

salute to scholars

CUNY 2017 • STUDENT AWARD RECIPIENTS

*Chinese Flagship Program's
Boren Scholarship Winners*

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE

Award-Winning CUNY Students

Top Academic Honors for Hundreds of Scholars



PRIDE IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR STUDENTS, ALUMNI

WITH THIS SPECIAL ISSUE of Salute to Scholars magazine, The City University of New York proudly celebrates graduating seniors, graduate students and recent alumni who won some of our nation's most prestigious academic awards in 2017.

These honors include highly competitive Goldwater, Truman and Marshall scholarships, as well as 12 National Science Foundation Graduate Research fellowships, the most prestigious federal grants for doctoral study in the sciences.

CUNY has 14 Fulbright fellowships for research and teaching abroad; five Boren Scholarships, federal grants for U.S. undergraduates interested in federal government service to study less commonly known languages; and four New York City Urban Fellowships to work in our city's government.

These and the other academic honors mentioned in this magazine reflect the high caliber of the University's students and the academic opportunities it provides. CUNY students' interests, drive and achieve-



ments underscore the transformative value of a CUNY degree. This is public higher education at its best, delivering on the University's historic mission to provide accessible, affordable, high-quality academic opportunities. Our graduates earn acceptance at leading graduate and professional institutions where they pursue law, medicine and the full range of arts, sciences and social sciences. They are welcomed quickly into the workforce, contributing their skills and talents to the betterment of our society. I am proud to recognize the remarkable CUNY students profiled in this special edition, as well as all members of the Class of 2017. They enrich our city, our nation and our world.

All best wishes,

James B. Milliken
James B. Milliken
Chancellor

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ON THE COVER: Four 2017 Boren Scholarship winners from Hunter College who participated in the federally sponsored Chinese Flagship program, which provides training in the Mandarin language.

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salute to scholars 

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

COMMUNITY COLLEGES:
BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GUTTMAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SENIOR COLLEGES:
BARUCH COLLEGE
BROOKLYN COLLEGE
CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND
HUNTER COLLEGE-1870
JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
LEHMAN COLLEGE
MACAULAY HONORS COLLEGE AT CUNY
MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE
NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
QUEENS COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
YORK COLLEGE

PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE SCHOOLS:
CUNY GRADUATE CENTER
CUNY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW
CUNY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH POLICY





Ensuring Fluency for the Next Generation of Global Professionals

SIX YEARS AGO, Hunter College launched its Chinese Flagship program, part of a federal initiative to develop a national corps of young global professionals who can speak, with flawless fluency, languages that are “critical to American competitiveness and security.”

The Chinese Flagship program at Hunter is now one of just 12 in the country and the only one in New York State. Its students live together in a dormitory where they speak more Mandarin than

English. They spend semesters in China and graduate with a coveted skill and rare experience that leads them into international careers in government, business and public service.

“They conduct high-level discussions and read and write in their professional domains.”

And a quarter of the 38 students who have been in the program — four this year — have been named

winners of a prestigious scholarship by the federal office that supports the nation’s Chinese Flagship programs and others at universities across the country in some 60 foreign languages.

The Boren Scholarships are highly competitive awards from the National Security Education Program, and among this year’s 194 winners nationwide are a record five CUNY students — the four in Hunter’s Chinese Flagship program and a fifth from the Macaulay Honors College at Queens College

— Yelena Suponya
*Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College*

— Jacob Kessler
*Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College*

— Omar Albert
Hunter College

— David O’Connor
*Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College*

**Boren Scholars
in Chinatown**

who is studying Arabic.

What is perhaps most remarkable about the Chinese Flagship's 2017 Boren winners is that they all began studying Mandarin almost by chance and quickly found it life-changing. Jacob Kessler happened to see a student writing Chinese characters one day when he was a sophomore, and now he's preparing to leave for a year of study in Beijing. Yelena Suponya took up the language after her mother suggested it during a free week before her freshman year. David O'Connor had friends who were learning Chinese and seemed to be enjoying it, undeterred by a language that has no alphabet. Omar Albert, meanwhile, was actually drawn by the difficulty: "Once I found that Chinese was so hard," he says, "I fell in love with it."

This year's winner from Queens College is Frances Raybaud, a sophomore who is as passionate about Arabic as the Hunter students are about Chinese. She will study as a Boren

scholar in Morocco.

The four Boren winners from Hunter are the latest triumph for the six-year-old Chinese Flagship program. Two Hunter students captured Borens to study in China in 2016 and four others were named winners in 2013 and 2014.

"Our program combines language learning and study of international relations and national security topics," says Der-lin Chao, the professor who heads Hunter's Chinese program and has directed the Flagship since it began in 2011. "The first thing is they must be interested in pursuing government public service, focusing on China and U.S. relationships."

Because students come in with no prior experience, Chao said, "Our challenge is to bring up students' proficiency from zero to an advanced level so they can study and work with the Chinese in China." Few universities offer language programs designed for that level of intensity or connect to international affairs, she said.

The Boren Scholar-

The prestigious fellowship is named for David L. Boren, who as a U.S. senator was principal author of the legislation that created the National Security Education Program.

— **Frances Raybaud**
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College
Boren Scholarship



“The internships allow them to interact with professionals in China, build a network and get to know the etiquette and culture in the work environment.” – *Flagship Program Director Der-lin Chao*

ships, worth up to \$20,000 each, come with a one-year commitment to work in national security for the federal government, which may lead to a career in government service. The prestigious award is named for David L. Boren, who as a U.S. senator from Oklahoma was principal author of the legislation that created the National Security Education Program in 1991. He is now president of the University of Oklahoma.

Under the National Security Education Program, the government supports undergraduate and graduate students who study one of more than 60 mostly non-Western European languages including Amharic, Kurdish, Tagalog, spoken in the Philippines, and Twi, spoken in West Africa. There are Flagship programs at other universities focused on Arabic, Hindi, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Turkish and Urdu. The Department of Defense administers the program.

For students in the Chinese Flagship, the language and culture of China become integral to their lives. “They conduct high-level discussions and read and write in their professional domains,” Chao said. “They will be tested in China to track their language growth, and their goal is to reach superior level, which is near-native.”

Besides taking on a demanding and rigorous language program, Flagship students are all double majors. Boren applicants must write statements that relate their research interests to national security issues. This year’s winners are pursuing fields ranging from economics to environment.

Kessler, O’Connor and Suponya are in Macaulay Honors College and expect to graduate in 2018. They and Albert live on a floor for Flagship students in a Hunter dormitory where they speak Chinese as much as possible.

“A lot of people who learn languages consider themselves language nerds, getting lost in the history between the words, but that isn’t me. What I love is using language as a tool to communicate.”

– *Jacob Kessler*

Kessler will attend Beijing Union University to study Mandarin and other subjects for two semesters so that he can get “the maximum amount of language instruction possible. I started studying Chinese late, as a sophomore.” He also will have a part-time internship in the spring.

The other students will study at Nanjing University, taking language and other courses in the fall and working in full-time internships in the spring, also in China.

“The internships allow them to interact with professionals in China, build a network and get to know the etiquette and culture in the work environment,” Chao explains.

Albert, who is in the Thomas Hunter Honors Program, started in CUNY’s SEEK program, which supports students with weak high school preparation. Having lost both parents, he has lived on his own since his mid-teens.

As a freshman, he met a Chinese Flagship student who

There is a floor in the Hunter College dormitory for Flagship students, and all four of the Boren scholars live there, where they speak Chinese as much as possible.

had just returned from Taiwan. Chao listened to him talk about the program and decided to sign on. “I love challenges, and Hunter’s program guarantees fluency.” Albert had previously won a State Department Critical Language Scholarship to study Mandarin in Changchun, China, in the summer of 2015, and he may pursue an MBA following his year of government service.

Kessler began studying Hebrew at age 5 and attended a Jewish high school on Long Island. At Hunter, he minored in Arabic and studied in Jordan during a winter break. “A lot of people who learn languages consider themselves language nerds, getting lost in the history between the words, but that isn’t me,” he says. “What I love is using language as a tool to communicate.” He studied in Beijing last summer and in Taiwan last fall.

Albany native O’Connor credits his grasp of Mandarin to the one-on-one tutoring that Chinese Flagship provides new students. “The way they teach is effective,” he says, comparing it with the way he learned French in France during

a gap year after high school. “Learning to speak is similar, but learning to read and write Chinese is very difficult, since they don’t have an alphabet. But if you study in an organic manner, it’s just a process of memorization.” He studied in Taiwan in the summer of 2015, interned with the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City and hopes for a placement with the State Department.

Suponya already has studied Mandarin in Taiwan and Beijing. “I find more and more things interesting about the language and the people and culture that make me stick with it,” she says. “The people are very honest and open, while Americans beat around the bush lots of times.” She foresees a career, perhaps at a policy institute, examining international relations and social and business trends. Suponya grew up speaking Russian at home, and she hopes to raise her command of that language to a professional level after she returns from China.

Frances Raybaud, the Macaulay/Queens sophomore, has a way to go in Arabic to match the proficiency of her Hunter peers. “I’m a high beginner,” she says. “My focus is building vocabulary and getting the grammar and writing, but I do have a good grasp on speaking.”

She initially hated the Arabic language when she tried it as a freshman, perhaps because of its difficulty. “And then I took a class in international relations. Because I was so interested in climate change and environmental science, I realized that the best place for me was the Middle East. They have so much sunlight and are running out of oil. I had to go back to Arabic, and then I fell in love with the language.”

She wants to see how Morocco is dealing with climate change. Seas are rising, drought blights agricultural areas and this oil-dependent country is going solar.

Rabaud holds U.S. and French citizenship and speaks French. She won Queens College’s Ibrahim Fellowship, which will take her through the Middle East in May to learn about conflicts, migrants and more. Her Boren-funded studies extend from June through December, at an Arabic-language school in Morocco’s capital, Rabat, and classes and interning in the historic city of Meknes.

She intends to go into the foreign service after graduate school in international relations.

