

ONIS Newsletter Vol. I, no. 2 (December 1, 2019)

The ONIS newsletter is a monthly record of news concerning applications for nationally and internationally competitive scholarships, primarily for undergraduates and primarily for the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota. If you would like to have a copy emailed directly to you, please send a request to natschol@umn.edu.

Scholar Profile:

Maria Lee of Madison, Wisconsin entered the College of Liberal Arts in 2012 and graduated with Honors, a major in Geography and minors in Park and Protected Area Management and Outdoor Recreation and Education in 2016. She was twice awarded the Selmer Birkelo Scholarship by CLA and received a UROP grant to study language as a limitation for access to outdoor recreation. While a student she volunteered and worked as an educator with the National Park Service, Forest Service, and Wilderness Inquiry.



What scholarships did you apply for and what did they allow you to do?

I was named a Udall Scholar in 2015 in the environment category. Udall is a generous scholarship that allowed me to take out less in loans! The money is obviously extremely helpful, but also part of being a Udall Scholar is attending Scholar orientation in Arizona. This week was a unique opportunity to make meaningful connections with a network of outstanding young people. I was also awarded the Gilman Scholarship in 2015 which helped support my semester abroad in Tanzania. It was another generous award that made my study abroad possible.

How did being awarded a scholarship change your academic and/or professional development? What other opportunities has it opened for you?

For better or worse, I know I was taken more seriously after being recognized as a Udall Scholar. People made time for me and wanted to hear my ideas. Additionally, the Udall Network is really expansive. There is a really active listserv that gives Scholars direct access to a large community with varied professional expertise and experience!

What did you learn about yourself through the application process? What particular skills or knowledge did you develop? How has the experience continued to be valuable?

I never saw myself as someone who would submit a competitive application for a national scholarship like Udall. To this day I am grateful for the wonderful people who gave me the nudge I needed to start the process. The application process requires you to succinctly convey your history of scholarship, community work, and future aspirations. After editing my essays I was far more confident when pitching my interests and goals. The process of asking for letters of support strengthened relationships with professors and showed them that I was serious about my ideas. Lastly, going through the essay writing and editing process helped me read applications and write essays that really respond to the prompts.

What are you working on now?

I work for the Civil Rights Department at the City of Minneapolis. In my role at the City I am able to work on racial equity related projects and staff the Urban Scholars program. [Urban Scholars](#) is a leadership and professional development program that is rooted in a racial equity mission. Our application opens January 6 and applications are due by February 17!

You have accomplished a lot. Really, how much do you sleep at night and what do you do to unwind?

I am happy to report that my nine to five work schedule allows me to get ample sleep! Sometimes even over 8 hours a night!

Is there anything that you wish someone had told you at the beginning of your college career?

I think beginning college I spent a lot of time being busy just to be busy, rather than really dedicating my time to things I care about. I wish someone would have told me that it's okay to be selective about how you use your time and that the measure of your success isn't the number of things on your calendar.

Events:

Astronauts Robert Cabana and Curt Brown were on campus November 6 to recognize the University's 2019 Astronaut Scholars Macy Vollbrecht (GCB) and Matt DeJong (ChemE). To be considered for the 2020 Astronaut Scholarship, submit your application by the February 3 campus deadline.



Scholarship Deadlines:

[Boren Scholarship](#): \$8-20K. Open to any students interested in careers related international affairs and national security to support language-centered study abroad. Campus nomination: January 6.

[Beinecke Scholarship](#): \$34K. Open to Juniors in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences who plan to complete graduate research degrees and have a record of qualifying for need-based aid. Campus nomination: January 13.

[Udall Scholarship](#): \$7K. Open to Sophomores and Juniors working toward solutions to environmental challenges or Native American students planning careers in tribal policy or health care. Campus nomination: January 24.

[Hollings Scholarship](#): \$19K. Open to Sophomores studying Oceanic or Atmospheric sciences, or other subjects related to the interests of NOAA, including science education, National deadline: January 31.

[Astronaut Scholarship](#): \$10K. Open Sophomores and Juniors in STEM majors who plan to have careers in research. Campus nomination deadline: February 3.

[Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship](#): \$2.5 to \$10K for students who combine intensive study of a less commonly taught modern language and Asian, African or International studies. Deadline: February 3.

[Sullivan Scholarship](#): \$15K. Open to students at any University of Minnesota campus who will have completed at least 120 credits by May 2020 and plan to spend the following year enrolled in study abroad. Deadline: February 7.

[Foreign Affairs Information Technology Fellowship](#): up to \$75K for Sophomores in IT majors or Seniors applying to graduate programs with an interest in international affairs and desire to work for the State Department. Deadline: February 14.