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First Morris International Gilman Scholar travels to Egypt

Summary: The scholarship program supports undergraduates who would not otherwise have the opportunity to study abroad.

(May 18, 2012)-Among the many opportunities the University of Minnesota, Morris offers is the prospect of studying abroad. For one student, that opportunity came through the receipt of a scholarship. Andreana Saunders '13, Bloomington, is Morris's first recipient of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. The Gilman Scholarship Program supports undergraduates who might not otherwise participate in study abroad programs due to financial constraints and aims to encourage students to choose non-traditional study abroad destinations. Award recipients are chosen by a competitive selection process and must use the award to defray eligible study abroad costs.

Saunders became aware of the scholarship through the University of Minnesota scholarship search engine and applied at the suggestion of Sarah Ashkar, study abroad adviser at the Academic Center for Enrichment.

"It is a privilege to have been selected to be an International Gilman Scholar, and I intend to utilize this resource and this opportunity to the fullest," says Saunders.

She used the scholarship to fund her 2012 May Session trip to Egypt as a participant of the Pyramids and Politics on the Nile course.

Sheri Breen, assistant professor of political science and Jayne Blodgett, metadata and technical services coordinator at Briggs Library are the program leaders. The course explores the importance of the Nile River to the political, cultural, social, and environmental development of Egypt, and will include a significant environmental studies curriculum, with emphasis on Egypt's current and historic hydropolitical issues, policies, and paradigms.

Saunders left on May 17, 2012 for Cairo. She will also visit the cities of Luxor, Aswan, and Alexandria.

A few items on Saunder's itinerary in Cairo are visits to the Giza Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Desert Development Center research station as well as a tour of the Egyptian Museum, including entrance to the Mummies Hall. From Cairo, she will travel by train to Luxor.

At Luxor, Saunders will embark on a Nile cruise to Aswan. On the way she will get to meet with residents, visit the Luxor and Karnak temples, and tour the Valley of the Kings, among many other planned activities.

Once in Aswan, Saunders will have an opportunity to tour the Aswan High Dam and learn about the positive and negative influences it has had on the surrounding areas. She will also see the Unfinished Obelisk and the Temple of Philae and take a tour around Elephantine Island on a traditional wooden sailboat called a felucca.

Excursions to the Alexandria Library, the largest library of the ancient world, the Roman Amphitheater, Pompey's

Pillar, and the catacombs of Kom el Shoqafa are planned in Alexandria. On the way back to Cairo via motorcoach, a stop in Wadi El Natrun for a guided tour of the monastery is on the itinerary.

Saunders will be back on June 13, 2012 at which time she will partake in a follow up project that includes outreach into the University of Minnesota, Morris community and her high school community.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.