Student Awards

Munazza Alam
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '16
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Alexander Alvarado
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '16
Fulbright English Teaching
Assistantship, 2017

Ma Su Su Aung
Macaulay Honors College
at Baruch College, '16
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017
Creighton University School
of Medicine, 2020

Chelsea Batista
Macaulay Honors College
at Brooklyn College, '17
Columbia University,
College of Physicians and
Surgeons, M.D., 2021

Maneesha Bhugwansing
Macaulay Honors College
at Baruch College, '14
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017
Maastricht University,
Economics, Master's in
Economics, 2018

Ashley Brea Tavarez
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '17
Teach for America, 2017

Alexandra Brown-Panisse
Macaulay Honors College
at Lehman College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Alexandria Brown-Panisse
Macaulay Honors College
at Lehman College, '19
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Norine Chan
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
Fulbright English Teaching
Assistantship, 2017

Bell Chen
Macaulay Honors College
at Baruch College, '17
1st Place Ninth Annual
Traders@MIT Fall
Intercollegiate Trading
Competition, 2017
Winner 2017 Rotman
International Trading
Competition, 2017

Samantha Chiu
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '17
Teaching English in Vietnam
Internship

Sara M. Clemente
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
FLAS Fellowship, 2017
Stanford University, Latin
American Studies, M.A., 2019

Kendra Cornelis
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '18
Battuta Scholarship for Peace
& Diplomacy, 2017

Marco Costanza
Macaulay Honors College
at College of Staten
Island, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Lisa Dazzell
Macaulay Honors College
at Lehman College, '19
Hunter College,
Psychology, 2025

Joseph Derosa
Macaulay Honors College
at City College, '15
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Elisha Edwards
Macaulay Honors College
at Lehman College, '19
Virginia Commonwealth
Division of Health Sciences
SAEP, 2017

Thomas Davis Peek Hart
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '15
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Thomas Hutton
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
New York City Urban Fellows
Program, 2017

Manal Janati
Macaulay Honors College
at Baruch College, '15
Venture for America
Fellowship, 2017

Maisha Kamal
Macaulay Honors College
at Brooklyn College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Savelyi Kelebeyev
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '16
Columbia University, Medical
School, M.D./Ph.D, 2024

Jacob Kessler
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
NSEP/David L. Boren Under-
graduate Scholarship, 2017

Nabil Khatri
Macaulay Honors College
at City College, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Devin Lee
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Matthew LoCastro
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
New York City Urban Fellows
Program, 2017

Danny Lundy
Macaulay Honors College at
Baruch College, '17
New York State Excelsior
Service Fellowship, 2017

Claire Lynch
Macaulay Honors College at
City College, '18
Truman Scholarship, 2017

Shirley Mak
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '15
Amsterdam Merit
Scholarship (University of
Amsterdam), 2017

Kaitlin McDermott
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Anika Nabila
Macaulay Honors College
at City College, '17
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017
Colin Powell
Scholarship, 2014

David O'Connor
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
NSEP/David L. Boren Under-
graduate Scholarship, 2017

Patryk Perkowski
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '14
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research Fellow-
ship, 2017

Anumta Raheel
Macaulay Honors College
at Brooklyn College, '18
Fulbright-Hays Group Projects
Abroad Program, 2017

Frances Raybaud
Macaulay Honors College
at Queens College, '19
Ibrahim Student Leadership
and Dialogue Middle East
Project, 2017
NSEP/David L. Boren Under-
graduate Scholarship, 2017

Nicole Rojas
Macaulay Honors College at
Hunter College, '18
Critical Languages
Scholarship, 2017

Ellianna Schwab
Macaulay Honors College
at City College, '17
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Michelle Sheu
Macaulay Honors College
at CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Alexandra Shoneyin
Macaulay Honors College
at John Jay College of
Criminal Justice, '20
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Victoria Smith
Macaulay Honors College
at Lehman College, '20
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Yelena Suponya
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
NSEP/David L. Boren Under-
graduate Scholarship, 2017

Olivia Sztanga
Macaulay Honors College
at Baruch College, '17
Critical Languages
Scholarship, 2017

Kevin Tang
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '18
Critical Languages
Scholarship, 2017

John Wetmore
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '17
Fulbright English Teaching
Assistantship, 2017

Alexandra Whittaker
Macaulay Honors College
at City College, '17
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Lucinda Zawadzki
Macaulay Honors College
at College of Staten
Island, '15
University of Oxford,
Oxford-Christ Church,
Ph.D., 2020

Saifelddeen Zihiri
Macaulay Honors College
at Hunter College, '19
Jeanette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Tydie Abreu
Baruch College, '17
New York State Excelsior
Service Fellowship, 2017

Amit Agrawal
Baruch College, '21
Winner TAMID stock pitch
competition, 2017

Jesse Aman
Baruch College, '17
Congress-Bundestag Youth
Exchange for Young Profes-
sionals Fellowship, 2017

Eline Andresen
Baruch College, '17
New York University, College
of Arts and Sciences,
Master's in International
Relations, 2019

Avi Atkin
Baruch College, '16
Venture for America
Fellowship, 2017

Sean Brock
Baruch College, '17
St. John's University,
School of Law, JD, 2020

Learning What We Don't Know About Islamic Law

BORN AND RAISED in Queens, Faiza Masood learned that Islamic law (Sharia) was flexible enough to fit widely varying social and historical contexts. “That’s in sharp contrast to what I knew from Western media, which presents Sharia as strict, archaic and the total opposite of what modern society looks like.”

Masood, who graduates from Hunter College this year, with a 2017 Marshall Scholarship to the United Kingdom, offers an example.

The Quran says women should dress modestly. Masood wears a hijab, or headscarf. While studying Arabic in Jordan with a U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, she saw that most women also wear a black cloak, or abaya, although some paired the hijab with a T-shirt and jeans, making it seem “more of a cultural norm than a religious imperative.”

But when she wore an abaya in Morocco, where she studied Arabic with a State Department Critical Language Scholarship, she was the most conservatively dressed student. Many Moroccan women who are practicing Muslims do not wear even a hijab.

And in Pakistan, her parents’ homeland, women may wear a hijab outdoors. Indoors, they reject what elsewhere is the norm of covering their heads if men who are not family members are present. “At a wedding, I was the only one of my family wearing a hijab.”

Such diversity in religious practice “undermines the assumption that Islamic law is monolithic.”

Masood will study at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London. Over two years, she intends to earn master’s degrees in Islamic studies and Islamic law.

Her first focus is the sources of law: the Quran; the Hadith, or teachings of the Prophet Mohammad; Qiyas, or analogical reasoning by Islamic scholars; and Ijm’a, consensus or scholarly agreements. As for the law, Muslims – more than a fifth of Earth’s population – have no common rulebook, and law varies by sect, region and time.

Take the Quran’s prohibition of alcohol. Can a Muslim use the cold medication NyQuil, which is 10 percent alcohol? By analogy, Muslims shouldn’t use marijuana, but what about medical marijuana for patients facing chemotherapy or chronic pain?

Masood envisions earning a Ph.D. and perhaps teaching at a public college such as Hunter, whose professors helped shape her worldview. Bert Breiner and Barbara Sproul offered insight into other religions, and Christopher Stone and Alexander Elinson explained the nuances of Arabic words.

And religion’s Mark James helped Masood start Hunter’s Interfaith Club, where students practice “scriptural reasoning,” in which they discuss passages from the Bible, the Torah and the Quran. “What do these verses mean to believers in everyday practice?” Also, “students needed a platform to engage in deeper religious and philosophical discussions.”

— **Faiza Masood**
Hunter College
Marshall
Scholarship



— **Norbesida Bagabila**
Borough of Manhattan Community College
Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
2017 Undergraduate
Transfer Scholarship



A Goal of Joining Western Technology With Traditional African Medicine

WHEN NORBESIDA Bagabila left the West African nation of Burkina Faso in 2012 at age 20, he spoke only the local and official languages, Moore and French.

In New York, he worked as a dishwasher, a 7-Eleven cashier and an airport security officer, often logging 60 hours a week while saving for his education. He delivered food for a restaurant so he could talk with Americans – even if at first it was only by using his phone’s translation program. “All the time my goal was to learn English,” he explains.

After two and half years, he was ready for higher education. “Borough of Manhattan Community College made me feel welcome.”

Graduating in 2017 as a science major with a 3.83 GPA, he has tutored his peers in mathematics, joined the Phi Theta Kappa Interna-

tional Honor Society and won both an America Needs You (ANY) Fellowship, a two-year mentorship and leadership program, and a Kaplan Scholarship, which guides top New York City community college students of color in transferring to and graduating from highly selective four-year colleges.

Now, Bagabila has collected another major honor, a nationally competitive 2017 Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. This privately funded grant, the largest of its kind, pays up to \$40,000 a year to community college students moving on to baccalaureate study. He awaits college acceptances.

Bagabila intends to major in either biomedical engineering or biochemistry. He got a head start in research with BMCC assistant professor Lauren Wickstrom, a computational biophysicist; they investigated the blood coagulation Factor-Xa via computer-based molecular dynamic simulation. He will present a poster at the BMCC Annual Research Symposium in May.

“In Africa, 80 percent of the time we are treated with plants and herbs ... I would like to research the mechanisms of the active molecules in the plants and herbs to convert them into medicine.” – *Norbesida Bagabila*

His long-range vision is to combine Western technology with traditional African medicine. “In Africa, 80 percent of the time we are treated with plants and herbs, which are cheaper and more convenient. I would like to research the mechanisms of the active molecules in the plants and herbs to convert them into medicine.” Manufacturing those medicines in Africa would create jobs and keep costs affordable, he reasons.

And then Bagabila gets to his dream. “After a Ph.D., I would like to create the first research university in Burkina Faso. Although there is a national university, it does not conduct research. I want to provide higher education and research facilities to ambitious students who are passionate about science and research, but do not have the opportunity to continue their studies in the United States, perhaps as a partnership between schools in the U.S. and Burkina Faso.

“Coming to the U.S., I did not have a clear path to success, but I now wish to leave a trail behind me for students who want to take big steps toward their success.”

