

THE INSIDER

AN ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM AT JOHNS HOPKINS

**CELEBRATING
OUR
GRADUATES!**

Mallika Dia '21
Lindsay Ofori '21



**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE**

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From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends of International Studies,

2021 was a challenging year, but I believe that the International Studies Program experienced many successes. Like every academic program and department at Johns Hopkins, we had to make significant adjustments to our modes of operation and methods of communication. While our staff and faculty worked and taught from their homes, students “attended” classes and advising meetings from their bedrooms and apartments. There was an unexpected intimacy and connection that derived from these virtual encounters. Along the way I feel that we got to know our students better, meeting with them on their terms in the bedrooms, kitchens, and back yards of their homes across the United States and around the world. It was an extra treat whenever I got to meet a cherished family pet!

During the last year, I was constantly amazed by the resiliency and adaptability of everyone involved in International Studies but especially of our students. For many students in distant time zones, virtual learning meant taking classes during the middle of the night. I expected to hear many complaints but this was very rare. Some students adapted their entire daily schedules to “night shift” learning, showing that International Studies majors could turn on a dime when required.

Virtual education was also conducive to strengthening the relationship between International Studies and SAIS. Zoom eliminated the cost of having to travel to or from Baltimore to attend an event or class on the other campus. Our virtual events enjoyed a much wider reach than ever before, and we would be able to accommodate guests from abroad with ease. Students, like the ones you will read about on Page 6, were able to intern virtually.

As we ramp up for the coming academic year, we must be thoughtful about how we return to “normal” in-person education. Our activities may have been curtailed last year, but we learned invaluable lessons. Virtual platforms like Zoom and Teams can enhance our connectedness, communication, and outreach – and also promote inclusiveness and accessibility – but there is no substitute for in-person engagement. Our work this year will be finding the right balance remembering that it's the quality of learning and mentoring, not the mode, that matters the most.

Finally, I want to thank Cameron Baird and Shanthi Ramakrishna (below) who edited this edition of the Insider. I think you will agree that the results are beautiful!

SYDNEY VAN MORGAN
DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM



Editors of The Insider

**Cameron Baird '23 (left) and
Shanthi Ramakrishna '23 (right)**

Congratulations to the Class of 2021



Marina Ayuso, Ava Kelley, Anna Sargeantson, Sophia Loughlin, Beatriz Ruan, Carmela Irato



Ivy Wang and Kate Bruffett



James Morrison, Liv Brown, and Siena DeMatteo



Sam Schatmeyer and Lou Burns



Carmela Irato



Kelly Pang and Angela Zhao

The Tucker Prize for Best Thesis

Left: Nicole Kiker and her thesis advisor, Professor P.J. Brendese (Political Science). Her thesis was titled "Uneven Temporalities: Climate Inaction and Segregated Time."

Right: Valerie Xu and her thesis advisor, Professor Gaochao He (East Asian) Studies. Her thesis was titled "Finding Space for Xingshaoshu (LGB) College Students in China."



HOW DO YOU H INTERNATION IN YOUR

"I hope to apply IS through the fantastic **network of faculty** and peers across the major."

-Jane Slaughter '23

"I will apply the reading, writing, and analytical skills that I learned through my IS coursework in a **legal career.**"

-Joe Paul '22

"I am using IS to broaden my world view, then return to my roots in South America and **shape their future of trade.**"

-Gonzalo Percovich '23

"IS will allow me to work in **foreign markets.** In this industry, understanding regional differences is key to success."

-Julius Dunn '23

Mia Aleman '24

"The IS program in its current virtual setting has exceeded my expectations. Not only have I met my best friends through the program, but I have also been given opportunities to engage with industry professionals across the world."

"I have found the connection I've been looking for, albeit digitally."



HOPE TO APPLY INTERNATIONAL STUDIES TO THE FUTURE?

DJ Quezada '24

My primary motivation in studying IS is to understand the systems that govern how states and other groups interact, so that I can do my part to change it."

