

Greetings from the Department of Political Science and International Relations!

Dear Alumni,

It's my honor and pleasure to reach out to you in my new role as Chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Geneseo. I'm stepping into this position after serving as interim Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at Geneseo in 2022-23. I learned a lot from that experience and I enjoyed serving the college in a different capacity. But at the end of the day, I missed the best part of Geneseo - the students! I'm happy to be back in the department and the classroom, discussing exciting topics such as climate change leadership and the politics of Latin America.

I have some big shoes to fill as department chair. After serving as our fearless leader for nearly 20 years, Dr. Jeff Koch is now back in the classroom full-time. When I asked Professor Koch what he viewed as his most significant accomplishments while being chair, he identified creating the senior seminar in Political Science and, not surprisingly, the development of this newsletter! And when I asked his favorite thing about being chair, he said he most "enjoyed interacting with alumni; it was wonderful to learn

we had so many successful alumni who cared about Geneseo and the ... Department." We're so grateful to Professor Koch for his many contributions to the department that fostered the success of our faculty and students, and bolstered the strength of our alumni network.



Chair and Professor Karleen West served as an official observer of Mexico's elections in June, 2023

As this newsletter shows, our department remains one of the largest, most active, and vibrant departments in the Liberal Arts and Sciences at Geneseo. We have so much to be proud of. However, enrollment is down across all SUNY schools and Geneseo is no exception. The college currently faces a financial crisis that threatens our faculty jobs and students' experiences. If you live in New York, please consider reaching out to your state representatives and let them know the value of a SUNY education and that all SUNY schools deserve to be funded.

I hope that you'll enjoy reading about the many outstanding accomplishments of our students, faculty, and alumni. And as always, we would love to hear from you! If

you have any news, updates, or ideas, please reach out to me, Dr. Karleen West, at kwest@geneseo.edu.

When you give to Geneseo, please restrict your contribution to the department of Political Science and International Relations

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Model UN and History Club: A Conversation About Israel and Palestine



On November 6, 2023, the Model UN Club and History Club hosted an event, "A Conversation About Israel and Palestine," in Newton Lecture Hall. The event included a speaker panel on the topic, with lectures from our department's Professors Andrew Hart, Raslan Ibrahim, and Anand Rao, joined by the history department's Professor Sadegh Ansari. We extend our gratitude to the insightful speakers, who come from a variety of backgrounds of expertise (see next page). The event welcomed questions from attendees through a Google Form, from which questions were moderated by History Department Chair Kathleen Mapes.

Many members of our student body have been engaging with the political issues in Israel and Palestine over social media, but this conversation-style event with moderation was held to create a space that rejects hate, prejudice, and endangering political statements. The motivation behind the event was to utilize SUNY Geneseo's plethora of

holistic resources, namely our faculty expertise, to allow students to make informed decisions about how to approach global conflict. These objective, information sharing sources are not so easily found online, which may be our student's main point of exposure. Social media may reduce the ability for nuanced conversations about issues impacting everyday people. These types of in-person conversations allow for a recognition of the complexities of history, beyond a dichotomy of deeming actions from either groups as right and wrong. Model UN and History Club hope to have offered students the opportunity to build a solid base of knowledge from which to draw conclusions.

Professor Ibrahim shared that it is crucial for our department to continue to provide opportunities for students to learn about global conflicts in a scholarly setting, where the aim is to explain and understand a set of events. The knowledge students obtain in class must incorporate or be accompanied by information regarding current events. He is proud that our department has tackled this issue, in conjunction with its past efforts to teach about the Russia-Ukraine conflict and women's protests in Iran. The variety of backgrounds of the scholars included in the Israel-Palestine panel help to expose the multidimensional nature of the effects this conflict will have on society, including regional perspectives. Ibrahim shared that students must keep in mind that this is an ongoing issue that affects individual Palestinians, Israelis, as well as the broader region itself. He encouraged our students to follow the conflict, with an eye towards the history, current stage, and future consequences. Professor Ibrahim is grateful that Geneseo hosts students who positively contribute to an environment where respectful debates/discussions surrounding sensitive issues can take place without problems arising.

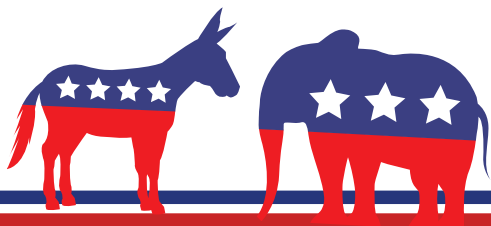
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In the face of a rather hostile broader climate of protests and threats of violence, Model UN and History Club made sure to coordinate with our University Police Department throughout planning of the event to avoid fostering an unsafe environment. We thank them for providing five officers who attended the event.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Andrew Hart

Andrew Hart teaches a range of international relations courses, including on the global political economy and international organizations. He also teaches the political science research methods course. His research examines different facets of economic globalization, specializing in the politics of multinational corporations as well as immigration politics. Professor Hart's research has appeared in *International Organization*, *International Interactions*, *The Journal of Peace Research*, *Survival*, and *International Peacekeeping*. His current projects examine how the design of national regulatory institutions influence developing countries' prospects for receiving foreign investment in infrastructure and public utilities as well as how welfare state spending changes people's attitudes about immigration.



Raslan Ibrahim

Raslan Ibrahim's research and teaching interests include International Politics of the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, International Relations Theory, Sovereignty, and Human Rights. Ibrahim was a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and he also taught at Haverford College, University of Denver, University of Colorado at Denver, and Charles University (Czech Republic). Raslan also has professional experience working as a correspondent for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC Arabic) and Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA), covering Israeli and Palestinian affairs.

