

# WKU named one of top Fulbright student producers in nation

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WKU has been named among the Top Fulbright Producing Institutions by the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#). With six grants for 2014-15, WKU is tied for third in the nation of Master's institutions and the only college or university in Kentucky to be recognized as a Top Producer.

WKU's six grantees are conducting research and teaching English in five countries during the 2014-15 academic year:

**Chad Coomer** (Biology and Chemistry, 2014, WKU Honors College) of Louisville is studying infection and immunity at University College London. Next fall, Coomer will begin PhD study at Oxford University.

**Jon Hendrie** (Biochemistry, 2014, WKU Honors College) of Elizabethtown is researching minimally invasive surgical techniques at Heidelberg University Hospital in Germany. Hendrie will return to the United States to begin medical school at the University of Kentucky in July.

**Clarice Esch** (Agriculture, 2014, WKU Honors College and Gatton Academy 2011) of Somerset is investigating sustainable agricultural techniques in Costa Rica. Esch will continue her research in the PhD program in Forestry at Michigan State University next fall.

**Wesley Bromm** (History and Social Studies, 2013) of Russellville, **Allison Feikes** (International Affairs and Political Science, 2014, WKU Honors College) of La Porte, Indiana, and **Angelika Masero** (Journalism and German, 2010, WKU Honors College) of Louisville have been teaching English and American culture in Vietnam, Turkey and Germany, respectively.

"Once again WKU leads the way in the academic achievements of our students," WKU President Gary Ransdell said. "A Fulbright success rate of nearly 25 percent (25 applicants, six awards) is a great testament to the ability of WKU students and the mentoring of WKU faculty. Given the international dimension of the Fulbright awards, it is also a strong indication of WKU's international reach."

Melinda Grimsley-Smith, WKU's Fulbright Program Advisor, said there are several reasons WKU students are competing successfully for Fulbright awards.

"They have excellent academic and career mentors in WKU faculty," she said. "In addition, more WKU students are studying abroad, and although study abroad isn't absolutely necessary to win a grant, it helps students make strong cases for studying or teaching English in their chosen host countries. And perhaps most striking from my perspective, our students are increasingly—and rightly—seeing themselves as competitive candidates. It is simply thrilling to work with these students."

The Fulbright Program, the U.S. government's flagship international exchange program, is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State. The largest international exchange program in the United States, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program awarded about 1,800 grants annually to fund an



academic year of study, research, or English teaching in one of about 140 countries worldwide last year. In each of the past two years, more than 10,000 graduating seniors and recent graduates applied nationwide. Grantees are selected on the basis of academic merit, leadership potential, and demonstrated ability to serve as cultural ambassadors for the United States while abroad.

**About the Office of Scholar Development:** The [Office of Scholar Development](#) is committed to helping WKU students in all majors and degree programs develop the vision, experience and skills to be independent, engaged scholars. OSD welcomes the opportunity to work with students interested in national or international scholarships.

Contact: Melinda Grimsley-Smith, (270) 745-5043