

# Meet the 2019–20 APSA Minority Fellows

The APSA Minority Fellows Program (MFP), established in 1969, is a longstanding fellowship competition to diversify the profession by providing support to students from underrepresented backgrounds applying to, or in the early stages of, a PhD program in political science. The goal of the program is to increase the number of minority scholars in the discipline, in particular political science PhD programs, and ultimately the professoriate. APSA has once again awarded a new cycle to provide support for first- and second-year political science PhD students from underrepresented backgrounds. Please join us in congratulating the 2019–20 class of fellows.

## CLAUDIA ALEGRE

Claudia Alegre is a senior double majoring in political science and sociology at UC Santa Barbara. She is a McNair Scholar and has had the opportunity to present her



research at her institution as well as a national conference. Her current research interests focus on race and ethnic politics, specifically Latino politics. In addition, Claudia is

interested in investigating undocumented Latino political engagement and the impacts of mass illegality on the political socialization of Latinos. She hopes to enroll in a PhD program in political science to become a professor and continue her work on race and ethnic politics.

## GREGORY AMUSU

Gregory Amusu graduated from Carleton College with a major in political science/



international relations and a minor in political economy. He has held positions as a research assistant in the department of political science at Michigan State University,

as a participant in the Hoover Institution Summer Policy Boot Camp at Stanford, and as an intern in the IDA Development Finance office at the World Bank. His research interests include comparative and international political economy, with a focus on the political economy of development. Having conducted fieldwork in Hanoi, Vietnam on female migratory labor and the political economy of the Vietnamese craft industry, Gregory has a strong regional interest in mainland Southeast Asia. He has also conducted research on ethnic partitioning throughout the African continent. Gregory has presented his research at Carleton College, Michigan State University, and the University of Chicago.

## AUSTIN BARRAZA

Austin Barraza is a second-year master's student in political science at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), where



he studies education politics. Austin focuses on how state legislatures use funding to incentivize community colleges to meet student success metrics. He will be

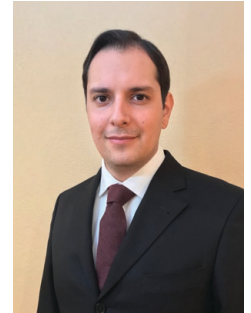
presenting his research at the 2019 Western Political Science Association's annual meeting and hopes to carry this research into his doctoral program. As a Graduate Equity Fellow at CSUF and a first-generation college student, Austin hopes to become a professor and to mentor students who are the first in their families to attend college. In 2018, he completed a certificate in teaching and learning at CSUF and a faculty internship at Fullerton College. Prior to attending CSUF, Austin earned his BA in political science with honors from UCLA and his AA in American studies with distinction from Riverside City College and Norco College.

## JUAN CAMPOS

Juan Campos is an MA candidate in political science at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). While studying at CSULB, Juan became a CSU Sally Casanova

Pre-Doctoral Scholar and earned the most prestigious graduate award on campus—the

CSULB Graduate Research Fellowship. In 2013, he received his BA in government and international politics from George Mason University. Juan's research interests include political violence, democratization, and state-cartel peace settlements in Latin America. In a paper published on *Justice in Mexico's* website, he empirically assesses the causes and consequences of mayoral assassinations. Drawing on a novel dataset of Mexican states between 2005 and 2017, this work shows that competition among different political parties across multiple levels of government (federal and state) makes it difficult for security institutions to protect mayors from being assassinated by drug trafficking organizations. At the doctoral level, Juan plans on specializing in comparative politics and international relations.



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## MICHAEL HERNDON

Michael Herndon (RBSI 2018) is a senior at the University of Nebraska at Omaha where



he is pursuing a dual degree in political science and international studies with a minor in Chicano(a)/Latino(a) studies. Michael completed an independent

research project through the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI) in 2018 and has presented his work at the Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium (PRIEC) in Houston. His research interests include identity, Latinx political behavior, and representation in legislative bodies. Michael aims to pursue a career in academia where he can continue to conduct research and mentor future change-makers.

**LEANN MCLAREN**

Leann McLaren (RBSI 2018) is a political science and history double major at the University of Connecticut, in the honors program. She currently serves on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Leadership Board and has served as the vice president of the University of Connecticut's chapter of the NAACP. Her research interests center on American public opinion, voting behavior, race and ethnicity, and immigration politics. Specifically, Leann is interested in Black immigrant voting behavior and political incorporation. Over the course of her undergraduate career, Leann has assisted on several projects facilitated by university faculty, including research on homicide and sex trafficking of women of color, gender bias in congressional hearings, and archival research on Caribbean immigration. Leann is a 2018 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI) Scholar and has presented her research at the 2018 APSA annual meeting and the 2018 Emerging Scholars Conference at the University of Michigan.



