



## American Rhodes Scholars-Elect for 2008

(Subject to ratification by the Rhodes Trustees after acceptance by one of the colleges of Oxford University)

### *District I*

BENJAMIN M. EIDELSON  
*Connecticut—Yale University*  
ADAM M. LEVINE  
*New Hampshire—Dartmouth College*

### *District II*

JASON R. BELLO  
*Massachusetts—Columbia University*  
CLARA LUISE BLÄTTLER  
*Massachusetts—Harvard University*

### *District III*

LAUREL SYDNEY GABLER  
*New York—Stanford University*  
SCOTT M. THOMPSON  
*New York—Stanford University*

### *District IV*

REBECCA ADAMS BRUBAKER  
*Pennsylvania—Swarthmore College*  
SHERIF GIRGIS  
*Delaware—Princeton University*

### *District V*

MELIS N. ANAHTAR  
*Maryland/DC—Massachusetts Institute of Technology*  
NADINE S. LEVIN  
*Maryland/DC—University of Chicago*

### *District VI*

DEEP J. SHAH  
*Georgia—University of Georgia*  
KATHERINE H. A. VYBORNY  
*Georgia—University of Georgia*

### *District VII*

JOHN BLAINE MOORE  
*Tennessee—United States Naval Academy*  
JOSEPH S. O'SHEA  
*Florida—Florida State University*

### *District VIII*

SARAH H. MILLER  
*Texas—University of Texas—Austin*  
SHAYAK SARKAR  
*Texas—Harvard University*

### *District IX*

JESSICA E. HANZLIK  
*Ohio—Ohio State University*  
JOYCE S. MENG  
*Virginia—University of Pennsylvania*

### *District X*

ISRA JAVED BHATTY  
*Illinois—University of Chicago*  
ANDREW S. HAMMOND  
*Illinois—University of Chicago*

### *District XI*

TODD R. GINGRICH  
*Missouri—California Institute of Technology*  
GEORGE C. OLIVE  
*Missouri—Columbia University*

### *District XII*

BRETT T. MASTERS  
*Michigan—Princeton University*  
ISHANAA N. RAMBACHAN  
*Minnesota—St. Olaf College*

### *District XIII*

HILA LEVY  
*Colorado—United States Air Force Academy*  
PRAVIN S. RAJAN  
*New Mexico—Georgetown University*

### *District XIV*

ANDREA M. DENHOED  
*Oklahoma—University of Oklahoma*  
NICOLE L. NOVAK  
*Iowa—St. Olaf College*

### *District XV*

JASON G. CRABTREE  
*Washington—United States Military Academy*  
AARON M. POLHAMUS  
*Washington—Stanford University*

### *District XVI*

REED DOUCETTE  
*California—University of Southern California*  
ASYA J. PASSINSKY  
*California—University of California—Berkeley*



## From the AARS President:

HAPPILY EVERY year brings joy in various events to the AARS and its members. Here you meet the 2008 American Rhodes Scholars! For the fourteenth year, the Association of American Rhodes Scholars (AARS) is pleased to present this newsletter introducing the newly elected Rhodes Scholars to their predecessors, to each other, to Oxford, and to individuals and educational institutions nationwide. It is indeed a joy to learn about these fine young people who will be given the wonderful opportunity to study at Oxford and become part of the Rhodes community worldwide.

In addition to introducing our 2008 Scholars, this newsletter also reports the twelfth annual Sailing Weekend sponsored by the AARS for the class of 2007 Rhodes Scholars, which took place in Washington, D.C., last September 22-26. This weekend allowed the new Rhodes Scholars an ample opportunity to become acquainted with each other before traveling to Oxford and dispersing among the colleges. By hearing from and talking with a wide variety of Scholars of all ages in the course of the Weekend, and by observing their predecessors at the Supreme Court, at the World Bank and in the Congress, for example, these young Scholars gained a good understanding of how Rhodes Scholars value and pursue public service and participate in “the world’s fight.”

Two other events were held in conjunction with the Sailing Weekend. First, AARS and Howard University held a public symposium to celebrate the life and work of Alain Leroy Locke, the first Black American Rhodes Scholar (Pennsylvania and Hertford ’07). Following the luncheon, there was an informal session open to the Scholars and alumni to discuss Locke’s sexuality and explore opportunities for GLBT Rhodes Scholars to organize future events and other forums to discuss topics of their choice. Also, the 2007 Rhodes Scholars had the opportunity to meet nearly a dozen members of the Class of 1957 who gathered to celebrate their 50th Rhodes Class Reunion. The keynote speaker at the departure luncheon, attended by the new Rhodes Scholars and a number of old Rhodes Scholars, was my friend and classmate, General Wesley K. Clark (ret.) (Arkansas and Magdalen ’66), Former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

The mission of AARS is to bring Rhodes Scholars together in support of the Rhodes Scholarship and Oxford University through events, reunions, publications, networks and the web. AARS fosters social, intellectual and professional connections that reflect shared experiences and extend perspectives. More information about Rhodes Scholars and AARS is available at the new website ([www.americanrhodes.org](http://www.americanrhodes.org)). AARS continues to facilitate the annual transfer of substantial gifts to Oxford, its colleges and related entities through the American Trust for Oxford University. Additionally, the AARS participates in the appointment of the annual Eastman Professor at Oxford and funds the Professor’s salary as well as the maintenance of Eastman House. The quarterly publication of *The American Oxonian* brings current information about Oxford, articles of interest to the Oxonian constituency, class letters and the annual address list.

