

Two students win scholarships to attend ♦ and cover ♦ national conference

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Two Alfred University juniors won scholarships to attend the annual conference of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association to be held Sept. 12-15 in Philadelphia. Sebastian White, a sociology major from North Haven, ME, won a print scholarship for his independent free-lance work for a variety of newspapers in Western New York. Elizabeth (Beth) Greenwood, a comparative cultures & communication studies major from Pelham, NH, won a TV scholarship on the basis of tapes of her AUTV shows. Both students will gain experience in print and TV coverage by attending convention sessions meant both for journalists in training and professional journalists on how to improve their coverage of minority issues - issues of interest to all minorities, not only the lesbian and gay community. More important, the students will cover the conference itself: its sessions and related events. At last year's conference in Dallas, for instance, anti-gay groups picketed the convention, and students covered their protest as well as more routine subjects. "I'm really excited that AU will be represented by these two fine students, and that they'll return to student media outlets and teach other students what they've learned," said Robyn Goodman, associate professor of communications, who will also be at the conference. And Pamela Strother, executive director of NLGJA and a 1991 Alfred University graduate, said that for the students, the most important part of the conference is that they'll be writing about it like paid journalists. Work by White and Greenwood, along with that of other students, will be displayed daily and archived on NLGJA's web site. "The students will work with professional journalists, who will serve as mentors to help them with any reporting, editing, photography, or other skills they are seeking to improve," Strother said. The organization also employs another AU graduate: Angie Brown, class of 2002, is executive assistant. Dozens of distinguished journalists, some of them nationally known, will also be there. They include Lesley Stahl, co-editor of the venerable TV news show "60 Minutes"; Linda Ellerbee, longtime TV journalist; and Terry Gross, host of National Public Radio's daily arts show "Fresh Air," which is aired on some 160 radio stations. Also on hand will be Vermont Gov. Howard Dean. The student-journalist project is financed by CBS News, National Public Radio, and private donations by NLGJA members. The students get transportation to Philadelphia, conference fees, and room and board. Sebastian White is the son of Jerry White of North Naven, ME, and Jean B. White of Frenchville, ME. Beth Greenwood is the daughter of Charles and Nancy Greenwood of Pelham, NH.