



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Greetings from the Department of Political Science and International Relations!

Dear Alumni,

Now in my second year as chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, I could not be more proud of all that our faculty, students, and alumni accomplished in 2024. This newsletter highlights some of these achievements.

The political science and international relations faculty continue to raise the bar on research, teaching, and service at Geneseo and the larger academic community. Professor Anand Rao gave a talk at Oxford University's Nissan Seminar about Japan's immigration policies. Professor Raslan Ibrahim was recognized as outstanding faculty by Geneseo's Student Association (SA), an honor coming from the students themselves. Professor Hanna Brant was promoted, chaired the search for our new faculty member, and organized a panel on the 2024 election that helped inform the campus about the stakes of last year's presidential race. Professor Jeff Koch, Professor Anand Rao, and Professor Joshua Turner all shared their expertise on the 2024 election panel. Meanwhile, Professor Aaron Herold wrapped up his fellowship at Princeton University and shared his research on Tocqueville and the current rise in revolutionary thinking both at Geneseo, and as an invited speaker at the University of Baltimore. Finally, the department is thrilled to welcome a new member of our faculty, Professor Jeonghwa Yang, whose expertise is on coordinated responses to natural disasters. For more details on all these accomplishments, please see the stories in this newsletter.

Our students have been recognized as outstanding not just at Geneseo, with their induction into Phi Beta Kappa, but also across all of the State University of New York (SUNY) system. We're so proud of political science major Laura Wright '24, who was selected for the 2024 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence. Our Model UN Club continues to be active in conferences across the northeast, and our Political Affairs Club advances the careers of our students by traveling to DC and hosting guest speakers. Please take a moment to read the articles about our amazing students included in this newsletter.

Last but certainly not least, the department is so grateful for the generous support from you, our alumni. In this newsletter, we highlight just a few of the many incredible contributions of our alumni network from across New York and in Washington, D.C. You never cease to amaze us with your generosity, not just in terms of funding (though we are grateful for that!), but also for your time, caring support, and commitment to Geneseo's Department of Political Science and International Relations. Please reach out with any ideas for how you can become more involved: kwest@geneseo.edu.

Sincerely,

Karleen West, *Professor and Chair*

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

Join Political Science and International Relations Alumni in giving back to the department through the

GREAT Give Back Event!



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The Spring 2025
Political Science
and International
Relations Newsletter
was compiled by
Professor Karleen
West, Alexis Savoie,
'24 and Rachel
Jessie, '25.

Josephine Lukito ('13) Social Media Use in the 2022 U.S. Midterms

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | Dr. Josephine "Jo" Lukito (Geneseo '13) joined our students for a lecture, "Social Media Use in the 2022 U.S. Midterms," on March 28th, 2024. Social media has become an increasingly important part of the election cycle as political candidates and

citizens alike use digital platforms to voice their opinions and share information.

Dr. Lukito focused on an interconnected set of studies that examine discourse during the 2022 U.S. Midterm elections which occurred on 11 different social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,

YouTube, Reddit, 4Chan, Gab, Gettr, Truth Social, Telegram, and TikTok). These studies show that candidates are leveraging different platforms to communicate with different audiences, and also show the rise of alt-tech platforms as an alternative, digital space for conspiracies and election fraud discourse to flourish. Dr. Lukito discussed the increasing use of computational methods in political communication research. She also met with graduating political science students prior to the talk to discuss graduate school and other avenues for post-undergraduate career planning.

Dr. Lukito is an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas at Austin's School of Journalism and Media. She studies cross-platform media language in the global political communication context, focusing especially on interactions between news and different social media platforms. Dr. Lukito specializes in natural language processing and quantitative language analysis methods to study language over time.

Dr. Lukito's ongoing work studies political mis- and disinformation, including the impact of Russian disinformation on political

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communication ecologies more broadly. She has discussed her research in *Columbia Journalism Review* and on CNN; this research was also cited in Robert Mueller's 2018 report. Dr. Lukito also studies live-tweeting, economic news coverage, public diplomacy, and U.S. news coverage about foreign policy. She publishes extensively in peer-reviewed journals such as *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *Political Communication*, and *Information, Communication & Society*.

Dr. Lukito received her Ph.D from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 2020, where she also earned Ph.D minors in English Linguistics and Political Science (International Relations and Quantitative Methods). Our department thanks Dr. Lukito for sharing her expertise and experiences with our students! We encourage all of our alumni to visit our campus and share their inspiring and informative work with us!



