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# Bolton and Bouras Earn Phi Beta Kappa Award for Research

May 30, 2018

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Phi Beta Kappa has named Raymond Bolton '18 and Zoe Bouras '18 the recipients of this year's [Phi Beta Kappa Liberal Arts Scholar Award](#) at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Founded in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest academic society in the United States. In keeping with the society's mission to champion the liberal arts and sciences, this award recognizes undergraduate research that "engages, translates, and bridges academic disciplines and/or crosses traditional academic boundaries."

Applicants submit a senior-level research paper involving a work of art, composition, film, collection of poetry or experience-based research. The award-winning project is published in [CrissCross](#), the IWU chapter's online journal of undergraduate interdisciplinary work.

Bolton's submission, titled "The Value of Green Certification on Single-Family Houses in the Chicagoland Area," studied the association between green certification and the price premium of a home. Based on analysis of real estate data on new homes sold between 2010 and 2017 in the Chicagoland area, his study suggests that a house which qualifies for green certification has a selling price that is 9.49 percent higher than a comparable house without certification, which translates to a dollar amount of roughly \$45,000.

Bolton found inspiration for his research after a summer internship at Eco Achievers, where he conducted market research on the value of green certifications around Chicago. An economics major, Bolton served as president of the [IWU Economics Society](#), editor-in-chief of the [Park Place Economist](#) and associate editor for the [Undergraduate Economic Review](#). During his time at IWU, he was also involved in an extensive number of university music ensembles – Titan Band, Jazz Ensemble, Wind Ensemble, IWSO, Trombone Studio and Brass Quintet – and was a member of [Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia](#).

Bouras' essay "Why the Right: Analyzing Vote Choice in Rural America" paired national level survey data from the 2016 American National Election Study with a series of local interviews conducted in the rural village of Arthur, Illinois, with the goal of better understanding the voting patterns and political motivations of America's poor, rural whites.

An international studies and political science double major, Bouras garnered a variety of professional experiences abroad through IWU's programs. Bouras spent the summer of her sophomore year as a [Freeman Asia](#) intern at Yonsei University's Institute of East and West Studies in Seoul, South Korea, where she conducted research on refugee flows from Pyeongchang. As a junior, she studied politics, philosophy and economics for a year through the [IWU Pembroke Program](#) at the University of Oxford, where she will also pursue her master's degree in Latin American Studies. Bouras then rounded out her senior year by presenting her political science senior seminar project at the Pi Sigma Alpha National Research Conference at George Washington University in Washington D.C.

Bouras' accomplishments at IWU have earned her recognition from a number of other honors societies, including Mortar Board, Phi Kappa Phi, Pi Sigma Alpha, Phi Beta Delta and Alpha Lambda Delta. In 2017, she was named IWU's Outstanding Scholar for Fraternity & Sorority Life. She was also a three-year recipient of the IWU Giving Circle Award for volunteerism and served as president of IWU Model United Nations.



Phi Beta Kappa Liberal Arts Scholar Award recipients Zoe Bouras '18 (left) and Raymond Bolton '18 (right) pose with Professor of Anthropology Rebecca Gearhart Mafazy (middle).

*By Rachel McCarthy '21*