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K-STATE'S TWO NEWEST GILMAN SCHOLARS BRING UNIVERSITY'S TOTAL TO 24

MANHATTAN — Two Kansas State University students are recipients of the 2009 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship that provides up to \$5,000 for undergraduate study abroad.

Scholarship winners Laura Carlson, Lindsborg, and Manuel Garcia, Ulysses, are both studying in Prague, Czech Republic, in the spring 2009 semester.

"The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship was established to encourage more students to gain experience abroad; so it is very exciting to see Laura and Manuel recognized in the competition, and to know that the Gilman is helping them expand their global view as a result," said Jim Hohenbary, K-State assistant dean for nationally competitive scholarships.

Carlson and Garcia, who are among the 600 scholars to receive the scholarship in spring 2009, bring K-State's total of Gilman scholars to 24 since the first scholarships were awarded in spring 2002.

Carlson is a junior in sociology and family studies and human services and is seeking minors in music and Spanish. She has been studying at the Anglo-American University of Prague since February and will finish in May. She is taking sociology, history and business classes, as well as a Prague art and architecture course and an introduction to Czech language course.

Carlson said she thinks her study abroad experience will help prepare her to work with diverse groups of people.

"Already it has stretched me out of my comfort zone and given me a completely new perspective," she said. "No matter the career I end up in, I will have a more multicultural background and hopefully be able to relate to those from all walks of life."

Carlson's career plans include working with people through counseling or youth/music ministry. She has received a Putnam Scholarship and K-State semester honors. She has been a member of the Christian Challenge worship team, serving as a LIFE group leader for the organization. She also has been a member of Helping International Students and Leadership, Education and Development. She has been a volunteer at Manhattan High School for an English as a Second Language course. A 2007 graduate of Smoky Valley High School, she is the daughter of Calvin and Shelly Carlson, Lindsborg.

(more)

Garcia is a senior in mechanical engineering and a minor in business. He began studying at Czech Technical University in February and will finish in June. He is taking mechanical engineering and business classes, as well as a course about Czech culture.

"There are numerous reasons why I wanted to study abroad in Prague, both personal and professional," Garcia said. "I would like to learn about another culture because of the great experience that I have had in life while being Hispanic and being raised in the United States."

After studying abroad, Garcia will serve an internship with ConocoPhillips. His career plans are to work for a petroleum company in the technical field of mechanical engineering, and later for the management side of the company. He would like to travel to different countries in his career, and he thinks studying abroad will help him achieve that goal. Garcia is a member of the Multicultural Student Honor Society, has served as the president and vice president of K-State's Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and has been involved with K-State intramural sports. He has been a member of the American GI Forum and the Hispanic American Leadership Organization. He also has volunteered for Homecare and Hospice, the All-University Career Fair and Engineering Fair, the Ecumenical Campus Ministry and the Girls Researching Our World Program. He has received a Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers Scholarship, an ExxonMobil Scholarship, a ConocoPhillips Spirit Scholarship and a Dow Chemical Company Foundation Scholarship. A 2005 graduate of Ulysses High School, Garcia is the son of Lauro and Consolacion Garcia, Ulysses.

The Gilman Scholarship asks winners to propose a service project to promote study abroad after they return. While in Prague, Carlson plans to become familiar with a piece of Czech choral music so that when returning to Kansas she can share the music with her high school's choir group to teach the students about Czech culture. Garcia plans to create a PowerPoint scrapbook of his study abroad experience and share it with on-campus organizations and organizations from his hometown. He also plans to become involved with the K-State's office of international programs.

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