Anand Rao

Anand Rao completed his Ph.D. at the University of Virginia in 2015 and joined the faculty at SUNY Geneseo in that same year. At Geneseo, he regularly teaches an introductory comparative politics class as well as higher-level courses on the topics of East Asian politics, terrorism and national security, and democratic peace theory.

Sadegh Ansari

Sadegh Ansari's research interests include the history of science, history of music, and the intellectual history of the pre-modern Islamic and Persianate Worlds. His works have recently appeared in the *Journal of Abbasid Studies* as well as the *Journal Philological Encounters*.

Political Affairs Club Trip to Washington, DC

On September 28, 2023, Professor Jeffrey Koch and 7 members of the Political Affairs Club set off for our annual trip to Washington, DC. The purpose of this trip is to meet with Geneseo Alumni to learn about their profession, the entity that employs them, receive career advice, and to

simply socialize with Geneseo alums. We are most appreciative of the Geneseo Political Science and International Relations alumni who took time from their personal and professional lives to spend time with us. We are also most appreciative of the

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Geneseo Alums at PAC reception

Sam White and Beth Semel with Political Affairs Club students

Dr. Koch and students in DC

generous alumni contributions restricted to the Department of Political Science that make this trip possible. For whatever reason, some of our most recent trips occurred with the threat of a potential government shut-down, scandals involving Supreme Court nominees, and scandals that led to impeachment votes. Compared to some recent events, this past trip was less exciting.

We were able to meet with several Geneseo Political Science and International Relations alumni. We began our trip with a panel at Gallaudet University with Sam White ('13) and Beth Semel ('11). Following his recent graduation from Geneseo, Sam worked in Syracuse government, then attended University of Michigan Law School.

Sam White is currently employed as an attorney at Jenner and Block. Beth Semel currently works at the Aspen Institute as the Associate Director of Aspen Digital, with a focus on democratic initiatives and special projects. A reception arranged by Geneseo's Alumni office followed.

On September 29th we met with Matt Thackston ('08). Matt works as a lobbyist for the Association of American Nurse Anesthesiologists. We next met with John Pekarik ('98) at the International Revenue Service, currently serving as Director of Digital Products. We then continued to hike down K Street to meet with Brian Skretny ('95) who works as a lobbyist at Wilmer Hale. Finally, we entered the State Department to meet with Under Secretary of State Elizabeth "Liz" Allen ('06).



Model UN at Boston Conference Fall 2023

Model UN Updates

The Boston Conferenc

In September 2023, Model UN excitedly sent just under a dozen students to the Boston Conference. These included veteran members and those who had never attended a Conference before. Our Model UN members were in attendance with students from all over the country who are planning hard for their futures, as they are. Within the community of Conference-goers, members get to network and make connections with like-minded students. We are appreciative of all of our Model UN students' continuous success and participation on and off campus!

Upcoming Events

At the end of February, Model UN members will be attending a Conference at University of Toronto. Later in mid-April, members will visit Buffalo State University for their Model EU Conference. This event is special because it is a beginner-friendly opportunity to get involved that is affordable due to its proximity to Geneseo. Model UN intends

to bring as many people as possible in hopes to expand the program, especially to those outside of the political science/IR field who may be interested.

Women in Model UN

Model UN President, Madilyn Falgiano ('24) joined model UN as a freshman at Geneseo after participating in high school until the COVID-19 pandemic would not allow it. Upon joining, Madilyn shares that she was the only woman in the club and at the first conference she attended. She was soon recruited by a Model UN presidential candidate to run as their vice president, with the goal of a culture shift to one of inclusivity and to make the space less intimidating for women. The club has made gains towards these goals, with their current executive board being mostly made up of women. Madilyn was elected as President in May 2023 to serve for the 2023-2024 academic school year. Our department is proud of these endeavors and will continue to strive to represent and lead all of our students towards future success.

Dr. Goeckel: Gifting the Experience of the Model EU

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Model UN at Geneseo experienced significant growth in members who were winning awards at conferences at the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Yale, and more. When SUNY Brockport began a Model European Union (EU) Organization and enlisted our college among others to join, Dr. Robert Goeckel proudly stepped up as the group's advisor. Dr. Goeckel was the department's leading Europeanist, teaching classes on the EU as an important actor in international and European politics. Many colleges sent Model EU delegates, including European universities. Each year the Model EU Conference would change locations from Europe to New York to allow students to experience a new setting.

It was costly to send students to Europe for this amazing opportunity, even with the generous funds given to the organization by our Student Association. Dr. Goeckel was troubled by the fact that Model EU participation became a question of whether a student could afford the higher costs of traveling to Europe. Model UN decided around 2008 to focus on U.S. simulations in order to be able to send more students on such trips for lower costs. Dr. Goeckel felt that as a premier liberal arts college, Geneseo should compete with other universities to showcase our talent.

In 2023, Dr. Goeckel made a significant donation to Model EU to offer stipends to cover student costs to travel to Europe for Model EU Conferences. He shares that, after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is as crucial as ever for our Model UN students to experience new cultures and interact with one another. Dr. Goeckel has been in contact with Model UN members who have shown interest in the Model EU program, and hopes that these trips and simulations can be revived once again by our department.



Dr. Goeckel has been a champion of the idea that Europe is a rich area of study, ranging from topics of Brexit, Ukrainian politics, and far right party activities. Our attention to Europe must increase if we are to increase our knowledge of international political affairs. Since his retirement in 2022, Dr. Goeckel hopes that the college will hire a replacement to sustain offerings in European studies and support for Model EU engagement.

