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ONCA Notice

Office of Nationally Competitive Awards 2022-2023 Student Profiles

The University of Arkansas had a bumper year this year! Several of the bright undergraduate students, listed below, have won prestigious Nationally Competitive awards! The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) would like to thank Dr. Suzanne McCray, vice-provost, **Office of Nationally Competitive Awards for her leadership and guidance to the students to prepare competitive applications for these prestigious scholarships.**

***The Goldwater Scholarship** (established by Congress in 1986) works to provide a continuing source of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians, and engineers by awarding scholarships to college sophomores and juniors who intend to pursue careers in these fields. Scholars receive up to \$7,500, and the award can be renewed for an additional year. To be competitive students should have some experience with research at the time of application.*

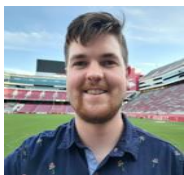


STEPHEN PIERSON – An honors mechanical engineering student who focuses on microchannel heat sinks research, Pierson uses advanced manufacturing techniques to improve thermal performance in liquid-cooled heat sinks. With three first-author publications and presentations at significant conferences, Pierson is making strides in his field. He's also an active tutor and volunteer, an Honors College Fellow, Arkansas Governor's Distinguished Scholar, and National Merit Scholar. Praised for his academic achievements and leadership, he plans to pursue a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering.

***The Fulbright U.S. Student Program** awards fellowships for U.S. graduating college seniors, graduate students, young professionals and artists to study, conduct research, and/or teach English abroad. Stipends and the length of stay in the selected country vary depending on the individual program. Recipients of the Fulbright U.S. Student fellowships are referred to as Finalists.*



JACOB CONDRAN – A 2021 honors graduate majoring in history, international and global studies, and political science, Condran was named a 2023 Finalist for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program and will serve as an English teaching assistant in Azerbaijan. He is pursuing a graduate degree from Charles University in Prague. At the University of Arkansas, Condran worked as an intern for Canopy NWA and as the fundraising coordinator for Students with Refugees. He interned with the U.S. Department of State in Cyprus. While studying in the Czech Republic, Condran volunteered with Dignity, a Czech refugee resettlement organization, taught English, and served as a graduate research assistant. He plans a career in academia.



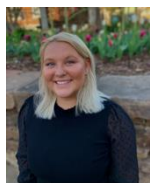
SPENCER HAZESLIP – A 2023 honors graduate majoring in chemistry and Spanish, Hazeslip was an Honors College Fellow and an Arkansas Governor’s Distinguished Scholar. He also received a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship to study Russian. Hazeslip is a Finalist for an English teaching assistantship to Kazakhstan. On campus, Hazeslip was involved in the Russian-Eurasian Student Organization, volunteered for the Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry, and tutored students studying Russian. After his time as an English teaching assistant, he plans to attend medical school.

The Marshall Scholarship is a prestigious postgraduate award funded by the British government that allows American students to pursue graduate study in any field at a university in the United Kingdom. The scholarship seeks to strengthen the enduring relationship between the British and American peoples. It recognizes high-achieving American students who demonstrate distinguished academic prowess, leadership potential, and ambassadorial potential.



JULIANNA KANTNER – A 2023 Marshall Scholarship Finalist, Kantner is involved in refugee resettlement efforts in Northwest Arkansas. Kantner served as president and vice president of Students with Refugees and volunteered with nonprofits working towards food security and youth mentorship. She was also vice president of Rotaract where she trained students on strategies for social change. For her honors thesis, she researched volunteer program development in refugee resettlement and launched an advocacy training program for college students to assist the local resettlement agency. Kantner, an international and global studies, and political science major, will pursue a law degree to gain the legal knowledge necessary to represent clients and provide legal aid to marginalized communities.

National Science Foundation – Graduate Research Fellowship, is a prestigious grant program that supports exceptional graduate students in NSF-supported science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees at accredited United States institutions. The fellowship provides three years of financial support within a five-year fellowship period, including a stipend and education allowance. The program prioritizes promoting diversity in STEM fields, fostering international collaborations, and developing the next generation of scientific leaders.



ALEXIS APPLEQUIST – A graduate in biomedical engineering in 2021, Applequist conducted research with Morten Jensen and Kartik Balachandran, both associate professors of biomedical engineering. She also conducted industry research at a medical technology startup company in Bangalore, India. Currently a Ph.D. student in biomedical engineering at the U of A, she is developing a heart-on-chip platform, Coco Chip, to be used as a novel drug screening device in the pharmaceutical industry. She plans a career in industry research and development with the goal of minimizing the socioeconomic gap in healthcare worldwide.



MARY JIA – A graduate with an honors B.S.Bm.E. degree in biomedical engineering in the spring of 2023, she is a Bodenhamer Fellow conducting research with Christopher Nelson, an assistant professor in biomedical engineering and is investigating CRISPR editing tools using orthogonal sequencing methods for curative rare genetic disease therapeutics. In her graduate studies, she will continue research in molecular therapeutics.



hardware.

CARSON MOLDER – A *summa cum laude* graduate with a B.S.C.E. in computer engineering in 2021, Molder was an Honors College Fellow, performing undergraduate research with data science professor Justin Zhan on using deep learning to improve the analysis of medical images. Currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas at Austin, he is now researching ways to use machine learning to accelerate the memory interface in computer



a career in academia after her graduate studies.

