RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK
Eagleton Institute of Politics

CLASS OF 2025 EAGLETON GRADUATE FELLOWS

68th Cohort

Study politics. Inspire engagement, Improve democracy.

EAGLETON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Graduate Fellows Program at the Eagleton Institute of Politics has been a cornerstone of the Institute's commitment to advancing the understanding and practice of politics and public service since the Institute's founding in 1956. Over the years, the Fellowship Program has expanded and changed, but its vision, mission and values have remained constant. Today, this one-year, interdisciplinary certificate program is open to Rutgers graduate students from all campus locations. Students selected for the cohort develop an advanced knowledge of government, American politics, policy, and advocacy and build professional skills and networks to then apply through their degree field of study.

The academic journey of Graduate Fellows begins with the "Perspectives in American Politics" course, which offers a deep dive into the intricacies of politics, policy, and government. This foundational course is complemented by hands-on experience through advanced government internships each spring. Fellows gain invaluable practical experience through placements in the New Jersey Legislature, Office of the Governor, various state executive agencies and departments, as well as local, county, regional, and federal offices.

Monthly program sessions and experiential education trips to the state houses in New Jersey and Maryland further enhance the Fellows' learning by expanding on the knowledge and professional skills acquired in the course, while also facilitating valuable networking opportunities.

To date, the program boasts over 1,200 alumni who have leveraged their sophisticated understanding of politics and government to pursue careers in public service, advocacy, and beyond, across diverse sectors including public, corporate, and non-profit arenas.

The 2025 cohort marks the 68th class of Eagleton Fellows, continuing the tradition of excellence and dedication that defines the program. Fellows benefit from financial support through four key awards: the Harold and Reba Martin, Henry J. Raimondo Legislative, Governor's Executive, and Eagleton Alumni awards. For more information on the program and its offerings, please visit eagleton.rutgers.edu/grad-fellowships.

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KATHERINE (K.D.) BARANY

K.D. Barany (she/they) is a **third-year dual degree master's student in public policy and social work at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and the Rutgers School of Social Work at Rutgers-New Brunswick**. Born and raised in Avenel, New Jersey, she is passionate about her home state and social justice policy. As an undergraduate, she graduated *cum laude* from Eastern University in 2016 with a degree in political science. While attending Eastern, she was inducted into the political science honor society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and participated in Model UN and Refuge - the campus LGBTQ+ organization. Having witnessed the difficulties of transgender and queer students on campus, she was motivated to pursue advocacy and public policy that protected and supported historically marginalized communities. She has served as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate for the Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly & Synod of the Northeast. She maintains an active leadership role as a Ruling Elder and Youth Leader at the historic First Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge, New Jersey. Before pursuing her master's, she served as an AmeriCorps VISTA in New Brunswick, New Jersey. In her position, she worked with a team as the Communications and Special Events Coordinator for PRAB, Inc. As a social work student, she has worked as an intern for the Mercer County Library System to assist patrons in need of social and psychological resources. In March of 2024, she was a top-three regional finalist in the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) Student Simulation Competition. After graduation, she hopes to advocate for socially just policy, anti-poverty measures, and racially equitable policy. K.D. is thankful to receive the **Governor's Executive Award** and looks forward to serving the great state of New Jersey.

GINA MARIE (G) BELLON

G Bellon is **a master's degree in social work student** from Cherry Hill, New Jersey, **specializing in administration and policy at the School of Social Work, Rutgers-Camden**. They recently graduated from Rutgers-Camden, with a bachelor's of social work in January. During the spring semester, G completed a White House internship at the Office of Public Engagement providing both logistical support leading up to engagements, and performed day-of event duties, such as escorting and overall providing their assistance to stakeholders as they arrived. During their time as an undergraduate student, they completed an internship at the YALE School in New Jersey to support the school social work staff in developing skill development courses, facilitating group therapy and counseling sessions with students ranging from elementary to college age with disabilities. They previously worked at Girls Inc. in Philadelphia to support the Eureka! Team and facilitate the EcoGirls After School program. G has had experience on the hill as an inaugural cohort member of Rutgers Scarlet Service in Washington DC program, which allowed them to intern with Congressman Donald Norcross, giving them experience with reading legislation, such as the National Defense Authorization Act, and providing insights as they read committee markups or watched house floor proceedings. They then interned at the Congressman's district office providing getting to work more directly with the Congressman's constituents. G received the **Governor's Executive Award**. Their interest lies in the macro social work process, with hopes of working within LGBTQ+ policy or disability justice policy in the future.

