



## **Evidence Document**

for Higher Learning Commission Reaccreditation

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**Document Title:** Office of Nationally Competitive Awards Annual Report

**Office of Origin:** Enrollment Services

### **Document Summary:**

The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards helps students apply for merit-based scholarships, fellowships, internships, and study abroad programs.

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# Nationally Competitive Awards

The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (ONCA) provides information, resources, and support for students applying for a variety of merit-based, nationally competitive undergraduate and post-graduate opportunities, including scholarships, fellowships, internships, and study abroad programs. ONCA manages outreach and advising for students at the freshman through graduate level and works to connect students with opportunities appropriate to their long-term academic and professional goals. In addition to offering individual advising appointments, ONCA staff members organize informational meetings, group workshops, and practice interviews as means of preparing students to compete at the state and national level. The office also supports students applying to graduate, law, and medical school (the director sits on the Pre-Medical Advisory Committee).

## By The Numbers

During the 2014-15 academic year, ONCA completed a review of the University of Arkansas's standing in several key scholarship programs. In two major undergraduate competitions, the Goldwater Scholarship and the Truman Scholarship, the U of A is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the SEC. In the Goldwater, the University's all-time total of 50 scholars places the U of A 16<sup>th</sup> among public institutions and 30<sup>th</sup> among both public and private institutions. For the Truman Scholarship, the University's total of 19 scholars places the U of A 14<sup>th</sup> among public institutions and 31<sup>st</sup> among both public and private institutions.

In two major post-graduate competitions for study in the United Kingdom, the Marshall Scholarship and the Rhodes Scholarship, the U of A is in the top fifty among public institutions. The University's record of 7 Marshall Scholars places the U of A 24<sup>th</sup> among public institutions and 53<sup>rd</sup> among both public and private institutions. For the Rhodes Scholarship, the University's total of 10 Rhodes Scholars ranks the U of A 38<sup>th</sup> among public institutions and 76<sup>th</sup> among all institutions.

In total, U of A students have received 67 Fulbright Scholarships, 113 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, 9 Udall Scholarships, 3 Gates Cambridge Scholarships, and 868 State Undergraduate Research Fellowships.

Another exciting development in the 2014-15 academic year was the University of Arkansas's recognition as a participating institution by the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States. This recognition will allow University of Arkansas students to apply for the Churchill Scholarship, an award that gives students in specific life science, physical science, technology, arts, humanities, and social science fields the opportunity to complete a one-year degree at the University of Cambridge. The University of Arkansas is one of 105 participating institutions across the United States.

## Student Awards & Achievements

During the 2014-15 academic year, the University of Arkansas continued a long tradition of students winning prestigious scholarships, as U of A students received more than \$2.7 million dollars in competitive fellowships and scholarships. Students earned awards on both the state and national level and were recognized for their commitment to academic excellence, research, public service, leadership, and community involvement. This year saw U of A students win some of the most prestigious and competitive scholarships and fellowships in the nation, including the Fulbright Scholarship, National Science Foundation

Graduate Research Fellowship, Truman Scholarship, Goldwater Scholarship, James Madison Fellowship, Gilman Scholarship, Udall Scholarship, and Harvard-Amgen Scholarship.

2014-15 was a landmark year for University of Arkansas students competing for the most prestigious junior-level scholarships in the nation: the Goldwater, Truman, and Udall Scholarships. Armin Mortazavi became the University's 50<sup>th</sup> Goldwater Scholar, and his win also marked the 20<sup>th</sup> year in a row that at least one University of Arkansas student was named a Goldwater Scholar. In addition, Elise Clote and Michael Reinisch were both named 2015 Udall Scholars. This is the first time in University history that two students have been named Udall Scholars in the same year. Finally, Grant Addison was named a Truman Scholar, making him the 19<sup>th</sup> in University history. Because of these students' success, the University of Arkansas was one of eight schools in the nation to have at least one Goldwater, Truman, and Udall Scholar in the same year.

## Rhodes Scholarship

The Rhodes Scholarship is the oldest international scholarship program and was initiated after the death of Cecil Rhodes in 1902. The scholarship is intended to bring outstanding students from many countries around the world to study at the University of Oxford. Only 32 U.S. Rhodes Scholars are selected each year. Last fall, Nathanael Franks was named as a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship and invited to interview for the award.

