

2023 Incoming Student Bios



Gretchen Allman (she/her) is an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student from St. Louis, Missouri. She recently graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio with a bachelor of arts in diplomacy and global politics. Her academic interests include security studies and comparative politics. Her undergraduate research focused on the intersection of politics and religion in Eastern Europe, and she interned for an ongoing project called “Empathy and the Religious Enemy” that seeks to understand lived experiences of religious radicals. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, going on runs, swimming, reading, and watching sports.



soccer, volleyball, hiking and swimming, and watching comedy movies.

Francis Amedoadzi is an incoming Master of Public Affairs graduate student from Ghana (West Africa). He graduated from the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana in 2021 with a bachelor’s degree in management studies (education). After graduating, Francis worked as a project manager for a nonprofit organization called Health2GO that partnered with Ghana Health Service to provide free and quality healthcare services to children living in extremely rural communities in Ghana who lack access to basic healthcare needs. He is excited to pursue interests in the areas of educational and health policy and to grow his professional network. Apart from work, Francis enjoys reading, camping, playing



have a “catio” built by the end of the summer) and an avid baker. He also looks forward to reengaging with his love of swimming and theater here at UW!

Matthew Bialo is an incoming first year Master of International Public Affairs student from Larchmont, New York. Since graduating from Harvard with a bachelor of arts in East Asian studies and a minor in evolutionary biology, he has kept his intertwined passions for history, cultural exchange, and language study alive while working for an Asia-focused travel agency and then a rare books dealership in New York City. He is beyond excited to begin studies at La Follette and gain new skills while building on his previous education. He hopes to apply his education in East Asian studies and international public affairs to a career in diplomatic relations. Outside of work, Matthew is an obsessive cat dad (with hopes to



Brelynn Bille (she/her) is a senior here at UW studying community and nonprofit leadership with certificates in public policy and disability rights and services. An accelerated Master of Public Affairs student, her policy interests mainly include increasing access and inclusion for people with disabilities and eliminating administrative burdens for disabled and multiply marginalized folks. She has worked in the Wisconsin Senate Sergeant at Arms office, Schreiber GR Group, and the National Disability Mentoring Coalition, but you are more likely to see her working as an event manager at the student unions! Outside of school, Brelynn enjoys reading, knitting, watching documentaries, and pointing out every dog in Madison.



Avery Bluey is an accelerated Master of International Public Affairs student at UW-Madison studying political science with certificates in public policy and history. She is originally from Oakland, California and has lived in Madison for the past three years since starting her undergraduate degree at UW-Madison. Avery has had experience working with the U.S. Department of State, a variety of nonprofits, and the City of Madison government through internship programs. These experiences inspired Avery to continue her education in international public affairs at the La Follette School, as she is passionate about international relations and international environmental policy.



Katie Campbell (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs candidate. She graduated from Marquette University with a bachelor of arts in communications and journalism with a political science minor. Her 31-year career includes work in law, marketing/advertising focused on hospitality and small business, and nonprofit fundraising, and she has served on several nonprofit boards in education, health, and housing. After 30 years in Colorado, she and her family recently moved back to Wisconsin to be closer to family. Katie is pursuing her passion where law, sociology and education intersect through UW-Madison's MPA program. She would like to pursue policy analysis in a city or state government position or for a consulting firm in Wisconsin, Hawaii, or Colorado. Katie is an avid road cyclist, skier, and hiker, as well as a compassionate wife, daughter, sister, and mom to two teenagers.



Courtney Clark (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student. She is originally from Mahtomedi, Minnesota and has lived in Madison since starting undergrad in 2017. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Spring of 2020 with bachelor's degrees in community and nonprofit leadership and environmental studies. Courtney has worked at several nonprofits, as well as at UW, and She hopes to continue working in the nonprofit sector once she earns her degree. Interest areas include women's health, food equity, and animal welfare. In her free time, Courtney loves to read, cook, and hang out with her cat.



