

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT | SPRING 2023

NEWS & VIEWS



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DEPARTMENT OF
**POLITICS AND
GOVERNMENT**
Illinois State University



Christian Arceo

Embracing internships

Internship experiences guide Department of Politics and Government students into rewarding careers

By John Twork

When a bipartisan gun safety bill passed in the U.S. Senate last summer, Illinois State University senior political science and criminal justice sciences double major Christian Arceo felt a sense of accomplishment.

As an intern for Sen. Rob Portman, Arceo compiled research cited by Portman while negotiating the federal legislation.

“It felt good knowing that I contributed to a bill that passed,” Arceo said. “It was particularly cool because it was bipartisan, which doesn’t happen as much on Capitol Hill anymore.”

Arceo, whose goal is to work as a congressional staffer after graduating this spring, has returned to Washington, D.C., this spring for his third internship experience, this time with the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute. His first internship was in the summer of 2021 with Rep. Adam Kinzinger ’00, a Department of Politics and Government alum.

Thomas McClure, professor and acting chair of the Department of Politics and Government, said internships such

as Arceo’s immerse students in their potential careers while helping them gain valuable experience.

“An internship allows students to see whether or not it’s something they’d like to do as a professional pursuit,” McClure said. “Internships are also great resume builders. Resumes show employers that our students have experience.”

When Allie (Mendez) Parks ’12 landed a competitive paralegal internship with State Farm Insurance as a senior political science major and legal studies minor, she was “really excited” and “fairly surprised.” She was even more amazed when, after just two months as an intern, she was offered a full-time position. Parks has worked as a paralegal with State Farm’s litigation team in Bloomington ever since.

“It’s the dream of college—to be fully employed before you even graduate,” Parks said. “So, that worked out really well.”

As a political science major, Parks discovered a personal passion for legal work, but she decided against pursuing law school. Parks turned to McClure for guidance.

“He was a great motivator,” Parks said. “When I first switched to the legal studies minor, I didn’t really have becoming a paralegal on my radar. And when I started taking the classes, I had Professor McClure for Litigation I and Litigation II, and I remember at one point he said he thought I would be really good at this career. Coming from someone who’s practiced law—that made a big impact on me.”

As an intern, Parks said she gained “real world” experience that complimented her political science and legal studies coursework. Ultimately, the internship led to a personally rewarding, yet challenging paralegal career.

“I work really closely with attorneys, so I’m able to still get the best of both worlds of the enjoyment that I have for the law and cases; but with a little bit more of that work-life balance of getting to leave the work at work,” Parks said.

In addition to her day-to-day duties, Parks has served on State Farm’s internship hiring committee. Her advice to interns is to embrace the opportunity to “show what they can do.”

“I encourage them to be professional, to be very hard working, and to not be afraid to look for opportunities to show where they could potentially be of value outside of that internship,” Parks said. “You just never know if there’s going to be a job that opens up.”

In Washington, D.C., Arceo is focused on developing skills, networking, and preparing himself for a future career on Capitol Hill. He is passionate about someday influencing legislation—particularly pertinent to criminal justice, education, and immigration reform.

Arceo called his first Capitol Hill internship in 2021 with Rep. Adam Kinzinger “challenging” and “exciting.”

“This was the first time I was really away from family for the whole summer, so that was definitely challenging,” Arceo said. “But also, D.C. is where I want to be, and I think to finally be in D.C., it was everything I could have hoped for. There was so much I learned on a day-to-day basis, whether it’s how Congress works or how representatives work to get bills passed. There’s just so many things that go on behind the scenes that you really can’t learn in a course or by watching a video. So, it was cool to see that firsthand.”

As an intern, Arceo was responsible for communicating with constituents, assisting with policy research, and processing Capitol flag requests. He enjoyed the experience so much that he applied to return to Washington, D.C., to intern with Sen. Rob Portman in 2022.

“After my first internship experience, I knew that after graduating I wanted to be in D.C., and I wanted to work in Congress,” Arceo said. “So, I knew I just really had to get that experience because I felt that while one internship experience was great, if I added one more, it would really help me stand out when applying for a job.”

Arceo’s duties were similar, with the added responsibility of leading constituent tours of the Capitol. He also observed that Senate staffers tend to be more specialized in comparison to staffers in the House of Representatives.

“Staffs are a lot smaller on the House side,” Arceo said. “So, they get to wear multiple hats compared to the Senate

where you tend to have your role and you stick within the parameters of that role.”

Arceo said he is grateful for his diverse internship experiences, and for the writing skills he developed as a political science major and refined as an intern.

“Writing is a huge aspect of my work on Capitol Hill, and one thing I really liked about our political science courses was that there was a lot of writing,” Arceo said. “I think I’ve grown as a writer. You really have to be concise to get your point across—and be persuasive.”

McClure said Illinois State’s Department of Politics and Government prepares students for successful internship experiences through relevant coursework and assistance with building resumes and preparing for job interviews. He added that the University’s American Bar Association-approved legal studies program emphasizes practical skills desired by prospective employers.

To students considering internship opportunities, McClure recommends exploring a field in which they can



Allie Parks

Internships by the numbers

Under the leadership of Instructional Assistant Professor Erik Rankin (public service internship director) in addition to Professors Thomas McClure and Jason Cieslik (legal studies internship coordinators), the department’s internship programs were quite successful in 2022. There were 379 credit hours and 17,055 service hours logged for the public service internship. The legal studies internship recorded 160 credit hours and 7,200 service hours. Public service interns worked with several political campaigns on both sides of the aisle, the Green Halo Scholars, political offices, as well as non-profit organizations. Paralegal students interned at a number of sites including Prairie State Legal Services, the Immigration Project, several State’s Attorney’s offices, the McLean County Public Defender, State Farm Insurance, and a variety of private law firms.

envision themselves pursuing a career. He also recommends trying an internship in a different field that could provide an alternative career path.

Most importantly, McClure said students should approach an internship as though it’s a job. This strategy has proven beneficial for Parks and Arceo.

“It’s different from the rest of your undergraduate experience,” McClure said. “It’s extremely important that you develop good work habits and do the best you can to impress your supervisor, because that person may be able to help you later on in your career.”

Acting chair's remarks

Beginning in August 2022, I began my two-semester term as the acting chair for the Department of Politics and Government during Dr. T.Y. Wang's sabbatical. This was a great year for the department because students and staff began transitioning from the COVID-19 pandemic restrictive environment to a more traditional university atmosphere. The department offered most courses in face-to-face format. The major shift, however, occurred outside of the classroom.



