

Portland student wins Marshall Scholarship to attend University of Oxford in England

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Bill Graves, The Oregonian



Jacob White

Jacob White says he will pursue graduate degrees in development studies while at the University of Oxford next year as a Marshall Scholar.

Jacob White, who grew up in Portland and graduated from Wilson High School in 2005, has been named a **Marshall Scholar**, a prestigious scholarship that will allow him to study at the **University of Oxford** in England beginning next fall.

White, 23, graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in history from **Northwestern University** in Evanston, Ill., in 2009. He now teaches English, math and basic literacy to impoverished children in **Nagua** of the Dominican Republic, where he has been serving with the Peace Corps since August, 2009.

A commission appointed by the British government selects up to 40 U.S. students for the Marshall Scholarship, which provides tuition, book and research grants and living expenses for up to two years to study in the United Kingdom. Josh Lupton, a senior at the University of Oregon, also

won a 2011 Marshall Scholarship.

The scholarship was established in 1953 by the British Parliament to honor former Secretary of State George Marshall and his plan to rebuild Europe after World War II and to strengthen relations between the United States and the United Kingdom.

White said he plans to work on a two-year master's degree in development studies at the University of Oxford and may stay a third year to get his doctorate.

In an email from the Dominican Republic on Monday, White said he was "ecstatic" and in "disbelief" upon learning he had won the scholarship. He added he also felt a great "sense of responsibility" to "make the most of this great opportunity."

"I feel a strong sense of duty to live up to the ideals of the Marshall commission," he wrote, "and find the best way to continue serving our great country, but also to learn the most I can about Britain and use that knowledge wherever life takes me."

White studied in Greece and worked with children in Uganda during his years at Northwestern, but he said the Peace Corps has challenged him with "the hardest experience of my life." He said he hopes to eventually work for economic and political improvements in developing nations, specifically on policies affecting youth.

Elizabeth Lewis Pardoe, associate director of Northwestern's Office of Fellowships, said, "we were struck by they ways Jacob's early life continues to motivate his steadily unfolding commitment to education in the Dominican Republic."

White's twin brother, Nick, also a Northwestern University graduate, now teaches in Spain, and their older brother Mark, 26, attends the University of Portland. Jacob White has always been a devoted learner concerned about those who are not as fortunate, said his mother, Becky White.

"He's just a great guy with a big heart reaching out to others," she said. "In a nutshell, he wants to help people."

-- **Bill Graves**

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Jacob White

Jacob White with students he is teaching in the Dominican Republic for the Peace Corps, "the hardest experience of my life."