HHP ANNOUNCES 2012 OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AWARDEES
Four Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management Students Were Recognized

Gainesville, FL -- Sofia Melendez (El Salvador), Katerina Berezina (Russia), Ekaterina Sorokina (Russia), and TzuShuo “Ryan” Wang (China) were recently named as the recipients of the 2012 College of Health & Human Performance’s International Student Awards. These four students from the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management were recognized for their exemplary academic achievement as well as for their contributions and wide range of accomplishments at the University of Florida.

Sofia Melendez is a master’s student in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism under the advisement of Dr. Brijesh Thapa. An avid belly dancer and environmental advocate, Sofia is a member of the service committee in the Tropical Conservation & Development (TCD) Student Group. Sofia was also the recipient of a TCD conference grant for the International Symposium on Society and Resource Management where she recently attended “Linking the North and the South: Responding to Environmental Change” in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Katerina Berezina is currently working on her Ph.D. in Recreation Parks, and Tourism under the guidance of Dr. Kelly Semrad. Katerina’s research interests are in the areas of information technology in hospitality and tourism, electronic distribution, and revenue management. Prior to coming to the United States to study, Katerina had been working for four years in travel agencies in Russia, primarily as an international sales manager. She is currently the President of the Hospitality Financial & Technology Professionals (HFTP) chapter at the University of Florida.

Ekaterina Sorokina began working on her master’s degree in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism in January 2012 and is also advised by Dr. Kelly Semrad. Ekaterina’s research interests include hotel sales forecasting, the application of time-series models, and consumers’ behavior in the tourism industry. Ekaterina’s interest in hospitality management led her to become a member of the Hospitality Financial & Technology
Professionals (HFTP) organization where she is currently representing the HFTP chapter at the University of Florida as the Social Activities Director.

TzuShuo “Ryan” Wang is currently a doctoral student in the Sport Management program and is advised by Dr. Kyriaki “Kiki” Kaplanidou. Ryan’s research interests include sport marketing, Asian-Americans in sport, and sport consumer behavior/psychology. He primarily focuses on the role of human emotion in sport consumers’ decision making process. Ryan also teaches both online and in-classroom in the area of introduction to sport management and sport marketing at the undergraduate level.

The International Student Award Ceremony was held to recognize their efforts at the George A. Smathers Library on Wednesday, November 14th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. during the annual celebration of *International Education Week*. Mutlu Citim-Kepic, an international gator alumna, gave an inspiring keynote speech and entertainment was provided by the UF Africa choir and the Colombian folk ensemble, Karimagua.

The Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management is committed to national and international excellence in the generation, dissemination, and communication of knowledge in tourism, recreation and sport management. The Department is also dedicated to excellence in the preparation and training of future industry and academic professionals, and providing relevant outreach to stakeholders.

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Dr. Michael Sagas (Department Chair) at msagas@ufl.edu (352.294.1640) or Stephanie Thorn (Marketing and Public Relations) at stephaniethorn1@hhp.ufl.edu (352.392.3992).