



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Thanks to the George J. Mitchell Peace Scholarship, students from across Maine have the chance to study abroad in Ireland with a student exchange program.

# Students have a chance to study in Ireland thanks to scholarship

BY ANNE GABBIANELLI

Imagine living in a place like Fort Fairfield, Penn-broke, or Bar Harbor and having the opportunity to study in Ireland. That was the case for three Maine college students recently, courtesy of the George J. Mitchell Peace Scholarship.

The scholarship is named in honor the former U.S. Senator from Maine's pivotal contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process. It represents an agreement between Maine and Ireland for a student exchange at the university level. During the 2018-2019 academic year, students from Maine will be in residence in the city of Cork on the south coast of Ireland, at the University College Cork of the National University of Ireland. The first Peace Scholarship exchanges took place during the 1999-2000 academic year.

Eastern Maine Community College graduates Kaitlyn Kinsey and Anna Dore, and University of Maine senior Brigitte Parady, were among the students awarded the scholarship recently.

Kinsey, a Fort Fairfield native, studied for a semester at Cork Institute of Technology in Cork in 2014. She was enrolled at EMCC at the

time, majoring in medical radiography.

"The George Mitchell scholarship opened many doors for me and ultimately allowed me to lead the lifestyle that I do now," she said. Since graduating from EMCC, she now lives in Germany as a member of the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals.

For Dore, a Pembroke native, receiving the scholarship offered her a growing experience. "I grew both as a person and academically," she said. "I think without going to Ireland, I would be a totally different person who isn't as driven and ready to take on the world."

Dore graduated from EMCC in 2016, majoring in medical office technology, then moved on to UMaine. She's no stranger to being abroad. As part of a military family, she has also lived in Wiesbaden, Germany, but the thought of studying abroad had her on edge nonetheless.

"The application looks daunting but it's so worth it," said Dore. "I was extremely nervous for my [face-to-face] interview and I thought I bombed it!"

UMaine student Brigitte

Parady of Bar Harbor said the online application of fered her an opportunity to reflect. "It actually allowed me to take a step back and focus on how I could contribute to the goodness of the earth and how traveling/studying abroad would enhance my ability to do so."

Parady expects to graduate from UMaine this May with a civil and environmental engineering degree from Orono. In Ireland, she studied at the University College of Cork.

After applying and being selected for an interview, students go before a series of panelists. "I realized that the interviewers were there to help me and hear what I had to say," said Parady. "The interview would be the first of many fears I would conquer in Ireland that have helped shape me into the person I'm proud to be today."

Karen Hamilton, the Maine Community College System publications and marketing coordinator, said the educational mission of the University of Cork are closely aligned with their own.

"Like Maine's community colleges which focus on

the educational, occupational, and technical needs of the state's citizens and the workforce needs of Maine employers, Cork Institute of Technology offers career-focused education, training and professional development developed in close partnership with business and industry."

In Ireland, Parady's studies kept her on track for her spring graduation, but it was the environment that captured her.

"Although it was a very large school, the campus did not feel overwhelming," she said. "It made [Cork] feel more like a small town rather than a college. The people were also my favorite part about studying abroad."

This year's winning students' names will be announced in April.

"If you're up for a good adventure, having the most amazing experience in a new culture, and meeting lifelong friends, this exchange scholarship is for you," said Kinsey. "I promise, you won't regret it!"

For more information on the George J. Mitchell Peace Scholarship, visit [maine.edu/admissions-aid/scholarships](http://maine.edu/admissions-aid/scholarships).