

Scholarship Allows Student to Explore Passion for Politics

William Dixon, SPA '20, Ansary-Kerwin Endowed Scholarship Recipient

By Hunter B. Martin | December 11, 2018



William Dixon loves the mix of metropolitan city opportunities and quiet greenery that AU offers. Credit: Hunter B. Martin.

Passion for Politics

American University is committed to increasing educational access and closing the affordability gap with more need-based aid. Scholarships make certain an AU education is accessible, attainable, and affordable.

William Dixon, SPA/BA '20, from Altoona, Pennsylvania, is a junior pursuing a degree in communication, legal institutions, economics, and government (CLEG). Dixon is a recipient of the Ansary-Kerwin Endowed Scholarship.

Dixon joked that he decided to major in CLEG, “because I’m indecisive.” He remembers first learning about the program as a high school student while on a tour of AU. “As soon as I heard about CLEG I said, ‘that’s what I want to do, that is everything I love!’”

After graduation Dixon hopes to build a career on Capitol Hill.

Dixon has been involved in a number of organizations on campus including College Republicans, Young Americans for Liberty, Turning Point USA, and his fraternity, Sigma Chi.

“Next semester I’m going to try to do something in government relations or a think tank. I love policy. It’s nerdy but I really love policy.”

Celebration of Scholarship

Dixon is one of three inaugural Ansary-Kerwin Scholars. The Ansary-Kerwin Scholarship was established with a \$1 million gift from the Ansary Foundation in 2017 in recognition of Cyrus Ansary's family friend, former AU president Neil Kerwin.

The scholarship is awarded to deserving American University sophomores, juniors, or seniors with demonstrated financial need, with preference for those studying in one or more of the fields of science, math, communications, business, American history, public administration or international service.

“I want to sincerely thank the donors of the Kerwin-Ansary Scholarship for helping me continue my education at American University,” said Dixon. “I greatly appreciate the donors’ generosity and dedication to the university.”

Impact of Philanthropy

Dixon has taken full advantage of American University’s location in the nation’s capital by interning on Capitol Hill with Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and at the White House. Currently he is interning with the US Chamber of Commerce.

“The [Kerwin-Ansary] scholarship opens up the possibility for me to do an internship next semester that’s not paid,” said Dixon. “I would have needed a job or a paid internship without the scholarship. The scholarship has definitely given me more opportunities and leeway in terms of my career.”

Many internships on Capitol Hill or at DC non-profit organizations are unpaid and scholarship support often helps student take advantage of opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach for most students.

“I was going to have to take out loans, but because of this scholarship I don’t have to for this year, so it really helped me,” explained Dixon.

Highlights of AU

“I love the location of AU. I like being in DC. I visited all the schools in DC and this one was the perfect mix between being in the city and having a secluded campus. There’s green everywhere at AU, I can walk down the street and see a deer!”

The highlight of Dixon’s time at AU has been the connections he’s built with his professors.

“I make it a point to take courses with a lot of adjunct professors because they can share their real-world experience. Any class I can take with an adjunct professor is a lot of fun for me because I get to learn about where they are in their life and they can give me a lot of advice on my major.”

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Philanthropic support from donors helps incredible students like William Dixon pursue their dreams at AU and beyond. Donors play a critical role in keeping the overall costs of an AU degree low. You can support AU students by making a gift at giving.american.edu.