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Sarah Geisler Named Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellow

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Sarah Geisler

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation has named University of Pittsburgh Honors College student Sarah Geisler a 2011 Thomas R. Pickering Undergraduate Foreign Affairs Fellow. Geisler, who just completed her junior year at Pitt, is one of only 20 new undergraduate Pickering Fellows nationwide and the only one from a Pennsylvania institution of higher education.

Administered by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and funded by the U.S. Department of State, the award provides financial support of up to \$40,000 for each fellow's senior year of undergraduate study and up to \$40,000 for the first year of master's degree study as the fellow prepares academically and professionally to enter the United States Foreign Service.

A Pittsburgh native and resident, Geisler carries an English writing and urban studies double major in Pitt's School of Arts and Sciences and is working toward a certificate in global studies. She has focused on community development, working as a study-abroad student in Nicosia, Cyprus, at a peace-building camp for Greek and Turkish children and with inner-city youth through various mentoring and tutoring programs. She also has studied in Istanbul and will start formal study of Turkish next year. This summer, she is doing research at Pitt on the relationship between divided cities, memory, and literature. She plans to concentrate on international development and conflict resolution in graduate school.

Pickering Fellows participate in one domestic and one overseas internship and commit to three years of service as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. Department of State, contingent on their passing the Foreign Service examinations. Geisler is the third Pitt student to be named an undergraduate Pickering Fellow; the previous awardees were named in 1995 and 2002.

The Pickering Fellowship is named in honor of one of the most distinguished and capable American diplomats of the latter half of the 20th century. Thomas R. Pickering held the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the U.S. Foreign Service, and was U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations from 1989 to 1992. He also served as U.S. Ambassador to Jordan, Nigeria, El Salvador, Israel, India, and the Russian Federation, finishing his diplomatic career in 2000 as U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

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