

Honors Program

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Shippensburg Graduate Awarded Fulbright Scholarship

SHIPPENSBURG, Pa. — A 2008 graduate of the Shippensburg University Honors Program has been awarded the prestigious Fulbright scholarship.

Jennifer Bly has been offered admission to the Fulbright U.S. Student Program to study and teach in Uruguay beginning later this month and continuing through November. She is believed to be the first Shippensburg University student to have received a Fulbright grant in the 62-year history of the exchange program.

Bly is a Shippensburg native, having graduated from Shippensburg Area Senior High School in 2004. She received her bachelor's degree in English from Shippensburg University in May 2008 and is currently pursuing her master's degree in rhetoric and political culture at the University of Maryland-College Park.

"I found out about the Fulbright less than a month before I would have to leave, so I've been working frantically to make the arrangements," says Bly, 23. "I can't tell you how excited I am about this opportunity. It's amazing how everything worked out."

Bly originally applied for the Fulbright in October 2007, hoping to secure an English teaching assistantship in Argentina. Now, nearly a year later, she has been awarded an eight-month assistantship that will take her to Montevideo, Uruguay, and an as-yet-to-be-determined Uruguayan province.

Much of Bly's time in South America's second smallest country will be devoted to English instruction for Uruguayan college students who plan to teach English when they graduate. She will also conduct independent research, complete university coursework, or carry out a service project.

Bly studied abroad in Spain during the spring semester of her sophomore year at Shippensburg and is a conversational Spanish speaker. Her interest in Latin American culture and globalization is what drove her to apply for a Fulbright in South America.

"Jenn's outstanding undergraduate record of scholarship, leadership, and service shows that she will take advantage of all the Fulbright experience offers," says Honors Program Director Kim Klein. "She'll contribute tremendously to the Fulbright program's goal of fostering intercultural communication and understanding."

The Fulbright program is administered by the U.S. State Department and is the largest and most admired U.S. international exchange program. Established by congressional legislation in 1946 to “increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and other countries through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills,” the program distributes only 1,500 student scholarships each year.

“I’m looking forward to learning more about Uruguayan culture and being able to share American culture with the students there,” says Bly. “I appreciate the support that the faculty at Shippensburg provided during my application process and that my department at the University of Maryland has shown in accommodating my time away.”

Bly will begin her studies in Uruguay on March 16 and will return to the University of Maryland to complete her master’s degree when her Fulbright expires in November. Her long-term plans are to pursue a doctorate degree in rhetorical communication.

The Shippensburg University Honors Program is made up of more than 150 undergraduate students of diverse backgrounds who are accepted to the program based on academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, and evidence of leadership and community service.

The Honors Program offers small, dynamic classes with excellent instruction; opportunities for research projects, internships, and study abroad experiences; and cultural events, social activities, and service projects.