

# 2015–2016 APSA Ralph Bunche Summer Institute Participants

Kimberly Mealy, *Director, APSA Diversity and Inclusion Programs*

**N**amed in honor of the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize winner and former APSA President, Ralph J. Bunche, the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI) encourages students to pursue academic careers in political science by (1) enhancing writing, research, and analytical skills to increase competitiveness in the application and financial aid process for graduate school; (2) developing statistical skills for data analysis used in political science; (3) exposing participants to the significant questions in the discipline and profession of political science; (4) introducing participants to leading political scientists; (5) educating participants about political science career opportunities; and (6) encouraging their application to doctoral programs in political science.

The RBSI is an annual, intensive five-week program held at Duke University. It is designed to introduce to the world of doctoral study in political science those undergraduate students from under-represented racial and ethnic groups or those interested in broadening participation in political science and pursuing scholarship on issues affecting under-represented groups. Participants in the RBSI are drawn from a competitive national applicant pool. The RBSI Selection Committee reviews applications and makes decisions early each year. APSA is glad to announce this year's RBSI participants.

## JORDAN CARTER

Jordan Carter is an honors junior majoring in political science at Jackson State University. She currently serves as the president of the Gamma Rho Chapter of Alpha Kappa

Alpha Sorority Incorporated. She is also a President's and Dean's List scholar, a member of the W.E.B. DuBois Honors College, and a participant in a plethora of organizations on campus.

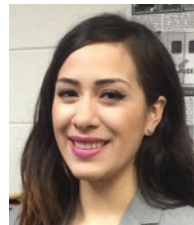
In the realm of political science, she has developed a special interest in research concerning African Americans and other minorities. Recently, she has enjoyed time with Dr. Orey in developing experimental designs to test blacks' physiological responses to newspaper articles related to the Ferguson uprisings. Upon graduating from college, Jordan plans to attend either law school or enter into a graduate program concerning political science.



research interests are American politics, the implications of race in the criminal justice system, and institutional racism. As a diversity advocate, he has been involved in dialogues on a wide array of topics, and he was a facilitator for a session on criminal justice at the 2015 College of Charleston Student Diversity Conference.

## KENNIA CORONADO

Kennia Coronado is a junior double-major in political science and Latin American, Caribbean, and US Latino studies at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; she is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society, and is the advocacy senator for People of Color on the Student Association on her campus. During her time at University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, she has been involved in advocacy work regarding social policy on local, state, and national levels, and she has continuously organized around immigrant rights. Her research interests include Latino politics, urban politics, and social movements. In addition, she was the 2012 national recipient of the National Council of La Raza-Best Buy emerging Latino leaders award, the 2012 Richard Oulahan youth activist award, and is a Lawton scholar.



## MARTY DAVIDSON

Marty Davidson is a junior at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, class of 2016. He majors in political science and

minors in public policy. He is interested in voting behavior and the effects of new voting regulation laws within marginalized communities.

In addition, he has an interest in education policy and currently works as an education policy intern for the Public School Forum of North Carolina. He plans to attend graduate school upon graduation from Chapel Hill.

## JESIEL M. DÍAZ-COLÓN

Jesiel M. Díaz-Colón is a fourth-year, political science undergraduate student at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez Campus (UPRM). He currently serves as president of the UPRM General Student Council, the official body that represents the interests and defends the rights of the 12,500 students of the campus, and also as student senator at the UPRM Academic Senate. Jesiel is currently working, along with other investigators, on his research seminar project which



intends to identify if age, socioeconomic status, type of education (public or private), and Puerto Rico's political status preference affect the knowledge level of participants about national, political,

and historical events. Also, he has worked in other research projects and leadership positions, in both the student governance



## BRANDON CHAPMAN

Brandon Chapman is a junior at the College of Charleston where he is double majoring in political science and African

American studies. At the College of Charleston, he is actively involved in the Black Student Union, Political Science Club, Debate Club, and Diversity Advocates. His

body and student associations. His future academic interests are directed to pursue a doctoral degree in a political science-related area—among which are Latin American politics and political economy—with the expectation to return to Puerto Rico to work in the development and promotion of the field of politics from a scientific perspective through academia. Naturally from the city of Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Jesiel has been acknowledged at the UPRM College of Arts and Sciences Honor Roll and with various private scholarships for outstanding academic achievement, is fluent in both Spanish and English, and enjoys swimming and working with social causes.

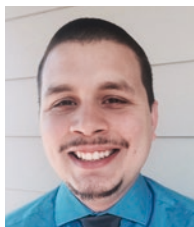
**KANEESHA JOHNSON**

Kaneesha Johnson was born and raised in England and is currently a junior at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill majoring in political science and philosophy. Her interests include questions regarding racial and cultural disparities within the criminal justice system, issues surrounding corruption in the developing and underdeveloped nations, and the impact of mass media on political systems. With plans to obtain a PhD in political science, Kaneesha hopes to become a professor to continue to refine and pursue her research interests and to inspire future students in political science.



**JESSE LOPEZ**

Jesse Lopez is an undergraduate student in political science at the University of California, Berkeley. In July 2014, he received an Associate's Degree with high honors in social and behavioral science from Santa Monica Community College. He is currently serving as a research apprentice on a project involving the role of gender stereotypes in California elections. He also plans to study abroad at Sciences Po in Paris, France for the upcoming academic year. He plans to attend graduate school and study public opinion, elections, and campaigns in a comparative perspective.



