

Four Watson Fellowship nominees share project proposals

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Last week, the college announced four Watson Fellowship nominees. Seniors Xzavier Killings, Alec Rotunda, Isabel McLain and Elizabeth Welliver are among a group of potential Watson Fellows from forty private colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The Watson Fellowship awards its recipients \$30,000 each for a year of international travel to pursue a self-designed research project. The Davidson nominees' projects represent a wide variety of interests and potential destinations.

Killings proposes a project to study integrated healthcare in a variety of countries. "I plan to travel the world to different places, like Ghana, Zambia, India, Belize, to study what different organizations and structures are in place to help patients reach what I call ultimate healing," says Killings. Ultimate healing, Killings explains, is "healing that transcends typical doctor-patient interaction out into the

community." By exploring the health practices of other countries, Killings hopes his project would assist his journey to become a family physician with a focus on ultimate healing, as well as be a personally challenging experience. "The Watson will really test my confidence, test my cultural exploration, test my ability to form meaningful relationships," he said.

Rotunda's proposed project focuses on the impact of soccer abroad. "I plan to go to four different [soccer] clubs, or academies depending on what country I'm in, and fit into what they're doing," Rotunda said. He would travel to Germany, Ghana, India, and South Africa to step in as a coach or other role, acting as a mentor and involving himself in the soccer communities. He is passionate about the potential for character development that soccer offers young players. "As much as education is about learning and soccer is about playing and having fun, it can be so much more."

Rotunda's year with the Watson Fellowship would be his first taste of international travel. "I myself have never been abroad. I've been playing soccer here for four years," he said.

"With that, I've developed a hunger for international experience and what that brings." He hopes that through the Watson he will be immersed in environments working to develop young people through soccer and education, which he says could inform a potential career of a coach or teacher.

McLain plans to explore how different communities around the world use art to enact change. McLain defines "community art" as "art that is used for economic empowerment, conflict resolution, and rehabilitation after crises." She specifically plans to examine art in Northern Ireland, South Africa, Ethiopia and Cambodia. As a member of a mixed race family--two of her brothers were adopted from Ethiopia--art has been a tool for McLain in sharing her own story and life experiences. This inspiration allows her to see art as means of connection.

Even as an artist, McLain does not know what to expect from her project. "I'm excited [about the Watson] because I don't actually know what people do with art. I'm going in with a really open mind. I don't know what to expect," she said.

Elizabeth Welliver applied to the Watson after dreaming about it since freshman year. She wants to look "at women's participation in food rituals in India, Indonesia, Bolivia, and Thailand" as a way of learning about the relationship between women, food and faith. Growing up in an Italian household, food and cooking has always been a means of connection for Welliver.

"I'm relentlessly passionate about the opportunity to spend time with women in dialogue," she added.

To combine these two passions, Welliver hopes to place herself in the middle of many groups of women and spend time eating, cooking and farming with them, embedding herself in the life of a community.

The next steps for the nominees are interviews with the Watson Foundation in January, and the final recipients will be announced in March. Welliver says she tries to focus on her personal enrichment rather than simply the outcome. "Through the application process, I'd learn valuable information about myself whether or not I progressed," she said.



Xzavier Killings



Isabel McLain



Alec Rotunda



Elizabeth Welliver

Eating house self-selection rescheduled for Saturday this spring

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Self-Selection Day is one of the most widely anticipated events in the spring semester at Davidson. A tradition that has spanned several decades, Self-Selection Day celebrates the induction of new members into the four Eating Houses on campus: Rusk, Turner, Connor, and Warner Hall. In the past, Self-Selection Day festivities have taken place on a Friday and consisted of two major activities: a morning reveal of one's Eating House followed by induction ceremonies, all which take place during the night. Self-Selection Day is preceded by several recruitment events, which include a service event in the fall, an education event in the spring, and a series of sisterhoods catered to prospective members of Eating Houses. Currently, around 63% of the female student body is enrolled in an Eating House.