Several popular student activities returned in their usual format. This conversion began in April when Dr. Noha Shawki led seven students to New York City where they participated in the National Model United Nations conference, representing Timor-Leste. Model UN, an activity that brings together college students from around the world, had been suspended due to the pandemic. The ISU team was recognized as a Distinguished Delegation at the end of the conference. After a two-year hiatus, the annual Illinois State University Washington, D.C., Civic Engagement Trip also returned in June. Eight students joined Instructional Assistant Professor Erik Rankin in our nation's capital to meet with various stakeholders in our democracy. After participating in virtual competitions during early 2020 through the beginning of 2022, the mock trial team again engaged in face-to-face intercollegiate contests. In the fall semester, ISU mockers traveled to tournaments in Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. ISU also hosted a 28-team invitational tournament

at the McLean County Law and Justice Center in Bloomington. The 17-member team was coached by Instructional Assistant Professor Josh Rinker, A.J. Blodgett, and Spencer Chikahisa, three Bloomington attorneys.

Assistant Professor Jason Cieslik led 30 Pre-Law Club members to the Palmer House in the Chicago loop for the Law School Admission Council's Law School Forum. Students had the opportunity to have face-to-face meetings with admissions officers representing over 100 law schools. The department paid the students' round-trip train fare for this all-day event. The Pre-Law Club additionally hosted several in-person events featuring guest speakers.

Dr. Noha Shawki organized and managed two study abroad experiences. She took four students to Stockholm, Sweden, for World Water Week, an event that brings together thousands of participants to discuss global water issues from different perspectives, share experiences, and develop solutions that can address global water problems. She also escorted five students to Turin (Torino), Italy, where they participated in workshops and sessions with thousands of other participants, concerning the Slow Food movement.

Drs. Meghan Leonard and Julie Webber organized a three-evening series over the course of the fall semester featuring post-*Roe v. Wade* reproductive justice presentations. The opening event, involving community discussion, was co-sponsored with the YWCA. The second session featured a talk by Dr. Brittany Leach concerning reproductive justice in immigration detention. The final program was given by Dr. Kimala Price on reproductive justice and the LGBTQ community.

The department was a co-sponsor of two events concerning the November gubernatorial election. The first debate between the two major candidates was held in Braden Auditorium at the Bone Student Center. Tickets for the event were a hot commodity. The department raffled tickets for interested majors. On the evening of the debate, we also co-sponsored the Gubernatorial Debate Watch Party at the Bone Student Center with the Center for Civic Engagement, the School of Communication, the Forensics Union, the Student Government Association, and the President's Events Office.

Drs. Kerri Milita, Carl Palmer, and L.J. Zigerell served on an ad hoc committee that aggressively took action to re-establish face-to-face programming. As a result of their leadership, the department sponsored "100 Seconds to Midnight: The Russian Invasion of Ukraine," a panel discussion with Dr. Ali Riaz, Dr. Christine Vargas-Harris, and graduate assistant Jeff Walsh, moderated by Maryna Teplova. In November, the committee presented a "2022 Midterm Election Debrief," a panel discussion with Dr. Meghan Leonard, Dr. Carl Palmer, Dr. Joe Zompetti, and Assistant Director of the Center for Civic Engagement Harriett Steinbach, moderated by Jimmy Holmes, a political science student.

The department also took major steps to recruit qualified students. I sent a personal letter to every applicant who was admitted to the political science and legal studies majors. We also established a scholarship fund for newly admitted students. The fund will provide a \$1,000 scholarship to 27 incoming freshmen and transfer students.

As we overcame the challenges brought by the pandemic, our faculty and students continued to achieve many goals. Sophia Quackenbush, a political science major and legal studies minor, was selected as a 2022-2023 Bone Scholar. Our mock trial team placed second in two 28-team tournaments in different regions of the United States.

The department has also made significant accomplishments in research. Two graduate students presented their research at professional conferences. Faculty had three books and 14 journal articles and book chapters published in 2022.

Finally, I want to thank our alumni, friends, as well as past and current faculty for their generous contributions to the department. Your support has kept us strong.

Professor Thomas McClure '76, M.S. '01

Editors

Guest editor, Dr. Kerri Milita • Managing editor, Angie Meiners

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Reproductive Justice speaker series

In the fall semester, the department hosted the Post-Roe Reproductive Justice Speaker Series. The series, also sponsored by the Harold K. Sage Foundation and the Illinois State University Foundation Fund, was designed to help students, faculty and staff, and community members come together to learn about reproductive rights and justice in a post-Roe v. Wade world. The series was organized after the Supreme Court's

decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* where the court struck the nearly five-decade old precedent guaranteeing a person's constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy. The series included an event co-hosted with the YWCA McLean County, as well as two academic talks.



A group discussion at the Reproductive Justice Speaker Series.

29th annual Illinois State University Conference for Students of Political Science



The 29th annual Conference for Students of Political Science held via Zoom

Illinois State University's Department of Politics and Government held the 29th annual Conference for Students of Political Science on Friday, May 13, 2022. The conference featured research by 25 undergraduate and graduate students from 15 universities and colleges. The meeting was held via Zoom. The papers presented at the conference covered diverse topics, such as political economy,

transnational justice, democratization in the Arab world and South Asia, comparative judicial politics, political theory, authoritarian populism, gender and politics, and American politics. Dr. Orçun Selçuk from Luther College delivered the keynote speech titled "Polarizing Populism in Latin America: Inclusion, Exclusion and Opposition."

Gubernatorial debate and watch party

More than 1,200 people filled Braden Auditorium for the only downstate televised gubernatorial debate between Democratic Governor JB Pritzker and Republican challenger Darren Bailey on October 6, 2022. The debate was hosted by Nexstar Media Group and presented by AARP and Illinois State University.

"Presenting this debate embodies Illinois State's core value of civic engagement," said then-Illinois State President Terri Goss Kinzy. "Our commitment to civic engagement is just one reason why Illinois State students go on to be lead-

ers in their respective communities and careers." As the candidates exchanged verbal parries onstage, members of the Illinois State community took part in a debate watch party in the Brown Ballroom. Those gathered gained information on what to look for in a debate, took part in interactive activities during the debate, and heard post-debate reflections from a panel of speakers. The watch party was sponsored by Illinois State University's Office of the President, Forensics Union, Center for Civic Engagement, School of Communica-



Students, faculty, and staff at the gubernatorial debate watch party

tion, Student Government Association, and the Department of Politics and Government.

New student scholarship

The Alice Ebel New Student Scholarship was established in December. These grants will be funded through the Alice Ebel endowment, which was created in recognition of the first chair of the

Department of Political Science, Alice Ebel. The purpose of this scholarship is to provide financial assistance and award a \$1,000 non-renewable award to incoming students who are declared

political science or legal studies majors. In its inaugural year, 27 students were awarded the scholarship.



