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Alumna Receives Fulbright Award

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The United States Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board announced recently that Lauren Ostrowski has been awarded a Fulbright U.S. Student Program scholarship. The 2005 Illinois Wesleyan University graduate will teach English part-time at a secondary school and continue her graduate studies at a local university in Madrid.

Ostrowski, who graduated with a degree in English-writing and Hispanic Studies, is one of more than 1,500 United States citizens who will travel abroad for the 2010-2011 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. She will remain in Spain for nine and a half months, or one full academic school year.

The Fulbright Program, which operates in more than 155 countries, is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the United States government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

Ostrowski cites her previous experiences abroad in Madrid and Mexico and her current work as an Academic Project Manager at IES Abroad (a not-for-profit organization that provides study abroad opportunities for United States university students), as the main factors in her decision to apply for the scholarship.

“Fulbright’s mission of international exchanges as a means for education and understanding successfully combines my professional and academic interests, my love of cultural and linguistic exploration and my enthusiasm for the Spanish language and culture,” said Ostrowski.

During her time in Madrid, Ostrowski plans to organize a creative writing workshop for English language learners, allowing them to form a sense of identity, expand their vocabularies and articulate more freely in a second language.

“Creative writing in a second language allows students to focus on utilizing the language as a means for communication and expression rather than simply providing a ‘right’ answer,” said Ostrowski.

She plans to publish these written pieces in a weekly pamphlet, literary magazine or class blog.

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