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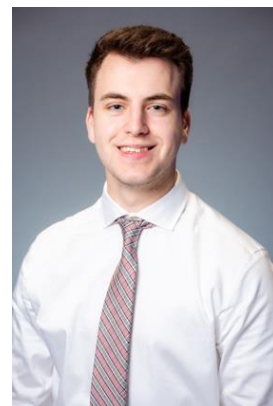
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Office of Nationally Competitive Awards

2023-2024 Student Profiles

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. 2024 is the second time in its history that the U of A has had four Goldwater Scholars in the same year.

- **ETHAN BATEY** – An honors chemistry and physics major, Batey plans to pursue a Ph.D. in physical chemistry or chemical physics followed by a postdoctoral position. He hopes to eventually work in academia either at a university or a national laboratory. Currently, he is conducting research with Bin Dong, assistant professor of chemistry, seeking to overcome traditional problems encountered in light-sheet fluorescence microscopy in cyto- and histological studies. Outside of his academic accomplishments, Batey has worked at Camp Kesem as a volunteer coordinator where he recruited, trained and managed other volunteers in support of children and parents suffering from cancer.



- **JOSHUA MORA SANCHEZ** – Mora Sanchez is a junior honors mechanical engineering major who plans to obtain a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering. He intends to conduct research on the electrification of aircrafts and work in the space industry. His interest in engineering and space took a meaningful turn when he met his role model, Franklin Chang Díaz, on a tour at the AdAstra campus in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. Currently, he is conducting research with Han Hu, assistant professor of



mechanical engineering, in the development of an advanced cold plate for the electrification of aircrafts.

- **SAM SOOTER** – A sophomore honors physics and mathematics major, Sooter is interested in applying tools from statistical physics to biological systems with many interacting parts, like the brain or animal flocks. Currently, he is conducting research with Woodrow Shew, associate professor of physics, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow Antonio Fontenele, along with Shew Lab collaborators Andrea Barreiro, associate professor of mathematics at Southern Methodist University, and Cheng Ly, associate professor of mathematics at Virginia Commonwealth University. Using tools from statistical physics, Sooter is exploring the relationship between behavioral state and distance to criticality. After college, he will pursue a Ph.D. in physics, followed by postdoctoral work, and eventually start his own lab as a physics professor.



- **EMILEE WALDEN** – Walden is a junior honors mathematics and biology major and plans to pursue a Ph.D. in bioinformatics and genomics with the intent of becoming a research professor.

She aspires to do research focused on developing mathematical models and algorithms to interpret the evolution of genome sequences and evaluate how these sequences can provide insights into disease mutation patterns and prevention. Currently, Walden is conducting research with Jiahui Chen, assistant professor of mathematical sciences, that aims to enhance genome data analysis for tracking flu virus mutations, potentially



advancing real-time monitoring and vaccine development. Walden also serves as president for the Association for Women in Mathematics.

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.

- **KATHERINE CHAMBERLIN** – A 2024 honors graduate majoring in international business, Chamberlin is a Finalist for an English Teaching Assistantship to Germany. She was a Gilman Scholar and studied abroad in Ireland. On campus, Chamberlin served as a cross-cultural mentor and a conversation club leader for international students. She plans to pursue a master's degree in tourism and travel.



- **SHERJEEL NAEEM** – A 2024 honors graduate majoring in anthropology and biology, Naeem is a Finalist for an English Teaching Assistantship to Laos. He was a Governor's Distinguished Scholar, a mental health ambassador, president of Students with Refugees, and a cross cultural education mentor. He spent time in Greece working at a refugee organization as well. When he returns from Laos, Naeem will enroll in a dual MD/MPH program in order to become a public health educator.



- **REBEKAH SMITH** – Smith holds a B.A. in German and history, '23 from the UofA. She is a Finalist for an English Teaching Assistantship to Germany. On campus, Smith was a culture team and IFriend intern with the International Students and Scholars Office and a peer ambassador for the Spring International Language Center. She also studied abroad in South Korea. Smith plans to teach at the high school level upon her return from Germany.



- **GABRIELLE VATTHANATHAM** – Vatthanatham graduate with an M.A. in French in 2024. She is a Finalist for an English Teaching Assistantship to Belgium. Vatthanatham was a Governor’s Distinguished Scholar and an Honors College Fellow. She taught French at the UofA as a graduate teaching assistant. She plans to continue her graduate education in a Ph.D. program in English and eventually teach English literature as a professor of English.



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. Amelia Southern Uribe was a 2024 Truman Finalist.

- **AMELIA SOUTHERN URIBE** – Southern Uribe was named a finalist for the prestigious 2024 Harry S. Truman Scholarship. Also a 2023 Udall Scholar, Southern Uribe is an honors political science and journalism major with a concentration in advertising and public relations. Southern Uribe has been extensively involved in campus and community events and groups, including founding the first Arkansas chapter of This is Zero Hour, interning with the city of Fayetteville’s Department of Sustainability, and sitting on a variety of statewide environmental boards. She plans to pursue a graduate degree in environmental management with a concentration in community engagement and environmental justice, as well as a career in public service focused on fighting climate change.



The NOAA Hollings Scholarship awards recipients an academic scholarship of \$9,500 per year for two years and a 10-week full-time paid summer internship at a NOAA facility. The internship between the first and second years of the award provides the scholars with hands-on practical experiences in NOAA-related science, research, technology, management and education activities.

- **ANDIE FORBES** – An honors environmental, soil and water science major, Forbes was named a NOAA Hollings Scholar. Active on campus and the community, Forbes plans to attend graduate school to pursue a master’s degree in marine resource management or environmental management.



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.