

Meet the 2023-2024 Diversity Fellowship Program Fall Fellows

INDIA SIMMONS | PROGRAM MANAGER, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PROGRAMS

The APSA Diversity Fellowship Program, formerly the Minority Fellowship Program, was established in 1969 as a fellowship competition to diversify the political science profession. DFP provides support to students from underrepresented backgrounds applying to, or in the early stages of, a PhD program in political science. The goal of the program is to increase the number of scholars from minoritized backgrounds in the discipline and ultimately the professoriate. APSA has once again awarded a new cycle to provide support for students currently in the process of applying to political science PhD programs for Fall 2023. Please join us in congratulating the 2023-2024 class of fellows. Learn more about DFP at <https://apsanet.org/dfp>.

BRIANNA DEMUTH

Brianna DeMuth is a senior at Ohio Wesleyan University, double majoring in political science and environmental studies. At OWU, she was a student research assistant studying political protest waves and political repression. DeMuth also participated in her school's Summer Science Research Program as a research assistant where she conducted a survey experiment to analyze human rights violations, democracies, and authoritarianism, and co-authored the results for journal publication. She has special research interests in international human rights violations and political protests, presenting her research at different symposia and conferences; most recently at the Midwest Political Science Association's 79th annual conference. DeMuth was also a Big Ten Academic Alliance SROP scholar and researched human trafficking and transnational advocacy in Southeast Asia at the University of Iowa. After earning a PhD in political science, she hopes to become a professor and work with students to develop their own research interests, like her professors and mentors at OWU.



DEVIN GREEN

Devin Green graduated from the Community College of Baltimore County in 2020 and will graduate from Johns Hopkins University in Spring 2023 with a BA in political science. His research interests include collective action through organizing and activism, the political consequences of mass incarceration, and lobbying coalitions. His senior thesis will explore the policy conditions under which progressive activist organiza-

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tions partner with corporations despite their history as natural enemies. He has pursued these research interests as a 2022 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute scholar, a research assistant at the P3 Lab in the SNF Agora institute with Hahrie Han, and as a Bloomberg Distinguished Professor's summer fellow with Vesla Weaver. His research has been presented at the American Political Science Association annual conference, the Leadership Alliance National Symposium, and the Michigan Emerging Scholars Conference.



ZACHARY LORICO HERTZ

Zachary Lorico Hertz graduated from the University of Chicago in 2022, where he earned a master's degree with a concentration in quantitative methods and social analysis. He is particularly interested in understanding how race and class identity develop, are expressed through political behavior, and intersect with power in local politics. In his research, he uses causal inference methods and survey data to study the effects an increasingly diverse and partisan electorate will have on representation and sub-national institutions. His writing has been featured in academic and popular outlets, including the Washington Post. He currently works as a political analyst and pollster, and in previous work connected researchers with legislators and journalists to inform local policy at Scholars Strategy Network. Before that, he organized student voter registration efforts at Tufts University, where he completed a bachelor's degree in political science in 2019 and studied ethical theory.



CHARITRA PABBARAJU

Charitra Pabbaraju (she/they) is completing her MPhil in development studies at the University of Oxford, where her thesis explores the technological turn to the developmental state's bureaucracy, with multiple and contradictory effects on ethnic violence and criminalization. Her thesis is supported by

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the APSA Centennial Center, and builds upon her work at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative's Signal program. She currently serves as a project manager for the Emory Oppression-Resistance Lab, researching state justifications for the use of violence and resulting trajectories of governance. As an undergraduate, Pabbaraju studied political science and English & creative writing at Emory University as a Robert Woodruff Dean's Achievement Scholar, researching how states carve out citizenship across gender and ethnicity with her thesis. Pabbaraju has worked as a grassroots journalist, at think tanks including the Carter Center and the Institute for Developing Nations, and government organizations including USAID, to address the policy praxis divide.

**ALISSON RAMOS**

Alisson Ramos graduated from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) with honors in political science and chicano/a studies. She is interested in pursuing a PhD in racial and ethnic politics, focused on political behavior and public opinion. Her interests include Latino politics, interminority politics, and survey research. At UCLA, she served as a research assistant for Dr. Efrén Pérez. Her work has been published in *Political Behavior and Research & Politics*. Her award-winning senior thesis focuses on the conditions that facilitate political solidarity between people of color and how that affects the attitudes of minoritized groups. Currently, she is the Lab Manager for the Race, Ethnicity, Politics, and Society Lab (REPS) at UCLA and a fellow of the Society for Political Methodology Expansions Initiative. Ramos wants to use her future PhD in political science to teach, mentor, and research historically underrepresented communities.

**BENJAMIN SOTO**

Benjamin Soto recently graduated with academic honors from California State University, Fullerton's Master of Public Administration program. He earned a political science BA from the University of California, Riverside, in 2019. As an MPA student, Benjamin was awarded a City Management Fellowship, and became a CSUF graduate research assistant for the Social Equity Research and

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Policy Lab. He is currently a Research Specialist for the lab assisting with a National Institute of Justice-sponsored project exploring undocumented immigrants' experiences with crime, victimization, and gangs. He presented at two national academic conferences and co-authored an article published in the *Journal of Public Health Policy*. His professional experiences in federal and local government, shaped his research interests in exploring how the dynamics of race, ethnicity, and immigration shape political representation, ideology, and behavior—focusing especially on how these dynamics impact state and local government intuitions and officials' responsiveness to the interests of marginalized communities.

JALEN WARD

Jalen Ward is a second-year master's student studying political science and government at California State University, Fullerton. Ward is a current Pa'lante Fellow and Grad Equity scholar at his campus. He splits his time working in health policy at a healthcare startup and working for his program's department as a TA and advisor to undergrads. His current research focuses on political psychology, revanchism and irredentism in states like Russia and China, and political epistemology. Ward's current thesis project focuses on political agnotology and dissemination of information in a myriad of contexts like the Nixon & Trump presidencies, Nuclear Security, Public Health, and Social Networks. After graduating, Ward plans to pursue a PhD in political science and hopes to go into academia and continue to teach, research, and mentor his community.

**MENGYUAN (JOHNNY) ZHENG**

Mengyuan (Johnny) Zheng is a senior at St. John's University, majoring in government and politics with minors in theology and philosophy. As a Ronald E. McNair Scholar, he has conducted 3 independent research in authoritarian politics and philosophy. Zheng's current research focuses on the authoritarian rule of Castro's Cuba and China's Belt and Road Initiative in Southeast Asia. He has also presented his work "The Authoritarian Rule of Lukashenka's Belarus" at the 2022 Research Month Conference at his university and was fortunate enough to have won a \$250 1st place prize for his work. His most recent work focused on the Nietzschean philosophy and themes that are present in the popular anime series *Berserk*. As a life-long learner, Zheng plans to use his future doctoral degree in political science to teach, research, and continue to mentor students in fields he is passionate about. ■

