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The Ralph Bunche Summer Institute: A Fellow's Perspective

Yvette M. Alex
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Prior to attending the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute, I had planned to graduate from Dillard University and pursue a doctoral degree in Urban Planning and Architecture. However, the Ralph Bunche Institute heightened my interest in political science and instilled in me an insatiable desire to understand the dynamics and usefulness of politics as a tool for social and economic mobilization.

Admittedly, my conversion to the political science discipline was not instantaneous. I was so adamant about my original plan that instead of asking the recruiters who came to the Institute about their respective political science departments, I boldly questioned them about urban planning and architecture programs. Inwardly though, I was confronted with a struggle between what I thought I wanted to become and what the Institute was inspiring me to become.

Controversial, stimulating and scholarly lectures by prominent political scientists such as Jewel Prestage, Melani Mjeri Jackson, Samuel Paterson, Richard Fenno and Mack Jones and thought-provoking books like *The Women's Movement*, *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon*, and *Power and the Powerless* prompted me to ask questions that I had not previously considered. Would urban planning and architecture effectively respond to my new interests?

After much praying, pondering, reading, and talking with trusted friends and advisors, I decided to alter my course and pursue a doctoral degree in political science. My transition to graduate school was greatly eased by my experience at the APSA Institute. For example, the required reading list was almost commensurate with my current reading load. Upon entering graduate school, I had expected challenging readings and I was pleased to have acquired the skills to effectively gather the important points.

The methodology class taught by Dr. Ronald Weber introduced me to statistical theory and manipulation. It was, in fact, my first opportunity to do elementary number crunching. As a result of this class, I did not experience the statistical phobia that most graduate students face in methods classes. The Institute also provided same-race role models of both genders which gave me a heightened sense of self-confidence.

I had a very positive experience at the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute. Most importantly, my interactions with my peers and professors instilled in me a unique sense of responsibility to the Black community and to my fellow scholars, as well as a need to live up to the expectations that the visionaries of the Institute have for me. I am thus committed to earn a Ph.D. in political science and succeed in my chosen career thereafter.

The APSA's Minority Identification Program: an Overview

Laura P. Wilson, *American Political Science Association*

Among the APSA's programs to attract African-Americans, Latinos, and other minorities into the political science professoriate is the Minority Identification Program. This program complements the important efforts already made through the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute and the Graduate Fellowship Program. A window of opportunity exists now for the profession as a result of the widespread opening of political science positions within the next decade (William G. Bowen and Julie Ann Sosa, *Prospects for Faculty in the Arts and Sciences*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989). The Minority Identification Project is designed to give every member of APSA and every department in the country—graduate and undergraduate—a chance to make significant progress in diversifying the profession.

Begun in 1989 as a pilot project under the leadership of Robert Keohane of Harvard University, the program identified 144 students (sophomores, juniors and seniors). Eighteen