

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IU Kokomo graduate chosen for history seminar

KOKOMO, Ind. — Tiffani Bonifant plans to be back in school shortly after graduating from Indiana University Kokomo, as the winner of a prestigious Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History fellowship.

Tuesday, May 8, she will be among the 493 graduates earning degrees from IU Kokomo. Commencement is at 10:30 a.m. in the pavilion east of Virgil and Elizabeth Hunt Hall.

Bonifant, from Bunker Hill, earned a degree in education. While student teaching, she competed with teachers nationwide for a Gilder Lehrman fellowship. She was one of 28 chosen for the “The World of Lincoln” seminar in July. Her fellowship includes books and class materials, housing, meals and a travel allowance.

Julie Saam, associate professor of education, said the selection committee recognized Bonifant’s leadership potential and knowledge in selecting her to attend, and noted that she competed with teachers who have worked in education many years.

“Tiffani is an excellent student and a true class leader,” Saam said. “I am not surprised she was chosen for this fellowship. She exemplifies the academic excellence and student success that is our goal.”

Bonifant thinks her thorough content knowledge and teaching skills gained at IU Kokomo made her stand out among seminar applicants.

“My small classes have afforded me the opportunity to better myself as a student and a teacher, because I have one-on-one time with my professors,” she said. “The professors have been invaluable in showing me how to strengthen my skills and boosting my confidence when I have done well.”

She is excited for a chance to learn more about the Civil War right where it happened, on the battlefields at Gettysburg.

“This era of American history, with the Civil War, Lincoln's presidency and the freeing of the slaves, is a huge focus in schools, and this experience will put me head and shoulders above other candidates when I interview for teaching jobs,” she said.

Bonifant said student teaching confirmed she made the right career choice, and that IU Kokomo prepared her for the classroom.

“I get up every morning and look forward to going to work. I have a good rapport with my students and genuinely enjoy having them in class. I feel ready to graduate and start working in my own classroom.”

For more information about IU Kokomo's Commencement, go to www.iuk.edu.

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