Memoriam

The Department of Politics and Government mourns the passing of Michele Ganschow, who worked as the department's office support specialist from January 1996 until May 2011. Michele is remembered as a valued colleague who was always friendly, approachable, and happy to help faculty, staff, and students. Her friendly demeanor and positive attitude were assets to the department for many years. Michele graduated summa cum laude from Illinois State University in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. She is survived by her husband, her father, two sons, a daughter-in-law, three grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

Faculty debrief students on the 2022 midterm elections

On November 14, 2022, the department hosted an in-person panel to debrief students and community members on the 2022 midterm elections. Dr. Meghan Leonard, Dr. Carl Palmer, Harriett Steinbach, and Dr. Joseph Zompetti (School of Communication) served as expert panelists, with undergraduate political science major Jimmy Holmes serving as moderator for the event. Some of the key takeaways included that the 2022 election was unusual. Palmer noted that it is common to see the president's party lose a significant number of congressional seats at mid-

term; an outcome which did not occur. It was speculated that the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* may have factored into this outcome, with a larger than usual Democratic and moderate Republican turnout. Panelists fielded audience questions as to whether this was an atypical midterm, what student engagement looked like, and whether the current trend of political polarization will likely continue. They also addressed the issue of the Workers' Rights Amendment ballot measure and spoke to what its passage means for public policy in the state of Illinois moving forward. Leon-

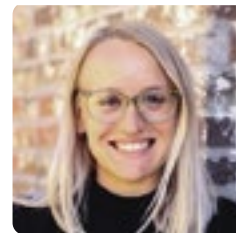
ard spoke to how the balance of power on the Illinois Supreme Court changed post-election and discussed its likely impact on state policy outcomes, while Steinbach addressed questions about youth engagement numbers and trends in this election relative to others. The event was catered with food and drinks, sponsored by the Center for Civic Engagement. It was well attended, and students were very enthusiastic about attending more current event panels in the future.

FACULTY AND SCHOLARLY NEWS

Enrollment director change

Erik Rankin resigned from his position as the academic advisor for the Department of Politics and Government in September, after many years in the department, with Brittney Vietti replacing

him as the director of enrollment management and undergraduate studies. Rankin continues to teach political science courses on a part-time basis.



Brittney Vietti, M.S. '15



Erik Rankin '00, M.S. '03



Professor Thomas McClure '76, M.S. '01, and Adrian Barr, Prairie State Managing Attorney

McClure honored with 2022 Lincoln Award of Excellence

At its annual Law Day event, the McLean County Bar Association presented Professor Thomas McClure with the 2022 Lincoln Award of Excellence, which is awarded to attorneys recognized within the legal profession for their service to the legal community as well as their contributions to the community. Adrian Barr, managing

attorney for the Bloomington office of Prairie State Legal Services, the 2020 Lincoln Award of Excellence recipient, presented McClure with the award. McClure became a member of the Illinois bar in 1979 and worked as a judicial law clerk to an appellate judge for two years before entering private practice. He was a 50% shareholder in the Kankakee

County firm of Elliott & McClure, P.C. After practicing law for 28 years, he became a full-time professor at Illinois State University where he has served as the director of legal studies. Under McClure's leadership, the Department of Politics and Government received

ABA-approval for its legal studies program, created a legal studies major, and established an expungement clinic for all students who complete the LGS program. McClure currently serves as the chair of the Standing Committee on Paralegals of the American Bar Associa-

tion. Past recipients of the Lincoln Excellence Award include notable Illinois State University alumni—Judges James Knecht, John Freese, David Butler, and Robert Freitag.

Shawki receives Kenneth A. and Mary Ann Shaw Teaching Fellowship

Dr. Noha Shawki and undergraduate student Eduard Winner were recognized at the 2022 Dean's Spring Address and Awards Ceremony. Shawki is the recipient of the Kenneth A. and Mary Ann Shaw Teaching Fellowship, and Winner was recognized with the Grabill-Homan Peace Prize. A strong proponent of experiential learning, Shawki has been teaching Model United Nations since she joined the department, investing much time and effort in making the program an excellent experience for students. She

has also established a number of study abroad programs, including the World Water Week in Sweden, the Fair Trade program in Costa Rica, and the Slow Food movement in Turin (Torino), Italy.

These programs provide students with active and immersive learning opportunities with a global focus. In addition to offering the full range of the department's courses in international relations, Shawki has contributed a significant amount of teaching-related service, including serving as the co-director of



Dr. Noha Shawki and Eduard Winner

the peace and conflict resolution studies program and as the co-director of the Center for a Sustainable Water Future.

Vietti named recipient of Administrative Professional Emerging Leader Award



Brittney Vietti, M.S. '15

Professional Emerging Leader Award.

Director of Enrollment Management and Undergraduate Studies Brittney Vietti is the 2022 recipient of the Administrative

This award recognizes an A/P staff member whose professional performance has shown tremendous promise for and commitment to the University community. Vietti advises all political science majors and minors and oversees all recruitment and retention initiatives within the department, as well as coordinates the undergraduate internship experience. Vietti completed her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and earned her

Master of Science degree in college student personnel administration from Illinois State University. In addition to her work responsibilities, Vietti serves as a representative on the Academic Advising Council (AAC), is a member of the AAC Professional Development and Training Committee, provides support to students as a Title IX advisor, and teaches a section of the IDS 128 Thriving in College course for first-year Redbirds each fall semester.

Prairie State Legal Services honors McClure

Prairie State Legal Services (PSLS) named Acting Chair and Professor Thomas McClure as an Outstanding Pro Bono Community Honoree for 2022 "for generous contributions and heartfelt commitment to providing legal services to low-income persons." Adrian Barr, the managing attorney for Bloomington PSLS presented McClure with the award. McClure was chosen be

cause he established the ISU Expungement Clinic and continues to provide legal work for dozens of PSLS clients by supervising students who prepare court documents for clients seeking to expunge and seal their criminal records. The Expungement Clinic offers students hands-on legal experience and a civic engagement opportunity. All legal studies majors and minors will work on an ac-



Professor Thomas McClure '76, M.S. '01, receives his Pro Bono Award.

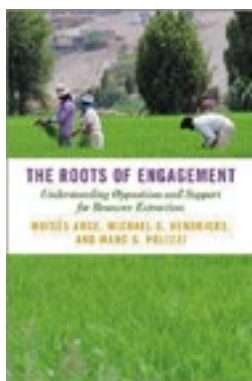
tual expungement or sealing case under McClure's direction as the supervising attorney. He supervised 44 students in

the clinic during the fall semester. PSLs also highlighted McClure on LinkedIn, in celebration of National Pro Bono

week, as an Outstanding Community Pro Bono Honoree.