Both this publication and the Sailing Weekend described herein are sponsored by the Association of American Rhodes Scholars and are paid for by dues and generous annual contributions of its membership. While financially and organizationally distinct from the Office of the American Secretary to the Rhodes Trust, many AARS activities enjoy the cooperation of the American Secretary in service to the Scholarships. Commended to you is this newsletter’s report from the American Secretary, Elliot Gerson.

On behalf of the AARS and its Board of Directors, I thank you for continuing your vital support.

STEWART EARLY, PRESIDENT  
(Pennsylvania and Brasenose ’66)



District V

Melis N. Anahtar

(Maryland/DC)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology: S.B., Mechanical Engineering, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Global Health, Immunology

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*Career Aspirations*

Physician-scientist



Melis Anahtar was born and raised in the so-called “Technology Corridor” of Montgomery County, Maryland, where the public school system and extracurricular activities stimulated her interest in science and engineering at an early age. In high school, she spent two summers in the labs of Massachusetts General Hospital creating a microfluidic device. There, she “fell in love with research” and returned to Boston to study mechanical and biomedical engineering at MIT. Since that time, she has conducted research at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the National Institutes of Health, as well as at MIT, where her senior thesis project is to design nanoparticles for cancer imaging. Melis’ extracurricular activities include serving as editor-in-chief of the MIT *Undergraduate Research Journal*, writing a blog on the MIT Admissions website, creating content for the MIT OpenLabWare website, volunteering at Cambridge public schools and Camp Kesem, and serving as VP of Research Activities for the MIT Biomedical Engineering Society. A finalist in the Intel Science Talent Search (2004), Melis was one of *Glamour Magazine’s* Top 10 College Women (2007), received L’Oreal’s Beauty of Giving Award (2007) and MIT’s Society of Women Engineers Graduating Senior Award (2007), and was selected to be in *USA Today’s* All-Academic First Team (2008). After pursuing public health policy and immunology at Oxford, she plans to enter an MD/PhD program and combine her interests in medicine, bio-engineering, and policy in an academic setting.



*District II*

Jason R. Bello

(Massachusetts)

Columbia University: B.A., Economics and Political Science, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Politics, Comparative Government



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*Career Aspirations*

Public policy, university teaching  
and research, law

Jason Bello is currently a Presidential Fellow at the Center for the Study of the Presidency, where he is studying how the different ways state parties distribute delegates to candidates in the national conventions affects the outcomes of the conventions. He was elected to Columbia's Phi Beta Kappa chapter as a junior and will graduate with a major in political science and economics and a minor in linguistics. His senior thesis asks whether media market liberalization may have unintended negative consequences for ethnically divided states. Jason's passion for studying problems in democracies has taken him from Newark, NJ, where he was a Humanity in Action Fellow studying racial politics, to Taipei as a Ministry of Education Fellow. He hopes to continue his study of democratic issues at Oxford. While at Columbia, he has served on the board of numerous clubs and activities. He founded The Columns, a multi-partisan web log, and published an annual election guide that is distributed throughout the University. An "avid enthusiast of Central Park running," Jason completed his first marathon in March. In his free time, Jason teaches math at a local public school and hosts a cooking show—"The Careless Cook"—on the Columbia Television Network.



District X

(Illinois)

## Isra Javed Bhatti

University of Chicago: B.A., Economics, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 2006

**Proposed Oxford Course:** Evidence Based Social Intervention

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### *Career Aspirations*

Non-profit, government, criminal justice



Isra J. Bhatti is currently in her first year at Yale Law School, having graduated from the University of Chicago in 2006 with majors in economics and Near Eastern languages and civilizations. As a junior, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and selected as a Student Marshal. While in Chicago, Isra spent three years assisting Chicago Public School teachers with classroom technology integration and founded a tutoring program on Chicago's southwest side. She also began working with the Inner-city Muslim Action Network on several criminal justice reform initiatives, one of which culminated in the passage of the Substance Abuse Management Addressing Recidivism through Treatment (SMART) Act last year. In addition, she began her current work with the Center for Constitutional Rights as a multilingual translator for Guantánamo Bay detainees. Recently, Isra completed a research fellowship at Yale Law School's Center for the Study of Corporate Law as well as a legal and policy internship at the Vera Institute of Justice in Washington, D.C. At Vera, she authored and revised national standards related to the investigation, detection, monitoring, and prevention of prison sexual assault, as mandated by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. In her spare time, Isra enjoys "playing and watching football, and reading and writing poetry."



*District II*

Clara Luise Blättler

(Massachusetts)

Harvard University: A.B., Earth and Planetary Sciences, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Earth Sciences



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*Career Aspirations*

Earth science

Clara Blättler was born and raised in Brookline, Massachusetts, but had “the chances for some wonderful travel experiences” through her undergraduate studies. She is interested in the geologic record of climate change, which has taken her to Namibia, where she worked as a geologic field assistant, and to Argentina, to study mapping and field geology. Clara has also pursued these interests in a laboratory, investigating geochemical proxies for sea water composition and temperature. She has spent time in Germany and Switzerland, where she was “happy to improve my German and French.” Outside of academics, Clara has played violin in several pit orchestras and pole vaulted with the track and field team, winning the league championships last year. Clara also enjoys playing piano and hiking.