Oscar Bruce
Baruch College, '17
New York State Senate
Session Internship, 2017

Kevin Cheng
Baruch College, '17
1st Place Ninth Annual Traders@MIT Fall Intercollegiate Trading Competition, 2017

Sok Cheng
Baruch College, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017
Freeman Awards for Study in Asia (Freeman-Asia), 2017

Hongshan Chu
Baruch College, '19
Winner 2017 Rotman International Trading Competition, 2017

Peter Cipriano
Baruch College, '17
Citizens Budget Commission Public Policy Fellow, 2017

Kimara Davis
Baruch College, '17
Washington University in St. Louis, School of Law, JD, 2020

Whitney Dihmes Peralta
Baruch College, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017

Thara Duclosel
Baruch College, '19
New York State Senate Session Internship, 2017

Quamid Francis
Baruch College, '17
New York State Senate Session Internship, 2017
New York University, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, Masters in Public Administration, 2019

Sebastian Franco
Baruch College, '16
Carnegie Mellon University, Heinz College School of Public Policy & Management, MS in Public Policy & Management, 2019

Paul Gagliardi
Baruch College, '19
New York State Senate Session Internship, 2017

Garrett Greene
Baruch College, '19
Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017

Chi An Huang
Baruch College, '17
New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, Interactive Telecommunications Program, 2019

Nabila Ibrahim
Baruch College, '17
New York State Excelsior Service Fellowship, 2017

Hasin Ishraque
Baruch College, '16
Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship, 2017

Jibreel Jalloh
Baruch College, '17
New York City Urban Fellows Program, 2017
Edward T. Rogowsky CUNY DC Internship, 2017

Gui Ming Jiang
Baruch College, '18
Freeman Awards for Study in Asia (Freeman-Asia), 2017

Lirek Kulik
Baruch College, '18
2nd Place Ninth Annual Traders@MIT Fall Intercollegiate Trading Competition, 2017

Peter Lewicki
Baruch College, '17
New York State Assembly Session Internship, 2017

Alexandra Lopez
Baruch College, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017

Stephanie Luna
Baruch College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson Fellowship, 2017

Danny Lundy
Baruch College, '17
New York State Excelsior Service Fellowship, 2017

Anna Makogon
Baruch College, '17
New York State Senate Session Internship, 2017

Qinkai Mao
Baruch College, '19
Winner 2017 Rotman International Trading Competition, 2017

Benjamin Mattison
Baruch College, '17
New York State Excelsior Service Fellowship, 2017

Linda Nikaj
Baruch College, '17
Seton Hall University, School of Diplomacy and International Affairs, J.D./M.A. Law and Diplomacy, 2020

Elsayed Osman
Baruch College, '19
New York State Assembly Session Internship, 2017

Karla Rangel Hernandez
Baruch College, '18
Edward T. Rogowsky CUNY DC Internship, 2017

Rajesh Rao
Baruch College, '21
Winner TAMID stock pitch competition, 2017

Adrian Reece
Baruch College, '16
Columbia University, Teachers College, Master's in Social-Organizational Psychology, 2019

Zulikha Roberts
Baruch College, '19
Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017

Speaking the Language(s) on a Path to Aiding Refugees

SOMETIMES the stage for life is set at an early age. Take Claire Lynch's path toward her prestigious 2017 Harry S. Truman Scholarship, which began with her chance acceptance into the first class of a dual-language elementary school, where she was among 50 English speakers to join 50 Spanish speakers.

"Learning Spanish and being part of a heavily Hispanic immigrant community was foundational for me," says Lynch, a junior at Macaulay Honors College at City College. That background started in working with staff in her mother's catering business at 11 or 12 and primed her for a far more challenging language, Arabic. "The way Arabic is constructed, the history and the social norms, the Islamic history that's present in the language, and the linguistics are so interesting."

The federally funded and highly competitive Truman Scholarship provides up to \$30,000 for graduate study leading to a career in public service. She intends to apply her experience in grassroots advocacy and public policy, along with her knowledge of languages, to the needs of immigrants and refugees. "I'm really interested in pursuing a job that will give me hands-on experience in the field," such as working with immigrants, perhaps in refugee camps.

As an activist, she has worked throughout New York State as a board member of the New York Public Interest Research Group, including tutoring

immigrants for citizenship tests, helping refugees and working on homelessness in New York City. From the policy perspective, she directs the City College chapter of the Roosevelt Institute, a student-run policy think tank that seeks to involve students in the political process.

Lynch majors in both political science and Jewish Studies – "I'm Irish-Catholic," she adds. Through City College, she traveled to Morocco in her sophomore year and Italy in her junior year "to learn about the political, social and economic dynamics between the Jewish and Muslim communities." She also studied in Amman, Jordan, in the winter of 2017.

She participates in the Colin Powell Fellowship in Leadership and Public Service, an intensive two-year program for undergraduates at City College, and she interned in Washington, D.C., with New York Sen. Chuck Schumer through CUNY's Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs.

At the moment, she's thinking of taking a gap year after graduation, perhaps to use her European Union citizenship, which is a benefit of her grandparents being Irish, to teach in Spain. And then there's the prospect of a dream graduate school at The School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, where she could dive deep into Arabic and Islamic culture. "There are great opportunities all around," she says.

"The way Arabic is constructed, the history and the social norms, the Islamic history that's present in the language, and the linguistics are so interesting."

— Claire Lynch

— Claire Lynch
Macaulay Honors College
at City College
Harry S. Truman Scholarship



Economics That Work for New Americans

FOR MANEESHA Bhugwansing, winner of a 2017 Fulbright fellowship to study economics in the Netherlands, seeing the world as an interrelated whole and understanding that knowledge provides opportunity, both stem directly from family experience.

Before she was born, her parents and other family members came to the United States from Suriname, a former Dutch colony in South America. Growing up in Richmond Hill, Queens, which has a thriving West Indian community, she repeatedly saw businesses open and fail because their owners didn't know how to keep up with licenses, inspections and other business issues. Yet, "around the corner, the public library might be offering a series on small-business skills that they probably weren't aware of," says Bhugwansing, who graduated from Macaulay Honors College at Baruch College in 2014. "A lot of immigrants don't have access to what's available and have to give up their endeavors."

Since earning her B.B.A. in international business, Bhugwansing has worked to connect immigrants and the children of immigrants with graduate

education as a program specialist with The Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans. She has handled the nuts and bolts of administering the rare and coveted \$90,000 scholarships. She has helped "with their entire life cycle as fellows," including selection, bringing the winners on board, assuring their payments and running conferences.

As she worked with the Soros Fellowships, which is housed in a larger nonprofit with international departments, she realized that she wanted to learn about economic development.

With the Fulbright, she will earn a master's degree at Maastricht University focused on European economic politics as well as global innovation. "I hope to find work in economic development, and that can mean many different things. I hope to figure it out in the next year."

This won't be her first international university experience. She won a C.V. Starr Study Abroad Fellowship from Baruch's Weissman Center for International Business to study at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain, in her senior year. She also used her Macaulay Opportunity Fund to study in China during her junior year.

"A lot of immigrants don't have access to what's available and have to give up their endeavors." — Maneesha Bhugwansing

— **Maneesha Bhugwansing**
Macaulay Honors College at Baruch
Fulbright Scholar



— **Michael Clark**
Hunter College, CUNY Baccalaureate Program
Fulbright Scholar

LGBTI Research on Refugees in Kenyan Camps

IN 2014, UGANDA passed a virulent anti-homosexuality law that, as a local advocacy group says, harnesses “the full force of the State ... to hunt down, expose, demean and suppress Uganda’s LGBTI people.” Thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people have since fled Uganda for the continent’s overburdened refugee camps.

Michael Clark, who has a CUNY Baccalaureate in health and human rights from Hunter College, will use his 2017 Fulbright fellowship to document their impact on the more hospitable country of Kenya. “I seek to immerse myself in the refugee communities to better understand the role that sexual orientation and gender identity have on forced migration and what the implications are for the public health of Kenya,” says Clark.

He had applied for his Fulbright last fall from Uganda, where he was conducting similar research into the plight of gay Congolese refugees. It was found “that discrimination in Uganda was just as bad, if not worse.” That research was supported by a federal Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship and the nonprofit Fund for Education Abroad.

Clark, now 43, the first person in his impoverished family to attend college, approaches his research with a depth of experience. A Native American from California, he was forced out of an ROTC college scholarship some 20 years ago because he was gay. He became a combat medic in the U.S. Army Reserves, a safe-sex educator, a personal trainer focusing on clients with chronic diseases and an advocate for the rights of HIV-positive people.

“I realized you can only get so far without a degree, and it was always dragging on me. I saw one of those [CUNY] posters on the subway – one of the Fulbright ones – and thought that’s really cool.” – Michael Clark

“I realized you can only get so far without a degree, and it was always dragging on me,” he says. “I saw one of those [CUNY] posters on the subway — one of the Fulbright ones — and thought that’s really cool. I want to do that.” He started at Borough of Manhattan Community College and later transferred to the CUNY Baccalaureate program with Hunter College as his home base.

His research in Uganda led to a 70-page paper and a great deal of data, which he is analyzing with School of Public Health associate professor Christian Grov. After his Fulbright, Clark intends to pursue a doctorate in public health.

In his Fulbright application, he underlines his personal connection with his research. In a Ugandan camp, “an Acholi elder singled me out and asked: ‘You are obviously older than the other students; what motivates you to be here?’ ... My answer came without hesitation. ‘My grandfather experienced catastrophic conflict not dissimilar to you [the U.S. government uprooted him and a burial ground from Achomawi tribal land to build a highway]. Two generations later, the effects of that event still impact my life. My motivation for being here is to understand the generational trauma of conflict so that, hopefully, your grandchildren are not affected, as I am, by displacement.’”

Kristina Sarkissyan
Baruch College, '17
Fulbright U.S. Student
Fellowship, 2017

Mike Szczepankiewicz
Baruch College, '18
3rd Place Ninth Annual
Traders@MIT Fall
Intercollegiate Trading
Competition, 2017

Ahathon Tolibov
Baruch College, '19
New York State Assembly
Session Internship, 2017

Dmitriy Treyger
Baruch College, '17
3rd Place Ninth Annual
Traders@MIT Fall
Intercollegiate Trading
Competition, 2017
Winner 2017 Rotman
International Trading
Competition, 2017

Ariella Trotsenko
Baruch College, '17
Baruch College, Master's in
International Affairs, 2019

Jolisel Vargas-Lopez
Baruch College, '18
New York State Assembly
Session Internship, 2017

Zhaoyue Wei
Baruch College, '19
Winner 2017 Rotman
International Trading
Competition, 2017

Annie Willis
Baruch College, '20
Edward T. Rogowsky CUNY DC
Internship, 2017

Raymond Wong
Baruch College, '17
2nd Place Ninth Annual
Traders@MIT Fall
Intercollegiate Trading
Competition, 2017

Winnie Wu
Baruch College, '17
Edward T. Rogowsky CUNY DC
Internship, 2017

Jamie Yatcha
Baruch College, '21
Winner TAMID stock pitch
competition, 2017

Gongshun Yin
Baruch College, '19
Winner 2017 Rotman
International Trading
Competition, 2017

Serena Zou
Baruch College, '18
Freeman Awards for Study in
Asia (Freeman-Asia), 2017

Aleksandra Artyfikiewicz
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '18
CUNY Sustainability
Student Competition

Norbesida Bagabila
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Jack Kent Cooke Transfer
Scholarship, 2017

Laiquan Bates
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Marija Binch
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Mahdiul Chowdhury
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Nano STEM Research
Scholarship

Kalida Clarke-Gittens
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17

Emily Colon
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Lionel Colon
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Annette Urso Rickel
Scholarship, 2017

