

Meet the 2022-2023 Diversity Fellowship Program Fall Fellows

JASMINE SCOTT | DIRECTOR, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS

The APSA Diversity Fellowship Program, formerly the Minority Fellowship Program, was established in 1969 as a fellowship competition to diversify the political science profession. DFP provides support to students from underrepresented backgrounds applying to, or in the early stages of, a PhD program in political science. The goal of the program is to increase the number of scholars from minoritized backgrounds in the discipline and ultimately the professoriate. APSA has once again awarded a new cycle to provide support for students currently in the process of applying to political science PhD programs for Fall 2022. Please join us in congratulating the 2022-2023 class of fellows. Learn more about DFP at <https://apsanet.org/dfp>.

OLATAYO BAKARE

Olatayo Bakare graduated from the University of Central Florida with a bachelor's of arts in political science in spring 2021. In April 2021, Bakare won the Judges' Choice Award for presenting original research at the University of Central Florida Undergraduate Research-Intensive Poster Showcase; examining how race shapes attitudes Americans hold toward financial institutions. Currently, as a Society for Political Methodology Expansions Initiative fellow, he is working with Dr. Dean Lacy on a longitudinal study of American political ideologies. Bakare's research interests concern the interplay between American political institutions, social identities, and inequality. He hopes to investigate research questions related to his research interests with more sophisticated methods training in a PhD program and ultimately use those skills to both teach and mentor the next generation of scholars from underrepresented communities.



ORLANDO BECKUM, II

Orlando Beckum II is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, having majored in government and psychology. In their research, they utilize Critical Race Theory, political theory, and social psychology to hone

in on the reciprocal impacts marginalized folk, especially QTBIPOC, and socio-political institutions have upon each other. This led to their undergraduate work, "Inaccessible Amenities," focusing on the impacts of gentrification on voter suppression in Austin. Outside of research, Beckum is greatly invested in communal work, such as community care, mutual aid, and collective education. For these reasons, their long-term goals are to not only become a professor and researcher in Black studies, political science, and sociology, but to also work with local communities to provide free and consistent mutual aid resources for necessities, professional need, and educational opportunities—most explicitly toward the low-income and historically disenfranchised areas they will live around.



KEVIN COVARRUBIAS

Kevin Covarrubias is a master's student in the political science department at Columbia University, focused on the international relations and comparative politics subfields. His research interests include China's global image, China's economic relations with the developing world (especially Latin America), public opinion, social movements, the international politics of technology, and formal theory. Covarrubias received his bachelor's in arts in government from Claremont McKenna College and his masters in arts in Chinese linguistics and literature from San Francisco State University.



Before joining Columbia University's master's program, Covarrubias studied abroad at the Shanghai Jiaotong University through Columbia University's Business Chinese summer program. He also interned at Congresswoman Barbara Lee's District Office, worked at Y-Combinator startup called Superbloom in Shanghai, and trained as a fellow in San Francisco State Uni-

versity's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fellowship Program. Covarrubias will begin his doctoral studies in political science in Fall 2022 at the University of California, Merced. Upon completing his doctoral studies, he desires to become an assistant professor or a postdoctoral scholar.

DARIUS COZART

Darius Cozart is currently a senior studying political science at The George Washington University. He has conducted research in multiple capacities. Most recently, Cozart was selected as 2021 APSA Ralph Bunche Summer Institute Scholar. His broad research interests concern the politics of policing, incarceration, and other forms of state punishment. Cozart's current thesis project focuses on the relationship between the race-class makeup of state populations and state and local policing expenditures. He is also the co-author of a forthcoming article exploring Black survey respondents' perceptions of police funding as a function of linked fate. His future projects hope to address wide ranging questions in this area, including the impact of punitive contact on political behavior and preference formation, the implications of punitive contact for US democracy, the relationship between race, class and policing intensity, and the implications of concentrated punitive activity for various aspects of urban political economy.



SADAF DASTAN

Sadaf Dastan is a master's student studying international affairs and the Middle East at The George Washington University, where she is a Foreign Language and Area Studies fellow. Dastan is interested in US foreign policy, domestic Iranian affairs, and Middle East security studies. She has conducted research projects on media freedom in Iran and Hungary, the United States' usage of sanctions as soft power, and the use of history and revisionist cultural policy as a means of nationalism abroad. Dastan has presented her research at the International Studies Association and at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has also served as a teaching assistant for a cultural anthropology class as an undergraduate, and more recently, as a graduate assistant for a human rights course. Dastan holds a bachelor's degree from George Mason University in international conflict analysis and resolution with a minor in anthropology.



