

# Fulbright Grants Send UNH Alums to Finland and Kazakhstan

## Anh Nguyen '22 and Taylor Nydam '23 '24G selected as recipients

Monday, August 19, 2024

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UNH graduates Anh Nguyen and Taylor Nydam are traveling to Finland and Kazakhstan, respectively, this summer and fall thanks to a pair of Fulbright grants.

Nguyen '22 is pursuing a master's in automation and electrical engineering at Aalto University in Espoo, Finland, while Nydam '23 '24G will be conducting a case study on how Kazakhstan's hospitality industry has been impacted by the recent influx of Russian migrants since the Russo-Ukrainian war.

The Fulbright Program (<https://us.fulbrightonline.org/>) was proposed by Sen. J. William Fulbright to help increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those in other countries. President Harry S. Truman signed the legislation into law in 1946.

Nguyen, who was born in Vietnam, was drawn to the opportunity in Finland thanks to the country's emphasis on gender equality, work-life balance and the progressive approach to education, she says, because "I aspire to promote these values in the community." She graduated from UNH Manchester with a degree in mechanical engineering technology and spent time working as an engineer during the past two years. She is also a graduate of Manchester Community College and received the NH BioMade Transfer Scholar (<https://www.nhepscor.org/nh-biomade-transfer-scholars>) Scholarship.

Her master's in automation and electrical engineering at Aalto University will focus on control, robotics and autonomous systems. She described receiving the Fulbright grant as "an incredible honor and a significant milestone in my academic journey."

“The grant will provide me with access to world-class education and cutting-edge research facilities and will allow me to gain invaluable knowledge and skills,” she says. “I am particularly excited about the opportunity to collaborate with leading experts and engage in innovative research projects.”

Beyond the educational work, Nguyen says she is excited about the chance to immerse herself in Finnish culture, learning from a society “that values equality and technological advancement.” She says she views the opportunity as a way to broaden her perspective and foster personal and professional growth.

She hopes to pay that forward, as well, as one of her goals is to become a Fulbright ambassador, promoting cross-cultural understanding and collaboration in future endeavors.

“I hope the experience will prepare me to mentor and inspire women in STEM,” she says.

Nydam, a native of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, studied in Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia as a Gilman Scholarship recipient



**TAYLOR NYDAM (COURTESY PHOTO)**



**ANH NGUYEN (COURTESY PHOTO)**

(<https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/2022/06/raising-bar>) and was both eager to return and inspired to pursue the opportunity to conduct international research on a topic she is passionate about. She departs for Kazakhstan in September and will spend nine months there.

Nydam graduated from UNH with a degree in homeland security and Russian and is currently completing her master’s degree at UNH in national security intelligence analysis. She hopes to pursue a career within the Foreign Service as a Consular Officer when she returns to the U.S., she says.

She hopes to use the Fulbright experience to become a subject matter expert in post-Soviet studies and culture. Hospitality is a core cultural component of Central Asian culture that her research will focus on, she says.

“I am interested to see how hospitality has been impacted by the recent influx of Russian migrants, and in turn, how that affects Russian migrant integration. I will be interviewing Russians, Kazakhs and representatives of migrant organizations in Astana, Kazakhstan,” Nydam says.

She was “so grateful and honored” to receive the Fulbright opportunity to conduct research in a region of the world that she is particularly fond of and views the experience as a chance to pave the way for future pursuits.

“I foresee the Fulbright opportunity to be very transformative to my professional aspirations of working on international issues with foreign partners and adversaries,” Nydam says. “I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in migration and refugee studies, and the experience Fulbright will provide me will make me a competitive future doctoral candidate.”

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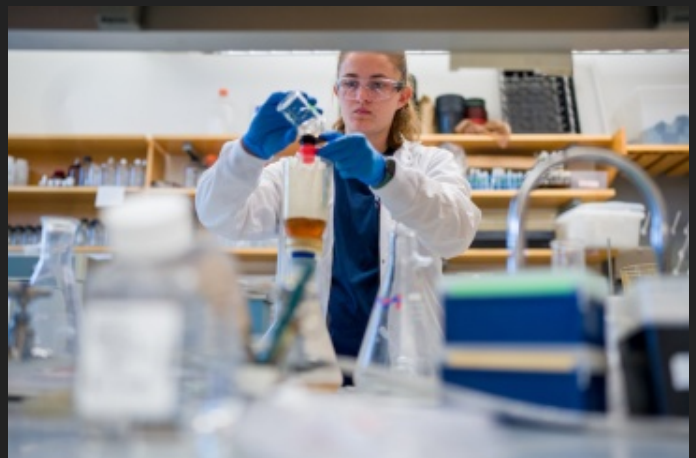


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