

Emily Burton
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To Be or Not to Be...
Wentworth Fellowship - Elizabeth Bernardo

Elizabeth Bernardo, or Liz as her friends call her, is a rising senior at University of North Carolina of Wilmington with a double major in Theatre and English. Liz's Wentworth Fellowship will take her to London, England, where she will be focusing her independent study for two weeks in mid-July on the world famous, William Shakespeare.

"I wanted to do the Wentworth Fellowship so I could have the freedom to study whatever I wanted, unlike with a regular study abroad program," she said. She went on to explain that her time is almost up at UNCW. She has already taken most of the classes she needs, and felt like doing a semester abroad wouldn't be as beneficial.

Liz is in the Honors program at UNCW as well, so this trip will be helping her achieve her honors project as well. Also by being a Theatre major, she has the upper hand of learning and understanding Shakespeare a lot better through this trip since his work is learned and talked about in her Applied Performance IV class this semester.

During this trip, Liz will be spending one week in London, and the next in Stratford-upon-Avon where Shakespeare grew up. While in London, she will study certain death rituals practiced back in the Renaissance, as well as the mourning rituals, the variation of gravestones, and even certain false deaths cases recorded back then. "I was led to this by a slight morbid curiosity and love for all things Shakespeare," she said. She will be using her time to do research by visiting churches, Shakespeare's Globe, gravesides, and Westminster Abbey along with burial ground there.

From there, she will take a trip northwest of London to visit Stratford-upon-Avon. Here she plans to see various plays and performances, visit the home of Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway, and conduct research on sexual politics in the Renaissance era, in the cultural, and in Shakespeare's plays.

This trip will be Liz's first time traveling abroad without her parents, let alone anyone at that. She says that she is a little scared, but it's a good experience for her. "I like that I can have a fresh face over there," says Liz, "I like that no one over there really knows me." She thinks it will be a perfect start to whole new world for her. She would love to do work relating to Shakespeare for the rest of her life, so she thinks this is the perfect place to start it all. If one were to just sit down and talk with her, they could easily tell that she has never been more prepared for such a one in a lifetime experience.