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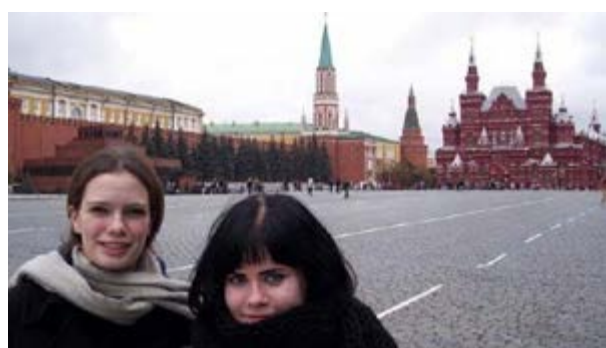
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Center for International Education

December 2006

NSEP SCHOLARSHIP THE PERFECT FIT FOR STUDY IN RUSSIA

by Jennifer Kelly '07



*Jennifer Kelly, left, with a friend in
Moscow's Red Square*

I never thought that ordering a cup of coffee would be so complicated. Sitting in a cafe in St. Petersburg trying, with some spastic hand movements, to describe in Russian to a blank-eyed waitress that I simply wanted a plain cup of Joe, quickly proved my pre-living-in-Russia assertion wrong. If ordering a simple drink in a different language is tedious, then just imagine how many crazy hand motions would be involved to talk about nuclear relations or international security issues.

Despite the number of inevitable challenges, learning a foreign language in its native land is incredibly advantageous. Simply by listening one is

able to pick up on natural intonation, the logical flow of the language, and the usage of slang that a textbook and university atmosphere simply can not provide. Absorbing the language daily in its natural use finally brings all those bits and pieces from class together into a comprehensible pattern; an essential revelation for one's brain.

As a Russian major at the University of New Hampshire, my purpose for living in Russia is to gain a working knowledge of the language, the people, and a Russian understanding of the world. My long-range goal is to apply this knowledge to a career with the U.S. Intelligence Community.

Thanks to the staff working diligently in the CIE office, my journey toward that goal is already headed in the right direction. I would never have discovered the National Security Educational Program (NSEP) Boren Scholarship without my study abroad advisor, Jeff Sherman. While sitting in his office one day wondering how I was going to pay for my studies in Russia, he mentioned the NSEP scholarship. In exchange for funding the part of my trip that financial aid would not cover, the scholarship offered an opportunity to gain paid experience following graduation with a U.S. government agency focused on national security. The scholarship tied my interests in Russian language and culture study together with my desire to work in the U.S. Intelligence Community— everything that I had been looking for; it was as if the scholarship criteria had been written specifically for me.

Despite the involved application and dedicated perseverance needed to compile the necessary elements, the reward was well worth the effort. Aided by the scholarship, I am presently studying Russian language and culture in St. Petersburg, and upon return will begin the search for a government job with assistance from the NSEP staff in Washington, D.C. If this scholarship sounds like it

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has been designed just for you as I felt it had been for me, I urge you to take advantage of this amazing opportunity. There is no better way to combine a fabulous study abroad experience with a pathway to job possibilities in government work--and the CIE staff will be there to help you every step of the way!

Jennifer Kelly, a junior from Arlington, MA, is a member of the University Honors Program with a major in Russian and a minor in political science.

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