Aggie Engineers Receive NSF Graduate Research Fellowships

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News Release — LOGAN, UTAH, April 6, 2018 — A Utah State University College of Engineering student will receive the prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Award. A second College of Engineering alumnus also received the award.

The program recruits high-potential, early-career scientists and engineers and supports their graduate research training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

Darcie Christensen, a first-year PhD student in USU’s Department of Engineering Education, and USU alumnus Trevor Bird (’17) were awarded the NSF Fellowship along with 2,000 other students across the country. The award will help cover the costs of graduate school and open new doors for the future engineers as they continue their education.

Christensen earned a bachelor’s degree in biological engineering and is also currently working toward a master’s degree in environmental engineering. The Tremonton, Utah, native has served on the College of Engineering’s student leadership council and is an active member of Society of Women Engineers and the Tau Beta Pi honor society.

Bird, a Logan native who graduated with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering, was an active member of the Engineering Undergraduate Research Program in which he worked under Dr. Ryan Berke in the Mechanics at Extreme Temperatures Lab. Bird took first place in the undergraduate engineering category at the 2017 Student Research Symposium and was named his department’s undergraduate researcher of the year in 2017. He is now pursuing PhD studies at Purdue University.

NSF received more than 12,000 applications for the 2018 fellowship competition. The purpose of the fellowship program is to ensure the vitality and diversity of the scientific and engineering workforce of the United States.

According to NSF, The program recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students who are pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees in science and engineering. GRFP provides three years of financial support within a five-year fellowship period — $34,000 annual stipend and $12,000 cost-of-education allowance to the graduate institution.

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