

SUU Student Gains Exclusive Access to Vatican Archives for EDGE Project

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Matthew Smith

Cedar City, UT: This past summer, Southern Utah University student Matthew Smith became the first undergraduate in the institution's history to visit the exclusive Vatican Archives. Assisted by Philosophy Professor Kirk Fitzpatrick, Matthew, a History major, went to the Archives as part of a three-week research engagement to fulfil Southern Utah University's EDGE project requirements. While there, he and Dr. Fitzpatrick translated some of the oldest ancient Greek manuscripts on record.

"Starting in Rome – Vatican City mostly -- we travelled onward to Florence and Paris," Matthew said. "It was a huge opportunity to engage with my studies. I'm very thankful for our faculty. Without Professor Fitzpatrick, Dean McDonald, Provost Cook, and President Wyatt, this wouldn't have been possible. I'm honored that they allowed me to represent our university in such an international setting."

At each stop, the two researchers translated passages from the sixth-century historian Procopius. The translations and additional research will culminate with a research paper due in December. "The idea was to use the EDGE program as a springboard to write a graduate-level academic paper," Matthew said. "Hopefully we can get it published next year."

The EDGE (Education Designed to Give Experience) project is an initiative by Southern Utah University that encourages students to pursue individual goals. Projects range from the service-oriented to the academic. Each year, hundreds of unique projects are completed by students from every major on campus. ###

For further inquiries, Matthew Smith can be reached via email at matthewsmithutah@gmail.com. For more information on the project, visit <http://matthewsmithut.wixsite.com/procopius>.