Our department has utilized the Rose Alent Award for over twenty years, which has been given to outstanding graduating seniors double majoring in foreign languages and political science/international relations, supported by friends and family of the late Dr. Rose Alent, Emerita. In 2022, Dr. Goeckel donated significant funds to the Geneseo Foundation, designated for this award, to make it monetarily sustainable over the long term future. The award is now called the Rose Alent/Robert Goeckel award.

Our department thanks Dr. Goeckel for his charitable donations to Model EU and the Rose Alent/Robert Goeckel Award, which will enhance our students' leadership skills, learning opportunities, knowledge, and professional development.

More About Dr. Goeckel

Robert F. Goeckel has taught international relations and comparative politics at SUNY Geneseo since 1982, specializing in European politics, Germany and Eastern Europe, and regions of the former USSR. Fluent in both German and Russian, Dr. Goeckel has spent considerable periods of time in Berlin and Moscow and conducted extensive

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research in the archives of both the former German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany) and the former USSR. In 2000-2001 Goeckel was director in Moscow of the Center for the Study of the US and Russia, created by SUNY and Moscow State University. Based on this experience, he led student exchange groups in the program "Geneseo in Moscow" during the years 2004-2012. In 2022, he received an honorary award in

Berlin, Germany, on May 28: The Horst Daehn Prize for Contributions to Study of Church and State in Eastern Europe. Dr. Goeckel has recently retired but will be remembered for his passionate teaching and advancements made for the department that will undoubtedly have a lasting effect. Students will never forget his enthusiasm to teach about his area of expertise, and especially his sharing of his own Stasi file from his time in the former GDR.



Senator Helming Visit

Speakers at Geneseo: Women in Politics

Visit with State Senator Pamela Helming

During the Spring 2023 semester, Dr. Hanna Brant organized a visit with State Senator Pamela Helming at Doty Hall for her Women & Politics course students. Senator Helming represents New York's 54th State Senate district, which includes several counties in the Finger Lakes region, now including Geneseo after redistricting occurred in response to the most recent census. Prior to elected office, she worked over three decades in the private sector, including commercial property management, regulatory affairs, and land use planning. Senator Helming also worked with individuals with developmental disabilities and managed several group homes, which is where she developed her passion for advocating for those who deserve to be heard. She then decided to dedicate her life to serving others.

Senator Helming was elected to the New York State Senate in 2016 and began her first term in office on January 1, 2017. She is the first woman elected to the 54th Senate District, home to the birthplace of the women's rights movement.

One of Senator Helming's most significant legislative accomplishments was passage of the Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act to prohibit incinerators and protect the region's vast water and land resources and essential tourism economy.

Students enjoyed the personable event, sharing coffee and pastries with Senator Helming after she shared a bit about her background, why she sought office, and advice for students who want to be engaged in politics. Dr. Brant shared that

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this was a great experiential learning opportunity for students to get outside of the classroom and to engage with real-world political science beyond reading textbooks and journal articles. A takeaway she hoped students got from attending was that being passionate about policy issues or areas and wanting to help your community is the key to beginning or transitioning to a career in politics, despite not possessing the stereotypical background of being an attorney that many politicians do have.

This event was open to Political Science/IR majors and the reception was attended by SUNY Geneseo President Denise Battles. Our department sincerely thanks Senator Helming for joining us and being open to sharing this learning opportunity with our students.

Visit with State Assembly Representative Marjorie Brynes

During the Spring 2023 semester, Dr. Hanna Brant also organized for her Women & Politics students to speak with State Assemblymember Marjorie Brynes virtually. Marjorie Brynes was elected to the New York State Assembly on November 6, 2018. Her district comprises Livingston County and parts of Monroe, Ontario, Steuben and Wyoming counties.

As an Assemblymember, Brynes advocates for increases to state-funded infrastructure programs such as CHIPS, PAVE-NY, and BRIDGE-NY. She partners with infrastructure and transportation stakeholders to address New York's crumbling infrastructure. Assemblymember Brynes believes the people of New York State are overly burdened by taxes, regulations, and red tape, and will fight for economic relief and term limits.

Assemblymember Brynes has joined Dr. Brant's class three times in total. She, like Senator Helming, was enthusiastic to speak with students and this is a testament to their support of Geneseo. Our department and students are fortunate to have representatives who care about our students at the state level, and thank Assemblymember Brynes for her continued efforts.

Visit with Mayor Kathy Sheehan

During the Fall 2022 semester, Dr. Brant's Community, State, and Regional Politics students virtually met and spoke with Kathy Sheehan, the Mayor of the City of Albany, New York. Prior to being elected Mayor, Sheehan served as City Treasurer from 2010 to 2013. After this, she became the first female mayor in Albany's history. Sheehan was re-elected in 2017 and 2021.

Mayor Sheehan shared her background and road to politics with students, and helped provide an overview of what aspects of government her job entails, as well as other areas that are handled at the county level and beyond. A takeaway from the talk included the importance of regional cooperation against looming issues that know no geographic city borders and entail collaboration with neighboring cities, elected officials, and organizations.

Mayor Sheehan hosted Geneseo student and political science major, Alexis Savoie, during summer 2023 as an intern at Albany's City Hall. Our department thanks Mayor Sheehan for supporting the professional development of our students and for taking time from her personal and professional life to speak with our students.