District IV

## Rebecca Adams Brubaker (Pennsylvania)

Swarthmore College: B.A., Political Science and Psychology, 2006

Proposed Oxford Course: Migration Studies

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### *Career Aspirations*

International service, foreign policy advisor,  
chief negotiator



Rebecca Brubaker is a native of Kimberton, Pennsylvania. She is currently working as the UNHCR Integration Unit liaison in Turkey, a post she helped create to increase cooperation and improve needs assessments between headquarters and field operators. As an Insight Fellow, she is analyzing conflicts arising from mixed migrant integration patterns as well as origin, transit and destination country migration policies. Her fellowship work will take her to Morocco, Turkey, and the Netherlands. Last year Rebecca conducted ethnographic research through a Fulbright Grant in Cyprus, where she studied the transference of the refugee identity through the second and third generation and its affect on political behavior. At Swarthmore, Rebecca participated in the Honors System and designed independent studies which examined identity, conflict, and nationalism through both a psychological and political lens. At Oxford, she looks forward to continuing her research on how communities form, fracture, and re-group as differences rise and fall in salience. In particular, she wants to expand her policy experience working with the Refugee Policy Center and the Center on Migration, Policy and Society so she can return to service work in the field after Oxford. She is “incredibly grateful to all those who supported me from a distance to make this opportunity possible.”



*District XV*

Jason G. Crabtree

(Washington)

United States Military Academy: B.Sc., Civil Engineering, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Engineering Science



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*Career Aspirations*

Infantry officer, space exploration, public policy,  
international relations

Jason Crabtree grew up in Kingston, Washington, working with angus cattle, designing theater lighting and sound, and doing construction work. He currently serves as the Brigade Commander for the 4,400 members of the Corps of Cadets at West Point and will commission into the infantry. His engineering research is focused on space exploration and development. Past work includes fluid-structure interaction research for NASA with Rice University and research into helical anchor systems for extraterrestrial applications. Jason hopes to use his background in technical engineering to inform future decisions as a policy maker. He believes that “technology has incredible potential for improving the human condition if pursued by technical experts who understand the social, political, and economic implications of technological change for society.” In addition to his formal studies as a civil engineering major, Jason is interested in strategic studies and international relations. Jason is an avid outdoorsman and a longtime guitarist. While studying engineering at Oxford, he hopes “to further my studies of contemporary strategic and international affairs in a culturally and intellectually diverse environment.”



District XIV

Andrea M. DenHoed

(Oklahoma)

University of Oklahoma: B.A., Letters and International Studies, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: English Language and Literature

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*Career Aspirations*

English professor, writing



Andrea DenHoed is originally from Aurora, Colorado, where she was home schooled from the second grade through high school. Andrea will graduate *summa cum laude* from the University of Oklahoma with B.A. degrees in Letters (an interdepartmental degree covering courses in history, philosophy, literature, and languages) and International Studies (with an unofficial emphasis on South Asia). While “maintaining a heavy course load and staying hydrated,” Andrea rowed for the OU crew team, wrote an opinion column for the *Oklahoma Daily*, and worked as a writing tutor for the OU athletic department. She also spent time serving as an intern for the Oklahoma-based nonprofit organization World Neighbors, where she assisted in authoring middle school geography curricula. Andrea spent the summer of 2006 living in Bangalore, India, and teaching English to underprivileged children. She recalls her time in India “as the most exciting and fulfilling experience of my life, or at least a close second to my participation in the 2007 Miss University of Oklahoma Scholarship Pageant.” Andrea looks forward to traveling, writing, and rowing while at Oxford before pursuing a career in academia.



District XVI

## Reed Doucette

(California)

University of Southern California: B.S., Mechanical Engineering, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Engineering Science



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*Career Aspirations*

Sustainable energy research and development

Reed Doucette is from Lodi, California, in the state's central valley. He traveled south to attend the University of Southern California, where he is majoring in mechanical engineering with a minor in business. Joining the USC basketball team as a walk-on, Reed competed for four years, advancing to the sweet sixteen of the NCAA tournament in his final year of eligibility. Off the court, Reed's research on nanoscale materials at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory has applications towards improving the efficiency of fuel cells and catalytic converters and towards making medical implants more safe and effective. He has also conducted research on improving the efficiency of titanium-based solar cells. Reed co-founded a student organization, Los Angeles Community Impact, that provides strategic consulting to small non-profits in Los Angeles (over the past three years, the organization has grown from 4 to 100 members and has completed over 50 projects ranging from stimulating U.S. trade with Africa to encouraging theater and arts education in city schools). Reed's current career aspirations are to conduct research into viable sustainable energy solutions. In his free time, Reed enjoys "skiing, playing tennis, wakeboarding, and running 5k and 10k races."



