

Fall 2024 Newsletter

Dear Alumni and friends,

Greetings from the Department of Political Science. The fall semester was extremely busy as we welcomed new and returning students to campus and hosted events for the campus community on the primary election. We hope this update from the department finds you well.

We have a few new faces in the department, including two new faculty and a new staff advisor for our undergraduate students. It is my pleasure to share many, many achievements by our current faculty, students, and alumni. From research, to civic engagement, to teaching, it is clear that our students are eager and ready to tackle complex political issues that challenge us today. On a more somber note, we also share a note of remembrance for Frank Myers, who passed away earlier this spring.

We are very proud of our distinguished faculty and the successes of our undergraduate, Master's, and PhD students. We are grateful for the support of our alumni and friends to offer scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students, recruit excellent students, as well as maintain faculty and graduate student attendance at national and international research conferences. I hope you'll consider investing in our students and faculty by making a gift today or speaking with Brianna Goodfellow, Director of Development, at (631) 793-4687 or brianna.goodfellow@stonybrook.edu.



Please stay in touch and send us updates about your accomplishments. If you enjoy reading about these developments please consider following us on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) to keep up with all our department news. Our profile name is SBUPoliSci on all platforms.

Best wishes,

Leonie Huddy, PhD

Distinguished Professor and Chair,
Department of Political Science



New Faces Around the Department

We welcomed two new faculty and one new staff member to our department this fall! We look forward to the research, teaching, and advising expertise they will be able to bring to our undergraduate and graduate students.

Stephanie DeMora Assistant Professor in American Politics



Dr. DeMora joins our department from the University of Pennsylvania, where she was the **Arlin M. and Neysa Adams Postdoctoral Fellow** at the Annenberg Public Policy Center where she worked closely with Dr. Dolores Albarracin. She holds a PhD in political science from the University of California, Riverside, as well as MA and BA degrees from the University of Arkansas, and an AA from Gloucester County College.

Dr. DeMora's research investigates the psychological drivers of political engagement and behavior of underrepresented groups. Her work is published in top journals such as the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Political Behavior*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and *Political Research Quarterly*, among others. DeMora is also co-author of *Motivating Black Turnout with Celebrations of Community* (New York University Press, in press), and *Family, Friends, and Political Beliefs: Examining the Facts* (Bloomsbury Academic, under contract) as well as a contributor to *The Cambridge Handbook of Political Psychology* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

Eric Groenendyk Professor in Political Psychology

Dr. Groenendyk received his PhD in political science from the University of Michigan in 2009. He received his BA in Political Science and Communication Studies with highest honors from the University of Michigan in 2001.



He was previously a Dunavant Professor of Political Science at the University of Memphis.

Eric Groenendyk's research examines the motivations that underlie opinions, beliefs, communication, and behavior in politics. He is particularly interested in the norms associated with identity groups, the goals made salient by the context of politics, the nature and dynamics of party identification, and the influence of emotion in politics. His work has been published in numerous journals, including *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, and *Journal of Politics*. His book, *Competing Motives in the Partisan Mind*, was published by Oxford University Press.

Ashley Porcello Undergraduate Program Coordinator

Ashley Porcello is a three-time alum of SBU, and joined the Department this past May. She holds a BA in Italian Language and Cultural Studies with a minor in International Studies; an MA in Higher Education Administration; and an MA in Public Policy. As a student employee here, Ashley worked in multiple offices across campus including the Office of Undergraduate Education, the Reservations Office in the Student Activities Center and the Graduate School's Finance and Administration Office. With an interest in higher education administration and higher education policy, Ashley previously worked in the Office of the President at SBU as a Presidential Fellow as well as at the New York State Senate as a Graduate Senate Legislative Fellow. She has held positions at the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research and American Cancer Society.



Celebrating Our Graduates' Achievements

On Thursday, May 16, 2024 we hosted our annual convocation and reception in the Bauman Center Ballroom. There were speeches by the 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient **Sean F. Conroy, JD, PhD '03, MAPP**, and graduating senior **Siya Majmundar '24**. The Martin B. Travis award was given to two graduating seniors with plans to attend law school: **Madelin Silva '24** and **Johan Arias Chacon '24**. One hundred fifty nine students were recognized for completing the degree requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, one for completing the Master of Arts in Political Science, thirty three for completing the Master of Arts in Public Policy, and two for completing the PhD in Political Science.



Sean F. Conroy, Specialist Director Mission Team for the Microsoft Corporation, was selected as the 2024 recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award for his extensive achievements in the armed force and government, as well as private business.