AMZIE CLAWSON

Amzie Clawson, a Califon, New Jersey native, is a **second-year graduate student pursuing a master's of arts degree in economics at Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Graduate Studies.** Previously, Amzie received a bachelor's of science, *magna cum laude*, in public policy with a minor in economics from the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, and an associates of art degree, *cum laude*, and liberal arts from Raritan Valley Community College, where he was a member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. Amzie has interned for the Somerset County Bar Association and for local Assemblyman Erik Peterson's District Office in Clinton, New Jersey. He has volunteered for various Democratic campaigns throughout Hunterdon County. Amzie is interested in both behavioral and public economics, using his expertise to assist policymakers in crafting better public policy. Beyond the classroom, Amzie is conducting independent research in labor economics with intent to publish his work prior to graduation in the spring. Amzie is an avid rock climber, saber fencer, and bassist; he hopes to summit Mount Rainier on his second attempt next summer, after surviving a blizzard while climbing in 2021. Amzie is honored to receive the **Henry J. Raimondo Award** and is looking forward to interning with the **New Jersey Assembly Majority Office** in the spring.

TAMINA DARUVALA

Tamina Daruvala is a native New Yorker and a **third-year student in the Clinical Psy.D program at the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers-New Brunswick.** She is currently on the executive board of the New Jersey Psychological Association's Committee on Legislative Affairs, where she drafts, proposes, and advocates for legislation that serves the best interests of psychology and the public. She regularly meets with New Jersey state senators and representatives to advocate for increased funding for psychology programs. She is also a student representative on the Rutgers University Senate, making recommendations to the university administration to improve graduate student welfare. Her research focuses on the development and adaptation of integrated treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder and co-occurring substance use. Prior clinical experience includes externships at New York Presbyterian and Montefiore. Before attending Rutgers University, Tamina practiced as a criminal defense attorney in the Bronx, NY for six years. She represented hundreds of clients facing misdemeanor and felony charges and lobbied in Albany for parole reform. Tamina utilizes a multidisciplinary perspective to promote healing and justice on the individual, community, and systems levels. She is honored to receive the **Harold and Reba Martin Award** and looks forward to a career at the intersection of psychology and law.

ANUSHA DAS

Anusha Das, originally from the Chicago area, is a **third-year law student at Rutgers Law School-Newark.** Anusha attended college at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, where she received her bachelors degree in social welfare and justice and criminology. During her time at Marquette Anusha was a Program Assistant for "The 414 Fellows," an AmeriCorps program dedicated to placing Marquette students in early headstart program classrooms in communities across the city. In addition, Anusha spent her summers interning at the Milwaukee Public Defenders Office, The Milwaukee County Courthouse, and for Governor Tony Evers in his Milwaukee office. Anusha earned recognition as Student of the Year in both the Social Welfare and Justice and Criminology Departments at Marquette. After graduating, Anusha spent two years as a social worker for children in the

foster care system with The Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee. During her time at Rutgers Anusha has served as Co-Chair of the Rutgers Newark Women's Law Forum, where she ran voter registration drives and put together a panel on Women in Civic Engagement. This past summer Anusha interned at the National ACLU's Voting Rights Project, where she assisted on cases nationwide to ensure voting rights for all. In her final year, Anusha will work as a student attorney in the Housing Justice Clinic, as well as on the executive board of the Rutgers Race and the Law Review. Additionally, Anusha is excited to share her journal note, which focuses on the developmental effects of parental incarceration on children, will be published in the journal's next volume. Anusha is passionate about ensuring equal access to civic engagement and hopes to continue this work post-graduation. Anusha received the **Harold and Reba Martin Award**. She is proud to be part of the Eagleton Institute of Politics Class of 2025, and knows the experience will add significantly to her commitment to public service.

CINDY ESCOBAR

Cindy Escobar is a **third-year law student from Rutgers Law School – Newark.** She was born and raised in Plainfield, New Jersey, and is a child of immigrants. At Rutgers Law, Cindy is a Teaching Fellow for the Minority Student Program, an Associate Editor for the Rutgers Race and the Law Review, a member of the Economic Justice & Public Benefits Clinic, and a student volunteer with the Honorable Stern Bankruptcy Pro Bono Project, which helps New Jersey residents file for Chapter 7 petitions bankruptcy. She previously served as the Co-President of the Association of Latin American Law Students during the 2023-2024 school year. Before attending law school, Cindy worked at Make the Road New York, the largest progressive grassroots immigrant-led organization in New York State, where she worked in fundraising and event planning. Her experience at Make the Road sparked her interest in further pursuing civil engagement and public policy and she aims to use her legal education to continue advancing the rights of immigrant and working-class communities in New Jersey. Cindy graduated *cum laude* from Syracuse University, where she received her B.A. in international relations and public relations. She received the **Governor's Executive Award** for her Eagleton Fellowship. Cindy enjoys running, especially with the Rutgers Law Run Club!