District I

Benjamin M. Eidelson

(Connecticut)

Yale University: B.A., Philosophy and Political Science, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Philosophy

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*Career Aspirations*

Law, academia, public policy



Ben Eidelson grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia and double-majored in political science and philosophy at Yale. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa as a junior, Ben was awarded the Riggs Prize for the Humanities, the Meeker Prize for English, the Yale College Writing Prize, and the Hart Lyman Prize for overall intellectual and social accomplishment. In addition, Ben won the North American Championship in competitive debating in his sophomore year. His academic interests are in political philosophy, law, and public policy, and he recently published an article in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Gender* exploring the constitutional parallels between gay rights and religious freedom. His other journal articles include a simulation model for evaluating bioterrorism response policies and a study on the use of computer games in education. Ben works part-time at a public high school in New Haven, where he coaches the school's debate team and teaches a Lego robotics class. He has worked on criminal justice issues as a policy associate in the Newark, New Jersey, Mayor's Office, and as technical director for 24 Hours for Darfur, an advocacy organization using online video technology to help build political will to end the crisis in Darfur, Sudan.



District III

## Laurel Sydney Gabler

(New York)

Stanford University: B.A., Psychology, 2006

Proposed Oxford Course: Global Health Science



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*Career Aspirations*

Medical doctor, public health, traditional and non-traditional medical practices

Laurel Gabler became interested in establishing self-sustaining community health care programs after spending a summer working at an orphanage in Oaxaca, Mexico. She subsequently assisted at a clinic outside Quito, Ecuador, and spent five months as a health advocate in an AIDS awareness program in rural Tanzania. At Stanford, Laurel organized a group of students to help rebuild Katrina-ravaged New Orleans and formed a coalition of students to investigate issues and devise solutions to problems in community health care programs in the developing world. Laurel worked at a genetics research laboratory studying depression and schizophrenia and, given her interest in non-traditional medical practices, initiated a project to collect data on the efficacy of acupuncture in the United States. At the intensive care unit of the Stanford University Hospital she studied doctor-patient communications and how doctors prognosticate, and presented her findings at the American Academy of Neurology annual conference. Laurel graduated with honors and distinction, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and received a J. E. Wallace Sterling Award for academic excellence. She is a recipient of the Luce Scholarship and is currently working in rural Thailand at a government hospital studying the integration of traditional medical practices and Western medicine. An accomplished photographer, she has photographed children at orphanages throughout the developing world in the belief that their having framed photos of themselves helps build self-esteem. Ultimately, Laurel hopes “to run my own clinic abroad in a rural area.”



District XI

(Missouri)

Todd R. Gingrich

California Institute of Technology: B.S., Chemistry, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Theoretical Chemistry

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*Career Aspirations*

Chemistry professor



Todd Gingrich became particularly passionate about scientific research after a summer research job in his hometown of Columbia, Missouri. The experience inspired him to attend Caltech, where he delved into mathematics, physics, and chemistry. At Caltech, Todd worked as a Carl and Shirley Larson Summer Undergraduate Research Fellow and later as an Amgen Scholar studying the behavior of mixed metal oxide semiconductors, a class of materials he hopes could be made into economically scalable solar cells. In addition to his research, Todd served as the president of the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology and reorganized Caltech's Prank Club for a brief uninvited visit to MIT. In recognition of these efforts he was awarded Caltech's Noland Leadership Award. Todd is "eagerly awaiting British public transportation after having lived for four years in Los Angeles without a car." As an experimental scientist, he is also "excited about trying my hand at chemical theory." He hopes that his study of theoretical chemistry will eventually enable him to design new chemical systems for collecting and storing useable energy in an environmentally responsible fashion.



## Sherif Girgis

Princeton University: A.B., Philosophy, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Philosophy

District IV  
(Delaware)



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*Career Aspirations*

University professor, moral and  
political philosophy

Sherif Girgis was born in Cairo but grew up in Delaware. His early conversion to Catholicism sparked an interest in philosophy. At Princeton, he has studied moral and political philosophy as well as ancient and medieval philosophy. He has served as a tutor in various subjects, a teacher's assistant, and a freelance editor. As editor-in-chief of *The Princeton Tory*, a contributor to several campus publications, and an intern at the Witherspoon Institute, Sherif explored the role of natural-law reasoning in public debates over social issues. He served as a co-leader of the Aquinas Institute Catholic chaplaincy and president of the Anscombe Society for the promotion of traditional sexual and family ethics. A native speaker of Egyptian Arabic and "a general fool for languages," Sherif has volunteered as a Spanish translator and ESL tutor. In 2007 he won the national Dante Prize for his essay analyzing the suicides of the *Inferno's* thirteenth canto through a Thomistic lens. He has also received academic prizes in Spanish, Italian, and German (the latter he studied in a summer immersion in Munich). Some of his fondest memories at Princeton "have been forged debating with friends over cheap wine and even cheaper cigars late into the night."



District X  
(Illinois)

## Andrew S. Hammond

University of Chicago: A.B., Political Science, 2007

Proposed Oxford Course: Comparative Social Policy

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### *Career Aspirations*

Public service



A native of Ridgewood, New Jersey, Andrew Hammond graduated with special honors in political science from the University of Chicago where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. At Chicago, Andrew was a columnist and editor for the student newspaper, the executive director of the ACLU college chapter, and an organizer for local political campaigns. Andrew served on the staff of Barack Obama's 2004 Senate campaign, as a researcher at the National Center for Children in Poverty, and as a staff writer at the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. A Truman Scholar, he is currently a fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, D.C. Andrew also studied voice at the Manhattan School of Music (winning the New Jersey Governor's Award in Opera), has performed in several plays, and was commissioned to write two plays for children. An avid baseball fan, Andrew spends his free time listening to jazz, reading literature, and going to the theater.



