As our students (and perhaps a few faculty members) look forward toward the end of the year and to our graduation festivities, this newsletter provides an "Oh the Places You'll Go" glimpse at life after a political science major. Our alumni are doing amazing things on the San Jose City Council, on the faculty at Princeton, and in a workshop on Muslim American identity. You can also read about how we celebrate Election Night in the department, what our alumni in law are doing to help future alumni, and how our faculty are building community near the border. Enjoy!

-Chad Kugser, Chair

Congratulations to Political Science graduate student Abigail Vaughn for being awarded the 2017 UC San Diego Integrity Award. This award recognizes those individuals, departments, organizational units and students who have made outstanding contributions in support of UC San Diego's commitment to integrity. A review committee comprised of faculty and staff representatives evaluated nominations and recommended award recipients. Congratulations, Abigail!

Voting Rights Class Fails Literacy Test Once Given to Minority Voters

Political Science Professor of Practice Nathan Fletcher recently gave his POLI 102D “Voting Rights Act: 50 Years Later” students a “literacy test” that African-Americans in the South once had to take to vote. The test was created in the 1960s and was impossible to pass. POLI 102D students were “devastated” and very surprised by their dismal results. California Secretary of State Alex Padilla also visited Instructor Fletcher’s class on February 2nd and all political science majors were invited to attend. Secretary Padilla spoke about voting rights and engagement and greater voter participation.

On Saturday, April 8th, tens of thousands of admitted Fall 2017 freshmen visited UC San Diego. There were over 580 admitted political science majors with their families and guests in attendance. Student Affairs staff members Regina Ready and Ariane Parkes met with them at the political science table while Professor Maureen Feeley, our Director of Undergraduate Studies, gave two presentations – the first one to a full house! Congratulations to the incoming class of 2021! We look forward to seeing you all again in the fall.
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: San Jose City Council member: Lan (Ethan) Diep

San José City Councilmember Lan Diep is an ERC alum, who graduated from UCSD in 2005 with dual bachelor degrees in Political Science/International Relations and History, with a focus on war, revolution, and social change. He obtained his law degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law and is licensed to practice in California, Mississippi, Texas, and the District of Columbia.

In the aftermath of the BP Oil Disaster in 2010, Lan Diep moved to Biloxi, Mississippi to serve as an Equal Justice Works/AmeriCorps legal fellow at the Mississippi Center for Justice, where he provided assistance to fishermen, small business owners, and other victims looking to file claims against BP. Fluent in Vietnamese, he particularly focused his efforts on aiding the limited-English-proficient Vietnamese American community in the Gulf, who account for over a third of the fishing industry in the area.

After two years of public service in the Gulf, Lan Diep returned to San José and took a job with the Legal Aid Society – Employment Law Center, directing the Vietnamese American Workers’ Rights Project, where he again used his Vietnamese language skills to help disenfranchised Vietnamese Americans learn about and pursue their rights, this time in the context of employment law. In this role, Lan Diep helped improve the condition of low-income workers while simultaneously combating the anticompetitive business practices of unethical employers.

Lan first ran for San José city council in a 2015 special election but lost by 13 votes. He ran again in 2016 and won by 12 votes.

Lan Diep’s record of service has won national recognition. The Huffington Post hailed him as the Greatest Person of the Day for April 27, 2011; President Barack Obama deemed him a White House Champion of Change in 2011; and President George H. W. Bush selected him a Daily Point of Light awardee in 2012.

CATCHING UP WITH AN ALUMNA

The IR Speaker Series and PIA hosted a talk with Princeton Professor Melissa Lee on March 2nd. Melissa is an alumna of our undergraduate program and won the Sandy Lakoff award for best Senior Honors thesis in 2008. Professor Lee’s research and teaching interests bridge the subfields of international relations and comparative politics, with a specialization in sovereignty, state capacity, state building, and political development. She recently received the American Political Science Association’s 2016 Helen Dwight Reid Award, which is awarded annually for the best dissertation successfully defended during the previous two years in the field of international relations, law and politics.

PRE-LAW MIXER

On Thursday, February 9th, the Department, in conjunction with the UCSD Pre-law Fraternity Pi Alpha Delta, hosted a Pre-Law Mixer. The event was held at the beautiful Village Fifteen on campus. Many pre-law students attended, as well as attorneys and judges from all over San Diego County. Students and attorneys enjoyed hors d’oeuvres and discussed the legal profession.

The event was graciously sponsored by Shulman Hodges & Bastian LLP.

U.S. News and World Report 2017 Ranking

The USNWR ranking of PhD programs has now been updated for the first time in four years, based on a survey of chairs conducted last fall. UCSD Political Science is tied with MIT for 9th place overall. Within specialties, we are ranked: 4. international politics specialty; 10. comparative politics specialty; 11. American politics specialty; 12. political methodology specialty. Congrats to all on keeping us in this stellar top ten position!

Job Market!

