The Distinguished Staff Awards, the university’s highest staff recognition, annually honors individuals for their exceptional leadership, accomplishments and service to Ohio State.

Four education abroad resident directors are recipients for the 2019 - 2020 Distinguished Staff Awards:

- Corey Tressler, director of Learning Programs/Digital Flagship in the Office of Distance Education and eLearning, resident director of the British Invasion program
- Brian Strzempkowski, assistant director of the Center for Aviation Studies in the College of Engineering, resident director of the International Perspectives on Aviation program
- Steven Mousetes, program manager for biomedical science majors in the Department of Biomedical Education and Anatomy in the College of Medicine, resident director of several comparative medicine programs in Brazil, Finland and Estonia
- Renee Johnston, school secretary in the School of Environment and Natural Resources, resident director of the New Zealand: Sustainable Tourism and Human Impacts on the Environment program

“Being recognized by the university and being nominated by my colleagues is incredibly humbling and fills me with great joy and a warm sense of accomplishment,” Tressler said. “This award inspires me to do more to help enhance the overall student and employee experiences as much as I possibly can.”

Strzempkowski said he could not have accomplished what he has in the last 20 years at Ohio State without the help of his colleagues and students.

“If there is one lesson that this institution has repeatedly taught me it’s that nothing is accomplished alone,” Strzempkowski said. “It
takes a diverse group of people, and talents to make this University operate. I am truly humbled to have been recognized for the DSA because there are some amazing and dedicated people at this university. I’m very thankful for the recognition, but the credit goes to each person who has helped me and taught me something along the way.”

While discussing the importance of studying abroad, Tressler, who has served as resident director for the British Invasion program since 2013, said participating in a program abroad is an enriching experience and opportunity for students to step out of their own culture to embrace another perspective.

“This allows one to expand their thought patterns, perspectives, empathy and compassion for the lived experiences of others,” Tressler said. “Additionally, the immersive nature of study abroad programs allows for incredible relationships to be formed with your fellow students and with your instructors. In my experience, the students who participated in British Invasion have become connected for life via their shared experience and develop deep friendships with one another.”

Specifically relating to his aviation program, Strzempkowski said the students studying aviation are entering a global industry and their careers have the potential to take them anywhere.

“One flight could transport them halfway around the world,” he said. “Knowing of and respecting other cultures and learning the importance of having a global aviation industry is a critical piece of their success.”

The Office of International Affairs is thankful for the resident directors who lead education abroad programs that shape and support Ohio State students. Learn more about education abroad programs and the Distinguished Staff Awards.