Maryland Continues to Set High Standard

With 15 new Fulbright grants this year, Maryland students and recent graduates have earned a total of 70 Fulbright grants in the past five years. Maryland’s newest Fulbrighters will travel to 12 different countries on five continents. Two recipients also received the Fulbright Critical Language Enhancement Award, which will provide them with advanced language training during their grant period. The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides more than 1,900 awards annually for students and young professionals to pursue international study, research, and teaching experience.

“Maryland’s undergraduate and graduate recipients of the Fulbright grant are an extraordinarily talented and adventuresome group of students and a credit to the departments where they study. From teaching English in Turkey, to exploring the experiences of women secondary school teachers in Ethiopia, to learning about the art and practice of clowning in Indonesia, these students set a high standard of accomplishment for the whole University,” says Professor James Gilbert, Maryland’s Fulbright program adviser.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Since its establishment in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the Fulbright Program has given approximately 318,000 students, scholars, teachers, artists, and scientists the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields. The Fulbright U.S. Student Program operates in more than 140 countries worldwide. A total of 38 Maryland students applied for the 2013-2014 Fulbright grants.

BY FRANCIS DUVINAGE, NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS OFFICE AND MARYLAND CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

2013-2014 UMD FULBRIGHT RECIPIENTS

Negar Ashtari Abay (Ethiopia) is a Ph.D. candidate in counseling, higher education, and special education. Abay’s research will focus on the experiences of female secondary school teachers in Ethiopia. Her study hopes to inform policies aimed at the greater inclusion of women in teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa and to fill a gap in the gender and education literature.

Amy Austin (Germany) graduated with a B.A. in government and politics in 2010. She will be an English teaching assistant in Berlin, Germany. After completing her Fulbright year, Austin plans to pursue a master’s degree in public policy or education and then to work at an organization that aims to eliminate educational inequalities.

Dave Balwanz (South Africa) is a Ph.D. student in counseling, higher education, and special education. He will examine secondary education and training programs for marginalized youth in two school districts in the Johan-
nesburg area. He will elicit perspectives from these youth on the skills and learning experiences they see as important in their transition to adulthood and the world of work.

Ashley Enrici (Indonesia), a Ph.D. candidate in geographical sciences, will research the recent extension of the UN’s Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) program. Enrici will examine implementation challenges of the REDD+ program that two forest communities face. She also received Fulbright’s Critical Language Enhancement Award to study Bahasa Indonesia.

Alex Gittelson (Russia), a 2009 B.S. alumnus of agricultural and resource economics, will research alternatives to agricultural burning in Russia. He is currently an international affairs specialist with the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, focusing on policy issues related to energy, climate, safety, and security.

Amina Goheer (Turkey), a 2012 alumna with B.A. degrees in government and politics and Arabic studies, has been awarded an English Teaching Assistantship. Following her Fulbright year she plans to pursue a master’s degree in international development or global public health.

Harrison Guthorn (Jordan), a Ph.D. candidate in history, will examine how the city of Amman developed. He will focus on its development as the capital of Transjordan during the Mandate period, a critical time for both the history of Jordan and the entire Middle East. Guthorn also received Fulbright’s Critical Enhancement Award to study Arabic.

James Hesla (Indonesia), a Ph.D. candidate in theatre and performance studies, will research Balinese clowns and clowning in traditional masked dance-drama. He will consider how clowns and clowning both reflect and have an impact on Balinese cultural values in performance and performer training.

Elana Mayer (Mexico), a history and Spanish double major, received her B.A. and earned a Latin American studies certificate. She has been awarded an English Teaching Assistantship where she will serve as an English language and cultural assistant at a public university. Upon her return from Mexico, Mayer plans to become a high school Spanish and/or ESL teacher.

Sonia Prescott (Panama), a Ph.D. candidate in history, will research Afro-Antillean contributions to the labor movement in Panama. She will focus on the role of racial propaganda in defining how these protests gained or lost the support of the larger Panamanian society.

Katherine Rennenkampf (Indonesia), a mathematics, English, and economics triple major, graduated with a B.S. She has been awarded a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship. Rennenkampf, who aspires to become a math educator at the secondary level, will also be pursuing a project to learn about Indonesia’s recent steps in reforming its mathematics curricula.

Mary Kate Schneider (Bosnia and Herzegovina) is a Ph.D. candidate in government and politics. She will research the effects of divided education in Bosnia and Herzegovina by exploring how education policies affect interethnic perceptions and attitudes.

Yu-Chi Wang (Taiwan) is a May 2013 graduate with B.S. degrees in psychology and biology. She has been awarded a Fulbright grant to teach English in Taiwan. After the completion of her Fulbright year, Wang plans to pursue a master’s degree in industrial/organizational psychology and to use her Chinese language skills to work internationally in this field.

Kimberly Wilson (Taiwan), a Ph.D. candidate in government and politics, will examine Taiwan’s maritime and territorial claims in the South China Sea. Wilson’s project will build on her current dissertation research in China, which is funded by a 2012-2013 Boren Fellowship.

Jesse Zarley (Chile) is a Ph.D. student in the department of history. He will research how the indigenous Mapuche population of southern Chile successfully resisted conquest and colonization by the Spanish Empire and the Chilean nation during the 18th and 19th centuries.