

# Where in the world is Wheaton?

Wheaton ranked eighth in the nation among liberal arts colleges in 2008 in the production of Fulbright scholars, the second consecutive year that our community made the country's top 10.

That achievement is a source of pride for several reasons. First, it testifies to the academic accomplishments, creative energy and hard work of our students. Second, it pays tribute to the effectiveness of our faculty members, who support and challenge young scholars to broaden their perspectives. Finally, it reflects the emphasis that Wheaton places on a liberal arts education with a global focus.

The Fulbright Scholars program aims to equip future leaders with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly global environment by providing funding for one academic year of study, research or assistant teaching abroad. Clearly, Wheaton's liberal arts education shares that goal.

In courses throughout the curriculum, the college's faculty consider issues of race and ethnicity and their intersection with gender, class, sexuality, religion and technology in the United States and worldwide. This emphasis, which faculty members call "infusion," is intended to ensure that all students engage in discourse about these topics regardless of their major. Since the program's inception, numerous courses have been reworked, and others created, to address these pertinent issues.

This deep integration of global concerns within the traditional framework of liberal arts study has become a hallmark of Wheaton, and it is winning the college a national reputation. Indeed, several years ago Wheaton was selected as one of 16 colleges and universities to participate in a national initiative on global education, sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Our participation in that initiative signals the innovative nature of Wheaton's curricular focus.

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Just a few months ago, I was invited to speak at a two-day Higher Education Leadership Conference hosted by the TIAA-CREF Institute. The purpose of the gathering, which included college and university presidents and provosts from across the nation, was to explore the critical role of higher education in strengthening worldwide economies, building global collaborations and meeting workforce needs around the world. I talked about Wheaton's efforts to integrate global learning across the curriculum.


At the same conference, *Newsweek International* editor Fareed Zakaria delivered

a keynote address in which he talked about what he calls "the rise of the rest" and what it will mean for the United States. He argues that rising economic and political power in many parts of the developing world has made for a complicated, multipolar, interconnected world far different from the global reality of the past 50 years.

"The distribution of power is shifting, moving away from American dominance," Zakaria said, drawing from his most recent book, *The Post-American World*. "That does not mean we are entering an anti-American world. But we are moving into a post-American world, one defined and directed from many places and by many people."

To navigate this new world, truly global citizens will need to be comfortable with complexity and able to appreciate an array of cultural, political, religious, ethnic and racial perspectives. Colleges and universities have an important role to play in preparing today's students for this new reality.

Study abroad can be a powerful experience. Students who live, study and work in other countries learn much about the world and about themselves. Wheaton's extensive offering of study abroad programs is important, but that alone is not sufficient. Students need myriad opportunities to encounter other perspectives in their study. The infusion of global viewpoints throughout the curriculum is vital.

Wheaton students also gain cross-cultural fluency through experiential learning. Students engaged in internships in Boston's Brazilian community or in a service-learning course on the Navajo reservation with Professor of Psychology Derek Price are immersing themselves in other cultures. Educators need to see the value of all of these experiences. I am proud to say that Wheaton is leading the way. 



Keith Nordstrom



Wheaton students work with Navajo children in northern Arizona.