Tesfamichael Demeke
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Quincy Doccy
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa

Ehab Elrawi
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '18
CUNY Sustainability Student
Competition

Jack English
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Bard University, Levy Econom-
ics Institute, Economics, 2019

Sanou Wouhohire Laurent
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
BMCC Foundation Scholar

Yan Ming Lee
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Out-in-Two Scholar

Naomi Mackliff
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
BMCC Scholarship Fund
Recipient

Eunice Melendez
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Keyu Mo
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Transfer Scholarship to the
University of Rochester

Dominika Palinko
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '16
ATLAS collaboration with the
Lawrence Berkeley National
Laboratory

Lisbeth Payano
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17

Tania Quiroz
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
CUNY Sustainability Student
Competition

Andrea Reed
Borough of Manhattan Com-
munity College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Christian Santo
Borough of Manhattan Com-
munity College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Jason Silva
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa Scholar

Erii Sugimoto
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
Loretta Lee Foundation
Scholarship

Aminur Ullah
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
CUNY Model Senate

Yeshi Dema Wangchuk
Borough of Manhattan
Community College, '17
CUNY Sustainability
Student Competition

Catherine Jerry
Bronx Community College, '17
Mentoring in Medicine

Henry Siccardi
Bronx Community College, '16
Director and Chief Research
Associate of National Alliance of
Research Associates
Program, 2017

Learning to Become an Agent of Change

WORKING as a college aide sanitarian for the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in 2014, Giselle Cordero had to enforce health regulations at day camps and other sites where low-income youngsters came for lunch. "A lot didn't have coolers or refrigerators to keep food at the required temperature, so the food needed to be thrown out," she recalls.

That offered a quick lesson in public policy: spending money on coolers and ice could have saved 200 meals at a time — and insured that those children got a daily meal.

Cordero, who earned a bachelor's degree from Queens College this year, recently won a 2017 New York City Urban Fellowship, a nationally competitive, nine-month New York City program that introduces participants to local government, public policy and public service.

"I aspire to become an agent of change and empower those who otherwise feel voiceless under our current system. I want to be an attorney and work in public service,



— **Giselle Cordero**
Queens College
New York City Urban Fellowship

so I can better contribute to my community and address its needs,” says Cordero, who majored in political science and government.

She already has quite a start.

In 2015, she worked in the health department’s Public Health Engineering Bureau with the team that combatted an outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease. Shortly after, she interned in Albany with then-Assembly Member Guillermo Linares. “I had to quickly adapt and learn the ropes of the office. The experience improved my research skills, and I learned how to draft memorandums and press releases. I sat in on meetings with constituents and attended legislative sessions. Mr. Linares was an incredible mentor.”

Cordero is particularly proud of her analysis of a bill to protect undocumented, domestically abused immigrant women from prosecution by state and local authorities. She says her research was published in the state interns’ handbook.

In summer 2016, Cordero, an American-born child of immigrants from the Dominican Republic and Ecuador, interned with her own congresswoman, Nydia Velázquez, through the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI).

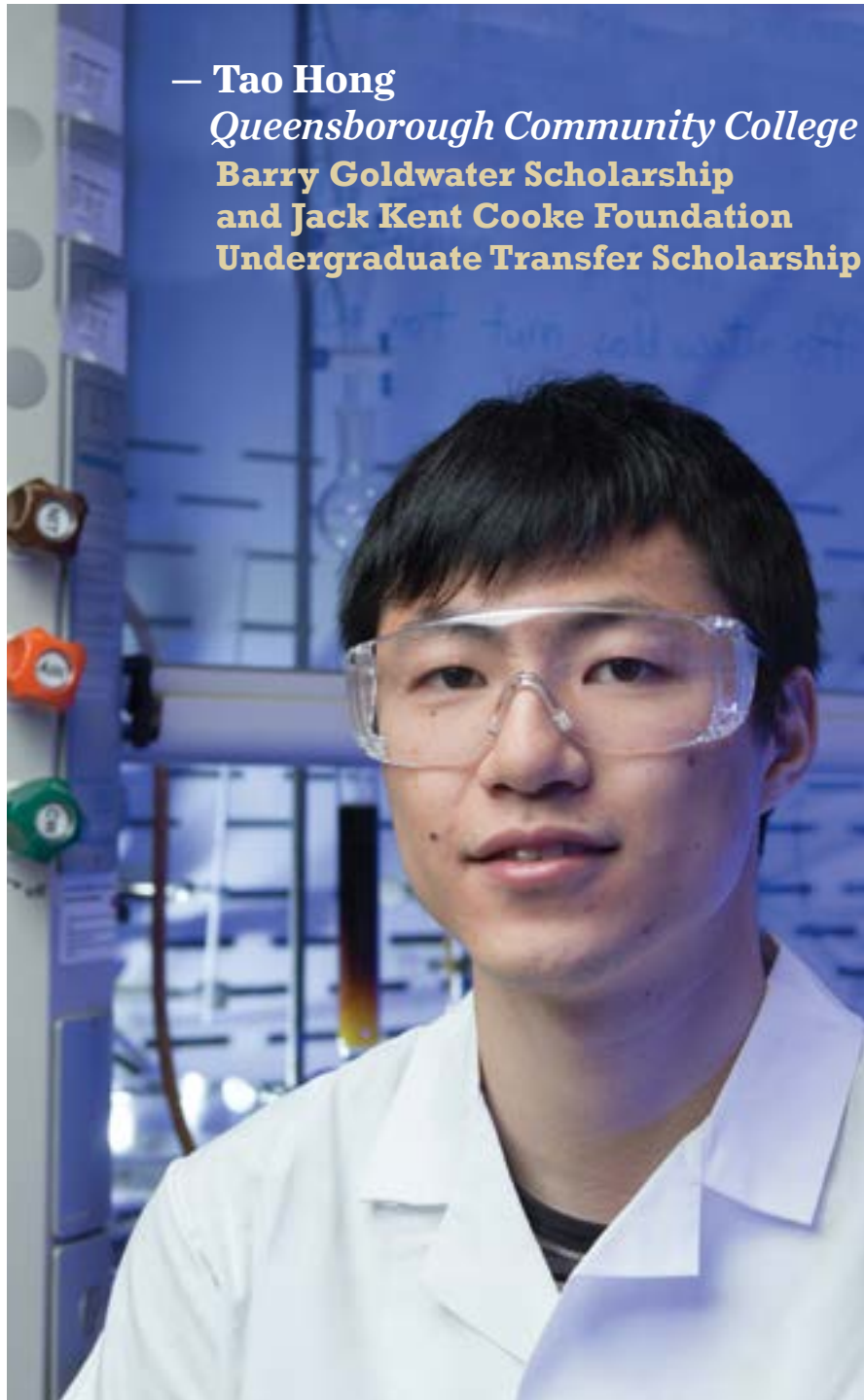
“I enjoyed the policy briefings, where we learned about issues impacting the community and formulated recommendations to solve them. Belonging to two minority groups, as a Hispanic woman who comes from a low-income neighborhood, I was encouraged by being surrounded by women in power who give us a voice,” she says. “Being part of CHCI, which is full of dedicated, young professionals who want to help their communities, motivates me to continue to strive to break down the barriers placed on all minority groups.”

Cordero attended a prelaw summer institute at SUNY Buffalo in 2015 and now works in an attorney’s office as a paralegal. She intends to apply to law school after her Urban Fellowship.

“I was encouraged by being surrounded by women in power who give us a voice.”

– *Giselle Cordero*

– **Tao Hong**
Queensborough Community College
Barry Goldwater Scholarship
and Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship



From Hardly a ‘Hello’ to Studying for a Ph.D. in Science

WHEN HE CAME to America from China in 2014, Tao Hong says the only sentence he could say was, “Hello, how do you do?” But after one semester with the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP), “I improved a lot, including my writing, reading and speaking.”

Now graduating from Queensborough Community College, he has captured two prestigious 2017 awards: a federal Barry Goldwater Scholarship for undergraduate students heading toward Ph.D.s in the natural sciences, mathematics and engineering, and a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.

As a rising junior, Hong will receive the Goldwater – up to \$7,500 for tuition, fees, books, room and board – for two years. Graduating with an A.S. in engineering technology and a 3.96 GPA, he awaits admission decisions from several top schools.

The Jack Kent Cooke award – given to just 55 of nearly 3,000 applicants – pays college costs that other financial aid doesn’t cover, up to \$40,000 per year. Recipients can apply for graduate scholarships.

Hong is seeking a doctorate in material science. “I like it because it’s not a single thing,” he says. “It mixes math, physics and chemistry.”

His Queensborough education prepared him well, he says. Professor Moni Chauhan “ignited my interest in science.” He explains that they developed an efficient “one-pot” process of synthesizing a PMHS- (polymethylhydrosiloxane)-coated polyrhodanine nanotube – or, in plain English, a neat way of delivering an antibacterial agent in an environmentally friendly way.

Hong also credits his success to Queensborough mathematician Howard Sporn and chemist Paris Svoronos, “the coach of the team.”

In the summer of 2016, he won a 10-week National Science Foundation-funded Research Experience for Undergraduates at Vanderbilt University. There, mechanical engineering professor Deyu Li wrote in a recommendation, “Tao really surprised me with his enthusiasm, productivity and creativity, which led to research progress easily comparable to senior graduate students.”

Li asked Hong to help a doctoral student develop a microfluidic chip to sort and trap *C. elegans*, a tiny worm used in research. Hong recognized that the worm prefers to swim in curved channels, rather than straight ones. His superior worm-sorting chip won Hong first place in Vanderbilt’s research-poster competition that summer – and co-first authorship of a paper with the graduate student.

This summer he will intern at a global specialty chemicals firm, Albemarle Corp. in Baton Rouge, La., thanks to a \$10,000 American Chemical Society internship in chemistry and chemical engineering; just 32 were awarded to undergraduates.

When Hong placed first in a 25-college competition sponsored by the New York State Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges this year, he said, “To me, science and math are the keys to unlock the natural phenomena that we see, and also phenomena beyond our perception.”

Hong says he is seeking a doctorate in material science “because it’s not a single thing. It mixes math, physics and chemistry.”