Scholarly activities

Dr. Michael Hendricks published a co-authored article in *International Studies Quarterly* titled "All Peacekeeping is Local: Measuring Subnational Variation in Peacekeeping Effectiveness." Hendricks also published a book with Oxford University Press titled *The Roots of*



Engagement: Understanding Opposition and Support for Resource Extraction. He also presented research with a former graduate student, Sohel Rana, at the International

Studies Association's annual conference, with undergraduate student, Hannah Brunier, at the Midwest Political Science Association, and with interdisciplinary colleagues at the Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Conference. Hendricks also received a book subvention grant from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies for approximately \$700 to help with the translation of his recent book into Spanish.

Dr. Meghan Leonard published two articles: "New Data on Court Curbing by State Legislatures" in *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, and "State Supreme Court Responsiveness to Court Curbing: Examining Judicial Review" in the *Justice System Journal*. Leonard served as the University's 2022 Electoral Engagement Fellow for the Center for Civic Engagement. She produced a report about student voting at Illinois State as well as a guide for voters to understand judicial elections. Additionally, she co-organized the Reproductive Justice Speaker Series to help educate the Illinois State community about the effects

of the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

Professor Thomas McClure was appointed chair of the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Paralegals for the second consecutive year. The Standing Committee advises and acts on behalf of the ABA on all matters relating to the roles of traditional paralegals who, as members of the legal services delivery team, work under the supervision of lawyers. As chair, he is the editor-in-chief of the committee's blog. Additionally, he was interviewed on legal issues by print and electronic media throughout 2022.

Dr. T.Y. Wang, university professor and chair of Politics and Government, has been on sabbatical leave in fall 2022 and spring 2023. During his leave, Wang published a book chapter titled "David vs. Goliath: Taiwan's Policy Toward China," a commentary on Taiwan's 2022 local elections and guest-edited a special issue titled "Hong Kong and the 2019 Anti-extradition Bill Movement" in the *Journal of Asian and African Studies* (February 2023). He also authored/co-authored three conference papers at the 2022 American Political Science Annual Meeting in Quebec, the International Conference on Security Alignments in the Indo-Pacific in New Zealand, and the 2022 International Conference of Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study in Taipei. He was interviewed by the Voice of America on U.S.-Taiwan relations. Prior to his sabbatical leave, Wang also published "Taiwan in 2021: The Looming China Threat" in *Asian Survey*.

Dr. Kerri Milita published a review of two books in *Perspectives on Politics* and presented a paper at the 2022 MPSA conference. She was also interviewed throughout the 2022 election season by local media.

Dr. Ali Riaz published two books on Bangladeshi politics and culture: *More Than Meets the Eye*, and *Lekhoker Dai* (Responsibilities of an Author). He has also published five book chapters, two co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles, and one research report. His other publications include 15 commentaries in various magazines and web portals such as *South Asia Source*, *South Asian Voices*, *The Daily Star*, and *East Asia Forum*. One of his commentaries was published in *Foreign Affairs*, one of the most influential foreign policy magazines of the United States. He delivered six invited lectures in the United States, Japan, and Bangladesh, as well as two conference presentations. Throughout the year, he was interviewed by and quoted in reports on South Asian politics in local and international media, such as Al Jazeera English, *Nikkei Asia*, DW, *South China Morning Post*, *Foreign Policy*, and *The Pantagraph*.



He continues to serve as the president of the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS), as a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, and is a member of the editorial board of *Populism*, and the *Journal of Governance, Security and Development*.

Faculty recognized

Dr. Michael Hendricks receives University Teaching Initiative Award and Teaching Excellence Award

Illinois State University recognizes its most outstanding teachers each year through the Outstanding University Teacher Award program. By honoring its instructors, the University demonstrates its commitment to teaching excellence and student learning. This awards program embraces the view that the best teachers likely have a talent for teaching and have methodically and consistently worked overtime to enhance their teaching knowledge, skills, and abilities. This encompasses persistent, focused, and purposeful dedication to striving for excellence over time and includes learning about and applying effective instructional practices across a wide range of teaching activities, evaluating the effectiveness of those practices, and reflecting on personal values and professional experiences to shape future teaching practices.

On December 2, 2022, the University Teaching Committee selected Dr. Michael Hendricks as a recipient for one of the five award programs: the Outstanding University Teacher Award-Teaching Initiative Award. This category recognizes pre-tenure professors who have shown considerable promise in teaching early in their academic careers. In addition to the University award, Hendricks also received the Hibbert R. Roberts Teaching Excellence Award from the Department of Politics and Government. He also received a small grant (\$195) from the Center for Civic Engagement to bring guest speakers to his graduate seminar in community development.

Dr. Meghan Leonard awarded Center for Civic Engagement Fellowship

Dr. Meghan Leonard has been named the 2022 Electoral Engagement Fellow through the Center for Civic Engagement. The Center for Civic Engagement launched the Civic Engagement Fellowship in 2022. These Fellowships support Illinois State University's efforts to enact its core value of civic engagement by preparing students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the disposition and skills to consider multiple perspectives and to act as ethical leaders who will craft, promote, and further positive goals for social transformation. Illinois State seeks to integrate civic education across the student experience to uphold the University's public purpose to create opportunities that promote full participation in a just, equitable, and democratic society. The fellowship runs from February 1 through December 31, 2023.

Professor Jason Cieslik receives the 2022-23 Pre-Tenure Faculty Initiative Grant

Project title: The Marketing Strategies in ABA Approved Paralegal Programs

Dr. Julie Webber receives the 2022-23 Faculty Research Award

Project title: Youth Politics: An Emergent Counterculture?



Dr. Michael Hendricks



Dr. Meghan Leonard



Professor Jason Cieslik

STUDENT NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Model UN Distinguished Delegation

Seven students from the Department of Politics and Government participated in the National Model United Nations conference in New York City between April 10 and April 14, 2022. They

represented Timor-Leste in this international conference that brings together college students from around the world. The students included Olivia Fromme, Gabrielle Gonzales, Morrigan Hartley,

Gavin McDonnell, Eric Morissette, Avery Spranger, and Rodrigo Villalobos. They represented Timor-Leste on five different committees and spent several days discussing critical global issues and

drafting working papers that address these issues jointly with other students in their committees. This past year, these issues have encompassed many pressing global challenges, including equitable and inclusive access to education; access to preventative healthcare for migrant workers; the threat posed by improvised explosive devices; biodiversity and its contribution to sustainable development; and the reduction of maritime pollution. The Illinois State team was recognized as a Distinguished Delegation at the end of the conference. The Distinguished Delegation recognition is based on several factors, including: the team's deep knowledge of the global issues they debated, correct application of the procedural rules, leadership in proposing creative solutions to critical global problems, and ability to obtain consensus in drafting working papers jointly with other delegates. The team was mentored and led by Dr. Noha Shawki.



The 2022 Model UN team

Mock trial tournaments back in person

Although the mock trial team began its 2021-22 season with in-person tournaments, the surge of the coronavirus omicron variant prompted the return of virtual competitions for the balance of Illinois State's season. All fall 2022 competitions were face-to-face.

