

Director's Column *by Suzuko Mousel Knott*

BLAUSTEIN HAS GONE QUIET. It's that time of year again. Self-scheduled exams have just wrapped up and senior grades have been submitted. Our graduating CISLA scholars are enjoying quick trips to Harkness Memorial State Park for dips in the ocean, meeting up at Michael's Dairy for some ice cream, and, of course, going to Boston for the senior cruise. It is that wonderful moment when the work is turned in and the seniors are waiting for commencement. They are enjoying a much deserved break and are slowly letting the reality of their next steps sink in. In these quiet moments, we reflect on the year that has been and imagine what the next academic year will bring.

We in CISLA cannot believe that we are saying goodbye to a truly outstanding group of CISLA scholars. Among the graduating, class six students successfully completed Honors Theses for their Senior Integrative Project (SIP), which is a recent record for the center. The seniors received 21 college honors and awards, including the Claire Gaudiani '66 Prize for best SIP in the centers earned by Jenifer N. Alvarado Rivadeneira with her highly interdisciplinary Honors Thesis titled "Civil Disillusionment: Citizens' Perceptions of Governance in Guayaquil." A triple major in Sociology, Latin American and Latino Studies, and English, Jenifer used a mixed methodology approach based on quantitative and qualitative survey data along with interpretations of street art to assess the levels of distrust and disillusionment that Ecuadorians in Guayaquil express regarding their government and their rights. SIP topics among the graduating class ranged from intergenerational trauma in the families of Hiroshima survivors to decolonizing health care practices in Madagascar to gentrification in Neuköln, Berlin.

This year, CISLA engaged in deep reflection by preparing a self-study report and completing an external review. The external review committee was composed of experts in the field of global experiential learning and provided robust and positive feedback on the work CISLA does to support student learning both on and off campus. We are currently in the process of reviewing and integrating recommended changes to the center and its curriculum in order to continue to provide high-impact learning for CISLA scholars that promotes intercultural competency, international pre-professional development, and independent research in sustainable models for the future. We are energized by this generative intellectual and strategic long-term work. Stay tuned for exciting changes ahead!



FACULTY DIRECTOR SUZUKO MOUSEL KNOTT SPEAKING AT THE ALL-COLLEGE SYMPOSIUM

A Note from the Associate Faculty Director *by Emily Kuder*



ASSOCIATE FACULTY DIRECTOR EMILY KUDER (LEFT) WITH CISLA SENIOR EISHA GIRAN (RIGHT)

MANY STUDENTS CONSIDER EMBARKING on the CISLA adventure because they want to study away. Others think that CISLA is the path towards a degree in International Relations. Then, those students attend a CISLA information session and realize that CISLA is neither of those things... So, what IS the experience all about, anyway?!

The question is simple to answer, yet also complex. CISLA offers students a path towards an international internship or globally-focused national internship that is connected to language study and a Senior Integrative Project (SIP); however, each student's journey varies considerably, which makes the CISLA "product" nuanced. As Associate Director, I have the joy of guiding CISLA scholars through the particularly nebulous junior year, when the future is yet to be determined. Doubt comes in: Will I ever secure an internship? Will I like living abroad? Will I advance my language skills? What will my SIP data look like? Who will agree to be my faculty advisor?

CISLA scholars are uniquely situated to handle this uncertainty. How do I know? Because CISLA scholars are language learners, and we know through decades of research that successful language learners possess a heightened tolerance for ambiguity. Language, just like the humanity it reflects, is full of ambiguities: shades of meaning, normalized errors, multiple ways of saying things correctly, forms that constantly evolve and change through time... and I am the Sherpa on their mission to an imagined summit.

The concept of research also brings mystery. Research is not one thing, and in that way, it is art. This semester, CISLA senior Eli Craddock asked me to help him understand what a literature review is. He said that he had read many examples of literature reviews in his courses, but that they always seemed to be different. I, of course, had to admit to Eli that there is not one answer to his question, but that each researcher forges their own path, weaving prior knowledge from previous studies with their own viewpoints, analyses, and frameworks. Eli, like a successful language learner, accepted the ambiguity of research and dove head first into his own unique exploration.