Nathanael Franks graduated cum laude in 2012 with a degree in physics and biochemistry and in 2014 with master of business administration. During the 2014-15 academic year, he completed a master of accountancy. In addition to his academic performance, Franks was a member of the University of Arkansas track and field team.

There have been 10 Rhodes Scholars from the U of A. Previous Rhodes Scholars include Anna Terry (2001), Eric Wear (1985), William Huff (1957), Gaston Williamson (1935), J. William Fulbright (1925), Phillip Brodie (1913), John Shipley (1911), Morris Cleveland (1908), Charles A. Keith (1907), and Neil Carothers (1904).

## J. William Fulbright Scholarship

The Fulbright program was established in 1946 through legislation sponsored by Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas to promote international education as a means of fostering cultural and political understanding across the globe. More than 155 countries participate in the program, and approximately 1,900 students from all fields of study are awarded grants each year.

This year, seven U of A students were awarded Fulbright Scholarships to teach abroad during the upcoming academic year. The Fulbright international exchange program offers students the opportunity to travel to a country of their choice, either to conduct advanced research in their fields of study or to teach English in elementary and secondary schools. All seven winners this year received English Teaching Assistantships. Six of the applicants were seniors in the Fulbright College and one was a senior in the College of Education and Health Professions.

### **THE FULBRIGHT WINNERS ARE:**

Erick Axxe, a senior honors German and sociology major in Fulbright College. Axxe is a previous Honors College Study Abroad Grant recipient and spent the Spring 2014 semester studying at the University of Regensburg in Regensburg, Germany. He will spend the upcoming year teaching English in Germany.

Bree Bursch, a senior English major in Fulbright College. She will spend the upcoming year teaching English in Germany before pursuing a master of fine arts in creative writing.

Amy Cosgrove, a senior communication major in Fulbright College. After completing her English Teaching Assistantship in Thailand, she plans to pursue non-profit work.

Grace Gandy, an honors elementary education senior in the College of Education and Health Professions. Gandy is an active member of the National Science Teachers Association. She will spend the upcoming year teaching English in Greece.

Zoe Gastineau, an honors history and Asian studies senior in Fulbright College. After completing her English Teaching Assistantship in South Korea, she plans to pursue a doctorate specializing in Korean history.

Jacob Pinter, a broadcast journalism major in the Fulbright College. Pinter graduated in December 2014 and currently works in Washington, D.C., as a production assistant on NPR's *Morning Edition*. He will spend the upcoming year teaching English in Thailand.

Haley Smith, a senior anthropology major in Fulbright College. Smith previously received a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship. She will spend the upcoming year teaching English in Malaysia.

## National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

Nine University of Arkansas students – one undergraduate student, five graduate students, and three recent graduates – received National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships for the upcoming academic year. Each fellowship is worth \$34,000 per year and can be renewed for up to three years. Along with the renewable stipend, each student's institution will receive \$12,000 per year, bringing the total amount of funding awarded to these 9 students to more than \$1.2 million. The award recognizes not only academic excellence, but also the expected future contribution that each student's research will make to her or his field and to society at large.

Sarah Bilsky is a doctoral student at the University of Arkansas. She received an undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University in 2011.

Calvin Johnson is a master's student in geology at the University of Arkansas. He received an undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University in 2014.

Elizabeth Reese graduated from the University of Arkansas with a bachelor of science in biology in 2012 and a bachelor of arts in psychology in 2013. She will begin a doctoral program in clinical psychology at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in the fall of 2015.

Sean Salazar is a doctoral student in civil engineering at the University of Arkansas. He received his undergraduate degree in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas in 2013.

Andrew Sanders graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2014 with a bachelor of science in biology. He is currently a doctoral student in ecology and evolutionary biology at Dartmouth College.

Aaron Shew is a doctoral student in environmental dynamics at the University of Arkansas. He received his undergraduate degree from Middle Tennessee State University in 2011.

Rebecca Simpson graduated from the University of Arkansas with honors in 2013 with a bachelor of arts in mathematics and a bachelor of science in biochemistry. She is currently a doctoral student in biochemistry and molecular and cell biology at Cornell University.

Bradley Wilson is an incoming graduate student of geosciences at the University of Arkansas. He received his undergraduate degree in geophysical engineering from the Colorado School of Mines in 2015.

Mariel Young graduated magna cum laude with majors in anthropology and Spanish in 2013. In 2013, Young was named a Gates Cambridge Scholar. She is currently a doctoral student in human evolutionary biology at Harvard University.

