

## App State alumna becomes Assistant Director of Nationally Competitive Scholarships

By Kistler Hunt



*Photo features the new Assistant Director of Nationally Competitive and Experiential Learning Scholarships, Johnna Reisner '15 '17.*

There is a new face to the [Office of Nationally Competitive and Experiential Learning Scholarships \(NCS\)](#)! App State has the pleasure of welcoming Johnna Reisner '15 '17 to the NCS Office. Reisner arrived at Appalachian in February 2022 and will serve as the Assistant Director of Nationally Competitive and Experiential Learning Scholarships. Reisner is a two-time alumna of Appalachian, having received her bachelor's of science in English education in 2015 and a master of arts in English with a concentration in college teaching in 2017.

Nationally competitive scholarships, as Reisner states, “are awards offered by various private foundations, the federal government or other groups that are often granted in the form of a stipend to pay for research, graduate work, or foreign study. Recipients for these awards are usually chosen from a national or regional pool of highly qualified applicants.” The NCS Office at App State, as Johnna says, “helps students find opportunities to fund their academic, professional, creative, and personal goals. Many of the scholarships we promote are experiential learning opportunities. We also support students as they develop their application materials, specifically essays and written materials that go along with many of these applications. The writing process is a huge part of what our office supports for these specific writing genres.”

Reisner’s role as Assistant NCS Director spans multiple responsibilities. She is responsible for promoting and recruiting students to apply for various globally competitive scholarships, such as the [Fulbright Scholarship](#) and the [Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship](#). Once students have decided to apply, Reisner also supports students throughout their application process. She says, “These applications are often rigorous...students have to really stop and think about their academic, professional, creative, and personal goals.”

Reisner is a Fulbright recipient herself. In 2018, Reisner received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Award and taught at a university until July 2019 at [Adam Mickiewicz University](#) in Poznan, Poland. Honors College Dean Jeff Vahlbusch was thrilled to be able to assist Johnna with her Fulbright application, and now she is assisting so many others with theirs. During her time in graduate school at Appalachian, Reisner taught Rhetoric and Composition courses and also taught in the Watauga Residential College. Reisner taught English to high school seniors for three years before returning to Appalachian. Reisner’s favorite part of her role at App State is, “helping students think about what they have done, what they value most, and how they can write that into a cohesive narrative about their life. It’s really not just about the application, but about connecting your dots and exploring your own story!”

Most Nationally Competitive Scholarships, as Reisner states, are “highly competitive...I think all honors students should consider applying for these types of externally funded awards to support their academic, professional, and personal pursuits.”