DONOR PROFILE: C.C. Christakos '83



By Lexi Savoie, '24 | C.C. Christakos graduated from SUNY Geneseo with her B.A. degree in Political Science in 1983 and earned an MPA degree from The American University School of Public Affairs in 1992 where she was named a Presidential Management Fellow. Christakos built her career in the Federal Government landing her first job at the U.S. Supreme Court. She has also worked at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management where she authored the legislation creating the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

She is currently a Senior Legislative Liaison in the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs at the US Department of Labor.

Christakos has been actively involved as a volunteer with various alumni initiatives. She served on the DC Regional Alumni Committee from 2010-2019.

She regularly attends regional events, has been an externship host, and a GOLD Leadership speaker. Christakos has been awarded the Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award in

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2010. She has also volunteered in her community, devoting more than thirty years to the Junior League of Washington, including serving as its President in 2003-2004.

Her lifetime giving comes to \$18,000 almost entirely directed to the Department of Political Science and International Relations, and it is our honor to highlight her generosity and achievements. Christakos also has a \$10,000 planned gift

commitment to our department, which we greatly appreciate and are confident will be used to help our student's foster excellence. She also created the Christakos Fund for Research in Political Science. Christakos shares:

"I had wonderful Political Science professors at Geneseo who encouraged my passion for public service, and it was in that spirit that I created the Christakos Fund for Research in Political Science. It is my hope that the fund

defrays expenses for research conference opportunities and living expenses for students."

Christakos shares that it is very important that alumni consider estate planning as a great way to also donate to Geneseo. Our department extends our thanks to C.C. Christakos for her continued support of our students and college!

Continuing the Conversation Israel and Palestine

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | On March 6th, 2024, students gathered for "Continuing the Conversation: Israel and Palestine," a speaker series on the ensuing conflict between the nations. Geneseo's Dr. Raslan Ibrahim and University of Connecticut's Dr. Jeremy Pressman presented lectures on the issue. These lectures were oriented around developments after November, since this was when our last programming on the topic was held by the College's Model UN and History Club. The presentations were followed by a question and answer period, moderated by Political Science major, Lexi Savoie '24. This event was made possible by generous grant funding from Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society. We thank the hardworking members of the Honor Society who helped to coordinate, our Department faculty who oversaw the student-lead planning, as well as our passionate speakers who extended their time to ensure our student body remains educated on this ongoing conflict.

The goal of the event was to utilize scholarly expertise from Geneseo and beyond to allow students to make informed decisions about how to approach



global conflict. This is an especially important aim, in the wake of political misinformation across social media platforms about the region that is today Israel and Palestine. In scholarly settings, the overarching objective is always to explain and understand a set of events rather than provide justification for any group's actions.

The University Police Department was contacted during the planning stages of the event, and we thank them for sending two officers who attended, to aid should any issues have arisen. We thank our student attendees for remaining respectful throughout the event and making this added security simply a precaution. We are proud that Geneseo has fostered a comfortable and safe environment of learning for all to engage with sensitive topics.

About the Speakers

Dr. Ibrahim is a Professor of Political Science and International Relations here at Geneseo. His research and teaching interests include International Politics of the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, International Relations Theory, Sovereignty, and Human Rights. Dr. 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). He also has professional experience working as a correspondent for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC Arabic) and Israel Broadcasting

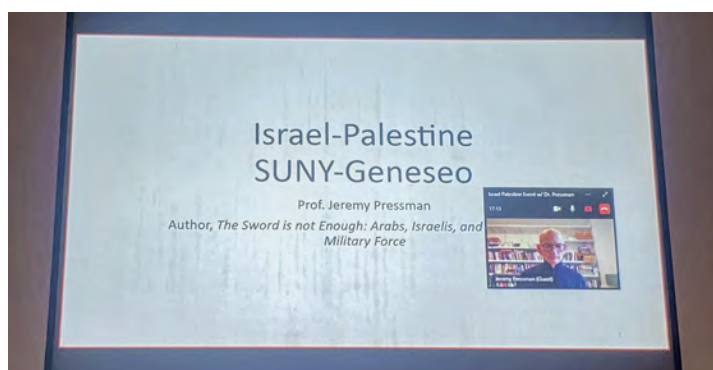
Authority (IBA), covering Israeli and Palestinian affairs.

Dr. Ibrahim is known for his involvement with the Ukrainian Working Group alongside Professors Goeckel and Hart, and their programming on the Ukraine conflict. Dr. Ibrahim has been actively involved with our college's Model UN organization, and has attended United Nations Conferences. These include the conference on Climate Change and Human Rights in Doha, Qatar in February 2023 and the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2023.