Caroline Corona is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student. She is originally from the Cincinnati, Ohio area and graduated from The Ohio State University in 2019 with a bachelor of arts in public management, leadership, and policy and a bachelor of science in city and regional planning. She has lived in Washington, D.C. for the past few years and most recently worked at the Greater Washington Partnership, a civic alliance dedicated to advancing an inclusive and competitive economy from Baltimore to

Richmond. Previous experiences in D.C. include roles with the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Brookings Metro, and the International Economic Development Council. Caroline is particularly interested in local economic development for mid-sized, Midwest cities and how they can support inclusive growth amid shifting migration patterns and a changing climate. She looks forward to moving back to the Midwest and exploring all that Madison has to offer.



Dorcas Donkoh (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student with an interest in international policy and economics. In 2021, Dorcas graduated cum laude from the University of Cape Coast with a bachelor of commerce degree in human resource management; she minored in economics and law. As part of Ghana's mandatory one-year National Service, she was selected to serve as an administrative assistant at the Office of the Registrar, College of Distance Education where she performed several roles and contributed immensely to the College's business. Dorcas also doubled as a teaching assistant, assisting course tutors to facilitate course modules and grad exams. In her final year, Dorcas started a nonprofit educational foundation dedicated to academic mentoring and vocational training of youth in her community. She volunteered with fellow university alumni to provide resources to make higher education more accessible to unsupported and

underrepresented high school students. Established on the premise that initiating global change starts with taking the right step locally, her nonprofit prioritizes care for brilliant first-generation students and reinforces substantial change to ensure social justice and equity in her community. Dorcas's academic

and personal background as a first-generation student coupled with her work and nonprofit experience sparked her desire for public service. The MPA program will equip her with a real-world policy toolkit to pursue a public service career devoted to ensuring public interest takes precedence over existing systemic inequalities in Ghana and across Africa and above all, to evolve as an advanced problem solver in an increasingly complex global economy. In her free time, Dorcas loves to cook, watch sci-fi and crime-action movies, and looks forward to exploring the Midwest culture and Madison in general.



Emmanuel Figueroa (He/El) is an incoming MIPA-MS URPL student who graduated from UW-Madison in 2023 with a bachelor's degree in political science, international studies, economics, and LACIS. As a McNair scholar, Emmanuel wrote a literature review concerning geographic incentives for Coca Leaf cultivation in El Salvador in addition to a senior thesis comparing criminal organizations to states. Other research interests include state development, criminal organizations, and international governance.

Emmanuel worked at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation in his senior year to learn more about the functions of state government. In his free time, Emmanuel enjoys language learning, photography, weightlifting, and traveling.



Francie Fink is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student, intending to concentrate on energy and environmental policy. She obtained her bachelor's degree in environmental sciences from the University of Notre Dame in 2020 and since then has explored the subject's intersection with the public sphere. After graduating college, Francie served a year in an AmeriCorps program as an educator at a children's science museum in Billings, Montana. For the past two years, Francie has worked at a community development nonprofit in South Bend, IN. She has led projects ranging from strategic planning for the Women in STEM Network locally, to policy analysis and program design for residential energy efficiency and the city's urban tree canopy. At UW - Madison, Francie is excited to learn from her peers and professors

about how to effect positive and just change in the transition to a decarbonized society. Catch Francie watching *Survivor* (44 seasons), hanging with friends, or attempting intramural sports in her free time!



Brando Flores is a new Master of International Public Affairs student who is originally from South Texas, but lived most of his later life in Boise, Idaho. Brando received his bachelor of arts in political science and international studies from the University of Idaho in 2021. As an undergraduate, Brando researched European asylum policy during developed prescriptive policies for the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) to facilitate protection for asylum seekers during the European Migration Cycle in the Central Mediterranean in 2019. He also researched the causes of the Baloch rebellion in Pakistan during the development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. His upbringing on the Mexican-

American border shaped his understanding of interstate relations as he witnessed the political reality of migration, socioeconomic disparity, and organized crime. His academic interests are in non-traditional security and political violence, interactions between state and non-state actors, protection of civilian population, and interventionism.