Visit with Jordan Butcher

During the Fall 2022 semester, Dr. Jordan Butcher (Arkansas State University) also met with Dr. Brant's Community, State, and Regional Politics course students virtually. Dr. Butcher is an Assistant Professor of Political Science. Her work centers on American Political institutions, with specialization in legislative institutions. Dr. Butcher focuses on a mix of quantitative and qualitative research and has conducted interviews in four state legislatures. In 2023, she published her book *Navigating Term limits: The Careers of State Legislators*. This book considers whether term limits help curb careerism in the US state legislatures. She finds that the presence of term limits has created a new career system unique to those states that have limits. In each chapter, there is a quantitative

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analysis, followed by qualitative interviews to better understand the underlying motivations of members.

In Dr. Brant's class, students were assigned two chapters of the work and got to explore the content further and discuss US state-level comparative politics methods with Dr. Butcher. We thank her for sharing her expertise with our students and hope she can join us for more course visits.

Thank You, Dr. Brant!



A recurring theme in Dr. Brant's Women in Politics course is that women are underrepresented in elected positions in the US. Students will be exposed to why and how this occurs and about tools to increase women's representation.

These organized guest visits speak to the theory of descriptive representation, which is about

the importance of elected officials matching the demographics of those they serve.

Dr. Brant shared that this lack of women's representation relates to the adage that it is difficult to be what you cannot see. This is why she strives to enlist women in politics speakers for her students, to help them engage with women who are succeeding at breaking down barriers. Learning from and creating connections with elected officials and political scholars who have similar backgrounds as students can empower and inspire them to run for office and engage in the political realm in impactful ways. Dr. Brant is grateful to all of our speakers who helped garner this feeling among our students.

Dr. Brant always encourages her students to reach out to her and organize a visit, should they end up working in politics. Our department encourages all of our alumni to reach out to our staff to share their experiences and success stories with our students, and we hope to see some of you in our classrooms soon!

Political Science and IR Faculty Receive Commitment to Civic Engagement Award

In Fall 2018, the Provost's leadership team created five new awards based on the College's values to recognize academic faculty and staff who have helped advance Geneseo's vision of demonstrating the enduring power of liberal arts education through teaching, advising, program development and implementation, student support, scholarship, and service to the campus community. The Civic Engagement award commends active participation grounded in self-reflection, empathy, and an ethical commitment to the common good of our local and global communities. The 2023 winners include our department's very own Bob Goeckel, Andrew Hart, and Raslan Ibrahim within the Ukrainian Working Group.

Professors Goeckel, Hart, and Ibrahim have all shown tremendous dedication to raising awareness surrounding issues in Ukraine



among our student body, exemplified by their participation in the coordination of lectures and film screenings as a part of the Ukrainian Series that occurred throughout the Fall 2022 semester. The goal of the Ukrainian Working Group was to help students, faculty, and staff understand the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and the scheduled events did not fall short.

The events included three lectures, one by visiting scholar Dr. Thomas Bremer (University of Münster, Germany) titled "The War in Ukraine and the Churches" on September 29th. Other lectures included "On Ukrainian History, Identity, and President Zelensky" by SUNY Geneseo's Dr. Alla Myzelev (Art History), Dr. Cynthia Klima (Global Languages & Cultures), and Professor Sonya Bilocerkowycz (English) on September 25th, as well as "On Global Responses to Russia's War" presented by the Ukrainian Working Group members on November 1st. A film screening was also included of *The Earth is Blue as an Orange*, which is part of the Alan Lutkus International Film Series. This took place on October 24th at the Riviera Theater on Center Street in Geneseo and was followed by a Q & A with Professor Sonya Bilocerkowycz (English). Recipients of the award receive an engraved acrylic award, and have their name with a brief description about their work displayed on the first floor of Erwin

Hall. Our department congratulates our winners and encourages our faculty to continue to raise awareness surrounding impactful global events.

UKRAINE LECTURE SERIES

JOIN SUNY GENESEO FACULTY IN FALL '22 FOR A SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE.

MON. SEPT. 19 - THE WAR IN UKRAINE AND THE CHURCHES
Visiting scholar Dr. Thomas Bremer (University of Münster, Germany).
 4pm, Doty Hall, room 300.


THURS. SEPT. 29 - ON UKRAINIAN HISTORY, IDENTITY, AND PRESIDENT ZELENSKY
Dr. Alla Myzelev (Art History), Dr. Cynthia Klima (Global Languages & Cultures), and Prof. Sonya Bilocerkowycz (English).
 5pm, Newton Hall, room 201. Pizza will be served for attendees.

MON. OCT. 24 - FILM: THE EARTH IS BLUE AS AN ORANGE
Film screening presented as part of the Alan Lutkus International Film Series, followed by Q&A with Prof. Sonya Bilocerkowycz (English).
 6pm, Geneseo Riviera Theater, 4 Center St.

TUES. NOV. 1 - ON GLOBAL RESPONSES TO RUSSIA'S WAR
Dr. Raslan Ibrahim (Political Science), Dr. Andrew Hart (Political Science), and Dr. Robert Goeckel (Political Science).
 12:30pm, Newton Hall, room 203.
 Pizza will be served for attendees.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Events in this series are generously supported by SUNY Geneseo's Office of the Provost, the Political Science & International Relations department, the English department, and Anne Lutkus.



Artwork of Kyiv's Berehynia statue by Ukrainian-born designer Mariya Pilipenko. See more work at mariyapilipenko.com or Instagram @mariya.pilipenko.

Ukraine Lecture Series

With Fewer Women in NYS Legislature, Where Will Future Leaders Come From?

March is Women's History Month, and an elected female governor leads New York for the first time. Gov. Kathy Hochul is one of only 12 female governors in the United States. Hochul's election followed the 2019 election of Attorney General Letitia James, the first woman and Black American elected to the position in New York.

