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Nate Christensen '11 receives National Security Education Program scholarship

Summary: The Boren Scholarship will support study of language and culture in Istanbul, Turkey.

(May 12, 2010)-The National Security Education Program has awarded Nathan Christensen '11, Cottage Grove, a 2010 Boren Scholarship to study at Koc University in Istanbul, Turkey. The program provides funding for United States students to add international and language components to their educations in geographic areas, languages, and fields of study critical to U.S. interests. Christensen will study the Turkish language and U.S. Turkish Relations and Politics in the Middle East in addition to continuing his studies in mathematics and statistics.

“We’re very proud of Nate’s receipt of the Boren Scholarship,” says Paula O’Loughlin, professor of political science and Academic Center for Enrichment (ACE) director. “Nate is an exceptionally gifted student with an insatiable curiosity about the world. His commitment to academic excellence and understanding the world typifies Morris students. Helping Nate apply for and win this prestigious scholarship are exactly the kind of enrichment opportunities we strive to provide through the ACE office.”

Christensen is excited and prepared for the challenges of living and learning in Turkey for a semester.

“It is my personal goal to educate myself about the world as much as possible,” he says. “I also consider this a responsibility as an American and global citizen. The earth gets smaller everyday with growing population, advancing technology, increasing accessibility, and it is important for people to understand how their lives may affect or be affected by others.”

In exchange for the Boren Scholarship opportunity, in the future Christensen will seek employment with the federal government.

“Post [Morris] graduation, I am looking to pursue graduate school in mathematics and statistics, and I would also continue my studies in the Turkish language and culture,” Christensen shares. “Eventually, I hope that all my experiences in language and cultural learning will help meet my goal of fluency before finishing school, so I can enter my service requirement with an expertise in an underrepresented language.”

He continues, “My short-term career goals...., I plan on using my experience to fulfill my service requirement by seeking employment as a risk analyst or in a similar field with the National Security Association or at the Embassy of the United States in Ankara, Turkey....My long-term career goal is to work for the U.S. government on a larger scale in risk analysis which would incorporate my studies in mathematics and statistics.”

The Boren Scholarship is named for David Boren, principal author of the legislation that created the National Security Education Program. Boren was the longest serving chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. The National Security Education Act of 1991 created the National Security Education Board, the National Security Education Program, and resources to provide undergraduate scholarships, graduate fellowships, and institutional grants.

Congress has mandated that a 13-member National Security Education Board be comprised of seven senior federal government officials, most of Cabinet rank, and six individual citizens appointed by the President of the United States. The Board determines critical areas the program should address and recommends criteria for the awards.

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