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## **Eilis McGranaghan Receives Fulbright Award**

TAMPA, Fla. (April 15, 2014) Ms. Eilis McGranaghan of the University of South Florida has been awarded a Fulbright Research Grant to conduct research for her master's thesis at the Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil.

Eilis will conduct research for her master's thesis on sustainable systems for the production of biodiesel and natural products. Her aim for this project is to create a complete cycle in which used cooking oil is consumed and biodiesel fuel and natural products are produced. She will conduct this research under the mentorship of Dr. Eduardo Cassel at the Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio Grande do Sul. Eilis will receive her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from USF this semester.

As an undergraduate student, Eilis represents the College of Engineering and the Honors College, where her academic achievements have been noted inside and outside of the classroom. She has been conducting research in the USF Sustainable Energy laboratory with Dr. Aydin Sunol for the past two years. She has also worked as an intern for General Electric twice: in 2013 doing environmental health and safety-related work and in 2012 as a manufacturing intern. Eilis has studied abroad in several countries through the Honors College, which included a volunteer project for a non-profit host institution as part of each program. She traveled to Puerto Rico in 2013, Germany in 2011, and Panama in 2010. Eilis completed her Honors College thesis on sustainable biofuels in which a research team built a continuous-flow biodiesel production process. She presented her thesis research at the Sustainable Engineering Forum of American Institute of Chemical Engineers Annual Meeting (2013).

Upon her return to the United States, Eilis plans to earn her master's degree from the University of South Florida using this Sustainable Systems project. She then plans to pursue a doctoral degree in chemical engineering with the hope of building an on-campus sustainable bio-diesel production plant that ties together all the technology, ideas, and knowledge she has learned through her academic, professional and Fulbright experiences.

Dr. Linda Lucas, Director of the Office of National Scholarships says of Eilis' award: "Eilis' career will benefit enormously by studying in Brazil with the Fulbright research and study grant and enable her to

make significant contributions in the future as a chemical engineer.” The USF Office of National Scholarships identifies, recruits and mentors high achieving students to apply for national merit scholarships across all disciplines. The scholarships and fellowships are for creative, motivated and academically strong students who are leaders in and out of the classroom.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program is an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Participating governments and host institutions, corporations and foundations in foreign countries and in the United States also provide direct and indirect support. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields. The Program operates in over 155 countries worldwide. The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is administered by the Institute of International Education.

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