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Alumna Chosen as U.S. Diplomat

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – Cedarville University will add a second alumnus to the honor of U.S. Diplomat as Jerica Ward, a 2009 graduate, has been chosen for the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship at Texas A&M University. She is one of 20 graduate students to be chosen for the prestigious fellowship.

Dr. Frank Jenista, professor of international studies, served as a diplomat for 25 years. He worked in the Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, and New Zealand.

As part of the Pickering Fellowship, Ward will serve as a foreign service officer for a minimum of five years. The Pickering Fellowship is a partnership between the U.S. Department of State and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, which provides mentoring, professional development and financial support to students who are preparing to enter the foreign service. Fellows can receive up to $37,000 annually to help cover the costs of their graduate education.

At Cedarville University, Ward received a degree in international studies with a minor in Spanish and Bible. While at Cedarville, she won multiple awards in the Model United Nations and forensic speech competitions. She was also was voted as an Outstanding Delegate by her peers at the National Model U.N. competition in New York City in 2009.
“Jerica has an outgoing personality and fascination with other people and cultures,” said Frank Jenista, Ph.D, professor of international studies at Cedarville and former U.S. diplomat to the Philippines. “These qualities make her a natural diplomat.”

After graduation, Ward spent two years in the Philippines as a Peace Corps volunteer and taught high school and college-level English and Spanish. In addition to teaching, she worked on many community development projects, such as planning a Palawan Department of Education English conference, organizing a successful library project and helping develop a United Nations initiative for HIV/AIDS. Ward is currently pursuing a master’s degree in international affairs at the The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,620 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and leading student satisfaction ratings.