

# The Magnificent Nine: Pitzer Announces 2023 Fulbright Recipients

Claremont, Calif. (May 5, 2023)—Nine members of the Class of 2023 have been offered 2023–24 Fulbright U.S. Student Program grants so far this year.

“We’re thrilled to have another outstanding Fulbright performance by our students this year,” said Professor of Political Studies Nigel Boyle, who oversees Pitzer’s Office of Fellowships, “and we’re not done yet.”

Boyle said he is confident that additional Fulbright recipients will be announced in the weeks ahead. For 15 consecutive years, Pitzer has been among the top baccalaureate producers of Fulbright recipients [according to a recent report](#) in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The Fulbright program gives recipients a chance to study, teach, or conduct research around the globe to promote mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries. Five of Pitzer’s current cohort will teach English in their host countries, while three will conduct research.

**To date, this year’s Fulbright U.S. Student Program awardees are:**



**Alyssa Dunn '23** is an organismal biology major who will conduct research in Poland on blood-borne infections, parasites, and coinfection dynamics in rodents. Dunn's research will take aim at an important area connected with public health that deserves more scholarly attention. "Greater research on coinfection is critical for increasing understanding of how parasites are transmitted and treated," Dunn explained in her application. "My project aims to provide insight into how the vast network of parasites and diseases interact with each other as well as with their hosts."



**Jack Friedman '23** will teach English in Uruguay as he explores the country's culture and immerses himself in its rural and urban environments. Fluent in English and Spanish, Friedman is looking forward to using his bilingual abilities during his Fulbright program. A writing and rhetoric major, he plans to draw on his current Pitzer teaching and tutoring experiences as a Writing Center Fellow to support his Uruguayan students.



**Amaya Gustave '23** will teach English in Mexico as she continues to expand her interest in the diversity of Indigenous and Afro-Mexican cultures, pre-colonial history, and ecosystems. An organizational studies major, Gustave has previous teaching and mentoring experience with the organization Big Brothers Big Sisters as well as having taught while participating in Pitzer's study abroad program in Ecuador. She currently serves as vice president of diversity for Pitzer's Student Senate.



**Ariel Kivela '23** will teach English in Taiwan and looks forward to sharing her personal and unique approach to learning English with students there. That approach has been influenced by Kivela's struggles with dyslexia, and she explained in her application that during her Fulbright program she hopes "to provide empathy and patience to students learning English while also creating an engaging way for them to learn." With a self-designed major that enabled her to develop an understanding of Mandarin Chinese and

East Asian studies, Kivela will also spend her time in Taiwan immersing herself in its culture, language, and politics.



**O'philia Le '23** will teach English in Taiwan as she seeks to continue building bridges between communities of learners and to create compassionate spaces in which this learning occurs. A sociocultural anthropology and environmental analysis double major, Le plans to pursue a future career as a public health professional and believes that educational training goes hand in hand with public health awareness and community building. Her experience includes serving as a volunteer for Literacy for All of Monterey Park, which has provided Le with an opportunity to use her Mandarin and Cantonese language skills to assist Chinese immigrant seniors involved with the organization.



**Shraya Poetti '23** will conduct research in Spain on the political dynamics affecting efforts by various groups to create affordable housing. Her research will be aimed at a specific question: Should affordable housing be framed as a partisan or ideological issue? A double major in political science and psychology, Poetti plans to analyze various facets of the housing justice movement. The goal, she explained in her application, “will be to construct a picture of the fight for a comprehensive ley de vivienda in Andalusia, and state partisans’ place in it.”



**Sergio Quechol '23** has been awarded a Fulbright to study the art of racialized travesti and trans femmes in Brazil and to explore how artmaking can serve as a strategy of agency and care for them despite continued threats of erasure and violence. A double major in Latin American & Caribbean studies and gender feminist studies, Quechol explained in their application how “the way we often come to know gender non-conforming identities is through stories about violence.” In response to that, Quechol wishes to conduct research on other non-violent forms of recognition of these communities, stating how “there is a dearth of scholarship on how joy and care are central and complementary to these identities.”



**Elliot Raskin '23** will teach English in Tajikistan as he continues to explore activities that foster mutual learning, empathy, and intercultural understanding. “When presented with the possibility of teaching in my family’s language of origin,” Raskin said in his application, “I immediately knew that the ETA in Tajikistan was right for me. Much of my training and teaching experience has centered on roundtable discussions and activities that foster mutual learning, empathy, and intercultural understanding; these values are the pillars that I hope to structure my American Space and pedagogy upon.” Raskin is a political studies major who has participated in Pitzer’s study abroad program in Vietnam.



**Jocelyn Vega-Robledo '23** will teach English in Portugal as she embarks on her post-undergraduate studies as an educator. A sociology and Chicana Latinx studies double

major, Vega-Robledo has served in leadership opportunities with several Pitzer groups and organizations, including the Latinx Student Union and Presidential Search Committee. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, she conducted research on the parental involvement experiences of Latinx farmworkers and how they contribute to their children's educational trajectories. Teaching in Portugal will immerse her in a new learning and cultural space as she continues her academic training.

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The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is the largest exchange program in the U.S., offering research, study, and teaching opportunities in more than 140 countries to outstanding seniors and recent graduates.

"Winning a Fulbright can be life-changing," said Boyle, himself a two-time recipient of a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award (most recently in 2019). "I'm not only thrilled for the way our newest student Fulbright recipients will advance Pitzer's reputation, but I'm also excited for the students themselves and the transformative experiences awaiting them."