Eight graduate students in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (NELC) are benefiting from the GAANN grant awarded to NELC by the U.S. Department of Education. The GAANN program is authorized under Title IX of the amended Higher Education Act.

GAANN (Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need) provides fellowships to outstanding graduate students who plan to teach or conduct research in academic areas considered nationally deficient by the Department of Education. The study of foreign languages was among the designated areas of need. The eight NELC students who received fellowships are concentrating on the Middle Eastern languages of Arabic, Hebrew, and Persian.

Fedwa Malti-Douglas, NELC Chairperson and new director of IU’s Middle Eastern Studies Program, was responsible for writing and submitting NELC’s award-winning proposal. The GAANN competition attracted 323 proposals from U.S. colleges and universities. Of these, 72 received GAANN grants totaling approximately $16.2 million.

Pictured left are seven of the students in the NELC graduate program who received fellowships: Tim Semmerling (seated) and (standing, left to right) Kate Hammer, Michael Hynes, Mandy McClure, James Rousseau, Heidi Ford, and Andrew Warren. NELC’s eighth fellowship recipient, Kim Searcy, is spending the academic year enrolled in an intensive Arabic language program at the International University of Africa in Khartoum, Sudan.

Under the terms of the award, the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures department will be eligible for GAANN “continuation grants” on a non-competitive basis during the next two academic years. Funding in the second and third years is dependent upon sufficient congressional appropriations and NELC’s progress in meeting stated goals.

Polish Embassy Hosts Benefit Concert for IU Polish Studies Center

On December 2, Jerzy Kozinski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, hosted a cultural evening at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. in support of the work of IU’s Polish Studies Center, a national center for the study of Polish culture, language, and contemporary Polish society. The event featured a concert by pianist Paul Siwko-Bajon (pictured, left), IU School of Music doctoral graduate and Polish native, and cellist Paul Beczkiewicz (right), Music School graduate student, followed by a reception and viewing of paintings and watercolors by Bloomington artist Tadeusz Dominik. The concert and exhibition were presented with the cooperation of American Center for Polish Culture Executive Director Kaya Mirecka-Ploss. Representing the IU Polish Studies Center were Director Timothy Wiles, Associate Director Stanislaw Filipowicz of Warsaw University, Planning Director Frank Nierzwicki, and Pawel Cichawa, Research Associate from Warsaw University.