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Aldag '16 Surveying Foreign Investment During D.C. Internship

June 25, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University student Austin Aldag '16 (East Peoria, Ill.) is interning in Washington, D.C. this summer with the Bureau of Economic Analysis as a statistical assistant surveying foreign investment in United States businesses.

A political science major, Aldag is one of 22 interns selected for the Joint Program in Survey Methodology Junior Fellow program. This initiative allows college students to work on projects developing, deploying and analyzing surveys and large-scale databases. Aldag is working on a survey to collect information on the acquisition or establishment of U.S. business enterprises by foreign investors, along with information on expansions by existing U.S. affiliates of foreign companies. The survey is mandated by the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act.



Austin Aldag '16 is interning at the Bureau of Economic Analysis in Washington, D.C. this summer.

Aldag discovered the Junior Fellow program through the Hart Career Center and guidance by Professor of Political Science Tari Renner. The paid internship also includes free housing at George Washington University. Junior Fellows work four and a half days each week, with the other half day devoted to seminars on methodology and field trips throughout the city.

He said his greatest takeaway thus far is the realization of the importance of research, data and statistical analysis as “the real driving force” behind so many things in life, whether at an individual or governmental level. Founders of the Junior Fellow program note that information about U.S. population growth and migration, health, criminal victimization, traffic patterns, educational performance, labor and job markets, prices of daily goods, agricultural production, air and water quality, and income distributions is based on sample surveys and censuses.

After graduating from Illinois Wesleyan, Aldag plans to earn a graduate degree in urban planning with emphasis on urban politics, transportation policy and “smart growth,” an urban planning and transportation theory advocating compact, transit-oriented, bicycle-friendly land use. At Illinois Wesleyan he is the former president and treasurer of Student Senate and a member of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest collegiate honor society, Pi Sigma Alpha political science honor society, and the IWU Bike Committee. He is also a research assistant in the political science department’s research lab.