

# Triple major, honors student earns Fulbright to teach in Indonesia

By Luz Capiral, ASU News  
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**Editor's note:** This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2026 graduates](#).

Scottsdale, Arizona, native Millicent Yurong is pursuing three degrees at Arizona State University in sustainability, biological sciences with a concentration in conservation biology and ecology, and English with a concentration in creative writing while also completing her honors education through [Barrett, The Honors College](#). Her studies span the [Rob Walton College of Global Futures](#) and [The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#).

Yurong has worked in Hayden Library's [Naturespace](#) for nearly two years, leading programs, planning workshops and helping facilitate student access to the space. She also received a Barrett scholarship to attend the Desert Nights, Rising Stars Writers Conference, an experience that inspired her to add creative writing as a major.

In addition to her degrees, Yurong is pursuing a certificate in environmental humanities through the Department of English in The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She also plans to pursue a TESOL certificate and volunteer with the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

During her sophomore year, Yurong decided to become more involved on campus, and later became a peer academic leader, or PAL, with Barrett Student Services, helping connect younger students with campus resources and programming.

Yurong recently received a 2026 [Fulbright Award](#) to Indonesia, where she will spend nine months working as an English teaching assistant at a high school, though she is still awaiting her placement location.

She previously spent two and a half months in Indonesia, an experience that inspired her to return. Yurong said the country's culture, people and biodiversity left a lasting impression and motivated her to continue studying the Indonesian language at ASU.

Although the Fulbright application process initially felt intimidating, Yurong said the opportunity allowed her to revisit a long-standing interest in teaching and cultural exchange.

"When I was little, I wanted to be a teacher, but I'd discounted that possibility in recent years because of the pay and my fear of public speaking," she said. "Fulbright could be a time to try that

out and learn about another culture. I hope to improve my Indonesian language abilities while I'm there."

Yurong credited [Shay Masterson](#) and [Catherine Salgado](#) from the [Lorraine W. Frank Office of National Scholarships Advisement](#), along with her Human Event professor, [Nilanjana Bhattacharjya](#), for helping guide her through the Fulbright application process.

She hopes teaching English and building connections abroad will help elevate conversations surrounding sustainability, culture and global environmental responsibility. Yurong also plans to attend graduate school in the coming years to earn a master's degree in biology.

Learn more about Yurong's Sun Devil journey below.

**Question: What has been the most meaningful part of your Barrett/ASU experience?**

**Answer:** Although I am generally focused on academics, I also really like choir. During my first year, I was a part of Barrett Choir. As my honors project for the class, I joined Outreach Choir, a small student group that sings at assisted living facilities. I joined the club the second week of my first year and I later became an officer, attending every single performance until now. I really appreciate the people I met through the group. Going to Outreach Choir rehearsal was the highlight of my week, and the people there helped get me out of my shell. I enjoyed getting to perform for people who didn't often have chances to attend live music events because they always seemed excited to see us, sometimes singing or clapping along. At our most recent performance, one of the residents accompanied us on the guitar as we sang.

**Q: What advice would you give to future Barrett students?**

**A:** Seek out new opportunities! I know that's a bit cliché, but most of the Barrett opportunities won't just be given to you. You have to go out and apply for them. For example, Barrett doesn't always award all scholarships to the ASU writing conference (Desert Nights, Rising Stars) because not enough Barrett students apply. Go to events with free food if you have an evening off, and see if the opportunity is something you're interested in.

**Q: Have you experienced a moment when you surprised yourself or accomplished something you once thought might not be possible?**

**A:** The Fulbright was definitely a surprise! I wasn't expecting to receive it, especially considering how competitive the program is and the accomplishments of so many other applicants.

I also remember being impressed with my improvement as a supplemental instructor. From spring 2024 to spring 2025, including the summer term, I served as a supplemental instructor for SOS 101, an introductory sustainability math course. I attended class and created three weekly review sessions. I am not naturally confident in math or public speaking, but they needed someone to fill the role, and I needed another job.

At first, presenting to other students felt awkward and stressful, and I spent many unpaid hours developing content for the sessions. After a semester or two, I became much more comfortable presenting and eventually started to enjoy the role. That experience helped me realize I may want to become an educator someday.

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## **Main image**



Millicent Yurong, courtesy photo