

TOWSON UNIVERSITY ALUMNI SPEAKERS AND LEADERS

MR. TOM DOWLING (Keynote Speaker)

Tom Dowling is an economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the Western Hemisphere Department. He has worked at the IMF for 13 years on projects and programs for countries including the United States, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Barbados, Denmark, and Sweden. His areas of research include forecasting, financial intermediation, international trade, and poverty and inequality. Prior to working at the IMF, he worked at the World Bank on international trade issues and at Sage Policy Group in Baltimore. He completed his undergraduate studies at Towson University, majoring in Political Science and Economics, and his graduate work at George Washington.

MR. AUSTIN BENNETT (communications, Environment Committee)

An alumni of Towson University, Mr. Bennett received his Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences with a minor in Political Science in 2020. While at TU, he pursued undergraduate research and presented his work on the UN Environment Program at regional and local undergraduate research conferences and volunteered for the TU-BCPS Model UN. He is starting a Master's degree in Norway for Risk Analysis and Governance.

MR. TIM BYNION (General Assembly pod leader; Chair, Anti-Corruption Committee; Graduate School Career Interest session)

Mr. Bynion is a PhD student in Political Science at George Mason University, focusing on American Government and International Relations. He graduated from Towson University in 2018 with a B.S. in Political Science. A member of the TU Honors College, Mr. Bynion wrote an undergraduate honors thesis on U.S. foreign policy, presented his work at national and regional undergraduate research conferences, won an Undergraduate Research Impact award, was Vice President of the Undergraduate Research Club, and was on the editorial board of the *Towson Journal of International Affairs*. His current research interests are the domestic sources of American foreign policy, specifically issues of national identity and public opinion.



MS. LAUREN CAHALAN (Chair, Economic and Social Committee; Business career interest session)

Ms. Cahalan is an Investigative Equity Research Analyst at Brown Advisory in Baltimore. She focuses on utilizing fieldwork and network driven research to provide in-depth analysis on existing and potential portfolio companies. While working full time, Lauren is currently pursuing her MBA at Georgetown's McDonough School of Business. She earned concurrent degrees at Towson University with a BS in Economics and an BS Political Science and completed an Honors thesis in Economics. While at TU, Lauren was a member of the Honors College, Founder and President of the Undergraduate Research Club, a research assistant for Dr. Seth Gitter, captain of the gymnastics team, and Honors College Commencement Speaker. She also won an Undergraduate Research Impact grant for her thesis work.



MR. NOEL DASS (General Assembly pod leader)

Mr. Dass, TU Class of 2004, enjoyed an adventurous career in humanitarian aid and development for over 10 years addressing issues such as Gender Based Violence amongst refugees and inter-agency humanitarian cooperation among others. He has experience volunteering and working in a range of contexts including Kenya, Pakistan, Malaysia and neighbouring countries in South East Asia over the course of his career. He is currently on hiatus from humanitarian work and pursuing a Masters in Geography, Urban and Environmental Studies at Concordia University in Montréal.

MS. STEPHANIE DUDEK (General Assembly pod leader: State Dept Career Interest session)

Ms. Dudek graduated from Towson University with honors with a degree in Political Science and a minor in International Studies. During her time at TU, she served as editor of the *Towson Journal of International Affairs*, a very demanding job in terms of time, skills, and patience, was the president of the Political Science honor society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and studied Chinese. She also completed an advanced undergraduate project on human trafficking in Europe and received grants to present her work at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Ms. Dudek completed her graduate work at the Johns Hopkins' School of Advanced and International Studies (SAIS) and the University of Delaware. She also went on to pursue an MBA in Global Business, with a focus on management in the government. She was an intern and later Foreign Affairs Officer at the State Department Office of the Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, where she focused on trafficking in persons and managed the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from national and sub-national governments to promote open government, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. She now resides in Baltimore County, where she owns two small businesses.



