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Two Students Receive Gilman International Scholarships

February 10, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Two Illinois Wesleyan students have received Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships to support study abroad programs. Cassandra-Lee Jordan and Bianca Spratt each received \$4,000 to study abroad with the School of International Training (SIT).

Jordan, a sophomore anthropology major, is studying Chinese culture and ethnic minorities in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. She left for China on Jan. 28 to spend a few weeks in Nanjing and Xi'an with her sister, who currently lives there, before beginning her program at SIT, which will run from Feb. 21 to June 5. "I hope to do research in my independent study in China that I can continue in my anthropology and religion independent studies at Illinois Wesleyan," said Jordan, "and on a personal level, I would like to be able to fluently communicate with my Chinese roommate, Li Li, (in Chinese) by the time I return to Illinois Wesleyan."

The Gilman scholarship requires recipients to complete a follow up project on their study abroad experience within six months of returning to the United States. For her project, Jordan is keeping a blog of her experience. You can read her blog at blogs.iwu.edu/cjordan/. "The ultimate goal of this project is to promote international education," said Jordan. She also has plans to arrange a dinner this fall when she returns to campus in order to share her experience at SIT with other students on campus.

Spratt, a junior sociology major, is currently studying multiculturalism and human rights through SIT in Cape Town, South Africa. "I hope to gain the South African Perspective on life, culture and the issues that affect the people there on a daily basis," said Spratt. "I intend on learning as much as I can from the excursions, home stays and the people I am surrounded by." Spratt says her goal is to one day travel throughout Africa and live with the people there.

The Gilman Scholarship Program was established by the International Opportunity Act of 2000 and since its inception in 2001, nearly 5,000 scholarships have been awarded to undergraduate students. The Gilman Scholarship is open to all U.S. citizen undergraduate students in good academic standing who: are receiving a Federal Pell Grant at the time of application or at the time they will be studying abroad, are applying or have been accepted into a study abroad program eligible for credit by the student's accredited institution, will be studying in a country that is not present on the U.S. Department of State's current watch list and will be studying abroad for at least 28 days in one country. If the study abroad program visits more than one country, 28 consecutive days must be spent in one.

For more information on the Gilman Scholarship or study abroad programs, contact the International Office at (309) 556-3190 or abroad@iwu.edu.

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