— *Tao Hong*

Maisha Kamal
Brooklyn College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Jessica Khaimova
Brooklyn College, '16
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Destiny M Samuels
Brooklyn College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman International
Scholarship, 2017

Najeeba Williams
Brooklyn College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman International
Scholarship, 2017

Lelucksamee Ampawa
City College, '17
University Innovation
Fellow, 2017

Violeta Contreras Ramirez
City College, '15
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017

Marisol Cortés
City College, '17
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017

David Dam
City College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Tammie Marie David
City College, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman International
Scholarship, 2017

Kurt M. Dawiec
City College, '20
University Innovation
Fellow, 2017

Junior Duplessis
City College, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Stephana Eghan
City College, '18
New York Women in Commu-
nications Scholarship, 2017

Elaine Johnson
City College, '17
Class of 2017 Salutatorian

Nabil Ahmed Khatri
City College, '19
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Mahmoud Khedr
City College, '19
University Innovation
Fellow, 2017

Yvonne Ng
City College, '16
Student Academy
Award, 2017

Iliana Ortega
City College, '17
One of 50 undergraduate
seniors nationwide in the
American Advertising
Federation’s Most Promising
Multicultural Students
Class of 2017

Christopher M. Reid
City College, '17
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017

Patrick Tuttle
City College, '19
Society of Chemical Industry
Scholar, 2017

Dan Wan
City College, '18
University Transportation
Center Outstanding Student
of the Year Award, 2017

Michael B. Clark
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '17
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Jane Guskin
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '17
Graduate Center,
Ph.D. in Sociology, 2022

Jessica Khaimova
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '16
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Shahrukh Khan
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '17
Fulbright-Nehru Senior
Research Program, 2017
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Minkyung Lee
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '18
Amgen Scholar- Japan, 2017

Seyed Alreza Noori
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '17
Benjamin Franklin
Fellowship, 2017

University of Pennsylvania,
Penn Arts & Sciences, Ph.D.
in Religious Studies, 2022

Tyler Brooke Wilson
CUNY Baccalaureate
Degree, '17
Massachusetts Institute of
Technology, MIT School of
Humanities, Arts and Social
Sciences, Ph.D.
in Philosophy, 2022

Steve Arriaga
College of Staten Island, '17
Fulbright English Teaching
Assistantship, 2017

Soukaina Chyat
College of Staten Island, '19
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Keegan Fernandes
College of Staten Island, '17
Jonas E. Salk Scholarship

Sosima Navarrete
College of Staten Island, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Amanda Tukaj
College of Staten Island, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Jessie Fredlund
Graduate Center, '20
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Chelsea Haines
Graduate Center, '20
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Stephanie Huber
Graduate Center, '20
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Abigail Lapin
Graduate Center, '20
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Mae Miller
Graduate Center, '20
Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral
Fellowship, 2017

Raymond Moody
Graduate Center, '20
National Institute on
Drug Abuse (NIDA), 2017

Tyler Olsen
Graduate Center, '18
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Danica Savonick
Graduate Center, '20
Woodrow Wilson
Dissertation Fellowship in
Women’s Studies, 2017

At Harvard, Researching Exoplanets 6.5 Light Years Away

MUNAZZA KHALIDA ALAM conducts her research of a place in the universe where the word may just be arriving that Mitt Romney is favored to beat pizza magnate Herman Cain to challenge Barack Obama's quest for a second term.

Since Alam's turf is at least 6.5 light years away, it has taken 6.5 years for that 2011 radio news to reach the nearest of the Earthlike exoplanets she studies as they orbit distant stars.

Alam, a graduate of Macaulay Honors College at Hunter in 2016, now is pursuing a doctorate in astronomy at Harvard University, where she analyzes the exoplanets' atmospheres with a 2017 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship worth \$138,000.

"We don't know what the atmospheres of these planets will be like. If they are different from Earth's, what would that mean for life there?" she wonders. "We should expect surprises."

One method astronomers use to deduce the existence of exoplanets is measuring minute dips in starlight as they transit, or pass in front of, their host stars. NASA had confirmed 3,475 exoplanets and 581 multiplanet systems as of April 13, 2017; almost 4,500 other detections await confirmation.

How do astronomers learn about their weather? As planets transit their host stars, atoms and molecules in the atmosphere absorb light at different wavelengths, each characteristic of a particular element. And, by observing changes in the apparent radius of a planet at different wavelengths, Alam

explains, astronomers can infer atmospheric structure, composition and even the presence of clouds.

Alam will conduct atmospheric studies of exoplanets ranging from super-Earths – larger than our planet – to hot Jupiters – similar in size and mass to our Solar System neighbor, but orbiting closer to their host stars than Earth.

"I'm working with data from the Hubble Space Telescope as part of a team from Harvard, with collaborators across the U.S., the United Kingdom and France," she explains. They study the atmospheres of about 30 exoplanets at different wavelengths: optical, infrared and ultraviolet.

As an undergraduate, Alam used her Macaulay Opportunity Fund to research "failed stars" known as brown dwarfs with NASA's Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF) at the Mauna Kea observatory in Hawaii.

Alam was born in Staten Island to a father from Pakistan and a mother from India, and she chose to study astronomy after Hunter astrophysicist Kelle Cruz invited her to join her research team at the American Museum of Natural History. There she also met Emily Rice of the College of Staten Island and Jackie Faherty, senior scientist and senior education manager at the museum. Cruz and Rice were recently promoted to associate professor.

"My first research experience was in a group led by these three strong women," says Alam, whose name joins theirs on two published papers. "I felt I had a place in science with them."

"We don't know what the atmospheres of these planets will be like. If they are different from Earth's, what would that mean for life there? . . . We should expect surprises." – *Munazza Khalida Alam*

– **Munazza Khalida Alam**
Macaulay Honors College at Hunter
**National Science Foundation Graduate
Research Fellowship**



A portrait of Kristina Sarkissyan, a young woman with long, dark, curly hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a black blazer with white geometric patterns over a black top and a simple necklace with a small pendant. The background is a light-colored wall with a grid pattern.

Fluent in Armenian, Russian and Spanish – It’s Time to Study Business Management in Mexico

WHEN SHE volunteered to teach English and dance in Colombia, her fellow students thought she was an American Latina because of her grasp of Spanish and “my dark features.” When she studied at the Berlin School of Economics and Law, they thought she was Latin American – “I spoke to my roommates in Spanish.”

Now Kristina Sarkissyan, born in Kazakhstan, raised on Long Island, conversant in Armenian and fluent in Russian, has a new venue to test perceptions about her, thanks to a 2017 Fulbright Mexico Binational Internship.

“My Spanish is maybe 90 percent, but I’m lacking in business terminology,” says Sarkissyan, who graduates with a B.B.A. in international business from Baruch this year. Her Fulbright, one of just 16 awarded nationally, provides an internship with a for-profit multinational business or a nongovernmental organization. She also can take courses related to international business at ITAM, the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, a presti-

—**Kristina Sarkissyan**
Baruch College
Fulbright Scholar

gious private university in Mexico City.

“With this internship, I will see how business is conducted in Mexico, how they approach management, situations and meetings,” she says. “I’ll get a better understanding how they determine what consumers value.”

Sarkissyan, her parents and her brother moved to the United States when she was 5. “Coming from a post-Soviet country, I had to balance the ideals and values of my parents with U.S. customs and school. So much was different, like food. Here I found pizza, hot dogs and tater tots. And in school you were expected to voice your opinions. I had to find my identity as an American.”

She chose to attend Baruch because of its international business program and its ranking as among the most diverse colleges in the nation. While she had close connections with a number of professors, it was the assistant director of undergraduate admissions, Kristin Pedicone, who became her mentor as she worked all four years as an “admissions ambassador” in the campus Welcome Center, first as a volunteer and, after two years, with pay.

“She’s so fluid in the way she speaks with people,” Pedicone says. “Imagine her leading a tour: Wouldn’t you want to go to the school where she is? And last week I needed someone to jump up on the stage before 300 people who were filling a theater; she did, and answered questions about study-abroad and international experiences.”

For Sarkissyan, part of the value in working at Baruch’s Welcome Center was seeing it as an exercise in marketing. “It’s right there on the first floor, and anyone can walk in. You formulate the proper way to pitch the school, and you speak with parents, which is very different from speaking with students. In terms of consumer behavior, it’s like marketing the same product in different parts of the world.”

— Bianca Brown York College National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship



Be It Barnacle or Fruit Fly, the Microbiome Is in Focus

IMAGINE BARNACLES on a jetty, some exposed to air, some under water and some partly submerged. They look pretty much the same, but are all their microbiomes – the microbes that live within each of them – the same, or do they vary with water level, exposure to sunlight, contact with bird droppings and other factors?

That’s one question that Bianca Brown, a graduate of York College in 2015 and now a doctoral student at Brown University, intends to answer with a 2017 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship worth \$138,000. “I study how host-microbiome relationships change in different environments,” she explains.

The human microbiome has been much in the news and on the web (“How to Build a Better Microbiome for Vibrant Health,” one merchant offers), prompting Brown to ask, “Is it just hype? The microbiome is something we’ve always had. Research like mine, where we try to figure out its true role, can bring clarity.”

Besides barnacles, she works with fruit flies, which zip through a generation in three weeks, and heads to Kenya this summer to study rodents in the wild. “The microbiome offers essential functions. For example, herbivores use gut microbes to aid in the breakdown of plant material. We’re trying to figure out other functional roles that microbiomes play using species in their natural habitat,” she says.

Brown says she grew up near the

beach on the island of Jamaica, “so I was always interested in the environment, although I didn’t realize there was an aspect that you could study in the lab.”

When she came to New York City at 18, she initially chose York because of its pharmacy program, but then she met assistant biology professor Elizabeth Alter. “She showed me this different world, where you could study things you never knew existed. She placed me on a practical trajectory and it opened doors.”

Brown started by helping Alter study tissue samples of fish from the Congo River. “This opened my eyes to how the natural environment influences the evolution of species and how it shapes their general morphology and behavior,” she says.

She also connected with CUNY’s Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, a National Science Foundation-funded program that supports undergraduate research.

As an undergraduate she spent two summers in Brazil conducting research into conservation efforts and biodiversity in the dwindling Atlantic Forest. She also studied how butterflies in Gabon diversify between continuous forest and savanna. “We surveyed the different species that inhabited both.”

Travel, she says, “opened my eyes as to what science can accomplish and how it can affect people’s lives. It also allows me to interact with different types of people and to be more patient with different cultures.”

