

# Cal State DC Scholars Newsletter



## Fall 2024 Edition



### Meet Marco

Marco is one of our 2018 DC Scholars. He is a dedicated political organizer, policy communicator, and organizational strategist. He has crafted messages for President Biden in the Office of Presidential Correspondence and recruited candidates for the Office of Presidential Personnel. His expertise includes domestic and foreign policy, with work on the U.S. Mission to the UN and as Advocacy Officer for the UN Foundation. An LGBTQIA+ advocate and first-generation college graduate from California State University, Fullerton, Marco is a proud son of immigrant parents and passionate about public education. We are thrilled to welcome him as the newest board member of the DC Scholars Program.



### Meet Marilyn

Meet Marilyn Nevy Cruz, a distinguished leader who embodies resilience and generosity. A proud Cal State Fullerton Titan and former DC Scholar, Marilyn's journey highlights the transformative power of education and the opportunities it provides. As the youngest Hispanic-American President of the 112-year-old Rotary Club of Washington DC, she extends her unwavering support to current DC Scholars, nurturing their aspirations and guiding them toward promising futures. Marilyn's tireless dedication to empowering the next generation exemplifies true leadership and mentorship, inspiring others to follow in her footsteps and make a difference in their communities.



### Meet Jasmine

A senior psychology major and proud Scott-Jewett Award recipient, Jasmine made a significant impact as a Spring 2024 DC Scholar. Her internship with The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services allowed her to tackle pressing issues such as maternal health rates and foster interfaith dialogue. As she takes on the role of Scott-Jewett Ambassador, Jasmine continues to champion social justice and equity. Her work reflects a deep commitment to improving community well-being and promoting inclusivity, making her a leading voice.



## We're Back!

Welcome to the latest edition of the DC Scholars Newsletter! As summer turns to fall, we reflect on the vibrant experiences and inspiring stories that have shaped our program. From exploring D.C.'s hidden gems to celebrating the achievements of our scholars and alumni, this issue captures what makes the DC Scholars community so special. Whether you're catching up on recent events or looking ahead, we hope these stories connect you to the heart of our program.

Enjoy the read!



*"In my introduction courses, I learned how government operates, and what it takes for bills to become laws, what political ideologies are, and how they are often affiliated with political parties. Being here, I got to see all these theories in practice. Although I would say that most of my political science classes introduced me to what I would see here on Capitol Hill, it is nearly impossible to grasp the reality of what happens here everyday." - Spring 2024 DC Scholar*

## Scholars Review



## Celebrating Stephen Stambough's Impact:

When Stephen Stambough attended his first Academic Senate meeting at Cal State Fullerton (CSUF), he recognized the diverse intellect and dedication of the faculty around him. His commitment to shared governance, where every voice is heard, not just the most prominent ones, has been a cornerstone of his approach throughout his career.

This inclusive philosophy, coupled with his dedication to academic excellence and community service, earned Stambough the 2024 John W. "Jack" Bedell Leadership in Collegial Governance Award.

### *A Champion of the DC Scholars Program*

The award, presented by CSUF President Sylvia Alva, recognizes faculty members who have made significant contributions to collegial governance. It is named after John (Jack) Bedell, a former sociology professor known for his leadership and commitment to helping others. Matthew Jarvis, associate professor of political science and chair of the Academic Senate, aptly noted, "Collegial governance has been the hallmark of Steve's career at CSUF, and it's only fitting that he be nominated for and receive this award."

Stambough began his journey at CSUF in 2003 as an assistant professor of political science. He found great joy in teaching and research, which he described as "the best job imaginable."



## Best of DC

For a unique experience in Washington, D.C., venture to the Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens. This lesser-known gem was once the home of socialite Marjorie Merriweather Post and offers a serene escape from the city's hustle. Explore the stunning French and Russian art collections, stroll through the beautifully landscaped gardens, and admire the opulent interiors of her former residence. Hillwood's tranquil setting and rich history provide an intimate glimpse into D.C.'s cultural and social heritage, making it a delightful alternative to the usual tourist spots.



### *Transforming Education Through Experience*

His involvement in the Academic Senate started in 2009, and he has since served as both chair and vice chair of the CSUF Academic Senate, as well as a two-term member of the Academic Senate of the California State University system.

Throughout his tenure, Stambough navigated numerous challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the revision of general education requirements, and social justice issues. His leadership was characterized by collaboration, critical thinking, and a focus on community support, always prioritizing the success of faculty, staff, and students.

As a first-generation college student, Stambough has always been guided by a commitment to student success. Over a decade ago, he recognized the importance of real-world experience for students and founded the Cal State DC Scholars program. Since 2006, this program has provided more than 700 students with the opportunity to study and intern in Washington, D.C., and has expanded to 14 other CSU campuses. "It never gets old seeing our students in our nation's capital," Stambough said. "Our students prove time and time again that, if given the chance, they can succeed anywhere. Leading this program gave me the honor of seeing that happen. I realize this was only possible due to our tradition of collegiality, collaboration, and determination to work together to build things that matter for our students and community."

