UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

April 27, 2018
Suzanna Ackroyd

Super Scholars

Their interests are disparate, ranging from Arabic and national security to college-access for high schoolers, and from evolutionary ecology to applying physics to the design of scientific apparatuses. What these UC Santa Barbara students have in common, however, is that each is the recipient of a prestigious national scholarship.

UCSB mechanical engineering undergraduate Michael Aling, and College of Creative Studies evolutionary biology undergraduate Jasen Liu, have been named 2018 Barry Goldwater Scholars. Chemistry undergraduate Shay Nguyen received an honorable mention from the Barry Goldwater Scholarship & Excellence in Education Foundation.

In other awards, Cassidy Pyle, an undergraduate double majoring in film and media studies and communications with a minor in feminist studies, was awarded the Donald A. Strauss scholarship. Peri Propper, who is completing her double major in global studies and Middle East studies with a minor in translation studies, received the Boren scholarship.

“We are really proud of the accomplishments of our students,” said Jeffrey Stopple, the co-interim dean of undergraduate education at UCSB. “They are not just talented, but also hard working and dedicated through a preparation process that can span a couple of years. Separately, we appreciate the support of faculty, who help us identify promising candidates early on.”

Said Kathy Foltz, interim dean of the College of Creative Studies, “UCSB students have a special spark when it comes to combining their academics with their accomplishments outside the classroom, including pursuing research opportunities, and the selection committees recognize this.”

Established by Congress in 1986 to honor Senator Barry Goldwater, the Goldwater scholarships are designed to foster and encourage outstanding students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Aling hopes to play a key role in the development of scientific apparatuses, with the aim of applications in multiple fields, and Liu plans to lead a research group investigating evolutionary ecology and phylogenetics of flowering plants. Both intend to pursue doctoral degrees, in their respective fields of study.

Aling and Liu are among 211 scholars to receive Goldwater scholarships, selected from a pool of 1,280 STEM students nationwide. Nguyen is one of 281 scholars highlighted by the Goldwater Foundation as honorable mentions.

The Boren scholarship is awarded to students who are interested in national security careers and who plan to study less commonly taught languages in a country or region critical to United States interests that is typically underrepresented in study abroad programs. Propper’s scholarship will support her study of Arabic in Morocco.

In exchange for financial support, Boren scholars commit to working in the federal government for at least one year after graduation.

The Strauss scholarship promotes the value of public service in the education and preparation of future leaders by providing funds to support innovative, student-generated projects for college students with public service track records. Pyle’s project, “Sacramento Equitable Education Commission (S.E.E.C.) Higher Education,” is aimed at tackling disparities in college access among predominantly poor students of color.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society.

All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.