Few can visualize from the jump how they will be influenced by the physical journey of an internship and the intellectual journey of learning a new language and creating original research, but it is the willingness to take the risk and confront the curiosity and excitement that lie in the unknown that sets CISLA scholars apart from others.

Social Media Update

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED that we recently bid farewell to our CISLA Facebook page. We would love to stay connected through our other social media platforms!



INSTAGRAM



LINKEDIN

Spotted on Campus!



CISLA SENIORS ELI CRADDOCK AND KAI GEE WORKING AT COFFEE GROUNDS DURING OUR POST SYMPOSIUM "DE-STRESS" EVENT

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Student Advisory Board
Samuel Bailey '27
Sylvia Brofka-Berends '27
Catie Clarke '26
Katherine Connor '27
Eli Craddock '26
Morgan Hann '28
Sindy Medina '28
Anna Olivia Nielsen '26
(co-chair)
Amalia Schillinger '28
Ty Schoeningh '28
Brennan Thomson '27
(co-chair)

Selection Committee
Sana Abdi Dalton
Joseph Alchermes
Nakia Hamlett
Andrew Levin
Suzuko Mousel Knott
Emily Kuder
Sadia Priyanka

IS 201

Guest Lecturers
Denis Ferhatovic
Eric Fleury
Katherine Kwong
Ervin Malakaj
Sufia Uddin

IS 302

Guest Lecturers
MaryAnne Borrelli
Laxman Timilsina
Audrey Zakriski

Fellows Initiatives

by Jenifer N. Alvarado Rivadeneira '26, Sylvia Brofka-Berends '27, Dulguun Damdinbayar '27, Hope Kisakye '26, and Sean Melvin '27



CISLA FELLOWS (FROM LEFT) HOPE KISAKYE '26, JENIFER N. ALVARADO RIVADENEIRA '26, AND DULGUUN DAMDINBAYAR '27

THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR started in full swing! As fellows, our role is to bridge the student experience with the everyday in-office operations, and to create a welcoming environment for all who pass through our cozy office (rumored to be the best center office on campus). We take pride in the knowledge we have as scholars and fellows, and are grateful to contribute to the student experience in the CISLA program!

This past fall saw a lot of great events make their way onto our calendars. We started with a paint-and-sip night where our scholars relaxed and got creative. We welcomed the CISLA class of 2028 at a welcome event in Coffee Grounds featuring letters to their future selves and a fun game of CISLA bingo. We celebrated our seniors' All-College Symposium presentations with a de-stress open tab. We even had the pleasure of interviewing this year's CISLA Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, Katherine Docampo '06.

While spring started off on a cold note, the CISLA office kept warm as juniors met with fellows and CISLA staff to finalize their internship plans. One of the most anticipated events, our Center Social, brought together scholars from CISLA, the Goodwin Niering Center for the Environment, Holleran Center's Program in Community Action (PICA), and the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE). This was the first time that we came together as Center students, and we learned a lot about what our center siblings do! Both semesters, we offered scholars the opportunity to take professional headshots, which you might see on our LinkedIn profiles.

Perhaps one of the most fun aspects of our jobs is our CISLA Instagram. From language learning hacks to internship spotlights and fun Q&As with our scholars and staff, we have an amazing time putting together content for our broader CISLA community. Make sure to check it out (@conncollcisla)!

Student Advisory Board Updates

THE CISLA STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD (SAB) serves to promote the goals and mission of CISLA while acting as a liaison between the students, fellows, faculty, and staff. This year, the SAB welcomed four new members from the class of 2028: Amalia Schillinger, Morgan Hann, Sindy Medina, and Ty Schoeningh. Under the leadership of co-chairs Anna Olivia Nielsen '26 and Brennan Thomson '27, the SAB held regular meetings in collaboration with CISLA staff. These meetings served as a platform to provide suggestions for the CISLA courses IS 201, IS 301-2, and IS 401, and to brainstorm ideas related to CISLA programming throughout the academic year.



