

**RALPH J. BUNCHE INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS CENTER**



**CHARLES B. RANGEL INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS PROGRAM**

**2018 RANGEL SUMMER
SCHOLAR BIOGRAPHIES**



Toward the goal of an excellent and diverse U.S. Foreign Service
representing the Uniquely rich range of talents and expertise of the
American people.



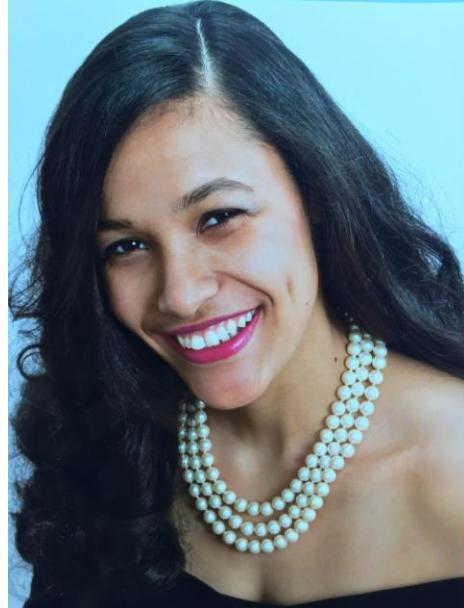
Mara L. Brody

Mara is a sophomore International Studies major with a concentration in International Affairs and Business at Bethune Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Florida. At Bethune Cookman, Mara was the recipient of an Excelsior Academic Scholarship Award. She has received both President and Dean List recognitions and was awarded the distinguished Top Freshman in International Studies Award in 2017. Mara was inducted into the National Society of Leadership and Success in 2017 and is a member of the United Nations Association. Additionally, she is a Division 1 athlete playing for the Bethune Cookman University Softball Team. In 2017, Mara served as summer intern in the St. Petersburg District Office of Congressman Charlie Crist. Her service activities include volunteering for the PRO Youth Foundation as a camp instructor for young girls aspiring to play softball as well as

working with the Youth Development Foundation of Pinellas, Inc. and the Alpha Kappa Alpha AKAdeemy Program. Mara has traveled extensively and is interested in studying U.S.-China Relations.

Angela Chin

Angela is a second-year Honors Student and Carolina Merit-Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a dual-major in Public Policy and Global Studies with a minor in Arabic, and she serves on the Undergraduate Student Attorney General Staff. She is from Bowie, Maryland and is the co-founder of Project uPGrade, a women's empowerment organization focused on uplifting women of color from Prince George's County, Maryland. Angela is interested in improving environmental policy in the Middle East and advocating for women's rights internationally.





Kennedy Copeland

Kennedy is from Atlanta, Georgia and is currently studying abroad in Croatia. She attends school at Alabama A&M University. She has a passion for traveling, and studying abroad has allowed her to explore Eastern Europe. When Kennedy is not on the move, you can find her in the kitchen or reading a book. She is big believer in wellness living and promotes daily physical exercise with proper eating. Recently she got a certificate in nutrition and plans on becoming a certified trainer. At her university she is involved with the honors program, yearbook staff, Pre-Alumni Association, and career development. Kennedy plans to continue her education after receiving her bachelor's degree in hopes of getting a Ph.D. As far as career aspirations go, she plans on being a career diplomat and become U.S. Secretary of State.

Daniel Courteau

Daniel was nine when a powerful experience set him on a path to the Foreign Service. As a Filipino-American, he has always had a foot in both countries. But he and his family never expected to find themselves fleeing from Raw-an to escape kidnappers because they were considered foreigners. He learned from an early age that the world is filled with a variety of challenges, and he soon became fascinated with the intricate world of international affairs. Since then, he has travelled to the Dominican Republic as an ESL teacher and has studied abroad at the University of Salamanca, Spain. Daniel is currently enrolled at the SUNY University at Buffalo where he is a double-major in International Studies and Economics while learning Spanish and Mandarin. In his free time, he enjoys going to the gym and exploring the local culinary scene. He is looking forward to visiting Howard University this summer and learning how to apply his experiences to the context of the Foreign Service.





Carla Garcia

Carla is second year student at the University of Central Florida in Orlando pursuing dual degrees in Economics and Political Science. She is the treasurer of UCF's International Relations Club, a student organization dedicated to the academic and professional development of students with an interest in international affairs. Carla is also a College of Business Student Ambassador, which means she helps plan events and initiatives to promote student engagement within the college. Throughout her time at UCF, she has developed a strong passion for studying the economic development and politics of

developing countries, particularly in Africa. Last fall, Carla was the inaugural Nelson Mandela African Affairs Fellow at the UCF Global Perspectives Office where she conducted research on African current affairs and economic issues. After graduating, Carla aspires to pursue a master's degree in Applied Economics with a focus on international development, hopefully in Washington, D.C. She is also considering eventually pursuing a PhD in Economics. Ultimately, she hopes to work for an international development organization and conduct policy research.

