

### ***Greetings from the Department of Political Science at UWM!***

We hope you enjoy this look back over our year, highlighting our great alumni, faculty, and students. Please take a moment to update your contact information with us, and let us know if you'd like to get more involved!

### ***SURF and UR@UWM Students Keeping Busy Tracking Supreme Court Appearances***

In lieu of a formal "Letter from the Chair," I thought I'd spotlight my undergraduate students – Kimberly Carver, Delaney Deleske, David Gomez, and Inaara McCray – who have been or will be engaged in conducting research with me thanks to funding from UWM's fantastic SURF (Support for Undergraduate Research Fellows) program ([details here](#)). Kimberly graduated in May 2023 (She's a 1L at Indiana's Maurer School of Law and, by all accounts, doing great!) and we are grateful to her for her work on the project, coding appearances by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Delaney just finished up her time with me so that she can focus on finishing up her degree, and she coded every appearance made by Supreme Court Justices Amy Coney Barrett, Sonia Sotomayor, David Souter, and John Paul Stevens between 2000 and 2021. First-year student David Gomez joined this summer as part of the UR@UWM program for incoming students ([read more about that program here](#)) and is working on tracking Justice Kavanaugh's appearances, and Inaara McCray, an Honors College first-year student, just finished her training and is readying to start coding Justice Elena Kagan. It is incredibly fun to work with this energetic bunch of undergrads, though their coding is likely not always super fun -- social science data collection can be tedious -- but we're excited to have a definitive picture of the over-time and across-justices differences in appearances so that we can test some hypotheses about their effect on public perceptions of the Court, and without them, we would not be nearly as far along in the process. Our plan is to send at least a descriptive paper, co-authored by all these great undergraduate researchers along with our team at SUNY Binghamton, this spring for publication consideration at a peer-reviewed journal. *We'll update you!*

Sara Benesh, Associate Professor and Chair



*Delaney Deleske*



*David Gomez*

## Spotlight: Faculty

Professor Emeritus Don Pienkos (at UWM 1969-2013) has lead an interesting life, both as Professor of Political Science where he was involved with certificate programs, the international studies major, and our Pi Sigma Alpha student honor society, and in terms of advocating for the entry of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO. In that work, he was able to meet and interact with some important figures. He recently wrote a letter to the editor of *The Polish Review* recalling his experiences and situating them into the current bid by Ukraine to join NATO and he shared it with us. We thought you might want to take a peek:

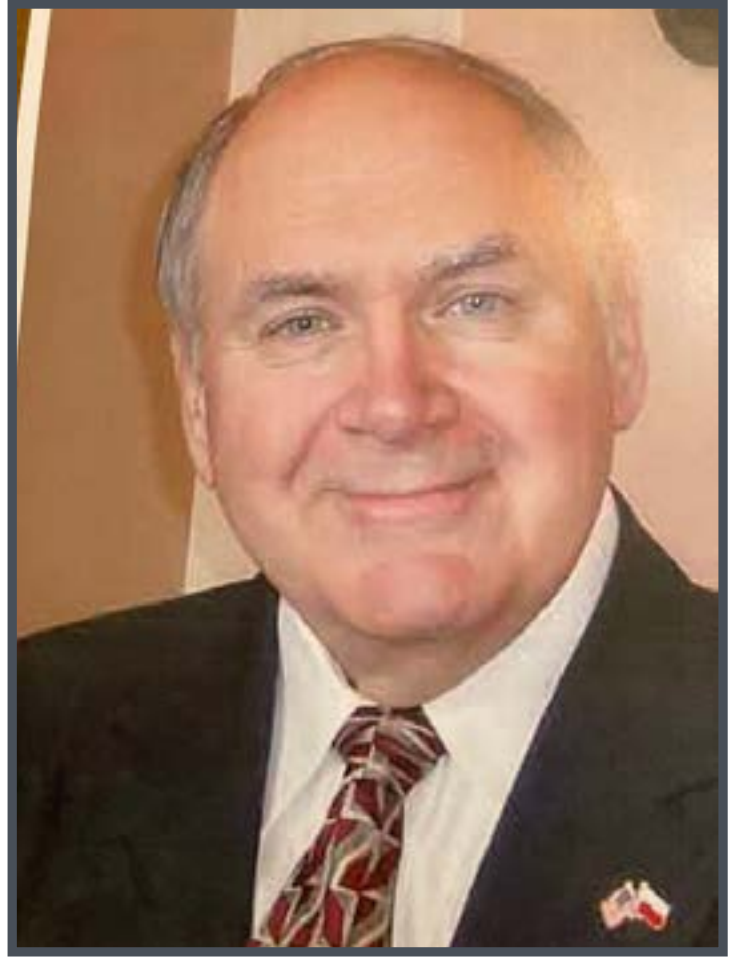
### ***Remembering Poland's Entry into NATO***

