



ILLINOIS STATE  
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# News & Views

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT | SPRING 2021

**STUDENTS STAY ENGAGED  
DURING TIME OF  
POLITICAL CHAOS**

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# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN A TIME OF ADVERSITY

BY JOHN MOODY

The Greek philosopher, Plato, may have been right when he said: “One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.” That said, there’s no need to fear the future as students in the Department of Politics and Government at Illinois State University have heeded the ancient warning and already immersed themselves in the political process.

The politics of Washington, D.C., and here in Illinois have become so polarizing in recent years that many people have turned away from all the noise emanating from both sides of the aisle. Thankfully, there are Redbirds who still hear the call to serve.

Professor Erik Rankin, the department’s director of enrollment management and undergraduate studies, said the current generation of students is in some ways more civically engaged than politically engaged. But, he added, even if the political climate of their era is caustic, his students remain concerned for their fellow citizens.

“These students—because it’s kind of imprinted in their DNA—they want to help people,” Rankin said. “And, they’ve chosen politics as the vehicle for that. These students are pretty awesome already.”

Rankin leads students on an annual, week-long civic engagement trip to Washington, D.C., where they get to see their government at work with visits to Capitol Hill and to nonprofit organizations. In the classroom, Rankin teaches U.S. government, leadership, and political theory. He said it is important as a teacher to welcome and defend all points of view, even those that don’t align with his own political ideals.

“This is for me as an educator my job,” he said. “I’m not an educator of Democrat or Republican students. I’m not an educator of liberal or conservative students. I’m an educator of all different ideologies and backgrounds.

“My job is to educate them wherever they are. If they are Democrats or Republicans, make them better Democrats or better Republicans, and meet them where they are.”

## Kevin Phares

Sophomore Kevin Phares is a double major in politics and government and marketing, with future plans for law school. He describes himself as a conservative with a twist.

“I’m a conservative, but also a conservatarian—a conservative with libertarian leanings,” Phares said.

Before committing to study politics and government, which Phares was considering for a minor, he made a visit to the department to check it out. He ran into Rankin that day and found an ally.

“Professor Rankin has been a huge advocate for me and also a defender of mine,” Phares said. “And, he’s a political opposite. He said I was needed here to add to the conversation. He’s a fierce defender of free speech.”

Rankin advised him to consider politics and government as a major rather than a minor, so Phares took him up on it. Since then he’s been very involved with Students for Trump and Turning Point USA, a conservative organization active on over 2,500 campuses that bills itself as “the largest and fastest-growing youth organiza-

tion in America.”

Phares, who is not from a politically active family, suspected that his beliefs would put him in a political minority on a college campus, and he knew conservatives didn’t always feel comfortable speaking out. But he was up for the challenge.

“There’s been some public persecution,” he said. “I’ve been met with some serious friction, but I started clubs to have a conversation so that we can root out the bad ideas through civil discussion.”

And, he’s kept at it. Through Students for Trump, he knocked on doors for then-candidate Donald Trump and for a senator and a congresswoman. He’s volunteered for local GOP organizations in McLean and DuPage counties. He’s also given speeches on the importance of energizing voters to vote for Republican candidates.

Phares can trace his conservatism to his roots where he was taught that in America you can succeed with hard work. He be-



Conservatarian Kevin Phares

came interested in politics in 2014, prior to the 2016 election. He was a big fan of Sen. Ted Cruz, and then Trump surprised the world by getting nominated.

“That made me nervous because he was a novice,” Phares said, adding that he liked Trump’s policies but found him “at best, morally reprehensible” as a person.

Phares plans to use his Illinois State education to eventually run for public office after earning his law degree.

“I’ll work my way up to the senate, start in state and local politics, and build up a reputation,” he said.

## Mary O’Brien

Mary O’Brien ’20 is pursuing a graduate degree at Illinois State in public service after completing a double major in political science and legal studies. She is the child of two state employees, so she was



**Activist and Campaign Manager Mary O'Brien**

naturally aware of state politics at an early age. Her real political influence was her grandmother, Marilyn Michelini, who served as mayor of Montgomery in northern Illinois for 12 years.

"She was a moderate who worked across the aisle," O'Brien said of her grandmother. "With that background, I never really explored other majors."

O'Brien, who was part of Rankin's civic engagement trip last year, describes herself as a social liberal.

"I want human rights, equal opportunity," she said. "I'm not really a progressive, but I am interested in the big social issues."

The last few years have inspired her to an even greater interest in politics.

"I've definitely been a little angry, to say the least," O'Brien said. "I didn't agree with (Trump's) LGBTQ+ policies or immigration issues, so I'm hopeful about the new administration. We'll see."

O'Brien enjoyed her academic experience at Illinois State so much that she stayed on to pursue graduate studies. She said the faculty inspired her and peaked her interest in politics. She said her most influential professors have been Nancy Lind, Katelyn Schachtschneider, and Rankin.

"I absolutely love the department at ISU and had never personally met professors who care so much about your success," she said. "They care a lot, and they follow through. They helped with getting me into grad school and helped me get scholarships."

O'Brien has gained some practical experience along the way by working on her first political campaign.

"Last election cycle I was the campaign manager for Abbi Sorrells' run for McLean County coroner," she said. "I really enjoyed that experience because it was my first time being directly involved with a campaign and leading it. I was able to see if politics is truly for me."

Even though it wasn't a successful campaign, O'Brien found a good fit for her career ambitions.

"My dream job would be to be elected to Congress or to be on staff for a member of Congress," she said.

### **Angel Zamudio**

Senior Angel Zamudio has logged more political experience than most people whether they be college students or their parents. He's served as vice president and president of the ISU College Democrats, but his interest in politics started when he was 18.

"I got involved as a senior in high school during the Bernie Sanders primary campaign," Zamudio said. "I went to three of his

rallies and got to shake his hand. He opened me up to politics."

Zamudio also knocked on doors as field director for Nikita Richards in her bid to become McLean County Clerk. He's worked on campaigns in Illinois and Wisconsin. His intense interest in politics is personal and started at home with his family.

"My mother is from Guatemala, and I'm a first-generation college student," Zamudio said. "Trump was not friendly to immigrants so it lit a fire."

Trump and his policies inspired Zamudio to get family and friends in his immediate circle more involved to help push back against what he saw as "Trump's hostility toward immigrants." Zamudio also believes Trump's environmental policies have put the planet in crisis. And, he sees greater income inequality, especially for low-income immigrant families like his own.

"I'm a progressive Democrat, but I'm also critical of the party," he said, noting that some in his party are too beholden to donors once they get elected. He also believes in Medicare for all because he knows the impact good health care can have on people he knows personally.

"In my community, folks can't go to the doctor for fear they can't afford it," he said.