**MICHELLE NGIRBABUL**

Michelle Ngirbabul was born and raised on the island of Saipan before she left to pursue her undergraduate career at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa. She will graduate with a BA in global health studies with concentrations in international development and politics in May 2016. Her current research focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of international development efforts and foreign aid on impacting local and global health outcomes and disparities, especially those in lower income countries. She is an advocate for higher education and political representation of traditionally underrepresented groups and is an active member of various advocacy organizations and programs in Iowa and Saipan that promote health, human rights, and political activism. She is a 2012 Gates Millennium Scholar, a 2014 Charles B. Rangel Scholar, and an active member of Pi Sigma Alpha. Michelle currently serves as a student ambassador for the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program, Charles B. Rangel Enrichment Program, and as the volunteer coordinator of Cornell's UNICEF chapter.



**ISAURA PEÑA**

Isaura Peña (Isa) is a student at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, majoring in politics and Spanish with a minor in American ethnic studies. Isa received research funding from the Willamette University President's Innovation Fund and Mellon Foundation to conduct research in the US and Mexico on transnational families across borders, immigration, and detention centers. Isa works closely with community organizations that focus on immigrants' rights and also works on campus to bridge the Willamette and Salem community. Her current research seeks to find transformative ways to address the displacement of children in mixed-status families. She is particularly concerned with questions about loss of identity due to the hardships of deportations, and understanding how the identity



of transnational children can redefine concepts of citizenship.

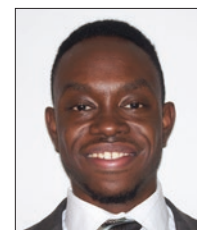
**ALEXIS SCHRAMM**

Alexis Schramm is a third-year honors student at the University of Cincinnati, where she studies political science and is also working toward a minor in communications. She will soon be inducted into the national honor society in political science, Pi Sigma Alpha. Alexis focuses on aiding those who struggle with various aspects of life and currently works part time as a job coach for a program that helps college-age students with developmental disabilities to become more independent adults with skills that can be applied in the working world. She is also very active in volunteering and has taken part in various service opportunities including tutoring at an underprivileged school, helping organize Relay for Life, and helping out around the grounds of the Buckhorn Children's Center, a residential facility for troubled youths.



**ISAAC SINGLETON, JR.**

Isaac Singleton, Jr. is a student at Saint Louis University (SLU) double majoring in political science and communication. His on-campus involvement includes having served as the vice president of external affairs within the SLU chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), being a member of the Phi Alpha Delta, a pre law honor society, and also serving as a member of the African American Male Scholars Initiative. He is interested in studying social justice issues within the African American community and also sickle cell disease and its impact on African Americans. When he graduates he hopes to either attend law school or pursue a doctoral degree in political science.



**ROMELIA SOLANO**

As a first-generation Latina college student, Romelia Solano's journey at the University of Illinois has been dedicated to

understanding and challenging the way that different individuals perceive and understand Latinos in the United States. As a scholar in the political science department's honors program, her research interests have been in the areas of Latino political partici-



ipation, Latino political identity development, and political representation for historically underrepresented groups at the congressional level. Throughout her college years, Romelia has also volunteered as an interpreter/translator at the East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center in Urbana. This past summer she interned at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and is now interning at the Public Defender's Office in Champaign.

These opportunities have allowed her to experience on a regular basis the inequality present in our country's institutions and perhaps especially in our criminal justice system. Therefore, to gain the knowledge and skills to continue empowering others, upon graduating from the University of Illinois with a double major in political science and Latina/o studies, she hopes to pursue a PhD in political science at a top research institution.



## Congressional Fellowship Program

### *Apply this Fall for the 2016-17 Fellowship Year*

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Since 1953, the APSA Congressional Fellowship Program has brought more than 2200 scholars and professionals to Washington, DC, to gain a hands-on understanding of the legislative process. More than sixty years later, the program remains devoted to its original objective of expanding knowledge and awareness of Congress.

Fellows begin their fellowship year with a comprehensive four-week orientation with congressional experts and policy leaders. Fellows then serve full-time assignments as legislative aides in the House of Representatives or Senate.

The fellowship year also features:

- winter and spring seminar series on Congress;
- visit to the district or state of a Member of Congress;
- optional programs in Annapolis, Maryland, and Ottawa, Canada; and
- ongoing guidance and mentoring from program staff and alumni.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Applications are welcome from political scientists who have completed a PhD in the last 15 years or will have defended a dissertation in political science by November of the fellowship year. Candidates must be US citizens or permanent residents.

The program is open to scholars in all fields of study within political science who can show a scholarly interest in Congress and the legislative process.

**FELLOWSHIP YEAR:** Orientation begins in November 2016. Office assignments run until August 15, 2017.

**STIPEND:** \$50,000 for the 9.5-month fellowship period, plus travel stipend.

**SELECTION:** Preference is for those without extensive Capitol Hill experience.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE:** The application period opens in September 2015, and applications are due in December. Applications must be submitted online and include:

- CV;
- 500-word personal statement;
- names and contact information for three references; and
- writing sample.

Learn more at [www.apsanet.org/cfp](http://www.apsanet.org/cfp)