August 29, 2012

RE: National and International Scholarships and Fellowships (NISF)

Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to update you on our successes last year and our plans for this year when it comes to Berry students applying for and securing national and international scholarships and fellowships.

Last academic year through this summer Berry had 43 applications for nine national or international fellowships, scholarships, grants or awards, including one Phi Kappa Phi; one Rhodes; seven Fulbrights; three Gilman Scholarships; one Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) William E. Simon Fellowship; three Woodruff, Whitehead, and Evans Foundations fellowships; three Goldwater Scholarships; two French Culture Teaching Assistantship Program applications; and 22 National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates awards (REUs).

As of today, there were fourteen winners, including one Woodruff, Whitehead, Evans Foundations Fellowship; one ISI Simon Fellowship; one Goldwater; one Gilman; one French Culture Teaching Assistantship Program; seven REUs; and two pre-REUs. Brin Enterkin's successful application for the Woodruff, Whitehead, and Evans Foundations Fellowship marks two years in a row that a Berry College student has won this prestigious fellowship. The previous year, Meredith Smith was the award winner.

There remains significant untapped potential in this area among Berry students. A crucial component to increasing students' chances of success is faculty identifying potential applicants early on and encouraging them to seek out funding opportunities. Another key factor is students researching, pursuing academic excellence, studying abroad, and engaging in meaningful and challenging community service. I urge you to reflect on your advisees, student workers, research assistants, students in your classes, and others with whom you work, thinking about who might be strong candidates for these funding opportunities both this year and down the road. We ought to be reaching out to those students right now, since competing successfully for big awards takes much time and effort.

The NISF office is here to work with you to identify and mentor students who ought to be applying for prestigious funding opportunities. The NISF website at http://berry.edu/nisf/ is loaded with information about scholarships and fellowships. It was updated last spring to include three video interviews, including one with our very own Eric McDowell.

Each scholarship and fellowship has a Faculty Contact, someone who is knowledgeable about that opportunity and coordinates applications for that scholarship or fellowship. The names and contact information for all Faculty Contacts are available at http://www.berry.edu/provost/nifs/page.aspx?id=7860.

I will be holding an information session for students sometime in the next few weeks. Keep keep your eyes out for that announcement and please then promote the session with your students so that they can inform themselves about the opportunities out there and about the resources available through the NISF office.

Again, faculty ought to reach out to students as early as possible to get them thinking about opportunities and to help them actually apply. Deadlines creep up very quickly. For example, the internal deadline for the Rhodes Scholarship is September 7. The internal deadline for the Fulbright grant is October 7. And so forth.

If you have any questions you can contact me by email at mstanard@berry.edu, by phone at (706) 290-2157, or in person at my office in Evans 131.

My best wishes for a productive year.

Matt Stanard
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