MS. KAYLA ELSON (General Assembly pod leader; Chair, Refugees Committee; Non-profit Career Interest session)

As an Associate, Kayla Elson leads the Planning & Development Practice at Justice and Sustainability Associates (JSA). As a facilitator-mediator at JSA, she directs community engagement and consensus-building processes to engage stakeholders in the visioning, planning, and development of their neighborhoods. She also designs training programs related to equitable development for a variety of audiences. Her recent work has expanded into advancing racial equity and inclusion in organizations and cities on the East Coast. Her experience as an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) professional began with service as an AmeriCorps member for Community Mediation Maryland. Ms. Elson partnered with Baltimore City schools providing mediation services and teaching conflict management skills to students. She continued to promote collaborative problem-solving in Washington DC as a founding board member of Community Mediation DC. She has experience working in various capacities with international humanitarian and peacebuilding organizations, including Search for Common Ground, Mediators Beyond Borders International, and ChildVoice International. With Mediators Beyond Borders, she coordinated educational forums for an international network of women mediators and supported planning for an International Training Institute in Lagos, Nigeria. With ChildVoice International, she provided on-the-ground strategic and programmatic support to a women's rehabilitation center in Northern Uganda. She is also an EcoDistricts Accredited Professional.

Ms. Elson has a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution from Georgetown University and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Philosophy from Towson University, where she was a member of the Honors College, was selected as College of Liberal Arts honors convocation speaker, and completed an Honors thesis.

MS. LAUREN FLEMING (Law committee; Law career interest session)

Lauren Fleming joined Smith, Gildea & Schmidt in 2020 after clerking on the Maryland Court of Appeals. Her practice focuses on complex civil litigation, including class actions. She was admitted to the Maryland Bar in December 2019. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Fleming earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Towson University in 2015, was a member of the Honors College, and completed advanced undergraduate research. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 2019. While in law school, Ms. Fleming served as an Associate Comments Editor on the University of Baltimore Law Review and as Vice President of the University of Baltimore Students for Public Interest (UBSPI). During her first two years of law school, she interned with FreeState Justice and the Office of Attorney General Organized Crime Unit. She also represented human trafficking survivors as a Student Attorney in her school's Human Trafficking Prevention Project (HTPP). In her final year of law school, Ms. Fleming worked as a law clerk at Schlachman, Belsky, Weiner & Davey, P.A. and continued as a Student Attorney with HTPP. She is a previous Board Member of FreeState Justice and currently serves on the Governance Committee.

MR. VINCENT GLYNN (Law Committee Co-Chair)

Mr. Glynn graduated from Towson University in 2015 with a BS in Political Science and Sociology & Anthropology and a concentration in Criminal Justice. While at Towson, he was a member of the Honors College and completed courses such as Contemporary International Politics, Civic Engagement & International Affairs, and Comparative Political Systems, in addition to advanced undergraduate research projects. After graduation, he attended the George Washington University Law School where he graduated in 2018 with honors. While in law school, Mr. Glynn served as the Executive Notes Editor of *The George Washington International Law Review*, which published his note, "*HIV in Russia on the Rise: A Micro-Level Health Concern with Macro-Level Security Implications.*" Mr. Glynn practiced commercial litigation at a large law firm in Washington D.C. before beginning his current position as clerk on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York in Brooklyn, where he currently resides.

MS. AMELIA GRAUER (General Assembly pod leader; Chair, Health Committee)

Amelia Grauer is the Program Coordinator with Parents For Peace, which supports families, friends, and communities concerned about someone becoming involved with extremism to provide guidance and early intervention; raises public awareness; and advocates for effective policy solutions. Ms. Grauer has supported organizations in researching Gender-Based Violence and developing programming to address its effects. She holds a graduate degree in International Studies and a certificate in Humanitarian Assistance from the University of Denver.

MS. ALLISON GUERRA (General Assembly pod leader)

At Towson University, Ms. Guerra graduated as a member of the TU Honors College with a B.A. in economics and international studies with a minor in French. To gain hands-on work experience in international development, she joined the U.S. Peace Corps and served in Benin for two years. She worked alongside small business owners and women's groups to produce agriculturally focused micro-business opportunities. Currently, Ms. Guerra is preparing for law school to work in the field of international law and human rights.

MS. ANNELEISE JOHNSON (General Assembly pod leader)

Ms. Anneliese Johnson is an Adjunct Professor with the Department of Political Science at Towson University. She has presented her research at both the Midwest Political Science Association annual conference and the Northeast Political Science Association conference. A graduate of the TU Honors College and the TU Masters in Social Sciences program, her research interests include the development of national identity, American political thought, and political psychology. Ms. Johnson spent much time helping to organize and run the TU-BCPS Model UN while a graduate student at TU and for several years since and always looks forward to seeing the exchange of ideas between young minds!

