

Andrew R. Ertl

Columbia University

Lint Center for National Security Studies Scholarship

Dear Selection Team,

Since January 2014, I have had the privilege of attending classes taught by world-renown academics, surrounded by colleagues who are amongst the brightest young minds in the world, and centered on a campus that excels in the refinement and production of knowledge. In that short time, I have been an active participant in Milvets—the largest student veterans organization in the Ivy League—working to enhance and develop career, service, and educational opportunities for Columbia’s student veterans. Through Milvets, I have worked as a liaison between our student veterans and the Columbia community at-large in order to better promote cross-campus understanding of veteran-specific issues and foster an environment of mutual appreciation. More broadly, I have also dedicated my time for fundraising events that help increase student resources for all Columbia-GS students. I am a three-time awardee of the Dean’s List and this past March was honored with an award for academic excellence by the German Consulate General here in New York City.

In addition to my service-oriented activities, last May I was fortunate to be selected—alongside 49 other talented Columbia students across all four undergraduate schools—to go on an all-expenses-paid trip on the invite of the Japanese government. The purpose of this trip was to improve cross-cultural ties between American and Japanese students in an effort to increase understanding and cooperation between our two nations. I still maintain frequent correspondence with students from Doshisha and Waseda universities and recently participated in an event at the Japanese ambassador’s residence in New York.

Prior to beginning my studies at Columbia University, I dedicated six years of my life to the United States of America by serving in the US Marine Corps, 3 ½ years of which were spent overseas. After deploying to Iraq and later Afghanistan, I was selected for special assignment in the Marine Security Guard program and was later stationed at US Embassies Tbilisi, Beijing, and Budapest and was sent on shorter Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) assignments throughout which included special protection duties for then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (Istanbul 2011). While standing guard, in a very real way MSGs are the face of American foreign policy as they are often the first and sometimes one of the few Americans some locals will ever encounter. Being ‘on the front line’ and ‘first face of American diplomacy’—a common trope touted by Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (MCESG)—has allowed me to pursue greater challenges and responsibilities as well as to explore different cultures and world history in ways that would not have been available to me had I remained in the normal Fleet Marine Force.

I could not be more proud of or thankful for the opportunities I’ve had, the places I’ve been, or the people I’ve met. Given that the Marine Corps’ MCESG and Columbia University have both afforded me opportunities to more actively and in better depth explore the wider world, I consider them linked, for they are part and parcel to the way I approach learning; both have allowed me to be more informed about and continue to reinforce my opinions of the world around me through active engagement with different cultures. I view a potential working relationship with the Lint Center for National Security Studies in a similarly favorable light and would consider it an honor to continue my exploration of our nation, and by extension, the world through this opportunity. I respectfully request that you view my resume favorably.

Sincerely,
Andrew Ertl