MATTHEW FILOSA

Matthew Filosa, from Howell, New Jersey is a **second-year master's student in public policy at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers-New Brunswick**. While pursuing his graduate studies, Matthew is a part of the Army ROTC program at Rutgers and will be commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army upon graduation. Simultaneously, he is a member of Bravo Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion, 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the New Jersey Army National Guard. Prior to attending graduate school, Matthew worked as the Program Coordinator for Soup Kitchen 411's FeedNJ program to help fight food insecurity across New Jersey. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Monmouth University, where he also participated on the policy debate team and earned the Peace Corps Prep Certification. In 2021, Matthew ran for the New Jersey General Assembly as the Democratic nominee in the 30th Legislative District. He is involved in politics and advocacy as a county committee member for the Monmouth County Democrats. Also, in his volunteer time, Matthew sits on the Howell Township Farmers Advisory Committee and is also a member of the Young Professionals Committee for the Jersey Shore Partnership; a nonprofit that advocates for beach restoration along New Jersey's coastline. Professionally, he most recently interned with the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. He received the **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** and will be interning at the **New Jersey Senate Majority Office** in the spring. Matthew is passionate about public policy and political

science; a dedicated citizen seeking solutions to address issues locally, nationally and globally. In his free time, Matthew enjoys traveling, hiking, reading and engaging in activities that promote physical fitness.

WILLIAM FOLINUSZ

William (Billy) Folinusz is a **second-year master's degree student in the Department of Political Science studying in the United Nations and Global Policy at Rutgers-New Brunswick**. He was raised and currently resides in Cranford, New Jersey, with his wife, Theresa, and their three children, Theodore (7), Quinn (3), and Grace (2). He attended James Madison University, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in history and participated in the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps program, where he was commissioned as an Active-Duty Armor officer in the United States Army. He is currently a Major attending Rutgers University as a part of the Army's Advanced Civil Schooling Program. He has led organizations from the platoon to brigade level in combat, training, and garrison environments. He has one combat deployment to Iraq, where he served as a route clearance platoon leader conducting over 350 missions looking for improvised explosive devices. He also has two operational deployments to Europe; to include a deployment as the Brigade Executive Officer for 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division who conducted a historic no-notice deployment to deter Russian aggression in February 2022. He will report to the United States Military Academy at West Point in the summer of 2025 to teach Cadets at the Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic. He has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and multiple other decorations, including the Combat Action Badge and Parachutist's Badge. He holds a master of public policy degree from Temple University and a master of operational and strategic studies from the U.S. Army's Command General Staff College. He is an active member in multiple volunteer organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ancient Order of Hibernians, and he coaches his son in Cranford youth baseball and flag football. He is honored to have been selected as an Eagleton Fellowship Program's **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** recipient who will be interning in the **New Jersey Assembly Majority Office** this spring.

TAYLOR HUGHES

Originally from Jackson, New Jersey, Taylor Hughes is currently in her **second year at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers-New Brunswick pursuing a master's degree in public policy with a concentration in health policy.** She enlisted in the New Jersey Air National Guard in 2018 and is now a commissioned officer, working as a healthcare administrator. The state activated her in April 2020 to assist the New Jersey Army National Guard, the NJ Department of Health, and The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with COVID-19 efforts. She was sent to a field hospital in Secaucus, NJ to establish paperwork, improve workflow, and field calls from concerned family members. Her experience working in a public health emergency setting laid the foundation for her future interests. A first-generation student, Taylor earned her bachelor's degree in economics with a certificate in public policy economics at the School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers-New Brunswick in 2023. While at Rutgers, she worked at the Rutgers Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services as a shift manager for the Veterans Affairs Work-Study Program. She also served as Secretary for the Rutgers Student Veterans of America chapter. Taylor interned at the New Jersey State Policy Lab in the Summer of 2023, where she conducted an independent research project based on access to primary care physicians, and a group research project based on the relationship between affordable housing, education, and health. She is a member of the Focus Forward Fellowship 2024 cohort for women student veterans, led by Purdue University's Military Family Research Institute (MFRI). Taylor is honored to be a recipient of the **Governor's Executive Award**

and is looking forward to completing her spring internship. She is confident that this opportunity will equip her with invaluable skills to bring into the health policy realm. In her free time, Taylor enjoys running, singing, and spending time outdoors.

