

Fall 2022 NEWSLETTER

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Greetings from the Department of Political Science! Fall has arrived on Long Island and the semester is well underway. We continue to host in-person events for visiting departmental and campus speakers. Best of all, we were able to celebrate the 2022 spring departmental convocation in person for the first time since 2019.

Over the summer we said farewell to several members of our Department. After nearly two decades at the University, Visiting Professor Ambassador Harsh Bhasin retired, and we thank him deeply for the time, experience, and mentorship he has so ably provided to political science students during that time. Senior Researcher Joseph Vitriol accepted a new position as an Assistant Professor at Lehigh University. We wish them both the best in the next chapters of their journey.



Fortunately, as we say goodbye to some faculty, we welcome a new member of our Department. [Eroll Kuhn](#) joined us in the fall as a Senior Researcher and will be a member of the faculty for the coming few years. He joins us most recently from the European University Institute where he was a Max Weber Fellow. Eroll's research focuses on migration, examining the reception of newcomers in receiving societies and how policies and institutions shape the integration of immigrants. We are currently conducting a search for an assistant professor in political psychology to begin Fall 2023.

I hope you enjoy reading about these developments, including the achievements of some of our recent alumni and the research work of our faculty. Consider following us on Twitter [@SBUPoliSci](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to keep up with Department developments as they happen.

We are very proud of our distinguished faculty and the successes of our undergraduate, master's, and PhD students. The past several years were challenging, but 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. We continue to face financial challenges in supporting undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom confront new obstacles as they pursue their education in the coming years. I hope you'll consider investing in our students and faculty by making a gift today or speaking with [Christopher Scarpati](#), Director of Development, at (631) 632-1202.

Please stay in touch and send us updates about your accomplishments.

Best wishes,
Leonie Huddy, PhD
Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science

Department Happenings

Celebrating Together: Political Science Departmental Convocation 2022!



Political Science Class of 2022 and guests

On Thursday, May 19, 2022 the Department hosted its first in-person convocation in several years at the Bauman Center (formerly the Leadership and Service Center) on campus. There were speeches by the 2022 Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient, DK Bartley '95, and graduating senior Erin Byers '22. The Martin B. Travis award was given to William Russell '22. One hundred nineteen students received their Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, 12 received their Master of Arts in Political Science, and 12 received their Master of Arts in Public Policy.

Mr. DK Bartley '95, chief diversity officer at Moody's Corporation, was selected as the 2022 recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award. Mr. Bartley's career has been characterized as a subject matter expert for Diversity, Inclusion and Talent Acquisition. As an executive, public speaker and influencer, Mr. Bartley has been very effective in inspiring global audiences. He is certified in Diversity and Inclusion Management from Cornell University ILR, holds a master's degree in communications from the New York Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from SBU.

It was a tremendous occasion to celebrate with graduating students, their friends and family, and faculty to recognize the culmination of their hard work at SBU. We wish them all the best in their future careers and are excited to see what they will achieve!



Distinguished alumni award recipient, DK Bartley '95



Department Chair Leonie Huddy (left) and class speaker Erin Byers (right)



MA in Political Science graduates.

Engagement Beyond the Classroom: Professor Feldman Receives John L. Sullivan Mentor Award



In July, Professor Stanley Feldman was honored as the recipient of the John L. Sullivan Mentor Award at the 45th annual meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology. Congratulations to Professor Feldman, whose work and dedication is well known to PhD alumni of our Department who have gone on to successful careers in political psychology research.

Professor Feldman received his PhD from the University of Minnesota and is a mentee of John L. Sullivan, making the award all the more fitting. The award honors faculty who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to and a history of success in the mentorship of scholars at all levels.

Professor Feldman has been a professor of Political Science at SBU for the past 30 years. He received his Bachelor of Arts at SBU and then attended the University of Minnesota and graduated with a PhD in Political Science. He was the associate director for the SBU Center for Survey Research from 2000-2015, a co-editor of the journal *Political Psychology* from 2005 to 2010, and is a past president of the International Society for Political Psychology.

Professor Feldman's research focuses on the origins of political preferences. He is particularly interested in the structure of political ideology and values, and the psychological bases of attitudes and opinions. Professor Feldman is currently working on projects to better understand the effects of authoritarianism on partisanship, voting, and political conflict. He also has a long-standing interest in the study of political emotions, including the role of emotions in politics and public responses to terrorism and threat. Professor Feldman's recent work examines the effects of anger aroused by social media content on the willingness to forward fake news.



