

## Five Macalester students receive U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship to study critical need language this summer

St. Paul, Minn. - **Alysha Alloway '17, Fabian Bean '17, Britta Dornfeld '15, Abigail Massell '18, and Jake Speirs '16**, have been awarded U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarships (CLS) to study Arabic in Meknes, Morocco, Russian in Vladimir, Russia, Arabic in Madaba, Jordan, Arabic in Amman, Jordan and Chinese in Beijing, China, respectively.



They are five of 550 U.S. undergraduate and graduate students who received a scholarship from the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship Program in 2015. The program received over 5,500 applications with finalists from all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

CLS participants will spend eight to ten weeks in intensive language institutes in one of many countries to study 13 CLS languages: Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bangla, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, Russian, Turkish, and Urdu.

**Alysha Alloway '17**, a double major in Geography and Arabic from Cabin John, Md., will return to North Africa to study Arabic in Meknes, Morocco. Alloway sees her CLS as not only a chance to study language, but also an opportunity to be immersed in a different culture. Upon graduation, she would like to pursue her interests in geography and Arabic - at either the State Department or at another like-organization.



Alysha Alloway '17, Fabian Bean '17

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**Fabian Bean '17**, from Palmer, Alaska, will study Russian in Vladimir, Russia. Bean looks forward to spending time with his host family, becoming more fluent in Russian and learning about Russian culture.

**Britta Dornfeld '15**, an Environmental Studies major from Owatonna, Minn., will study Arabic in Madaba, Jordan. She sees the CLS as an opportunity to learn more about the country of Jordan and its cities, since the last time she was there she stayed primarily in Amman. Once her CLS ends, Dornfeld will work with AmeriCorps Cape Cod where she'll be learning about environmental community outreach and water research. In the future, she would either like to work in water science or water management and policy with a focus on arid regions, especially in the Middle East.

**Abigail Massell '18**, a double major in International Studies and Arabic from Burlington, Vt., will study Arabic in Amman, Jordan. When she was in high school, she spent four months studying Arabic in Rabat, Morocco, with a U.S. State Department program like CLS, and with that experience she began her regard for the Arabic language and a cultural understanding of the region. Massell looks forward to living with a

Jordanian host family to strengthen her grasp of Arabic and gain unique insight into a rich culture. Although she's not sure if she'll work in diplomacy with the State Department, teach English in the Middle East or, work at a nonprofit with refugee resettlement in the Twin Cities, she does know her experience this summer will no doubt be transformative.

**Jake Speirs '16**, a double major in International Studies and Chinese from Cottage Grove, Minn., will study Chinese in Beijing, China. Speirs will be returning to China after studying abroad there his junior year and continue to explore that country but in a new location and with new opportunities to deepen his understanding of the Chinese language and culture. While living with a host family, he expects to discover some of the more minute differences between Chinese and American life, particularly in the home and family setting. After graduating from Macalester, Speirs would like to work in for an international development organization either in Minnesota, or the greater Midwest for a few years. Looking further ahead he'd ultimately like to pursue a Masters Degree in either International Studies or International Development followed by a China-related career in that field.

The CLS Program provides fully funded, group-based intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences. Participants are expected to continue their language study beyond the scholarship and apply their critical language skills in their future professional careers.

Formal classroom language instruction is provided for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Extracurricular activities are designed to supplement the formal curriculum, including regular one-on-one meetings with native speaker language partners for conversational practice. For further information about the CLS Program or other exchange programs offered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, please visit <http://www.clscholarship.org> (<http://www.clscholarship.org/>) and <http://exchanges.state.gov> (<http://exchanges.state.gov/>).

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Britta Dornfeld '15, Abigail Massell '18  
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Jake Speirs '16

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