KATIE HURTADO

Kat Hurtado lives in Essex County and is a dedicated public servant pursuing a **master's of public administration degree at the Rutgers-Newark School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)**. They earned their bachelors in public administration and nonprofit management from SPAA, focusing on budget, financing, and philanthropy. Kat was a McNair Scholar and was honored with the Richard Roper Scholarship for Public Service. Leveraging their knowledge of New Jersey charitable giving and the local media landscape, Kat is a fundraiser at NJPBS/NJ Spotlight News. Kat's experience spans community organizing, particularly around affordable housing and urban beautification in Phillipsburg, New Jersey. During their undergrad, they worked on the fundraising team at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Essex, Hudson, and Union Counties. Additionally, Kat serves on the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) - NJ Chapter board as the Emerging Professionals Chair on the Membership Committee and is a recent fellow of the New Leaders Council (NLC) - New Jersey Chapter. Kat is a recipient of **the Governor's Executive Award**. Looking ahead, Kat plans to transition into grantmaking within the policy advocacy space upon graduation, aiming to drive meaningful change and address systemic inequities.

ANNE JOSEPH

Anne Joseph is a first-generation Haitian-American student, with a profound interest in the intersection of medicine, law, business, and social justice. She has crafted a unique career path that bridges these diverse fields. Anne pursued her undergraduate studies in exercise science and sport management at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, where she developed a strong foundation in scientific principles and business acumen in the realm of sports and fitness, gaining advanced knowledge of anatomy and physiology, biomechanics, and injury prevention, while also delving into the complexities of sports marketing, event coordination, financial management, and organizational behavior. She is currently pursuing a **master's degree in global sports business from the Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Graduate Studies,** which will equip her with a deep understanding of global industry dynamics, marketing, finance, leadership, and legal issues. Anne's professional experience includes working as a medical assistant in internal medicine, emergency medicine, gastroenterology, and as a patient care coordinator. With plans to attend Physician Assistant school, Anne aspires to integrate her diverse experiences and knowledge to make a meaningful impact in healthcare. Honored to be part of the Eagleton Fellowship Program and receive the **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award,** she will be interning in the **New Jersey Assembly Minority Office** next spring. Anne aims to develop strategies that support and uplift low-income and underserved communities, drawing from her expertise in medicine, business, law, and social justice.

ALYSSA KING

Alyssa B. King is currently pursuing a **master of public policy degree at the Bloustein School of Public Policy and Planning at Rutgers-New Brunswick**. She is also the Business Assistant at the Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies on the Rutgers University – Newark Campus. Alyssa graduated from Saint Vincent Academy High School in Newark, NJ, and Arcadia University in Glenside, Pennsylvania, with a B.A. in business and biology. Alyssa loves the arts and is passionate about self-expression, exercise, public policy, education, travel, culinary experiences, and cultural celebration. She also cares about her colleagues and Community and is always looking for a way to give back. Since graduating, Alyssa has completed the Leadership Newark Public Policy Fellowship and has remained active among her colleagues. Over the years, Alyssa has been elected Co-chair and Parliamentarian, of the RU-N Staff Council; an organization on campus with the purpose of giving a voice to staff and as a Commissioner on the Chancellor's Commission on Diversity and Transformation. She currently serves as a Commissioner on the City of Newark's Caribbean Commission, is Chair of the City of Newark's Guyana Independence Flag Raising Planning Committee, and was most recently the recipient of the 2024 Dr. Robert A. Catlin Endowed Fellowship, which is awarded to a full-time graduate student with a preference for students whose studies focus on the impact of race in public policy decision-making and/or urban revitalization. She looks forward continuing her advocacy journey and joining the Eagleton family as a **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** recipient interning at the **New Jersey Office of Legislative Services**.

DEBORAH LYNAM

Deborah Lynam is currently pursuing a **doctoral degree in childhood studies at Rutgers-Camden Graduate School** while working as graduate assistant for the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports for Early Reading initiative at the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers-New Brunswick. After more than a decade working in the non-profit sector at organizations such as the New Jersey Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Learning Ally, and AIM Institute for Learning and Research, Deborah returned to school to pursue her research interests in literacy, learning disability, and education policy. She serves on the Family Engagement Advisory Board for the National Center on Improving Literacy and recently served an appointment on the U.S. Department of Education's Regional Advisory Committee for the mid-Atlantic region. A passionate advocate for children's literacy, Deborah previously chaired the NJ State Special Education Advisory Council and served on the New Jersey Department of Education's Dyslexia Handbook Committee. She is a certified Orton-Gillingham Teacher, a founding member of the parent-led grassroots movement Decoding Dyslexia - New Jersey, and a board member of the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council and The Reading League - New Jersey. Deborah resides in Haddon Heights, New Jersey and is honored to have been awarded the **Governor's Executive Award.**