The Cal State DC Scholars program stands as one of Stambough's most significant achievements, offering students a transformative experience that bridges academic knowledge with practical application. Students in the program not only gain invaluable professional experience but also build networks that enhance their career prospects. The program's expansion to other CSU campuses is a testament to its success and the high regard in which it is held.

Participants in the DC Scholars program have interned at prestigious organizations, including congressional offices, federal agencies, think tanks, and non-profit organizations. This exposure helps students develop a deep understanding of the workings of government and public policy, preparing them for successful careers in various fields.

Beyond the professional advantages, the DC Scholars program also enriches students' personal growth. Living and working in the heart of the nation's capital allows students to immerse themselves in a vibrant, dynamic environment, fostering independence, resilience, and a broader worldview.

As we honor Stephen Stambough's retirement, we celebrate his lasting contributions to the DC Scholars Program and the CSUF community. His legacy of promoting student success, fostering inclusivity, and leading with integrity will continue to inspire future generations.



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## DC Scholars in Review: *Spring and Summer 2024 Highlights*

This spring and summer, the DC Scholars Program offered a rich tapestry of experiences that significantly enriched our Scholars' time in Washington, D.C.

With more than 40 Scholars embarking on Washington, DC, we saw our broadest representation of diverse students from across the Cal State University System. We reached our goal to serve additional students from CSU Long Beach, CSU San Marcos, CSU Sacramento, CSU San Jose, and CSU Channel Islands. These students not only benefited from their experience, but felt a deeper sense of connection to their campuses after completing the program.

Once again, our Scholars experienced the energy of Congress with nearly a dozen interning for Members throughout California. The Archives, America 250, Department of Labor, HHS and the Securities and Exchange Commission were impressed with our hardworking Scholars.

We are proud of our student success stories, like our Spring Scholar, Jasmine Lars, accepting a remote position with HHS at the conclusion of her internship.

The season featured an awe-inspiring solar eclipse in April observed from the National Mall, a memorable highlight for everyone. Scholars explored historic sites such as Mount Vernon and the U.S. Capitol Dome, delving into America's past. Cultural experiences included a captivating performance of Little Shop of Horrors at Ford's Theatre and visits to the Vietnam and WWII Memorials, as well as the Holocaust Museum. Networking opportunities were abundant, with scholars engaging with alumni at a lively party at The Dubliner and having insightful conversations with Greg Schuckman, Acting Vice Chancellor of Federal Relations at the California State University Chancellor's Office,

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along with DC Scholar alums Joel Thayer, Alaina Hooks, Irene Conforti, Marco Sanchez, Leah Milhander, Vincent Gonzalez, Kamille Morales and Matthew Brazas. The Fourth of July was celebrated on the National Mall, while excitement continued with a Nationals baseball game and a thrilling Women's National Soccer League match at Audi Field. Community service was a significant focus, highlighted by a Day of Service on the W&OD Trail and a picnic at Gravelly Point. Several Scholars also witnessed history first-hand and waited overnight to get seats in the Supreme Court, where they took their lessons on Constitutional law from the classroom and applied it to life in D.C.

This season has woven together exploration, cultural immersion, and community involvement into an extraordinary journey. We look forward to continuing these enriching experiences and supporting our scholars as they thrive in Washington, D.C.



## On the Road to a Sustainable Cal State DC Scholars Program:

As the Cal State DC Scholars Program nears its 20-year anniversary, CSUF Provost Dabirian has provided the Cal State DC Scholars program with a one-time grant. In short, this grant is to grow the program system-wide. Specifically, he has tasked Director Amie Zeoli and DC Liaison Dr. Kathryn Buechel with ensuring that this transformational program is open to all students from across the California State University system. Provost Dabirian, like so many CSU executives, understands the lifelong impact of internship opportunities for CSU students and our workforce, not to mention the broad impact of having more and more CSU graduates and students in Washington DC. As part of this effort, Director Zeoli is traversing the state to meet with interested students and CSU leaders while Dr. Buechel is feverishly growing the network of internship opportunities for our Scholars in Washington DC.

In addition to Amie Zeoli and Dr. Kathryn Buechel, the program welcomes Dr. Patricia Literte into the role of CSUF Campus Director of the Cal State DC Scholars Program. As a seasoned faculty of the program, (2012, 2013, 2015, and 2022), Dr. Literte brings much experience and unbridled commitment to the success of each Scholar. Dr. Literte is an Associate Professor of Sociology and comes with experience running CSUF's Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Literte was also part of the team that secured the sizable Scott-Jewett Fund for Student Success and Innovation to support students in Cal State DC.

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