This Women's History Month we should focus on the status of women representatives in Albany. Despite Hochul and James's success, the number of women in the state legislature has recently

declined. According to data by the Center for American Women and Politics, New York is one of 12 states that experienced a drop in the number of women serving in the state legislature after the 2022 midterm elections. New York now ranks 23rd out of the 50 state legislatures for women's representation.

State legislatures serve as a pipeline, or stepping stone, to higher office; the status of women's representation in the state legislature can provide insight into the future of women's representation at higher levels (statewide or congressional)

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of government. For example, New York has a strong track record of electing trailblazers: Shirley Chisholm served in the New York State Assembly before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming the first Black woman elected to Congress. Chisholm stood true to her campaign slogan, “unbought and unbossed.” She had a strong record of advocating for women and minorities through advancing legislation on support for education and extending access to daycare, among other policies. In 1971, she helped co-found the Congressional Black Caucus in Congress and the National Women’s Political Caucus to help recruit, train, and support women’s advancement in government positions. Chisholm would go on to seek the Democratic nomination for president in 1972.

More recently, Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins is the first woman to serve as Senate Majority Leader in New York’s history. This month, the majority leader has used her position to champion legislative initiatives by Sens. Samra Brouk, Cordell Cleare, Lea Webb and James Sanders to improve access and care for reproductive and maternal care. Serving in high-ranking leadership roles positions women to shape policy in meaningful ways. Increasing the number of women in the legislature may lead to women serving in similar leadership positions.

When put into this perspective, this is why we should care about the decrease of women in the

legislature. Women in the legislature can provide an essential and unique perspective on legislation that affects all New Yorkers. For example, Sen. Rachel May’s previous career in sustainability has helped her be a key voice in the Senate on environmental and climate policy. As the only female veteran in New York’s legislature, Assemblymember Pamela Hunter’s service in the U.S. Army has positioned her to be an advocate for veterans and chair the Subcommittee on Women Veterans.

Furthermore, seeing women represented in government can inspire girls to eventually seek office. While we can’t as easily quantify this, this role model effect is something we should care about. As the saying goes, it’s hard to be what you can’t see. When a young girl sees someone who looks like her in a position of power, she may be inspired to want to grow up to be like her.

Studies have shown that recruitment and encouragement are among the most significant barriers to increasing the number of women representatives in government. Women are more likely to run when they are encouraged to seek elective office. This Women’s History Month I challenge you to encourage a woman in your life to run for office. After all, New York has a reputation to uphold of electing strong women in government.

Guest Opinion by Dr. Hanna Brant, published on March 21, 2023 in the *Syracuse Post-Standard*.

Alumni Spotlights:

Samson McKinley ('23), Abdul Sanderson ('20), and Elizabeth Allen ('06)

Samson McKinley ('23)

Samson McKinley, from Ithaca, NY, won an extremely competitive Saint Andrew’s Society of the State of New York Scholarship for graduate study in Scotland. McKinley graduated summa cum laude as an international relations major

with a concentration in Asian studies. He began studying at the University of St Andrews for a MLitt graduate degree in peacebuilding and mediation in Fall 2023.

The Saint Andrew’s Society Scholarship is given





Alumni Spotlight: Samson McKinley

yearly to three American students of Scottish descent from New York, New England, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania who can demonstrate financial need. McKinley was also named an alternate selection for a US Student Fulbright award for graduate study in Taiwan at National Chengchi University in Asia-Pacific Studies.

McKinley enlisted in the military soon after high school, performed with distinction in the US and Afghanistan as a military intelligence analyst, and is currently a sergeant in the New York Army National Guard. His experiences in Afghanistan afforded him a unique perspective on peacebuilding as he saw first-hand the limits of top-down approaches to diplomacy.

“The news headlines about the ongoing US-Taliban peace deliberations felt disconnected to conditions on the ground,” he says. “The Taliban is a decentralized organization, but ceasefire negotiations dealt primarily with the group’s highest leadership, and attacks by local warlords continued unabated throughout the peace process.” Experiencing that reality led him to focus his international relations studies and future career on conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

McKinley was the president of Geneseo’s Model UN and is planning a career as a diplomat in the US State Department. He was attracted to St Andrews’ reputation as a renowned institution for international relations: “Studying there will afford me unparalleled opportunities to engage with like minded peers and faculty, and the connections I make at such a globally oriented school will be invaluable to a career in the Foreign Service.”

“Samson is one of the very best undergraduate students I ever taught in my academic career,” said Raslan Ibrahim, associate professor of political science and international relations. “His combined drive and self-discipline are augmented by a powerful analytical mind. He has the required academic, analytical, communication, leadership, organizational, and interpersonal skills to be an excellent student at St Andrews and Foreign Service officer.”

Founded in 1756, the Saint Andrew’s Society of the State of New York is the oldest charitable organization in New York. Members celebrate Scotland and Scottish culture, contributing to the fabric and diversity of life in the New York region. The scholarship was established in 1956 to promote cultural interchange and goodwill between the countries.

Attribution: Michael Mills, Director of National Fellowships and Scholarships

Abdul Sanderson ('20)



Alumni Spotlight: Abdul Sanderson

Abdul Sanderson has been awarded both a prestigious 2023 Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Fellowship and a 2023–24 Fulbright US Student award for Kyrgyzstan in highly competitive national competitions. He graduated with a double major in economics and international relations with a concentration in global political economy.

Sanderson is the 49th Geneseo Fulbright US Student award winner and will spend 2023–24 living in a Kyrgyz community and teaching in a university as an English Teaching Assistant.