"My Hopkins experience, particularly in the IS department, has been excellent even in spite of the limitations posed by the coronavirus."



"I will apply IS towards my development of **macroeconomic and political applications** within international financial markets."

-Alvin Mak '23

"As an IS major, I hope to work with the U.N or International Rescue Committee to find **solutions for poverty and humanitarian rights.**"

-Michelle Sicard '24

"IS gives me an invaluable **global perspective** as I pursue a career in international law."

-Drew Valsamedis '24

"I plan to use the critical thinking and writing skills I gain in IS to work on **Capitol Hill.**"

-John Strezewski '23

REMOTE INTERNSHIPS

COVID-19 affected many of our students' internship plans for Spring and Summer 2020. Meet some of our amazing International Studies students who were able to make the best of the situation and intern remotely this year!



**SAMANTHA
GOULD**

**Maryland
PIRG**
Class of 2021

During the Spring 2020 semester, I interned with the Maryland Public Interest Research Group (Maryland PIRG) for the second time, which gave me the opportunity to build off of my experiences from the semester before and apply them to new projects. For the first half of this semester, I worked to support Maryland PIRG's efforts to pass the Student Voter Empowerment Act in the Maryland legislature. Unfortunately, the bill failed unexpectedly. Shortly after, we regrouped and started working on consumer protection projects related to Covid-19. While this certainly wasn't the internship I anticipated in January, it taught me about the legislative process and how advocates and policymakers can respond when plans fall through and situations change rapidly.

**American Society/
Council of the Americas**
Class of 2021

**GABRIELA
HUBNER**

In Spring 2020 I had the opportunity to participate in a semester-long internship at Americas Society/Council of the Americas. As the Policy Intern, I worked mainly under the Managing Director Zoe Dauth, and the Programs Manager Stephanie Davis. I often worked on helping with events for the Young Professionals of the Americas (YPA), a group of young professionals in D.C. and I managed tasks for the Washington Conference. Adapting to an online format mid semester was incredibly interesting. I no longer had access to the drive on my work computer and all the files in it, so my options became limited. Instead, I began helping with research on new topics relating to the COVID-19 crisis, such as on potential impacts in the food supply chains and medical supply chains. I also became the point-person to create and send out the YPA newsletter, which allowed me to get in contact with the people who work in the NYC office. Although challenging, I found the experience incredibly rewarding and I am so grateful for the opportunity.



International Studies Leadership Council

The [International Studies Leadership Council \(ISLC\)](#) is comprised of students who work directly with the program directors and associated faculty with the purpose of bringing greater unity and direction to the IS major and program. The ISLC acts as a liaison between students and faculty, works to organize events, listens to student opinions and recommendations, and works to publicize news, information, and opportunities across campus and around the world. They also have the chance to share their thoughts on and experiences with the International Studies Program at Hopkins. Past events include the annual IS Ice Cream Social, Faculty Friday lunches, Young Alumni networking events, and incredible speakers series.



Above: Nathan Felmus ('23),
Co-president of ISLC

The ISLC also coordinates the International Studies Program membership with the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs.



Above: Kevin La Monica ('23),
Co-president of ISLC

Hopkins Podcast on Foreign Affairs



Above: POFA members Chris Park and Indi Aufranc interviewing US Senator Tammy Duckworth on US-Taiwan relations.

Since its founding in 2017, the [Johns Hopkins Podcast on Foreign Affairs](#) has grown exponentially.

In many ways working virtually throughout the pandemic provided a lot of benefits to our team—allowing us to interview experts from around the world on a diversity of topics.

We've been able to streamline our process and are proud to have over 8,000 subscribers across Spotify and Apple Podcast. We've expanded our guest list to include notable names like Senator Tami Duckworth (D-IL), Representative Ami Bera (D-CA), Fiona Hill, and many more!

We are excited to continue building POFA and educate more people about foreign affairs!