OUR NEWEST SAB MEMBERS FROM THE CLASS OF 2028 (FROM LEFT): SINDY MEDINA, MORGAN HANN, TY SCHOENINGH, AND AMALIA SCHILLINGER

In the fall 2025 semester, SAB members took part in the center's external review through interviews with independent third-party representatives to aid in the process of providing feedback regarding CISLA's curriculum, recruitment, and programming. Amidst the center's search for a new Director of Operations, SAB members got the opportunity to meet with potential candidates. To help welcome the new CISLA class of '28, SAB members helped put together a welcome event at Coffee Grounds, where cohort members of all class years had the chance to mingle and participate in an exciting international bingo game organized by the CISLA fellows. Furthermore, SAB members readily joined in on the center's annual sophomore trips to help mentor and bond with the incoming class, which included the retreat at Camp Hazen YMCA and the trip to United Nations Headquarters in New York City. SAB members additionally helped promote CISLA to prospective scholars in various first-year information sessions and events alongside other college centers. The SAB ended the year by helping to organize the annual CISLA Senior Dinner, where scholars reflected on their time in the program, geared up for graduation, and were awarded some light-hearted superlatives to conclude the evening.

Alumni Panel

WE WERE LUCKY TO HAVE three incredible CISLA alumni join us in October for a panel discussion on navigating success after graduation. Drawing from their diverse academic and professional backgrounds, Ege Sakirt '19, who has been volunteering, working, and exploring Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia since 2023, Justin Winokur '18, Ernest May Fellow in History and Policy at Harvard Kennedy School and PhD candidate at the University of Virginia, and Liz Lewis '18, attorney at the NYC office of Freshfields LLP, offered a wealth of advice and ideas for our current scholars. It was incredibly rewarding to learn more about their time in CISLA and hear the guidance they have to offer, and in such a close-knit setting. We count ourselves lucky to have such amazing alums! We try to hold this event annually, so please let us know if you are interested in joining us for a future panel.



CISLA ALUMS (FROM LEFT)
LIZ LEWIS, JUSTIN WINOKUR, AND
EGE SAKIRT

All-College Symposium

ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025, all 23 CISLA seniors presented their CISLA journeys and research agendas at the All-College Symposium. This year the students created their own panels in the senior seminar IS 401 and decided collectively on the themes of each panel and its members. Additionally, they chose the faculty members to invite as panel moderators. At the symposium, the students showcased their phenomenal projects in topics ranging from intergenerational trauma in the families of Hiroshima survivors to decolonizing healthcare practices in Madagascar to catastrophe bonds that transfer financial risk from individual companies and governments to the global financial market. As always the student presentations were deeply informative and highly engaging. The newly admitted sophomore CISLA scholars were in attendance and enjoyed post-symposium coffee chats with the seniors to learn more about their research and internships.



CISLA SENIORS (FROM LEFT) GRAY RUFFER,
KAHRON GAUL-BLAKLEY, AND SABRINA
MALEC DURING THEIR CONTEMPORARY
EXPLORATION OF GLOBAL MINORITIES PANEL

All-CISLA Dinner and Distinguished Alumni Award

THE ANNUAL ALL-CISLA DINNER took place in December and we were overjoyed to celebrate this year's Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Katherine Docampo, class of 2006. Many thanks to our CISLA Alumni Advisory Board for helping us to select a recipient for this award, which honors a CISLA graduate for distinguished achievements in their professional field and in the wider world.

