



*From the Office of the American Secretary*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC/November 18, 2017 – Elliot F. Gerson, American Secretary of the Rhodes Trust, today announced the names of the 32 Americans chosen as Rhodes Scholars representing the United States.

Gerson described this year’s class: “This year’s selections—independently elected by 16 committees around the country meeting simultaneously—reflects the rich diversity of America. It includes, among others, ten African-Americans, the most ever elected in a U.S. Rhodes class; African and Asian immigrants; other Asian, Muslim, and Latino Americans; an Alaskan Native (Aleut); a transgender man, the second self-acknowledged transgender Rhodes Scholar after Pema McLaughlin was elected last year; and four from colleges that have never before elected Rhodes Scholars in the 115 years of the United States Rhodes Scholarships (Hunter College, CUNY; Temple University; the University of Alaska Anchorage; and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. They plan to study a wide range of fields across the social sciences, biological and medical sciences, physical sciences and mathematics, and the humanities.”

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 Founders, John McCall MacBain O.C. and The Atlantic Philanthropies, and many other generous benefactors. The first class of American Rhodes Scholars entered Oxford in 1904; those elected today will enter Oxford in October 2018.

Rhodes Scholars are chosen in a two-stage process. First, applicants must be endorsed by their college or university. This year more than 2,500 students sought their institution's endorsement; 866 were endorsed by 299 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.

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 Gerson said, "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's 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 17 and 18, 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 twenty-eight applicants from 100 different colleges and universities reached the final stage of the competition, including 17 that had never before had a student win a Rhodes Scholarship. Of the 100 institutions whose students reached the finalist stage in 2017, 27 had not endorsed any applicants in 2016.

The 32 Rhodes Scholars chosen from the United States will join an international group of Scholars chosen from more than 20 other jurisdictions (64 different countries) around the world. In addition to the 32 Americans, Scholars are also selected from Australia, Bermuda, Canada, China, the nations of the Commonwealth Caribbean, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Southern Africa (South Africa, plus Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Swaziland), Syria/Jordan/Lebanon/Palestine, the United Arab Emirates, West Africa (including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Togo), Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Approximately 100 Rhodes Scholars will be selected worldwide this 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, 3,452 Americans have won Rhodes Scholarships, representing 322 colleges and universities. Since 1976, women have been eligible to apply and 546 American women have now won the coveted scholarship. Nearly 2,000 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\$68,000 per year, and up to as much as approximately US\$250,000 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. Very brief profiles follow the list.

For further information, please contact:

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Beginning Sunday, November 19, Mr. Gerson may be reached for press inquiries or comments at [amsec@rhodesscholar.org](mailto:amsec@rhodesscholar.org). Joyce Knight and Thom Yu 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](mailto:joyceknight@rhodesscholar.org) or [thom@rhodesscholar.org](mailto:thom@rhodesscholar.org). Beginning Monday, questions can be directed to Ms. Knight and Mr. Yu at the Rhodes Trust office in Vienna, Virginia at 703-821-5960.

PLEASE NOTE: Given the time challenge and complexity of 16 concurrent district selections across the United States, initial versions of the short bios and winners' list included with this press release may contain small errors, typographical and otherwise. Most are corrected on Sunday, November 19, so always check [www.rhodesscholar.org](http://www.rhodesscholar.org) for the most up-to-date versions. In addition, you may find photos of the winners on the global Rhodes Trust website, [www.rhodestrust.ox.ac.uk](http://www.rhodestrust.ox.ac.uk), where they will be uploaded as soon as practicable.