Foreign Affairs Review

Are you proud of a paper you have written for one of your International Studies courses at Hopkins? The Foreign Affairs Review (FAR), a Johns Hopkins University undergraduate journal, is looking for submissions!

FAR is open to all JHU undergraduate students and managed by the International Studies Leadership Council.

Send your work to johnshopkinsfar@gmail.com or submit online at our website jhufar.com.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

FAR

FOREIGN AFFAIRS REVIEW

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

PROFESSOR CHRISTY THORNTON

Professor Christy Thornton (PhD, New York University) is a Sociology professor affiliated with the Program in Latin American Studies, and a core faculty member for the Latin America in a Globalizing World Initiative. Professor Thornton's research and teaching often focus on comparative-historical sociology, global equality and development, labor and social movement, Latin American political economy and Mexican State formation. Before joining the Hopkins faculty in 2017, Thornton was previously an assistant professor of history and international studies at Rowan University and the Executive Director of the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA).



Revolution in Development

PUBLISHED: JANUARY 2021



Her first book, *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy*, was published in January with University of California Press. The book examines the role of post-revolutionary Mexico in the conception and construction of some of the twentieth century's most important international economic institutions. *Revolution in Development* is a true International Studies kind of book because it is so interdisciplinary," Thornton said. "Using insights from scholars working in Sociology, History, and International Political Economy, the book explains how economists, diplomats, and political figures from a developing country like Mexico thought not just about their own domestic development strategies, but worked to create and reform the very system of international development itself."

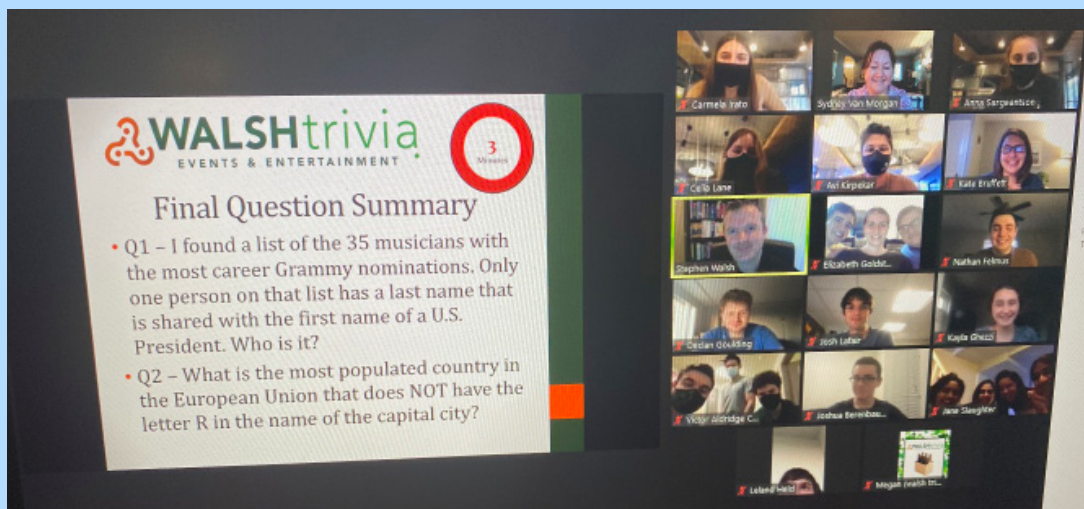
International Studies Virtual Events

Despite the global pandemic, the International Studies office was still able to host both fun and educational virtual events this past year.

I.S. Trivia Night

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF OUR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES TRIVIA NIGHT!

Team International Study Buddies, with William Hill '21 (I.S.), Elizabeth Goldstone '21 (I.S.), and Alexander Goldberg '21 (I.S.)



Fall 2021 Aronson Speaker Series

This series featured a diverse set of topics such as "Is the Olympics Worth It?", "Two States, Two Pandemics: The Implications of COVID-19 on the Israel Palestine Conflict", "Climate Change and Capitalism: The Cost of Our Modern Lifestyle", and "The Rise of Cross-National Conspiracy Theories".