During March 2018, Sean Conroy joined Microsoft after many years working as a civilian for the Department of the Air Force. Except for 20 months serving as Chief of Staff for Microsoft Federal's Department of Defense Account Unit, he has solely focused on bringing best-of-breed cloud-enabled solutions to bear against the challenges the US Government encounters each day. He concentrates on using technology to provide decision support for actions from acquisition through deployment.



Siya Majmundar

Sean is also serving as Chief of Staff of the Louisiana Air National Guard. He is responsible for leading the LAANG headquarters staff as well as developing plans and publishing policies that support the field units. He directs new mission development for the LAANG and serves as principal liaison to state and federal agencies. He is a designated dual-hat general officer and serves as Reserve Component liaison to the Department of the Air Force's studies and analysis directorate (SAF/SA).

Sean holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of New Orleans, a law degree from St. John's University School of Law, and a Master's degree in public policy from Stony Brook University. He is an in-residence graduate of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS) and the Air War College.

It is always a privilege to be able to celebrate this milestone with graduating students, their friends and family, and faculty and recognize the culmination of their hard work at Stony Brook. We wish all our graduates all the best in their future endeavors and are excited to see what they will achieve!



Madelin Silva, Johan Arias Chacon

Making a Mark, Making a Difference: Notable Achievements by Our Faculty and Students

Distinguished Professor and Department Chair **Leonie Huddy** was the recipient of the 2024 John L. Sullivan Mentor Award. It was presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for Political Psychology meeting in Santiago, Chile. The award is given to someone who exhibits intellectual leadership to encourage and enable peers and students, build institutions for research and scholarship, and integrate students and/or postdoctoral scholars into the broader culture of the field of political psychology.

Congratulations Dr. Huddy! To learn more about the John L. Sullivan Award you can read more [here](#).



PhD student **Maggie Martin** was a recipient of the 2024 Stony Brook Foundation Board of Trustees Dissertation Completion Endowed Fellowship. This fellowship is to support dissertations that bear high scholarly promise. The fellowship is for her dissertation, “The Role of Masculine & Feminine Identities in American Politics,” she continues previous research to develop

a refined measure of masculinity and femininity to better understand partisanship and preferences on gender-related policies.

Congratulations Maggie! To learn more about her dissertation and research you can read more [here](#).

PhD student **Asha Venugopalan** was a recipient of this year’s Ruth B. Mandel Dissertation Research Award for her dissertation research entitled, “Joan of America: How Republican Women Convey Their Partisan Credibility.” The award is granted by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. Drawing on social identity theory and the gender



trait literature, Asha’s research proposes the concept of partisan credibility to argue that Republican women do not fit the prototypical image of their party’s leadership and use aggressive rhetoric to compensate for partisan credibility disadvantage.

Congratulations Asha! To learn more about her dissertation and research you can read more [here](#).

Jay Rose, Lecturer, was the recipient of the Excellence in Assessment Award, presented by the Center for Excellence and Teaching and Learning. The award recognizes an instructor who has demonstrated excellence in assessment techniques and measures (both formative and summative) in their teaching.

“My approach to teaching is that each student has their own unique set of strengths and weaknesses. I believe that it is an instructor’s responsibility to cultivate individual assessment addressing these traits that builds a foundation for students to progress to advanced study in the field, while emphasizing data and best-evidence over ideology and partisan tribalism. Giving extensive, detailed feedback to students’ errors and mistakes and providing them an opportunity to redraft and correct their work is the crucial component to promoting a grasp of course material and cultivating rigorous analysis.”

Congratulations Jay! To learn more about the teaching awards you can read more [here](#).



Remembering Frank Myers, Distinguished Teaching Professor



It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Frank Myers, a distinguished member of the Political Science Department of about six decades, on June 2.

Myers joined Stony Brook University in 1966, after earning his Bachelor's of Arts degree from UC Berkeley in 1958 and PhD from Columbia

University in 1965. Myers' PhD focused on British politics, and he later went into analyzing rhetoric of speeches and arguments made by political leaders.

He was the Chair of the Department of Political Science for two terms, Dean of the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Dean of International Programs, and was on multiple university committees. He was truly committed to his students, the department, and the university.

Derek O'Connor, BA Political Science and History '09 and current Workforce Development Manager in Stony Brook's Office of Economic Development, took classes with Myers' four times during his time as an undergraduate.

