IUB Senior Is Named Mitchell Scholar

Indiana University Bloomington senior Kathleen Claussen has been named one of 12 national recipients of the 2006–2007 George J. Mitchell Scholarship. She is the fourth IU student to be named a Mitchell Scholar since the program was launched in 1998. This year’s competition included 236 applicants from 171 colleges and universities nationwide.

The Mitchell Scholarship recognizes outstanding young Americans who exhibit the highest standards of academic excellence, leadership, and service. Administered by the U.S.–Ireland Alliance, the scholarship is named in honor of former U.S. Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell, who chaired the historic Northern Ireland peace process in the mid-to-late 1990s. It is supported by an endowment established by the government of Ireland and allows recipients to pursue a year of graduate study at any one of seven universities in Ireland or two in Northern Ireland.

Claussen will seek a graduate degree in international politics at Queen’s University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in May with a double major in Spanish and in comparative social policy and ideology—through IU’s Individualized Major Program. In addition, she has a double minor in political science and West European Studies. She has had a life-long interest in service learning and community volunteerism. As a sophomore in 2004, Claussen founded the very successful Conversations about Service and Engagement (see p. 42 and International News, Summer 2005).

During her years at IU, Claussen has frequently represented the university at national and international civic engagement conferences. She has conducted research and interned in various countries, including Belgium, Denmark, Mexico, and, most recently, Trinidad and Tobago. In 2005, she was awarded IU’s Palmer-Brandon Prize, which she used to fund a study of civil society in Kosovo.

At Queen’s University, she will study the topics of citizenship and conflict resolution as they relate to the concept of identity. Then she plans to attend a U.S. law school with the goal of one day becoming an international judge involved in the field of human rights and humanitarian law.

“The affirmation of universal rights and the simultaneous acknowledgment of sweeping disparities throughout the world have compelled me to marry my passion for knowledge with a commitment to action,” Claussen says. “I aspire to live up to Senator Mitchell’s example: to not only serve the public good but to assertively realize positive change. I’ll contribute my experience, hoping to inspire others to join in our collective vision.”

—Ryan Piurek
IU Media Relations

For more information about Mitchell Scholarships: www.us-irelandalliance.org/scholarships.html