Right: Tara Kirk Sell, former Olympic swimmer and current Senior Scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security and Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.



From the IS Program to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Joel Meyer received his BA in International Studies from Johns Hopkins in 2004 and his law degree from the American University Washington College of Law in 2008. He has since pursued a career in government and the private sector.

Mr. Meyer served on the Biden-Harris Presidential Transition on the Department of Homeland Security Agency Review Team, and has served as a Biden-Harris Administration appointee since January 20, 2021. He currently serves as the Chief of Staff for the Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, where he supports the Under Secretary for Policy in leading DHS-wide policy development, coordination, and implementation. Previously, Mr. Meyer served at DHS as a career civil servant in the Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans, in the Office of the DHS Coordinator for Counterterrorism, as well as on the White House National Security Council staff. He has also served on the Homeland Security Advisory Committee's Subcommittee on Countering Violent Extremism and as an Instructor with the Johns Hopkins University's International Studies Program, where he created and taught the intersession D.C. Career Course.



Mr. Meyer leading the International Studies D.C. career trip in 2019.



Mr. Meyer also worked in the private sector building and leading major business units at two high-growth artificial intelligence and machine learning technology startup companies. As a senior executive, he built strategies and teams to support public and private sector adoption of innovative data analytics solutions.

When asked what advice he would offer current undergraduate students, Mr. Meyer said, "Always look for ways to put yourself in new and challenging situations that help you grow and explore. Keep an open mind to experiences that may spark a new interest and give you opportunities to make an impact."

Joel T. Meyer, A&S '04 is currently the Chief of Staff for the Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Students Vie for the Attention of the DHS in Nationwide Competition



Who We Are

We are Hopvertising, a student-run advertising agency of 20 undergrads enrolled in the Advertising & Integrated Marketing Communications Course at Johns Hopkins University



What We Do

We help you self-assess your propensity to believe false information through the myBIAS Quiz

Our Quiz

The myBIAS Quiz determines how susceptible one is to misinformation, identifies areas of improvement, and suggests resources for expanding one's perspective

Five IS students are participating in a virtual Invent2Prevent competition to propose solutions to Targeted Violence & Terrorism (TVT) in the United States. Their team of 20 undergraduates will be implementing an integrated marketing campaign known as Check Your Bias. The cornerstone of this campaign is the myBIAS Quiz, a short questionnaire that allows students to self-assess their ability to detect misinformation. The myBIAS Quiz can be compared to the Myers-Briggs Personality Test, but rather than identifying the user's personality, it will identify their propensity to believe misinformation.

Through a series of questions about the user's media consumption and depth of knowledge on certain nonpartisan issues, the myBIAS Quiz helps determine how susceptible the user is to false information and match them with a personified, apolitical character or persona. The quiz then identifies areas of improvement and offers resources and recommendations tailored to each persona so that the user can balance their media consumption, broaden their perspective, and improve their assessment of the truth. The top three teams will present their campaign to senior leadership at the Department of Homeland Security in May 2021. **We wish our IS students the best of luck in this endeavor!**



Left: Lauren Paulet ('22), Manager of Press Relations and Lou Burns ('22), Finance Manager

Remembering Pier Larson



On July 25th, 2020 Johns Hopkins lost a champion of international studies, Professor Pier Larson.

Professor Larson's academic work centered on social, cultural and intellectual history of Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands in the early modern period. His teaching and research focused on the history of East and southern Africa, Madagascar and the Francophone islands of the Western Indian Ocean, slavery, literacy, religion and the history of the French empire. "He cultivated professional ties across the globe, and his work was – and will remain – widely admired abroad," says his colleague Michael Kwass.

