

**“SOMEWHERE, OVER THE RAINBOW”
Eric Briggs Memorial Scholarship**

Up to \$1,000 in funding towards a semester study abroad experience

Description:

Eric G. Briggs was born in Wadsworth, Ohio, growing up on the dairy and beef cattle farm of his parents, Gordon Briggs and Jean Sommers Briggs. At the family farm, Eric cultivated a vast appreciation and respect for nature. Toward the end of the Vietnam War, he was drafted into the United States Army and commissioned to Germany, which gave him the opportunity to travel throughout Europe. So began his fascination for traveling and exploring the world. In 1984 he earned a BA in Communications from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, and two years later he married Rose McEwen, a Latin American literature professor who teaches at SUNY Geneseo and with whom adopted Lilia Abigail.

Although Eric possessed much talent in the field of television and radio production, he opted for continuing tending the earth. He became a professional gardener, and worked as a greens keeper with various professional golf courses, including the prestigious Oak Hill Country Club in Pittsford, New York. As a result of an automobile accident that aggravated the symptoms of a chronic disease, from 2004 on Eric became a full-time stay-at-home Dad—an endeavor he fulfilled with much pride.

Throughout his life, Eric’s passion for traveling was channeled through his hobby of bicycling (the summer of 2010 he pedaled over 2,600 miles in the vicinity of his home in hilly Western New York). But he also traveled to Spain and other European countries, many times within Central America, and in March of 2010 through several South American countries where he finally satisfied his life-long quest to climb the Inca ruins of Peru.

Eric, an enthusiastic historian and expertly knowledgeable of countless details about world geography, thought that the best way to learn about countries, people and cultures that are different than our own is by living abroad—“somewhere, over the rainbow.” During his life, he sowed numerous and everlasting friendships with people around the globe.

~~~~~

## “SOMEWHERE, OVER THE RAINBOW” Eric Briggs Memorial Scholarship

The Eric Briggs Memorial Scholarship awards yearly up to \$1,000 to help cover the cost of housing or flight expenses for one eligible student (or \$500 each for two eligible students) pursuing a semester study abroad experience through either of the following programs coordinated by the Department of Languages and Literatures: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (Argentina), Universidad Nacional (Costa Rica), Universidad de Cádiz (Spain). The scholarship is funded by Mrs. Jean Briggs, Eric’s mother, and other members of Eric’s family. It honors the memory of a noble human being, an unforgettable citizen of the world.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

1. SUNY Geneseo student pursuing a Spanish major (must have declared the major one semester prior to applying for this scholarship);
2. Strong academic performance in Spanish courses and overall (minimum GPA 3.0 for both) or strong academic promise;
3. No previous study abroad or living experience in a Spanish-speaking country;
4. Having applied to and accepted for participation in either of the programs listed above;
5. Financial need/lack of opportunity.

All who meet these criteria are encouraged to apply and will be considered by the selection committee; however, if two finalists equally meet said criteria, preference will be given to an applicant with a proven background in farming, greens keeping and/or US military service.

### **Application must include:**

1. A letter by the applicant, in English (2-page limit), that:
  - Explains how the applicant meets the scholarship’s eligibility requirements;
  - States clearly the applicant’s goals for pursuing a study abroad experience;
  - Explains how the Eric Briggs Memorial Scholarship will be transformational for the student in regard to the student’s completion of the Spanish degree;
  - Addresses, if relevant, financial need and/or preference backgrounds.
2. Two academic letters of recommendation, at least one of which must be from a Geneseo Languages and Literatures Spanish-teaching faculty member other than Dr. McEwen.
3. Unofficial academic transcripts from all colleges attended.

**Application deadlines:**                        March 31<sup>st</sup> (for fall semester abroad)  
                                                                 October 15<sup>th</sup> (for spring semester abroad)

**Submit hard copy materials to:**        Chair, Dept. of Languages and Literatures  
                                                                 Welles Hall 211

**Selection Process:** Review of applications will be conducted by a committee consisting of the Spanish section’s chair, the Department’s scholarships committee member, and a designated representative of the Study Abroad Office. The committee reserves the right to solicit additional, pertinent information from department faculty familiar with the applicant’s work. Award announcement will be made within two weeks of the application deadline.

**Distribution:** Scholarship ~~“SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW”~~ completion of a minimum of 12 credits through the experience abroad, as verified by the host institution’s official transcript. Awardees who drop the Spanish major before graduating must return the awarded amount.