This group of fellowship recipients brings the overall total of NSF GRFP winners from the University of Arkansas to 113. Three recent graduates - Tobias Bothwell, Preston Scrape, and Michael Wyssman; three graduate students - Stephen Bauman, Gage Greening, and Kayla Skinner; and one undergraduate students - Michaela Mertz - received honorable mentions.

## James Madison Fellowship

This year, Scott Shackelford, an incoming Master of Arts in Teaching student in the College of Education and Health Professions and University of Arkansas alumnus, won the prestigious James Madison Fellowship in the amount of \$24,000 to help him pay for graduate studies in American history. Shackelford graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2001 with a degree in political science and journalism. The James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation generally selects one winner from each state, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories each year.

Previous James Madison Fellows from the U of A include Annie Williams (2014), Alexander McKnight (2009), Korienne Barnes (2002), Kathleen Blankenship (2001), and David Buchner (1999).

## Truman Scholarship

University of Arkansas junior Grant Addison of Cabot won a 2015 Harry S. Truman Scholarship. Addison is an honors history and political science double major in the Fulbright College. He plans to work in education policy and reform in the state of Arkansas. Addison is one of 58 students from 50 U.S. colleges and universities to be awarded the prestigious scholarship this year. He will receive \$30,000 to be used toward graduate study.

Political science and Middle East studies student Hilary Zedlitz was selected as a Truman Finalist.

Truman Scholars are selected on the basis of their academic success, leadership skills, and the likelihood of their becoming public service leaders. Recent University of Arkansas Truman Scholars include Cicely Shannon (2014); Nathan Coulter (2013); Mike Norton (2012); Olivia Meeks (2008); and Dwayne Bensing (2006).

## Goldwater Scholarship

Armin Mortazavi, a Bodenhamer Fellow majoring in chemistry and physics, was selected as a 2015 Goldwater Scholar. He will receive a scholarship of \$7,500 from the Barry Goldwater Scholarship Foundation for the coming academic year. Mortazavi's win marks the 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that at least one U of A student has won a Goldwater Scholarship.

Mortazavi is one of 260 students in the nation to be named a Goldwater Scholar. His research focuses on studying the stability and behavior of alpha-helical peptides. Upon graduation, Mortazavi plans to pursue an MD/PhD and eventually conduct research and teach at a medical university.

Congress established the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education program in 1986 to provide a continuing source of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians, and engineers by awarding scholarships to college students who intend to pursue careers in these fields. Goldwater Scholars are selected from a field of more than a thousand mathematics, science, and engineering students, who must be nominated by their institutions. The first University of Arkansas student to receive a Goldwater was mathematics major Todd Williams in 1991. The University has had a total of 50 students receive the prestigious award.

The University of Arkansas nominated four students for the Barry Goldwater Scholarship for excellence in math, science and engineering; three of those students were recognized with honorable mentions: Ailon Haileyesus (biomedical engineering); Stephanie Long (biology and psychology); and Lauren Reed (chemical engineering).

## Udall Scholarship

The Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Scholarship Foundation awards 50 merit-based scholarships of up to \$5,000 and 50 honorable mentions to college sophomores and juniors who have demonstrated outstanding potential and a commitment to pursuing careers related to the environment. The foundation also awards scholarships to Native American college sophomores and juniors who have demonstrated outstanding potential and a commitment to careers related to tribal public policy or health care.

Two University of Arkansas students received Udall Scholarships this year: Elise Clote of Glendale, Missouri, and Michael Reinisch of Düsseldorf, Germany.

Elise Clote is an honors junior agribusiness management and marketing major in Bumpers College. She is a member of the Osage Nation and currently serves as the president of the Native American Student Association. Clote ultimately plans to work for the Osage Nation by focusing on food sovereignty and food security through their Bird Creek Farms project.

Michael Reinisch is an honors junior working on degrees in chemical engineering and physics. He is a previous recipient of an NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates and a RISE Scholarship. His ultimate goal is to help build “eco-villages” (self-sustaining communities) around the world.

## Gilman Scholarship

During the 2014-15 academic year, 20 University of Arkansas undergraduates received the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, for the fall, spring, or summer terms. The Gilman Scholarship allows undergraduate students with high financial need the opportunity to study or participate in an internship abroad, develop valuable career and language skills, and prepare themselves for the global economy while serving as citizen ambassadors in their host country.