President of the Political Science Honor Society (PSA) Chapter while attending University of Idaho, Brando was involved in various organizations and held positions in student government, the Residence Hall Association, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, and Quiz Bowl. Brando formerly worked as Boise's group coordinator for RESULTS and RESULTS Educational fund, lobbying members of Congress on bills and initiatives involving global poverty and international development. Later, he became an editorial intern during the development of Parlia.com, writing daily articles on current events. Recently, he was involved in elections as Madison's field organizer for the League of Conservation Voters during the 2022 midterm elections, mobilizing citizens to vote for candidates supporting environmentally sustainable policies and hosting events with partner organizations.



Contessa Ganske is a new accelerated Master of Public Affairs student, finishing her undergraduate degree double majoring in psychology and legal studies, with certificates in African American studies and criminal justice. She has been involved in activism and advocacy on campus, with a specific focus on criminal justice system reform, reproductive rights, and education policy. Contessa previously completed an internship at the Wisconsin State Capitol in the legislative office of State Representative LaKeshia Myers. Last summer, she had the opportunity to work for a nonprofit on a class action lawsuit relating to the student debt crisis and barriers to higher education. She now works for the Division of Extension at UW-

Madison in the Dean's Office as an administrative assistant for policy and operations. Contessa is thrilled to continue her education at UW-Madison and expand upon her interests in social policy. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading novels, and playing with her dog.



Jennifer Gaxiola is originally from Tucson, Arizona but she lived in Nogales, Sonora in Mexico most of her life. Spanish is her first language, and she learned English when she was 15 years old. She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Arizona, where she triple majored in political science, global studies, Spanish, and Portuguese. Jenny has experience translating and interpreting through an internship at the YWCA in Southern Arizona, where she focused on teaching English and translating legal documents. In addition, she was an intern at the Consulate of Mexico in Tucson where she worked with the Protection Department which focused on migratory, criminal, and administrative affairs. After graduating in May 2023, Jenny volunteered with the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores in Mexico City, Tlaxcala, and Queretaro, where she helped teach English to students, restore schools,

and plant trees, among many other activities. As a student who has mainly focused on international relations and diplomacy, she is mostly interested in foreign and educational policy. She loves outdoor

activities such as hiking, biking, and swimming. She also loves learning new languages! Currently, Jenny speaks English, Spanish, and Portuguese and is in the process of learning German. She is excited to continue her education as a Master of International Public Affairs candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and get to know more people!



Asa Hooper-Lane (he/him) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student from Madison, Wisconsin. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in May of 2023 with degrees in political science and philosophy along with a certificate in physics. Throughout his undergraduate career he developed a deep interest in politics, during which he worked as a research assistant under a PhD candidate in the field. With his background in physics, Asa is particularly interested in the intersection between science and politics, with an interest in energy policy and environmental protection. Having participated in the Cornell Pre-Law Summer Program in Paris, Asa also has both an interest in and experience with the international nature of such policies. In addition to his physics background, Asa has a passion for political philosophy, which contributes to his other primary policy interest, social policy. He is excited to have the opportunity to bring about change in his community through the La Follette School and can't wait to begin. Outside of his academics, Asa enjoys collecting vinyl, camping, film, and tennis.



Sabina Huseynova is an incoming Master of Public Affairs candidate who is originally from Baku, Azerbaijan. In May 2022, she received her bachelor of arts from one of the most prestigious universities of Azerbaijan, ADA University. She specialized in public and international relations and, during her final year, worked as an accountant at the USA-founded Logistics Company, E&O Global. Sabina had the chance to intern both in the Cabinet of the Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan during her undergraduate summer internship. Her goal is to become a diversified individual by working on her research and professional skills. In her free time, she delights in exploring new pursuits, cherishing moments with loved ones, and engaging in activities like swimming and volleyball. Sabina eagerly anticipates joining and discovering the opportunities offered by the La Follette School and she is excited to learn from the exceptionally skilled and varied group of faculty and students.