Illinois State had two squads both seasons. The 2021-22 A Squad (1012) was composed of Connor Martin (captain), Andrew Cummings, Kyla Egizio, Tyler Gray-Henry, Amelia O'Neal, and Natalie Ponce. McKenna Plotner (captain), Caitlyn Danielson, D'nija Johnson, Shannon Johnson-Cadle, Julia Kourkemelis, Paige Malloy, and Brock Melrose were members of the B Squad (1013).



Andrew Cummings

In 2022-23, Squad A (1224), led by Captain Andrew Cummings, included



NIU Awards

Trinity Allen, Myah Brantley, Lilly Foulk, Grace Nord, Sara O'Dowd, Emmalie Parson, and Oscar Serratos. Squad B (1225) was made up of Captain

Shannon Johnson-Cadle, J. Bradshaw, Caitlyn Danielson, Laney Hawkins, Jimmy Holmes, Ava Knapp, Isabelle Lindenmeyer, Andrea Novotny, and Kyleigh Weir.

In the spring of 2022, the Redbirds participated in one tournament, a multi-



Winners of the Outstanding Witness Awards



Sara O'Dowd and Myah Brantley

team scrimmage hosted by Carthage College, and the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) regional tournament. All three events were virtual. In January, they competed in the Fear the Moose Invitational sponsored by Utica College in New York. Squad 1012 went 6-0, defeating teams from Truman State, Fordham, and the University of Oklahoma. It placed second in a field of 28 teams from across the nation. Squad 1013 won both ballots against Wisconsin Lutheran College and split, 2-2, against Auburn. Both squads garnered 3-5 records at the AMTA regionals. Senior Kyla Egizio was named an outstanding attorney and junior Dnija



Mock Trial squad 1224

Johnson was awarded outstanding witness at the regionals.

The first tournament of the 2022-23 season was the Golden Dome Invitational run by the University of Notre Dame mock trial program. Squad 1224 went 3-5, and squad 1225 went 0-8. The tournament recognized Andrew Cummings with an outstanding attorney award.

Squad 1224 participated in the Arch Invitational, hosted by Washington University in St. Louis as well as the Illini Invitational in Champaign. Although their records were not as strong (2-5-1 and 2-6), junior Trinity Allen was

named an outstanding witness.

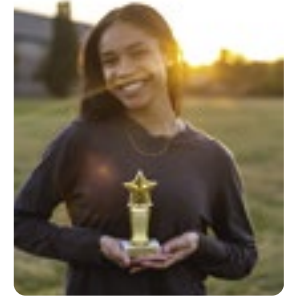
Squad 1225 competed at Northern Illinois University's Husky Cup Invitational, garnering a 3-4-1 record. The tournament recognized Myah Brantley as an outstanding attorney and Sara O'Dowd as an outstanding witness.

Both squads competed at the Back to Normal Invitational that was hosted by Illinois State University at the McLean County Law and Justice Center the first weekend in November. Twenty-eight teams from Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan, and Wisconsin competed in the event. Squad 1224 took second place, garnering a 6-1-1

record. Squad 1225 had a 4-4 record. Three team members were named outstanding witnesses: Trinity Allen, J. Bradshaw, and Sara O'Dowd.

The final fall tournament was the Colonel Classic Mock Trial Invitational, sponsored by Eastern Kentucky University at the Lexington, Kentucky courthouse. Both squads went 4-4. They faced a wide variety of teams at this event, including Furman University, Lee University, Georgia State, the University of Tennessee, Indiana University, and Loyola University in Chicago.

The head attorney coach of the team is Josh Rinker, and the assistant coach is A.J. Blodgett. Both are Bloomington attorneys who were award-winning members of Illinois State's mock trial team. McLean County Assistant State's Attorney Spencer Chikahisa was a volunteer assistant coach. Professor Thomas McClure is the educator coach.



Trinity Allen

Students return to Washington D.C., for civic engagement trip

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual Illinois State University Washington D.C., Civic Engagement Trip returned in 2022. Eight students joined Instructional Assistant Professor Erik Rankin in our nation's capital to meet with various stakeholders. This year, the housing venue changed to the Catholic University of America. Students spent a day on Capitol Hill meeting with Rep. Adam Kinzinger (an Illinois State alum) and Sen. Dick Durbin. The Capitol had just reopened to visitors since the events of January 6, 2021. Students also met with fellow Illinois State alums Corine Weiler



Students on the Washington D.C., Civic Engagement Trip

(in the office of Sen. Jon Tester) and Sean Sibley (in the office of Sen. Gary Peters), among others. A meeting with professionals in the area of public policy was also added this year, and students

were pleased to meet with Patrick Brady of Amazon. Also on the list of meetings was with the Gallup Editor-in-Chief Mohamed Younis. In addition to great meetings and time spent together,

the group visited many of the historic museums and monuments in D.C., such as the Holocaust Museum and the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Pre-law students attend Law School Forum

On Saturday, September 24, the Illinois State Pre-Law Club attended the LSAC Law School Forum in Chicago. Students were able to attend workshops to learn more about the admissions process, financial aid, and application requirements. Most importantly, students were able to meet with admissions representatives from more than 100 law schools from around the country. Because each law school has different admission requirements and standards, the forum provided students with the opportunity to learn about the specific demands



Pre-law students at the Law School Forum

from each law school. The students found the experience to be a worthwhile and engaging opportunity as they con-

tinue their career progression into the study and practice of law.

Study abroad trips

The Department of Politics and Government sponsored two study abroad programs during the fall 2022 semester. The two programs, both led by Dr. Noha Shawki, were each organized as independent study projects related to global events. Graduate and undergraduate political science students participated in these two programs.

One program focused on water as a global sustainable development issue. Students read extensively about different

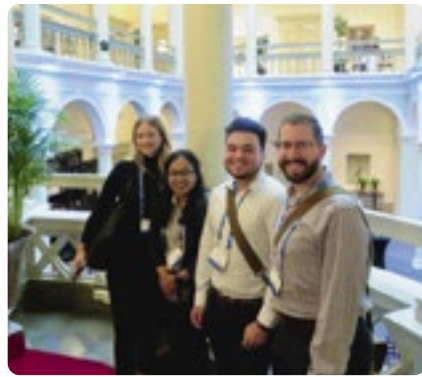
dimensions of water as a global issue, completed summaries of and reflections on what they read, and met to discuss the assigned sources. The discussions focused on issues such as the human right to water and sanitation, international cooperation in the management and use of transboundary waters, and climate change and its impact on water. Students then attended World Water Week, an annual event held in Stockholm, Sweden, and hosted by the