During his time at Illinois State, Zamudio credits his professors for pushing him to do his best and for helping him better grasp politics. He's been inspired by professors Kerri Milita, Noha Shawkiki, and Rankin.

The ISU College Democrats also make a yearly trip to Washington, D.C., which Zamudio has participated in three times. So, it's no surprise that his future goals involve working in the nation's capital, possibly on a Congressional staff or for a non-profit. As he finishes up his time at Illinois State, he knows he made the right choice for a major.

"This department is great," Zamudio said. "We have some of the best profs on campus."

For Rankin, he wants all of his students to come away from their experience here with an appreciation for the importance of politics and government in their lives.

"We absolutely require as an American society students who are willing, able, and intelligent enough to tackle the big problems we have," Rankin said. "We will always need solutions to big problems. Right now it's the coronavirus, but in 20 years it will be something else. We need smart, capable people who are ready to help people."

*"Ben Franklin said: 'Well done is better than well said.' Putting your hat in the ring is important."*



**Progressive Angel Zamudio**

## NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

### CHAIR'S REMARKS

The period of 2020-21 is unprecedented as the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on the global community. ISU is no exception as students, faculty, and staff have had to make substantial adjustments to teaching, learning, service and research. After a quick and successful transition of all in-person classes to online in spring 2020, our faculty have since worked diligently to perfect their delivery. To help our students, faculty and staff have used various means, including virtual meetings, frequent email communications and announcements as well as Zoom happy hours, to keep in touch with students to foster a sense of community. As a result, we have witnessed an impressive retention rate as the majority of our students have continued their study in the department during the pandemic.

To recruit the best and brightest students, the department has coordinated with the Admissions Office and launched several initiatives, including offering scholarships to incoming students, establishing a student ambassador corps, publishing new marketing materials, and making videos that introduce and highlight the department.

As we have confronted these challenges brought by the pandemic, our faculty and students continued to achieve many goals. Bethany Ekwonwa, a double major in political science and legal studies, was selected as a 2020-2021 Bone Scholar. Our Mock Trial teams participated in several virtual invitational competitions in Fall 2020 and achieved a respectable record.

The department has also made significant accomplishments in research. Two graduate students presented their research at professional conferences and also had their works published. Faculty have six books and twenty-one journal articles and book chapters published in 2020. Faculty and students continued to conduct their research despite having all university-sanctioned travels suspended due to the pandemic.

Finally, I want to thank our alums, friends, and (retired) faculty for their generous contributions to the department. Your support has kept us strong.

Dr. T.Y. Wang



### Donor Spotlight

#### Ali Riaz

The newly endowed Ali Riaz Graduate Student Award in the Department of Politics and Government will recognize the best student in Comparative Politics and International Rela-



From left, David Crumbaugh '73, donor of the Thomas E. Eimermann Professorship, Distinguished Professor Ali Riaz, and Professor Emeritus Thomas Eimermann at the inaugural Thomas E. Eimermann Professorship induction ceremony April 25, 2019.

tions. Distinguished Professor Dr. Ali Riaz was inspired to create the award after receiving the inaugural Thomas E. Eimermann Professorship in Politics and Government. The professorship was established by David Crumbaugh '73 to honor his former professor, who taught law-related courses for 38 years at Illinois State. Eimermann served as ISU's first pre-law advisor, founded and directed the mock trial program, and was chair of the Political Science Department from 1992 to 1998.

Riaz joined Illinois State University in 2002 and would later chair the Department of Politics and Government from 2007 to 2017. In 2018, he was appointed a Distinguished Professor.

"I am humbled by the opportunities ISU and the department offered me since I joined and wanted to express my gratitude to the students and the department," Riaz said. "I hope this award will encourage our graduate students to pursue studies in global politics at a time when we live in a deeply interconnected world and have much to learn from each other."

The inaugural recipient of the Ali Riaz Graduate Student Award in Comparative Politics and International Relations will be announced at the department's Annual Award ceremony, scheduled to take place in April 2021.

#### Charlotte Roberts

Charlotte Roberts ensured that the legacy of her brother, Politics and Government Professor Dr. Fred Roberts, lives on at Illinois State following his death on February 26, 2019. She used funds from his estate to establish the Dr. Frederick and Carlene Roberts Memorial Internship

Fund. The fund will enable students to gain internship experiences and embrace civic engagement opportunities.

Before joining the Politics and Government Department, Roberts attended Princeton University on a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, earning his master's and doctoral degrees there while completing his doctoral research at the Brookings Institute.

In the fall of 1968, Roberts joined the Politics and Government Department at Illinois State as one of its founding professors. Immediately, he developed a new course on collective decision-making, which he taught until his retirement in 2000. He was an instructional innovator, creating a legislative simulation as a teaching device for students to learn about political participation. Roberts was long-serving director of the internship program, sponsored the Model Illinois Government program and served as graduate director where he recruited and advised students.

"Knowing that about him, I felt that providing funding for internships was the best way to acknowledge and continue my brother's life-work," Charlotte Roberts said.



From left, Siblings David, Charlotte, and Fred Roberts in 2010.

Politics and Government Department Chair Dr. T.Y. Wang worked closely with Fred Roberts.

"Dr. Fred Roberts was a committed educator. He had a modest demeanor and was extremely generous to others," Wang said. "We want to thank Fred's sister, Charlotte Roberts, for establishing the Dr. Frederick and Carlene Roberts Memorial Internship Fund to honor his legacy."

#### Kay Wilson

Kay Wilson '63 has been a longtime supporter of the Politics and Government Department. Her late husband, Thomas D. Wilson '59, was a professor in the department for 31 years. His



**Kay B. and Thomas D. Wilson**

dedication to his students, especially those pursuing public service internships, inspired him to establish the Thomas D. Wilson Award in 2013 to assist unpaid interns with their expenses. Today, the award motivates and rewards outstanding students whose internship experiences continue to impact their lives.

In 2018, Kay Wilson furthered the family's legacy by establishing the Wilson Family Model United Nations Endowment. The endowment awards travel and registration costs for students who attend Model United Nations through Illinois State University. Political Science graduate student Grace Burgener '20 was among 10 Illinois State Students who attended the 2019 National Model United Nations conference in New York.

"Model United Nations was a tremendous experience for me because I was able to learn more about diplomacy, international relations, and the operations of the U.N.," Burgener said.

T.Y. Wang, chair of the Department of Politics and Government attributes Kay Wilson's generosity to the department's ability to provide meaningful, hands-on learning opportunities to its students.

"Through their generous donations, the department has been able to support students' civic engagement activities. We are most grateful for Kay's and Tom's generosity," Wang said.

### **Wang Named University Professor**

Illinois State University's Office of the Provost announced Professor of Politics and Government T.Y. Wang has been named University Professor.

