

UWO students earn coveted national scholarship

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Two University of Wisconsin Oshkosh students will spend their summers learning, advancing their careers and getting paid to do it.

Dan Curran and Jackie Topp — both secondary education, broad field science, majors — were selected for the Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program, sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a governmental organization based in Washington, D.C.

NOAA selects about 100 outstanding college students from across the nation each year to receive an \$8,000 award to be used toward academics, a 10-week full-time paid internship at a NOAA facility with housing and possible reappointment to include another \$8,000 award.

Curran was selected for the program last year and completed an introductory workshop in Silverspring, Md., during summer 2008.

“It’s lucrative,” Geology Professor Bill Mode said. “The great thing is that in addition to the scholarship, they get to attend a summer workshop and the summer internship.”

The workshop is designed to get students acquainted with everything NOAA has to offer. A part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA studies and researches ecosystems, climate, weather and water, and commerce and transportation.

“It was a little overwhelming to see all the resources they had,” Curran said. “It made me really aware of what they were doing and their outreach.”

Topp was selected for the program this year and will attend the introductory workshop this summer.

“Getting into a well-known governmental organization like NOAA is a good step for my future,” Topp said.

Meanwhile, Curran will start his hands-on internship this summer; he will be mentored by a senior NOAA scientist.

“The internship can be in any number of NOAA’s offices across the United States,” said Mode. “There are a lot of neat locations to choose from.”

Curran will work in Boulder, Colo., to create a Web site designed to educate citizens about carbon cycle greenhouse gases.

“I’m excited to interact and collaborate with some of the scientists at the lab and with cooperating

institutes,” Curran said.

Interested students had to submit an application with two essays, an official college transcript and two academic references. Winners are selected based on relevant course work, their submitted essays, academic recommendations and other relevant experience like awards and volunteer work.