Destry Sibley
Graduate Center, '18
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Richard Smith
Graduate Center, '20
Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral
Fellowship, 2017

Jessica Woodson
Graduate Center, '21
Academy of Doctors of
Audiology (ADA), 2017

Levi Sharpe
CUNY Graduate School of
Journalism, '15
Society of Professional
Journalists National Mark of
Excellence Award 2015, 2017

Joseph Swide
CUNY Graduate School of
Journalism, '16
71st College Photographer of
the Year, 2017
72nd Pictures of the Year
International
Competition, 2017

Rosemary Almonte
CUNY School of Law, '17
Honors Attorney with the U.S.
Department of Labor, 2017

Shoshanna Brown
CUNY School of Law, '17
Appellate Attorney with the
New York State Supreme
Court, Appellate Division,
Third Department, 2017

Annemarie Caruso
CUNY School of Law, '17
Skadden Fellowship, Student
Representation Project, Main
Street Legal Services, 2017

Maggie Gribben
CUNY School of Law, '17
Skadden Fellowship, Justice
at Work, representing low
wage workers in wage theft
cases, Boston, Mass., 2017

Ricky He
CUNY School of Law, '17
Immigrant Justice Corps
Fellow, 2017

Megan Lynch
CUNY School of Law, '17
NY State Excelsior Service
Fellowship, 2017

Connor Mealey
CUNY School of Law, '17
NY State Excelsior Service
Fellowship, 2017

Katy Naples-Mitchell
CUNY School of Law, '17
Judicial Clerk, Senior Judge
Anne E. Thompson, U.S.
District Court, D.N.J., 2017

Mariam Sardar
CUNY School of Law, '17
NY State Excelsior Service
Fellowship, 2017

Dianne Galasso
CUNY School of Professional
Studies, '17
Fordham University, Graduate
School of Social Service,
Master of Social Work, 2020

Emily Towner
CUNY School of Professional
Studies, '17
Columbia University, School
of Nursing, Doctorate in
Nurse Practitioner Program
(MD-DNP) with a psychiatric
mental health specialty, and
to Columbia's post-bac Ph.D.
in psychology program, 2020

Matthew Laz Romo
CUNY Graduate School
of Public Health and
Health Policy, '20
Extraordinary Research in
Epidemiology, 2017

Lucas Michael Schiffer
CUNY Graduate School
of Public Health and
Health Policy, '17
Extraordinary Research in
Epidemiology and
Biostatistics, 2017

Rokia Diabi
Hostos Community
College, '17
Phi Theta Kappa All New York
Community College Academic
Team, 2017

Nader Abdelrahman
Hunter College, '18
Critical Languages
Scholarship, 2017

Munazza K Alam
Hunter College, '16
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Omar Albert
Hunter College, '18
NSEP/David L. Boren Under-
graduate Scholarship, 2017

Heather Armijo
Hunter College, '17
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Hassan Ayub
Hunter College, '18
Critical Language
Scholarship, 2017

Fatoumata Bah
Hunter College, '19
Foreign Language and Area
Studies Scholarship, 2017

Keya Bari
Hunter College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Jane L Breakell
Hunter College, '14
Fulbright U.S. Student
Program, 2017

Dina Buitrago
Hunter College, '17
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017
University of California, San
Francisco, Graduate School
of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. in
pharmaceutical sciences and
pharmacogenomics, 2023

Hila Chase
Hunter College, '15
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research Fellow-
ship, 2017

Theresa Heo
Hunter College, '18
Benjamin A. Gilman Interna-
tional Scholarship, 2017

Mia Kang
Hunter College, '17
Yale University, Graduate
School of Arts and Sciences,
Ph.D., 2023

David Kansberg
Hunter College, '16
NYU, Middle Eastern and
Islamic Studies Ph.D., 2023

Florimond Le Goupil-Maier
Hunter College, '18
Critical Language
Scholarship, 2017

Faiza G Masood
Hunter College, '17
Marshall Scholarship, 2017
School of Oriental & African
Studies, London,
Masters, 2019

Halima Mayat
Hunter College, '17
Buttata Scholarship for Peace
& Diplomacy, 2017

Dennis Melendez
Hunter College, '17
Rockefeller University, Grad-
uate Program in Bioscience,
Ph.D., 2023

Ubayed Muhith
Hunter College, '18
Critical Language
Scholarship, 2017

Lashawn Pena
Hunter College, '15
National Science Foundation
Graduate Research
Fellowship, 2017

Robert Roth
Hunter College, '16
Fulbright English Teaching
Assistantship, 2017

Amy M. Russo
Hunter College, '18
Pulitzer Student Reporting
Fellowship, 2017

Larisa Shagabayeva
Hunter College, '16
Jonas E. Salk
Scholarship, 2017
Harvard University, School of
Medicine, MD/Ph.D., 2022

Jasmine Awad
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '19
Jeannette K. Watson Fellow-
ship, 2017

Brianna Cingari
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '17
Collegiate Science and
Technology Entry Program
— 1st place Statewide
Research Presentation Award
(Chemistry), 2017

Edwin Diaz
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '17
Benjamin A. Gilman
International
Scholarship, 2017

Erica Fontanes
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '17
Collegiate Science and
Technology Entry Program —
1st place Statewide Research
Presentation Award
(Chemistry), 2017

Josephine Guo
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '17
Society for the Advancement
of Chicanos/Hispanics and
Native Americans in Science
— National Research Presen-
tation Award (Environmental
Science), 2017

Rabia Javed
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '18
Collegiate Science and
Technology Entry Program —
1st place Statewide Research
Presentation Award (Environ-
mental Science), 2017

Emily Legutko
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '18
NSEP/David L. Boren
Fellowship, 2017

Lisa Nishimura
John Jay College
of Criminal Justice, '19
Jeannette K. Watson
Fellowship, 2017

Law School Is in Sight for One Purpose – Public Service

THE DAY AFTER an ISIS-inspired gunman killed 49 people and wounded 53 in an Orlando nightclub in June 2016, Jibreel Jalloh began interning with Rep. Yvette Clarke in Washington. “Her office was bombarded with calls, and the debate about banning assault weapons consumed our office for the next month,” he recalls.

That was just one in a series of internships that propelled Jalloh, who earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from Baruch College this year, into a 2017 New York City Urban Fellowship. The nationally competitive, \$30,000, nine-month fellowship places participants with New York City agencies to encourage public service.

This first-generation college student says he graduated from a public high school in Bushwick reasonably up to speed academically, but without needed study and social skills. CUNY’s Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge program (SEEK) and Urban Male Leadership Academy “provided structural support to gain a firm footing in college. They showed me the importance of mentorship and taught me the soft skills necessary for success.”

He has served as president of Baruch’s SEEK Society, peer mentor and vice president of the campus Black Student Union. “I believe that everyone can get through college with the proper support system,” he says.

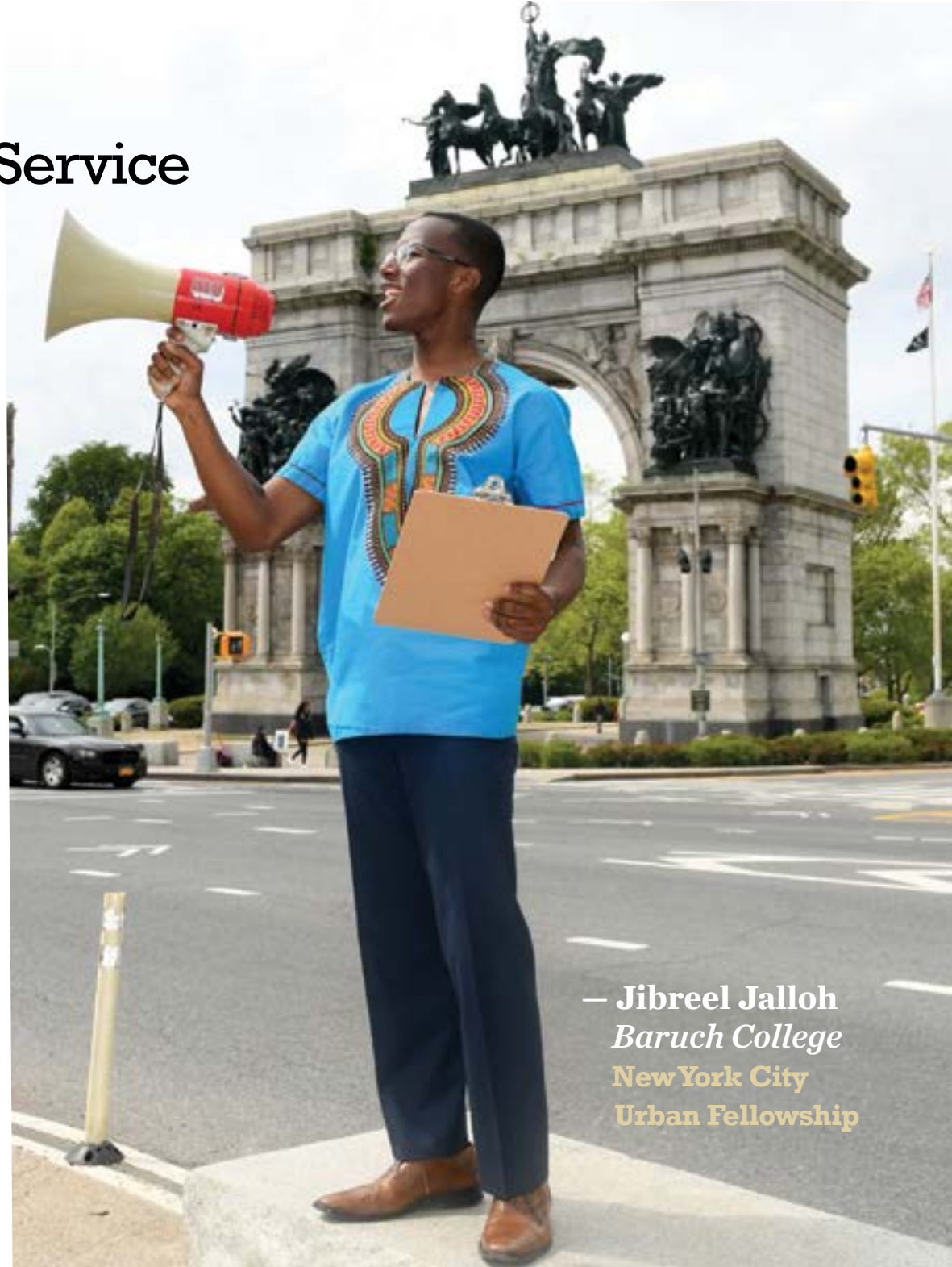
When he lived with his grandparents and other family members in Sierra Leone for two years, he encountered the aftermath of that

country’s 1992-2002 civil war. “At 9 years old I was playing soccer with amputees — kids who had one arm or one leg and were using crutches to play goalie,” he recalls. “It didn’t hit me at that moment, but they were children my age who had survived the civil war. If my parents had not decided to come to America, I could have been one of those kids.”