CATHERINE MCGOWAN

Catherine McGowan is a **sixth-year doctoral candidate in the library and information science department of the School of Communication and Information in Rutgers-New Brunswick**. Her research focuses on how humans are mediated through digital technologies, crystallized through the conceptual lens of the datafied citizen. She analyzes the privacy implications of emerging technologies and traces the networks of strategic relationships that facilitate the aggregation and flow of consumer data, and how knowledge is produced about citizens. She received her bachelor's degree in philosophy from William Paterson University and received her master of information degree from the Rutgers School of Communication and Information in New Brunswick. As an undergraduate student she received the John Victor Machuga Foundation scholarship. And, as a graduate student, she has received the Tefko Endowed Fund Award, the Tefko Award, and the PhD Student Support Fund Award, along with several Graduate School Travel Awards to present her research at academic conferences. During her time as a doctoral student, Catherine served as president of the School of Communication and Information Doctoral Student Association during the 2020–2021 term, which required uniting the community remotely. She organized virtual gatherings to foster a sense of community and peer-mentorship during the pandemic isolation. A New Jersey native, she was born and raised in West Milford, New Jersey, and currently resides in Montclair, New Jersey. She has over 10 years of experience in store communications and procurement in corporate retail. In her spare time, Catherine enjoys long bike rides and completes a century ride (100 miles) every fall. Catherine believes that data rights are human rights, and her career goals are aimed towards research for the oversight and safety of digital technologies to inform data privacy policy. Catherine is honored to be a recipient of the **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** with a placement at the New Jersey **Office of Legislative Services**.

CYNTHIA MENDOZA

Cynthia Mendoza, a first-generation and **second-year law student at Rutgers Law School-Newark**, is driven by a commitment to policy reform and advocacy. As the child of an incarcerated parent and a member of a community affected by peer policing, she is passionate about pursuing a career that supports community-based alternatives to youth incarceration. Her goal is to build a more humane, accessible, and rehabilitative legal system for all. Originally from Inglewood, California, Cynthia earned her bachelor of arts degree in history from Bucknell University as a Posse Foundation Scholar. In her senior year, Cynthia was awarded the Bucknell Prize in History. At Rutgers, she serves as Co-President of the Association of Latin American Law Students and the Environmental Law Society. She is also the Community Liaison for OUTLaws and a 2L Representative for the Student Bar Association. This past summer, Cynthia worked at the Verizon & NJ LEEP Summer Law Institute, where she taught criminal law lessons to rising ninth graders and mentored them in a mock trial program. Cynthia also worked with Advocates for Children of New Jersey, where she contributed to a legal guide for teens and researched the impact of student services on chronic absenteeism and standardized testing. She is committed to using her education and experience to advocate for underrepresented communities and effect meaningful change within the legal system. Cynthia is honored to be the recipient of the **Harold and Reba Martin Award**. She looks forward to her spring internship and joining the next generation of policy makers.

SEAN NGUYEN

Sean Nguyen, a native of Sacramento, California, is a **master of public policy student at Rutgers-New Brunswick Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy** where he was awarded the Public Policy Dean's Fellowship, a full academic scholarship. His professional interests focus on issues affecting higher education. This includes college access and retention, student loan and repayment programs, food insecurity, and workforce development. He is currently a research assistant at Rutgers Law School - Newark working on research projects surrounding campaign fundraising limitations, state legislative processes, state governance, and New Jersey election ballot design. Prior to coming to Rutgers, he graduated *magna cum laude* with a B.A. in public policy and Asian American studies (minor) from the University of California, Riverside. During his time as an undergraduate, Sean was selected to be a Public Policy and International Affairs Fellow at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He also was heavily involved in student and academic affairs serving as the School of Public Policy Senator in the undergraduate student government and a Peer Academic Advisor at the UCR School of Public Policy. In his free time, Sean enjoys cooking, playing tennis, and spending time with friends. Sean is honored to receive the **Governor's Executive Award** through the Eagleton Graduate Fellowship Program and looks forward to building community with this year's graduate fellow cohort.

BEAUTY OKUNBOR

Beauty Okunbor is a graduate student pursuing **dual degrees in public policy and public informatics at Rutgers-New Brunswick Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, where she specializes in education policy**. In her home country, Nigeria, she graduated as the best student in her cohort with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Diplomacy from Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti. Beauty is also one of the 40 Public Policy New Voices (PPNV) cohort 4 fellows and a recipient of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scholar Award at Rutgers University. Her professional experience includes roles at institutions such as the New Jersey Senate Majority Office, where she served as a Policy Intern, and the Capital Research Center in Washington, D.C., where she worked as a Research and Communications Intern, resulting in a published article on the risks of identity politics. As a Grading Assistant at Rutgers University, she contributes to undergraduate education by grading assignments and providing academic mentoring. As one of the eight summer 2024 interns at the New Jersey State Policy Lab, Beauty conducted research on ways to address the challenges of integrating AI into K-12 education for teachers. With a strong foundation in research and communication, Beauty has proven herself as a capable professional adept at tackling complex policy issues and driving positive change. She received the **Harold and Reba Martin Award** for her Eagleton Fellowship. Upon graduation, Beauty hopes to advance legislative changes, specifically those that promote the successful integration of artificial intelligence in education and improve the well-being of children and marginalized communities.

