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University of Dayton

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Dayton Peace Accords at 20

Toddlers then, college students now, will learn about the process in each other’s countries.

University of Dayton student Jon Puricelli was just a toddler as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia brokered an agreement known as the Dayton Peace Accords at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio.
As he nears his 21st birthday, the senior political science major, with minors in economics and human rights studies, will get a firsthand look at what the accords created 20 years ago. He will attend a study-abroad program June 27-July 31 at American University in Kosovo focusing on peace building and post-conflict transformation and development.

Selected by the University of Dayton honors program, Puricelli will join students from nearly 50 countries to study economics and social development in post-conflict societies, and war, diplomacy and peace in Yugoslavia during the 1990s. Former U.S. State Department, United Nations, White House, Kosovo government and nongovernmental organization officials will teach the classes.

Growing up, Puricelli played soccer with Bosnians near his alma mater, Webster Groves High School, in the St. Louis suburbs, and he said, "next to Spanish, Bosnian probably is the first foreign language I heard.

"But a war never came up. I was naïve to the war."

It definitely didn't occur to him his opponents' families may have been displaced by a war. When he picked the University of Dayton because of its human rights studies program, it never entered his mind the school also was near the site of the Dayton Peace Accords.

"An international relations class was where I heard of (the accords) for the first time," Puricelli said. "I was kind of surprised something like that happened in Dayton, and it's a big deal."

Puricelli said he looks forward to gaining a deeper understanding of his career path this summer. During an internship last year in Washington, D.C. with a public health advocate for the elderly, he discovered he wants to have a larger impact on the world. Now Puricelli aspires to work for the United Nations or another agency where he can have an international impact.

The University of Dayton Center for International Programs, honors program, international studies program and Human Rights Center are supporting Puricelli's trip.

Also to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Accords, the University of Dayton and the U.S. Embassy to Bosnia and Herzegovina have established the Peace Accords Fellowship, which will award one-year scholarships to three students from Bosnia and Herzegovina to study at the University. The University of Dayton College of Arts and Sciences, enrollment management and marketing division, Center for International Programs and the provost's office also are supporting the scholarships.

The selected students will take classes in history, international law, human rights, international
relations and theology. They will participate in Model U.N. or the Washington, D.C., career immersion trip, the University of Dayton International Club, serve on the Dayton Peace Accords @ 20 student committee and assist with anniversary commemoration events Nov. 18-21.

Photo, Nov. 18, 1995: Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, left, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, center, and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, right, initial the peace agreement after 21 days of talks at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. AP/Wide World photo by David Longstreath via U.S. State Department web archives.

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Peace Accords Fellowship Programs

Entrepreneurship in China

Two undergraduates from a university in China will travel to campus and compete for $65,000 in cash prizes in the final round of the University of Dayton's 10th annual Business Plan Competition on March 5.