This year, however, Patterson Court Council revealed that Self-Selection Day would be

held on a Saturday January 30, due to a conflict with the athletic calendar. The initial date for self-selection falls on the same night as men's basketball's nationally televised game against VCU. Since the athletic calendar was released, Cristi Hovet '16, Eating House Ambassador, has worked closely with Erica Urban, Patterson Court Council Advisor, and self-selection chairs in each house to plan for Self-Selection Day and the events leading up to it. "We met with house Presidents and Deans to try to fix a new date for self-selection," Hovet explained. "We thought about splitting self selection day between Friday and Saturday, or even moving it up one week, but that would severely shorten the recruitment process." With that in mind, Hovet and her peers set a new date and a new schedule for Self-Selection Day.

In the new Self-Selection Day schedule, morning activities will be conducted an hour later and evening activities an hour earlier. Additionally, this year's self selection day is introducing a partnership with Dining Services in Vail Commons. "Commons was really excited about self-selection and reached out to

us and asked us what time should they open... they were really enthusiastic about self selection and wanted to see how they could be a part of it," Hovet explained.

The change in the date for Self-Selection Day resonates with changes in the recruitment process that are being orchestrated by Self Selection Chairs. These changes aim to demystify the interactions between Eating Houses and blur the differences between them. For instance, self-selection chairs are hosting a panel to provide prospective Eating House members with information about each house. This informative panel is taking place instead of the Eating House Walk-Around: an open-house event hosted in previous years for freshmen to visit and interact with members of different Eating Houses. "We felt as if the walk through was an ineffective way to introduce freshmen to Eating Houses," Claire Kane '18, self-selection chair for Turner House mentioned. "The goal for us this year us to eliminate the stereotypes associated with each house."

Although the change in date for Self-Selection Day sprung from a scheduling conflict,

self-selection chairs agree that having self-selection span an entire day can change the dynamic between Eating Houses and their newest members. "The Saturday aspect will give people who didn't get into their first choice a chance to bond with all the girls in their house and know that regardless of the house they're in, they'll be surrounded by a great group of people," Olivia Strader '18, self-selection chair for Connor House commented. Specific plans for Self-Selection Day – other than the traditional events – are still in the works. However, as the date approaches, self-selection chairs are mindful about retaining and expanding the traditions associated with this event.

The Eating Houses pride themselves on being open and inclusive. Self-selection chairs, as well the female Paterson Court organizations, continue to encourage the growth of the system and provide a positive social experience for its members. "We're trying to move past the stereotypes. At the end of the day we want to make girls feel that regardless of which Eating House they join, or which they're placed in, they're going to have a great time," Strader '18 concluded.

Davidson Outdoors launches trip focused on racial dialogue

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Outdoors but the experience of experiencing the outdoors."

When planning this trip, group leaders decided to use an intergroup model. The model "brings people into the room with different lived experiences and tries to foreground our personal experiences and identities as part of the process," according to Parker. Fessehayeh added that in this model, "there is no room for people to be silent." This approach allowed for the participants to be more equally involved than in a different approach that they might have chosen.

As a result of using this model, Parker-

said, "It really got me thinking more about the importance of dialogue spaces in order to bring people together in a more sustained and meaningful way." He also added that this approach includes "a whole other element of mutual trust."

Fessehayeh explained that the trip "allowed me an air of optimism that I think as a senior I've kind of lost. I've always taken pride in the fact that Davidson is on the right side of change and there are avenues and platforms to have really tough conversations, but sometimes I do not see those happen as much as I'd like, particularly with white students getting outside of their comfort zone. We made an active effort to make sure white students

were not remaining silent as a form of non-engagement."

Dove and Fessehayeh will both be graduating in the spring, and Parker will finish his internship this semester. In the hope for future trips, Dove mentioned that there are underclassmen trip leaders that have expressed interest in leading a similar Davidson Outdoors weekend.

Davidson Outdoors received feedback from the weekend as to how it can improve if this kind of trip is organized again. According to Dove, the feedback includes "incorporating more skills driven training. Davidson Outdoors historically has been, and is currently, a space coded in whiteness. Many of our par-

ticipants of color wanted more outdoor skills instruction, which makes me wonder why DO has remained a predominately white space, and begs the question of how we can begin to cultivate a space for students of color interested in participating in, and learning about, outdoor recreation. This trip serves as a first step in creating such a space, but, more importantly, it calls attention to the need for more trips like these in the future."

"It was a pilot program," Fessehayeh said of the trip. "It was successful in the fact that we did accomplish our main goal of breaking the ice and bridging those two goals I mentioned earlier." Participants hope for future Davidson Outdoors trips to provide an environment to