JESSE PAPINEAU

Originally from Rhode Island, Jesse Papineau is a **third-year law student at Rutgers Law School – Camden**. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts from Temple University, Jesse worked as an Immigration Paralegal for more than six years, writing persuasive petitions designed to grant work authorization to foreign nationals. In that role, he honed his strong analytical writing and research skills to advocate on behalf of clients in the healthcare, engineering, technology, and communication industries. Jesse's passion for personal advocacy grew significantly, and ultimately inspired him to attend law school. He has since authored a Note exploring solutions to sea level rise along New Jersey's coast that will be published in Volume 77 of the Rutgers University Law Review, for which he also works as a Commentaries Editor. Outside of the classroom, Jesse has served as a Judicial Extern for the Honorable Christine P. O'Hearn at the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey; a Law Clerk at the Environmental Protection Agency's office in Philadelphia; a Legal Writing and Research Teaching Fellow at Rutgers; and as Secretary of the University's Environmental Law Society. In 2023 and 2024 he also worked as a Summer Associate at Jackson Lewis, P.C. in Philadelphia. Jesse was honored to receive the Brenda Lee Eutsler Scholarship Award and the Eagleton Institute of Politics' **Harold and Reba Martin Award**. After graduating, Jesse plans to explore the employment and environmental law fields while dedicating himself to public service.

SHAKIRA RAMIREZ

Shakira Ramirez, a native of Newark, New Jersey, is currently a **third-year law student at Rutgers Law School - Newark**. She earned her bachelor of science degree in criminal justice and psychology from Rutgers- Newark. Shakira's passion for education led her to participate in Teach for America in the New Jersey region through 2018-2020. Shakira's experiences as a certified elementary teacher in New Jersey, led her to teach for four years, spanning the educational grades of 2nd, 3rd and 4th. During the 2023-2024 school year, Shakira served as Co-Chair of the Mentorship Program for the Women's Law Forum, Teaching Fellow for the Minority Student Program, Property Teaching Assistant, for the Academic Success Program and Partnership-Liaison for MetroLALSA for the Association of Latin American Law Students. As a 1L, she participated in the Federal Communication Bar Association's Diversity Pipeline Program and earned a Certificate for the studies of Telecommunications, Media and Technology. She was selected for the Hispanic National Bar Association's Intellectual Property Law Institute, a prestigious program that chooses up to 30 students nationwide. As part of the program, she spent a week in Washington D.C., engaging with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Copyright Office, visiting the United States Supreme Court, and meeting the Honorable Jimmie V. Reyna, Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. This year she will be serving as the Managing Notes Editor for the *Rutgers Computer and Technology Law Journal* (RCTLJ). She is honored to have been chosen for publication for the RCTLJ, where she extensively researched and wrote about closing the gap of the digital divide, arguing for renewed funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program, to ensure that 23 million Americans have access to high-speed, high-quality internet at an affordable rate. She will be a Legal Clinical Student for the Intellectual Property Law Clinic, where she will be assisting entrepreneurs in securing their intellectual property rights. Shakira's experiences in the legal field have been diverse, she was the first ever Legal and Technology Policy legal intern at CableLabs, and a JD Claims Intern working in the Financial Lines, Directors and Officers at AIG. Shakira's diverse experience in teaching and in the legal field has driven her passion to become an Eagleton Fellow. Shakira received the **Governor's Executive Award**. As an Eagleton Fellow, she aims to enhance her communication skills, gain a deeper understanding of the policymaking process, and build strong community ties while aspiring to serve in governmental roles.