MS. ALISON KEEFNER (Committee assistant; Graduate School Career Interest session)

Alison Keefner graduated from Towson University in 2018 with a B.S. in Political Science. While at Towson, she served on the *Towson Journal of International Affairs* editorial board. Currently she is a graduate student in the European and Eurasian Studies program at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University specializing in international security.



MR. JEFF MARTINDALE (General Assembly pod Leader; Chair, Trade Committee; Government Service career session)

Jeff Martindale, MPA began his career with the City of Newark, DE in June 2019 as the Assistant to the City Manager/Purchasing Administrator. He is now the Chief Purchasing & Personnel Officer, which incorporates his previous functions with other HR responsibilities, such as interview facilitation, employee benefit administration, and other personnel-related items. Prior to working for Newark, Jeff served as an Administrative Fellow in the University of Delaware's Biden School of Public Policy & Administration while receiving his master's degree in Public Administration and briefly worked for the United States Department of Commerce in Washington, DC. Mr. Martindale graduated from Towson University with a major in Political Science and completed an advanced undergraduate research project on the UN and internships in government agencies in Washington D.C. He enjoys running, weightlifting, and yoga in his spare time, as well as hiking with his dog and fiancé.

MS. LILY McFEETERS (Government service Career Interest session)

Ms. McFeeters' journey at Towson University began when she participated in Model United Nations, organized by Dr. Alison McCartney, as part of the first homeschooled delegation in 2011. Under Dr. McCartney's mentorship, Lily went on to receive dual bachelor's degrees from Towson in International Studies and Asian Studies and minors in Political Science and Spanish. While at Towson, she founded the Japanese Language and Culture Organization and served as the 2016 College of Liberal Arts Undergraduate Commencement Speaker. Ms. McFeeters was a member of the TU Honors College, studied abroad in Japan, and completed an advanced undergraduate research project, which she presented at a regional undergraduate research conference and turned into an Honors thesis.

In 2018, Ms. McFeeters received a Master of Arts in Asian Studies from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. She entered the U.S. Department of Commerce as a Presidential Management Fellow and currently serves as an Advisor in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing, where she specializes in trade policy that supports the competitiveness of U.S. technology companies in international markets. Prior to Commerce, Ms. McFeeters was an Analyst at The Asia Group focusing on the firm's Japan Portfolio.



MS. LAUREN McDADE McLAUGHLIN

Lauren McDade McLaughlin spends most of her time trying to make the world a better place. She has over seven years of experience in non-profit fundraising and operations and currently works for South Baltimore Gateway Partnership, a small public organization that manages tax dollars generated from slot machine gambling to neighborhoods in Baltimore. She has also worked for Teach For America Baltimore and City Year Washington, DC. She began her career as an AmeriCorps Member with City Year, working at a high school in Northeast Washington, DC.

Ms. McDade holds a B.A. in Political Science from Towson University and an M.A. in Politics and Education from Columbia University. She proudly resides in Baltimore City.



Ms. MAYA MEHTA (Non-profits Career Interest Session)

Ms. Mehta lives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and is the Head of Communications at the Social Gastronomy Movement (SGM). As a global network, SGM exists to enhance the collective impact of member organizations, chefs, activists, farmers, and academics working toward food systems change. Maya graduated from Towson in 2014 with a BS in Law and American Civilization, was a member of the TU Honors College, and conducted advanced undergraduate research which she presented at national and regional conferences. After Towson, she completed a Master's degree in International Relations from the New School in 2018. Her work is focused on building collective intelligence and bringing attention to the transformative power of the grassroots.

MR. MICHAEL MOREY (Business career interest session)

Mr. Morey works in Retail Investment & Banking, and he is currently the Vice President and Team Lead for Merrill Guided Client Management and Participant Services. He manages a client and acquisition requisition team of 14 Financial Solutions Advisors who help to educate 401(k) plan participants. Prior to this job, Mr. Morey was AVP Financial Solutions Advisor & Retirement Education Specialist for Merrill Lynch Wealth Management and Financial Advisor. He studies at Towson University and the University of Baltimore.