He describes Myers and says "Everyone knew he was brilliant, but he was able to share the information in the most inclusive way possible. He would share information for everyone's purpose, not to show off." In O'Connor's last year as a student, he enrolled in Myers' political philosophy class, not because it was of interest to him, but because he felt a need to take Myers' class no matter what he was teaching. O'Connor saw it as "an opportunity to learn because he [Myers] could really make any topic sound so interesting."

O'Connor says Myers was "committed to the university's role in shaping the next generation. He really pushed everybody to be better leaders, and conscious thinkers forever." Even though O'Connor did not go into the field of political science, he still uses skills taught by Myers and became more of a reader.

Milton Lodge, a distinguished professor emeritus in the Department of Political Science, was a colleague and close friend of Myers for over 50 years. Both professors started at Stony Brook University around the same time. They became fast friends at the University, and their families grew close as well.

Lodge recalls that Myers would get letters from students years after teaching them talking about the impact he had on them. "He was a great teacher and an amazing colleague," says Lodge.

Lodge compares Myers to a "Renaissance man whose grasp of history, philosophy, and music enlightened us all."

In his time at Stony Brook University, Myers was recognized for his dedication and excellence to his students and was recognized for this with a promotion as a Distinguished Teaching Professor, the highest honor SUNY can grant in recognition of dedication to teaching. Myers also received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and frequently won the department's Excellence in Teaching award (later named the Frank Myers Award, in his honor.)

Frank Myers left a mark on his students, the department, and the entire university. His presence will sorely be missed, but his legacy and impact continue in the students he taught.

How Certain Groups React to Slight Census Change of Significant Impact: “Validating White’ Reactions to the ‘Racial Shift”

After observing the “racial shift” present in the media, census, politics, and more, Assistant Professor **Andrew Engelhardt**, PhD Candidate **Nicole Huffman**, and PhD Candidate **Veronica Oelerich** look into White Americans’ response to it in their research paper titled, “Validating Whites’ Reactions to the ‘Racial Shift.” The “racial shift” is the declining percentage of non-Hispanic white people in the population.



Assistant Professor Engelhardt’s research focuses on using political psychology to understand how multi-racial democracies tackle challenges related to inclusion and inequalities. He looks into how individuals’ attitudes about social groups develop and/or change. PhD Candidate’s, Nicole Huffman, research interests are in group identities. It is also in how race and gender impact legislative behavior and communication and the individual’s reception of legislative behavior and rhetoric. PhD Candidate’s, Veronica Oelerich, research falls under political psychology, behavioral political economy, and American politics, with an interest in collective action.

Their paper reveals that, contrary to previous experiments and literature, there is no change in White Americans’ perception of threat, shift towards conservative policy, nor a lack of heterogeneity in political affiliation as a result of the “racial shift.”

They surveyed 2,100 non-Hispanic White Americans of various age, sex, and region. Respondents first answered questions, including about their partisanship, prior to reading a hypothetical news article. Results from the pre-treatment are to be compared to the post-treatment items to find any potential differences in reactions towards the “racial shift” if people identified as

Democrats or Republicans. Then the respondents were assigned to read one of four hypothetical news articles the researchers wrote to reflect the Census and media stories motivating their work. The four articles were a population racial shift, a political racial shift, a cultural racial shift, and the placebo condition. After reading their assigned article, respondents answered questions about it and various political topics.

There are no treatment effects, as none of the conditions changed the respondents feelings towards racial groups or partisanship. In their research, there is little evidence supporting pre-existing evidence of a population shift treatment increasing status threats and promoting conservative attitudes.

However, the researchers do not think that Whites are unaffected by the “racial shift”, and encourage others to replicate their experiment.

“Validating Whites’ Reactions to the ‘Racial Shift” was presented at the 2024 APSA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA in September, and is in the process of being published in the *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.

2023-2024 Department Scholarship Recipients

The Political Science Department is thrilled to congratulate our outstanding scholarship recipients for this past 2023-2024 academic year. These six students have showcased incredible academic achievement, commitment to their academia, and a dedication to excellence in political science.



Madelin Silva

Madelin Silva '24, double major in political science and women's, gender, and sexuality studies, was awarded the prestigious **Alumni Pre-Law Scholarship** for her exceptional academic record, with plans to pursue a career in law. This scholarship was established to support undergraduates who have an interest in becoming a lawyer. The scholarship is intended

for students who have taken law-related courses or had previous work experience in the legal industry and show promise for a future career in law.

