BC STUDENTS EXCEL IN NATIONAL RUSSIAN LANGUAGE COMPETITION

CHESTNUT HILL, MA (May 2008) -- Four Boston College students have distinguished themselves in national competitions, the Department of Slavic and Eastern Languages and Literatures has announced.

Woong-Ki Ahn '09 has been chosen to be a 2008 American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate -- the first time a BC student has received such prominent recognition by that organization, according to Prof. of Russian and English Maxim D. Shrayer, department chair.

An Economics major, Woong-Ki began studies in Elementary Russian with adjunct faculty member Elena Lapitsky three years ago, Shrayer said, and last year added a major in Russian.

The University also has three student winners in the Ninth Annual ACTR National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest. This year's essay topic was from the opening of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Seven hundred twenty three entries were submitted from fifty colleges and universities across the nation; each essay was ranked by three judges in Russia.

Graduate student James Stotts took silver (second place) in the Non-Heritage Learners Category, Level 4; Laura Hurst, an international exchange student from the University of Glasgow, Scotland, received an Honorable Mention in the same category and senior Artom Bogdanovich received an Honorable Mention in Heritage Learners Category, Level 1.

All three students also have been taking Russian with Ms. Lapitsky, Shrayer said.

"These achievements are a recognition of Elena Lapitsky's dedication and commitment, and her - and our program's - passion for bringing Russian language to BC students," said Shrayer. "Congratulations, Elena, students, and BC's Russian program!"

Founded in 1974, The American Council of Teachers of Russian is a professional membership association for American teachers of Russian language and literature. ACTR is dedicated to advancing the teaching of Russian through publications, programs, and conferences.

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