Benjamin Jaccard is both an accelerated Master of International Public Affairs candidate and a senior undergraduate student at UW majoring in journalism with a certificate in public policy. After a great experience taking undergraduate policy courses at the La Follette School, Ben decided to pursue an accelerated degree. He is particularly interested in social protection, human rights, and diplomacy. At UW he is also the director of the Wisconsin Union Directorate Society and Politics Committee, where he programs events for the UW committee that focuses on social and political topics. Ben also coaches his local swim club and loves to travel.



Allison Keeley is a political science and Chican@/Latin@ studies student at UW-Madison beginning her accelerated Master of International Public Affairs degree this fall. She is originally from Chicago, Illinois and is entering her fourth year of study in Madison. During her undergraduate years, she has worked as a research assistant in the political science department, a host for the 1050 Bascom podcast, and a summer honors research apprentice. This past summer, she enjoyed working for Spitfire Strategies, a political PR firm based in Washington, D.C. Her love for the university is what inspired her to continue her studies at La Follette. In her free time, Allison is a musician who loves to play shows around the Madison area.

Ayah Kenj Halabi



Erin Kennon sends a warm hello to her classmates. A first year Master of Public Affairs student this fall, Erin received her undergraduate degree from UW-Madison, double majoring in Spanish and legal studies while also receiving certificates in public policy and gender and women's studies. She is interested in social policy, specifically gender equality, and education policy. Outside of school, Erin loves spending time with her friends and family, traveling, enjoying all the different restaurants and activities Madison has to offer, and attending Badger sporting events. She could not be more excited to remain in Madison and begin her education at La Follette!



Padraic Kenny is an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student. He is joining the program after an assignment to 2/11 Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska where he served as the Brigade's civil affairs officer. He enlisted in the U.S. Army as a 42R Bandsman and served two tours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. As a North Carolina native, he graduated from Campbell University in 2013 with a bachelor of science in social science-history and commissioned as an infantry officer in the United States Army. Upon graduating, Paddy served in multiple positions and units at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. After completing the U.S. Army's Special Operations Governance Officer training course, he completed an operational deployment in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Paddy has a passion for international development and security cooperation. He enjoys spending his time with his wife of 12 years,

Hannah, and his sons William (8) and Holden (6), in addition to fishing, hunting, and camping.

Dan Levan



Alivia Lindorfer (She/Her) is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student and a University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate with a bachelor of arts in political science. For the past four years Alivia has been a member of UW-Madison's varsity swim and dive team. Alivia is looking forward to beginning her fifth (and final) year of NCAA eligibility this fall. Alivia's policy interests center around a passion towards helping those who are disadvantaged and marginalized in society. She is excited to learn about ways that she create thoughtful and productive policies. When she's not swimming or studying, she enjoys reading, art, and spending time with friends or her pets.



Ali Mammadov is from Azerbaijan and is pursuing a Master of Public Affairs and an energy analysis and policy certificate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Having completed a bachelor's degree with distinction diploma in public affairs at ADA University, Ali furthered his academic experience through Erasmus+ exchange studies in Latvia and Lithuania. His primary research area involves analyzing and integrating social welfare policies with the energy sector, displaying a passion for progressive and sustainable public policies.

Throughout his undergraduate years, Ali showcased exceptional leadership as the president of the "Speak for Youth" organization for three years, while also excelling as a research methodology and statistics tutor at ADA University. With enriching internships at the Embassy of Azerbaijan to Hungary, International Bank of Azerbaijan, AIESEC in Poland, and AIESEC in Türkiye, he has honed practical insights. Furthermore, his dedication to volunteerism, starting from

the age of 15, includes active participation in major events such as UEFA Baku 2019, EURO 2020, Formula 1, Baku Islamic Games, and public and private sector organizations. Ali's commitment to academic excellence is evident through two published research papers, a co-author journal, and a significant capstone project. Awarded numerous national and international grants, Ali strives to make a positive impact in society through transformative projects. Ready to bring his expertise and passion to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ali is poised to leave a lasting and positive mark on the academic community and beyond.