The Rangel Fellowship, funded by the US Department of State and administered by Howard University, supports individuals who want to pursue careers in the US Foreign Service. Selected from nearly 900 candidates, Sanderson will receive up to \$84,000 to complete a two-year master's degree, studying international affairs or economics after his Fulbright year. He will also undertake a Congressional internship, a US Embassy or Consulate internship, mentoring, and professional development activities before he begins a five-year placement as a Foreign Service Officer.

"What Abdul has accomplished this year is extraordinary," says Michael Mills, director of national fellowships and scholarships. "These awards are fiercely sought after by applicants from the finest schools in the nation, and for him to win both in the same year is largely unprecedented. He is a remarkable example of the incredibly talented and dedicated alumni the College produces who go on to become leaders not only in the US but across the world."

Born in Ethiopia, Sanderson was adopted at age seven by a single mother from Carthage, NY. Because of his immigrant experience, he made a lifelong commitment to "spreading cultural understanding and embracing differences, a commitment I see in the Foreign Service's mission, vision, and values."

Sanderson welcomes the opportunity to enhance his Kyrgyzstan connections and looks forward to promoting cultural exchange between his host community and the United States. "I aspired to a career with the Department of State even before I began at Geneseo and hope that my success is an inspiration to other students and alumni, no matter their background," he says. "People of color especially have a place in study abroad and international programs, and our perspectives are vital to building a holistic picture of American culture."

Sanderson is the first Geneseo student or alumni to win a Rangel award. Last year, he was an alternate finalist for the Thomas R. Pickering

Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program. He also won a 2020 Critical Language Scholarship to Kyrgyzstan to continue the Russian studies he began at Geneseo, but the program was changed to remote due to the pandemic.

Attribution: Michael Mills, Director of National Fellowships and Scholarships

Elizabeth Allen ('06)



Elizabeth Allen, a 2006 SUNY Geneseo graduate and current Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, participated in Phi Beta Kappa's Call to Serve networking reception held on June 22, 2023. This took place on Capitol Hill as part of the 2023 Key into Public Service Conference. The reception aimed to address how recent graduates can jump-start public service careers without personal connections in their ideal fields; the place for the humanities in science policy issues like the AI Bill of Rights; and what public diplomacy and crisis management experts think recent liberal arts and sciences graduates should know before embarking on a public service career.

Allen was quoted on Phi Beta Kappa's website in an article about the Call to Serve Reception: "If you are thinking about writing, staffing colleagues, or providing information, give people: the what, the so what, and the now what... When I think about building teams, I want people to have a

point of view. It can be really tempting to throw information at the wall for other people to draw their own conclusions. I cannot tell you how valued it is to have drawn your own, to share it, and to not be afraid to be wrong.”

Our department is proud of our strong ties to Phi Beta Kappa, and hopes to continue to induct

students who can potentially become and train our future leaders, as Allen has. We wish Allen well on her future endeavors and know she will continue to empower our student body and those at other universities to advance their public service-oriented career journeys.

Attribution: David Irwin, Media Relations Director and Ben Beagle, *Livingston County News*



Corina Tulevech Wins Gilman Scholarship

In a national competition, five SUNY Geneseo students won the 2023–24 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships, including political science and international relations double major Corina Tulevech ('24). Since 2007, 50 Geneseo students have won Gilman scholarships.

The State Department award financially assists US undergraduates of limited financial means in pursuing academic studies or credit-bearing, career-oriented internships abroad. The goal is to better prepare students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world.

Tulevech, from Ithaca, NY, is interested in a summer in Senegal to increase her abilities in French and to better understand how French colonization affected the region's many cultures. After graduation, she plans on a law degree for a career with the "International Criminal Court or for an adjacent NGO in order to help developing and developed countries' leaders understand and work with each other, socially and politically."



Corina Tulevech

"Geneseo students continue to be a wellspring of excitement and curiosity for intercultural learning experiences, and our faculty spend countless hours crafting meaningful, high-impact learning experiences that maximize time abroad," says Sam Cardamone, director of the Study Abroad Office. "The Gilman Scholarship is a powerful vehicle to close the equity and access gap and serve some of our most financially disadvantaged students."

The recipients of this prestigious scholarship attend 500 US colleges and represent all 50 US states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Gilman Scholars will study or intern in 90 countries through the end of 2024. On average, 70 percent of Gilman recipients self-identify as racial or ethnic minorities, 60 percent are from rural areas and small towns across America, and half are first-generation college or university students. Our department congratulates Corina on this huge achievement and will continue to support her future endeavors!

Attribution: Michael Mills, Director of National Fellowships and Scholarships

Faculty Updates

Jeffrey Koch

Professor Jeffrey Koch received a sabbatical for the Spring 2023 semester. The release time from teaching and service responsibilities allowed him to work on his research. Professor Koch devoted his time to two projects, each within the subfields of American electoral behavior, each making use of survey data from the American National Election Study. His first project tracks changes in the role of income and education for shaping citizens' partisan identities. In recent years it has become clear that (especially) among the white population, citizens with a college education are more likely to affiliate with the Democratic Party. Dr. Koch uses survey data from 1986 to 2020 to track this change. He finds that attainment of a graduate degree has inclined white citizens to identify as Democrats at least since 1986. He also finds that income has greatly diminished as a force for shaping citizens' partisan identification. This is a remarkable change. A second project examines changes in the levels of educational attainment of union members. In the 1960s union members were typically less well-educated than most of the American public. Today union members are better educated than the rest of the American public. As was the case in 1960, union members are very likely to support the Democratic Party. However, support for the Democratic Party by union members in the current period is more attributable to their level of education than the fact that they are members of a union. Union members without a college or graduate degree are likely to support the Republican Party. Union membership itself exercises a much smaller role for shaping partisanship than previously. Professor Koch has presented both these pieces of research at professional meetings. He is thankful to Geneseo for providing him with a sabbatical leave.