Back in 1995 and 1999 I authored two articles in *The Polish Review* on Poland's effort to gain entry into the NATO Alliance, the Polish American Congress' key role in this endeavor, and my involvement from 1993 to 1999 in this ultimately successful enterprise.\* Here is a brief "post script" on my experience. It comes at a timely moment, in connection with NATO's, and Poland's, response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In sharing my story with your readers I am well aware that other ordinary citizens who worked for Poland's entry into NATO likely did far more significant things. Unfortunately, I have not seen any reference to this in print. So here's my story 'for the record.'

It all began in December 1997 when I got a telephone call from Ryszard Sarkowicz, Poland's Consul General in Chicago. He said he had been in contact with Wisconsin State Senator Richard Grobschmidt, whose district included many Polish Americans. The Senator had agreed to submit a resolution supporting Poland's entry into NATO and to work for its approval in both houses of the state legislature.

In fact, Senator Grobschmidt, a Democrat, and his colleagues, Democrats Roger Breske, Brian Burke and Kevin Shibilski, and Republicans Gary Drzewiecki and Robert Welch had already authored such a resolution, joined by 13 concurring sponsors in the State Assembly, Democrats Peter Bock, Barbara Gronemus, Donald Hasenohrl, James Kreuser, Walter Kunicki, Jeff Plale, Rosemary Potter, and John Ryba, and Republicans John Dobyns, John Gard, Joseph Handrick, Alvin Ott, and Scott Walker.

The resolution had been referred to the Senate committee on Economic Development, Housing, and Government Operations. It gave six reasons for approval – most notably that Poland, as a free and democratic country, was indeed prepared to be a contributing NATO member, that it was in the U.S national interest to maintain and expand NATO to insure the peace, stability, and prosperity of post communist-ruled central Europe, and that NATO's mission would be enhanced by doing so.



The Senate committee scheduled a hearing on the resolution for January 7, 1998 in Madison, Wisconsin's capital. In my chat with the Consul General, he asked that I speak in its favor. At first I was skeptical – amending the NATO treaty to admit Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was the responsibility of the U.S. Senate in Washington, DC, not in Madison. When the Consul persisted I agreed to go. I then asked a friend, Terry Witkowski, a Milwaukee City government official and president of the influential Milwaukee Society lodge of the Polish National Alliance fraternal, to accompany me.

My testimony took all of about forty seconds! The Committee Chair, Senator Gwen Moore of Milwaukee, stopped me in mid-sentence and said, “Thank you Professor. I believe we are now prepared to act on this resolution.” It was then approved by a 4-0 vote. Senate passage came days later, on January 15, 1998.

But Assembly approval was blocked due to a squabble between the Democrat-controlled Senate and the Republican-controlled Assembly. I learned this from Senator Grobschmidt who was pessimistic about an early settlement of the dispute. But he did encourage me to call the Republican Speaker of the Assembly on the matter.

I did so and reached Rep. Gard (the Speaker's deputy). I asked why the Assembly was refusing to even take up the bill. At this point Rep. Gard asked me my name and where I lived! I gladly assured him I was a Wisconsin resident. Then I repeated my request, and in the strongest language I could muster.