Dr. Pressman is an Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Middle East Studies at the University of Connecticut. Dr. Pressman studies international relations, protests, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Middle East politics, and U.S. foreign policy. He co-founded and co-directs the Crowd Counting Consortium, an event counting project that has tallied and made publicly available data on all manner of protests in the United States since 2017. Dr. Pressman received his PhD in political science from MIT and previously worked at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His most recent book is *The sword is not enough: Arabs, Israelis, and the limits of military force*, which questions the over-reliance on military force and highlights the negative military and political consequences such as greater insecurity.

Dr. Pressman has written two other books and has also published many articles and letters in the wider press such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, the *Boston Review*, the *Washington Quarterly* and *ForeignAffairs.com*. He has enjoyed speaking to community groups – often about Israel-Palestine – including at public libraries, eldercare facilities, faith communities, schools, a debate camp, and (virtually) to the Tucson (AZ) Great Decisions Association. We thank him for joining us!

Our department encourages all of our students to organize programming surrounding topics and themes they are interested in, and we look forward to providing resources to turn future ideas into action.





2024 Senior and Honor Society Dinner

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | Our department held its annual Senior and Honor Society Dinner on April 29th, 2024 at our college's Union Ballroom. Students enjoyed dinner, followed by induction ceremonies and special mentions/awards.

Bartoszek, Madilyn Falgiano, Claire Hackbush, Brian Kenny, Jesse Larkin, Lauren McCormick, Alexandra Messerklinger, Corina Tulevech, and Hiroki Yoshida. Other current members include Eugene Bullock, Kieran Kelley, Henry Kemblowski, Eleanor Parkhurst, Alexis Savoie, and Laura Wright.

Dr. Andrew Hart inducted several students into Sigma Iota Rho Honor Society for International Relations. 2023-2024 inductees include Brian Kenny, Zoe Navratil, Corina Tulevech, Elinore Voss, and Hiroki Yoshida. Eleanor Parkhurst is a current Sigma Iota Rho member.



After opening remarks from Department Chair Karleen West, current member Nicole Kemmett '24 led the Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Honor Society induction ceremony. 2023-2024 inductees include Julie



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Awarded Students include:

Elinore Voss- Twenty-Fourth Annual Robert Goeckel/Rose Bachem Alent International Relations & Foreign Language Award, presented by Professor Emeritus Robert Goeckel

Emma Furnari and Brian Kenney – Ambassador Apartments Scholarship for Outstanding International Relations, presented by Professor Anand Rao

Rachel Jessie, Alexandra Messerklinger, and Zoe Navratil – Jesse M. Rodgers Memorial Endowed Scholarship, presented by Professor Andrew Hart

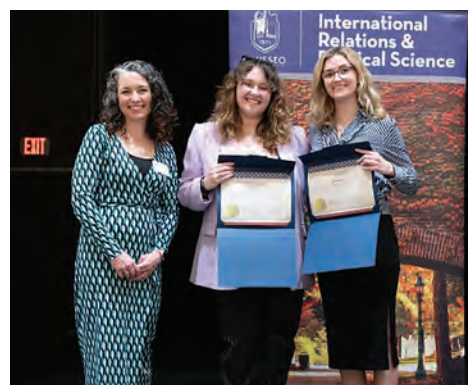
Lauren Witting – Thirty-Fifth Annual Award for Outstanding Intern, presented by Professor Andrew Hart

Thomas Healy – Twenty-Fifth Annual Alumni Senior Award in Legal Studies, presented by Professor Hanna Brant

Alexander Dellaratta and Madilyn Falgiano – Nineteenth Annual Edward G. Janosik Leadership Award, presented by Professor Jeffrey Koch

Corina Tulevech and Eleanor Parkhurst – Twenty-Third Annual Award for Outstanding Senior in International Relations, presented by Professor Raslan Ibrahim

Nicole Kemmett and Alexis Savoie – Forty-Fifth Annual Award for Outstanding Senior in Political Science, presented by Professor Karleen West



Graduating seniors got to share their future plans with attendees, which range from Masters, law school, and PhD programs. We commend all of our students who are pursuing higher education and entering the workforce!

Our Department is proud of all of our Political Science/International Relations undergraduate and soon-to-be-graduate scholars, and wishes our students well on their future endeavors at Geneseo and beyond!



Alumni Career Panel

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | Our Department proudly organized and hosted five alumni for a Career Panel on April 29th, 2024 in our College Union. We thank Dr. Jeffrey Koch for helping to facilitate this event,



which was open to all students! Featured Political Science alumni who joined to discuss their careers and dispense career advice include:



- Craig Arrighetti, '87 – CIA Analyst
- David Case, '99- Supervising Partner at Relin, Goldstein & Crane LLP & Fein (JD from SUNY Buffalo)
- Reilly J. O'Brien, '21 – Chief of Staff at Monroe County Legislature- Republican Conference
- Kate Wastl, '071 – Global EHS Services Manager, Moog Corporate Group, Global EHS Project Manager, Environmental Health & Safety (Masters in Integrated Marketing Communications from St. Bonaventure and MBA from SUNY Buffalo)
- Martha Valenti, '071 – Chief of Staff, Industry Solutions Group Cisco Systems (MPA from Syracuse University)



We extend our thanks to our alumni who returned to our campus to discuss their careers and experiences with our current student body. Students enjoyed asking questions, learning, and visiting with alumni after the panel at the Annual Senior and Honor Society Dinner. We are honored that they were present to support our graduating and continuing students. We encourage all of our alumni to connect with us and our students as you set off on your futures after Geneseo!