LAUREN (REN) RAMOS

Ren Ramos (she/they), originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, is a **third-year student at Rutgers Law School – Camden**. Ren graduated *cum laude* from Smith College in 2021 with a degree in history and sociology. While in college, Ren worked as a research fellow for a reproductive justice history project and completed internships at the Knox County Public Defender's Community Law Office and the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth. These experiences sparked their passion for working with youth and families and inspired them to pursue a legal career to provide accessible representation to underserved communities. At Rutgers Law, Ren is a Social Justice Scholar, an Articles Editor for the *Rutgers University Law Review*, a member of the Mock Trial team, a Moot Court participant, and a research assistant. They also volunteer for the Street Law program, where they teach high school students and young adults about their legal rights and responsibilities. Over the past two years, Ren has interned with Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, the Support Center for Child Advocates, and the Montgomery County Public Defender, where she has focused on child welfare and juvenile defense work. Ren is honored to accept the **Governor's Executive Award**. After law school, Ren plans to continue working directly with youth and families while advocating for systemic changes through policy work. As an advocate, she hopes to shape child welfare policy to break intergenerational cycles of child welfare involvement through preventative legal advocacy and holistic representation. Ren lives in Palmyra, New Jersey, with her partner and two cats, Bagel and Mailbox. In her free time, she likes to garden, knit, do puzzles, and cook.

GRETEL RODRIGUEZ RAMOS

Gretel Rodriguez Ramos is a social justice advocate, community organizer, and political campaigner. As a DACA recipient originally from La Ceiba, Honduras, Gretel immigrated to the U.S at the age of four and grew up in Plainfield, New Jersey. She is a **second-year master's student in public administration and social entrepreneurship at Rutgers-Newark School of Public Affairs and Administration.** Prior to pursuing her MPA, Gretel received her bachelor's degree in political science and legal studies at Rutgers-Newark College of Arts and Sciences where she graduated *magna cum laude.* She is currently a graduate coordinator at Rutgers-Newark Office of Community Standards and Student Development, where she helps oversee university policy. Gretel is also an active member of Make the Road NJ and Rutgers Immigrant Student Empowerment (RISE), both of which helped shape her grassroots community organizing. In addition to working on campaigns such as NJ Governor Murphy's re-election campaign, Gretel has also had the privilege of providing testimony for state laws such as S2459 which provides translation of state documents and other language access services for the limited-English proficient population. During the summer of 2024, she was a research intern at New Jersey State Policy Lab where she conducted a literature review on transnational migration and economic development. She is honored to receive the **Harold and Reba Martin Award** and aspires to continue working to advance the progress of marginalized communities at the state and federal level.

CLAUDIA SANCHEZ

Claudia Sanchez is from Parsippany, New Jersey and is **a third-year student at Rutgers Law School-Newark**. She earned her bachelor's in social work from Monmouth University and her master of science degree in social work, specialization in policy, from Columbia University. As an undergraduate student, Claudia interned with various non-profit organizations that served victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. During her sophomore year, she studied abroad in London, England. Before law school, Claudia worked at the International Rescue Committee (IRC), where she supported various federal grant programs under the U.S. Department of State. During her tenure, she contributed to nationwide initiatives that aided Afghan refugees who were evacuated during the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. At Rutgers Law, Claudia serves as a senior staff editor for the Rutgers Journal of Law and Public Policy, is a member of the Minority Student Program, is a judicial intern at the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, and has earned Dean's List honors. In Spring 2024, Claudia interned for Chief Justice Stuart Rabner of the New Jersey Supreme Court. She also traveled to Cape Town and Johannesburg in March, where her South African Constitutional Law class met with Justice Leona Theron of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. Upon graduation, Claudia will be a judicial law clerk in the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division. Claudia is a **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** recipient placed at the **New Jersey Office of Legislative Services** and hopes to prepare for a future in public interest impact litigation and policy work. In her free time, Claudia volunteers for No One Left Behind, a non-profit that supports Iraqi and Afghan allies who served with the U.S. military overseas.

HANNAH SHEPHERD

Hannah Shepherd is in **her final year of a dual degree program where she is obtaining a juris doctorate at Rutgers Law School-Newark and a master's of social work degree at the School of Social Work at Rutgers-Newark.** Hannah received Dean's list honors for all semesters of matriculation at Rutgers Law School. While attending classes at the law school, Hannah was a member of the Rutgers University Law Review and a teaching assistant as a second-year law student for the first-year students' constitutional law and torts courses. Hannah grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and graduated *summa cum laude* from Hofstra University in December of 2020 with dual bachelor's degrees in political science and psychology and a minor in disability studies. Upon graduation, Hannah was awarded the Outstanding Senior Scholar Award, which is awarded to the graduating student with the highest cumulative grade point average. Hannah interned with New Jersey Congressman Anthony Bucco for two summers while she was obtaining her undergraduate degree. In graduate school, Hannah completed a legal internship at Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ), a legal internship at the Administrative Conference of the United States (ACUS), and a social work internship at the Office of Parental Representation, a division of the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender. This past summer, Hannah worked as a research assistant for multiple projects focused on studying the best ways to assist individuals with opioid use disorder at the Rutgers University New Jersey State Policy Lab. Hannah is honored to have received the **Henry J. Raimondo Legislative Award** and is excited to intern at the **New Jersey Office of Legislative Services** during the Spring of 2025. After she graduates, Hannah hopes to work in the public sector on domestic social policy as she is passionate about eradicating inequality and social and economic injustice in the United States.