Rep. Gard promised to call me back and indeed did so just 20 minutes later, saying that the Assembly would bring up the resolution the next week. On March 25, the Assembly gave its approval and in a concurring resolution.

The joint resolution was then immediately forwarded to the President of the United States, the President pro tem of the U.S. Senate, the two U.S. Senators from Wisconsin, Herbert Kohl and Russell Feingold, and Poland's Ambassador to the U.S.

On April 30, 1998 the U.S. Senate approved extending NATO membership to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and by a vote of 80-19. (67 votes were needed to amend the NATO treaty.)\*\* Both U.S. Senators from Wisconsin voted for NATO expansion.\*\*\* Then, and only after all 16 NATO members had formally approved expansion, the three states joined NATO in April 1999, the fiftieth anniversary of its founding.

It had taken six long, tough years of lobbying to achieve this breakthrough; later expansions of NATO in 2004, 2009, 2018 and 2020 have since gone swiftly and smoothly. In 2022, with Finland and Sweden seeking to join NATO in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the alliance was on the verge of including thirty-two member states with 950 million inhabitants.

Donald Pienkos, Professor Emeritus, Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Past National Director Polish American Congress

#### Footnotes:

\*Donald E. Pienkos, “Poland, the Issue of NATO Enlargement and the Polish American Congress,” *The Polish Review*, vol. 40, no. 2 (1995), 181-195; and “Witness to History: Polish Americans and the Genesis of NATO Enlargement” *The Polish Review*, vol. 44, no. 3 (1999), 329-337. Sadly, the pivotal role of the PAC and American Polonia on Poland's behalf has been little recognized. Note, for example, the otherwise excellent collaborative work edited by Ambassador Robert Kupiecki, *Through the Eyes of a Strategist and a Diplomat: Polish-American Relations since 1918* (Warsaw: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019). (My thanks go to State Representative Ken Skowronski for his help with this letter.)

\*\*In the 14 states where the PAC was most active, the Senators voted 26-2 for expansion. On this see the impressive work by Les Kuczyński, et al., eds., *Expansion of NATO: Role of the Polish American Congress* (Chicago: Alliance Printers and Publishers, 1999), pp. 48-50.

\*\*\*In 2010 I chatted briefly with Senator Feingold, who was then seeking re-election. I thanked him for his vote for Poland's entry into NATO. He replied that I was the first person in Wisconsin to have brought up this matter to him.

# **POL SCI @ UWM**

## **Faculty in the News**



*As you might imagine, our faculty get called upon frequently to contribute their expertise to local and national media outlets. Did you catch these?*

[Deep Dive Podcast](#), Professor Sara Benesh frequently visits with triple-alum Shawn Fettig on his podcast, Deep Dive with Shawn Fettig.

[NPR](#), Professor Thomas Holbrook speaks with All Things Considered on the first Republican debate.

[The Guardian](#), Professor Thomas Holbrook speaks with the AFP on the charges against Donald Trump.

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), Professor Sara Benesh speaks with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* on the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

[New York Times](#), Professor Kathy Dolan spoke with the *New York Times* on Wisconsin's spring elections.

[Milwaukee Courier](#), Professor Kathy Dolan spoke with the *Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service* about Wisconsin's senatorial race.

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), Professor Hong Min Park spoke with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* about voting systems in local school board elections.

[CBS 58](#), Professor Hong Min Park appeared on Milwaukee's CBS 58 to discuss the potential government shutdown.

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### **Welcome Visiting Assistant Professor Kyle McWagner**

While the Department was disappointed to lose Professor Patrick Kraft, who taught our graduate students political methodology (Professor Kraft is now Ramon y Cajal Fellow at the Juan March Institution of Social Sciences at Carlos III University of Madrid), we are very excited to welcome Kyle McWagner, who just finished his PhD (and Masters in Behavioral Mathematics) at the University of California, Irvine. Kyle's research focuses on political attitudes and the effect of partisanship, polarization, and religion on those attitudes, but he's also a talented methodologist who will no doubt continue our tradition of rigorous methodological training. He and his family arrived in Milwaukee in August and are settling in well to the Midwest. Welcome, Kyle!