**SRILEKHA MURTHY**

Srilekha Murthy is a senior at Mount Holyoke College, pursuing a major in politics, along with minors in French and development studies. Her current research project examines the successes of indigenous movements aligned with the Catholic Church in the Andean region of Latin America. This project has informed her broader interest in the political participation of racial and ethnic minorities. She aims to pursue a doctoral degree in political science where she plans to study questions of race, ethnicity, and political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. Ultimately, Srilekha aims to be a professor and to work to increase representation of racial and gender minorities in academia.



**MONIQUE NEWTON**

Monique Newton (RBSI 2017) is a recent graduate of Oberlin College where she double majored in politics and law & society and minored in African studies. Her research interests lie within the subfields of race and ethnicity politics, urban politics, political psychology, and political behavior. In graduate school, she intends to explore African American political participation in urban settings. Monique has presented her research at various conferences including the 2017 APSA Annual Meeting. As an alumna of the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI), Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, and the Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers Summer Workshop, Monique is excited by the opportunity to mentor first-generation students of color as a political science faculty member upon completion of graduate school.



**CRYSTAL ROBERTSON**

Crystal Robertson (RBSI 2018) is currently a senior in the honors program at the University of Michigan, where she is majoring in political science. Her research interests include American politics, race and ethnicity politics, and public opinion. Specifically, Crystal is interested in racially-focused social movements and how public perceptions of the movement shift across different racial groups. Crystal is a 2018 APSA Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI) scholar. She has presented her research at conferences such as the 2018 APSA Annual Meeting, where she presented her work on Black Lives Matter and racial attitudes. She is currently completing an honor's thesis under the advisement of Dr. Vincent Hutchings.



**PRECIOUS CHERAY ROBINSON**

Precious Cheray Robinson is a senior at Bryn Mawr College, where she is majoring



in political science with a concentration in gender and sexuality studies. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, she was involved in the University of Chicago's

Summer Research Training Program where she began her current project. Precious' research focuses on Black feminist literature, which she maintains, is a topic that has been largely overlooked by the field of political theory. Through engaging Black feminists, she explores how Black political thought can be enriched by acknowledging and overcoming its patriarchal biases. She presented her work at the 2018 Association for Political Theory (APT) Conference as well as the 2017 Chicago Research Symposium. Precious is currently the head of the Bryn Mawr Student Curriculum Committee and aspires to become a professor once she finishes her PhD.

**MICHAEL STRAWBRIDGE**

Michael Strawbridge (RBSI 2018) is a senior at Beloit College double majoring in political science and media studies. As a McNair scholar, he researched the progress made in Ferguson, MO since 2014, assessing the city's progress and challenges in enacting reforms. At the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI), he completed a project examining the effects of print, television, and internet news on opinions regarding the importance of gun control. He presented his research at the 2018 APSA Annual Meeting. Michael's research interests include American politics, political communication, public opinion, and media and politics. As a PhD student, Michael intends to explore the role media plays in diminishing the voices of those less privileged while prioritizing the issues facing those already in a position of power.



**CATALINA UDANI**

Catalina Udani (RBSI 2018) is an honors senior at the University of Central Florida studying human communication, intelligence and national security, and terrorism studies. She conducted independent research at the 2018 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI)



on terrorism and human trafficking and looks forward to her first publications, a coauthored book on terrorist propaganda and a book chapter analyzing terrorist rhetoric, both of which are in progress. Her undergraduate thesis was a longitudinal thematic analysis of ISIS digital media, comparing rhetorical trends with the group's real-world operations. A teaching

assistant for the Burnett Honors College, Catalina's research interests include international peace and conflict, terrorism, CBRN weapons, and human rights abuses. She developed these research interests as a Lawrence J. Chastang Global Fellow and an India Research Fellow for the Global Perspectives Office. Upon graduation, she plans to use her research interests to pursue an academic career through a PhD in political science with an international relations focus.

**ZOE WALKER**

Zoe Walker (RBSI 2018) is a senior at the University of Notre Dame studying political science and English. At Notre Dame, she was named a Franklyn Doan Scholar for her outstanding research skills. She has also conducted research for the American Bar Foundation (Montgomery Summer Research Fellowship) and was a participant in the 2018 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute

(RBSI). Zoe is interested in studying the effects of partisan polarization on the



political participation of minority groups as well as the role of media in shaping political behavior and attitudes, changes in American public opinion, and identity group-based

political conflict. She has presented her research at Notre Dame's Undergraduate Scholars Conference, the 2018 APSA Annual Meeting, and the 2018 Emerging Scholars Conference at the University of Michigan. Zoe plans to earn a PhD and she looks forward to producing scholarship in political science with an eye towards the role that identity plays in political decision making. ■