SERAFINA SMITH

Serafina Smith is a **third-year Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers-New Brunswick,** where she also serves as the Assistant Dean at the Rutgers University School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. With an extensive background in higher education, Serafina has demonstrated a commitment to advancing student success, diversity, and institutional excellence. Serafina earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Rutgers University, cementing her deep-rooted connection to the institution. Her career spans various roles within higher education, including recruitment, admissions, academic affairs, and marketing. Notably, she has specialized in supporting underrepresented minority students, non-traditional students, student-athletes, and international students showcasing her dedication to fostering inclusive academic environments. In her previous role as Director of Admissions, Diversity & Partnerships at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, Serafina led a team to expand diversity within the MBA programs, managing partners regionally and globally to improve access for graduate students and growing female representation. Serafina's leadership extends beyond her institutional roles. She is a Leadership Newark Policy Fellow, where she collaborated with City of Newark officials to develop a Parent Engagement Curriculum. Additionally, she has been active in global and domestic higher education environments, including a study abroad program in South Africa to explore sociopolitical systems and educational practices. At Rutgers, Serafina is the president of the Student Advisory Committee and has introduced innovative initiatives such as Writing Accountability Groups to support doctoral students. Recognized for her contributions, Serafina is a recipient of the Eagleton Graduate Fellowship **Governor's Executive Award.** Her future aspirations include leveraging her extensive experience in higher education and policy to influence legislation and public policy, making a lasting impact on educational equity and student success.

KEVIN STAWICKI

Kevin Stawicki, a native of Robbinsville, New Jersey, is a **third-year law student at Rutgers Law School -Newark.** He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2015 with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and served as a Judicial Intern at the U.S. Supreme Court and as a Management Intern at the U.S. Department of State in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. After graduating from Penn, Kevin earned a master of science degree in journalism from Columbia University. He worked as a journalist for an affiliate of CBS News in Binghamton, New York and as a legal affairs journalist for a legal news publication in New York City. Kevin decided to return home to the Garden State to pursue law school, with an interest in public policy, criminal justice, labor and election law. During law school, Kevin has interned for the New Jersey Reentry Corporation, the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General and the law firm of Genova Burns. He serves as Symposium Editor of the Rutgers University Law Review. Kevin is thrilled to serve New Jersey through the **Governor's Executive Award**.

VIRGINIA UYEHARA

Virginia Uyehara (she/her) **is** pursuing a **master's of public health degree at the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences School of Public Health.** She graduated *summa cum laude* from Rutgers–New Brunswick (SAS '24), where she was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa and Tau Sigma Honor Societies. She is a proud alum of the Eagleton Undergraduate Associates Program and Douglass College, and she was the 2024 recipient of the Sheila Kelly Hampton Prize for Student Leadership. A member of the inaugural cohort of Rutgers Scarlet Service–DC, Virginia had the honor of working with Senior Advisor for Climate Alexis M. Pelosi, Esq., in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She previously externed at the district office of NJ Assembly Majority Leader Louis D. Greenwald, Esq. Virginia is originally from Pitman, New Jersey, where she currently serves on the Executive Campaign Team for the Pitman Democratic Party, in addition to her role as Chairperson of the Young Democrats of Pitman. Through her work with the Young Dems, she continues to educate young adults on the importance of voting and strives to inspire others to get involved with local politics. She received the **Eagleton Alumni Award**. Virginia's future plans include combining her knowledge of health and social sciences to eliminate structural barriers blocking marginalized communities from accessing equitable and affordable healthcare.

DEVON ZIMINSKI

Devon Ziminski (she/her) is a **PhD candidate at the Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Social Work**, a doctoral research fellow with New Jersey's Gun Violence Research Center (NJGVRC), and a Senior Research Administrator at the Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs (WRI) at Rutgers University – Camden. Her research focus areas are community violence interventions, differences in urban/rural gun violence, relationships between gun violence, neighborhoods and safety, and community-informed research practices. Her work involves direct engagement with community partners and local and state governments on primary and secondary data collection, analysis, and program evaluation projects. Devon currently leads multiple projects in the social service and violence prevention spaces – predominantly focused in Southern New Jersey. Prior to joining WRI, she worked in various roles at the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy and the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Ziminski holds a bachelor's degree from The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Devon is a New Jersey native, and she received the **Governor's Executive Award.**