During her time at Connecticut College, Katherine Docampo majored in Slavic Studies with a CISLA language of Russian. She interned at The Angel Coalition in Moscow, Russia and completed a Senior Integrative Project titled "From Vixen to Victim: The Sensationalization of Prostitution in Post-Soviet Russia." Since graduating, Katherine has fully leveraged what she learned in both CISLA and the Slavic Studies department to grow her career at the intersection of international relations, communications, and geopolitics. Through her Master's studies at Syracuse University and her first job at Ketchum in New York City, Katherine became a thought leader on the question of Russia's public diplomacy. She subsequently moved to Geneva, Switzerland where she has been a leading expert voice at the World Economic Forum / Davos for over 12 years, and is directly involved in advancing their mission to improve the state of the world and build public-private partnerships to address pressing global issues. Katherine serves as the Head of Business Development in the Geneva hub of Weber Shandwick, a leading global communications agency based in New York City. In this position, Katherine leads the agency's Europe, Middle East, and Africa practice for executive communications and works with a range of Fortune 500 companies on corporate reputation and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Katherine joined us at the All-CISLA Dinner through a fun video Q&A, created in collaboration with our CISLA fellows. The footage was screened for everyone in attendance, which included all three cohorts of scholars, plus faculty friends of CISLA. Great company, lively conversation, and delicious food made for a truly delightful evening.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA KATHERINE DOCAMPO '06
DURING HER VIDEO Q&A AT THE ALL-CISLA DINNER

In January, Katherine virtually visited CISLA's IS 201 gateway course, where she helped introduce our sophomores to thinking about issues from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Topics of discussion included the concept of stakeholder capitalism and observations from the World Economic Forum in Davos. Overall, it was a truly inspiring and eye-opening conversation for our newest class!

CISLA EVENTS



END OF DAY PHOTOGRAPH WITH SMILES

The Sophomore Retreat

THE COLD AND SNOWY WINTER SEASON did not deter our semi-outdoor Sophomore Retreat from happening. Originally scheduled for January 25, 2026 which turned out to be a winter weather blizzard weekend, the retreat instead took place on February 15th. CISLA sophomores, faculty, staff, and CISLA junior and senior leaders returned to Camp Hazen YMCA in Chester, CT, the site of last year's retreat. A mix of short and fun introductory games started the group off then moved into a series of outdoor activities focused on communication, teamwork, facilitation, strategizing together, and organically exchanging and building off each other's ideas to meet the different game objectives. We then gathered inside near a warm fire for lunch, where we sat at several round lunch tables allowing for more casual conversation. The small group, comfortable ambiance of Camp Hazen, participation of the group, opportunity to ask questions, and informal gatherings near the indoor fireplace created an engaging and collaborative off-campus day for the new CISLA scholars. Four CISLA seniors and one CISLA junior volunteered to co-lead the retreat. They readily shared insight on language learning, research, internships in a foreign country, and much more with the sophomores during the afternoon session. The sophomore retreat continues to be a success and is fully integrated into the CISLA experience.

The United Nations Trip

FOUNDED IN 1945 AND CURRENTLY 193 MEMBER STATES, the United Nations (UN) is where the world can congregate. On March 31st, CISLA scholars, faculty, and staff boarded a bus in light drizzle at 6:00 AM to New York City (NYC). Arriving at the UN, the sea of flags waved in sunlight against a blue sky on a beautiful spring day. The group had time to view both exhibitions and a live UN session at the UN Visitor's entrance. Thereafter, a formal tour of the UN included history about the abundant donated artwork, UN trivia, and entry into the Security Council Chamber, which had just recessed. The group had lunch at the UN visitor's cafe and visited the UN giftshops. A great morning at the UN was then duplicated at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) on East 68th Street. This was the first year CISLA visited CFR, a new twist on this annual visit to NYC. A CFR International Affairs Fellow gave a talk on humanitarian affairs and policy, which was then followed by Human Resources speaking about CFR's robust internship program. The group then had some free time on a beautiful spring day to walk on the Upper East Side with some visiting the facade of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, perusing books in Barnes & Nobles, and enjoying the neighborhood shops and bakeries. Everyone was on time for a 5:00 PM dinner of Middle Eastern food in the East 80s. The group then boarded the bus and departed NYC at 7:30 PM, arriving back to campus at 10:00 PM. It was a seamless day brimming with international affairs, international food, and positive engagement of CISLA scholars. The annual trip to the UN continues to serve as an end of academic year catalyst for our sophomores as they move along the CISLA continuum, soon to enter their pivotal junior year.



