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Dear Friends,

As we reflect on 2019, we want to thank all of our alumni and supporters for their continued investment and interest in SPGS.

This year the school launched a [cybersecurity concentration](#) as part of the online Master of Arts Degree in Global Security. In 2020, SPGS looks to continue to add graduate programs including a Political Psychology M.A. and a Master's program in [Washington D.C. partnered with the McCain Institute](#).

In the spring, SPGS hosted Stephen Ansolabehere, from Harvard University, for our [annual Pi Sigma Alpha Kramer Lecture](#). Events like these are made possible by an endowment from alumnus Victor Kramer who studied Political Science at ASU from 1958 to 1961.

The school also continued to advance women in politics research. This spring the [Women in Politics working group hosted the Kopf Conference](#) "Diversity in the Judiciary: Does it Matter for Democratic Inclusion, Representation or Inequalities?" where judicial scholars from all over the country attended and presented their work.

On the undergraduate side, the school hosted a daylong, nonpartisan training — [called Elect Her](#) — for women looking to run for student government and political office. The event included a panel of Arizona female elected officials including ASU Political Science [alumna Alexa Scholl](#) who is on the Prescott City Council.



For two years in a row, a faculty member within SPGS has been awarded the Adaljiza Sosa-Riddell Mentor Award from the American Political Science Association. This year the award went to [Narayani Lasala-Blanco thanks to her work in mentoring Latina/o graduate students.](#)

We hope you keep in touch with SPGS and let us know what you are up to.

Sincerely,
Dr. Cameron G. Thies
Director of the School of Politics and Global Studies

School Director Reflection

Professor Cameron Thies will be stepping down as Director of the School of Politics and Global Studies and will rejoin the faculty as a professor of International Relations. Here are a few highlights of his activities during his seven-year tenure as Director.

After joining the school in 2013, Dr. Thies focused on advancing faculty research through the development of [interdisciplinary working groups](#). These groups have financial support, including a conference series made possible by an estate gift from [Brian A. Kopf](#). The school has also funded faculty participation in national surveys and hosted a variety of association-based conferences. Dr. Thies also created incentives to increase externally funded research. He also provided the resources to establish the school's [Experimental Lab](#), which is used by students and faculty. The school's first two centers were also established during his tenure.

At the undergraduate level, Dr. Thies took the Global Studies degree online, and worked with Economics to create the Politics and the Economy degree, in addition to the creation of a number of certificate programs. In 2015, he established the [Director's Scholarship for deserving SPGS undergraduates](#), and in 2019 a scholarship for students to attend the McCain Institute Policy Design Studio and Internship program in DC. He also created the [Victor Kramer lecture series](#) drawing upon an estate gift that brings academics with a public profile to lecture to the

school and the public and meet with undergraduates in Pi Sigma Alpha.

At the graduate level, Dr. Thies has fostered the development of three new graduate programs, including the [M.A. in Global Security](#), the M.A. in International Affairs and Leadership with the McCain Institute, and the M.A. in Political Psychology. He has also directed school resources to improve the competitiveness of the Ph.D. program, including the creation of the [Stephen G. Walker Graduate Support Endowment Fund](#).

Dr. Thies also concentrated on reengaging our alumni. He formed the school's [Alumni Advisory Board](#) and launched a yearly [Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series](#). He also reestablished the annual newsletter.

As Dr. Thies steps down, he is proud of the strong faculty and staff we have recruited and retained, as well as the growth in the quantity and quality of undergraduate and graduate students in our many degree programs.



[Mia Armstrong](#), Global Studies alumna, won the prestigious honor of accompanying New York Times Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Nicholas Kristof on a reporting trip this year to cover global poverty and social justice issues.

[Matthew Jernstedt](#), Political Science alumnus, won the prestigious Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship which is a program that funds graduate school for



students preparing to enter the U.S. Foreign Service.



Shaandiin Parrish, Political Science alumna, became Miss Navajo Nation in 2019. She will spend a year visiting over 27,000 square miles of tribal land serving as a goodwill ambassador, promoting community health, economic development and other initiatives.



Elaissia Sears, Global Studies alumna, was elected as justice of the peace for the West Mesa Justice Court becoming the youngest person elected into state office in the 2018 election, and one of just three African American women in Arizona history to hold the position.

Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series

Sarah Allen Gershon, who graduated from ASU with a Ph.D. in Political Science in 2008, was this year's Distinguished Alumni Speaker for the School of Politics and Global Studies. Each year the school honors an outstanding alumnus for their accomplishments by inviting them back to ASU to speak with faculty and students.



"I'm super excited to be here," Gershon shared. "The people within this department just gave me so much support and guidance when I was here and have continued to support me throughout the course of my career."

An Associate Professor at Georgia State University, Gershon's field of research is American political behavior, where she focuses on women and racial/ethnic minorities.

"Sarah and I are working together on exciting research exploring how people's emotional reactions influence their understanding of political

communication," said Dr. Kim Fridkin, Foundation Professor at ASU. "It is extremely rewarding to have witnessed Sarah's transformation from a first-year graduate student in my research methods seminar to a first-rate scholar with an impressive record in scholarship, teaching and administration."

While back in Tempe, Gershon gave a colloquium to faculty and students titled "Shared Identities: The Intersection of Race and Gender and Support for Political Candidates".

"More than anything I'm grateful that I'm a part of this community and I'm grateful that I get to come back and see all of them. It's a wonderful thing to be here."

International Affairs and Leadership, M.A.

The School of Politics and Global Studies has partnered with the McCain Institute to develop a new Master of Arts degree that will be offered in Washington D.C.

The M.A. in International Affairs and Leadership establishes a dynamic and active learning environment led by senior international affairs professionals from the public and private sectors. Drawing on the legacy of values-driven leadership embodied by Senator John McCain, the McCain Institute's access and connectivity in the international community and ASU's extensive academic capacity provide students a distinctive edge to succeed in the full spectrum of international affairs professions.



The program will prepare graduates for the complex international environment through extensive exposure to topics such as character-driven leadership, national security, human rights, foreign policy, and global economics.

The Master of Arts in International Affairs and Leadership has a planned launch date of spring 2020. Stay up to date on the M.A. in International Affairs and Leadership on the SPGS and McCain Institute [websites](#). The application deadline for the spring 2020 semester is January 5th.



Many of the programs and initiatives at the School of Politics and Global Studies would not be possible without the generous gifts we receive from our alumni and donors.

With your help we are able to provide funding for students wishing to pursue their research interests, participate in study abroad, [travel to Washington D.C. for an internship](#), or even help relieve some of the financial stress that students face.

As a school, we aim to help each student reach their full potential and we ask that you join us in this endeavor by contributing whatever you can.

Donations also go towards elevating the academic enterprise. Through initiatives such as the [Stephen G. Walker Graduate Support Endowment Fund](#), future generations of graduate students will receive support to attend conferences, receive additional professional development and training opportunities, and conduct dissertation fieldwork, among other activities.

We truly appreciate every contribution and invite you to come to our school and see how your investment today is helping us invest in the leaders of tomorrow.

For more information or to give now, go to spgs.asu.edu/alumni

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