Wang joined Illinois State University in 1990 as an assistant professor. He achieved the rank of full professor in 2002 and has served as department chair since 2017. Prior to that, he served as associate chair, associate director in International Studies and Programs, and since 2004 has co-edited the prestigious *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. He is a key scholar on East Asian politics with a special emphasis on Taiwan. He has published multiple books, 50 journal articles/book chapters, and has been invited to present at institutions around the world. In 2015, he received the college's Outstanding Researcher award.

Wang is a committed educator and promotes empirical research in political science often choosing to teach the methodology courses in the department. He has been frequently invited to conduct workshops on empirical methodology in prestigious foreign institutions.



**President Larry Dietz and Dr. T.Y. Wang**

Two of his textbooks are widely used by graduate students and scholars in China and Taiwan. He also disseminates his work through online outlets such as the Monkey Cage, an academic peer-reviewed blog that regularly attracts millions of views.

### **Riaz and Shawki Recognized with Impact Award**

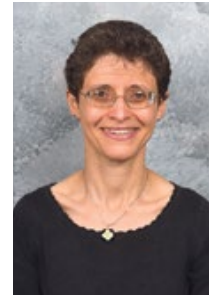
Department of Politics and Government Professors Ali Riaz and Noha Shawki are recognized with this year's Impact Award.

Sponsored by University College, the Impact Award is designed to show appreciation for individual members of the campus community who have made an impact on new students and on student retention. Recipients include advisors, students, and faculty who were nominated by freshmen. Since 2013, new freshmen and new transfer students have nominated Illinois State faculty, staff, and students for an Impact Award.

Riaz is a Distinguished Professor of the



**Distinguished Professor Ali Riaz**



**Professor Noha Shawki**

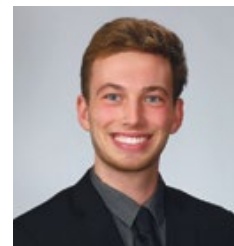
Department. He teaches several undergraduate courses on comparative politics. His area of expertise includes South Asian politics. He is also a nonresident fellow of the Washington, D.C.-based Atlantic Council.

Shawki's area of expertise is international relations, and she teaches several undergraduate courses on international organizations. Shawki also leads the ISU Model United Nations team and several civic engagement initiatives of the department. Recipients of 2020 award was recognized in the fall.

### **Han, Rankin and Robinson Received the RISE Award**



**Office Manager Jennifer Han**



**Gordon Robinson (second-year graduate student)**



**Professor Erik Rankin**

Members of the Department of Politics and Government received recognition for their exemplary service to the department during the pandemic. Jennifer Han, office manager; Erik Rankin, director of Enrollment Management and Undergraduate Studies; and graduate student Gordon Robinson have been selected to receive the Red-birds RISE to the COVID Challenge Award.

The RISE Award was established by the Provost's Office to recognize the work of students, faculty, and staff

“who have exemplified one or more of the RISE attributes: Resilience/Resourcefulness, Innovation, Service, Empathy in the performance of their job functions and, in doing so, have positively impacted the Division of Academic Affairs.”

### Department Receives 2020-2021 Assessment Initiative Award

The Illinois State University Assessment Advisory Council and University Assessment Services staff has selected a proposal submitted by the Department of Politics and Government for a 2020-2021 Assessment Initiative Award. The proposed project focuses on informing departmental faculty how to best design and implement their future online courses through indirect evidence from students regarding their recent online course experiences.

In its award letter, the committee noted the importance of the project because it “provides an important initiative that examines student learning in online courses, both synchronous and asynchronous, and the elements of course design and instruction that students perceive to best promote their learning, as well as the extent to which those perceptions may be different across course modalities and student characteristics.”

The principal investigator of the project is Dr. L.J. Zigerell, the department’s assessment director. The project will be conducted in fall 2020 and spring 2021.

### Brown Bag Presentation

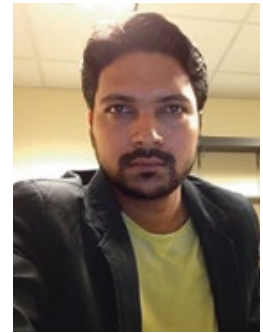
**Md. Sohel Rana**, a second-year graduate student presented his ongoing research on legitimization strategies of the new authoritarian regimes at the department’s brownbag series on September 10. His presentation was titled “The Construction of Regime Legitimacy: How Do Competitive Authoritarian Regimes Legitimize their Rule?” His research investigates the institutional and the non-institutional aspects of regime legitimization in the rising new authoritarian regimes. His research explores three case studies, which share dissimilar historical, cultural, ideological, and demographic characteristics.

Sohel argues that the conventional literature broadly identifies institutional strategies for regime legitimization, including elections, co-optation and repression, and economic performance, but largely ignores non-institutional strategies such as ideological narratives as a mode for regime legitimacy. He examines how non-institutional strategies work in combina-

tion with institutional strategies to construct regime legitimacy in competitive authoritarian regimes. He develops a broader theoretical framework combining both institutional and non-institutional elements to analyze three strategies for regime legitimization: procedural, performance, and ideological.

Sohel contends that in the presence of procedural and performance legitimization, ideological legitimization builds the bridge between “legitimacy claims” (of the rulers) and “legitimacy beliefs” (of the ruled), which eventually construct legitimacy in authoritarian regimes. By exploring this linkage and explaining how ideology helps create legitimacy, he intends to add new knowledge to the existing literature.

Sohel is currently working on his thesis. His thesis committee members are Professors Ali Riaz, Yusuf Sarfati, and Mike Hendricks.



**Sohel Rana (second-year graduate student)**



**Professor Emeritus Gary Klass**

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

During his 34 years as a faculty member in the Department of Politics and Government, Gary Klass made an impact both on ISU’s campus and across the community.

With a doctorate from State University of New York at Binghamton, Klass was prepared to teach a variety of courses, including public policy, race and ethnicity, and quantitative research methods.

He contributed on campus as a member of the University’s Academic Senate, creating much controversy when he opposed the construction of the Redbird Arena. He was also a voice in his field as an author of journal articles and the book *Just Plain Data Analysis*, which teaches practical statistical skills not often taught in statistics courses.

Beyond his academic life, Klass played a significant role in the University’s Habitat for Humanity chapter. He has been involved with the ISU student volunteers since the campus chapter formed in the mid-1990s, serving as a faculty advisor and project

director. ISU students have partnered with Illinois Wesleyan University to construct 26 houses in 25 years. The chapters have been recognized as the Habitat Collegiate Chapter of the Year in 2010, and are recipients of the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Award.

His dedication was recognized by the College of Arts and Sciences in 2005, when he received the Outstanding Service Award. Klass also received a Lifetime Achievement Habitat Hero Award last fall. The honor recognizes the many years that Klass has raised funds and worked at construction sites on weekends.