To learn more about Professor Feldman's research and work you can visit his page [here](#).

A Career of Service and Teaching: Ambassador Harsh Bhasin Receives College's Highest Teaching Award

Visiting Professor Ambassador Harsh Bhasin was recognized on May 11 at the annual College of Arts and Sciences "Difference You Make" Ceremony as a recipient of the Godfrey Excellence in Teaching Award. The award is named in honor of the late Aaron (Bill) Godfrey, who impacted the lives of so many students through his teaching. Recipients are nominated and selected by students based on their excellence in classroom teaching as well as their dedication to student mentorship.



Left to right: Harsh Bhasin, Mariam Malik '22, Leonie Huddy, Kumkum Bhasin, Peter Salins



Students and faculty commemorate Harsh Bhasin's retirement this past spring.

After nearly four decades of service as a career diplomat in eight countries, including Washington DC, Beijing (China), and Pretoria (South Africa), Ambassador Bhasin joined SBU in 2001. During his nearly two decades at SBU, he also served as Chair of the Department of Asian and Asian-American Studies (2008-2014) and led several groups of students on Study Abroad programs in China. Ambassador Bhasin has mentored an impressive number of students who have taken up professional careers in international relations, including in the Foreign Services of the US and other countries, foreign policy think-tanks, and in multinational business organizations. He is very proud of this accomplishment. He sees considerable future potential for Stony Brook students in these fields, allowing students to fulfill their dream of a career beyond the shores of the United States.

This past spring (2022) marks Ambassador Bhasin's final semester of teaching at SBU. The Department celebrated the occasion with numerous faculty, staff, and students expressing their appreciation to Ambassador Bhasin for his mentorship, guidance, and friendship over the past few decades.

Alumni Spotlight: From Stony Brook Back to the Community

Alanna Harte '16 is a staff attorney at the Suffolk county Legal Aid Society. As a public defender, she represents clients who cannot afford legal counsel. Alanna has lived in the St. James area in Suffolk County her entire life and continues to work in this area.

Alanna is known for her hard work and dedication to those in need of representation. After receiving her bachelor's in Political Science, Alanna received her JD at Touro Law Center.



What made you go to law school?

I always knew even from high school that in the back of my mind, I wanted to go to law school. I think there was something I was just drawn to about it. I thought this was my way to make a difference. I love education and my dad always instilled that. He would always say "give anything less to your education, and you're only stealing from yourself," so I was always interested in learning more. I think even if I went into social work or something else, I would have ended up in law. It allows me to help people in a way I otherwise couldn't.

How have Stony Brook professors helped you in figuring out what you wanted to do?

I had some really good law classes here, and took a lot of classes on foreign policy with Professor John Kessler. I also took a couple of law classes with Professor Alessi. He's an excellent attorney at an excellent law firm and he was able to give insight into what his day-to-day practice was. I also did an independent research study with him during my final semester. Both professors were really great! Also, I was the president of the pre-law society and the mock trial, and they were able to give me a really good taste of what law school would be like.

What made you choose legal aid?

I always liked the phrase "think globally, act locally." So I've lived in this area my entire life and knew if I was going to work and help people, I would want to help people here. I grew up privileged and received a great education but there are people in the same county that don't have the same opportunities. If I'm able to use what I was lucky enough to have, I like to return the favor at home. These are my Suffolk County people.

What advice would you give to students who want to pursue a career in law?

I would start with the basics: if you're thinking about going to law school, take a law class, and take whatever Stony Brook has. Get invested in the Political Science Society and the Pre-Law Society. The mock trial, which I did and was an awesome experience, was a lot of work -- but that's what the job is. I was sitting in a hearing and thought, "I can do this, I did it in the mock trial." Just get involved and talk to people who have done it. Ask your professors. I've found that many people in the Department are nice and are willing to help. There are also a lot of good Stony Brook alumni who would be willing to talk about their own experiences and offer advice!

Alumni Corner

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

Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom '10, PhD was promoted to full professor in the [Department of Political Science at Hebrew University](#).

