, it is vital that America's future leaders have a deep understanding of the rest of the world,” says University of Oklahoma President David Boren, who as a U.S. Senator was the principal author of the legislation that created the National Security Education Program and the scholarships and fellowships that bear his name. “As we seek to lead through partnerships, understanding of other cultures and languages is absolutely essential.”

Boren Scholarship applicants sought guidance from WKU's Boren Awards campus representative, Dr. Melinda Grimsley-Smith in the Office of Scholar Development (OSD), in preparing their applications. She encourages undergraduate and graduate students interested in federal careers and critical language study abroad to contact OSD to discuss program guidelines and the application process. Boren applicants generally begin the process in the fall semester to meet the campus deadline in late January.

About the Office of Scholar Development: The Office of Scholar Development is committed to helping WKU students in all majors and degree programs develop the vision, experience and skills to be independent, engaged scholars. OSD welcomes the opportunity to work with students interested in nationally competitive scholarships.

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