OUR GROUP AT THE UN VISITORS ENTRANCE



CISLA SCHOLARS ON A GUIDED TOUR INSIDE THE UN

CISLA Alumni Coffee Hour

WE WERE THRILLED TO WELCOME 13 CISLA alums plus family members back to campus for our CISLA Alumni Coffee Hour during the College's Reunion Weekend. This year brought the class years ending in 1s and 6s together with CISLA Faculty Director Suzuko Mousel Knott to reminisce and connect over dessert and coffee. A special treat for all, retired Staff Director Mary Devins joined in the fun and we all enjoyed hearing about CISLA's storied past. Having the opportunity to connect with CISLA alumni and to learn about all of the amazing career and life milestones they've met is a highlight of our year!

Claire Gaudiani '66 Prize Recipient

WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE that CISLA senior Jenifer N. Alvarado Rivadeneira was presented with the 2026 Claire Gaudiani '66 Prize for Excellence in the Senior Integrative Project (SIP) at the College's 108th Commencement on May 17th. Jenifer earned the prize for her Honors Thesis, "Civil Disillusionment: Citizens' Perceptions of Governance in Guayaquil." Congratulations and well-deserved, Jenifer!

Alumni Updates

EACH YEAR WE SEND OUT A SURVEY to gather information for this section of the newsletter. It is our hope to keep updated with the lives and careers of our many alums. The people listed in this section are those that responded to this year's Alumni Updates Google form. Please consider sharing your news with us in the future. On occasion, we can use the information we receive to ask for assistance with an internship, or to pair a current CISLA scholar on study away or on an internship with an alum in another country. It is wonderful to stay in touch!

ELISA ROLLER '93

has built her career at the European Commission, based in Brussels, where she currently serves as a director working on policies that promote prosperity, competitiveness, and the clean transition. Elisa's professional journey has been driven by a strong commitment to public service and European collaboration, allowing her to contribute to shaping initiatives that address key economic and societal challenges. Looking back, the foundation Elisa gained during her CISLA experience has been instrumental in preparing her for this path, and she remains inspired by the role CISLA's alumni community can play in driving meaningful impact across the world.

ALEX THOMPSON '94

is a professor of political science at Ohio State University, following in the footsteps of his Connecticut College mentor, Professor Alex Hybel. Alex's wife, Jennifer Lange '94, runs a residency program for filmmakers at the Wexner Center for the Arts. Their daughters, Lucy and Stella, are continuing the family's liberal arts tradition: Lucy is at Oberlin College and Stella is at Carleton College. If you find yourself in Columbus, look Alex up!

SARAH SCHOELLKOPF '97

embarked on a hugely successful Oscar campaign and traveled all over the world after her documentary, "Norita," went global. In essence, "Norita" began during Sarah's time at Connecticut College and solidified during her CISLA internship, as the film follows the life of activist Nora Cortiñas and her work with the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (the organization where Sarah interned). During Argentina's brutal Videla dictatorship, thousands vanished, including Cortiñas' son. Cortiñas led protests at Plaza de Mayo that helped end the regime and, today, despite family costs, she continues fighting for justice, women's rights, indigenous rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, and the memory of the 30,000 disappeared. Connecticut College screened "Norita" in the spring of 2025 and it was an incredible homecoming.



PHOTOS: THE CLASSES OF '97 AND '98 CAME OUT TO SEE "NORITA" DURING THE FILM SCREENING AT CONNECTICUT COLLEGE, AS DID MARY DEVINS!

DOREEN (VAILLANCOURT) MARONEY '99

is working as Consular Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka, Zambia.

KIM BENDER '00

just started a new role as Executive Director of the Washington, D.C. chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Washington Architectural Foundation after serving 15 years as Executive Director of the Heurich House Museum.

