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Borisova, Garcia Awarded Gilman Scholarships for Study Abroad

May 29, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— The U.S. Department of State's Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program has awarded study abroad scholarships to Illinois Wesleyan University students Boryana Borisova '17 (Elgin, Illinois) and Ruby Garcia '17 (Evanston, Illinois).

Gilman scholarships are awarded to U.S. undergraduates, including students from diverse backgrounds and students going to non-traditional study abroad destinations, with financial need. The program was established under the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000. More than 850 students received awards for fall 2015 and the coming academic year from nearly 2,900 applications.

Garcia, a Hispanic Studies major, will receive \$4,000 for study of comparative education and social change in Santiago, Chile, through the School for International Training (SIT). As part of the program, she will take courses in education quality and equity, bilingual intercultural education, and research methods, and will complete an independent study project.

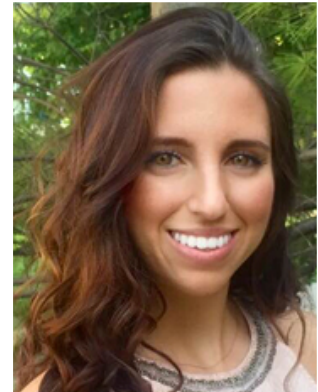
Garcia said she is looking forward to comparisons between the Chilean and the American approaches to bilingual education. "I am also very excited to explore all Chile has to offer," she said.

Although study abroad in South America is relatively inexpensive compared to other locations, Garcia said the Gilman scholarship is providing her the opportunity to study abroad.

An International Studies major, Borisova will receive \$8,000 for study in St. Petersburg, Russia, with the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). Her courses will focus on Russian history, culture, politics, civilization and cinema. While in Russia Borisova will explore the impact of politics on visual culture at an internship at the Pushkin Children's Library.

"Fourteen years ago my family and I moved to America from Sofia, Bulgaria, with not a word of English nor a stable income," said Borisova. "Not only am I privileged to be attending Illinois Wesleyan University, but I am more than grateful for the opportunities that have come after. My zeal to pursue Russian area studies can only be fulfilled with the aid of the Gilman Scholarship." She credited the guidance and leadership of Isaac Funk Professor of Russian and German Marina Balina for her successful Gilman application.

At Illinois Wesleyan Borisova is a member of the varsity women's tennis team, Alpha Gamma Delta sorority, and a research assistant to Balina. Borisova is also a Russian and Spanish language tutor and founded Illinois Wesleyan's chapter of Students Today Leaders Forever, which will help launch IWU's first community service road trip in spring 2016.



Boryana Borisova '17



Ruby Garcia '17