Gilman Scholars receive up to \$3,000 to apply towards their summer study abroad program costs, and a limited number of students will also receive additional funding for language study through the Critical Need Language Awards, for a total award of \$8,000. At present, 80 U of A students have received the Gilman Scholarship since the program began in 2001.

## Harvard Amgen Scholarship

The Harvard-Amgen Scholars Program is an intensive 10-week summer research program for undergraduate students studying biotechnology. Scholars work with faculty mentors and live in Harvard's Summer Undergraduate Research Village community. In addition to performing research, Scholars also receive a stipend and attend the Amgen Scholars Symposium at UCLA with students participating in other Amgen programs around the country. The Amgen Foundation currently operates Amgen Scholars Programs at 17 of the top educational institutions in the United States, Europe, and Japan.

Ailon Haileyesus, a junior honors biomedical engineering major, is the University of Arkansas's first Harvard-Amgen Scholar. She plans to pursue a graduate degree in biomedical engineering and use her research to improve the quality of medical care in developing nations.

## Additional National Awards Received by U of A Students

Environmental Protection Agency Greater Research Opportunity (GRO) Fellowship

Gates Millennium Scholarship

NASA Pre-Service STEM Fellowship

National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates

Smithsonian Environmental Research Center Internship

Southern-Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Young Scholars Enhancement Grant

## State Undergraduate Research Fellowship

For the 2014-15 academic year, 42 U of A students earned State Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF). These students' research interests represent a variety of fields, including the arts, humanities, social sciences, agriculture, business, education, engineering, and the sciences.

Individual state awards ranged from \$1,375 to \$2,750, with the University providing matching funds for each student. SURF funds provide financial support for students to engage in research projects that are meaningful to their degrees and future careers, while also providing financial support to faculty research mentors who supervise student projects.

Name	Major	Mentor
Leslie Baldwin	Anthropology, Chemistry	Zheng, Nan
Darcy Boultinghouse	Nursing	Smith-Blair, Nancy
Christian Buechel	Marketing, Supply Chain Management	Jensen, Sarah
Kyle Camp	Biology	Pinto, Ines
Timothy Carroll	Biology	Baum, Jamie
Joe Carter	Biological Engineering	Zhu, Jun
Skye de Saint Felix	Communication	Corrigan, Lisa
Annie Everett	History	Hare, J. Laurence

Name	Major	Mentor
Lucas Fair	Biology	McNabb, David
Grace Gandy	Elementary Education	Imbeau, Marcia
Kevin Glennon	Chemistry and Biochemistry	McIntosh, Matt
Ailon Haileyesus	Biomedical Engineering	Balachandran, Kartik
Kristen Harrison	Environmental, Soil & Water Science	Zhang, Wen
Amy James	Chemistry and Biochemistry	Zheng, Nan
Logan Jones	Physics	Kennefick, Julia
Alex Khang	Biomedical Engineering	Balachandran, Kartik
Kendall Kraus	Economics, Marketing	Rapert, Molly
Carolyn Kroger	Psychology	Margulis, Elizabeth
Stephanie Long	Biology, Psychology	Parks, Nathan
Aneeka Majid	Biomedical Engineering	Muldoon, Timothy
Padma Mana	Chemistry	Adams, Paul
Emily Miller	Chemistry, French	Chen, Jingyi
Jonathan Mishler	Physics, Mathematics	Herzog, Joseph
Alita Mobley	Psychology	Ham, Lindsay
Shawn Morris	Physics	Herzog, Joseph
Armin Mortazavi	Chemistry, Physics	Koeppe, Roger
Nelly Muyia	Accounting	Jensen, Molly
Ryan Nakamoto	Physics	Bellaiche, Laurent
Anna Nguyen	Biology	Du, Yuchun
Juniper Patel	Communication, English	Schulte, Stephanie
Joshua Pennington	Microelectronics-Photonics	Huang, Adam
Rebekah Porter	Civil Engineering	Braham, Andrew
Bonnie Ramsey	Chemistry	Striegler, Susanne
Anna Rigdon Rowe	Kinesiology	Elbin, Robert
Cicely Shannon	Economics	Kali, Raja
Christopher Sims	Agricultural Business, Poultry Science	Goodwin, Harold
Kaylee Smith	Chemical Engineering	Servoss, Shannon
Griffin Sonaty	Biomedical Engineering	Barbote, Ravi
Sarah Stolze	Computer Science	Gashler, Michael
Kaitlyn Thomas	Industrial Engineering	Zhang, Wen



Name	Major	Mentor
Margaret Watermann	French, History, Political Science	Pierce, Michael

## Campus Events

### INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Each year, ONCA offers informational sessions for students interested in applying for outside scholarships and fellowships. This year, ONCA offered informational sessions for SURF, NSF, Truman, Goldwater, Udall, the UK scholarships (Marshall, Rhodes, Gates Cambridge), and – in collaboration with the office of study abroad – Fulbright.

### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION WRITING WORKSHOP

Following the NSF informational session, ONCA organized a workshop for students planning to apply for the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. The workshop included presentations from ONCA, the office of study abroad, and a number of U of A faculty. After participating in a panel discussion chaired by Dr. Magda El-Shenawee, students met one-on-one with ONCA advisors and STEM faculty to discuss their individual application materials. Approximately 40 students attended the workshop.

### STATE AND NATIONAL AWARDS RECEPTION

On April 20, ONCA honored nearly 250 students and over 100 faculty members at its annual state and national awards reception at the Janelle Y. Hembree Alumni House. Among the students honored were a Truman Scholar, a Goldwater Scholar, 2 Udall Scholars, a Rhodes Finalist, 9 NSF Graduate Research Fellows, 42 SURF Scholars, and 7 Fulbright English Teaching Assistants.

Vice Chancellor Charles Robinson and Interim Dean Curt Rom presented awards to the winning students and their mentors. Vice Provost Suzanne McCray, director of the office of nationally competitive awards, also presented the first staff gold medals to DeDe Long, director of the office of study abroad, and Angela Oxford, director of the center for community engagement, in recognition of the continued impact they have on campus.

Continuing its tradition of honoring outstanding faculty mentors and their departments, ONCA also recognized eight faculty members and one department with the 2014-15 Faculty and Departmental Gold Medal Awards. Winners are selected because of their demonstrated commitment to student success. The 2014-15 Faculty Gold Medal winners were:

- Kartik Balachandran, assistant professor of biomedical engineering, College of Engineering
- Mark Boyer, professor of landscape architecture, Fay Jones School of Architecture
- Robert J. Elbin, assistant professor of kinesiology, College of Education and Health Professions
- Raja Kali, professor of economics, Walton College of Business
- Doug Karcher, associate professor of horticulture, Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences

- Roger Koeppe, distinguished professor of chemistry, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences
- Ines Pinto, associate professor of biology, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences
- Stephanie Schulte, associate professor of communication, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

The Walter J. Lemke Department of Journalism was recognized with the 2014-15 Departmental Gold Medal Award. Previous departmental winners include Electrical Engineering; Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science; Marketing; International Relations; Biological Sciences; Chemical Engineering; History; Political Science; Chemistry; Economics; World Languages, Literatures & Cultures; and Physics.

## Office Changes

In December 2014, Jeremy Burns received his Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Arkansas. In addition, Dr. Burns was promoted to associate director and gained the title of communications liaison. He continues to work with students applying for nationally competitive awards, and he helps coordinate the communication efforts and campaigns of enrollment services.

## Arkansas Reads

In October, the Arkansas Reads program, conducted by the office of nationally competitive awards, received a \$5,000 grant from the University of Arkansas Women's Giving Circle. The grant money will help support Arkansas Reads' new "Women in STEM" initiative that will work to promote science careers and fields of study to children at C.B. Partee Elementary in Brinkley. The ONCA team identified 20 books that feature women scientists as protagonists. For each of these books, a University of Arkansas student or staff member will make a recording introducing herself, talking about her path to higher education, and reading an excerpt from the book. In addition, each reader will choose a book that was influential in her childhood and make a similar recording. The grant funding will support the purchase of these books.

Through new partnerships on campus and throughout the Fayetteville community, the Arkansas Reads program has collected a record number of books for C.B. Partee Elementary in Brinkley. Donation bins were placed in various locations around campus, including the Student Union, Hotz Honors Hall, and Silas Hunt Hall. In addition, Parice Bowser, director of greek life, helped coordinate a book drive among the sororities on campus that gave nearly 2,000 books to the program. The University's Advancement Division held its own book drive that collected over 750 books. Additional partnerships with Nightbird Books and the Charlie Brown Book Sale at Vandergriff Elementary netted close to 1,000 books. In all, the Arkansas Reads program will donate well over 3,000 books to benefit Brinkley students.