Nissan Seminar Great Power Politics and Japan's Immigration Dilemma



By Lexi Savoie, '24 | On May 17th, 2024, Dr. Anand Rao spoke at St Antony's College through the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. He discussed how the coronavirus pandemic suddenly closed Japan's doors to inbound tourism and migration in the early 2020s, but those doors were never going to be closed indefinitely. The pandemic, originating in Wuhan, revealed the centrality of China in particular to Japan's immigration dilemma. China's transformation in

the twenty-first century into an economic superpower has been an understudied possible motivation for Japan's government to liberalize the country's immigration regime as a tool for retaining influence in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

St. Antony's College is a constituent college of Oxford that was founded in 1950 and specializes in the study of international relations, economics, and politics. 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.

Dr. Rao is an assistant professor of Political Science and International Relations and his

work has been published by Asian Politics & Policy, the Japan Studies Association Journal, and Lexington Books. He is a member of Cohort 5 of the U.S.-Japan Network for the Future. He 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. This spring semester, he has been passionately teaching a Senior Seminar course on Comparative Politics in which the second half of the term has focused largely

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on immigration policy and issues. Dr. Rao was an Academic Visitor at St Antony's College during the Michaelmas Term in 2023. He received a sabbatical for the Fall 2023 semester which ran from October 8th to December 2nd. While there, Dr. Rao did research for an ongoing project that analyzes geopolitical factors influencing recent Japanese immigration policy. 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. Our department hopes Dr. Rao enjoys speaking at this seminar and is proud of his ongoing research and contributions to our department!

Model UN ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Closes 2024 Season with Participation in Model EU

By Madilyn Falgiano '24 | In mid-April, Geneseo's Model United Nations (UN) team participated in the SUNY Model European Union (EU) conference at SUNY Buffalo State. They were able to bring 10 students on this trip, including two attending their first conference. Our students participated in three days of debate and negotiations while representing Finland, Slovenia, and Portugal, discussing issues such as the conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, migration politics, and various economic policies.

At the opening ceremony on Friday, keynote speaker Ryan Meilak delivered remarks and answered questions from students. Mr. Meilak is a congressional liaison for the European Parliament working in Washington D.C. Also present was Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, an alum of SUNY Buffalo State, who briefly spoke to the conference. During the



dinner reception following the opening ceremony, two Geneseo students, Jared and Ethan, took the

opportunity to introduce themselves to Mayor Brown and speak with him.



opportunity to introduce themselves to Mayor Brown and speak with him.

Despite much hard work, Geneseo did not come home with an award from the conference. However, we are very optimistic that the club's growth over the past two years to rebuild following the Covid-19 pandemic will result in future conference success. This was also the final conference that four of our seniors participated in; Damian Bradley, Jo Grady, Eleanor Parkhurst (Treasurer) and Madilyn Falgiano (President) graduated in May.

The Model UN was able to participate in the Model EU Conference as a result of the generous support of Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Robert Goeckel.



Eugene Bullock
Carly Salerno
Elinore Voss

Madilyn Falgiano
Alexis Savoie

Phi Beta Kappa 2024 Inductees

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | A number of our Political Science and International Relations department students were proudly inducted into Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society on May 8th, 2024. Department Chair and Professor Karleen West was unanimously elected as President of Geneseo's Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa as of September 2023, and she and all of our faculty members are incredibly proud of our student's achievements.

Our department congratulates the following political science and international relations inductees:

Students and members enjoyed food and networking followed by opening remarks from Professor Karleen West. This was followed by a discussion on the history of Phi Beta Kappa as well as a personal remark about the impact of Phi Beta Kappa enrollment by Political Science major Nicole Kemmett '24. Students completed the induction ceremony and excitedly received their certificates.

Phi Beta Kappa is celebrating 20 years at Geneseo this year, and is the nation's oldest and most widely known academic honor society. Students from both the junior and senior classes are selected each spring for membership into the organization. Geneseo's chapter annually invites for induction of outstanding liberal arts students and sponsors activities on campus to increase awareness of the importance of studies in the liberal arts and sciences. The Alpha Delta Chapter at Geneseo was established in 2004. About 10 percent of the nation's institutions of higher learning have a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. We thank our students for their continued hard work to uphold this tradition of excellence at our college and for the attendance of current Phi Beta Kappa members.



