



From the Office of the American Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC/November 21, 2015 – Elliot F. Gerson, American Secretary of the Rhodes Trust, today announced the names of the thirty-two American men and women chosen as Rhodes Scholars representing the United States. Rhodes Scholarships provide all expenses for two or three years of study at the University of Oxford in England and may allow funding in some instances for four years. Mr. Gerson called the Rhodes Scholarships, "the oldest and best known award for international study, and arguably the most famous academic award available to American college graduates." They were created in 1902 by the Will of Cecil Rhodes, British philanthropist and African colonial pioneer, and are provided in partnership with the Second Century Founder, John McCall MacBain and other generous benefactors. The first class of American Rhodes Scholars entered Oxford in 1904; those elected today will enter Oxford in October 2016.

Rhodes Scholars are chosen in a two-stage process. First, applicants must be endorsed by their college or university. This year approximately 2000 students sought their institution's endorsement; 869 were endorsed by 316 different colleges and universities. Committees of Selection in each of 16 U.S. districts then invite the strongest applicants to appear before them for interview.

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Applicants are chosen on the basis of the criteria set down in the Will of Cecil Rhodes. These criteria are first, academic excellence. This is a critical but only threshold condition. A Rhodes Scholar should also have great personal energy, ambition for impact, and an ability to work with others and to achieve one's goals. In addition, a Rhodes Scholar should be committed to make a strong difference for good in the world, be concerned for the welfare of others, and be conscious of inequities. And finally, a Rhodes Scholar should show great promise of leadership. In short, we seek outstanding young men and women of intellect, character, leadership and commitment to service. Gerson said "these basic characteristics are directed at fulfilling Mr. Rhodes's hopes that the Rhodes Scholars would make an important and positive contribution throughout the world. In Rhodes' words, his Scholars should 'esteem the performance of public duties as their highest aim.'"

Applicants in the United States may apply either through the state where they are legally resident or where they have attended college for at least two years. The district committees met separately, on Friday and Saturday, November 20 and 21 in cities across the country. Each district committee made a final selection of two Rhodes Scholars from the candidates of the state or states within the district. Two-hundred eight applicants from 93 different colleges and universities reached the final stage of the competition, including 10 that had never before had a student win a Rhodes Scholarship. Gerson also reported, "in most years, we elect a winner from a college that had never before had a Rhodes Scholar, even after more than a century. This year we are pleased to announce first-time winners from Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts, and from Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio."

The thirty-two Rhodes Scholars chosen from the United States will join an international group of Scholars chosen from sixteen other jurisdictions around the world. In addition to the thirty-two Americans, Scholars are also selected from Australia, Bermuda, Canada, China, the nations of the Commonwealth Caribbean, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan, Southern Africa (South Africa, plus Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Swaziland), the United Arab Emirates, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Nearly 90 Scholars are selected worldwide each year, usually including several who have attended American colleges and universities but who are not U.S. citizens and who have applied through their home country.

With the elections announced today, 3,388 Americans have won Rhodes Scholarships, representing 318 colleges and universities. Since 1976, women have been eligible to apply and 514 American women have now won the coveted scholarship. This year, women constituted 49% of the applicant pool, and, coincidentally, 49% of the finalists and 50% of the winners. Over 1,950 American Rhodes Scholars are living in all parts of the U.S. and abroad.

The value of the Rhodes Scholarship varies depending on the academic field and the degree (B.A., master's, doctoral) chosen. The Rhodes Trust pays all college and university fees, provides a stipend to cover necessary expenses while in residence in Oxford as well as during vacations, and transportation to and from England. The total value of the Scholarship averages approximately US\$50,000 per year, and up to as much as US\$200,000 for Scholars who remain at Oxford for four years in certain departments.

The full list of the newly elected United States Rhodes Scholars, with the states from which they were chosen, their home towns, and their American colleges or universities, follows. Brief profiles follow the list.

For further information, please contact:

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Beginning Sunday, November 22, Mr. Gerson may be reached for press and other inquiries at amsec@rhodesscholar.org. Joyce Knight of the American Secretary's Office will be able to provide details on how to reach Scholars-elect, and may be reached at joyceknight@rhodesscholar.org. Beginning Monday, questions can be directed to Ms. Knight or to Mr. Thom Yu at the Rhodes Trust office in Vienna, Virginia, or to Mr. Gerson.