Karleen West

Department Chair and Professor Karleen West was unanimously elected as President of Geneseo's Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa as of September 2023.

Phi Beta Kappa celebrated its 247th birthday on December 5th, 2023 and shortly after, its 20th year at Geneseo. Our faculty, staff, and students are proud of Geneseo's connections with Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society, which celebrates and advocates excellence in the liberal arts and sciences.

Phi Beta Kappa annually invites the college's most outstanding liberal arts and sciences students for induction and sponsors activities on campus to increase awareness of the importance of the liberal arts and sciences. About one college senior in 100, nationwide, is invited to join Phi Beta Kappa. Seventeen U.S. Presidents, thirty-eight U.S. Supreme Court Justices, and one hundred and thirty-six Nobel laureates can be counted among the ranks of Phi Beta Kappa. We thank Professor West for taking on this duty and continuing the legacy of Phi Beta Kappa membership for our students!

Raslan Ibrahim

This past year, Professor Raslan Ibrahim was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Geneseo. His teaching, mentoring of students, and research accomplishments are outstanding, and he is a valued member of our department. Professor Ibrahim was also invited to attend multiple conferences organized by the United Nations (UN). He participated in a conference on Climate Change and Human Rights in Doha, Qatar in February 2023. The conference was organized by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Program, and the League of Arab States. Professor Ibrahim gave a talk on the role of regional organizations in promoting a human rights approach to climate change. He also participated in another United Nations conference to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2023. Our department is proud of Professor Ibrahim's achievements and participation in such important global discussions.

Hanna Brant

Professor Hanna Brant will be on Drescher Leave for the Spring 2024 semester. The Drescher Leave Program is designed to support women and faculty of color who are disproportionately less likely to receive tenure and promotion. During this leave, Dr. Brant will be working on her project “Queering Candidacy: Queer Women’s Representation in U.S. State Legislatures,” which focuses on understanding the experiences of queer women seeking and winning elected office positions, serving during a time where there is backlash against the LGBTQ+ community, and how they are navigating this tension within the legislative process. This will include interviewing queer women working in politics in Albany, NY, Montpelier, VT, and Concord, NH, to collect data. Women are underrepresented in state legislatures and elected office, and the gap widens even more for women within the LGBTQ+ community. Throughout 2023, Dr. Brant has completed multiple works. These include her book review of Belinda Robnett and Katherine Tate’s *Gendered Pluralism* and guest commentary in *Syracuse Post-Standard*, “With fewer women in NYS Legislature, where will future leaders come from?” She has also published the articles “R&R: Retirements from and Retentions in the Popularly-Elected Senate” (*New England Journal of Political Science*) and “The Rainbow Wave in 2020: The LGBTQ+ Community and the Path to Equitable Representation” (*Identity Politics in US Elections*). Our department commends Dr. Brant for her efforts to conduct research within an area that deserves more attention and information to begin to create a more equitable political scene.

Anand Rao

Professor Anand Rao received a sabbatical for the Fall 2023 semester at Oxford University. This took place during the Michaelmas Term, which ran from October 8th to December 2nd. He was officially an Academic Visitor at St. Antony’s College, a constituent college of Oxford that was founded in 1950 and specializes in the study of international relations, economics, and

politics. While there, Professor Rao did research for an ongoing project that analyzes geopolitical factors influencing recent Japanese immigration policy. St Antony’s College is home to the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, one of the world’s leading academic centers for the study of all topics pertaining to Japan. He attended weekly seminars that featured talks by Japan experts based in Europe, discussed his research with faculty members at the Nissan Institute, and was able to access the resources at Oxford’s renowned Bodleian Japanese Library. Professor Rao hopes to eventually write a monograph as part of the Palgrave-St Antony’s Series of publications. While on sabbatical, he enjoyed traveling by train during weekends in Britain and was able to visit many places, including Bristol, Cardiff, Coventry, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and St Andrews.

Aaron Herold

During the 2023-24 Academic Year, Professor Aaron Herold is spending a year while on sabbatical from Geneseo as a Visiting Fellow in the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University. The Madison Program promotes teaching and scholarship in constitutional law and political thought by enhancing Princeton’s undergraduate curriculum in constitutional studies, supporting graduate student and faculty scholarship that advances understanding of American ideals and institutions, sponsoring visiting scholars, and promoting scholarly collaborations. While in residence at Princeton, fellows attend guest lectures, present their scholarly work to one another, participate in the intellectual life of the program, and pursue their own research. Fellows also met for breakfast once a week and were able to build personal connections. At Princeton, Professor Herold has begun work on his second book, which examines the ascendancy of revolutionary thinking—the idea that social and political institutions should be evaluated, reformed, and perhaps even remade from whole cloth, without regard for existing customs and institutions—in modern democracy. This book is tentatively entitled *Revolutionary Thinking: Populism, Imperialism, and the Trajectory of Modern Democracy*.

Political Humor

"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office."

