ROSEMONT SENIOR CATHERINE BOBBITT, OF PENNSVILLE, NJ, TO SPEND A YEAR IN TURKEY

Rosemont, PA-Catherine Bobbitt (Pennsville, NJ), a senior at Rosemont College, has been selected to receive a 2007-2008 National Security Education Program (NSEP) David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship. Bobbitt was chosen for her interest in Turkish language and culture. The scholarship is offered to U.S. undergraduates who wish to study abroad. Bobbitt will be spending the 2007-2008 academic year in Turkey as a result of this scholarship.

Bobbitt’s fascination with Turkish culture and language began more than a decade ago, as she sat in her living room watching her grandmother teach several Turkish immigrants the necessities of the English language. As she sat there, Bobbitt’s fascination evolved into a passion for the country of Turkey, its language, and its citizens.

In the summer of 2006, Bobbitt traveled to Turkey for the first time. While there, she studied the language and lived in Istanbul. Her interest in studying Turkish complements the goals of the NSEP in preparing students to work in the field of government by utilizing her knowledge abroad.

By attending Bogazici University, for the 2007-2008 academic year, in Istanbul, Bobbitt will engage in challenging and professional Turkish language courses while immersing herself in Turkish culture for an extended period. “United States citizens familiar with Turkish culture and qualified to speak in both English and Turkish will become an invaluable asset for the continued success of Turkish-United States relations in the future.”

Officially known as the Republic of Turkey, the transcontinental country is a modern region that has overseen the birth of major civilizations such as the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Because of its strategic location Turkey’s culture has a unique blend of Eastern and Western tradition, often described as a bridge between the two civilizations. “Turkey holds a critical geographical location as a hub between the West and the Middle East,” says Bobbitt. “It serves as an example of a secular democracy with a predominantly Muslim population. Maintaining a moderate and secure Turkey is critical to United States and global security in light of the current situation in the Middle East.”

“Spending an extended time in a foreign country is essential for becoming familiar with cultural norms of the society as well as gaining language proficiency. There is no better way to reinforce language learning than surrounding oneself with culture and society. After studying at Bogazici, in the Turkish Language and Culture Program last summer, my determination to continue my studies there only grew. I believe this university offers the best program available and opportunity for studying Turkish language,” says Bobbitt.
From her previous trip abroad, Bobbitt reaped many benefits including the development of a more open mind. She learned how to cope with the unexpected, and how to make the best of difficult circumstances. “Traveling offers individuals invaluable experience that not only benefits the traveler, but also society. When I returned, I had a newfound tolerance and understanding for diversity found in cultures that differ from my own,” she says.

When Bobbitt leaves for Turkey this fall, she expects to enroll in an intermediate level “Turkish Language for Foreigners” courses and move onto take intermediate “Reading in Turkish” course at Bogazici. “Each course requires a minimum of four formal classroom hours per week. But of course, there are informal opportunities for study at every turn. Even though the medium of instruction of the university courses in English, all other aspects of daily life require the use of Turkish, as the services announcements, support staff, and personnel only speak Turkish. Additionally, a majority of the students are Turkish, so outside of class, the language of choice is Turkish.”

Throughout her college career, Bobbitt has explored many avenues for personal and professional growth. She has actively participated in the Rosemont College community and beyond. On campus, she has been inducted into both the Rosemont College Honor Society and the Kistler Honor Society. She has achieved the Dean’s List every semester since entering the College in 2004. For the past two years, she was a Learning Fellow in courses for first year student and has served as co-president for the Rosemont College Democrats chapter. In her spare time she has worked on several local and state political campaigns, but is now yearning to enhance her international perspective.

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Founded in 1921 by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Rosemont College is an independent liberal arts institution in the Catholic tradition located on the Main Line, 11 miles west of Philadelphia, on the border of Montgomery and Delaware Counties. The nationally-acclaimed, traditional Undergraduate Women’s College confers B.A., B.S. and B.F.A. degrees in twenty-three majors. Rosemont College also includes the Schools of Graduate and Professional Studies, which are open to both women and men. For more information, visit [www.rosemont.edu](http://www.rosemont.edu).

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