

## Press release

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### **President's welcome reception for international students and guests on 13 October**

The University of Passau welcomes its international students and guests with a reception in the refectory. The German Academic Exchange Service's Prize for Exceptional Performances of International Students at German Universities and the Education for Democracy Scholarship by the University of Passau will both be awarded as part of the welcome ceremony. Members of the media are cordially invited to attend the reception, which will take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 13 October in the refectory (Innstrasse 29).

#### **About the DAAD Prize**

The DAAD confers this prize to honour exceptional academic performance and substantial social and intercultural commitment on the part of international students. This year's DAAD prize goes to Kanishka Ghosh Dastidar, who is currently in the third semester of the M.Sc. Computer Science programme at the University of Passau. A highly talented student with excellent marks, his social engagement is exemplary: In India, he undertook numerous social activities, including organising a carnival for orphans and children in need and volunteering at St. Joseph's old age home in Calcutta, as well as participating in unpaid cleaning drives to remove waste from the streets of Calcutta. During his time in Calcutta, Kanishka Ghosh Dastidar chaired the debating society at St. Xavier's Collegiate School in Calcutta. His social and community spirit is also reflected in the student societies in which he participates in Passau: Model United Nations, AEGEE and the Student Parliament.

#### **About the Education for Democracy Scholarship by the University of Passau**

The University of Passau and the European students' forum AEGEE jointly offer a ten-month scholarship to students from the Western Balkans and Caucasus region, i.e. from Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The objective of the scholarship is to establish a network that prepares the ground for students' initiatives after they return to their home universities. As future decision-makers, the scholarship-holders will become acquainted with democratic and

European value systems, giving them the ability to promote these ideas in their home countries. Moreover, it is the stated aim of the programme to use multiplier effects to contribute to a European-inspired international understanding. Candidates are selected by an independent jury. The University of Passau supports and facilitates the award of the Education for Democracy scholarship, which this year goes to Tamar Giorgobiani from Georgia.

Vice President for International Relations, Professor Ursula Reutner, will be awarding both prizes.

### **273 international students from 39 countries**

This winter semester, 273 new international students from 39 countries have joined the University of Passau. The largest groups of new students come from France, Italy, Hungary, Russia and Spain, with Brazil, Turkey and China also strongly represented. The welcome reception takes place during the Orientation Weeks for International Students, which are designed to help new students settle into life in Passau and at the University. During the 'O-Weeks', new students can attend German area studies and language courses and take part in guided tours of the university and the library facilities in German, English or Russian. The Orientation Weeks programme also includes an international football match, visits to the BMW plant in Dingolfing and the Oberhaus castle museum as well as day trips to the Bavarian Forest, Regensburg and the Bavarian Alps.

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