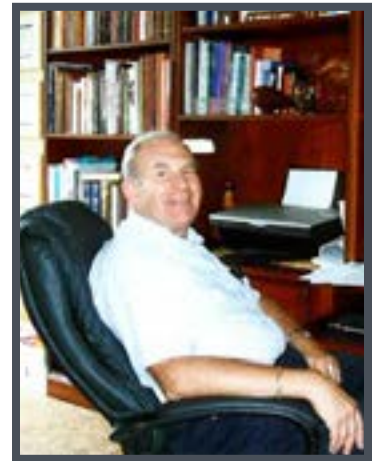




## Spotlight: Alumni

### Michael LeMay

Our Department is delighted to announce that this year, our incredibly generous alumnus, Michael LeMay, will be funding THREE \$1,000 scholarships for our undergraduate students! What an amazing way to give back. (This past spring, Delaney DeLeske, was the grateful recipient of Michael's investment in our students and their future. You read about her above!) Michael told us, "I have such fond memories of my years at UWM, and the department – BS and MS. The late Clark Hagensick was my mentor, but several of the departmental faculty were very formative of my professional career and served as models to me in teaching, scholarship, and administration." Michael went on to earn a PhD in political science from the University of Minnesota and had a very successful career as an academic, most recently at Cal State San Bernardino, where he served as director of the National Security Studies program, Chair of the Department of Political Science, and Associate and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. He has been a prolific author (23 academic books and articles in many peer-reviewed journals), writing extensively on immigration policy well into his retirement. Thank you, Michael, for your support!



*Michael LeMay, BS Political Science (1966),  
MS Political Science (1967)*

*If you'd like to talk to someone about creating a scholarship for political science students, please contact [Ana Conant](#) in University Advancement.*

### Jacob Anderson

Jacob Anderson graduated from UWM in Fall 2021 with majors in history and political science. After graduation, Jacob explored a few career paths, eventually finding himself at the Argosy Foundation, a private family foundation that supports people and programs that make society a better place to live, located in downtown Milwaukee. In his role, Jacob often collaborates with other folks with political science backgrounds to explore social issues, evaluate nonprofit organizations, and determine the best strategies to contribute to positive change in the Milwaukee community and throughout the United States. One of his colleagues, POL SCI @ UWM PhD Nick Davis, raves about the great work he's doing.



*Jacob Anderson, BA Political Science and  
History (2021)*

In Jacob's words, "I may have never known Argosy Foundation existed without connections I made in the political science department at UWM! Additionally, the skills I learned during my academic years, like researching policy issues and writing about strategies to progress, directly translate to my work now."

When he's not at work, Jacob volunteers at SEA Literacy, a refugee literacy organization. On top of regular tutoring, he uses the same POL SCI skillset to assist with grant writing efforts, ensuring continued support for the organization's mission of empowering refugees through education.

We're so proud of the work Jacob is doing to make this world a better place. Keep it up, Jacob!

## Spotlight: PhD Program

### ***Taraleigh Davis Begins the Fall as Assistant Professor of Political Science at Bradley University***

Dr. Taraleigh Davis, who graduated with her PhD in May 2023, has recently been appointed as a tenure track Assistant Professor of Public Law and American Politics at Bradley University. Taraleigh teaches a range of courses, including constitutional law, judicial politics, international law, and American government.

Beyond teaching, Taraleigh has two articles from her dissertation currently under peer review. In addition, she has a co-authored publication with Professor Benesh, forthcoming in the *Emory Law Journal* (November 2023), titled “Procedural Justice and the Shadow Docket.” Taraleigh is also serving as a Wiki Scholar with Wiki Education, contributing to knowledge dissemination on elections and electoral processes leading up to the 2024 election.

Taraleigh credits her time at UWM for providing a solid foundation for this new role. The experience gained from serving as both a Teaching Assistant and an Instructor was instrumental in shaping her pedagogical approach. Taraleigh extends special thanks to the faculty members who offered mentorship beyond the dissertation committee, enriching her academic journey and preparing her for a career in higher education.