## Jessica E. Hanzlik

Ohio State University: B.S., Physics; B.A., French, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Particle Physics

District IX  
(Ohio)



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*Career Aspirations*

Professor of physics; public policy,  
gender disparity within the sciences

Jessica Hanzlik was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, and has “always loved reading, swimming, and rollerblading.” Her academic passions are jointly fundamental physics (including research on the Higgs boson as part of Ohio State University’s high-energy experimental physics research group) and women’s lack of representation within the sciences. Her French major has facilitated her work in identifying possible causes of this gender discrepancy in the sciences by comparing the rates of American and French women who choose to study science. Her senior French thesis will look for possible cultural patterns that lead to greater proportions of French women than American women becoming scientists. She also addresses this lack of representation on a local level through her mentoring and tutoring.



District V

Nadine S. Levin

(Maryland/DC)

University of Chicago: B.A., Biological Sciences, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Global Health Science

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*Career Aspirations*

International public health,  
preventive medicine, infectious disease



Nadine Levin is a graduating senior at the University of Chicago, where she has garnered numerous academic awards including the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and induction into Phi Beta Kappa as a junior. Fluent in Spanish, she spent the summer of 2007 in La Paz, Bolivia, volunteering in a public hospital, where she reinforced her interest to pursue studies and a career in public health. Her “lifelong passion for the the biology of disease” led to her specialization in the study of immunology, and she has spent the last four years researching the bacterium that causes bubonic plague. She participated in the Howard Hughes Undergraduate Research Internship and was published in a feature article of the campus undergraduate research journal. In addition to her scientific research, Nadine has played the violin for 14 years, performing in several chamber music ensembles, including her quartet, Atriata. Passionate about Ultimate Frisbee, she has traveled across the United States to participate in tournaments at both the college and the club level. Nadine looks forward to “making an impact in international public health, focusing on the delivery of affordable treatments for infectious diseases in South America.”



*District I*

Adam M. Levine

(New Hampshire)

Dartmouth College: A.B., Anthropology, Art History, Mathematics and  
Social Sciences, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: History



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*Career Aspirations*

Museum curator and director

Adam Levine is a senior at Dartmouth College, where he is majoring in anthropology, art history, mathematics and social sciences. While he is writing an honors thesis for each major, it is his art history thesis on the evolution of Christ's canonical image that he intends to pursue at Oxford in the history of art. Adam hopes to use his art historical studies as a platform to pursue a career as a museum curator and eventually as a museum director. Over the course of his undergraduate career, Adam has held a number of internships in both art and natural history museums; he has also authored or co-authored a number of papers in art history and anthropology. Adam is particularly interested in integrating his mathematical studies, which center on the application of network analysis, to his study of anthropology and art history. Adam has been particularly involved in student government, serving as treasurer of his class and sitting on several related committees during his four years at Dartmouth. Adam is also the president of Dartmouth's boxing club. A natural light heavyweight, Adam hopes to continue his amateur career at Oxford.



*District XIII*  
(Colorado)

## Hila Levy

United States Air Force Academy: B.S., Biology, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Public Health

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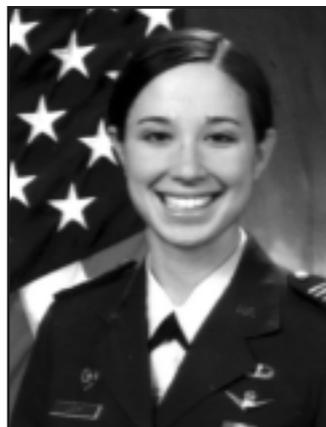
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*Career Aspirations*

U.S. Air Force physician, international health;  
federal service or international NGO



Hila Levy acquired her passion for language and international work early, having been raised in both Puerto Rico and Israel. First in her class at the US Air Force Academy, she became the first cadet to complete three language minors, studying French and Spanish, which she speaks fluently, as well as Arabic (in addition to her knowledge of Hebrew, Italian, and Portuguese). Hila combined her linguistic abilities with her study of biology at the Universidad de los Andes in Mérida, Venezuela, where she conducted cooperative research on dengue hemorrhagic fever, a disease she was afflicted with during childhood. She has presented and published research on various topics in both molecular biology and US governmental policy, including work on black plague diagnostics and the development of a revolutionary heat-stable mix for pathogen identification via Polymerase Chain Reaction. Her research has also included studying the US role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and language transformation within the Department of Defense. Hila spent time overseas on Academy programs in the UK (where she worked as a surgical and ER technician), Ecuador, France, and Israel. While at the Academy, she flew on the Academy's Flying Team, competed on the Women's Powerlifting Team, and served as the Deputy Commander for Basic Cadet Training and as the Wing Executive Officer. Hila hopes to become a surgeon and serve as an international health specialist within the Air Force Medical Corps.