He continues to do both and remains a project director in his retirement, which began in 2015. He resides in Normal with his wife, Patricia, who is retired faculty from ISU’s College of Education. Beyond his priority to create positive relationships in the community and meet housing needs through Habitat, Klass spends much of his time trying to beat fellow Politics and Government faculty retiree, Bob Bradley, at golf.

## FACULTY AND SCHOLARLY NEWS

### Faculty Changes

**Professor Jason Cieslik** joined the Illinois State faculty as an assistant professor of Legal Studies in the Department of Politics and Government.



**Professor Jason Cieslik**

Cieslik earned his Juris Doctorate (2004) from Western Michigan University, Thomas M. Cooley Law School and his B.S. in criminal justice (2001) from Washburn University. From 2012-2020, Cieslik was the program coordinator and professor of Paralegal and Criminal Justice Studies at South Suburban College in

South Holland. From 2005-2012, Cieslik was a partner at Barmann, Bohlen, Jacobi & Cieslik, P.C. in Kankakee, and also served as an assistant state's attorney for Kankakee County. In addition to teaching in the Legal Studies Program, Cieslik will serve as the academic advisor for Legal Studies. Cieslik's research interests will focus on criminal law and procedure.

**Professor Katelyn Schachtschneider** left the Department of Politics and Government.

**Professor Noha Shawki** is on sabbatical leave spring 2021.

### Scholarly Activities

**Professor Michael Hendricks** published an article entitled "Minería: ¿El Elixir de la Vida o la Fruta Prohibida? Un Examen Empírico de las Oportunidades y Amenazas de la Minería en Santo Domingo, Nicaragua: Una Comunidad Dividida Sobre la Minería" in *Quid 16: Revista del Área de Estudios Urbanos*. He also presented research and served as a panel discussant at the Southern Political Science Association's annual conference in Puerto Rico in January. Hendricks was also expected to present research at the Midwest Political Science Association's annual conference in April, but due to COVID-19, the conference was canceled.

**Professor Nancy S. Lind** published three books in 2020. *Governing Illinois* with Erik Rankin is in its fifth edition and underwent significant changes updating the book and adding an entire new section on policy issues in Illinois. It has frequently been adopted as a textbook in high schools and universities throughout the state. *Navigating the Open Road* is a brand new text authored for professional development classes in the social sciences. It highlights the types of

skills that students and recent graduates need to know to successfully place themselves on the job market. *Cultural Competence in Higher Education* with Tiffany Puckett is a cutting edge book that focuses on the impact of diversity in university classrooms.



**Professor Thomas McClure** co-authored *Fundamentals of Criminal Law and Procedure for Paralegals* plus the instructor's manual (Wolters Kluwer, 2nd ed). He was lead author of "An Empirical Look at Programs Applying for ABA Approval: Does Program Director Longevity Matter?" appearing in *The Legal Educator*. He authored a treatise used for the arrest expungement clinic the Legal Studies Program operates with Prairie State Legal Services. He appeared as a featured contributor in *Paralegal Today* (Cengage Publishing). *U.S. News and World Report* interviewed him for "What Does a Paralegal Do and How to Become One" published in the January 16, 2020 issue.

**Professor Kerri Milita** published three articles in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Political Science Research and Methods* and the *Journal of Public Policy*, with an additional forthcoming article in the *Journal of Politics*. She also received an external grant in the amount of \$25,000 from the American Political Science Association's Special Projects Fund. She was scheduled to make three conference presentations at the Midwest Political Science Association, and was an invited panelist at the 2020 meeting of the Illinois Broadcaster's Association on survey and polling methodology. She also served as section head for the State Politics Section of the Midwest Political Science Association's 2021 conference.

**Professor Carl Palmer** published two articles. The first, "Toxic Mask-ularity: The Link Between Masculine Toughness and Affective Reactions to Mask-Wearing in the COVID-19 Era," appeared in *Politics and Gender* and has been featured in articles in *Mother Jones* and *The New York Times*. The second, "Physical Attractiveness, Halo Effects, and Social Joining" appeared in *Social Science Quarterly*. Both articles were co-authored with Rolfe D. Peterson of Susquehanna University. He also had two papers accepted for presentation at the Midwest Political

Science Association and a poster accepted for presentation at the International Society for Political Psychology; both conferences were cancelled due to the pandemic.

**Professor Erik Rankin** attended Stoicon 2020 (international Stoicism conference) and presented his article titled "Political Civility" during the lightning round talks. The article was published in the October issue of *The Stoic Gym*.

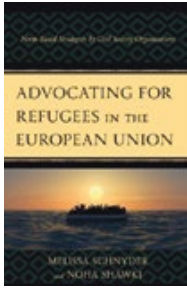
**Professor Ali Riaz** published two book chapters, two journal articles, 20 non-refereed articles, delivered six invited presentations in person within and outside the United States, made one conference presentation, and participated in 11 webinars. He was interviewed and quoted in international media 21 times. Riaz received the Impact Award. He served as a Non-resident Senior Fellow of the Atlantic Council and a consultant to the Center for International Private Enterprises. The webinars were organized among others by Conflict and Resilience Research Institute, Canada, Independent University of Bangladesh, Centre for Governance Studies. Riaz, presented a co-authored paper with Sohel Rana at the APSA virtual annual conference.

**Professor Lori Riverstone-Newell** published *The Local Power & Politics Review*, an annual report examining local governments' power and capacity to meet local needs. *The Review* examines the impact of abusive state preemption on local equity efforts, and individual health, social, and economic well-being. Contributors include the researchers, legal scholars, and on-the-ground advocates who are



leading the charge to course-correct through efforts such as preemption repeal, educational home rule reform. These experts worked as advocate-researcher co-authors to produce short articles across seven policy fields: Public Health; Civil Rights and Discrimination; Environmental Policy; Emerging Technologies; Housing Policy; Labor Policy; and Local Fiscal Authority.

**Professor Kam Shapiro** presented "Destabilizing Racial Differences in the Detective Fiction of Chester Himes" at the 2020 American Political Science Association National Conference.



The virtual conference was held September 10-13.

**Professor Noha Shawki** published a book co-authored with Melissa Schnyder titled *Advocating for Refugees in the European Union. Norm-Based Strategies by Civil Society Organizations* (Lexington Books).

**Professor T.Y. Wang** was recognized as an ISU University Professor, a designation that honors faculty members who have achieved national/international recognition for scholarly research and teaching. In 2020, he published one co-authored journal article and three commentaries, with one co-authored journal article forthcoming in *Asian Survey*. He delivered three invited presentations and presented a paper at the APSA virtual annual conference. His published co-authored article is titled “Generational Difference of Taiwan Identity” (in *Journal of Electoral Studies*). The three commentaries examine lessons to be learned from Taiwan’s dealing with the coronavirus pandemic (in the *Taiwan Insight*) and China’s suppressive responses to the democratic movement in Hong Kong (in *The Diplomat*).