BENJAMIN FALCON

Benjamin Falcon is a senior at Trinity University, double majoring in political science and history, and minoring in Chinese. As both a Ronald E. McNair scholar and Mellon Undergraduate Research fellow, he has conducted and presented independent research in international relations and diplomatic history. Falcon's current research focuses on the nexus between great power politics, peace science, and conflict, often with respect to US-China relations. His most recent work has explored issues of interstate conflict, peace durability, and state responses to transnational issues of human security like refugee migration. Falcon's senior thesis, funded by Trinity University's Mach Research Fellowship, builds on his project with Dr. Sussan Siavoshi, "Pawns at Play: Refugees and the Game of Foreign Policy," which examines the securitization of Pakistan's refugee policy within the context of the Pak-India rivalry.



MARIA ZAVALA GARCIA

Maria Zavala Garcia is a senior majoring in political science and minoring in biology at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Her research interests span authoritarian legacies and regimes, democratic backsliding, and state violence, with a vested interest in humanitarian consequences. She was first acquainted with research through a Louis Stokes North Star STEM Alliance brain conditions fellowship and most recently assisted on a project concerning how, when, and why judges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights engage in separate judicial speech as a Ronald E. McNair scholar. Garcia presented this research at the 2021 Annual McNair Scholars Research Symposium at the University of Minnesota. In addition to research, she has been active as a College of Biological Sciences Dean's Scholar, peer mentor, and teaching assistant. As a lifelong learner, Garcia plans to use her future PhD in political science to teach, research, and continue to mentor and serve her community.



NICOLAS HERNANDEZ FLOREZ

Nicolas Hernandez Florez is a fourth-year student at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona double-majoring in political science and communication. At Cal Poly Pomona, he worked as a co-author and research assistant in a study examining mass media framing of underrepresented political candidates and the undocumented student experience.

He hopes to study political parties and, specifically, factors that inspire strategic behavior from both elites and voters during nomination contests in a PhD program. Nicolas is a 2021 APSA Ralph Bunche Summer Institute scholar and presented his research from the institute at APSA's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exhibition and at the 2021 Emerging Scholars Conference at the University of Michigan.



opment, constitutional law, and Canadian politics. She hopes to enroll in a graduate program to study articulations of group sovereignty in the United States and Canada.

MAYA NUNEZ

Maya Nunez graduated from Wellesley College with honors in political science in 2020. Her current research interests focus on how political institutions and race interact with each other to produce life outcomes amongst individuals. Nunez developed these interests through a thesis project that explored key policies from the 1980s and 1990s that shaped today's punitive immigration detention system. This research has pushed her to explore complex questions related to how laws and institutions have mediated individuals' experiences. Nunez currently works as the Democratic Politics and Elections assistant at ActBlue where she performs research on redistricting efforts, grassroots campaigns, and ballot initiatives across the country. Maya plans to attain a PhD in political science and pursue a career in academia to continue the tradition of introducing students to materials that can help them understand the world around them.



ANISSA JOSEPH

Anissa Joseph is a senior at Skidmore College from Brooklyn, New York.

Joseph, a Prep for Prep alum, is a member of the National Political Science Honor Society, a Dean's List student and has represented her college at the Student Conference on US Affairs.

She has also published work on digital archiving and has worked as a research assistant with Dr. Emmanuel Balogun for the last two years.

Joseph is also the co-president of Ujima, a club that represents the Black diaspora. She has served on the executive board of Ujima for three of her four years at Skidmore. Joseph is interested in pursuing a PhD in political theory, focused on Pan-Africanism and African American political thought. She is interested in understanding the social conditions that affect political associations, participation, and ideologies and how that can be applied in social movements and in the rapidly changing world due factors such as the global pandemic and the rise of technological hegemony.



YAMILET VELEZ

Yami Velez is a senior at Smith College majoring in government. She is interested in pursuing a PhD in political science with a focus on comparative politics and Latin America. She is also currently a full-time intern with the Brookings Institution, a think tank in DC committed to expanding political research. In the past, she has interned with CHIRLA, a non-profit where she conducted civic engagement work. She was also a UCLA DREAM Summer 2020 fellow which gave her the opportunity to conduct research on brand and worker violations in the garment industry in Los Angeles during the pandemic. Velez is particularly interested in the intersection of indigenous peoples' citizenship rights and environmental movements. Velez hopes to amplify indigenous voices in Latin American politics, and she hopes her diverse work background and indigenous identity will help her design research that is inclusive and reflective of indigenous movements and goals. ■



ANGELA KOTHE

Angela Kothe is a senior at New College of Florida, majoring in political science. She is currently writing an honors thesis analyzing the effect of pluralist institutions on Canadian elections. Kothe's research interests include American political devel-