Professor Larson played an instrumental role in securing Hopkins' first **Foreign Language and Area Studies grant** in 2015 as well as its renewal in 2018. During the last six years, the grant has disbursed \$1.5 million in funding to students studying foreign languages. These grants led to meaningful applied learning experiences for countless international studies students. See page 14 to learn how the FLAS grant has impacted two IS majors.

"He was a world-class scholar of great renown"

–Michael Kwass,
Professor, Department of History

On the following page, the International Studies Program would like to honor Professor Larson's memory by sharing some testimonials from his students, who admired him so dearly.

Lindsay Ofori: Winner of the Inaugural Pier Larson Prize for All-Around Achievement in International Studies



Ofori's nomination letter made clear that she both excelled intellectually, and also thought seriously and perceptively about the moral and ethical implications of her field of study. This twin set of attributes seemed to us to embody precisely the kind of scholar that International Studies hopes to cultivate.

Above: Lindsay Ofori with Professor Larson's wife, Michelle Boardman

"I was lucky to have taken two of Professor Larson's classes - Introduction to African History and Gender and Sexuality in African History. From learning about the impact of colonization in Africa to masculinity in Congo, I was exposed to many historical and contemporary issues in his classes.

Professor Larson loved to listen to our perspectives on the readings but also challenged our views and made us think more critically. I learned so much from his classes, and I would apply that knowledge to other classes and still use it as a framework for what I see in the world today. Most importantly, Professor Larson was a kind and thoughtful professor who cared about his students. My condolences to his loved ones."

- Woudese Befikadu A&S '19

"The first time I ever took African history classes was at Hopkins and half of those classes were taught by Professor Pier Larson. I first encountered Professor Larson as a sophomore in his class on Decolonization and Citizenship in Africa. It was his course on Gender and Sexuality in African History however that became one of my favorites during junior year.

While teaching these small seminars, Professor Larson encouraged my classmates and I to actively engage in and think critically about people across the African continent through the stories and choices that shaped their past. He also told us his own stories about growing up, conducting research, and traveling all over the world. This made his classes as well as the other campus activities he participated in particularly fascinating.

Professor Larson was one of those teachers that I was happy to run into while I was at Hopkins and happy to see virtually during the reception the IS department had for graduating seniors this past May. I didn't think for one second that it would be the last time I saw him. Hearing about his death was sad and shocking, for he still had so much knowledge to spread and life to live. As someone who also experienced the death of a close family member earlier this year, I'm sending my most heartfelt condolences to his loved ones as they take the time to grieve and heal together. I learned a lot from Professor Larson and I pray he rests in peace."

- Nana Bruce-Amanquah, A&S '20

"Professor Larson was a kind and thoughtful professor who cared about his students."

- Woudese Befikadu

A&S '19

"His love for African history was palpable, and his excitement about the subject matter was contagious."

- Zack Toussaint

A&S '19

"I was lucky enough to be in two of Professor Larson's classes, and enjoyed every second of both of them. As a professor, Professor Larson was one of the best. His love for African history was palpable, and his excitement about the subject matter was contagious. I found myself excited to take on long reading assignments, normally daunting to me, to prepare for the stimulating discussions that were sure to take place during his classes.

As a person, Professor Larson's genuine care for his students made each class session feel more like a family or close group of friends chatting around the kitchen table. Each class would begin with fun conversation which brought the class close together. Professor Larson was a master storyteller, and he loved to tell his classes about his experiences traveling, doing research, and anything else that came to his mind.

I remember that one year before Spring Break, we were talking about our travel plans during class, and Professor Larson, who seemed to have traveled to just about every city in the world, was quick to provide great recommendations to every student. Professor Larson was a great professor and man, and he will be missed!"

- Zack Toussaint, A&S '19

Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowships

The **Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowship Program (FLAS)** is administered by the International Studies Program and supports undergraduate and graduate students studying modern foreign languages, particularly one of the eight priority languages offered at Hopkins: Arabic, Mandarin, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, and Russian.