MS. SYLVIA OTIENO (General Assembly pod Leader; Chair, Sustainable Communities committee)

Sylvia Otieno is an Operations Analyst at the World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). In her work, she conducts data analysis of World Bank Group (WBG) projects and supports the Methods Team in its mandate to promote the use of innovative methods across WBG evaluations. A member of the TU Honors College and undergraduate researcher and conference presenter on the UN, Ms. Otieno received her B.A in International Studies from Towson University (2016), and Master of Public Administration from The George Washington University (2020).



MS. MACKENZIE RICE (Chair, Science and Technology committee; Non-Profit Career Interest session)

Ms. Rice is a Program Lead at Digital Public Square, a not-for-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada that focuses on building technology that counters misinformation and enables healthy community engagement. Her previous work experience includes an internship with UNICEF in Nairobi, where she worked on social policy issues for the Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa.

She holds a Master's in Global Affairs from the University of Toronto and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Economics from Towson University. While at TU, Ms. Rice was a member of the *Towson Journal of International Affairs* editorial board, a member of TU Women's Varsity Golf team, and a highly engaged undergraduate researcher, which allowed her to present her work at national and local research conferences. Her research included work to support the TU-BCPS Model UN conference. She was also selected to be the College of Liberal Arts Undergraduate Commencement Speaker.

MS. LINDSAY ROBBINS (General Assembly pod leader)

Ms. Robbins graduated from Towson University with a Bachelor's degree in International Studies in 2018. A member of the TU Honors College, she completed undergraduate research projects, presented her work at undergraduate research conferences, and studied abroad in Peru. After graduation, she spent a year as an AmeriCorps/Vista worker. Ms. Robbins will graduate with a Master of Public Policy from the University of Maryland in May 2021.

MS. SARAH ROWAN (Chair, Children's Committee; Education career interest section)

Sarah Rowan graduated from Towson University as a member of the TU Honors College with a degree in Foreign Languages in 2019. During her time at Towson, she performed a long-term independent research project on the role of asset-based community development on rural healthcare systems in Central America, won a TU Undergraduate Research Impact Grant, and participated in Study Abroad. After graduation, she worked as a high school Spanish teacher for one year at the Institute of Notre Dame in downtown Baltimore. She also worked part-time for a legal marketing consulting firm. Currently, she works in financial publishing as the Editorial Coordinator for the Angels & Entrepreneurs Network. There, Ms. Rowan researches, writes, and edits copy about private equity investment opportunities for a subscriber base of 150K+.

MR. MATT SANFORD (General Assembly pod Leader; Law career interest session)

After graduating from Towson University as a member of the Honors College with a degree in political science, international studies, and economics, Matt researched presidential transitions in the non-profit sector. He matriculated into The George Washington University Law School with aspirations to one day negotiate international trade agreements. However, after a couple of "tours" with the Maryland public defenders and the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project, he was moved by the struggle to end mass incarceration and give indigent defendants a fighting chance in a system that stacks the deck against them. During law school, Matt worked as a student attorney defending DC residents accused of crimes and undocumented Americans facing deportation. He continues that work as an assistant public defender in Kenai, Alaska.



MR. CHRIS SEKELSKY (General Assembly pod leader)

Mr. Sekelsky graduated from Towson University with a degree in Political Science. During his time at TU, he worked on undergraduate research, exploring the challenges of reforming the UN Security Council. He continues to stay abreast of politics and international issues, but was always good at Computers/Engineering. He now works as a Telecom Engineer.

MR. BEN SIEGEL (Government service and elections career session)

Ben Seigel, MPP, is an Associate Institutional Planner at University of Wisconsin - Platteville. He received a Bachelor's degrees in Economics and International Relations from Towson University, where he was also a member of the Honors College, and his Masters in Public Policy from the University of Arizona. He has served on several political campaigns including the Houston mayoral campaign for Sylvester Turner and served as an organizer with the Democratic Party of Wisconsin and 2020 Coordinated Campaign with Biden for America.

