

**Stephanie B. Anderson**  
**Faculty Director for Major Scholarships**  
**Report for Year 1: 2020-2021**

Despite the COVID pandemic, this past year has been a fruitful one for laying the groundwork for a major scholarships program at UW. We now have a buy-in from across campus with a Major Scholarships Committee, a SOAR badge to encourage students to explore the possibilities, a trove of documents and resources, and membership in the National Association of Fellowship Advisors (NAFA). This report will begin with (1) the proposed job description for the faculty director, (2) the vision for accomplishing these goals, (3) achievements to date, (4) goals for AY21-22, and (5) conclusions.

**I. Job Description**

The position of faculty director for major scholarships reports to the provost and should accomplish the following:

- a) Gather and share information about available scholarship opportunities with students and faculty. This should be done via a web presence, email, social media, and information sessions. The director will need to work with staff support to develop and maintain a current website. These opportunities should include major national and international scholarship programs (Rhodes, Gates, Marshall, Truman, Udall) and could also include scholarship opportunities at specific universities and/or other institutions;
- b) Gather and implement national best practices for recruiting, including a pipeline for student applicants starting in the freshman year as well as outreach to students in upper years, ideally engaging departments and other university offices in building this pipeline, and meeting with students to discuss their initial queries;
- c) Gather and implement national best practices campus wide for mentoring student applicants, including workshops on effective applications and on preparing for all aspects of the interview process, and organizing mock interviews for those students who advance to the interview stage in the application process;
- d) Mentor faculty campus-wide on how to identify and prepare students to compete for the big scholarships, including an advice-for-advisors section on the website and workshops for faculty on best practices in letters of recommendation;
- e) Maintain and provide data to address both absolute numbers and trends over time in: student contacts, student and faculty attendance at workshops, numbers of applications, rates of success in applications.

**II. Vision**

Through NAFA, I have learned that most universities have whole offices, staffed with four or five professionals, usually housed in the university research office, e.g. UW's ORED, to direct similar programs. At this point, the director is paid summer salary to create such a program with no staff support. With very limited resources to realize these ambitions, I designed a structure that allows former students to connect with current students,

addresses student, faculty, and parent concerns, diffuses information to faculty, staff, and administrators, while using minimal staff support. Specifically, I have designed the following to address the lettered goals above:

- a) A SOAR badge, which will link with an outside drive, e.g. GoogleDrive or Microsoft with information on major scholarships and other opportunities, e.g. the Presidential Management Fellowship, videos from past UW winners, and step-by-step instructions. Special sections will be included for minority and/or first-generation, as well as for women and international students.
- b) A Major Scholarships committee with representatives from all the colleges, the Global Engagement Office, and ACES to recruit students, identify mentors, and disseminate information. To create a pipeline, we will work with FYS teachers to discuss options for students they can pursue, not just as seniors, but for all four years;
- c) With guidance from the National Association of Fellowship Advisors for best practices, we are working closely with the Honors College to create workshops and mock interviews to prepare our students;
- d) With guidance from the National Association of Fellowship Advisors for best practices, we have curated documents to help faculty and advisors learn about the process and write letters of reference;
- e) We have plans to create a calendar, in-take forms, and exit polls to collect data.

Currently, our most severe problem is lack of staff support. We have no webpage because we have no one to create or maintain one. Qualtrics could be a very useful tool in maintaining such data.

### **III. Achievements**

- Creation of a Major Scholarship Committee
  - The members each represent a different college, support international, and have expertise in certain areas, such as Peace Corps or Fulbright.
    - Stephanie Anderson – Director and committee chair, A&S (Marshall)
    - Peter Parolin – Dean of the Honors College
    - Curtis Biggs – College of Education
    - Jo Chytka – Director of ACES
    - Steve Russell – College of Business
    - Ginger Paige – College of Agriculture (Peace Corps)
    - Michelle Jarman – College of Health Sciences
    - Shawn Bunning – Center for Global Studies, GEO (Fulbright)
    - Shelley Jewell – International Programs, GEO
    - Tony Denzer, College of Engineering
  - They are key to publicizing relevant scholarships to their students and for recruiting.
  - They are a liaison with their college.
  - Braintrust – they come up with ideas and propose new directions.

- Membership with NAFA <https://nafadvisors.org>
  - Over 300 members, which include all the big names (Harvard, Columbia), as well as many of our peer institutions (New Mexico State, Utah State) and stretch-peers (CSU, Kansas State).
  - I have used their resources to bring relevant opportunities to campus.
    - E.g. Jenny Nielsen, presented a poster at the Inequality and Social Justice conference at Wake Forest University.
  - Attending workshop for new advisors, summer 2021.
  
- Professional Development
  - Investigated scores of scholarship and internship opportunities and accompanying resources.
  - Attended workshops
    - Rhodes -- <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/office-of-the-american-secretary/>
    - FAO Schwartz <https://faoschwarzfellowship.org>
    - Fulbright <https://us.fulbrightonline.org>
  
- Creation of SOAR for National Scholarships
  - With the help of Becky Despain and ACES, we put together a SOAR badge to help students navigate the application process. Steps towards the badge include looking for relevant scholarships, finding news ones for our list, writing a personal essay, and applying for one.
  - Should be live by fall 2021 and will include a video on how to use it.
  