**Professor L.J Zigerell** published “US Public Perceptions of an Intelligence Quotient Test Score Gap between Black Americans and White Americans” in *Political Studies Review*.

## COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Each week the college publishes a weekly electronic newsletter, CASNews. It shares the latest achievements of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please send an email message to [casnews@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:casnews@IllinoisState.edu).

## VISIT US

If you are interested in being invited back to campus as a distinguished alum, please send current vitae to [PoliticsAndGovernment@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:PoliticsAndGovernment@IllinoisState.edu).

## FACULTY RECOGNIZED

### Faculty Honored at the Awards Ceremony

Professor L.J Zigerell was awarded the Pi Sigma Alpha Excellence in Teaching Award, as well as the Hibbert R. Roberts Teaching Excellence Recognition Award.

### Hendricks Received the New Faculty Initiative Grant for 2020

Professor Michael Hendricks received the College of Arts and Sciences New Faculty Initiative Grant (\$3,500) to conduct field research in mining communities in Nicaragua and Mexico. Data from the interviews will be used in several research projects that Hendricks is working on in relation to resource extraction in Latin America.

### Milita Awarded External Grant from American Political Science Association’s Special Projects Fund

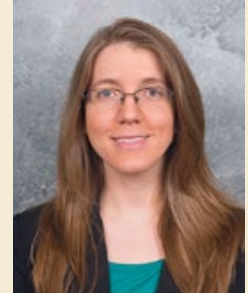
Professor Kerri Milita was awarded an external grant in the amount of \$25,000 from the American Political Science Association’s Special Projects’ Fund. Grant funds will be used to increase the presence of women political scientists in the media and the ability of women political scientists to effectively respond to media requests. Part of this goal will be achieved by hosting a virtual one-day event with representatives of local and national media, representatives from relevant foundations, and women political scientists, with a focus on members of historically marginalized communities such as Black women from local Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). After the online gathering, there will be a media guide published for political scientists.



Professor L.J. Zigerell



Professor Michael Hendricks



Professor Kerri Milita

## STUDENT NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

### Mock Trial Team Continues Tradition of Success During the Pandemic

In July, the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) announced that regional and championship tournaments for the 2020-21 season would be held entirely online. Following AMTA’s lead, schools sponsoring invitationals began holding competitions as online events. Accordingly, the Illinois State University mock trial program revamped how the season would unfold.

This season ISU is comprised of two squads. Kyla Egizio, Parker Francisco, Connor Martin, Carlos Montenegro, Amelia O’Neil, McKenna Plotner, and Nadalie Ponce are members of Squad 1033. Squad 1034 is made up of Tim Cook, Caitlyn Danielson, Sarah Feltes, Tyler Gray-Henry, Paige Malloy, Brock Melrose, and Jasmyne Wells.

After the first few weeks of practices, the coaches decided that Zoom practices are more effective than face-to-face in preparing for “virtual” tournaments. They also decided to enter





**Top photo, Mock Trial Squad 1033; Bottom photo, Mock Trial Squad 1034**

tournaments that hosted schools from outside of the region so that the team could face more competitors from outside of the Midwest. To prepare for three fall tournaments, team members participated in Zoom sessions with their coaches.

In mid-October, the team competed at the “Testing the Waters Invitational,” sponsored by Loras College. Squad 1033 won both judges’ ballots in rounds against Luther College and Winona State University. It split ballots with Dillard University. Squad 1033 lost one ballot and tied the other against Loyola University, the second-place team of the tournament. The 5-2-1 record put the squad in fourth place in

the competition. Squad 1034 garnered a 4-4 record, winning rounds against Carthage College and Winona State while losing to Central College and Wheaton College. Connor Martin received an individual award for outstanding performance in his witness portrayal.

The third-annual Colonel Classic Invitational, sponsored by Eastern Kentucky University, was held the weekend of October 31-November 1. Squad 1033 won two of six ballots, and squad 1034 tied one ballot but lost the remaining seven. Despite these disappointing results, there was a silver lining. Both teams took the next two weeks to work harder to improve their performances. These efforts paid off.

In mid-November, both squads earned winning records at the first-annual George Floyd Memorial Tournament, hosted by Hamline University. Squad 1033 took both ballots from University of St. Thomas and Macalaster College. It split with University of Central Missouri and lost its round against University of California-Berkeley. Squad 1034 lost its round with Harvard University, won rounds against Drake University and Carthage College, and split ballots with Villanova University. Team members won five individual awards. Nadalie Ponce was a double award recipient as an outstanding attorney and an outstanding witness. Parker Francisco was named an outstanding attorney. The tournament also recognized Kyla Egizio and Connor Martin as outstanding witnesses.

The team competed in tournaments hosted by Central College, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and Loras College in January. The team’s competitive post-season started the first weekend in February at a virtual regional tournament sponsored by AMTA.

Due the pandemic, the coaching staff canceled the 2020 fall ISU mock trial invitational. Now that millions of Americans are receiving vaccinations, the program has scheduled the next invitational tournament for November 5-7, 2021, at the McLean County Law and Justice Center. Illinois State has hosted this event for over 20 years.

The lead attorney coach of the team is Josh Rinker ’06, a Bloomington attorney in private practice, who was an All-American award-winner for the ISU mock trial team when he was an undergraduate student at Illinois State. He is assisted by Brad Rigdon, the first assistant state’s attorney for McLean County. Professor Tom McClure is the educator coach.

### **Central Illinois Paralegal Association Awards Four Legal Studies Students Scholarships**

The Central Illinois Paralegal Association (CIPA) offers students enrolled in a local paralegal studies program the opportunity to receive a \$500 scholarship. In December, CIPA named four Illinois State University legal studies students the winners of this grant. The scholarship recipients are Legal Studies (LGS)/Political Science double majors Amanda Pinkham and Paris Hall, LGS minor Haley Schnapp, and undergraduate LGS certificate student Amanda Watson.

Applicants for the scholarship submitted essays about what they learned about themselves that might assist them in navigating a future career as a paralegal in light of the transforma-



Paris Hall



Amanda Pinkham



Haley Schnapp



Amanda Watson

tions brought on by the COVID-19 health crisis. All four women shared how the pandemic impacted them.

“Throughout the pandemic, I have learned from kindness and from hardship,” Pinkham said. “The kindness I received reminded me why I chose this career path in the first place, and I hope to use these realizations to make me a better paralegal.”