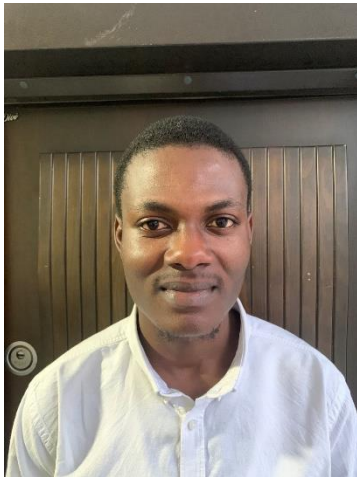
Doris Mbaka (she/her) is an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student from Chuka, Kenya. She graduated in 2019 from The Cooperative University of Kenya with a degree in cooperative business - accounting option. She has been working in the Policy and Standards Directorate which is under the State Department of Cooperatives. The major role in this directorate is to develop policies and a regulatory framework and provide support services. She observes that a big gap exists between formulation and implementation of policies and hopes to gain knowledge on how to bridge the gap between the two and hence, make the policies more effective. Doris is excited and looks forward to exploring new cultures and people as she enjoys travelling and meeting new friends during her free time.



Summer Mitchell is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student from Evanston, Illinois. In May 2021, she graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a bachelor of arts in legal studies. In the two gap years that followed her undergrad, she interned at the Wisconsin State Capitol and currently works as a medical program specialist for the Pediatric Hospital Medicine division within the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health. Within a few years, she plans to attend law school. Her passion for policy stems from the disparities in American communities. She hopes to gain a further understanding of how policy shapes communities and their outcomes. She is particularly interested in increasing housing and educational opportunities within communities of color.



Luis Navarrete is an incoming graduate student pursuing a Master of Public Affairs and a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning. He graduated from Marquette University with a bachelor of arts in political science and previously worked as an assistant in the Office of Mayor Cavalier Johnson in Milwaukee. Additionally, he serves with local and national nonprofits such as Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee and Hispanics Forward. He works as a development intern for Genesys Works, a nonprofit that assists high school students in underserved communities in their professional development through skill training, work experience, and networking opportunities. His hobbies include following professional sports, working out, video games, cooking, dancing, and getting out of his comfort zone.



Richmond Osei Panford is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student from Ghana. He received a first-class honors bachelor of arts in sociology with a minor in social work from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 2020. Richmond went on to serve as a research and teaching assistant in the Department of Sociology and Social Work for a year. He has also worked as a consultant/quality control officer and a client support unit officer. Richmond's undergraduate experiences and work as a TRA, helped develop policy interests in social and economic equity, governance and accountability, and public policy, and how evidence-based research and solutions can be used to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of government policies in these fields, specifically in his local community and home country, Ghana. Richmond hopes to help less privileged individuals in his home

country have equitable access to social and economic opportunities to enable their development. He believes that nobody should be deprived of their basic social and economic needs and opportunities due to their background or location, as deprivation eliminates chances at a better life and development. He is also interested in joining volunteer groups and student organizations that share similar interests. Richmond is very excited to attend the La Follette School and to connect with the great students and faculty. Richmond enjoys educational debates, watching sports and movies, playing games, and hanging out with friends.



Ryan Ring is a first year Master of Public Affairs student with a background in government and politics. Ryan hails from Green Bay, Wisconsin and is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where he earned a bachelor's degree in finance with a minor in political science.

While attending college, Ryan was appointed by Governor Scott Walker to serve as the Traditional Student Regent on the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents. While serving on the Board of Regents, Ryan served on the Capital Planning and Budget Committee, Education Committee, and the Committee on Student Discipline and Other Student Appeals. Ryan advocated for affordable tuition, increase in state investments, freedom of expression, and the restructuring of the UW System.

After college, Ryan worked as a legislative correspondent for Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. in Washington, D.C. Upon his return to Wisconsin, Ryan worked for Senator Howard Marklein, the co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance, Wisconsin's powerful budget writing committee. Currently he works for Representative Alex Dallman, a member of the Joint Committee on Finance, assisting with policy related to Wisconsin's biennial budget.

Stemming from his background in finance, Ryan's policy interests include public finance and taxes, economic policy, regulatory reform, and public administration. In his free time, Ryan enjoys all Wisconsin sports, golfing, and spending time with friends.