Professor Recognition Award Dr. Raslan Ibrahim

By Lexi Savoie, '24 | Geneseo's Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) of the Student Association (SA) hosts annual Professor Recognition Award Ceremonies. This year, our department's Dr. Raslan Ibrahim received one of the Professor Recognition Awards. He was honored among other

distinguished Geneseo faculty at an award ceremony on May 2nd, 2024 at Doty Recital Hall. The ceremony was open to all students, and 27 professors will receive awards among the 140 student-initiated nominations received.

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It is no surprise that Dr. Ibrahim has been chosen for this award as he has made an incredible impact on our student's success and development as scholars. We are continuously proud of Dr. Ibrahim's endeavors on and off our campus and thank our students for taking the time to appreciate and give back to their educators. For more information about Dr. Ibrahim's involvement, see our

"Continuing the Conversation: Israel and Palestine" article and check out Episode 4 of our reel series "What's in My Office?" on our department Instagram page: @geneseopolisci.

In their nominations of Dr. Ibrahim, students highlighted how he has helped them find their passion for politics and career direction. Students cited how he is kind, understanding, and passionate

towards his students and within his roles at our college. Thank you, Dr. Ibrahim!

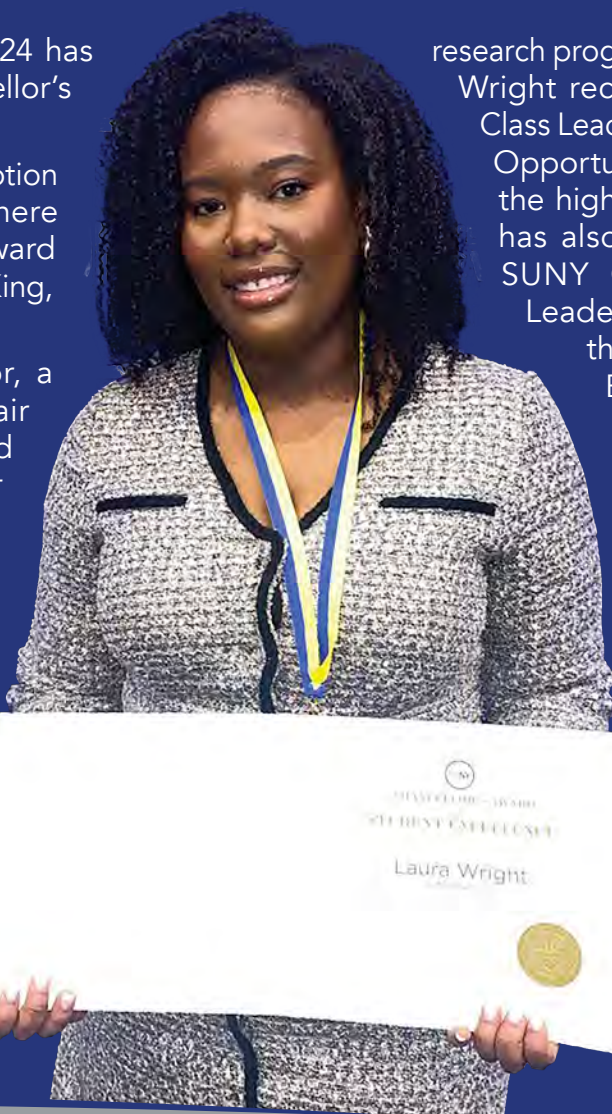


2024 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence

By Betsy Harris | Laura Wright, '24 has been selected for the 2024 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.

Laura was invited to an awards reception on April 11th, 2024 in Albany, where she received a medallion and an award certificate from Chancellor John B. King, Jr.

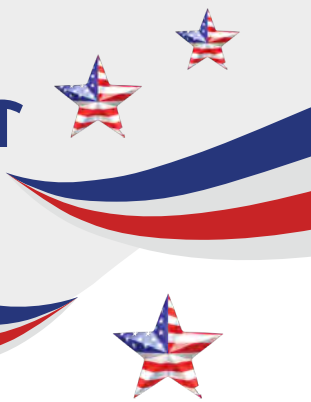
Laura is a political science major, a recipient of the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program for research, and was awarded the Jessie M. Rodger Memorial Endowed Scholarship for academic achievement, leadership, and character. She is a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society and Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society. In addition to her academic prowess, Wright is a participant in the competitive National Science Foundation summer undergraduate



research program at Vanderbilt University. Wright received the SUNY Geneseo Class Leader Award for an Educational Opportunity Program student with the highest GPA in their class. She has also been recognized by the SUNY Geneseo Global Affairs Leadership Program, funded by the Jewish Foundation for the Education of Women.

