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IWU Students Receive Rotary Scholarship

September 21, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – In August 2011, Illinois Wesleyan University student Megan Winkeler, '11 and recent graduate Charlie Sell, '10 will jet halfway across the world to become goodwill ambassadors for one year. Winkeler and Sell are two recipients of the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, a \$25,000 grant to complete post-graduate studies in another country.

The scholarship program, founded in 1947, has sponsored over 40,000 men and women from 100 nations to study in other countries. Last year alone, The Rotary Foundation awarded nearly 700 scholarships to recipients from 70 countries to study in over 80 nations.

“The program is an opportunity for students to build friendly relations in other nations and help foster international understanding,” said Winkeler, a political science and philosophy double major.

Winkeler will leave in August 2011 for South Africa, where she will study peace and conflict studies at the University of Cape Town. Although this will be only her second extended stay outside of the United States, her previous experience was a semester abroad in Edinburgh, Scotland; Winkeler is excited about the opportunity.

“At no other time in my life will it be this manageable to live in another country for a year while I study and provide service,” said Winkeler. “I want to see the world and perform philanthropy while I still have the freedom and mobility to do so, and the Rotary Program is providing me with that possibility.”

In her academic work at the University of Cape Town, Winkeler will focus on women, their role in conflict and the effects of conflict. She will also perform service work at shelters for abused and homeless women.

“I felt that the University of Cape Town would be the ideal place to study peace and conflict studies since conflict is in their recent memory and is still an issue today,” said Winkeler.

Sell, who graduated from Illinois Wesleyan with a degree in political science, will head to Switzerland in September 2011 to earn a master's degree in international relations.

While Sell cites numerous reasons for applying for the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, perhaps the greatest motivator was his study abroad in Switzerland his junior year at IWU.

“My initial interest in Rotary was part of my desire to study abroad again,” said Sell. “Out of the major programs, Rotary, Fulbright and Peace Corps, I was most intrigued by the principles of the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, which are world understanding and service to others.”

Although Sell is still in the process of applying for his institution of choice, the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, he is excited about the opportunities the city and the university offer.

“I am very interested in U.S. foreign policy and the plethora of international organizations in the city provides a very different perspective on the issue,” said Sell. “In the city you are surrounded by the United Nations, World Bank and hundreds of non-governmental organizations. The Geneva School of

Diplomacy and International Relations does a good job of connecting its students with internships in these organizations.”

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