

## Five Alfred University professors awarded International Fellowships for Faculty Development

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ALFRED, NY Alfred University has awarded International Fellowships for Faculty Development to five professors, which will help fund the cost of their overseas study and research initiatives.

Hope Childers, associate professor of art history and chairperson of the International Fellowship Review Committee, announced the following faculty members were awarded fellowships: Linda Sikora, professor of ceramic art and Robert C. Turner Chair; Kate Dimitrova, associate professor of art history; Nick Schlegel, assistant professor of communication studies; Sarah Blood, assistant professor of sculpture and dimensional studies; and Lydia McCarthy, assistant professor of drawing, painting and photography.

International Fellowships for Faculty Development are awarded on a competitive basis in order to support the participation of faculty members in international study programs or international travel for research. In addition, the funds support efforts of faculty members to internationalize existing courses or create new courses using an acquired or enhanced international perspective. Faculty who benefit from IFFD funding often share their experiences with the campus community, such as at the weekly Bergren Forum presentations.

Sikora will attend a Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) course in Prague to study issues around cultural identity, vessel forms, and ceramic traditions. Dimitrova will conduct research in Rome to bring new findings and updated material to her courses on Medieval and Renaissance art history. Schlegel will conduct research in Germany to develop his courses in international cinema. Blood, who is developing an Honors course, Drawing as a Sculptural Practice, will travel to Paris to research drawing practices in history and contemporary art contexts. McCarthy has been accepted for an artist residency program in Greece. She will bring to her photography courses her first-hand experience with the new forms of artist-run spaces that have emerged in Athens following its recent economic and political crises.

The five will share a total of \$9,500 in funding, nearly double the amount of support the University had been providing through the IFFD program.

“This award is so important because it is one of the only University-wide sources of funding for faculty research that is not tied directly to student participation,” said Childers, who has served as chairperson of the International Fellowship Review Committee since 2013. “Faculty use these funds to support travel abroad that will help them internationalize their own curriculum, to adapt course material or create new courses that expand global awareness at Alfred, and help students fulfill their Global Perspective requirements.”

Childers thanked Rick Stephens, Alfred University provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, for boosting the amount of grant funding available, adding she hopes financial support for the program continues to increase.

“This small investment in faculty has a tremendous impact upon students, the curriculum, and the community, as can be seen for example in the well-attended Bergren Forum lectures that most recipients give to share their experiences,” Childers said. “The demand is growing for these funds: the number of applicants has risen steadily in the last five years, and the cost of travel is going up. I hope we can expand the program even further in the coming years.”