“You grow when your life is hectic, everything has changed, and you’re forced to adapt,” Hall said. “Despite the fact that this deadly virus has definitely put a damper on the entire year, it brought me out of my shell and allowed me to see a different side to myself—a side that I would have never seen if this pandemic didn’t happen, so I am forever grateful for that.”

“Having the ability to adapt to your surroundings, work under pressure, and remain positive are three qualities that I have either gained or strengthened during the COVID-19 health crisis that would assist me as a paralegal,” Schnapp said.

Watson wrote that the pandemic made her “realize just how important it is to complete my certificate, so I have more security for my future. I have worked so hard and persevered to change the trajectory of the life I have been given versus the life I want and see for myself.”

CIPA is a National Association of Legal Assistants affiliate and is composed of volunteer paralegals working every day to advance the paralegal profession. Carolyn Pitts, a paralegal with the Champaign firm of Erwin, Martinkus, & Cole, is the acting chair of the CIPA scholarship committee. Pitts has served on the ISU

Paralegal Advisory Committee since it was formed in 2007.

### Academic Activities

**Md. Sohel Rana**, a graduate student, and **Distinguished Professor Ali Riaz** co-authored a paper at the American Political Science Association (APSA) National Conference. The virtual conference was held September 10-13. Their paper, entitled “How Democracy Backslides: Tracing the Pathway in Six Countries,” examines the processes of democratic backsliding in six countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, namely Bangladesh, Bolivia, Mali, Turkey, Ukraine, and Zambia. It draws on data from the Freedom House and the Varieties of Democracy. The paper examines whether there are specific milestones in the process of democratic backsliding, and how the process proceeds. The paper was presented at the iposter session of the Democracy and Autocracy division.



Sohel Rana

**Joel McReynolds**, a graduate student, was selected as a GradBird Scholar. One challenge all researchers must overcome is how to explain their work to a general audience. The Graduate School launched the GradBird Scholar initiative in September 2019 in an effort to make scholarly research more accessible while honoring the scholarship of Illinois State students.

Each month, a committee of graduate students, faculty, and staff selects a new GradBird Scholar, who is chosen from a cohort of students who self-nominate for the award. Submissions are judged on the quality of the research and how clearly it is explained. The winners receive a monetary award and are highlighted in a video shared on social media. Last year, about a dozen students submitted nominations each month.



Joel McReynolds, master's student, Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development and Department of Politics and Government.

McReynolds was selected as a GradBird Scholar in March 2020. In collaboration with the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, McReynolds in

vestigated whether Illinois State students made a difference in the Bloomington-Normal community. McReynolds surveyed seven community organizations that have worked with the University for at least five years. The results were overwhelmingly positive, with several organizations noting that Illinois State students bring unique assets that are vital to their organization.

### Student Highlights

#### Nargiza Yusupova shares study abroad experience at Bilkent University

Political science graduate student Nargiza Yusupova had an amazing experience studying abroad. She recently spoke about her experience.

“Whenever you have an opportunity to see another culture and live in a foreign country, take advantage of it! Before going for an exchange program to Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, I already knew that I would enjoy it and gain lifetime experience,” Yusupova said. “Bilkent University is one of the best universities in Turkey and all the professors are highly experienced. All classes in Bilkent were conducted in English, and I was able to carry interesting discussions with peers whose English language skills were very advanced. In other



Nargiza Yusupova at Pierre Loti Hill in Istanbul, Turkey.

words, if you choose to go to Bilkent University you don’t have to worry about classes and their content”.

Yusupova noted that at Bilkent students select classes from a pool of department courses. There are many options to choose from, and selection is not limited. While studying at Bilkent, the ESN group responsible for Erasmus/exchange students will organize several trips around Turkey and weekly gatherings, giving students an opportunity to make new friends from all around the world.

“Additionally, it is cheap to live and travel around Turkey because of the recent Turkish lira devaluation against the U.S. dollar,” Yusupova said. “You will also receive a monthly stipend.



**Nargiza Yusupova at the student farewell ceremony at Bilkent University.**

I was very surprised when my coordinator at Bilkent told me that all graduate students receive a monthly stipend and do not necessarily hold GA positions.”

She also talked about how the exchange agreement enables a student going to Bilkent to live on campus and receive free housing accommodations. Yusupova said that she enjoyed her time at Bilkent University and met excellent people.

“The classes were interesting, and I learned a lot from my Turkish peers,” Yusupova said. “This exchange program also gave me an opportunity to practice my Turkish language skills and improve them significantly. I have no regrets whatsoever that I decided to do an exchange program and would like to encourage other ISU students to go to Bilkent University.”

### Stevenson Center Spotlight

#### Peace Corps Fellow Serving With AmeriCorps Uses Art to Promote Inclusion and Community

Peace Corps Fellow Ryan Arnold has always had a penchant for making things happen, even before joining the Stevenson Center. Before starting his master’s degree, Arnold served with the Peace Corps in Cameroon from 2011 to 2013 as a youth development coordinator. He worked on various grassroots projects, ranging from public health to water and sanitation. Arnold went on to work at CARE for AIDS for four years as the African operations director. In 2018, Arnold joined the Stevenson Center to pursue a master’s degree in political science.

“After years of working in the international nonprofit sector, I was excited to study political science and dig into deeper understandings of the power structures that create the inequalities that make the nonprofit sector necessary in the first place,” Arnold said. “I am looking forward to continuing to work in the nonprofit sector in a way that addresses root causes, not just immediate needs.”

## STUDENT RECOGNIZED

### Ekwonwa Named Bone Scholar

Bethany Ekwonwa, a double major in Political Science and Legal Studies and a member of the Honors Program, has been selected as a Bone Scholar for 2020-2021. The Bone Scholarship is the highest award an undergraduate at Illinois State University can receive.

Ekwonwa has stood out in her classes because of her excellent academic skills, her work ethic, and her leadership. In addition to her excellent academic record, Ekwonwa has been very involved on campus and in the community. She has served as vice-president of the African Student Union and as secretary of the Black Student Union at ISU. She has also volunteered with “Summer Suppers for the Homeless” and is actively involved in the Black Lives Matter movement in Bloomington-Normal.

In addition to balancing her classes and her campus and community activities, Ekwonwa also works in retail and has held leadership positions in her sales team.



**Bethany Ekwonwa**

The Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development cultivates leaders to positively impact communities. Fellows are required to have at least a year of relevant experience prior to admission. Fellows have served with Peace Corps or AmeriCorps, or they have worked for nonprofit organizations or government agencies. Fellows pursue a master’s degree in anthropology, applied economics, political science, kinesiology and recreation, or sociology, each with an interdisciplinary sequence in applied community and economic development.

The program requires an intense year of on-campus study, followed by 11 months of paid professional practice. Arnold is finishing his professional practice with the Berwyn Development Corporation, where he is serving as a full-time AmeriCorps member.