Maimuna Gassama

Maimuna is a junior at St. John's University where she is majoring in Government and Politics with a concentration in International Relations, with minors in Arabic and Social Justice. She immigrated to the United States at the age of two from The Gambia and grew up in Atlanta. Her background has allowed her to develop a unique perspective on the importance of cross-cultural communication and diversity in the international arena. Maimuna is especially passionate about global security concerns particularly concerning diplomacy and foreign policy. She is fluent in Mandinka, Wolof, and Arabic, and hopes to use these languages to further support her future goals. Today Maimuna works in the St. John's University English Department, is Vice-President of the St. John's Chapter of UNICEF, is a mentor for Black and Latino freshman as part of the "R.I.S.E" network, and serves as a Diversity Peer Educator under the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Maimuna believes that the notion of students being the leaders of tomorrow has been shattered, and instead believes as leaders of today, students have a responsibility to participate in all opportunities that allow them to deepen their understanding of the world around them.





Hayden Grace

Hayden, from Hopkinsville, KY, is a third-year honors scholar at Western Kentucky University where he is majoring in mathematical economics. In his junior year of high school, he was selected to be one of approximately 1,000 Kentucky students selected for the Kentucky Governor's Scholar Program. During the GSP he was surrounded by some of Kentucky's best and brightest, and made lifelong friends while learning about psychology and a great deal about himself. During the spring of his second year at Western Kentucky University, Hayden applied for and was awarded a UK Summer Institute award from the

US-UK Fulbright Commission. Over the course of four weeks, Hayden was able to study issues related to climate change and international relations through the International Summer School at the University of Exeter in Devonshire, England. During these four weeks Hayden was able to meet people from all over the globe and developed a strong desire to travel the world. Hayden is approaching fluency in French and speaks some Spanish.

Jessica Hernandez

Jessica is a junior at Howard University from New Orleans, Louisiana. At Howard she studies Political Science and English Literature. Throughout her collegiate career, Jessica has served as a member of the National Council of Negro Women – Howard Chapter, and as the Editor-in- Chief of the Howard University yearbook. Jessica has had the opportunity to work in different areas of law including the New Orleans Public Defenders office, the District of Columbia Public Housing Authority, and as a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Emerging Leaders Scholar in the congressional office of Congressman Gregory Meeks.





Sabrina Newton

Sabrina was raised in Bridgetown, Barbados and is a rising senior at Howard University where she is studying Political Science. She currently serves as a Research Assistant in the Congressional Black Caucus' Center for Policy Analysis and Research. Sabrina has spent the past year as a foreign and domestic policy intern for Congresswoman Yvette Clark and has also co-founded Howard University's inaugural chapter of the United Nations Association. Sabrina formerly worked as a Human Rights Law Intern to the Regional Director of the Ministry of Justice in Ghana during summer of 2017, dealing primarily with appeals and cases of Human rights violations such as lynching and hate crimes. She also serves as a Global Health Policy advocate at the United Nations Foundation's "Nothing but Nets"

initiative which educates lawmakers and members of society on the risks and contraction rates of Malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further, Ms. Newton has served as a political columnist to the Hilltop Newspaper as well as an Intersectionality Researcher for the Women and Gender Studies Collective, conducting research on the role that traditional ideologies play in contemporary gender oppression.

Lindsey O'Neal

As a 2018 Rangel Scholar, Lindsey O'Neal will set foot in Washington, D.C. for the first time. From a young age, Lindsey knew she wanted to make a positive change in the world. She spent her high school and college years serving those in need of help. She currently studies Political Science at West Texas A&M University and will graduate at the end of the year. She has been motivated by studying world cultures, history, language, policy, and politics. Her devotion to international affairs has finally found a home with the Charles B. Rangel Summer Enrichment Program. She's delighted to be given the opportunity to learn about the abundance of career opportunities in diplomacy and Foreign Service. While graduate school is still on her radar, she believes this summer program will allow her to network with potential employers so that one day she can land her dream job.





