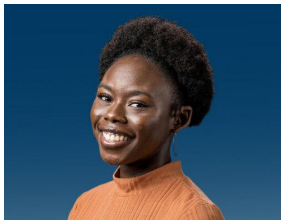


https://www.bgdailynews.com/news/wku-student-selected-for-prestigious-foreign-affairs-fellowship/article_ca9adaba-9967-5146-8936-1a2c8c873626.html

WKU student selected for prestigious foreign affairs fellowship

By MICHAEL J. COLLINS michael.collins@bgdailynews.com

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Tani Washington

Submitted

Over 250 nominees from 147 universities nationwide applied to the Gaither Junior Fellowship with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, an international affairs think tank headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Only 16 nominees were selected – including Tani Washington, a history and international affairs student at Western Kentucky University.

“It can be very discouraging when you don’t get the (opportunities) that you apply for,” Washington told the Daily News. “I had a final push to get this one that I really wanted, and it ended up being exactly what I got, and that’s very exciting.”



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Washington will spend a year working with a senior research fellow in the CEIP's Africa program, which provides economic, technological and transnational analysis of issues across the continent.

"I'll be working underneath the sector of what is called 'global trade and economic development,' which is very exciting because my minor is also in economics," she said.

Washington plans to attend graduate school after her fellowship, aiming to become an area specialist for the U.S. Bureau of African Affairs or to lead community engagement at the National Museum of African American History in Washington, D.C.

“I want to work in a capacity where I can provide students who come from the African diaspora as a whole with the funds and research to do the things they want to do and learn more about their history from a perspective that is not Euro-centric,” Washington said.

In her time studying political science, she has often been frustrated with the “patronizing” ways that some researchers and analysts approach African issues and policy.





“It argues that the only way for Africa to uplift itself and gain mobility is essentially asking (other countries) for it,” Washington said.

Washington said her work at CEIP will bring her closer to organizations like the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, which focus on organizing nearby states through sovereign cooperation.

Gaither Junior Fellows are nominated by an institution and must go through several levels of judgment before selection. Many of Washington’s mentors and professors, including associate professor of African American

studies Andrew Rosa, spoke highly of her work throughout her undergraduate education.

“This most recent recognition by the Carnegie Endowment is one of many notable milestones in what has been an illustrious undergraduate experience marked by numerous internal and external awards, conference invitations, and co-authored publications,” Rosa stated in a release.

Washington said she is the only Black person selected for the cohort and one of only a few state-school students. Many from her cohort hail from places like Harvard University, Yale University, Cornell University and Wesleyan University.

While she would like to see more fellows like her, she said it is a reminder to others looking for a similar path.

“You don’t have to be part of an Ivy League institution to get accolades or fellowships or awards like this,” Washington said. “It’s about the work

that you put in and the resources that you wring dry in order to get what you want.”

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Michael Collins

Reporter