### ***Enes Ayasli Wins Grants for Dissertation Research in Turkey***

PhD Candidate Enes Ayasli is spending the year in Turkey, having secured a prestigious research grant from the European Union Delegation for his work on native attitudes and how they shape perspectives on refugees, using experimental methods. This grant serves as a testament to the practical significance of his work as well as to his commitment to advancing not only theoretical knowledge in his field but also to actively contribute to the formulation of informed public policy recommendations. By engaging with key decision-makers, he seeks to bridge the gap between academic research and tangible policy outcomes in the context of migration.

Enes will use this grant to (1) field an online survey experiment and (2) conduct focus groups with a representative sample of Turkish citizens. He is also interviewing Syrian refugees for a separate project on his research agenda. He is exploring what natives think about the return migration of refugees, trying to uncover reasons why and when natives demand the return of refugees by proposing a novel theory. Notably, this theory is built upon insights gained from his prior field research conducted in 2021, culminating in a comprehensive and impactful research agenda with real-world implications for migration policies in Turkey as well as other host countries.

Enes has also been awarded the Wilder Crane Memorial Scholarship and the Graduate Student Excellence Fellowship for his academic performance and engagement in the field of study. While we miss him here in Milwaukee, we are very excited to hear what he learns in Turkey.



## ***UWM POL SCI Welcomes Four New PhD Students From Around The World***

Our incoming PhD class includes four students who have come a long way to study political science with us: Ti-Jesu and Vanessa from Nigeria; Ivy-Chara from Ghana; and Kaan from Turkey. We've asked Ti-Jesu and Vanessa to introduce themselves in this newsletter and will introduce you to Ivy-Chara and Kaan next time!

### ***Tijesu Ojeade***

I am Tijesu Ojeade, a first-generation student and a native of Ipetumodu in Osun State, Nigeria. I am presently a PhD student in political science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

I have a First Degree in Political Science (2018) and, Master's degree in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations (2021). The Department of Political Science, UWM, stood out for me because of the school's special status as an R1 institution, the exceptionally diverse faculty members, and its rooted curriculum in the scope, and methodology of undertaking scientific research in the study of politics. Also, the school's reference was a point of interest for international students, which endeared my love for the school and I saw it as a platform that would enable me to achieve my goal as a budding Researcher.

My major and sub-field of discipline are international relations and comparative politics, and my research interests are woven around war, civil conflict, and political violence.

I look forward to the experiences that will shape my career progression and deliver me a rewarding career path as I begin this journey.

### ***Vanessa Dolapo Oladipo***

My name is Vanessa Dolapo Oladipo. I am from Kwara state, Nigeria. I was drawn to this department for its exceptional reputation in cutting-edge research opportunities and the expertise of its distinguished faculty.

My journey involved thorough research, interactions with students and faculty, and attending enlightening events. Being here in the U.S. adds an exciting dimension to my academic journey, exposing me to diverse perspectives and opportunities.

I am keen on comparative politics and international relations and aim to explore ways in which information technology can be applied to aid fair elections and accountability in the Nigerian government. Collaborating with faculty and peers to achieve these goals excites me. Thank you once again, and I look forward to embracing the academic and professional prospects here.





## Spotlight: Undergraduate Program

### ***UWM's Center for Student Experience and Talent (SET) Prepares Students to be Career-Ready and Community-Minded***

UW-Milwaukee has its sights on becoming the premier destination campus for experiential learning in Wisconsin and the Midwest. UWM's location in the economic and cultural center of Wisconsin provides the unique opportunity to partner with businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to help students gain hands-on skills and a broad professional network before they graduate. The Center for Student Experience and Talent (SET) will lead the charge to ensuring that all students graduate career-ready and community-minded. SET brings together community engagement and career services, as well as establishes a new centralized focus on student employment and internships. The SET team has a goal to provide every student who needs one access to a paid internship, and aims to support academic departments as they work to engage their students in internships in their intended field.