FLAS fellowships are available for the academic year and summer language study; both graduate and undergraduate students can apply

Q&A WITH | **ALEXANDRA JARAMILLO** FLAS RECIPIENT | **JHU CLASS OF 2023**



WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO STUDY YOUR LANGUAGE?

ALEXANDRA:

Mandarin and Chinese culture have always fascinated me: thousands of years of history, a rich and unique cultural identity, beautiful artwork, delicious food—the list is endless. After I began studying the language, I truly fell in love with the characters and the future possibilities of utilizing the language. Appreciation, fascination, and pure interest are my prime motivators for continuing my language studies.

DOES THE STUDY OF THIS LANGUAGE CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH YOUR IS FOCAL AREA?

My study of Mandarin inspired my declared major and IS focal area. I knew entering Hopkins that I wanted Mandarin to be a significant portion of my studies, either through continuous courses or additional academic designations. My IS focal area coincides with my East Asian Studies minor, allowing me to pursue language to a deeper level while earning the necessary requirements to graduate.

WHAT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU GAINED FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE?

I have learned that language is so much more than a means of communication. To properly learn a language, you need to dive into the culture and the history. Understanding how culture, history, and language interact is such a valuable skill to learn as a language learner.

IS THERE A PARTICULAR SAYING THAT YOU LIKE FROM THIS LANGUAGE AREA?

I am a big fan of slang, brainteasers, tongue-twisters, idioms, and anything linguistically unique to a given language. I have quite a few favorites, but generally, I would have to say “字谜” which roughly translates to character puzzles, where the listener tries to guess a character or phrase from a riddle. Another favorite, in addition to the Confucious sayings I know, would be the first idiom I ever learned: “塞翁失马” which means “a blessing in disguise.”

Homewood–SAIS Connection



The Johns Hopkins Direct Matriculation: Master's in International Studies Program allows qualified prospective students displaying a strong interest in international studies to pursue a BA/MA degree with the Johns Hopkins Krieger School of Arts & Sciences in Baltimore and the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington D.C. Students apply to the Direct Matriculation Program as part of their application for undergraduate admission.

Congratulations to the newly admitted Direct Matriculation Program first-year and second-year students:

Nicholas Meeker, Mia Venezia, Jiwon Lim, Tess Lepelstat, Emma Vengosh Weinthal, Jessica Caterson, Greta Cortez, Alison Bader, David Donald, Rachel Fink, Victor Aldridge (right), Mia Aleman, Cherise Kim, Harvey McGuinness, and Tess Yu.

The **SAIS BA/MA** is a special degree program in collaboration with the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, DC, a world-renowned graduate school of international affairs, that allows selected KSAS students to pursue an accelerated undergraduate-graduate program.

BA/MA alumni have gone on to become political, business, and organizational leaders around the globe. Students selected to participate in the program spend three years on the Homewood campus as undergraduates and two years at SAIS pursuing the master's degree.

Students may apply to spend their first year of the master's at SAIS Europe in Bologna, Italy, while students proficient in Mandarin may apply to spend their first year at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center (HNC) in China.

"I hope to get an international view on how politics and economics work in the world and be able to take that knowledge with me to better the world in my professional career"

- Cameron Berman ('22), SAIS BA/MA Candidate



Q&A WITH AIEG SUMMER RECIPIENTS

Featuring | **Avi Kirpekar '22, Alana Barry '22, Amanda Yuen '22, & Chris Park '23**

How has the AIEG grant helped enhance your summer experience?

Chris (Conducted a research project on South Korea and Sino-American competition):



The AIEG grant has helped me pursue extremely valuable opportunities relevant to my major that helped me apply what I've learned inside classrooms.

What project or opportunity are you pursuing this summer?



Avi: I was an intern with the United States Department of State in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA). I specifically worked with the External Unit on the India Desk in the Office of India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and

Maldives Affairs (INSB). I handled issues related to India's relations with other nations in the region, including China, Pakistan, Australia, Japan, and Southeast Asian nations.