Stockholm International Water Institute. This global event brings together the full range of stakeholders who work on global water issues. Students attended a variety of workshops and panel discussions and had opportunities to hear and learn from individuals who work at non-governmental organizations and civil society groups, intergovernmental organizations, governments, and in the private sector. In their free time, students explored the city of Stockholm



Students in Torino, Italy, at the Slow Food movement





Students at World Water Week

and visited the Vasa Museum and the Viking Museum. Following World Water Week, students each completed reflections on their World Water Week experience along with a research paper. Research papers discussed a variety of topics, including water insecurity and conflict, water subsidies from a human rights perspective, and the role of the private sector in providing water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

The other program focused on the Slow Food movement, which seeks to transform food systems into systems that are socially just, environmentally sustainable, and that produce good and healthy food for all. The Slow Food

movement emphasizes the importance of preserving biodiversity in food systems and making food systems climate resilient by highlighting and centering the roles of peasant farmers and indigenous peoples and their traditional agricultural knowledge and practices in efforts to bring about food systems transformation. Students spent time studying the Slow Food movement and sustainable agriculture, reading extensively, writing reading summaries and reflections, and meeting to discuss what they read. These discussions focused on a variety of issues, including food sovereignty, agroecology and sustainable food systems, and the philosophy

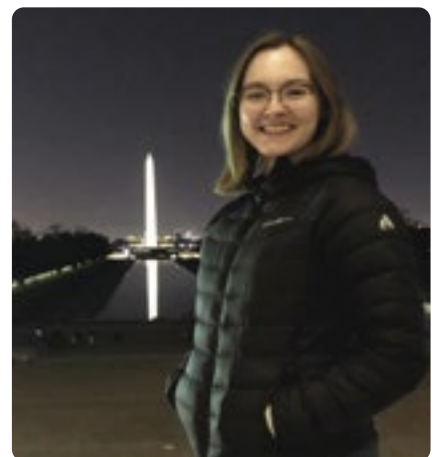
and goals of the Slow Food movement. Students then attended Terra Madre, a global gathering of Slow Food movement participants that is held every other year in Turin, Italy. At Terra Madre, they attended a variety of events and workshops, and in their free time, they explored the city of Turin. After their immersive experience at Terra Madre, students wrote reflections on what they learned in Turin, and they each completed a research paper on a topic of their choice. The topics students researched included participatory guarantee systems and food literacy.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Bone Scholar Sophia Quackenbush

Sophia Quackenbush, a political science major who is also a legal studies and French minor, was selected as a 2022-23 Bone Scholar. The Bone Scholarship is the highest award an undergraduate at Illinois State University can receive. Quackenbush is a member of the University Honors Program and has been on the Dean's List every semester since she enrolled at Illinois State. In addition to being an outstanding student, Quackenbush has also been active in co-curricular activities. On campus, she has served as the legislative director of the College Democrats of Illinois, where she has put her knowledge of political

science into practice. She has worked with other stakeholders on campus to advance a legislative agenda that aims to promote social justice. Externally, Quackenbush worked in the Office of the Champaign County Clerk in Urbana. As an Election Department staff member, she managed election materials to be used by the department's staff to facilitate fair and just elections. She also served as an election judge. Her involvement in the local community led to her internship at the McLean County State's Attorney's Office, where she served as a translator in addition to proofreading and drafting search warrants.

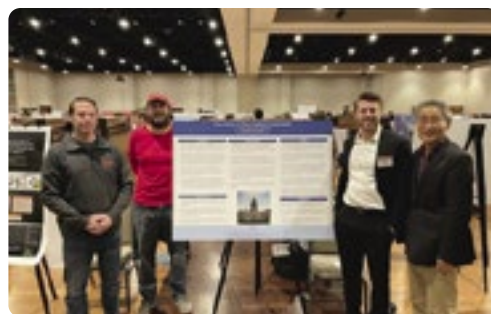


Bone Scholar Sophia Quackenbush

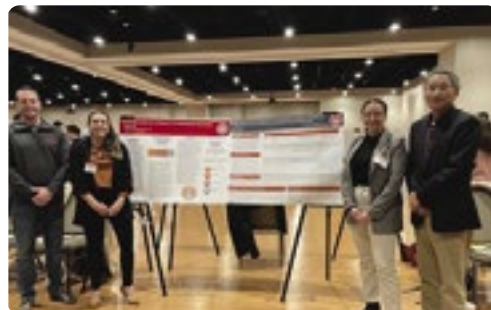
Graduate students present research at 2022 University Research Symposium

On April 1, 2022, several graduate students who received mentorship from department faculty presented their research on various topics at the University Research Symposium. The Research Symposium is held each spring and offers an exciting opportunity for students to share what they have learned through their scholarship, research, and creative expression in an academic setting. The following political science student presenters are listed with their faculty mentors and their project titles:

- **Grace Northern**, “Combating Civic Disengagement: An Analysis of Youth Civic Engagement and Education Trends in The United States” (mentored by Dr. Lori Riverstone-Newell)
- **Max Seeley**, “Time Is Money: The Effect of Legislative Professionalism on Time Spent Fundraising” (mentored by Dr. Michael Hendricks)
- **Manda LaPorte**, “Food Security as a Means to Adequate Housing” (mentored by Dr. Michael Hendricks)
- **Jeff Walsh**, “From Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing—Eliminating Veteran Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in The 21st Century” (mentored by Dr. Michael Hendricks and Dr. Carl Palmer)



Graduate students and department faculty at the symposium



Graduate students present at the 2022 University Research Symposium

STEVENSON CENTER SPOTLIGHT

Stevenson Center welcomes eight new fellows

The Stevenson Center provides two graduate programs, the Peace Corps Fellows Program, and the Applied Community and Economic Development (ACED) Fellows Program. These programs aim to support those who have served in the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps,

or other community development organizations for an extended period. These programs allow students to obtain master’s degrees in applied economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, or kinesiology and recreation with a sequence in applied community and economic development. Each fellow is given a tuition waiver, guaranteed paid graduate assistantship, and other benefits.

The Stevenson Center is happy to welcome eight new fellows, six of whom served in AmeriCorps. Two of the new students are Peace Corps Fellows who were placed in Namibia and Malawi before their time at Illinois State. All fellows have shown dedication to public service and applied to the Stevenson Center Fellowship to continue that mission. What they learn during their time at the Stevenson Center will allow them to develop and grow the com-

munities they work with in the future. An ACED Fellow, Terragan Brouk is currently working toward his master’s degree in political science. He recently earned a bachelor’s degree in history and global studies. Brouk was drawn to this program through his love of public service. It was also the reason he originally joined AmeriCorps. “I was looking for something related to the outdoors, and my AmeriCorps program was conservation-based with a mix of disaster response,” he said. “I had originally thought to apply to the anthropology program; however, I found political science to vastly overlap with my undergrad and previous experiences,” he continued. “(I want to learn) how to focus my service in a more direct way so that I can go on and work for a nonprofit or in the government, such as under foreign affairs.”