Todd Hartman '09, PhD was promoted in 2021 to Professor of Quantitative Social Sciences at the University of Manchester (UK). He is also currently the [Daniel B. German Endowed Professor](#) at Appalachian State University.

William Murphy '00 was awarded his doctorate of Education in May 2020 from St. John's University by defending his dissertation "Teacher perceptions of standards-based reforms in social studies education". He also published [Leading for success: Turning professional disengagement into teaching empowerment](#) in the Journal for Leadership and Instruction.

Examining the Data: A Quantitative Approach to Examining Global Occurrences of Sexual Violence Committed by Rebel Groups

Assistant Professor Katherine Sawyer alongside Assistant Professor Kanisha D. Bond (Binghamton University) and Professor Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham (University of Maryland) explore the reason why rebel groups refrain from sexual violence specifically to women in their recent article "Rebel Leader Ascension and Wartime Sexual Violence." In this article, Sawyer and her co-authors couple data sets for a quantitative approach to examining global occurrences of sexual violence committed by rebel groups.

"Often these civil conflicts take place in an authoritarian context where the government isn't very democratic. So there is a movement to look at rebel groups as transformative as the way they can provide government and services when the state really isn't. This speaks to how rebel governments when it is more democratic, when it's more inclusive of the civilian population can really work to decrease some of these types of issues" said Dr. Sawyer.

By using data from the [Rebel Leadership Ascension Dataset \(RLAD\)](#), which was originally coded by Dr. Sawyer and the authors, and the [Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict \(SVAC\)](#) dataset, the article concludes that there is evidence that rebels who elect their leaders are "consistently and significantly less likely to commit acts of sexual violence" than other groups.

There is also evidence that rebels who include civilians in their elections are "significantly less likely to commit acts of sexual violence in wartime." The RLAD dataset includes conflicts from 1949 up to 2011. Instances span the globe with some examples of conflicts led by Pol Pot in Cambodia, Seamus Twomey in the United Kingdom, and Abdolmalek Rigi in Iran.

Dr. Sawyer focuses primarily on data analysis and coding while the others focus on the theoretical aspects. She and her collaborators use data to compare whether having an elected leader impacts the willingness of rebel groups to engage in sexual violence. They hypothesize that rebels will less likely engage in sexual violence if they have an elected leader and that the size of the electoral population would affect how likely a rebel leader would engage in sexual violence.

The results in the article shows optimism for working with rebels. "There's a lot of questions about whether the government should negotiate with rebels, and which rebels should they negotiate with. So this maybe tells us what types of rebel actors are going to be more trustworthy or are better negotiation partners. It can help us guide international mediation efforts."

[Click here to read Dr. Sawyer's article.](#)

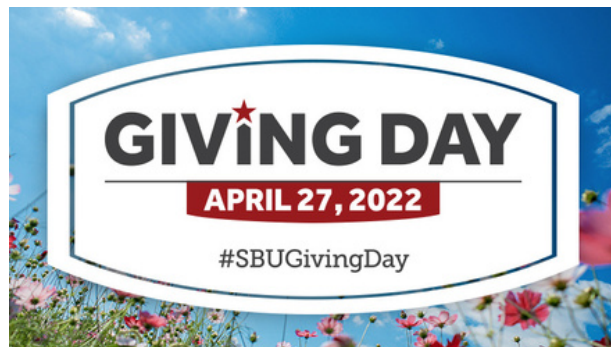
2022 Giving Day in Review

On April 27, 2022 Stony Brook University hosted its 4th annual Giving Day and the Department of Political Science participated for a second time. Our goal was to raise funds to directly support student research opportunities and experiences. The funds we raised go toward costs of maintaining lab spaces, designing research studies, and overall support departmental research projects where undergraduate and graduate students gain hands-on experience.

Our campaign raised \$2,970.22 from a total of 23 individual donors. More than half of the gifts were from former Department alumni from our BA, MA, and PhD programs. The remaining gifts came from current students, faculty, and staff. Thank you to all who contributed, and we look forward to continuing this tradition in spring of 2023.

Contributions can be made to support student-driven political science research at any time by giving [here](#).

If you are interested in supporting the Department's mission with ongoing contributions, please contact Christopher Scarpati, Director of Development, at (631) 632-1202 or Christopher.Scarpati@stonybrook.edu.



PhD student Shawn Kim with undergraduate research assistants in the Center for Behavioral Political Economy Lab



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