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## NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### KIMBERLY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT STUDIED ABROAD THROUGH THE NATIONAL SECURITY LANGUAGE INITIATIVE FOR YOUTH

**Kimberly, Wis. – November 27, 2017**– Joe Radtke, a junior at Kimberly High School (KHS), was awarded a National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) scholarship for 2017-18 by the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Participation in the initiative is a great example of how Joe is reaching his potential. Through NSLI-Y, he was able to study Russian in Kirov, Russia, for six weeks over the summer.



He was one of about 600 competitively selected students from across the United States who received a scholarship to study Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Persian, or Russian overseas this year. While in Russia, he received formal instruction and informal language practice as part of an immersion environment.

His journey to Russia began when he first heard of the NSLI-Y program from his KHS teacher and Global Scholars Program advisor, Patricia Eckerman Ambas. “The goal of the Global Scholars Program is to prepare students for a more globalized world,” said Joe. He chose to join the Global Scholars Program because it provides opportunities to pursue his interests in world languages, cultures, history and globally-focused service projects.

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When he found out that he was accepted into NSLI-Y and heading to Russia, Joe experienced a mix of emotions. “I was pretty excited, and also a little nervous to see what it would be like,” said Joe. “Overall, I was pretty excited to travel abroad.”

Not only was he honored to have been selected for the NSLI-Y program, it was also his first opportunity to study Russian. “I initially picked Russian because I thought that it would be the language I could get the best understanding of in the short amount of time of the program,” said Joe.

There were a total of 22 students from around the United States selected for the Russian program. “One of the things I took away from the experience is the diversity in our own country,” said Joe. “With the group of American students, we learned a lot about the differences between the regions of the United States.”

The students flew into Moscow and took a 14-hour train ride to Kirov. They spent the majority of their time in Russian language classes. In their free time, they were able to explore Kirov, a city nearly the size of Milwaukee. To Joe, some of the highlights of their sightseeing were ice skating, exploring parks, visiting monuments dedicated to World War II and the Soviet era, and touring large Eastern Orthodox Monasteries.



Joe Radtke at the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow, Russia.

“The main focus of this program (NSLI-Y) is to inspire students to study languages that are deemed necessary for national security but are not as well known in the United States,” said Joe. “It also promotes cultural understanding, which I think is a good thing. It creates camaraderie between countries because you form relationships that can make foreign relations a little bit better between the countries involved in the program.”

Another takeaway was a sense of gratitude. “It was an eye opener for me to see the different lives that people have,” said Joe. “I realized how fortunate we are to live where we are.”

After high school Joe plans on attending college to study business or finance. As society becomes more globalized through technological advancements, he believes that participating in the Global Scholars and NSLI-Y programs will help him as he pursues college and his career.

The NSLI-Y program is part of a multi-agency U.S. Government initiative launched in 2006 to improve Americans' ability to communicate in select critical languages to advance international dialogue and increase American economic global competitiveness.

The goals of the NSLI-Y program include: promote critical language learning among American youth, enhance cross-cultural understanding and deepening trust, spark a lifetime of interest in foreign language and culture, develop the skills to advance international dialogue, compete effectively in the global marketplace, promote mutual understanding, and contribute to a more peaceful world.

NSLI-Y is administered by the American Councils for International Education in cooperation with AFS-USA, American Cultural Exchange Service, AMIDEAST, iEARN-USA, Legacy International, the Russian American Foundation, Stony Brook University, the University of Delaware, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Wisconsin.

Applications for 2018-19 NSLI-Y programs are available at [www.nsliforyouth.org](http://www.nsliforyouth.org). For information about U.S. Department of State-sponsored exchange programs visit <http://exchanges.state.gov>.

### **About the Kimberly Area School District**

The Kimberly Area School District is a progressive public school district committed to providing the best possible education available to students. Its responsibility is to help lead the way in developing well-rounded students and future citizens. The District wants every student to be given the opportunity to reach their potential through academics, the arts and co-curricular activities. It encompasses approximately 17 square miles and serves over 5,100 students in one 4K center, four elementary schools (5K-4), two intermediate schools (5-6), one middle school (7-8) and one high school (9-12). To learn more about the Kimberly Area School District, call (920)788-7900 or visit [www.kimberly.k12.wi.us](http://www.kimberly.k12.wi.us).