Stevenson Center fellow and political science graduate student Terragan Brouk

ALUMNI NEWS

McCuskey now legislative inspector general

Department of Politics and Government alum Michael McCuskey '70 assumed his role as Illinois Legislative Inspector General in February 2022. The Office of the Legislative Inspector General is responsible for investigating "complaints of violations of any law, rule, or regulation or abuse of authority or other forms of misconduct by members of the General Assembly and all state employees." McCuskey was chief judge in the U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois until he retired from the bench in 2014. He was a member of Illinois State's 1969 NCAA national champion baseball team and a student in the Department of Political Science. McCuskey is a 2005-06 Hall of Fame



Michael McCuskey '70

inductee of Illinois State's College of Arts and Sciences. He was an Illinois State Alumni Association board member and chair of the Illinois State University Board of Trustees.

2022 Redbird proud alumni

The Division of Student Affairs recognized five outstanding young alumni during Homecoming week at the Alumni Day Luncheon on October 14, 2022. Two of the recipients were political science alumni: Richard Greenfield and Nikita Richards. These alumni demonstrate great pride in Illinois State and eagerly share what they learned through their student experiences with Student Affairs. Recipients of this honor live



Professor Thomas McClure with Nikita Richards '06, M.S. '15, and Richard Greenfield '17 at the Alumni Day Luncheon

the values of Student Affairs: integrity, compassion, creativity, diversity, and relationships.

Richard Greenfield graduated Cum Laude from Illinois State University in December 2017 with a Bachelor of Science. Most recently, Greenfield earned his Master's in Public Administration degree from Governors State University. Greenfield currently works for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago as director of community and external affairs for Commissioner Kimberly du Buclet. Greenfield is the recording secretary for the Illinois State University Black Colleagues Association and is the legislative affairs chairperson for the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education.

Recently recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives and Congressional Record for her leadership and accomplishments, Nikita Richards is a proud Navy veteran, an appointed member of Governor JB Pritzker's transition team and the Illinois Council on Women and Girls, the vice chair of the Planned Parenthood of Illinois Board of Directors, and a member of the Illinois

HONORS/AWARDS

Undergraduate Awards

**Hibbert R. Roberts
Outstanding Senior Award**
Michele Calabrese

**Alice Ebel Outstanding
Graduating Senior Award**
Avery Spranger

Alice Ebel Award
Trey Georgie Sydney Redmond
Sidney Ropp Maddy Small
Bella Wilkerson

**Thomas Wilson
Internship Award**
Claudia Fiorenza
Emma Forberg

**Thomas More Scholarship
in Political Philosophy**
Michelle Ramirez

**Frank M. and Hermina R.
Giordano Scholarship**
Eduard Winner

Walter S. G. Kohn Award
Gabrielle Gonzales

Jamal R. Nassar Scholarship
Devon Fine

John P. Freese Scholarship
Sophia Quackenbush

**George J. Gordon Scholarship
in U.S. Public Affairs**
Jack Abraham
Zach Roy

**Robert Bradley
Scholarship Endowment**
Grace Nord

**Equity and Inclusion
Advocacy Award**
Lawrence Landfair

**Dr. Frederick & Carlene Roberts
Memorial Internship Fund**
Olivia Fiorenza
Nadalie Ponce

Subfield Awards

American Government
Vincent Carta

Comparative Politics & International Relations

Morrigan Hartley

Public Administration

Harold Dennis

Public Law

Madison Inman

Pre-Law Awards

Outstanding Legal Studies Student Award

Oksana Zavolokoff

Carl Kasten Pre-Law Leadership Award

Tierra Shickel

Tom Eimermann Outstanding Pre-Law Student Award

Michele Calabrese

Barry S. Tolchin Mock Trial Leadership Award

McKenna Plotner

Mock Trial Outstanding Witness Award

Andrew Cummings

Michael A. Hall Mock Trial Outstanding Attorney Award

Kyla Egizio

Graduate Awards

Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Grace Burgener

Outstanding Graduate Student Service Award

Carolyn Hannon

Graduate Student Civic Engagement Award

Jeff Walsh

Ali Riaz Graduate Student Award

Nur Moon

Pi Sigma Alpha Inductees

Grant Chassy
Nickolas Christiano
Sydney Redmond
Kerem Tasdan

State University Alumni Association Board of Directors. Richards received both her Master of Science in com-

munication in 2015 and her Bachelor of Science in politics and government in 2006 from Illinois State University.

Riaz and Rana publish paper

Distinguished Professor Dr. Ali Riaz and Department of Politics and Government alum Sohel Rana, M.S. '21, have published a paper on the contemporary democratic backsliding. The paper, titled "Democratic Erosion in Comparative Contexts: Evidence from Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, and Pakistan," is published in the *Journal of Governance, Security & Development*. Employing Larry Diamond's regime categorization, the paper examines the characteristics of the systems of the governance of these four countries and their debilitating democratic conditions. Riaz and Rana argue that all four countries have suffered from a democracy deficit for an extended period, and they continue to face the

same predicament. The paper also demonstrates that there has been a disturbing trend of erosion in the democratic qualities of these countries during 2010-



Dr. Ali Riaz



Sohel Rana, M.S. '21

2020. The authors insist that with no significant improvement in their overall democracy, the future of democracy in these countries is at stake.

Butler presented with Pro Bono Award

Retired judge and Department of Politics and Government alum Judge David Butler was recently awarded the Pro Bono Service Award. The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) Board of Directors met in Chicago on July 13, 2022, and during the event, presented the Pro Bono Service Award to Butler for his volunteer work with Prairie State Legal Services' (PSLS) Bloomington office. Butler has helped 165 PSLS clients over his three years of volunteering with PSLS. He was

also instrumental in creating PSLS's eviction court help desk in the McLean County Law and Justice Center. Butler graduated from Illinois State with his B.S. in 1976 and his M.S. in 1986. He received his J.D. from SIU Carbondale in 1980. He was an associate judge on the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Illinois. He was reappointed in 2011 and 2015 before retiring December 5, 2018.



Retired Judge David Butler '76, M.S. '86, presented with Pro Bono Service Award

Freitag receives E. Burt Mercier Alumni Service Award

The E. Burt Mercier Alumni Service award recognizes the outstanding service of alumni to Illinois State University, the Alumni Association, or humanity. Selection is based upon outstanding volunteer service and contributions to the University, community, state, country, or an important social cause. The award honors the memory of Burt Mercier '50, a community leader who gave back to the University in many ways throughout his life.



