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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Macaulay Honors College Students Earn Critical Language Scholarships to Study Abroad



Ilana Gelb



Samuel Rubinstein

NEW YORK, NY-April 01, 2015 – Ilana Gelb ‘16 Macaulay Honors College at Baruch College, and **Samuel Rubinstein** ‘16 Macaulay Honors College at Baruch College were awarded Critical Language Scholarships and an opportunity to study abroad. Gelb will be traveling to Jaipur, India to study Hindi, and Rubinstein will be traveling to Meknes, Morocco to study Arabic. The Critical Language Scholarship Program (CLS) is an intensive overseas language study program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and is part of a U.S. government effort to dramatically expand the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages. Gelb and Rubinstein were among the 500 students who were nationally selected from more than 5,000 applicants. Michael Lamb, the Thomas R. Slaughter Scholar-in-Residence, says the two students join five previous winners from Macaulay Honors College at CUNY since 2009.

Gelb is a junior at [Macaulay Honors College](#) in the CUNY B.A. program. She is majoring in Violence, Conflict, and Development, which is a compilation of human rights, sustainable development, anthropology, and political science. The Macaulay student will be studying Hindi in Jaipur, India starting in mid-June with the Alliance for Global Education

“During this semester, I will also be volunteering and conducting research with the NGO, Guria, which aids victims of human trafficking and forced second-generation prostitution in the red light district of Varanasi,” said Gelb, who is from Bedford, New York. “I will be in India for about seven months.”

Gelb, who is also a New York State finalist for the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, is devoting her career to gender equality in India due to her passion for Indian culture, the Hindi language, and her commitment to women's rights. The Macaulay student says her time in India should be a growth experience.

"Learning Hindi will enable me to effectively communicate with at-risk populations, learn the needs of the communities, and influence changes in Indian and international policy," she said. "The interdisciplinary coursework during my stay in India, as well as my volunteer work with Guria, will allow me to learn more about the dynamics of gender-based violence and human trafficking, and better prepare me for a career in preventing and mitigating gender-based violence."

Samuel Rubinstein, a junior Macaulay Honors College student majoring in Economics, currently serves on the Baruch's Undergraduate Student Government as Vice President of Academic Affairs. Rubinstein's family is originally from Minsk, Belarus, and they moved to the United States in 1993. He is the first person in his family to be born in the United States and says he's looking forward to his experience in Morocco that begins on May 31.

"This will not be my first time in Morocco," said Rubinstein, who was born in Cincinnati and raised in Brooklyn. "I had the chance to go last year and the experience taught me that there is more to life than having a fancy car and six figure paying job. Sometimes, it's nice to sit down with your family, drink tea, and hear the birds chirp."

Rubinstein also hopes to engage with local citizens who can offer insight into the Moroccan culture and economy. "Arabic is an important language to know in this globalized economy, but I hope to meet like-minded Moroccans who would want to foster better economic trade between Morocco and the United States," he said. "In addition, I think my experiences could make a good novel someday."

Both Gelb and Rubinstein encourage other students to consider applying for scholarships that offer an opportunity to study abroad.

"I would suggest if someone wants to study abroad, it should involve learning a language," Rubinstein said. "Whether it is Arabic or Mandarin, you cannot just learn in the classroom. You need to be immersed in the country, the customs, and the people."

"Studying abroad is an incredible opportunity to learn a new language and immerse oneself in another culture," Gelb said. "While it does not have to be as drastically different from NYC as India, there is great value in being around people who learn, think, behave, and communicate differently than people in one's own culture. It is an excellent opportunity to challenge oneself, to explore one's education from a different perspective, and to learn intercultural communication."

About Macaulay Honors College

Macaulay Honors College at The City University of New York offers exceptional students a uniquely Personalized education with access to the vast resources of the nation's largest urban university and New York City itself. Selected for their top high school records and leadership potential, Macaulay students receive a full-tuition scholarship, a laptop and technology support, and an Opportunities Fund to pursue global learning and service opportunities. Macaulay students enroll in one of eight CUNY senior colleges (Baruch, Brooklyn, City, Hunter, John Jay, Lehman, Queens and Staten Island). For more information, see macaulay.cuny.edu.

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