

Alfred University alumna awarded Fulbright grant

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Taylor Jaczko '18

ALFRED, NY Taylor Jaczko, a recent Alfred University graduate, has been awarded a Fulbright grant to teach English in the European nation of Luxembourg.

Jaczko, who in May earned a bachelor's degree in foreign language/culture studies and global studies, applied last fall for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program in Luxembourg. In March, she was named a semi-finalist in the 2017-18 Fulbright U.S. Student Grant Program and her application went before the Fulbright Commission for Belgium and Luxembourg.

Ellen Bahr, a librarian at Herrick Library and Alfred University's Fulbright Program advisor, said Jaczko has been named a finalist in the U.S. Student Grant Program and as such will be awarded a Fulbright grant. She becomes just the 17th Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant winner from Alfred University in the last 41 years and the first since Timothy Gonchoroff in 2015.

Bahr, along with Mary McInnes, professor of art history, and Vicky Westacott, director of the AU Writing Center, make up Alfred University's Fulbright Program Committee. In the spring of 2017, Jaczko began work on her application and the committee assisted her in finalizing it for submission in October to the Fulbright Program for review.

Jaczko said she had planned to pursue a Fulbright award since enrolling at Alfred as a first-year student. A semester spent in France (fall 2016), where she volunteered as an English teaching assistant at the L&Institut polytechnique de Grenoble, convinced her to pursue a Fulbright position in Luxembourg, a tiny nation located between the borders of France, Germany and Belgium. The country has three official languages: French, German and Luxembourgish.

“Taylor has a strong interest in culture and language, and the intersection between the two. Luxembourg, with its multilingual educational system, will be an ideal setting for her to further explore these interests,” Bahr commented. “Throughout the application process, Taylor showed the kind of perseverance and dedication that is required to prepare a competitive application. The campus Fulbright committee is thrilled that she has been awarded the grant.”

Jaczko&s professional goal is to teach: either English abroad, or French in the United States. Last summer, with a scholarship from Phi Sigma Iota, the foreign language honor society, Jaczko earned her Teaching English as a Foreign Language certification. She said her love of travel is what has inspired her to pursue an education and career in languages.

“I went to France by first year in high school, and I realized this is what I wanted to do,” she said. “With (international travel), it&s important to be able to communicate. You get a more authentic experience.”

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. federal government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The primary source of funding for the program is an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Participating governments, host institutions, corporations, and foundations in foreign countries and in the United States also provide direct and indirect support. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields. The Program, established in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late U.S. Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas operates in over 160 countries worldwide.