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## Four UM Students Named Fulbright Finalists

Record group includes two headed for Spain, others bound for Germany and Czech Republic

MAY 7, 2019 BY EDWIN B. SMITH



Zachary Gill, a senior linguistics, Spanish and classics major, is set to teach in the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program in Spain. Photo by Megan Wolfe/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss – Four **University of Mississippi** students soon will study in Spain, Germany and the Czech Republic, thanks to the 2019 **Fulbright U.S. Student Program**.

Zachary Gill, a senior linguistics, Spanish and classics major from Saucier, and Katelyn Frazer, a master's candidate in history from Richmond, Virginia, will teach in the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program in Spain. Bethany Fitts, a senior English major from Tupelo, also received a teaching assistantship to the Czech Republic. Jan Verberkmoes, of Roseburg, Oregon, who earned a Master of Fine Arts degree, has a Fulbright Research Grant to Germany.

The highly selective program enables college graduates and graduate students from the U.S. to study, conduct research or teach English in countries around the globe. Both Gill and Fitts are students in the university's **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College**.

Douglass Sullivan González, Honors College dean, noted that "we are thrilled to have played a role in helping these students develop into the dynamic scholars and global citizens the Fulbright seeks.

"Ty received an honors fellowship to study in Valencia, Spain, and Bethany's Barksdale award supported her as she studied and wrote alongside a world-renowned poet, M.S. Merwyn," he said. "The Fulbright affirms what we already know: that the Honors College creates a crucible where excellent students are challenged and develop into citizen-scholars, with the world as their classroom."

Others concurred with Sullivan-González's assessment.

"With four grantees, it is a record number of awards for us," said Tim Dolan, director of the UM Office of National Scholarship Advisement. "These University of Mississippi students were selected because of their outstanding academic record and because they will be excellent cultural ambassadors, eager to learn about the culture of the place they will go and able to teach about their home culture."

Each of the finalists expressed great anticipation about being a Fulbright recipient.

"I'm delighted to have the opportunity to return and continue nurturing my investment in German culture and history, as well as furthering my long-term goals of exploring cross-cultural experimental poetics with an emphasis on environmental engagement," said Verberkmoes, an award-winning poet who had a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Germany 2010 and will be doing research at the Museum für Naturkunde and the federal archives.

"This museum has in its collection a selection of birds that were taken from Tibet by zoologist Ernst Schäfer and naturalist Brooke Dolan II in the 1930s. I'm working on a collection of poems about these birds, and being awarded the time and support to do this research is a huge boon for the life of the manuscript and for my writing plans next year."

A 2019 Barksdale Award winner, Fitts said she's excited about the challenge of being in an unfamiliar place, surrounded by a language she doesn't speak.

"This is my first time in the Czech Republic," she said. "I love getting to know people, so I'm going to have to go about that in different ways. Honestly, I think that can be beautiful."

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### Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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### Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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## Ole Miss In the News

### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

Though Gill's undergraduate thesis focuses on second language acquisition, he has not taught a course yet. He will be in Asturias, a region of northwest Spain, teaching primary and secondary school students English, about American culture and food while helping them improve their English communication skills. Gill also plans to facilitate an English language group for the LGBTQ+ community.

"This experience will provide me with both sides of the equation that I will be able to use in future research," he said. "Moreover, the cultural knowledge will allow me to see how all parts of Spain are drastically different, and I can use this knowledge when I begin pursuing a master's and Ph.D. in romance linguistics."



**UM English major Bethany Fitts has received a teaching assistantship to the Czech Republic through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Photo by Megan Wolfe/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services**

Frazer, who will be teaching English in La Rioja, a region of northern Spain, from September to June 2020, said she is excited to be able to live in Spain for a longer period and invest in the community.

"I am excited to be working and learning from Spanish teachers and to be speaking Spanish when I am not inside the classroom," Frazer said. "After the grant, I plan on returning to the U.S. to teach high school history."

"If possible, I would also be interested in teaching in an immersion program or teaching Spanish in addition to history."

Established in 1946, the Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and of other countries. The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program is an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.



**UM master's candidate Katelyn Frazer will teach in the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program in northern Spain during the coming year. Photo by Megan Wolfe/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services**

Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

Students interested in applying for the Fulbright U.S. Student Award are encouraged to contact the Office of National Scholarship Advisement at [onsa@olemiss.edu](mailto:onsa@olemiss.edu).

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