Caroline Riordan (she/her) was raised in rural, central Wisconsin. In 2020, she started her bachelor of arts in sociology with certificates in political science and public affairs from UW-Madison. Entering her first year as an accelerated Master of Public Affairs student at La Follette, her policy foci are rural healthcare, rural poverty, income inequality, and education. While studying at UW-Madison, Caroline interned for the Wisconsin State Assembly, worked as a restaurant supervisor, practiced dance, and worked as a brand ambassador. When not studying or working, Caroline spends her time cycling, reading, and spending time with friends. After completing her MPA, she plans to pursue another degree in law or sociology.



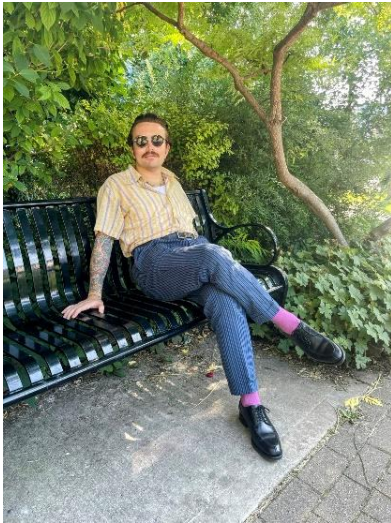
Chloe Roberts (she/her/hers) is an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student from Columbus, Wisconsin. In May 2023, she graduated from UW-Madison with a double major in political science and classics and is excited to continue her studies here. Chloe's policy interests include energy policy, social policy with an international emphasis, and transportation. She looks forward to growing her policy knowledge and expertise during her two years here!



Sammy Rothman (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She graduated from UW-Madison in 2018 with degrees in political science and history and a certificate in studio art. Since graduating, Sammy has worked for progressive digital firms helping candidates up and down the ballot win elections through persuasive advertising strategies. While at the La Follette School, Sammy is excited to focus on energy, climate, and health policy. In her free time, she loves to spend time with

her dog, hike, and discover new restaurants and bars.

Elisabeth Severini (she/hers) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student from Evanston, Illinois. In June 2020, she graduated magna cum laude from Northwestern University with a degree in social policy and political science. Since graduating from NU, she has worked as a research assistant on an Institute of Education Sciences grant, investigating the corpus of large-scale randomized trials that have been funded by IES during its lifetime to determine what has been learned and in what if any ways they have contributed to advances in the education sciences. Her policy interests include social policy and education policy, among many others. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, crocheting, and hiking.



Al Schultz is a first year Master of Public Affairs Student. He graduated in 2016 from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in philosophy and political science. Since graduating from UW, he has worked in various positions with the State of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Due to this career progression, Al was drawn to an MPA degree with La Follette to further his skills and abilities in evidence-based policy making and public management. In his free time, he enjoys reading, cooking, men's fashion, and interior decorating.



Jarunee Shuller is an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student. Originally from Maha Sarakham, one of the poorest provinces in Thailand, she received a bachelor of arts in civil engineering from Washington State University in 2021. She works as a transmission line engineer in Madison. In her free time, Jarunee has been helping refugees get settled. She has always dreamed that one day she would return to her hometown and start enacting change there. She would like everybody there to have equal access to education and to stop the human trafficking problem. Jarunee's policy interests are education, social justice, and economic policy. She enjoys social work, volunteering, biking, and rock climbing in her free time.



Julia Sikowitz Lee (she/her) is a first year accelerated Master of Public Affairs student from Brooklyn, New York. She is currently a sociology major with certificates in health policy and integrated studies in science, engineering, and society at UW-Madison. Throughout her time in the health policy certificate program, she has taken a particular interest in healthcare access, pharmaceutical legislation reform, and maternal health outcomes. Outside the classroom, Julia works in the hospitality industry and enjoys spending time with friends in downtown Madison.