## Brett T. Masters

Princeton University: A.B., Comparative Literature, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Medieval English Studies

District XII  
(Michigan)



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*Career Aspirations*  
University teaching, writing

Brett Masters hails from Charlotte, Michigan, a small town southwest of Lansing, and is the first person in his immediate family to go to college. After earning a scholarship to Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts, Brett attended Princeton as a comparative literature major with an interest in French and Italian medieval poetry. He is particularly interested in intertextuality in thirteenth and fourteenth century Italy and France, the evolution of a medieval secular poetics and notions of “poetic knowledge,” and the evolution of medieval ideas about sexuality. His senior thesis addresses the sources and the authorship of the *Fiore*, a poem attributed to Dante. Brett also has an amateur interest in finance and economics, and helped economics professor Burton Malkiel research and organize his recent book on Chinese financial markets, *From Wall Street to the Great Wall* (2008). As a summer intern at the hedge fund Savannah-Baltimore Capital, Brett researched primarily European and Asian consumer goods firms. As a freshman, he won Princeton’s Quin Morton Writing Prize and, as a sophomore, an Edwin Ferris Grant from the Council for the Humanities to fund an internship at the publishing house Farrar, Straus, Giroux. Brett was nominated for—“though did not win (see Sherif Girgis!)”—the Dante Society of America’s Dante Prize for a paper on Dante’s *Paradiso*. A peer educator at Princeton’s LGBT Center, Brett has helped organize efforts by the Gay Family Rights Project to promote marriage equality legislation in New Jersey. At Oxford, in addition to his academic work, Brett hopes “to develop my writing working for campus publications, to be active in the LGBT community, and to try my hand (erm . . . my arms) at rowing crew.”



District IX

(Virginia)

## Joyce S. Meng

University of Pennsylvania: B.A., International Studies;  
B.S., Economics, 2008

**Proposed Oxford Course:** Economics for Development; Financial Economics

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*Career Aspirations*

International development, banking reform



Joyce Meng is a Huntsman Student of International Studies and Business at the University of Pennsylvania, majoring in finance and international studies and minoring in Spanish and mathematics. She is particularly interested in microfinance and international development and aspires to work in the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank. Leveraging her experiences of microfinance field work in Mexico (with FINCA International) and her work as a research scholar for Fundación Nantik Lum in Spain, Joyce co-founded YouthBank ([www.youth-bank.org](http://www.youth-bank.org)), a microbusiness incubator for street youth in Nigeria. YouthBank operates a community center in Lagos, providing young people on-the-job business training followed by a small microcredit loan upon successful program completion. The goal of YouthBank is to address the roots of poverty and provide a means for sustainable self-employment. As a research scholar for Fundación Nantik Lum, an affiliate of the European Microfinance Network, Joyce contributed to the publication of the the research monograph “Microcredit in Spain” and acted as a consultant in helping the Foundation’s Chiapas business collectives make the transition into a full group-solidarity lending microcredit fund.



## Sarah H. Miller

University of Texas–Austin: B.S., Physics and Astronomy, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Astrophysics

*District VIII*

(Texas)



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*Career Aspirations*

Astrophysics, professor,  
interdisciplinary leadership

The daughter of two dental professors, Sarah Miller has always lived in Texas, but has traveled widely due to her parents' academic duties. Now she herself travels to present her research at physics and astronomy conferences, and has published both first and second author papers in scientific journals. She has taught astrophysics and research methods to freshman and helped develop a web-based tool for high-school and public educators to integrate cosmological astronomy into their science curricula. The recipient of various awards, scholarships, and research fellowships in her college and department, Sarah served as president of the science honors program and as student advisor to the dean, developing a system that will increase student input into the hiring of teaching-focussed science faculty. Additionally, Sarah created programs to involve science students in orchestras, bands, and art, and produced and directed several plays. She has written and produced an award-winning screenplay, composed orchestral music for college ceremonies, and recorded rock music (as both a singer and instrumentalist), some of which has been played on Austin's station and abroad. Sarah has spent the last four summers in Oxford studying theology and seeks "to close the communication disconnect between science, religion, and the arts."



District VII

## John Blaine Moore

(Tennessee)

United States Naval Academy: B.S., Chemistry, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Pharmacology

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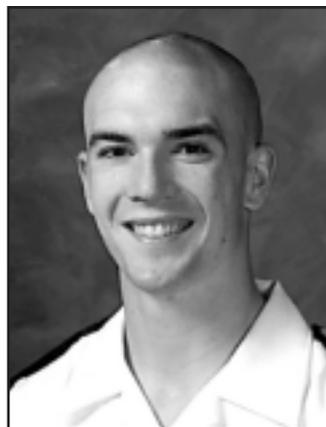
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*Career Aspirations*

Medical doctor, Navy physician



John Blaine Moore is currently ranked first in his class academically with a 4.0 GPA. A Naval Academy Trident Scholar majoring in chemistry, Blaine is currently studying the improved synthesis of a class of organic chemicals with demonstrated antimicrobial and tumor-killing capacities. As Regimental Commander in the summer of 2007, he was the overall midshipman in charge of the first half of Plebe Summer, the indoctrination phase for all 1,202 incoming Academy freshmen. Blaine has been recognized with Honorable Mention in the *USA Today* All-Academic Team and was also recently invited to participate in the 47th annual International Achievement Summit (July 2008) on the Big Island of Hawaii. He has volunteered at the University of Maryland Medical Center's Shock Trauma Center, participated in several projects with the Midshipmen Action Group, and ran the Marine Corps Marathon and the Bel Monte 50k in 2006. As part of the Naval Academy summer training programs, Blaine has spent time aboard two nuclear submarines. After his two years of study at Oxford, Blaine plans to attend medical school to become a Navy physician.



