



Joanna Lawrence: 2013 Beinecke Scholarship winner

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“Studying archaeology, particularly through an anthropological perspective, has transformed my way of thinking about the world and about people in all circumstances, and inspired my career goals of researching and educating about European culture in the Bronze Age,” writes Joanna Lawrence, winner of the 2013 Beinecke Scholarship.

The anthropology major’s passion for her subject is clear. And that passion, coupled with a strong work ethic and impressive resume, led Lawrence to be among twenty college juniors nationwide selected to receive a Beinecke Scholarship.

The Beinecke Scholarship Program was established in 1971 by the Sperry and Hutchinson Company. This award provides \$34,000 for graduate study leading to a terminal degree in the arts, humanities or social sciences. UW-Madison’s last Beinecke winner was political science major Asad Asad in 2010.

Lawrence did not start out studying anthropology. She had trained intensively to be a ballet dancer. However, for health reasons she had to abandon her dreams shortly after receiving her first professional contract. Lawrence began the search for a new direction in which to find purpose and strive for excellence.

Lawrence had always been fascinated by the past and had a keen interest in studying the people around her. An introductory class in archaeology solidified her love for the field. Lectures and articles provoked new questions for her and left her wondering about the people of the past.

“My passion to create physical expressions of myself has found satisfaction in uncovering the memories of selves expressed in the physical objects they left behind,” Lawrence writes.



Joanna Lawrence receives her 2013 Beinecke Scholarship from Chancellor David Ward.



An inspiring passion, however, is not the only requirement sought by the Beinecke Scholarship committee. Lawrence proved her worthiness with her impressive academic record, plentiful research experiences, campus involvement and an overall inspiring work ethic.

“Beyond excelling in academic performance, Joanna is a thoughtful, compassionate person who is dedicated to making a positive impact on the world through the dissemination of knowledge related to cultural diversity,” Assistant Professor of Archaeology Sarah Clayton said. “Joanna has a deep sense of appreciation for exposure to cultural diversity and is genuinely concerned with advancing multicultural education to improve upon the human condition.”

Lawrence’s enthusiasm for archaeology has led her to many exciting opportunities. She completed her first excavation in Bulgaria and, this summer, she will be traveling to Troy for yet another. This excavation will give Lawrence the opportunity to explore Bronze-Age household life, which she’ll use for her senior honors thesis.

“Motivated by these experiences, I aspire to be a professor of archaeology at a research focused institution where I can follow my dual passions for researching past lives and teaching.” Lawrence said.

As Lawrence heads to the University of Cambridge, where she will be studying for an MPhil in Archaeology, she becomes one step closer to that goal.