SARAH COOPER '00

returned to the U.S. in September 2025 with her husband, 8-year old son, and Salvadoran cat Felix after nearly a decade living and working overseas in Africa, Central America, and Asia with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



PHOTO: SARAH WITH HER SON, MILES, AND HUSBAND, BRETT, IN THEIR NEW HOME

JULIA (GREENLEAF) PITNEY '00

was nominated by Maine Governor Janet Mills to become a District Court Judge in the fall of 2024. This April, Governor Mills nominated Julia to the Maine Superior Court. She has loved the transition to bench after working for almost 20 years in private practice.

ELENI LAMPADARIOS '00

is finishing up her 16th year teaching history at an independent school in Baltimore. She used her Russian language skills this past March when chaperoning the Russian language immersion program trip to Latvia. It was difficult, but exciting for Eleni to be spending most of her day speaking and listening in Russian. She also developed a new course on the history of the Russian Empire, which felt especially relevant while in Latvia.

JORDANA GUSTAFSON WRIGHT '01

got to experience Connecticut College again over the past four years - this time as a parent! - ending with her stepdaughter's graduation in May of 2025. It was especially fun for Jordana to reconnect with professors and staff, past and present.



PHOTO: JORDANA (RIGHT) WITH STEPDAUGHTER BITSY WRIGHT '25 AT CONN'S 2025 COMMENCEMENT

LAUREN SHADFORD '01

received the American Institute of Conservation's (AIC) Allied Professional Award for outstanding and distinguished contributions to the field of cultural heritage conservation. During the award presentation, Lauren was cited as having fostered cross-disciplinary dialogue and education, as well as elevating underrepresented voices in contemporary art conservation during her work as Executive Director of Voices in Contemporary Art (VoCA).



PHOTO: LAUREN (CENTER) WITH ARTIST AND MOHAWK MEMBER OF THE SIX NATIONS OF THE GRAND RIVER ALAN MICHELSON (LEFT) AND DIRECTOR OF THE GOCHMAN FAMILY COLLECTION LAURA PHIPPS (RIGHT) AT THE VoCA TALK: ALAN MICHELSON EVENT LAST MAY

LINDSEY (MEYER) WERKHOVEN '03

is spending six months traveling this year with her husband and 6- and 11-year old boys. They are starting in Asia, moving on to South Africa, and then will be doing some sailing in the Mediterranean in Italy, Croatia, and Greece.



PHOTOS: (LEFT) KO LANTA, THAILAND; (RIGHT) JOY ELEPHANT SANCTUARY OUTSIDE OF CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

SARAH (JACOBS) FORBES '04

is excited to announce that, after a long gestation, her new book, "Mama Sex: How a Perfect Storm Caused a Revolution," was published in April through Demeter Press in Canada. Sarah is particularly thrilled to be working with Demeter, as the lead publisher of this small academic press, Andrea O'Reilly, is the mother of matricentric feminism. O'Reilly's theoretical framework has deeply inspired Sarah's work.



PHOTO: THE COVER OF "MAMA SEX: HOW A PERFECT STORM CAUSED A REVOLUTION," ALONGSIDE A HEADSHOT OF SARAH

M. GRANT HOGAN '07

started a greeting card business one year ago! He traveled to Malta and Sicily this spring, and recently celebrated one year together with his boyfriend.

ANDRAS MOLNAR '09

completed his Ph.D. at the Graduate School of Foreign Language Education and Research at Kansai University in Japan.



PHOTO: GRADUATION DAY FOR ANDRAS

LAUREL WOLF '14

and her husband, Jon, were thrilled to welcome their son, Malcolm, on Christmas Eve 2024. They are planning a move to Seattle this summer and would love to connect with anyone in the area!



PHOTO: LAUREL AND HER HUSBAND, JON, WITH THEIR SON, MALCOLM

ALEXIS CHENEY '16

moved to D.C. for her role on the "Women, Business and the Law" project at the World Bank Group. She splits her time between D.C. and Vancouver and invites anyone in those places to reach out.