As part of propping up SET as a new initiative, the career services model is being modernized to best suit students' needs in the current world of work. SET will be launching a Career Communities model, where students will be able to engage in any of twelve industry-based communities, focused on their eventual field. For example, political science majors may join communities that provide career-specific opportunities, tools, and resources in the areas of non-profit management, government service, advocacy and community development, education, public policy, lobbying, issue area work, and more.

As alumni, you're able to get involved with a career community and work as a partner to network, connect, and be a resource for students. Become a partner and learn more by emailing SET at [careerplan@uwm.edu](mailto:careerplan@uwm.edu)!



*Students speak with employers from around the country at one of SET's Career Fairs.*



## ***Pi Sigma Alpha, Chapter Epsilon Xi***

Pi Sigma Alpha is the National Political Science Honor Society. Our Chapter Epsilon Xi remained active last year. Five of its members presented their papers at the Pi Sigma Alpha National Undergraduate Research Conference in Washington, D.C. All five members also received generous funding from the UWM Office of Undergraduate Research.

The group organized several events including hosting a presentation and a coffee with the U.S. State Department Diplomat in Residence for the Midwest, Susan Falatko.

Epsilon Xi also successfully wrote for an activity grant from the National Office for their end-of-the-year recognition and initiation ceremony and participated in local trivia contests (and won!) They are looking forward to the new academic year and activities, and invite you to join them!

Now accepting applications for membership.

<https://uwm.edu/political-science/wp-content/uploads/sites/186/2016/08/Pi-Sigma-Alpha-Application-2016.pdf>



*(L to R) 2023-2024 Executive Board: President: Brady Steinbrecher, Vice President: Maelyn Kaczmarek, Secretary: Ana Grace Quast, Director of Recruitment: Joey Socha. Not pictured Communications Director: Alexandra Pascarella.*



*(L to R) Members of Pi Sigma Alpha at the UWM Spring 2023 Honors Commencement: UWM Chancellor Mark Mone, Kimberly Carver, Xandra Hadsell, Kylie Ott, and Isabella Burns.*

## ***UWM POL SCI STUDENTS INDUCTED INTO PHI BETA KAPPA***

The Department congratulates the following POL SCI students on their induction into Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious undergraduate honors society. Some are graduating – congrats! – and others are back for the Fall. We look forward to continued great experiences with you in POL SCI @ UWM!

Andrea Bishop    Kimberly Carver    Taylor Nelson    Kylie Ott    Niah Shauer    Isabella Zizzo

Phi Beta Kappa recognizes academic excellence in the liberal arts and intellectual exploration. Eligibility is based on a record of breadth in coursework across the liberal arts and sciences, and a minimum 3.85 GPA for induction as a junior or 3.75 GPA for induction as a senior. Only about 10% of colleges and universities in the U.S. have a chapter; in the UW-System, only Milwaukee and Madison have earned a chapter. The Eta Chapter, here at UWM, was installed in February 1974.

# DEPARTMENTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

We are so grateful to have generous donors fund two important scholarships for our current students: the Michael C. LeMay Political Science Scholarship (see our feature of Professor LeMay, above!); and the Wilder Crane Scholarship. The two fantastic students recognized for their excellence and supported through this generous scholarship money have both been mentioned in our newsletter already. Well-deserved congratulations to:

- Michael C. LeMay Scholarship (\$1000) winner Delaney Deleske
- Wilder Crane Scholarship (\$2000) winner Enes Ayasli

Thank you, LeMay family and friends and family of Wilder Crane for your support of UWM students!

## We Want to Hear From You!

We'd love to hear from you, alumni, on what you're doing with your political science degree! Please feel free to email Professor Benesh at [sbenesh@uwm.edu](mailto:sbenesh@uwm.edu) or connect with her on [LinkedIn](#) and let us know what you're up to. We may even ask to profile you in next year's newsletter. And invite you to campus to participate in one of our Careers in POL SCI Brown Bag events! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram too! (@UWMPolSci)



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