- Curation of relevant documents to aid students and faculty
  - Several lists of national scholarships from different sources
  - Useful links to other university scholarship databases, especially for students of color and international students.
    - FSU's Scholarships by Identity site: <https://onf.fsu.edu/identity> .
    - The University of Rochester's Office of Undergraduate Research listing of summer research programs open to international students: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/ugresearch/opportunities/summer-international-students.html> .
    - • The University of Minnesota's Asian Pacific American Resource Center has catalogued scholarships such as the Korean Ancestry Grant: <http://aparc.umn.edu/aapi-resource-library/asian-american-and-pacific-islander-scholarships>
  - Documents for faculty on how to write a letter of support
  - Sample applications from past UW applicants who have given their permission to share theirs.
  - Instructions and links on how to write the personal essay.
    - Structure: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GXv2C7vwX0>
    - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/opinion/college-admissions-essays-trauma.html?referringSource=articleShare>

- <https://www.npr.org/2021/05/09/995172973/imposter-syndrome-or-something-else-historian-talks-discriminatory-gaslighting>
  - Videos of past students who won such scholarships, e.g Rey Fuentes who won the Truman and the Marshall, Leena Hornlein who won the Phi Kappa Phi graduate scholarship, Emily Wood on Peace Corps and the Payne, Maggie Bourque and Tessa Wittman for Udall, etc. (While I have promises from these students, they are still in the process of making them. They should be done by the end of fall 2021.)
- Mentorship of several UW students applying for such grants
  - Emily Wood won the Payne; she was one of 15 out of 650 applicants, i.e. 2.3%  
<https://www.uwyo.edu/uw/news/2021/01/uw-student-from-granite-canyon-receives-prestigious-national-fellowship.html>
  - Mat Waugh applied for the Fulbright. He was a semi-finalist.

#### IV. Goals for 2021-22

The next step for the coming academic year is to find ways to catalog the information we have gathered and to find ways to promote it, with few resources. The following are my plans for cementing a supportive structure for our students:

- Professional Development
  - Attend the NAFA conference and new advisor workshop to learn best practices
  - Read relevant books on the topic:
    - *Wild About Harry: Everything You Have Ever Wanted to Know about the Truman Scholarship* <https://www.uapress.com/product/wild-about-harry/>
    - *Roads Less Traveled and Other Perspectives on Nationally Competitive Scholarships* <https://www.uapress.com/product/roads-less-traveled-and-other-perspectives-on-nationally-competitive-scholarships/>
    - *Bridging the Gap: Perspectives on Nationally Competitive Scholarships* <https://www.uapress.com/product/bridging-the-gap/>
    - *All Before Them: Student Opportunities and Nationally Competitive Fellowships* <https://www.uapress.com/product/all-before-them/>
    - *Nationally Competitive Scholarships: Serving Students and the Public Good* <https://www.uapress.com/product/nationally-competitive-scholarships/>
- Create a map of how to apply
  - Working with a student assistant (Jonet Jennings), while she is applying for these scholarships, will allow me to determine where the sticking points are and how to address them.

- Jonet is a URDM and first generation student with different experiences from me. While I can anticipate sticking points for rural and female students, Jonet can help me pinpoint sticking points for minority and first gen applicants.
  - Jonet will write up and create videos for every step in the process, which will link to resources on a shared drive, probably the UW Microsoft, but perhaps Google since it is easier for students to access, in general.
  - Investigate whether it is possible to make an open-access WyoCourses page for students to explore the documents and get information.
  - Create an online calendar for applications and a timeline for applicants.
- Create a webpage or revamp the existing webpage to include a welcome video and links to the GoogleDrive/WyoCourses with all the documentation.
    - The idea is to have the webpage, SOAR badge, and shared drive all link to each other with explanatory documents and videos.
    - Students will have a chance to ask questions and to add new scholarships to our list.
      - In this way, we can harness the students as a resource for future students.
    - All faculty and administrators will also have access to help them as they mentor.
    - Ideally, each of the main scholarships, for which there is a designated mentor, will have its own webpage/WyoCourses page with relevant links, information and videos.
      - E.g. Tom Seitz for the Carnegie James C. Gaither Junior Fellows program: <https://carnegieendowment.org/about/jr-fellows/faq#citizen>
- Other Goals
    - Linking Major Scholarships with FYS
      - Way to reach all students and to expose them to different opportunities for the next four years
    - Work with the Writing Center to help with personal essay writing
    - Implement best practices learned from the NAFA new advisor workshop
    - Speak at the A&S Dean's retreat and at the Provost's fall meetings to inform faculty and administrators.
    - Use AcademicWorks as another platform to promote the scholarships?

## V. Conclusions

Despite the pandemic, UW now has a plan in place to leverage what resources we have to create an enduring structure to support student applicants. The most significant obstacles are finding staff support and incentives for faculty to work as mentors. With UW's diminishing number of faculty, there is increased service work to go around. Many faculty already feel overburdened. I propose offering a one-time stipend of \$750 to compensate

mentors for the time necessary to learn about their specific scholarship. For example, we need a faculty mentor on campus to help students apply for the Truman. The small financial incentive would compensate the faculty member for the time to learn about the scholarship and the application process. Perhaps this training would be better placed under professional development, and Foundation support could be used.

I look forward to leading this process and to showing the world the wonderful students at the University of Wyoming!