Retired Circuit Judge,
Bob Freitag '84

Bob Freitag arrived at Illinois State as a transfer student from Moraine Valley Community College. He became an active leader in student government while attending Illinois State and completing an undergraduate degree in the Department of Politics and Government. He served as president of his class

leadership council and was chosen as a guide for Preview, the University's freshman orientation program.

He pursued a legal career after leaving campus and earned his Juris Doctorate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. After working in private practice for two years, he served as a public defender in McLean County before joining the State's Attorney's Office. As a McLean County prosecutor, Freitag partnered for a decade with undercover police officers to combat drug trafficking. He was chosen in 2000 to serve as an associate judge and eight years later, won election to become a circuit judge. He was in that role until his retirement in July 2018.

A commitment to serve resulted in Freitag enlisting in the U.S. Army Reserves. During his military career, he completed deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom through the Judge Advocate General's Corp. He reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before retiring. Freitag has demonstrated an equal commitment to

servicing his community and has done so as a volunteer firefighter and EMT, as well as former mayor of the Village of Carlock.

His work for Illinois State University spans years and includes membership on the Alumni Association Board, Foundation Board, Attorney's Advisory Board, and the Student Government Association. His efforts have been recognized with numerous accolades, including the Alumni Association Outstanding Young Alumni Award and induction into the College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Steve and Sandi Adams Legacy Hall of Fame.

Beyond investing his time, Freitag has made a financial commitment to Illinois State. He and four alumni friends partnered to create the Redbird 5 Scholarship to support students who need assistance paying for their education. He remains a loyal fan of Redbird Athletics and is a long-standing member of the Redbird Club.

Alum wins Golden Apple Award

The lessons Sharon Ponder-Ballard '86 learned as a political science major at Illinois State University helped to mold her into a powerful educator who would go on to win the prestigious 2022 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching at Chicago's Englewood STEM High School.

"The Black network of ISU students and faculty truly nurtured my growth as a person and educator," said Ponder-Ballard, who teaches ninth-grade English at the south side high school and was one of 10 chosen from 400 applicants to win the Golden Apple Award.

"I had friends all over campus—Watterson Towers, Atkin-Colby, Tri Towers—and some who lived off campus. We studied together, attended IYC services, football games, and partied at the Bone Student Center. I also participated in Students Against Apartheid and the Black Student Union. The comrad-

ery and interaction were organic and life-altering."

Among those who impacted her life were the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Her sorority sister, Dr. Gloria Jeanne Davis, served as advisor to the Eta Alpha chapter at Illinois State. "Dr. Gloria Jeanne Davis served as the University's assistant to the dean for minority recruitment and director of affirmative action, and she was an exemplary role model for us young Black women."

As an Illinois State student, Ponder-Ballard desired to make a difference



Sharon Ponder-Ballard '86, the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching recipient (Photo courtesy of the Golden Apple Foundation)

through policy change in education. She recalled one inspiring professor who also served as chair for the Department of Politics and Government, Dr. Hibbert Roberts.

"I popped into his office on a weekly basis and our discussions were cen-

tered around the politics of education in America and the school-to-prison pipeline,” said Ponder-Ballard, who at the time planned to follow her siblings into the field of law. However, while she was studying for the LSAT, Ponder-Ballard took a job as a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) substitute teacher. “And that was it,” she said with a chuckle. “I was hooked.” More than 20 years later, Ponder-Ballard still infuses her lesson plans with passion and purpose reflecting the University’s motto, “Gladly we learn and teach.”

During the Golden Apple presentation, Ponder-Ballard predicted the

highly sought award would also change the trajectory of lives at Englewood STEM.

“This award validates marginalized communities by motivating a generation to no longer have dreams that are the size of peepholes, but to have dreams that should be bigger than the door; Englewood Stem this Golden Apple is yours,” said Ponder-Ballard, adorned in gold glitter from her eyelashes to her fingernails. “This is a reminder,” she said to a cheering crowd of Englewood STEM Panthers. “Your situation does not have to determine your destination,” echoing the uncompromising insistence of her

mother decades ago.

Ponder-Ballard is now positioned to impact the lives of the next generation as a Golden Apple recipient, which comes with a \$5,000 cash award and a spring sabbatical to study at Northwestern University. “I want to continue being a beacon of light and hope for young people and those new to the teaching profession. I’m really honored to demonstrate that seasoned teachers are still making an impact in the classroom. This award shows we are adaptable, flexible, and are brilliantly committed to doing the work of educating our youth.”

Political science alums honored on Alumni Day

The Department of Politics and Government honored two outstanding graduates on Alumni Day during Homecoming weekend.



Marc Loro '74 and Illinois State Senator Laura Murphy '81 were the guests of honor at the University’s alumni recognition event.

Marc Loro '74

After graduating from ISU in 1974, Marc Loro went to the Washington University School of Law where he graduated in 1977. He worked in the Office of the State’s Attorney of McLean County for several years before moving to the Office of

the Secretary of State’s Department of Administrative Hearings in Springfield until 2018. There he began as a staff attorney, was promoted to senior legal advisor, and retired as deputy director. Loro is a charter member of the ISU Attorney Advisory Board and served as chair from 2011-2013. He’s also a member of the Illinois State Bar Association, having served on the Committee on Government Lawyers. He is currently a member of the ISBA Administrative Law Section Council, McLean and Sangamon County Bar Associations, and is a charter member of the Illinois Government Bar Association. He held the position of chair for several of these boards at various times.

Laura Murphy has spent the past 20 years as an active member of the Des Plaines community, including eight years as an alderman for the city’s Third

Ward. She was appointed to the Illinois State Senate in 2015 to represent the 28th Senate District. In 2020, she was appointed deputy majority leader of the Senate.



Laura Murphy '81

Murphy also serves as chair of the Committee on Executive Appointments, as vice chair of the Committee on Local Government, and as a member of the Committees on Assignments, Commerce, Environment and Conservation, Executive, Financial Institutions, Higher Education, and Labor.

Politics and Government alum making a difference in Chicago area

Kevin Murphy graduated from Illinois State in 2015, and after studying in politics and government, he was inspired by the coursework of Dr. Touré Reed to take the plunge into diversity, equity, and inclusion consulting. After six years in consulting, Murphy started a community organization called, “The Jet City Coalition,” a direct service organization supporting the O’Hare, Chicago community, his home area.

The organization provides shoveling and lawncare services for 75 disabled, low income, and senior residents in the O’Hare service area. They also distribute 1,500 coats each winter for the area and organize a small business restaurant campaign in the summer. Murphy’s organization has been featured in *The Daily Herald*, on WGN-TV, and as a 2021 NBC 5 “Making a Difference” honoree. Murphy believes that

none of this would have been possible without the interdisciplinary education he gained via Illinois State’s Department of Politics and Government.



Kevin Murphy '15

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Thank you!

Gifts were received between January 1 and December 31, 2022.

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