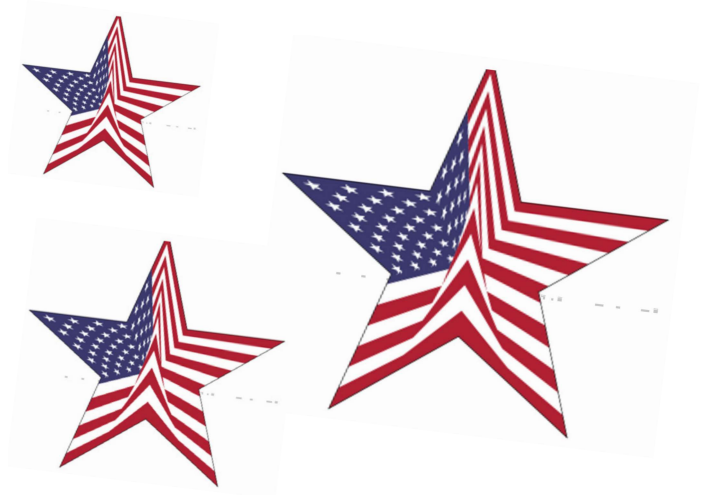
Aesop

"One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors. "

Plato

"When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become President. I'm beginning to believe it."

Clarence Darrow



"Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we."

George W. Bush

"He knows nothing and thinks he knows everything. That points clearly to a political career. "

George Bernard Shaw

“Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.”

Plato

“I bring quadruple diversity to the Senate: I’m a woman; I’ll be the first Asian woman ever to be elected to the U.S. Senate; I am an immigrant; I am a Buddhist. When I said this at one of my gatherings, they said, ‘Yes, but are you gay?’ and I said, ‘Nobody’s perfect.’”

Mazie Hirono,

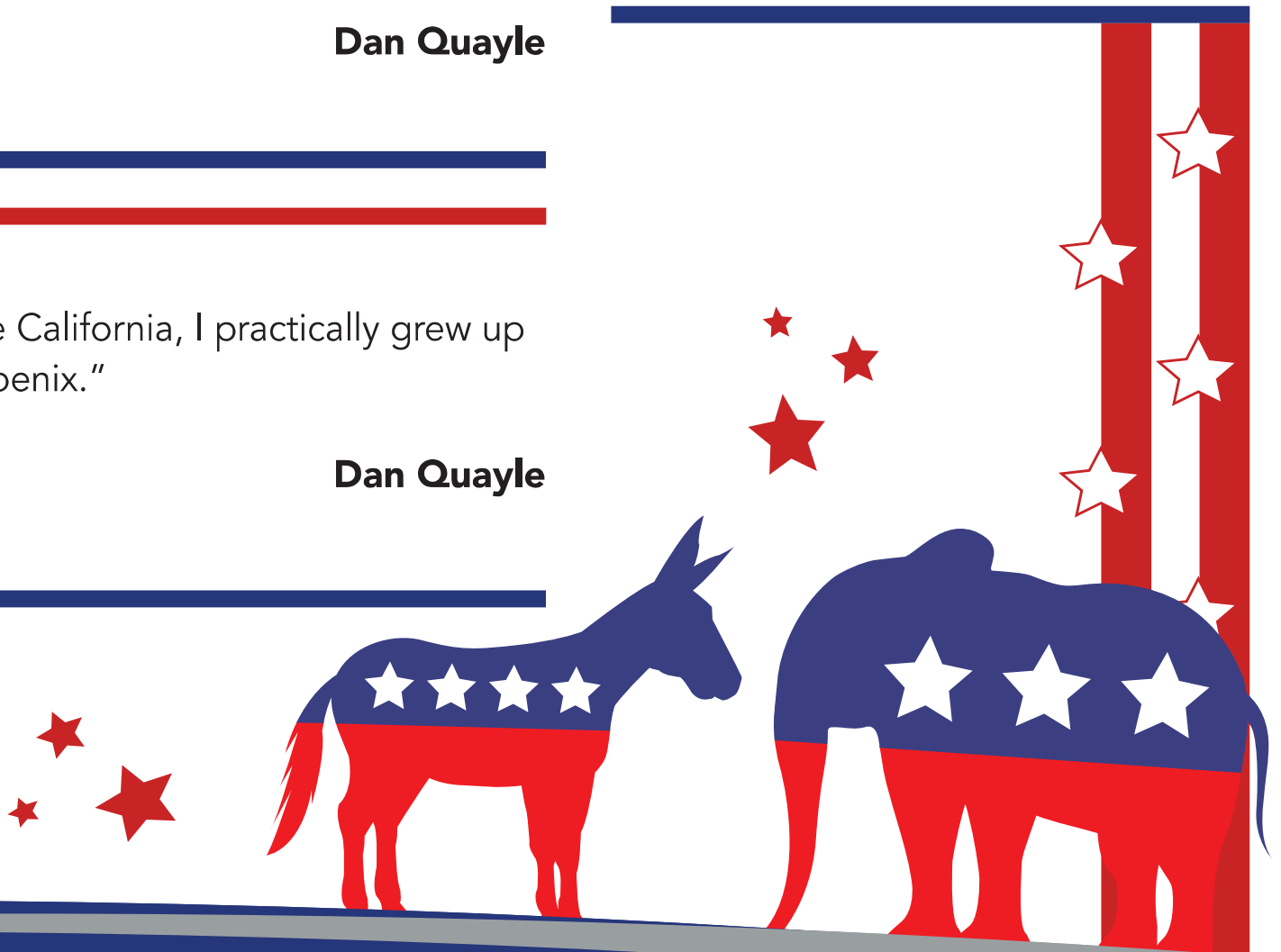
U.S. Representative from Hawaii

“It’s wonderful to be here in the great state of Chicago.”

Dan Quayle

“I love California, I practically grew up in Phoenix.”

Dan Quayle



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