After completing her undergraduate studies, Wright plans to pursue a PhD in political science at Vanderbilt University, where she will study how American local politics contribute to community segregation. Congratulations, Laura!

2024 GREAT Day



By Lexi Savoie, '24 | On April 24th, 2024, classes were cancelled for the annual GREAT Day, to encourage students to attend a number of panels, presentations, and poster projects about various topics, created by students from all disciplines at our college.

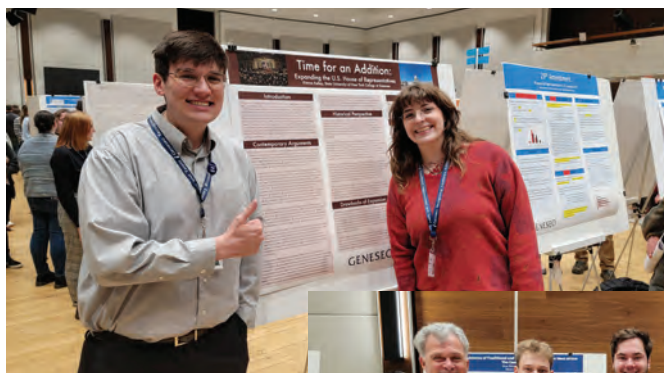
GREAT Day is a college-wide symposium celebrating the creative and scholarly endeavors of our students. GREAT Day fosters academic excellence, encourages professional development, and builds connections within the community.

Nicole Kemmett '24 presented her research, during the Edgar Fellows Panel, titled "Two Sides of the Same Coin? LGBTQ+ Rights in the US and Russia," sponsored by Dr. Hanna Brant. Dr. Koch's PLSC 490 Senior Seminar on American Politics students also prepared posters for GREAT Day:

Andrew Alsup – A Discussion on the Topic of Race and American Politics

Kieran Kelley – Time for an Addition: Expanding the House of Representatives

Nicholas Parks – Proposal of 29th Amendment to the U.S.



Constitution, Age Maximum of 75 Years for Members of Congress

Emilee Meadors – An Analysis of the Effectiveness of Food and Housing Programs for the Poor

Pamela Flores – Interest Groups and Democratic Legitimacy: Analyzing the Influence and Impact of Interest Groups on Election Polling/Results

Zoe Navritil – Why Representation Matters: Examining the Role of

Congressional Racial Diversity on Political Engagement

Our department is proud of all of our students who participated in sharing work or volunteering to help at GREAT Day and will continue to encourage our students to showcase their hard work and talent.



Political Affairs Club D.C. Trip

By Karleen West | The Political Affairs Club (PAC) continued their tradition of traveling with Professor Jeff Koch to Washington, D.C. every fall semester to meet with our fabulous Geneseo alumni. The trip began on September 26, when students heard from an alumni career panel that included: Madeline Vars, '17: foreign affairs officer in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Assistance Coordination (NEA/AC); Dan Matthews, '14, Director for Industrial Competitiveness at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative which is part of the Executive Office of the President; Ryan Callanan, '06, Senior Congressional Advisor in the State Department; and Bronwyn Irwin, '97, a consultant who previously worked at DAI, an international development



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company. Following the panel, students attended a dinner with alumni that was sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations. The following day, students met with Andrea Delgado, '07, Chief of Staff for Natural Resources and Environment at the USDA; Brian Skretny, '95, lobbyist at Wilmer Hale; Matthew Thackson, '08, lobbyist for Association of American Nurse Anesthesiologists; and Tom Buneo, PAC Services & Compliance at 720 Strategies. The students learned so much from our alumni - we want to thank all of them for sharing their precious time and expertise. As a reminder, the PAC DC Trip is only possible due to donations from alumni like you!



2024 Election Panel



Professor Hanna Brant organized a panel leading up to the November 2024 general election to inform students of the stakes of last year's presidential race. On the panel, Professor Jeff Koch spoke on the importance of the race for domestic politics, while Professor Anand Rao and Professor Joshua Turner highlighted the global implications of the outcome of the U.S. presidential election. Students, faculty, and staff from across the college attended. "I really enjoyed being able to listen to the speakers and being able to just soak in their expertise," wrote one political science major in response to the event. "I loved the format of having them each speak on their areas of interest and then allowing for student questions to follow. I thought it was great and I'm so glad I went." Thank you to our brilliant panelists and our faculty organizer for making this event possible!

