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Bowden '18 Awarded Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship

July 13, 2018

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Phi Kappa Phi has named recent Illinois Wesleyan University graduate Maisy Bowden '18 (Des Peres, Missouri) as the recipient of a \$5,000 Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship award to support her graduate-level studies at Georgia State University focused on the evolutionary precursors of language in nonhuman primates.

[Phi Kappa Phi](#) is one of the nation's oldest collegiate honor societies which recognizes achievements in all academic disciplines. Each Phi Kappa Phi chapter may select one candidate entering the first year of graduate school or professional study, and from that competitive pool, only 51 are selected to receive a \$5,000 fellowship.

"Without Illinois Wesleyan, I'm not sure I'd be going to grad school right now," said Bowden, who plans to pursue a doctorate in psychology. "IWU gave me every opportunity to develop as a student, a researcher, and a well-rounded human being. My experiences studying abroad and as a student-athlete and a sorority member shaped me into a confident and ambitious woman, and ultimately, motivated me to pursue my passion for animal cognitive-behavioral research."

A [psychology](#) and [French & francophone studies](#) double major, Bowden spent the summer of her junior year as an animal behavior research intern at the St. Louis Zoo, where she researched aggression, mother-infant bonds and other behavior patterns in various animals. Bowden's internship experience served as an impetus for her honors research project "Evolution and Social Facilitation in Non-Human Animals," in which she studied orangutans, gorillas, grizzly bears, meerkats, tigers, snow leopards, river otters, seals and sea lions from the Louisville Zoo and the Miller Park Zoo in Bloomington.

"After graduate school, I'd like to go into comparative cognition research that aids conservation and welfare efforts toward primates and other endangered animals," Bowden said.



Maisy Bowden '18



Maisy Bowden '18 conducted research at Miller Park Zoo.

In addition to her research, Bowden was an active member of the campus community. She was a four-year letterwinner on the volleyball team, for which she earned College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) Academic All-District honors. Bowden also served as the vice president of scholarship for Alpha Gamma Delta and was the women's lacrosse team manager for two seasons.

Bowden additionally demonstrated a willingness to share knowledge with others by volunteering monthly at Colene Hoose Elementary School in Normal. On IWU's campus, she took on roles as a French tutor and an assistant to the chair of the French department. In the spring of her junior year, she studied abroad in Aix-en-Provence, France and worked as a teaching assistant in a French middle school.

As Bowden prepares to begin the next step of her education, she attributes much of her success so far to the connections she made at Illinois Wesleyan.

"The support and help from the faculty at IWU made all the difference for me," Bowden said. "They were there every step of the way: advising me, challenging me, and always keeping an ear to the ground for new opportunities for me to pursue. I feel very privileged to have gone to this school."

By Rachel McCarthy '21