Omar Pimentel Marte

Omar was born in Fort Hood, Texas into a military family. After his father retired from the U.S. Army when Omar was eight, his family moved to the Dominican Republic to immerse themselves in their Dominican heritage. Omar is a senior studying Political Science and Economics at Florida State University (FSU). He currently serves as Student Body Treasurer and Founding President of the United Nations Association of Florida State University (UNA-FSU). His passion for politics and international affairs began through participation in his high school's Model United Nations, but grew tenfold as he traveled around the Dominican Republic and abroad debating controversial international issues from different perspectives. While abroad, Omar has evaluated the current situation in the Middle East with members of the Israeli Knesset and generals of the Israeli Defense Force in Tel-Aviv, debated

the meaning of secularist policies with leaders from the three major religions in Jerusalem, and discussed post-revolution Egyptian policy with President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in the Sinai Peninsula. Based on these experiences, Omar hopes to serve in an international capacity, representing the United States abroad to multinational organizations.

Amica Rapadas

Amica is a junior at The University of Alabama studying international studies and Chinese. Moving from the Philippines to the U.S. at an early age, she has grown up interested in how countries relate to one another. As a 2017 NSEP David L. Boren Scholar, she studied abroad in China for a full year in order to improve her Mandarin and learn more about Chinese culture and politics. She is a member of the Randall Research Scholars Honors Program and has conducted research in the collection and dissemination of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) data, as well as, language learning pedagogy. Amica founded a Chinese Culture Club on campus in order to bridge better connections between Chinese international students and domestic students on campus. She is also an active member of the International Relations Club and Model UN.





Deven Richardson

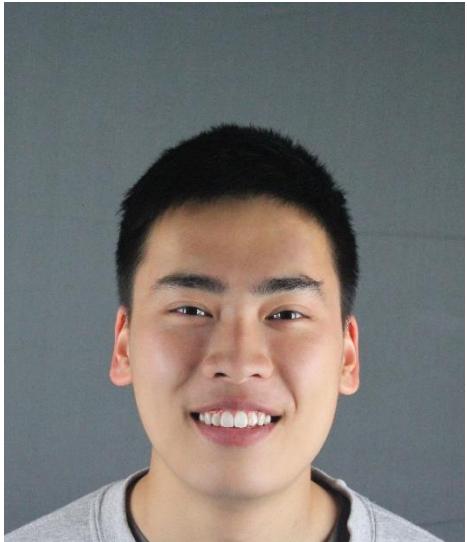
Deven is a junior in the Honors College at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. He is pursuing a degree in Political Science and International Relations and studying the Japanese language in his spare time. In Deven's spring semester of 2017, he studied abroad in Osaka, Japan with the help of the Gilman Scholarship. This experience inspired him to pursue a career in the Foreign Service. He is honored to be selected for this program and excited to meet the other scholars who will be sharing this experience with him.

Christian Solano Osorio

Christian grew up in "estrato dos," which is one level below middle class in Colombia. In this environment, he faced the harsh reality that abides in many third world countries of crime, death, poverty, and scarcity. Without a father, Christian relied on his mother's strength and obligations to sustain them both.

Concerned with the dangers of gangs and drugs, his mother enrolled him in military school to cement a strong disciplinary base when she was not present to do it. Such decision proved to be incredibly rewarding for Christian and would go on to shape his character while also bestowing a sense of duty and resilience. As an only child, and because of his mother's arduous responsibilities, Christian spent most of his time alone; nevertheless, he found refuge and comfort in his studies and learning about the world – pushing him fervently towards academics. For Christian, history, literature, and languages were part of a wish to explore places and histories beyond Colombia and beyond borders. In time, those desires became realities when he migrated to the United States at the age of ten with his mother. Today, Christian attends UC Berkeley, double-majoring in History and International Relations. He has participated in various clubs and organizations dedicated to voicing prejudice and inequality around the globe. In addition, Christian has had the opportunity to study and intern abroad in Germany, Italy, and Spain, reaching those horizons that were once only dreams.





Victor Yau

Victor is an Asian-Canadian, naturalized American citizen who grew up in the racially and ethnically diverse cities of Dallas and Houston. His upbringing in a Hong Kongese-Cantonese trilingual family required him to regularly negotiate between the Chinese languages and Asian culture he experienced at home and the English and Texan-American cultures he encountered everywhere else. As a teenager, he discovered and used b-boying, a 1970s hip-hop dance practiced by underserved minority American youth escaping drugs and gang violence, to recover from a childhood of domestic violence and depression and pursue personal growth. As a college student, Victor was inspired by hip-hop's message of youth empowerment through nonviolent artistic expression to serve as an ambassador of

American youth culture in Asia as a Critical Language and Boren Scholar. In addition to achieving advanced proficiency in Mandarin and Korean, he taught dance classes, hosted educational performances, and facilitated collaborative exchanges and fundraising projects among hip-hop communities in Texas and Asia. Connecting international youth via hip-hop helped him realize his passion for representing and serving youth as a cultural diplomat—specifically, at-risk young people who turn to gangs, radical ideology, and other activities to cope with personal insecurities and social prejudice.