Noah Kirchner '24, double major in political science and globalization studies and international relations, is honored for his service to the United States Armed Forces and was awarded the **Davidson Family Scholarship**.

This scholarship was established by Robert C. Davidson '72 and Barbara Davidson, his wife. The Davidson Family Scholarship was created to provide support to a Junior or Senior, preferably majoring in Political Science, who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States or Coast Guard that has served on active duty.



Noah Kirchner

Johan Arias '24, major in political science, has been recognized with the **Patricia A. Gramer Memorial Scholarship** for his outstanding performance and dedication to his senior honors thesis. This scholarship was created to commend an undergraduate political science student who has demonstrated outstanding scholarship and is writing a senior honors research thesis in political science.



Johan Arias

Lana Gouda, current junior majoring in political science, is celebrated for her academic excellence, earning the **Robert Clasen Scholarship**. This scholarship was established by Robert Clasen, a practicing attorney who graduated from Stony Brook University in 1980 with a BA in Political Science. Mr. Clasen generously established the fund in appreciation of the education he received at Stony Brook and to provide scholarship support for students that demonstrate potential and promise through their course work.



Lana Gouda



Tristan Brown-Devergilio

Tristan Brown-Devergilio, current senior majoring in political science, and **Emma Li**, current sophomore double majoring in political science and sociology, are recipients of the **Mark Herzinger Scholarship in Political Science**, for their academic achievements and commitment to the field of political science.

This scholarship was generously established by Mark Herzinger who graduated in 1989 with a BA in political science. The scholarship is meant to give back to Stony Brook University to support undergraduate students who are majoring and studying political science.

These scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000, provide crucial support to our students, enabling them to pursue their academic and professional goals. We are immensely proud of their accomplishments and look forward to witnessing their continued success. Congratulations to all our 2023-2024 scholarship recipients!



