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Boston College junior is US' first-ever 'youth observer' at United Nations

Posted by Matt Rocheleau September 27, 2012 01:17 PM

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(Keith Bedford/Insider Images for United Nations Foundation)

Boston College junior Brooke Loughrin, the first-ever US Youth Observer at the United Nations, poses alongside Ambassador Susan E. Rice, the US' Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The State Department has picked a Boston College junior as the US' first-ever "youth observer" at the United Nations.

Brooke Loughrin, a Seattle-area native, is at the UN Headquarters in New York City for the ongoing 67th annual regular session of the UN General Assembly after being selected through a pilot program by the US State Department, according to a press release from the [United Nations Association of the USA](#), which has helped organize the program.

Loughrin has an extensive background traveling and studying the globe, including a particular focus on the Islamic culture, the Middle East and Iran – which have been prominent topics at this year's UN General Assembly, the release said.

More than 730 applications were submitted by people from 47 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, according to the release. Student applicants hailed from 236 different colleges and universities across the country.

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“UNA-USA is launching an unprecedented program today that connects young people with the United Nations,” Patrick Madden, the association’s executive director, said in a statement.

“While other countries have sent youth representatives to the UN over the years, now young people in the U.S. will have a voice at the United Nations General Assembly for the first time,” the statement continued. “Today, the next generation of global engagement takes a huge leap forward.”

Loughrin will watch the United Nations in action and attend other high-profile meetings and events, including a number of events around the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee, commonly referred to as the “Third Committee,” of the General Assembly, officials said.

She is reporting back about her experiences, including writing [blog entries](#),, uploading photos to [Flickr](#) and posting updates via [Twitter](#).

She is also scheduled to travel to speak to UNA-USA chapters around the country and will advise the organization on potential future roles for youth at the United Nations, the release said.

Loughrin is enrolled in the Presidential Scholars Program at Boston College studying political science and Islamic Civilizations and Societies.

She is also an undergraduate research fellow, whose research focuses on politics, religion and civil society in the Middle East and Iran’s social history, contemporary domestic politics and foreign relations, officials said.

She is editor-in-chief of BC’s Middle Eastern and Islamic studies journal “Al-Noor,” and is vice president of the college’s Iranian Culture Club.

In Boston, Loughrin volunteers for the African Community Economic Development of New England organization, Haley House, and in the education department of the Suffolk County House of Corrections, officials said.

Since 2005, she has also volunteered for the Fabric of Life Foundation, based near Seattle.

She has studied abroad in Visakhapatnam, India and Dakar, Senegal, and has

traveled extensively in Iran, Turkey, Nicaragua, and Tajikistan, officials said.

For more information on the U.S. Youth Observer program, visit www.unausa.org/usyouth.

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(Keith Bedford/Insider Images for United Nations Foundation)

Boston College junior Brooke Loughrin, the first-ever US Youth Observer at the United Nations, speaks during the "Mobilizing Young People For The Next Generation of Social Good" panel at the Social Good Summit. The panel also featured co-founder and CEO of Tribal Brands and mPowering Jeff Martin, executive director of the United Nations Population Fund Babatunde Osotimehin and Mashable chief operating officer Sharon Feder.

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