In the spring of 2016, he interned in Albany with Assembly Member Charles Barron, drafting bill memoranda, analyzing demographic trends and meeting with constituents. In the fall of 2015 he interned with City Council Member Jumaane Williams, working on legislative issues and representing him at meetings. And in the summer of 2015, he worked for the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, helping with inquiries and advising the public about government policy.

“Working on all legislative levels, from New York City Council to Congress, I’ve touched on many topics: gun violence, economic growth, the social costs of gentrification and bail reform among them,” he says. “I’m passionate about changing my community for the better — regardless of whose jurisdiction it falls under.” He intends to go to law school to better prepare for public service.

Jalloh recalls the mock legislative session at the end of his time in Albany, when he played the role of an Assembly member, debating and voting on bills. “It was amazing to see my parents, immigrants from Sierra Leone, watch me, their son, speaking on the floor of the Assembly.”



— Jibreel Jalloh
Baruch College
New York City
Urban Fellowship

Veronica Pacheco John Jay College of Criminal Justice, '18 Charles B. Rangel Inter- national Affairs Graduate Fellowship, 2017	Aaron Pakow Kingsborough Community College, '17 National Society of Collegiate Scholars First in the Family Scholarship, 2017 KCC Presidential Scholars (2015-2016)	Konstandinos Gobakis LaGuardia Community College, '17 Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship, 2017	Jonathan Morales LaGuardia Community College, '17 Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship, 2017 Freddie T. Davy Scholarship, 2017	Michelle Castel Lehman College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Shanell Mangrum Lehman College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Brandon Robinson Lehman College, '19 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017
Ronal Peralta John Jay College of Criminal Justice, '17 Program for Research Initiatives in Science and Math at John Jay College — Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher Award	Oleakan Shonowo Kingsborough Community College, '17 Harvard Public Policy Leader- ship Participant, 2017 National Model United Nations Participant, 2017 Gladys Brooks Scholarship for Student Leadership, Academic Excellence, and Civic Engagement	Soleil Griffin LaGuardia Community College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Kaplan Leadership Associate's Degree Scholarship, 2017	Alwin Joshua Chico Lehman College, '20 National Science Foundation REU, 2017	Octavia Maybank Lehman College, '18 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Melissa Ruiz Lehman College, '18 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017
Ronald Rodriguez John Jay College of Criminal Justice, '16 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow- ship, 2017	Miguel Castillo LaGuardia Community College, '17 Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship, 2017	Awatef Ibrahim LaGuardia Community College, '16 Women's Forum of New York Education Fund, 2017	JuYeon Park LaGuardia Community College, '16 Women's Forum of New York Education Fund, 2017	Northern Carolina State University, Soil Science Institute, Environmental Science M.S., 2025	Hilal Muharam Lehman College, '20 Columbia University, NERA MedPrep Program, Biology	Madelyn Sher Lehman College, '16 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program, 2017
Mateo Rubino John Jay College of Criminal Justice, '17 NSEP/David L. Boren Under- graduate Scholarship, 2017	Christian Esquivel LaGuardia Community College, '17 Kaplan Leadership Associate's Degree Scholarship, 2017	Nelson Jarrin LaGuardia Community College, '17 Point Foundation Community College Scholarship, 2017	Aaron Ramirez LaGuardia Community College, '17 Point Foundation Community College Scholarship, 2017	Yori Dume Lehman College, '19 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Giancarlo Oviedo-Mori Lehman College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Cindy Vargas Lehman College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017
Donovan Trinidad John Jay College of Criminal Justice, '17 National Institute for General Medical Sciences - Initiative for Maximizing Student De- velopment (IMSD) Fellowship, 2017	Joey Fernandez LaGuardia Community College, '17 Charles B. Rangel Inter- national Affairs Graduate Fellowship, 2017	Remy Patrick Lavilla LaGuardia Community College, '17 NCHC Innovation For Tomor- row Award, 2017	Steven Roa LaGuardia Community College, '17 Point Foundation Community College Scholarship, 2017	Morgan Elliot Lehman College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Yara Palin Lehman College, '19 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Nisha Varughese Lehman College, '17 New York City Teaching Fellowship, 2017
John Johnson Kingsborough Community College, '17 Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship, 2017 KCC Honors Presidential Scholar (2015-2017) Award, 2017	Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Catherine Leon LaGuardia Community College, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Peire Wilson LaGuardia Community College, '17 Frederick Douglas Global Fellowship, 2017	Maria Feliz Lehman College, '20 Columbia University, NERA MedPrep Program, Biology	Mousa Payinkay Lehman College, '20 Columbia University, NERA Medical Prep Program	Lateisha Walters Lehman College, '20 Astrocom Fellow, 2017
		Ninotska Love LaGuardia Community College, '17 Kaplan Leadership Associate's Degree Scholarship, 2017	Mairin Cahill Lehman College, '18 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017 CUNY School of Professional Studies, Political Science M.S, 2015	Hilliary Frank Lehman College, '20 National Science Foundation REU, 2017 Institute of Creative Technologies, University of Southern California, Chemistry	Pretiva Persaud Lehman College, '19 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Jonathan Arcentales Medgar Evers College, '17 SUNY Downstate Medical Center, M.S. for Physician Assistant Studies, 2019
			Edith Carrasco Lehman College, '19 Benjamin A. Gilman Interna- tional Scholarship, 2017	Merita Ljubanovic Lehman College, '17 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program, 2017	Alessandra Rios Lehman College, '17 Graduate Enrichment Fellowship, 2017 Ohio State University, Ohio State University, African American Studies	Roderick Hurley Medgar Evers College, '17 Belle Zeller Scholarship Graduate Center, Ph.D. in Psychology, 2020
					Sciancia Metelus Medgar Evers College, '17 Brooklyn College, Masters of Science in Sports Management, 2019	

— Alexandra Whittaker
Macaulay Honors College at City College
Fulbright Scholar



Discovering an Artist Unknown in the U.S.

ALEXANDRA WHITTAKER, who graduates from Macaulay Honors College at City College this year, intends to use her 2017 Fulbright fellowship to learn about a pioneering Polish photographer whose work is all but unknown in the United States.

Fortunata Obrąpalska (1909-2004) is called the First Lady of Polish Photography for her creativity under communist rule and her boldness in exploring surrealism. “The artist versus the totalitarian state is the theme of my research,” Whittaker says.

She discovered Obrąpalska in a history of photography course with her mentor, associate professor of art history Ellen Handy. They are in the City College Fellowship, which grooms undergraduates for doctoral degrees and careers in teaching and research.

“I couldn’t find any of Obrąpalska’s work in American collections, and that was my justification for the Fulbright: I couldn’t view her original photographs in the United States,” Whittaker says.

She will be affiliated with Adam Mickiewicz University, “a center for research on postwar Polish art and on the history of photography, so it will serve as an excellent home base,” she says. “I am very grateful to the University’s Institute of Art History hosting my project.” The university is in Poznań, where Obrąpalska lived.

In the 1930s, Obrąpalska studied chemistry, biology and botany, while exploring photography. During the war, she hosted two

underground exhibitions in her apartment. Her style cycled from pastoral landscapes to modernism to socialist realism to nature photography. Her excursion into surrealism produced her best-known images. In her “Diffusion in Liquid” series, she dropped ink into water, evoking shapes and bodies. “It was unlike any photograph I had ever seen before,” Whittaker says.

Whittaker studies Polish at Hunter College and, with Macaulay funding, spent two weeks last summer at Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

She intends to become a photography curator. Through Macaulay, she had a taste of that career in a summer internship at the Whitney Museum of American Art. She also studied for a semester at Charles University in Prague through a City College Art Department Connor Fellowship, where she continued research on



*Fortunata Obrąpalska.,
Power Plant, photo: courtesy of
the Asymetria Gallery*

Czech photographer Josef Sudek (1896-1976), the subject of her senior honors thesis.

Whittaker says that she doesn’t think of herself as a photographer, but it was a summer photography course at City College that sent her “wandering the streets of New York City, taking photographs” and participating in group critiques that “inspired me to study the history of photography. I had been trying to figure out what direction my interest in art history might take, and this summer course was the first step along the path that has led me to Sudek and to Obrąpalska.”

Yahya Mused Medgar Evers College, '17 NYPD Recognition for Service to Community, 2017 Brookhaven National Laboratory Student Research Award, 2017	Ida Seck Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '17 Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs, 2017	Saloua Daouki New York City College of Technology, '17 National Science Foundation-Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, 2017 City College, Education, M.S., 2019	Fathima R. Mohamed Rafeek New York City College of Technology, '17 City College, M.S., 2019	Naomi Ducat Queens College, '16 White House Internship, 2017	Rana Safian Queens College, '19 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Nanoscale Science and Engineering, 2016; Gold medal at American Chemical Society-Long Island Section 16th Chemistry Challenge, 2016; 2015-16 New York State Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (NYSMATYC) Award for Excellence in Mathematics, 2016 Society of Chemical Industry (SCI) Scholarship Phi Theta Kappa All New York Team Award, 2017
Billy Corporan Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '18 America Needs You, 2017	Howlatu Sowe Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '16 Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs, 2017	Craig Dawes New York City College of Technology, '17 NSF REU scholarship, 2017	Jawad Rashid New York City College of Technology, '17 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, 2017	Reshad Hai Queens College, '16 University of California, Berkeley, Environmental Design, Masters in Regional and Urban Planning, 2019	Andy Su Queens College, '21 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Bianca Regina Brown York College, '15 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2017
Fatou Jobe Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '19 America Needs You Fellows Program, 2017	Jessica Urena Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '17 Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team, 2017	Manuela Hoyos Giraldo New York City College of Technology, '17 National Science Foundation-STEM Scholars, 2017	Geovanny Rivera New York City College of Technology, '17 The One Club: Creative Boot Camp New York (1st place), 2017 Internship, 2017	Courtney Harewood Queens College, '16 Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, 2017	Zainab Syed Queens College, '19 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	
Francesco Musio Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '18 Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs, 2017	Cisco Alers New York City College of Technology, '18 New York City Council Merit Scholar, 2017	Miguel Gomez New York City College of Technology, '18 ReNUWit (Re-Inventing the Nation's Urban Water Infrastructure) REU Program, 2017	Tyace Smith New York City College of Technology, '17 Columbia University, Construction Administration department, Master of Science, 2019	Amandeep Jaswal Queens College, '18 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Venu Toolaram Queens College, '17 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Salim A. Gnabode York College, '17 Duke University, School of Medicine, Master of Biomedical Science (M.B.S.), 2017
Sugey Orea Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '17 America Needs You Fellows Program, 2017	Nicole Bellaflores-Mejia New York City College of Technology, '19 NOAA-funded research expedition, 2017	Alisa Kalegina New York City College of Technology, '17 University of Washington, Seattle, Computer Science and Engineering Department, Ph.D.	Nohely Cesarina Abreu Queens College, '16 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2017	Huanxin Liu Queens College, '19 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Vincent To Queens College, '20 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Muhaned Mohamed York College, '15 New York University, School of Medicine, M.D/Ph.D., 2021
Daniel Plastrik Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '17 Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team, 2017	Fatima Chebchoub New York City College of Technology, '17 National Science Foundation-STEM Scholars, 2017 Western Kentucky University, Graduate School, Computer Science, M.S., 2019	Amera-Rime Lulu New York City College of Technology, '17 Multicultural Advertising Intern Program (MAIP), 2017	Giselle Cordero Queens College, '17 New York City Urban Fellows Program, 2017	Rita Malo Queens College, '19 Ibrahim Student Leadership and Dialogue Middle East Project, 2017	Tao Hong Queensborough Community College, '17 Goldwater Scholarship, 2017 Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship, 2017; Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team Gold Scholar, National Science Foundation — 2017 Research Experience for Undergraduates program at Vanderbilt Institute of	Olayinka Oladipupo York College, '16 Jonas E. Salk Scholarship, 2017 SUNY Upstate Medical University, Medical, M.D., 2021
Emerald Sanjurjo Stella and Charles Guttman Community College, '17 Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs, 2017	Cherishe Cumma New York City College of Technology, '18 CUNY Futures Initiative Peer Mentors Program	Sheila Moaleman New York City College of Technology, '16 NSF-funded REU position at Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, 2017; NOAA-funded research expedition, 2017	Isaac Deonarine Queens College, '18 APIASF AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution) Scholarship, 2017	Chu Paing Queens College, '17 University of Colorado, Department of Linguistics, Ph.D. in Linguistics	Adolmary Pena Queens College, '15 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2017	Durrell Washington York College, '17 Columbia University, School of Social Work, M.S.W., 2018