Emma Li

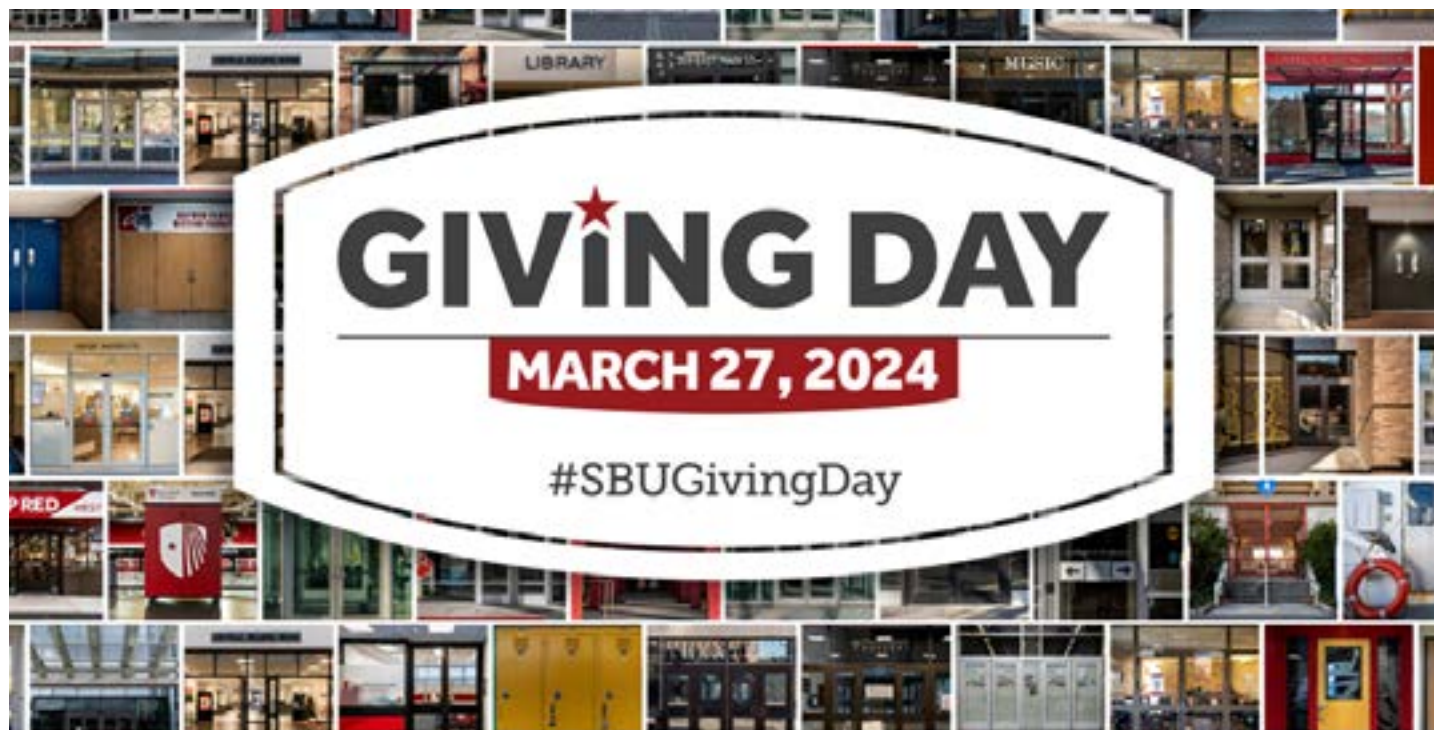
2024 Giving Day in Review

On March 27th, 2024 Stony Brook University hosted its **6th annual Giving Day!** Our goal was to raise funds to support research work conducted by graduate and undergraduate students in the field of political science. The funds we raised helped our students to design and conduct their own experiments, using our own behavioral science labs or collaborating with national survey companies to test their theses.

Our campaign raised **\$3,486.74** from a total of sixteen individual donors, with a third of the gifts were from current and former department students in our BA, MA, and PhD programs. The remaining gifts came from faculty and staff. Thank you to all who contributed, and we look forward to continuing this tradition next year!

Contributions can be made at any time by giving here. If you are interested in supporting the department's mission with ongoing contributions, please contact Brianna Goodfellow, Director of Development, at (631) 793-4687 or brianna.goodfellow@stonybrook.edu.

Save the Date - Giving Day 2025 will be on Wednesday, March 26, 2025!



Alumni Corner

Making an Impact: Seven Political Science Alumni Recognized at 40 Under Forty Event

The [40 Under Forty honorees](#) for 2024 have been announced, and seven of them are graduates of degree programs from within our department. Honorees from our department are represented across three categories of Civil Service & Activism, Education, and Technology.

We are thrilled for all honorees selected as recognition for their achievements after their time at Stony Brook, but are particularly proud for the achievements of those that have utilized their education to make a positive difference, in their communities and beyond. To read more about the honorees, see their full profiles below. Congratulations!

Civil Service & Activism

[Timothy Cole '05](#), Esq. Attorney - Office of the General Counsel, Brookhaven Science Associates (Brookhaven National Laboratory)

[Daniel Lloyd '19](#), Founder & President, Minority Millennials

[Steven Raga '06](#), '08 MPP, Assemblyman, New York State Legislature

[Jillian Ringhauser '14](#), United States Senate Sergeant at Arms, Disaster Response & Recovery Program Manager, Office of Security, Emergency Preparedness, and Continuity

[Pedro Atzel Zapata '13](#), '14 MPP, Deputy Director, Program Implementation, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Education

[Monique Watson '14](#), Strategy Fellow, College Board

Technology

[Joseph Verardo '13](#), '14 MPP, '16 MS, President, Young Education Professionals - NYC; National Science Foundation CyberCorps Coordinator, Binghamton University.

Alumni Updates

Where has your degree taken you? Let us know! Send us your achievements and updates to polsci_alumni@stonybrook.edu.

James F. Gesualdi '85, of Islip has been appointed the Chair Elect and Program Vice Chair for the American Bar Association, Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section, Animal Law Committee for the 2024 - 2025 Bar year. The Animal Law Committee's mission is "to address all issues concerning the intersection of animals and the law to create a paradigm shift resulting in a just world for all." He was the founding Co-Chair of the Suffolk County Bar Association, Animal Law Committee, and founding member and former Chair of the New York State Bar Association Committee on Animals and the Law. Gesualdi earned an M.A. in Political Science (Public Affairs) in 1985 and received the Political Science Department's Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2000.



Networking and Mentorship Opportunities for Alumni

The Stony Brook Career Center has adopted a new platform, **Stony Brook Mentor Connect**, to help connect alumni to one another, as well as find opportunities for alumni who wish to give back to current students. Mentoring options and availability are based on your schedule and ability to dedicate time, ranging from making yourself available to answer questions on the platform, all the way to conducting resume/cover letter views, or meeting in person to talk about career opportunities or attending industry events.

Interested alumni can register for the platform [here](#)

Questions about the platform can be directed [here](#)



Follow the Department of Political Science on social media!

Stay up to date with our semester events and research activity.