Geneseo Adds New Major in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

By Robyn Rime | The Department of Political Science and International Relations is supporting a new interdisciplinary major in philosophy, politics, and economics for undergraduate students that debuted in fall 2024.

"The new program in philosophy, politics, and economics combines solid career and graduate school preparation with the best of what a liberal arts education offers: interdisciplinary learning in the social sciences and humanities, asking big questions about things that matter, and working closely with faculty in many different fields," says Carly Herold, assistant professor of philosophy and program coordinator. "Students will learn about how politics, morality, and economics interact in major questions and

issues of policy, law, and social organization. It's a great major for anyone interested in making a difference."

Program highlights include a rigorous exposure to all three disciplines and the flexibility to focus on specific areas of interest. Opportunities for mentored research or internships will help prepare graduates for careers in law, public policy and administration, non-profit management, media and marketing, or public and private sector consulting.



For more information about the philosophy, politics, and economics major, contact Herold at heroldc@geneseo.edu or 585-245-6352.

Generous Gift Supports New Professorship in Political Science and International Relations

By Keith Walters, '11 | Mary Houlne DeWeaver, '71 and Kevin DeWeaver, '72 unexpectedly left more than \$530,000 to the departments of sociology and

political science and international relations.

"Mary and Kevin DeWeaver expressed their support for Geneseo over the years with modest gifts to The Fund for Geneseo, athletics, and scholarships," says Ellen Leverich, '90, vice president for college advancement. "They did not notify us that they planned to include us in their estate. This gift of more than half a million dollars is a testament to the undergraduate experience they had at Geneseo, and we are so grateful for their foresight and generosity."

Little is known about the DeWeavers outside of their professional networks, as they lived an intensely private life and have no surviving family. What can be gleaned from those who interacted with them is that the couple's love story began at Geneseo.

The DeWeavers were both only children. Kevin grew up on a dairy farm in Western New York, and Mary traded the hustle and bustle of New York City for the serenity of the Finger Lakes. According to a close friend, the DeWeavers often took long walks

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around campus and throughout the region—a habit they kept late into their lives.

Following Geneseo, the DeWeavers moved south as Kevin pursued his Ph.D in social work at the University of Florida. He subsequently landed a job at the University of Georgia, where he served as a professor and the PhD program director in the School of Social Work for more than 26 years. Kevin's affinity for undergraduate teaching may have stemmed from his time at Geneseo, where, according to a former colleague, he "felt liberated and free for the first time in his young adult life." Mary

was an avid reader who enjoyed volunteering in her community and traveling around the country with Kevin to academic conferences.

When Kevin passed away in 2011, Mary was "never really the same," according to those closest to her, but that's not where the DeWeavers' love story ends. The couple's bequest to Geneseo will ensure that their name and memory will serve Geneseo students and faculty for generations.

With their gift, the Department of Political Science and International Relations has established the

DeWeaver Professorship, which will support a research-focused faculty member annually, prioritizing junior faculty seeking continuing appointment and promotion.

"The professorship will allow faculty the time to engage more deeply with their research, work with their students on research projects, and publish the results of their research," says Karleen West, chair of political science and international relations. "The DeWeaver Professorship will also support hiring long-term adjunct faculty who are excellent instructors and teach classes that our students need to graduate."

Invited Speakers on Gun Control and the Constitution



On Tuesday, October 22, 2024, the Department of Political Science and International Relations welcomed Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Political Science at SUNY Cortland to deliver a talk on "Gun Law History: Separating Fact from

Fiction." Dr. Spitzer is the author of *The Politics of Gun Control*. Spitzer is often quoted and interviewed by American and international news outlets, including *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, *ABC Nightly News*, *PBS's News Hour*, *MSNBC's All In With Chris Hayes*, *CNN*, *NPR's Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, *The Diane Rehm Show* and *1A (NPR)*, the *BBC*, *CBC*, *NHK*, *Der Spiegel*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *Slate*, and *Politico*, among others. He

also appeared in the documentary films *Guns and Mothers* (PBS, 2003), *Under the Gun* (Katie Couric Film Company, Epix, 2016), *The Price of Freedom* (Flatbush Pictures/Tribeca Films, 2021). He has testified before Congress on several occasions.

On Thursday, October 10, 2024, we welcomed Marc Landy, Professor of Political Science at Boston College. Based his new book co-authored with Dennis Hale, *Keeping the Republic: A Defense of*



American Constitutionalism, Professor Landy's talk will aim to counter the increasingly fashionable diatribes against the Constitution by law professors, journalists and political scientists who claim it is "broken," "obsolete," paralyzing, irredeemable etc. The talk's larger purpose is to explain why the Constitution is especially well constructed to enable America to resist the threats to the survival of republican democracy posed by the problems this modern state must face, amongst which are massive size and religious, ethnic, racial and ideological diversity.