Are there any major lessons you've gained from this experience that made a lasting impact on you?



Amanda (Pursued her senior thesis on refugee resettlement): Beyond the actual takeaways that I'm writing about in my thesis, this experience has taught me a lot about the research process more broadly. Learning how to come up with a central research question, develop methods, and even submit an IRB were helpful in clarifying my thinking and ensuring that I used sound

methodology. Although it might be harder for social science/humanities students to get involved in research, compared to STEM students, the opportunities are certainly out there and luckily at Hopkins you can definitely make them for yourself!

What advice do you have for IS students looking for internships?

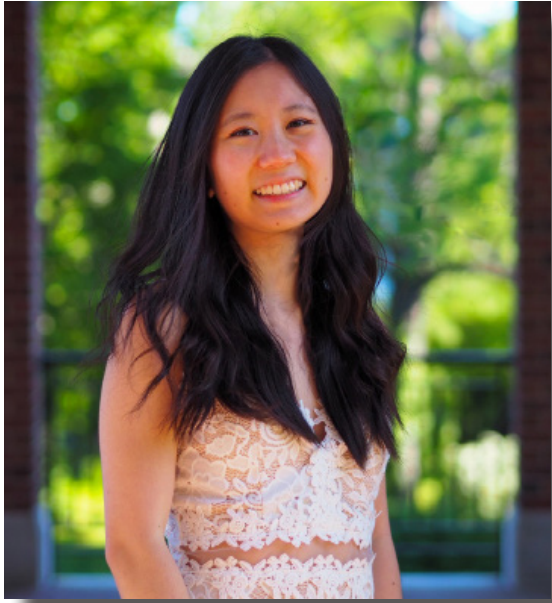


Alana (Intern at the International Trade Administration's Office of China and Mongolia, U.S. Department of Commerce): Apply for as many positions as possible, even if you think you aren't qualified or your skills/experience don't match the internship exactly. You don't want to let your own fears or insecurities get in the way of a potential opportunity. Additionally,

I would always encourage students to have someone read over their resume and stock cover letter. This could be someone from the Life Design Lab (highly recommend!), a mentor, or even a trusted family member. Lastly, start early! Some organizations have internship/job postings up in January or even earlier. You'll want to make sure you have an updated resume and stock cover letter ready by the time applications open so you don't miss out on any opportunities.

FULBRIGHT WINNER

Angela Zhao
JHU Class of 2021



Congratulations to Angela Zhao for receiving an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Fulbright Award! This program places recipients in classrooms abroad to provide assistance to the local English teachers. Angela is a recipient of an ETA award to Taiwan. She will be able to help teach English language while serving as a cultural ambassador for the U.S. The age and academic level of the students varies by country, ranging from kindergarten to university level.

KISSINGER CENTER ESSAY PRIZE

Elizabeth Raphael
JHU Class of 2021

Congratulations to Elizabeth Raphael, winner of this year's Kissinger Center Essay Prize for her essay on Artificial Intelligence and Nuclear Deterrence: Implications for Second-Strike. The Essay Prize is given to one Johns Hopkins University undergraduate each year and rewards the best paper written on U.S. foreign policy and America's role in the world, broadly defined.



INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

SYDNEY VAN MORGAN

Program Director

Mergenthaler 264

sydney@jhu.edu

ADRIA LAWRENCE

Program Chair

Mergenthaler 270

adria.lawrence@jhu.edu

KATE BRUFFETT

Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies

Mergenthaler 250

kbruffett@jhu.edu

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ADVISORY BOARD

ALESSANDRO ANGELINI, ANTHROPOLOGY

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International Studies Program at Hopkins



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[@internationalstudiesjhu](https://www.instagram.com/internationalstudiesjhu)



internationalstudies@jhu.edu



International Studies Program
3400 North Charles St.
240 Mergenthaler Hall
Baltimore, MD 21218

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY



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