MS. BRANDY JO SYKES (General Assembly pod Leader; Chair, Law Committee; Business career session)

Ms. Sykes is the International Spectrum Policy Lead for Apple Inc. Prior to this position, she was US Regulator for National Telecommunication and Information Administration; US Head of Delegation to a UN affiliate organization, chaired at three international Treaty Conferences and internationally appointed vice chair on second term; and US spokesperson at a treaty setting Conference. She received undergraduate and graduate degrees from Towson University, where she also served as the Graduate assistant to run the TU-BCPS Model UN conference.

MR. BOBBY WALLS-THUMMA (Chair, Security Council; General assembly Pod leader; International and Domestic Security Career Interest session)

Bobby Walls-Thumma served as a federal counterterrorism agent for the Department of Homeland Security from 2002-2011. While there, he worked on issues including the threat posed by Al Qaeda, extremist groups, CBRNE threats, agro-terrorism, and pandemic response. He was responsible for briefing senior-level government officials, including Homeland Security Secretaries Ridge and Chertoff, and the office of Vice President Cheney, on the status of threat reporting and investigations. He graduated from Towson University with Honors and a degree in Political Science and wrote an Honors thesis on international terrorism.

MS. JULIANNE WEIDMAN (Career Session, Law)

Originally from Maryland, Julianne (“Jules”) Weidman graduated in 2016 from Towson University, where she majored in Political Science, was a member of the Honors College, served many times as a volunteer for TU-BCPS Model UN and as a school coach, and was chosen as Honors College Commencement Speaker. After attending Towson, she spent three years in New Orleans at Tulane University Law School. Following her graduation from Tulane in 2019, Ms. Weidman moved to Delaware and became a member of the Delaware bar. From 2019 to 2020, she served as the law clerk to the Honorable James T. Vaughn, Jr., of the Delaware Supreme Court. In 2021, she started her career with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP at the Firm’s office in Wilmington, Delaware. She currently works as a second-year associate in the Firm’s Mergers and Acquisitions department.

Ms. Weidman lives in Wilmington, Delaware, with her significant other and their incredibly spoiled dog. She can be reached by email at jmarieweidman@gmail.com.



MS. MEGAN WESSELL (Chair, Human Rights Committee; State Dept. Career Interest session)

Megan Wessell is the acting Division Director for Planning and Strategic Performance in the Bureau of Budget and Planning (BP) at the Department of State. Her role includes coordinating the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) process for the Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the bureau and embassy strategic planning processes for State; and the strategic budget integration process. Prior to joining BP, Ms. Wessell was a strategic planner in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). She managed performance planning, measurement, and improvement for 34 programs in the Office of Security Technology (DS/C/ST). Ms. Wessell began her career with State as an intern in the Bureau of Information Resource Management's (IRM)'s policy office. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Towson University with majors in Political Science and International Studies and a minor in Spanish. She also received a Master of Science degree from University of Maryland University College in Project Management.



MR. DOUGLAS WOODRUFF (General Assembly pod leader; Committee Chair)

Douglas Woodruff holds two Bachelor of Arts degrees both from the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, MA, US, in Wind & Percussion Studies and Political Science. He also received a Master of Science in Music Education from Towson University and completed his post-Master’s Certification in Educational Leadership and International Curriculum Development from George Mason University. Prior to serving as a teacher and administrator at Yew Wah School of Shanghai Changning in Shanghai, China, Mr Woodruff served eight years as Music Teacher in the US and China. Since joining YWIES Shanghai Gubei in August 2017, Mr Woodruff has held several positions at the School, beginning as Music Teacher, and later as Global Perspectives Teacher, ICT Teacher as well as A Level Curriculum Coordinator.

His passions include a love of working with Model United Nations programs and music. He has had the opportunity to play trombone for the Boston Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, and Montgomery Philharmonic.

MS. SOPHIA ZAHNER (General Assembly pod leader; Graduate School interest session)

Sophia Zahner is originally from Essex, Maryland. She graduated from Towson University in 2019 with a B.A. in History and International Studies, was a member of the Honors College, and completed advanced undergraduate research. She is currently obtaining a Master's in Global, International, and Comparative History at Georgetown University. Ms. Zahner’s academic interests include the history of the Internet, drug policy, energy policy, and reproductive/family policies. She is currently researching the interconnected effects of the birth of the Internet and the collapse of the Soviet Union on the boom in human trafficking during the 1990s.