



2009 Grant Proposal

The Honors Collegium Student Travel Grants

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Program Abstract

The Honors Collegium is a program for purposeful students who expect to distinguish themselves beyond the baccalaureate degree. The Collegium creates opportunities for OSU's brightest minds and helps further their development toward making an impact at the state, national, and international levels. Often these important opportunities are located away from campus in developing countries, at world-class laboratories and at other centers of excellence. Honors Collegium Student Travel Grants would enhance the Collegiums' ability to support and encourage students to pursue these opportunities, which in turn would be another step in achieving President Gee's vision of being one of the top public universities in the nation.

Project Narrative

The Honors Collegium, which was established in 2003, has two primary functions. First, it provides support and resources for the top students at the university and helps the students create customized learning experiences, embrace rigorous academics, and go on to become intellectual leaders in the global community. Second, it serves all undergraduates pursuing national scholarships and fellowships by helping them present themselves well on paper; coaching them on how to survive those grueling scholarship interviews; connecting them with important faculty in their field; and developing their knowledge of world affairs and self-confidence.

Currently, the Collegium has 56 students pursuing a wide range of majors, from Engineering to Political Science to Women's Studies to Molecular Genetics. About half of the students are double or even triple majors, and nearly all the students have minors. Of the 56 students, 31 are women and 17 are of minority origin. While these students are extremely diverse in both their background and interests, they share several important characteristics. All the students are extremely driven to succeed academically in the classroom, but perhaps more importantly, they are driven to succeed outside the classroom as well. These experiences include conducting research with exceptional faculty taking place both on campus and at

world-class laboratories; experiencing diverse cultures through study-abroad programs; interning at centers of excellence; and leading service organizations on campus and in the local community. These activities extend the undergraduate experience beyond what is typical and enable students to find their passion and become agents of change. Through the course of four years, the portfolio of experiences expands, and students create a compelling case for preeminent scholarships and fellowships, such as the Rhodes, Marshall and Truman Scholarships. In addition, the enhanced undergraduate experience makes the students competitive for the very top graduate and professional schools.

One component of the Collegium experience is the opportunity for scholarly activity away from campus. In the past, the Collegium has provided grants that have partially supported student travel. These grants have typically been of two types. First, the Collegium provides small grants, approximately \$500 to \$1000, for students to travel to professional conferences where they can present results of their research. For example, Megan Meuti, who studied termites in Costa Rica, presented her results at the Entomological Society of America's National Conference in San Diego. The Collegium covered part of her travel expenses. Second, larger grants, approximately \$1500 to \$3000, allow students to experience extended stays away from campus, which often occur during the summer. For example, Ellen Manovich, an Ohio State Student Trustee for Campus Partners for Community Urban Redevelopment, spent last summer in Rome, Italy studying the history of the city from a topographical and archeological perspective. For the last two summers, the Collegium has helped support Adrienne Strong's travel to Tanzania where she has served as a hospital volunteer. Adrienne, who is a national finalist for the Truman Scholarship, plans to pursue an MD and a PhD in medical anthropology. Her life goals are to open a clinic in sub-Saharan Africa and act as an advocate for women's health issues in the region.

Experiences such as these are critical for two reasons. First, they enhance the student's national and international perspective and provide them with formative experiences that can impact their lifetime goals. Second, these students, who are among the best and brightest, act as ambassadors for the University. They demonstrate to the nation and the world the high-caliber of students that exist at The Ohio State University. However, these experiences often require significant funds to support the travel. The Collegium grants only cover a small portion of the expenses, on average about 20%. In addition, the Collegium can only fund about 12 students a year out of the approximately 60. We propose to use funds in this grant to enhance our student travel support. We want to increase the number of students studying or performing research abroad and increase the level of our support for individual trips.

Request to create a travel fund for students

We propose using the grant to create a travel fund for our Honors Collegium students to enable them to pursue opportunities that will ultimately further their development toward making an impact at the state, national, and international levels. This travel fund would be used for:

- A) Stipends for conferences to present research results
- B) Assistance in covering travel expenses for study and/or research abroad

Total Request

Support for Collegium student travel grants\$40,000