

U of M Immigration History Research Center awards two prestigious graduate fellowships

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MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL (10/08/2009) - The Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) at the University of Minnesota has awarded two of its most prestigious graduate fellowships: the Francis Maria Graduate Fellowship in Arab American Studies and the American Latvian Association (ALA) Graduate Fellowship in Latvian American Studies.

Charlotte Albrecht, a Ph.D. candidate in feminist studies, was awarded the Francis Maria Fellowship. Her research focuses on Arab migration history in the United States and how class, gender, sexual and religious norms have affected processes of racial formation for Arab migrants.

"I am very grateful to be awarded the Francis Maria Fellowship. The IHRC has a rich legacy of supporting both Middle East area studies and Arab American studies and I am excited and honored to be a part of it," Albrecht said. "This fellowship will enable me to work in the IHRC collections, and to travel to a national conference to present my work and learn from others in my field."

The fellowship was established in 2003 with a major gift from the Francis Maria Foundation for Justice and Peace. Its objective is to further research in the Near Eastern collections of the IHRC and to promote scholarship on Arab American identity.

Ilze Garoza, a masters student in comparative and international development education, was awarded the ALA Fellowship. Garoza's research looks at how Latvian immigrants have both successfully integrated themselves in the United States and also managed to maintain their national identity for over 50 years.

"Receiving the ALA Fellowship sets the highest possible standards for my research," said Garoza. "It acknowledges the importance of my research on Latvian diaspora in the United States and provides me with the necessary resources to do my work."

The ALA Fellowship was established in 2004 with a combined gift from the American Latvian Association, the Latvian Welfare Association, and the World Federation of Free Latvians, and an additional contribution from the Diaspora Fund of the Republic of Latvia in 2005.