Dr. Landy has a B.A. from Oberlin College and a Ph.D Government from Harvard University. He was the recipient of the 2009 Teaching Award chosen by the student members of the Boston College Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. He is the author (with Sidney Milkis) of *Presidential Greatness* (Kansas U.

Press, 2000), *The Environmental Protection Agency From Nixon to Clinton: Asking the Wrong Questions* (with Marc Roberts and Stephen Thomas) (Oxford University Press 1994), and the textbook *American Government: Enduring Principles, Critical Choices* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), now in its fourth edition. He is an editor of *Creating Competitive Markets: The Politics and Economics of Regulatory Reform* (Brookings Institution Press, 2007); *Seeking the Center: Politics and Policymaking at the New Century* (Georgetown University Press, 2001); and *The New Politics of Public Policy* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), and he has authored popular as well as scholarly articles on the Presidency and executive power, federalism, environmental regulation, the nature of American citizenship, and Patrick Deneen's critique of liberal democracy.

Professor Hanna Brant Promoted



In order to be successful at Geneseo, all faculty members must embody the model of "teacher-scholar" - a balance between a commitment to teaching, and the pursuit of scholarly research. The

department is proud to recognize that Dr. Hanna Brant has been promoted from the title of assistant professor to associate professor as a result of her achievements as a teacher-scholar.

Professor Brant epitomizes the kind of teacher-scholar that we need at Geneseo to advance our mission of "welcoming and inspiring students to develop their knowledge and skills to build a better world." She demonstrates a commitment to Geneseo's values of learning and belonging in all of her courses, and she has enabled our department to engage with Geneseo's new Gen Ed curriculum in a way that would not have been possible without her curricular developments and commitment to diversity, inclusion, and belonging. Professor Brant has made the course offerings in the department richer and more diverse since she joined



the faculty. She's expanding those offerings to the larger Geneseo community as she worked with other Women and Gender Studies faculty to develop the new interdisciplinary Queer Studies minor for the college. She continues to mentor students from underrepresented groups, supporting students in the McNair and AOP programs, first-generation students, and students that identify as LGBTQ+, in addition to all the students that thrive in her classes regardless of their identities.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Brant on her well-deserved promotion!

Introducing Professor Jeonghwa Yang



By Rachel Jessie, '25 | The Political Science Department at Geneseo welcomed Professor Jeonghwa Yang to its staff starting in the Fall 2024 semester. She has a B.A. from Ewha Womans University, an M.A from Korea's University in South Korea, and a Ph.D. in Public Administration from Florida State University with a graduate certificate in Emergency Management and Homeland Security. Her research areas focus on nonprofit and public management with a specific focus on disaster management. Dr. Yang was motivated to explore this field of research by the various experiences she encountered during her undergraduate studies in Seoul, South Korea. Throughout the duration of her undergraduate degree she noticed housing shortages that

impacted a lot of younger people and college students. She never noticed an improvement in the housing crisis and decided to start researching and learning more about potential solutions. Through this process she started to learn about cooperatives and social initiatives which sparked her interest in nonprofit organizations. Dr. Yang realized that there was a lot to be learned surrounding community initiatives or solutions to large social problems, such as the housing crisis. The research she completed allowed her to talk about the issues and the potential solutions.

Dr. Yang has presented her research at several academic conferences such as the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organization and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR), Public Management Research Conference (PMRC), and American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Professor Yang's work aims to bridge theory and practice in public administration, making a substantial impact in public and nonprofit management. Dr. Yang is currently working on a few different articles but the one she is most excited about centers around organizational learning in nonprofit and public sectors. She enjoys many aspects of being a professor here at Geneseo. Her favorites being the freedom it gives her to research topics of her choice and connecting with the students. She loves the energy that comes from students

when they are passionate about something. When asked if she had any advice for students, she stated "passion and interest is the most important thing to keep yourself motivated." Dr. Yang urges students to choose topics they are interested in so they can have a fulfilling life and enjoy every day.

At Geneseo she teaches Political Science 374 Public Administration which introduces public administration and covers both its theoretical and practical aspects. She also teaches Political Science 414 American Public Policy which is an introduction to the policy making process in American government with a special emphasis on the development of national domestic and defense policies. However, Dr. Yang's favorite area to teach is nonprofit management; she is the most motivated and passionate about this subject and enjoys when students engage with her. Dr. Yang strives to have a close relationship with her students and wants them to feel free to reach out to her anytime. Overall, the political science department at SUNY Geneseo is honored and excited to welcome her to our staff.

Join Political Science and International Relations Alumni in giving back to the department through the

GREAT Give Back Event!