Annalisa Solis (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs-Juris Doctor dual degree student. Born and raised in Los Fresnos, a town located in the southernmost region of Texas, she graduated with her bachelor of arts in English and political science with a minor in Spanish from Texas A&M University- Kingsville in fall 2022. During her undergraduate career, Annalisa studied abroad at Stellenbosch University, located in Stellenbosch, South Africa, and interned with the Smithsonian Institute National Museum of the American Indian. These experiences, along with her lived experience in the Rio Grande Valley, fueled her interest in the study of communities impacted by social injustice. She hopes to explore and expand her knowledge on immigration policy and energy regulation throughout her time in this program. Outside of school, Annalisa loves spending time outside with friends/her dog, reading anything she can get her hands on, and exploring different types of food!



Cameron Towne is a first year Master of Public Affairs student from Southern California. He earned his bachelor of arts in history from the University of California, San Diego. Cameron taught high school English in the Los Angeles Unified School District for five years and was a steward in his union, United Teachers Los Angeles. While at the La Follette School, he hopes to strengthen his knowledge of social policy, particularly as it relates to child poverty alleviation, and explore an emerging interest in energy policy. In his free time, Cameron enjoys reading, collecting vintage furniture, and spending time with his cat, Tallulah.



Gattiosso Traore, an incoming Master of International Public Affairs student from Burkina Faso, West Africa, is passionate about politics and its impact on gender issues. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, majoring in political science and legal studies.

Gattiosso has actively contributed to the political landscape, serving as a political organizer in the 2020 Presidential election with Wisconsin Working Families and in 2022 with Senator John Brooks from New York State. Her dedication to gender equality led her to initiate a project addressing period poverty on campus, for which she successfully earned a grant. Beyond her academic pursuits, Gattiosso actively engages in political discussions and advocates for reproductive rights. As an emerging bilingual leader, she strives to connect with diverse communities and bridge cultural gaps.

Excited to join Lafollette's esteemed cohort, Gattiosso aims to equip herself with the tools and skills to advocate for gender participation in the global economy and promote equitable policies that alleviate the struggles faced by women. Eager to embrace new challenges and expand her expertise in international policy, Gattiosso is determined to contribute to creating a more equitable world. In her leisure time, Gattiosso enjoys reading, biking, and cooking.



Arissa Watkins (she/her) is an MPA-MPH student dual degree student. She graduated with her degree in public health from Brigham Young University in 2022. While working for the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, she realized her interests in health policy and health communication frame working. Her most recent internship was focused on health policy research in correctional settings, focusing on health equity for inmates during and post incarceration. Arissa grew up in Wisconsin and has enjoyed returning to her home state this last year. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, reading, trying new restaurants, hanging out with friends, and visiting family.



Jake Wesner (he/him/his) is an incoming Master of Public Affairs student. He graduated magna cum laude, with majors in economics and political science and a minor in democracy and justice studies from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. His senior theses focused on poverty and international economics. Jake completed undergraduate research with the chair of UWGB's political science department investigating public opinion on unions and the relation between political efficacy and participation. He has published in the Social Science Journal, focusing on policing and media framing. Jake is particularly interested in political economy, linguistics, normative ethics, and political theory. Jake hopes that his studies will allow him to pursue a role in political analysis.



Megan Westerman (she/her) is a first year Master of Public Affairs student from Chesapeake, Virginia. She recently received her bachelor's degree in political science with minors in global studies and history from Randolph College in Lynchburg, Virginia. While obtaining her undergraduate degree, she interned virtually with the social media team for Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America in Boston, Massachusetts. She also held a summer position with Qualcomm's D.C. office, where she attended various meetings on behalf of the company and tracked the 2022 CHIPS Act. Her senior research focused on the effects of the NRA on the passage of gun policies in the U.S. and she plans to continue pursuing gun safety measures. Megan enjoys running, horseback riding, and spending time with family.



Chee Yang (she/her/hers) is an accelerated first-year Master of Public Affairs student from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is entering her senior year as an undergraduate student pursuing a legal studies major and public policy certificate. She is currently affiliated with the Lab for Family Wellbeing and Justice and works with the Center for Leadership and Involvement and Center for Educational Opportunity. Post-grad, she hopes to work with policy that involves families impacted by incarceration. During her free time, she enjoys attending concerts, visiting museums, and staying active by biking and roller-skating around Madison.