

Reflections on the 2002 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute

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In addition to commemorating the anniversary of America's independence from British rule, July 4th of this year also marked the conclusion of the 2002 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI), an intensive five-week program for political science undergraduates from underrepresented minority groups.

Founded in 1986, one of the key objectives of the RBSI is to encourage talented minority students to explore the opportunities associated with obtaining an advanced degree in political science. Unfortunately, many undergraduate political science students, and minority students in particular, are unaware of what it is that political scientists do and what political science as a discipline is about. Most of the participants in the Institute come to the program intending to attend law school upon graduating from college. Fortunately for me (and perhaps law schools too), RBSI served its purpose and helped me to realize that graduate school in political science is where I belong.

To give the students a feel for political science and graduate school, the participants in RBSI take two graduate level courses (one in Race and American politics and the other in Research Methods), work on an original political science research

project, and attend a series of presentations by some of the most prominent scholars in the discipline. As an added bonus, RBSI the students also participate in a recruitment fair with over 30 political science graduate programs in attendance, and benefit from taking a mock GRE and receiving test-taking tips from Kaplan. By the end of the program, the students

different from the "Bunchees" of some of the previous years. Whereas last year's class of students found plenty of time for "fame and fun", as my colleague and fellow RBSI teaching assistant J. Alan Kendrick observed, the Bunchees of 2002 began the program with such intensity that they cancelled their planned trip to one of North Carolina's

beautiful ocean beaches in order to devote more time to their work. The hard work and dedication of the students culminated in the successful completion of a scholarly research project and also paid off in the networking opportunities and relationships developed with political science faculty and graduate students from Duke, the University of Chicago, and Emory University, among many other places.

The 2002 Ralph Bunche Summer Institute participants cited

institutions such as University of Michigan, Yale, Columbia, and Texas A&M, among many others, as schools that they plan to apply to for graduate training. Like RBSI participants of previous years, I have no doubt that many of them will be accepted to these top schools and do quite well. Consequently, the future of political science as a discipline is in for quite a treat. I feel honored and privileged to be a part of it.



2002 Bunche students participating in the Annual Meeting poster session, from left, Gisela De Santiago, Maria Elena Guadamuz, Patrice Howard, Marvin Addison, Naomi Dunson, and Indira Henard.

have had a realistic simulation of the graduate school experience, in addition to acquiring valuable information to give them an edge in the application process. Many of the 2002 participants took full advantage of this opportunity and, as a result of their experience, plan to pursue an advanced degree in political science.

Though just as intelligent and capable, the Summer Institute participants of 2002 were a bit

2002-2003 APSA Minority Fellows Named

In recognition of their outstanding academic and personal achievements, APSA named five fellows with stipends and four without stipends for the 2002-2003 academic year. Awards are based on students' undergraduate course work, GPA, extracurricular activities, and recommendations from faculty. The program designated five fellows with stipends \$4,000 fellowships that will be allocated in two \$2,000 payments at the end of each academic year. The Association also recognized an additional four outstanding students who do not receive funding; these students were recom-

mended for admission and financial support to every graduate political science program in the country. This year all fellows were accepted to graduate programs in political science.

Fellows with stipends

African Americans

Ronald L. Jackson, *U. of New Orleans*
Shannon R. Sinegal, *U. of New Orleans*
Kahreen C. Tebeau, *Yale University*

Latinos

Christina Bejarano, *University of Iowa*
Brenda Carpio, *U. of California, Irvine*

Fellows without stipend

African Americans

Adam G. Dickinson, *East Tennessee State University*
Chinwe Madubbuike, *London School of Economics*
Gladys Mitchell, *University of Chicago*
Ronald Vanderpool, *Ohio State University*

The APSA established the Minority Fellows Program in an effort to increase the number of minority Ph.D.s in political science. To find out more visit the APSA web site or email minority@apsanet.org.