PhD Placement Candidates: http://polisci.ucsd.edu/grad/hire-a-phd/index.html
Vacant Church in San Ysidro to Become Community Center and Park

The UCSD Center on Global Justice, led by Fonna Forman of Political Science, is partnering with the San Ysidro-based non-profit Casa Familiar to convert the vacant 90-year-old Monte Carmelo Catholic Church in San Ysidro into a UCSD Community Station site, and an anchor space for a mixed-use affordable housing development called Living Rooms at the Border. Forman and Teddy Cruz, Professor of Visual Arts and Director Urban Research in the Center on Global Justice, have received major grants from ArtPlace America and the PARC Foundation to support construction; and a $1M grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support educational activities in the Station (along with a nascent sister Community Station site in Tijuana). Forman and Cruz, who also head the University of California San Diego Cross-Border Initiative, observe the many interdependencies among communities straddling the U.S.-Mexico border. Fonna says, "We’re interested in understanding the porosity of this border. We’ve been tracking the various flows that move back and forth—environmental flows, economic flows, cultural flows—between Tijuana and San Diego. We’re trying to understand what we share despite the physical boundary that divides us.”

RECENT PHD GRADUATE HOSTS MUSLIM AMERICAN WORKSHOP

Menlo College hosted their first-ever Muslim American Workshop. Organizers included Nazita Lajevardi, a recent graduate of our Ph.D. program. Menlo College created the workshop to address the need to improve our nation’s understanding of this growing population within the United States. Faculty member Claire Adida and graduate student Liesel Spangler attended. The workshop was planned to foster professional networking relationships that will construct data generation and data collection to maximize usefulness by various scholars. A group of 30 political scientists from around the country was asked to focus on what they think they know, what they want to know, and how they will measure it.

Workshop attendees examined what would be helpful in a cross-sectional survey and gathered topics for further discussion, such as the difference between ethnic and religious identity. They questioned if Muslim identity was necessarily intertwined with religiosity, which includes numerous aspects of religious activity, dedication, and belief.

ELECTION NIGHT PARTY

On November 8th, the Department hosted a Presidential Election Night. There were about 300 in attendance at Price Center Theater. Everyone enjoyed pizza as prizes were distributed from election prediction contests.Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzales and Instructor of Practice Nathan Fletcher both spoke at the event. News teams also interviewed students and host Thad Kousser, Professor and Chair.

Congratulations to Our Fulbright-Hays Recipient

Inbok Rhee, a Political Science Ph.D. candidate, recently received a unique funding opportunity to perform research at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. Inbok’s research examines when legislators in developing African democracies emerge to become more policy-oriented, and he will be interviewing politicians and other relevant actors during his stay in Kenya. Recently, Inbok was caught on national television when he attended a local conference. Fortunately, his funding from the Fulbright-Hays includes dependent support. "I am really grateful for the generous support which not only allows me to conduct my research, but also to share this unique experience with my wife and two kids." Congratulations Inbok!
Congratulations!

Please join us in congratulating graduate students Garret Bredell, Julia Clark and Duy Trinh (not pictured), who all received the Friends of the International Center scholarship. The Friends scholarships are given to graduate students planning to conduct research or study abroad. The award recipients are students who have a distinguished academic record; promote international friendship, understanding, and cooperation; and contribute in a meaningful way to programs at the International Center.

Graduate Students planning to apply to the NSF: Please contact Elizabeth Brost at ebrost@ucsd.edu for assistance with your application at least one month before the submission deadline.

ITALY PRIME MINISTER VISITS UCSD

Enrico Letta came to give a talk at GPS’s Center on Global Transformation on the future of the European Union after Brexit and the Migration Crisis. He served as the 55th Prime Minister of Italy (2013-2014) and is currently the Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) at Sciences Po.

During his time in San Diego he met with Professor William Chandler and Dr. Matthew Bergman (both of whom have taught POLI120I: Politics of Italy) to give an insider’s view of European politics.

 staff corner

Our student worker Melanie Limbo went skydiving right after her winter quarter finals ended!

ExCITING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT

INTERNSHIPS

Local Internship Research Program. For more information visit: polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/internships

RESEARCH

Research Apprenticeship Program. For more information visit: http://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/research-apprenticeship/index.html

RESOURCES FOR CURRENT UNDERGRADS

Like our Facebook page “Political Science Department at UCSD” for consistently updated information on internship and career opportunities.

pre-law board

Board members are attorneys currently enrolled in the doctoral program in political science and are available for individual appointments to discuss careers in law, selection of appropriate law schools, or any other concerns you may have about this career path.


Happening SOON: Alumni Mentor Program

This fall, the Department will launch our first ever Alumni Mentor Program for Political Science undergraduate majors. Students will have the opportunity to be paired with alumni in the professional field of their choice. Current students should be on the lookout for more information this fall.

Alumni, if you’d like to serve as a mentor, please e-mail Jenelle Dean jmdean@ucsd.edu.