IVRIS RAYMOND – An honors computer engineering graduate in spring 2023, Raymond conducted undergraduate research with Alexander Nelson, assistant professor of computer science and computer engineering, with the support of an Honors College Undergraduate Research Grant. Raymond will pursue a Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in the fall, researching heterogeneous computer architectures for novel devices. She plans to pursue



JOSEPH ROLL – An honors graduate in spring 2023 in physics (computational concentration) and mathematics (pure concentration), Roll performed undergraduate research with Salvador Barraza-Lopez, associate professor of physics, and will attend the University of Texas at Austin to pursue a Ph.D. in physics researching theoretical condensed matter physics. He plans to pursue a career in academia working as a physics professor.



academia or industry working at the intersection of biotech and business.

SANIDHYA TRIPATHI – A *cum laude* graduate in biomedical engineering in May 2022, Tripathi conducted undergraduate research in the lab of Narasimhan Rajaram, associate professor of biomedical engineering. Currently a Ph.D. student in biomedical engineering at the University of Texas at Austin, he is developing optical imaging technologies to aid in the detection and treatment of skin cancer. He plans a career in



his own lab at an institution where he can continue researching the molecular bases for behavior.

JARROD VARNELL – A *summa cum laude* U of A graduate in biology and biochemistry in 2022, Varnell studied the genetics underlying butterfly mate preferences with Erica Westerman, associate professor of biology. Currently a Ph.D. student in evolutionary biology at Cornell, he researches the genetic and neurobiological factors underpinning behavioral and wing pattern phenotypes in butterflies. In the future, he hopes to establish

The Rhodes Scholarship, one of the world's most prestigious awards, covers all expenses associated with graduate study for two to three years at Oxford University. Every year, 32 American Rhodes scholars are selected, while award numbers vary for other countries. Students of all disciplines are encouraged to apply.



EILEEN "ALEX" ALVAREZ – An honors graduate in spring of 2023 with majors in international and global studies and political science, Alvarez was named a 2023 Rhodes Scholarship finalist. Alvarez made her mark as a senior resident assistant, an intern for Search for Common Ground, an organizer of Fight Forward-Arkansas, and an active member for several campus committees. In graduate school, she plans to study global governance and diplomacy, eyeing a future in non-profit advocacy, and eventually, a faculty position in political science or international affairs, focusing on human rights for minoritized communities.

The Schwarzman Scholarship, a highly selective international scholarship that offers students the opportunity to earn a one-year master's degree in Global Affairs at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Founded by American financier Stephen A. Schwarzman, the program aims to foster future global leaders with firsthand understanding of China. Scholars are selected based on their leadership potential, strength of character, and academic ability, and they are expected to contribute to increased understanding between China and the rest of the world.



J.P. GAIRHAN – A 2019 graduate and honors student in African and African American studies, history, and political science, Gairhan was named a 2023 Schwarzman Scholar, securing a full scholarship for global affairs graduate study at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Originally from Cabot, Gairhan has served in various leadership roles and worked domestically and internationally, including as a Fulbright English teaching assistant to Botswana and an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer. He plans to pursue a career with the U.S. Agency for International Development, focusing on youth development and education.

The Truman Scholarship (created by Congress in 1975 as a living memorial) awards \$30,000 for post-graduate study to students pursuing careers in public service. Students apply during their junior year. They are selected first as finalists, then after a rigorous interview process, may be selected as Scholars. Funds are awarded when a student enters graduate school.



ANNA MATHIS –An agricultural education, communications and technology major, Mathis was awarded the prestigious 2023 Harry S. Truman Scholarship. She is committed to rural and international agricultural development, particularly food security. Involved in community service and food security programs, she aspires to work on rural and agricultural policy in Washington, DC, and international agriculture development nonprofits before returning to Arkansas to focus on equitable food systems. The scholarship will fund her master's degree in global development and agricultural economics, furthering her ambition to champion rural America.

The Udall Scholarship Foundation (created in honor of Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall) awards 55 merit-based scholarships of up to \$7,000 and 55 honorable mentions to college sophomores and juniors each year. Students apply in the categories of the environment or in Native American healthcare or tribal policy (students in this latter category must be Native American).



ALEX DAVIS – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen, Davis is an agriculture business, pre-law junior with a minor in international economic development. An active campus leader, Davis works with the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Directorate Resource Assistant Fellowship. She is focused on advocating for Indigenous agriculture and sustainable practices, with future plans to pursue environmental law, and ultimately, uplift the Muscogee (Creek) community in agricultural pursuits.



AMELIA SOUTHERN-URIBE – A Colombian American journalist, climate activist, and artist, Southern-Uribe is majoring in broadcast journalism and political science. They founded Zero Hour Arkansas, a climate justice organization and served as the director of southeastern chapters for This is Zero Hour. Southern-Uribe is committed to environmental justice, climate communication, and intersectionality and plans to be a climate communications coordinator, bridging the gap between policymakers and communities, and intend to pursue a master's degree in environmental management to further these ambitions.

Students wishing to apply for any of these or other competitive scholarships or postgraduate opportunities should contact the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards through awards@uark.edu and visit awards.uark.edu for more information.