Arnold is leading a community strategic planning process. He developed and administered a resident survey, planned and facilitated focus groups, and ran a workshop with almost 100 residents. Among other projects, he created and managed a volunteer database, designed and implemented marketing and outreach projects, and researched best practices. With Illinois under shelter-at-home orders due to COVID-19, Arnold is working remotely. One of his new projects is developing virtual community meetings and creating training materials

to enable community members to facilitate these sessions.

Being an AmeriCorps member means going beyond the position requirements and looking for new ways to fill unmet needs. All AmeriCorps members commemorate the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday through service.

Arnold used the event to create a project that will live on long after his work in Berwyn is done: the 2020 Inclusion Project. Arnold brought together local groups to involve middle and high school students in social justice conversations, engaged artists to help the students paint a mural, raised all of the necessary resources, and energized the community around the project. The students participated in a series of workshops that covered Dr. King’s life and



**Ryan Arnold (far right) with members of his community in Cameroon during his 2011-2013 Peace Corps service.**

## HONORS/AWARDS

### Undergraduate Awards

**Hibbert R. Roberts  
Outstanding Senior Award**  
Ava Garcia

**Alice Ebel Outstanding  
Graduating Senior Award**  
Andrew Prom

**Alice Ebel Award**  
Hannah Brunier  
Chance Cook  
Anna Kraft  
Cheyanne Pincsak  
Savannah Remkus

**Thomas Wilson Internship Award**  
Matthew Gawlik  
Trey Georgie

**Thomas More Scholarship  
in Political Philosophy**  
Carolyn Hannon

**Frank M. and Hermina R. Giordano  
Scholarship**  
Mary O'Brien

**Walter S. G. Kohn Award**  
Hannah Anderson

**Jamal R. Nassar Scholarship**  
Amanda Pinkham

**John P. Freese Scholarship**  
Bethany Ekwonwa

**George J. Gordon Scholarship in U.S.  
Public Affairs**  
Jennifer Scara  
Michele Calabrese

**Equity and Inclusion Advocacy Award**  
Samiat Solebo

### Subfield Awards

**American Government**  
Brody Frieden

**Comparative Politics & International  
Relations**  
Grace Burgener

**Public Administration**  
Joshua Leonard

**Public Law**  
Jessica McCann

legacy, drawing and sketching techniques, and how public art can be used as a community development tool. The final mural commemorates the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and celebrates Berwyn's racial and cultural diversity.

Wonderfully, the groups will continue to paint additional murals in Berwyn, providing a meaningful experience for middle and high school students along the way.

"The mural project that is still in progress was a just spark of an idea in August that grew as I had conversations with stakeholders and be-

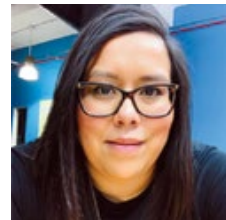
came a long-term, community project with multiple partners and a corporate sponsor," Arnold said. "That process was a great reminder that it really doesn't take much to bring people together to create positive change. I've found that a lot of people are looking for ways to get involved and make a difference. Why not be the person who has the idea, who creates the opportunity, and who makes things happen?"

Arnold is the recipient of this year's Graduate Student Civic Engagement Award from the Department of Politics and Government.

## ALUMNI NEWS

### Claudia Chavez Named Senior Appointee in Biden Administration

Department of Politics and Government alum Claudia Chavez '05 has been appointed as a White House liaison of the U.S. Department of Education. Her involvement in Student Government Association allowed her to explore and develop her interests.



**Claudia Chavez '05**

Chavez held different positions with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, including deputy director for the Mayor's Office of Legislative Council and Government Affairs. She most recently served as a member of the Education Agency Review Team for the President Joe Biden-Vice President Kamala Harris Transition and on the Biden for President campaign as Midwest deputy director.

Chavez was one of the distinguished alumni of Politics and Government in its celebration of Illinois State University's 2017 Homecoming event.

### John Davis Shares Reflections on His Career Path

My name is John Davis and I attended ISU from 1974-1978 as a Political Science major. I was a member of the College Republicans all four years, and my last year I was elected President of the College Republicans. While at school I was a charter member of Sigma Pi fraternity (EH Chapter). I also worked on some of the local area election campaigns as a volunteer.

I worked as a GOP staffer for the Senate

Insurance Committee and the Senate Public Pension Committee (1979-1981). Later I accepted employment at the IL Insurance Department as their Legislative Liaison. I successfully worked on Workers Compensation reform (deregulation of pricing) in 1982 that reduced workers compensation premiums for Illinois business by 30 percent on average. This was the height of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. I wanted to do my part to defeat communism. I joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves (artillery), and still maintained my job at the insurance department.



**John Davis '78**

My current job [is with] the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) as Director of (federal) Legislative Programs. I have testified before Congress on several occasions. I write testimony, a weekly legislative newsletter, a monthly column for the association magazine, and position papers used on Capitol Hill. I [also] organize the annual Capitol Hill reception for awarding legislator of the year award to selected representative or senator. I plan the "Storming the Hill" event that provides an opportunity for activist members to meet their legislators to discuss specific issues. A big legislative victory for FRA last year was enactment of substantial improvements for military widow benefits.

When I went to ISU, I considered it a privilege not an entitlement. I was very excited to go to college at a big university. I was the second and last of my five siblings that had the opportunity to go to a four-year college. Looking back on my life, I am proud to be a Marine and I am very proud to be an ISU Redbird alumnus.

## Bill Dwoinen 2020 Redbird Proud recipient

Bill Dwoinen, an alum of the Department of Politics and Government is a recipient of the 2020 Redbird Proud Young Alumni Award. Dwoinen's Redbird Proud memory was, "As a



From left, Department Chair and Professor T.Y. Wang, Bill Dwoinen '04, and Professor Nancy Lind

student, it was easy to have pride during Homecoming when you would see how excited people were to come back and reconnect with former classmates. The other thing that was very impactful for me as a student was interacting with successful alumni. At that age and point of my life, being successful wasn't something I thought could happen to me."

## Anthony Pierucci Earns Ph.D.

Tony Pierucci, who graduated from the Department of Politics and Government in 2014 with an M.S. degree in political science, recently defended his dissertation in political science at Purdue University. His dissertation title is "Signaling or Safeguarding: The Logic of Mobilization in Crisis Bargaining". His dissertation research uses game theory to understand when mobilization is an efficient strategy in diplomatic crises. The central argument is that mobilization is a bet hedging strategy, in which a state simultaneously signals its resolve over a foreign policy issue and prepares for war in the event deterrence fails. This suggests that mobilization is most valuable in a diplomatic crisis when early preparation provides military benefits, there is pessimism about the success of deterrence, and the state is risk averse.



