



PAUL SMITH'S STUDENT WINS \$5,000 TO STUDY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

PAUL SMITHS—A Paul Smith's College sophomore has won a \$5,000 scholarship to participate in an ecologically oriented study-abroad program this spring.

Jonas Borkholder, of Oakfield, N.Y., was awarded a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State and the Institute of International Education. Of more than 1,350 applicants, only 400 received a scholarship, which is named after the former Congressman from New York State.

Borkholder will study in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua with the Center for Ecological Living and Learning, a Maine-based organization that gives students hands-on experience dealing with environmental issues and solutions. While in the field, Borkholder, who is majoring in natural resources environmental science, will participate in community service projects aimed at promoting sustainable practices, such as installing a solar-electricity system in a remote Nicaraguan village and restoring sea turtle habitats in Costa Rica.

"Ever since I went to Paul Smith's, I've always wanted to help the earth. It's important for animals, which I love, but it's also important for all of us," Borkholder said. "When I find a career, I don't want to be in it just for me. It's not just about money. I really want to help."

Borkholder participates in TRiO-Student Support Services (TRiO-SSS) at Paul Smith's. TRiO, a federally funded academic-assistance program, also helps students apply for scholarships such as the Gilman. That aid is specifically aimed at students who are typically underrepresented in study-abroad programs: those who lack financial resources, for example, or students in fields such as the sciences and engineering.

"We are just thrilled that Jonas was selected for this prestigious award," said Thomas Huber, director of TRiO-SSS at Paul Smith's. "It was a very competitive selection process, but we knew Jonas had a good shot given his outstanding academic record. He is a kind-hearted and dedicated individual who will fully realize this great opportunity."

Dave Oakes, director of the Center for Ecological Living, congratulated Borkholder on his award. "He is a very committed young man who cares deeply about sustainability," Oakes said. "We know he will add a lot to our program, and we look forward to what he will be doing to implement what he learns when he returns back home."