December 12, 2013

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Robin L Danzak, Sacred Heart University

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Professor Robin Danzak, center, works with students.

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Professor Robin Danzak, of Sacred Heart University’s Department of Speech-Language Pathology, was recently awarded the Fulbright Junior Research Award.

This research-based award is one of the core Fulbright Scholar awards for recipients in the early stages of their careers. Danzak, who earned a doctorate degree in 2009, will be sent to Italy to work at the University of Padua for four months where she will conduct a research project on the bilingual writing of Italian middle school students who are studying English.

“Now that the idea of having a Fulbright is a reality, I am so excited to actually go to Italy and collaborate on this project. The University of Padua is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Europe,” said Danzak.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 under the legislation of Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, for whom it was appropriately named. The award program is governed by policies established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB), the 12-member board appointed by the President of the United States, and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Grants are available in 125 countries worldwide and provide approximately 800 teaching and/or research opportunities to worthy United States faculty and professionals.

“The Fulbright application process is pretty rigorous, and very lengthy. I actually applied in the summer of 2012, heard that I had made it to the second round of reviews in November of that year and finally found out about my acceptance in February 2013,” Danzak said. “My award is for March-June, 2014, so you can see that the process is a long one.”

Danzak’s research proposal demonstrated the strong characteristics of timeliness, comprehensiveness and innovation that are needed to be considered to be named a cultural ambassador and scholar in the Fulbright program.
Danzak will be partnering with her collaborator, Barbara Arfe, at the University of Padua. They will be analyzing bilingual students’ writing and conduct research on a psychological and socio-cultural level. “Overall, I am just incredibly grateful for this opportunity,” Danzak concluded.