Aftermath of a Nuclear ‘Kumo’ in the First Film of a Trilogy

IN MAY 2014, YVONNE NG attended the U.N.’s 2014 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee Meeting as a participant of a Buddhist organization, Soka Gakkai International.

“In Buddhism,” she says, “we learn, in the words of Daisaku Ikeda, that a great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and, further, can even enable a change in the destiny of all humankind.”

How could Ng, a New York commercial photographer in her 30s who was born in Singapore, change herself to diminish the nuclear threat? Thinking about the power of movies to inform and stir emotion brought her to City College’s MFA program. The upshot was her 15-minute thesis film, “Cloud Kumo,” which won a silver medal in the Alternative Category at the 2016 Student Academy Awards, a competition that drew 1,749 entries from around the world. Ng is City Film’s fourth Student Academy Award winner in 10 years.

The movie concerns a fictional Hiroshima survivor who battles illness, and her granddaughter, who carries a radiation-related genetic defect. The grandmother “does not see herself as a victim,” Ng says. “She rises above her situation, never giving up hope that another day will be bright and beautiful.”

Shot in Hiroshima and New York City on a \$30,000 budget, “Cloud Kumo” (kumo means cloud

in Japanese) cast an actual *hibakusha* — a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Michiko Ishii, a musician and poet, was 7 years old when the bomb dropped, burning her severely. Ng hired child actors in Hiroshima for flashbacks.

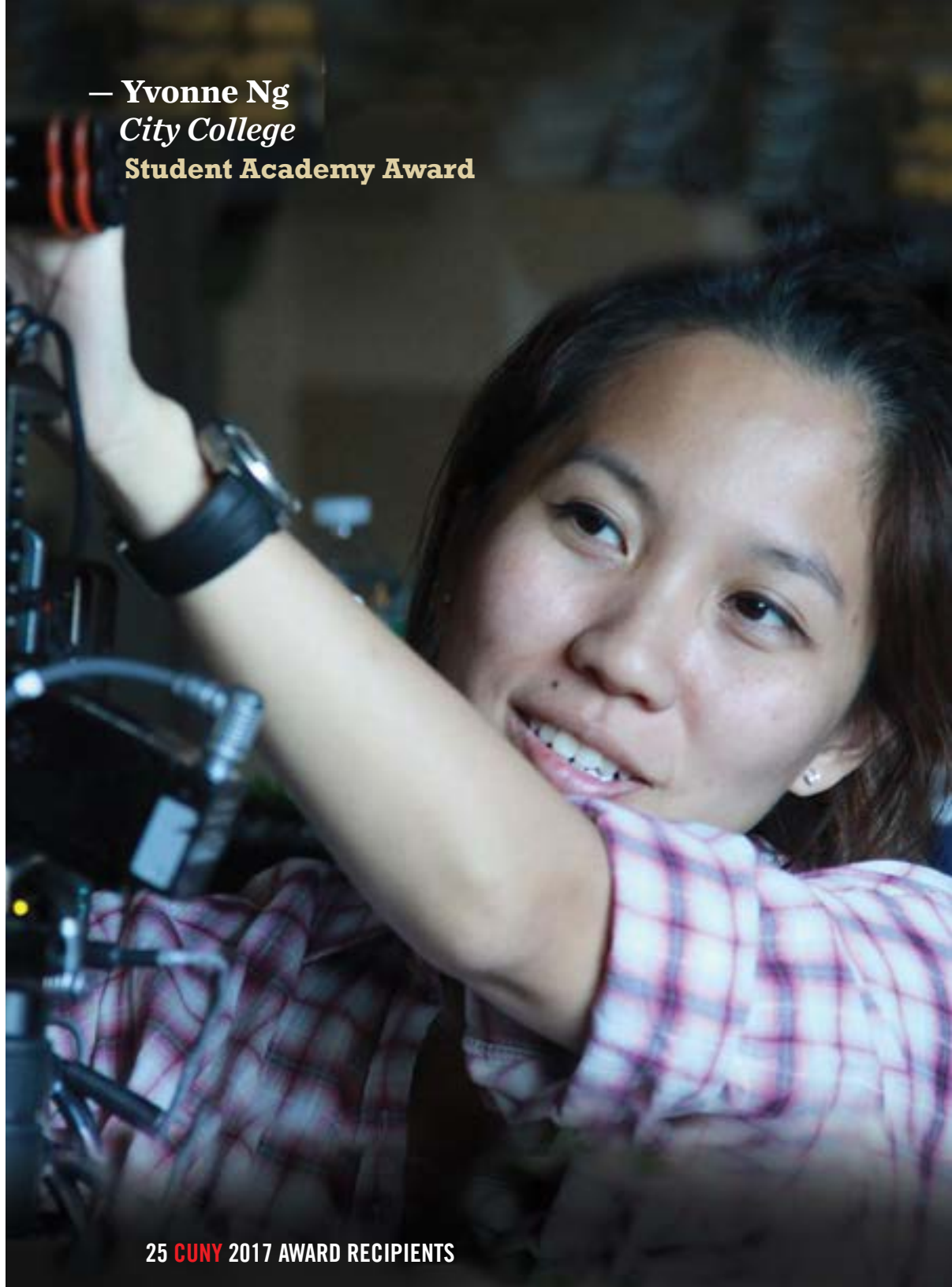
To play the adult granddaughter, she found Yokko, a New York Butoh dancer, a practitioner of a confrontational Japanese theatrical and dance form rooted in the anguish of war. Yokko, who is from Japan, performs a modern dance in the film. “It was by pure luck I ran into her. She had zero acting experience, but when I sent her the script, she agreed immediately.”

Ng’s film mixes fiction and documentary. “I was keen on having a survivor star in the film.” She and Ishii lacked a common language, but they connected. Although she had never acted, “The quality and depth that she brings to the camera is immense,” Ng says.

She credits City Film’s program directors, Andrea Weiss and Antonio Tibaldi, with helping her to cut miles of footage into a concentrated short. “Every time we screened a cut, they asked, ‘What is the essence?’” Andrzej Krakowski, who teaches screenwriting, “helped tremendously, too. I had to rewrite my script so many times!”

“Cloud Kumo” is the first in a planned trilogy about nuclear issues. The second deals with the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster and the third will be about uranium mining.

— Yvonne Ng
City College
Student Academy Award





— **John Wetmore**
*Macaulay Honors
College at Hunter*
Fulbright Scholar

Spanish, Latin, Neuroscience, Biostatistics, Chemistry, Archaeology...

JOHN WETMORE has far-flung interests, as his double major in psychology/neuroscience and classical studies indicates. So it's no surprise that before he heads to graduate school for biostatistics, Wetmore, who graduates from Macaulay Honors College at Hunter this spring, will spend a year in Madrid with his 2017-2018 Fulbright fellowship, teaching English in a secondary school and perfecting his Spanish.

"I applied for the Fulbright when I was studying archeology in Sicily as part of a Hunter study-abroad," he says. There, and on the island of Stromboli, "We worked on Bronze Age pottery and bones. It's amazing to see Roman monuments and experience another culture firsthand. The food was amazing, too!"

His interest in classics and languages began at St. Joseph by the Sea High School in Staten Island, where he studied Spanish and Latin. His path to neuroscience was more convoluted. He started at Hunter thinking he wanted to become a Latin professor, but also followed Hunter's pre-med track. He found that although he liked chemistry (he would minor in it), it was psychology and, in particular, neuroscience that captured his imagination more than medicine.

Meanwhile, he started volunteering with Hunter's Peer Health Exchange to teach in public high schools about sexual decision-making, substance usage, and mental hygiene. "Our goal is to give them skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their health." This work

in public health ultimately changed his career goals, as did his stint in the laboratory of Amber Alliger, a lecturer in experimental psychology, statistics and animal behavior.

Under Alliger's guidance, Wetmore looked at the effects of environmental enrichment and stress on rats. He examined what happened when he changed their environment, making it more stimulating (such as with running wheels and space to play) or more stressful. In results that he presented at the 2017 Hunter Undergraduate Research Conference, he said that he found physical changes in the hippocampus, a part of the brain that deals with learning and memory, that would better defend them against acute stress.

Besides taking Alliger's psychology statistics course, Wetmore also became her teaching assistant, which in part involved making presentations to students. "She really encouraged me toward biostatistics and the Fulbright. In her recommendation, she was able to say how well I performed as both a student and an educator."

He also praises the help given by associate professor Rosa Alicia Ramos, his Spanish teacher, who made sure that his Fulbright essays were culturally tailored for Spain.

Before heading to Spain, he will attend the Harvard University Summer Program of Epidemiology and Biostatistics to study neurodegenerative disorders, such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. "It's a combination of all the things I want to do."