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## KLATASKE SELECTED AS ROTARY AMBASSADORIAL SCHOLAR

MANHATTAN — A Kansas State University graduate has been named the winner of a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship for 2007. The award, just announced, provides Ryan Klataske, Manhattan, \$23,000 to study abroad for one year.

Klataske, a 2006 K-State graduate with a B.A. in anthropology and Spanish, was sponsored for the scholarship by the Manhattan Rotary Clubs. He plans to pursue research at the University of Namibia in the southern part of Africa.

"I chose Namibia because I am very interested in the region's cultural and linguistic diversity, unique history, and the variety of ecosystems and wildlife," Klataske said. "I also look forward to serving as an ambassador of goodwill to a country that receives fewer visitors and fewer Rotary scholars than many other locations."

Currently, Klataske is a graduate student in sociocultural anthropology and environmental sciences and policy at Michigan State University. His current research interests include the human dimensions of environmental change in southern Africa, political ecology and the conservation of grassland and savanna ecosystems.

While at K-State, Klataske was involved in a variety of campus and community activities. He served in leadership positions as a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, worked as a teaching assistant in anthropology, tutored students in both anthropology and Spanish, and was a member of Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society. He also worked for Audubon of Kansas, a local non-profit conservation organization, and volunteered as a Spanish interpreter for the Crisis Center. As an undergrad, Klataske received the Sigma Alpha Epsilon True Gentleman Scholarship and earned honorable mention for the Ibn Battuta Award for best undergraduate anthropology research paper.

Klataske already has taken advantage of several opportunities to study abroad. While at K-State, he studied Spanish in Madrid and the Canary Islands for a semester, and spent a summer in Guanajuato, Mexico.

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He was part of K-State's first group to spend a summer teaching conversational English at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, China. Following graduation, Klataske also spent three months traveling through the eastern United States, Canada and Europe. During that time, he worked on a sheep farm in Nova Scotia and on vegetable farms in Belgium and France.

Betty Stevens, K-State associate vice provost for information technology partnerships and associate dean of continuing education, was present for the scholarship interviews. She said Klataske stood out among the competitors because of his travel experience and fluency in Spanish.

"Typically, the students who are selected are chosen because the Rotarians believe the students will make good use of the knowledge and skills they acquire in their education, and that they will be excellent 'ambassadors' of good will and friendship between the United States and the countries they will be visiting," Stevens said. "Ryan has traveled abroad on his own, and is familiar with some of the issues that come up when Americans visit other countries. As an anthropology major, Ryan has a good perspective on cultural differences as well as having a commitment to a climate of peace and good will."

The Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship Program is the oldest program of the Rotary Foundation and has sponsored nearly 38,000 people from 100 nations to study abroad since it was founded in 1947. Today, it is the world's largest privately funded international scholarships program.

The program focuses on humanitarian services, personal diplomacy and academic excellence. Applicants must demonstrate maturity and social skill; service and leadership; proficiency in host country's language; a good rationale for study abroad and program options; and have a minimum 3.0 grade point average, according to the organization's Web site.

Two Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships are offered each year by the Northeast Kansas Rotary District 5710. Twenty-two students interviewed for the district scholarships this year, and of those, eight were from K-State.

While abroad, Rotary scholars serve as goodwill ambassadors to the host country and give presentations about their homelands. Upon returning home, scholars speak to Rotarians and others about their experiences in their host countries.

"I look forward to interacting with Rotary clubs and communities through my host district in southern Africa, experiencing different ways of life and views of the world, as well as sharing and listening to the stories that connect us from Kansas to Namibia," Klataske said.