JULIA ENOS '16

started working at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in December, working with Arctic affairs at the Security Policy Department. As part of her portfolio, Julia is working on Sweden's new Arctic policy together with the Swedish Arctic Ambassador.

SOPHIA ANGELE-KUEHN '20

moved to Heidelberg in Germany last October to prepare for the German language exam for university entrance. (Spoiler: She passed!) Sophia plans to start her master's degree in Comparative German Studies at Heidelberg University this fall. She would like to thank Connecticut College's German Department and CISLA, without whose support she would not be where she is today.



PHOTO: SOPHIA STANDING IN FRONT OF THE NECKAR RIVER AND 700-YEAR-OLD HEIDELBERG CASTLE!

HANNAH CAPUCILLI-SHATAN '21

is wrapping up her first year of graduate school in Museum Studies at Syracuse University, where she continues to build on her undergraduate studies of Government, Studio Art, and Italian. This semester, Hannah traveled to Puerto Rico to conduct first-hand research on Caribbean museological practices, with a focus on the preservation and interpretation of books and prints. She also contributed to the preliminary curation of an exhibition on American printmaking, and looks forward to continuing to develop her skills in research and curatorship of prints.



PHOTO: HANNAH DECOMPRESSING AT THE BEACH IN PUERTO RICO

ELIARIS BRITO CASTILLO '25

has started a new job as Associate Director of Community Affairs at Yale University's Office of New Haven Affairs.

MAYA BRUNO '25

is finishing her master's degree in Smart and Sustainable Cities at Trinity College Dublin, excitedly diving deeper into urban sustainability and planning. She has been building strong skills in Geographic Information System (GIS) using ArcGIS Pro and ArcGIS Online, which has really changed how she understands and analyzes cities. This spring, Maya interned with Smart Dublin, working with geospatial datasets to support projects across Dublin City Council. One of the highlights of the year was a week-long class trip to Amsterdam, where they explored sustainable urban systems and gave presentations on different smart city approaches.

Maya is currently working on her dissertation, which looks at adaptive reuse and regeneration in Dublin, focusing on how sustainability and heritage can be balanced in practice. She will be graduating in November 2026 and is exploring job opportunities and planning to stay and work in Dublin!



PHOTO: MAYA AND HER CLASSMATES OUTSIDE TRINITY COLLEGE

CORINNE ROBBINS '25

has almost reached six months with her first job since graduating. She is a Constituent Services Representative for the Mayor of Providence. Corinne has been able to learn a lot about local government and spend time directly serving the residents of Providence.

Student Research Travel Grants

THROUGH DEDICATED CISLA DONORS, our center continued its annual student research travel grant program for CISLA scholars to further enhance their learning and complete research for their Senior Integrative Projects (SIP). Seven of our seniors were awarded travel grants:

Eisha Giran further built research skills and navigated institutional spaces while conducting interviews in Spanish with researchers in sociology, psychology, neuroscience, and social work at the University of Granada's Institute for Migration Research in Spain. This primary data is included in her SIP.

Tandin Johnson Ward returned to Germany to continue research, conversations, and observation on the use of public spaces as sites of protest in Kreuzberg, Berlin. Tandin's junior year internship organization welcomed her back and provided her with further contacts and information for her research.

Leah Mayerhauser attended the 2025 Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference (ASEEES) in Washington, D.C., where she attended specific sessions and interacted with speakers and participants particularly on Georgia, her country of research.

Anna Olivia Nielsen received an invitation to present her thesis research in the form of a poster at the Cambridge Undergraduate Conference in German Studies 2026 at Cambridge University in the UK.

Stephanie Reyes Bravo conducted interviews and distributed surveys at an organization in Mexico City, and used the resulting data and information in her Honors Thesis. She created new connections to further discuss her research with now that her thesis is complete.

Gray Ruffer also attended ASEEES, benefiting from thematic panels relevant to his Honors Thesis and expanding his network in the Baltic states and plans for post-graduation studies.

Caelan Stewart returned to Morocco where her internship organization connected her to a youth development organization which she interacted with throughout her stay. The information and insights gained are presented as a case study in her SIP, balancing out the theoretical literature.