Anthony Pierucci '14

tion is an efficient strategy in diplomatic crises. The central argument is that mobilization is a bet hedging strategy, in which a state simultaneously signals its resolve over a foreign policy issue and prepares for war in the event deterrence fails. This suggests that mobilization is most valuable in a diplomatic crisis when early preparation provides military benefits, there is pessimism about the success of deterrence, and the state is risk averse.

Pierucci received a B.A. degree in political science from Loyola University Chicago in 2012, an M.S. degree in political science from ISU in 2014, and an M.S. degree in economics from Purdue University in 2018 prior to completing his Ph.D. at Purdue University in 2020. He is currently working as a Senior Economic Analyst at Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria and plans to continue working for Caterpillar. He also plans to publish his ongoing research projects that focus on game theoretic applications in international security.

## Nikita Richards Honored by the State of Illinois

Nikita Richards '06, M.S. '15, has over 10 years of experience in the communication industry, guiding companies through how to survive the next wave of marketing, data analytics and innovative customer relations. She is the owner of NDR Communications which focuses on crisis diversion, management and political communication. She is currently the employment coordinator for the City of Bloomington where she manages the city's recruitment, selection of qualified candidates, and training and development to meet the hiring needs of a 12-department, 10,000-member workforce.



Nikita Richards '06, M.S. '15

A United States Navy veteran, Richards was appointed to serve on Gov. J.B. Pritzker's transition team in late 2018 for Illinois veterans and has since been appointed to the Illinois Council on Women and Girls in the spring of 2019.

Richards' civic and professional contributions have also been recently recognized by the State of Illinois. Treasurer Michael Frerichs presented Richards with the 2020 Outstanding Service in Leadership Award for her strength, courage, and leadership across the state. A U.S. Navy veteran, Richards owns NDR Communications, which focuses on crisis diversion, management, and political communication. She is the employment coordinator for the City of Bloomington. A member of ISU's Alumni Association Board, Richards has been appointed by Pritzker to the Illinois Council on Women and Girls.

## Pre-Law Awards

### Outstanding Legal Studies Student Award

Colleen Holliday

### Carl Kasten Pre-Law Leadership Award

Shaina Andrews

### Tom Eimermann Outstanding Pre-Law Student Award

Natalie Balnius

### Barry S. Tolchin Mock Trial Leadership Award

Erin Monroe

### Mock Trial Outstanding Witness Award

Nadalie Ponce

### Michael A. Hall Mock Trial Outstanding Attorney Award

Elizabeth Adebiji

## Graduate Awards

### Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Zunaid Almamun

### Outstanding Graduate Student Service Award

Rhiannon Stringer

### Graduate Student Civic Engagement Award

Ryan Arnold

## Pi Sigma Alpha Inductees

Elizabeth Bills  
Emilija Deksnys  
Dawson Diederich  
Kyla Egizio  
Matthew Gawlik  
Trey Georgie  
Osvaldo Gomez  
Paris Hall  
James Lewandowski  
Jessica McCann  
Carlos Montenegro  
Robert North  
Haley Oros  
Andrew Prom  
Ryan Roth  
Pamela Rubi  
Jennifer Scara  
Dylan Toth  
Elise Weidner  
Rachel Young

**Daniel Wagner Receives the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award**

Dan Wagner '89, M.S. '94, was honored by Illinois State University with one of its highest awards, the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award.



Daniel Wagner '89, M.S. '94

Mr. Wagner has been 'Redbird Proud' since his first days on campus and served in many leadership roles as a student that carried into leadership roles in

his career. Wagner was a former Student Regent, Academic Senator, and Vice-President and President of the Association of Residence Halls during his time at Illinois State.

Wagner has been a leader in his professional career as well. Serving as senior vice president of Government Relations for the Inland Real Estate Group, he was named as the 2017 Chicago Realtor of the Year and this year was inducted into the Hall of Fame for both Illinois Realtors and the National Association of Realtors. He is

also a board member for the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Last summer, Wagner was selected as an Edgar Fellow, an award offered only to the most up and coming leaders in the state, founded and supported by former Gov. Jim Edgar.

Perhaps his most proud moment, however, was his Advocacy Award from the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association, for his work in building the first special needs park in Wheaton, Illinois. As the father of a child with autism, he saw a gap in services provided to those children and worked tirelessly to pass a special needs referendum to get the park built. And as Wagner ends his presentations, in the spirit of President Larry Dietz, he says, "Go you Redbirds." The Edgar Fellows Program was established by Edgar to develop leaders at the state and community levels and focuses on development of governing capacity in Illinois.

**Wagner Named Secretary of Illinois Chamber of Commerce Board**

Wagner, an alum of the Department of Politics and Government and senior vice president of government relations for The Inland Real Estate Group of Companies, Inc., was appointed to the position of secretary of the board of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Wagner is currently the chairman of the Greater Oak Brook Chamber of Commerce and has held many

different positions on various boards and committees that together speak to an impressive commitment to the real estate industry and to civic engagement. These positions include treasurer and president-elect of Illinois REALTORS®, president of the Chicago Association of REALTORS®, commissioner on the DuPage Airport Authority, trustee for The Conservation Foundation, board member for the Civic Federation of Chicago, and board member of the Institute for Portfolio Alternatives (IPA).

Wagner's professional accomplishments and civic engagement have been recognized with a number of different awards, including the Advocacy Award from the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, ISU's College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame Award, the ISU Division of Student Affairs Steve and Sandi Adams Legacy Hall of Fame Award, and the ISU Alumni Achievement Award.



Daniel Wagner '89, M.S. '94



For more information, visit

[Homecoming.IllinoisState.edu](http://Homecoming.IllinoisState.edu)

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We would appreciate any help you could earmark for our program. In the last few years your contributions have allowed us to provide student scholarships, student travel awards to professional conferences, and engaging speakers such as Noam Chomsky, John Mearsheimer, Larry Diamond, Rabbi Melissa Weintraub, Reverend Sekou, Steven Salaita, and Christopher Achen.

## INTERNSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

Under the leadership of Professor Nancy Lind (public service internship director) and Professor Thomas McClure (legal studies director), the department's internship programs were quite successful in 2020. There were 279 public service credits earned with over 12,555 hours of service across the state of Illinois and in Washington, D.C. These students were active in U.S. Senate offices, Illinois legislative offices, and several national, state, and local political campaigns. Students served prominent roles in Sen. Bill Brady's office and Rep. Adam Kinzinger's D.C. office. The department has also created a continuously updated webpage for all open internships brought to our attention throughout the world and has provided scholarships to interns accepting placements in Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, there were 76 credit hours for 2020 LGS internships for a total of 3,420 hours on-the-job.