*District XIV*

Nicole L. Novak

(Iowa)

St. Olaf College: B.A., Environmental Studies, Spanish, Hispanic Studies, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Global Health Science, Medical Anthropology



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*Career Aspirations*

Epidemiology, environmental and immigrant health, community development

Born and raised in Iowa City, Iowa, Nicole Novak has focused her undergraduate experience on the challenges of the environment and development in Latin America. A Morris Udall Scholar for Environmental Studies, she spent a semester studying sustainable development and living with families in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Nicole also spent a summer as an interpreter and health aide at clinics for migrant farm workers near her hometown. She is accomplished in econometric and statistical modeling and spent a month analyzing foodborne disease mortality data with the World Health Organization in Geneva. She and her research partners have won awards for an econometric model of the impact of US agricultural subsidies on Costa Rican rice producers and for a statistical model of socio-economic predictors of dental health in South India. Nicole is a graduate of St. Olaf's Great Conversation program, which engages Western classics from Homer to Woolf, and is president and co-creator of a campus residence for women dedicated to environmental and social justice. She is captain of her track team and spent three summers working at wilderness camps for youth and families. As often as she can, she enjoys "trail running, cross country skiing, and cooking over campfires."



District XI

George C. Olive

(Missouri)

Columbia University: B.A., Economics and Environmental Science, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Economic and Social History

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*Career Aspirations*

International alternative energy development



George Olive was raised in Springfield, Missouri. An opportunity to conduct paleo-climate research at Columbia University prompted an interest in global warming and development, leading George to pursue a double major in economics and environmental science. In 2006, George joined an international research team for two months to drill for crystallized natural gas in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal for India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. After returning to Columbia, he began to collaborate with the governments of Papua New Guinea and the Dominican Republic on development and sustainability initiatives. This latter collaboration led to further work for the government of the Dominican Republic's Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development. He took leave from Columbia in the fall of 2006 to work in Chile on energy projects for Kyoto compliance. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa as a junior, George has served as president of the Columbia Economic Forum, as treasurer of Phi Gamma Delta, and as an instructor for introductory economics. At Oxford, he plans "to cultivate a more rigorous understanding of economic growth and development, and of the role of energy infrastructure in the developing world." George enjoys "backpacking, cooking, and traveling," and reads about "phenomenology, entomology, and the philosophy of science" whenever he can.



Joseph S. O'Shea

Florida State University: B.A., Philosophy and Interdisciplinary  
Social Science, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Comparative Social Policy



District VII  
(Florida)

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*Career Aspirations*

Social entrepreneurship, public service, politics

Joseph O'Shea, a native of Clearwater, Florida, currently serves as Student Body President and is a member of FSU's Board of Trustees. A Truman Scholar with a 4.0 grade point average, Joe was named one of the top ten male undergraduates in the country by *USA Today*. Joe's activities have ranged from founding a free health clinic that sees 10,000 patients a year in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward to serving as president of numerous student groups on campus. He led political campaigns to provide health care to Leon County's working families, formed the first ever student division of the United Way charity, and also co-founded the non-profit Global Peace Exchange, which offers international service-based exchanges for students worldwide (this summer, students with Global Peace Exchange will fund and build a technical school in Rwanda). Joe's interests include politics, philosophy, sports, and enjoying the outdoors. At Oxford, he will pursue studies in comparative social policy with the aim of "a career in politics and as a social entrepreneur solving some of society's most persistent social problems."



District XVI

Asya J. Passinsky

(California)

University of California–Berkeley: B.A., Political Economy and  
Russian Language & Literature, 2007

Proposed Oxford Course: Philosophy

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*Career Aspirations*

Philosophy



Asya Passinsky was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and moved to the United States with her family at the age of three. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa as a junior, and graduated from UC-Berkeley *summa cum laude* with majors in political economy of industrial societies and Slavic languages and literature. During her junior year, she interned with the United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome and wrote for an expatriate newspaper in Moscow. She has also worked as a theatre and dance critic for the *Daily Cal* and the San Francisco *Examiner*. A competitive figure skater for most of her life, Asya co-founded an intercollegiate figure skating team at UC-Berkeley and won two gold medals at the National Intercollegiate Figure Skating Championships. Some of her other interests include playwriting and poetry translation. Currently she works as a research assistant to philosopher John Searle (Wisconsin and Christ Church '52).



*District XV*

Aaron M. Polhamus

(Washington)

Stanford University: B.A., Public Policy, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Applied Statistics, Financial Economics



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*Career Aspirations*

Developing and emerging economies;  
public policy

Aaron Polhamus is a Pacific Northwest native who grew up in Bellingham, Washington. From a young age “the beauty of the snow-capped Cascade Mountains and the San Juan archipelago instilled in me a sense of wonder of the natural world, and a desire to explore far-off places.” After a rocky start in high school, Aaron graduated concurrently with his two-year community college degree and high school diploma and went on to attend Western Washington University, where he developed an interest in mathematics, political science, and economics. In his junior year, following two travel excursions throughout Central and South America and a summer position as a deckhand on an Alaskan commercial fishing seiner, Aaron transferred to Stanford, where he has integrated his interests in economics, statistics, and political science into the study of contemporary policy problems. Aaron wrote his senior thesis on comparative models of rural finance in Peru, investigating the theme of sustainable outreach to low-income borrowers. He also interned for the US Department of Treasury, where he spent a quarter working on US-Latin American economic relations. In his spare time Aaron enjoys “playing classical guitar, reading, exploring, exercising, and spending time in community.”