CISLA Honors & Awards

ATTENDING THE COLLEGE'S annual Honors & Awards ceremony and watching CISLA scholars from across all three cohorts receive recognition for their wonderful engagement and outstanding scholarship is always a moment of absolute pride. This year, the following CISLA scholars were honored by their respective departments at the ceremony. Of particular note, the CISLA Award for Distinction in the Program was presented to seniors Jenifer N. Alvarado Rivadeneira, Caleb Butler, Hope Kisakye, and Anna Olivia Nielsen. Our newly established CISLA Service Award was conferred to seniors Eli Craddock and Gray Ruffer for their dedication to the program and contributions that have made a lasting impact on the CISLA community.

Jenifer N. Alvarado Rivadeneira '26 *Claire Gaudiani '66 Prize; CISLA Award for Distinction in the Program; Dean of Students' Robert Hampton Award; Hispanic Studies' Antonio Rebolledo Memorial Prize*

Catie Baker '28 *Excellence in Environmental Studies Award*

Delaney Brenner '26 *Phi Beta Kappa; ACS Division of Biochemistry & Chemical Biology Undergraduate Award; French and Francophone Studies' Esther C. Cary Prize*

Caleb Butler '26 *Phi Beta Kappa; CISLA Award for Distinction in the Program; Department of Classics, Arabic & Jewish Studies' Dirk Tom Dieck Held Memorial Award; Division of Retention and Success' Harold D. Juli Memorial Award for Student Research; Theater's Morris Carnovsky Award*

Eli Craddock '26 *CISLA Service Award; Walter Commons Distinguished Fellow Award*

Dixie Dayton '26 *East Asian Languages & Cultures' Prize*

Anika Ekra '27 *Studio Art's Salvatore Stephen Figliomeni '82 Memorial Art Award*

Natalie Fear '28 *French Language Prize*

Tandin Johnson Ward '26 *Outstanding Major in German Studies*

Hope Kisakye '26 *Architectural Studies Award; CISLA Award for Distinction in the Program; Office of the Dean of the College Student Employee Award; Hispanic Studies Book Prize*

Sabrina Malec '26 *Anthropology's Claire Garber Goodman '54 Award; East Asian Languages and Cultures' Prize for Best Chinese Essay Writing*

Nutsa Mamulaishvili '27 *Chemistry's Dr. Joseph Nunes Pereira Memorial Prize*

Eliza McCoole '26 *East Asian Languages and Cultures' Prize for Best Chinese Essay Writing*

Sindy Medina '28 *Sociology's Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy Memorial Award*

Edona Nezaq '27 *ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry Award*

Anna Olivia Nielsen '26 *CISLA Award for Distinction in the Program; German Department Prize*

Roman Perrotto '26 *Psychology's Bernard I. Murstein Award; Psychology's Otello Desiderato Fellowship for Student-Faculty Collaborative Research*

Ekaterina Petrichenko '27 *Government & International Relations Department Prize; Italian Department Prize*

Stephanie Reyes Bravo '26 *Hispanic Studies' Doris Meyer Scholarship & Service Award*

Gray Ruffer '26 *Phi Beta Kappa; CISLA Service Award; Slavic Studies Award*

Steven Saccoccio '28 *The Robley Evans Award for an Outstanding Sophomore English Major*

Matthew Sharretts '26 *Outstanding Minor in German Studies*

Harrison Sklaver '28 *Slavic Studies' Vladimir Papov Prize*

Grace Sousa '28 *Psychology's John R. Mackinnon Prize*

Julia Zay '28 *Slavic Studies Award*

Congratulations, CISLA Class of 2026!



FACULTY DIRECTOR SUZUKO MOUSEL KNOTT AND ASSOCIATE FACULTY DIRECTOR EMILY KUDER WITH THE CISLA CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES ON THE STEPS OF HARKNESS CHAPEL AFTER THE CERTIFICATE CEREMONY ON MAY 16, 2026

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