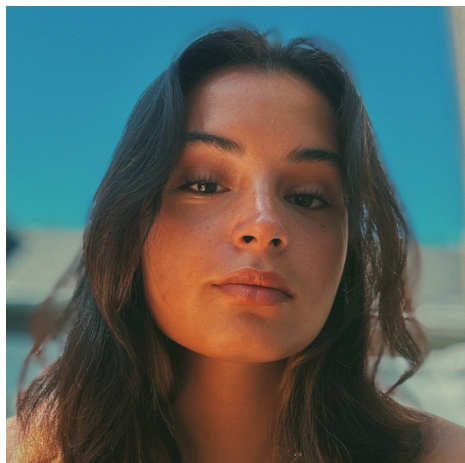


Eden Marroquin Named Student of the Year

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English Literature undergraduate Eden Marroquin was named the 2025-26 English Department Student of the Year. Between East Coast research trips to participating in Sigma Tau Delta to presenting at multiple conferences, Eden has made the most of her time at USU.

Also named the 2024-25 Undergraduate Researcher of the Year, Eden has been heavily involved in research since arriving at USU, specifically focusing on archival work. She was part of a team researching Black history in Utah as seen in the African American travel guides, such as the Green Book, which culminated in the curation of a traveling museum exhibit for the non-profit organization Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation. Additionally, Eden earned the Peak Fellowship to travel to Washington D.C., to explore the archives at Howard University and the National Archives and Records Administration to learn about the roles of Langston Hughes and James Baldwin in the Cultural Cold War.

Beyond her research, Eden has been an engaged student in each of her literature courses, with a special interest in post-colonialism. She reflects, "Every single novel I've read has taken my breath away and has given me a good foundation in post-colonial studies."

While she's enjoyed each course, Professor Shane Graham's Zimbabwe Women Writers and Assistant Professor Adena Rivera-Dundas's Toni Morrison courses

were standouts for her. She also took special advice from Assistant Professor Travis Franks.

"Dr. Franks says this at the beginning of every class I've taken from him: Be bold and proactive in your thinking. Be clear and concise in your writing," Eden remembers. "I have that taped inside my computer, and I think I'll carry that with me forever — the computer and the sentiment."

Eden's favorite memory in the department was being able to share successes with friends she made in the program, including when she, Ella Stott, and Yasamin Osqueezadeh all earned departmental awards.

"I think my favorite thing to happen during my time at USU was being able to celebrate and share that experience with some of my closest friends in the department," Eden says.

Her time at USU isn't yet over. Beginning this fall, Eden is pursuing a master's in Literature, Culture, and Composition, staying in Logan for the next two years. Following that time, she plans to pursue a PhD in American Studies with a focus on Latin America — but not before taking a real break.

"I think USU has done a phenomenal job at preparing me for the academic and self-directed research rigor of a master's program," Eden notes. "The entire faculty has been incredibly invested in my — and all student's — success and research interests."

Eden's advice to English students is simple: "Do research! Have ambition! And find people to support those ambitions. They're probably sitting in their office down the hall."