District XIII

Pravin S. Rajan

(New Mexico)

Georgetown University: B.S.F.S., Science, Technology, and  
International Relations, 2007

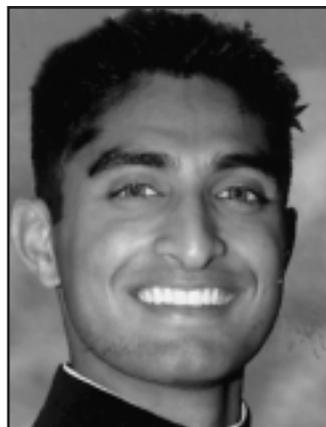
**Proposed Oxford Course:** International Relations

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*Career Aspirations*

Marine Officer, national security policy



Pravin Rajan graduated from Georgetown University in May 2007 as Class Marshall and a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit Honor Society. At Georgetown, he was a co-founder of GU Men Advocating Relationship Responsibility, worked in the Office of the President, and on the FRIENDS Initiative Leadership Team. His sophomore year, he was elected student body president. Pravin graduated from Marine Corps Officer Candidates' School in Summer 2006. He has conducted research on terrorist movements in twenty countries, helped developed State Department models to assess terrorist threats, and has authored a publication on the origins of the Muslim Brotherhood. The son of Indian immigrant parents, he inherits from his mother "a passion for all things international" and from his father "a love of mystic poetry and works—most notably the *Divine Comedy* and the writings of Hafiz, San Juan de la Cruz, and Lao Tzu." After Oxford, Pravin plans to be a Marine Officer, hoping to follow in the footsteps of his mentor, Captain Dennis Doyle, by becoming an infantry officer. More than anything, Pravin is grateful "for my friends, with whom I share faith, fellowship, and 'so much' fun, and for my family, whose support and inspiration keep me going."



*District XII*

Ishanaa N. Rambachan (Minnesota)

St. Olaf College: B.A., Political Science and Economics, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Development Studies



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*Career Aspirations*

Development

Ishanaa Rambachan, from Apple Valley, Minnesota, is a political science and economics major with a concentration in Middle Eastern studies. Her academic highlights include her participation in the Great Conversation program, a rigorous two-year survey of Western thought. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa last fall, Ishanaa is also a member of the Phi Sigma Alpha and Omicron Delta Epsilon honor societies. Her extensive studies abroad include time in Turkey, Morocco, Egypt, Greece, and the Czech Republic. As a Rand Scholar, Ishanaa researched the Scandinavian development program in Norway; as a Kloeck-Jenson Scholar, she volunteered with microfinance organizations in South India. In 2004, she studied the Caribbean Hindu Diaspora in the United States as a research affiliate with Harvard University's Pluralism Project. Ishanaa is a dedicated leader on and off campus, serving as chair of the Student Senate and as an executive member of the Hindu American Foundation. She also mobilized a student response to Hurricane Katrina and has since led a service trip of 180 students to the Gulf Coast annually. An avid debater and public speaker, Ishanaa is the 2004 National Champion in International Extemporaneous Speaking.



District VIII  
(Texas)

## Shayak Sarkar

Harvard University: A.B., Applied Mathematics; A.M., Statistics, 2007

Proposed Oxford Course: Social Policy

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### *Career Aspirations*

Public service



Shayak Sarkar is “a Californian at heart” who “left behind the San Diego sunshine to study in Massachusetts.” He spent four years volunteering with and directing the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter, an activity he describes as “the most educational part of my college career.” He also spent his summers teaching ESL to teenage refugees, coordinating a service-learning curriculum in the Boston community of Mission Hill, and volunteering in street outreach for homeless youth. Shayak served as treasurer of the Phillips Brooks House Association, managing a budget of over \$1 million for student-led public service efforts at Harvard. He also served on the steering committee of the Freshman Urban Program, a social justice orientation program for incoming freshmen. Combining his public service and academic interests, his senior thesis addresses the effects of landmark homeless legislation on the academic outcomes of American homeless children. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa as a junior and won both the Detur and Hoopes prizes. He aspires to work on “socially-inclusive economic and educational projects.”



*District VI*

## Deep Jayendrakumar Shah

(Georgia)

University of Georgia: A.B., International Affairs; B.S., Biology, 2008

Proposed Oxford Course: Comparative Social Policy



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*Career Aspirations*

Medical practice, health policy;  
physician policymaker

Deep Shah is a Foundation Fellow at the University of Georgia and a recipient of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship. His long-term plans are to combine his majors in biology and international affairs in work as a physician-policymaker. In 2005, Deep founded a student think tank, Roosevelt at UGA, which publishes extensively on policy issues and offers a public policy course for undergraduates. Deep has published on public issues related to bioterrorism preparedness and state health care regulations, and has served as a policy intern at the Greater New York Hospital Association and as Legislative Fellow to Senator Johnny Isakson. He has also performed basic science research and published on neuroanatomical changes related to Parkinson's Disease. He is "committed to addressing health, housing, and education issues related to the poverty crisis in UGA's home of Athens, Georgia." Deep enjoys "playing golf and racquet sports, cooking, and spending time with friends and family."



District III

(New York)

## Scott M. Thompson

Stanford University: B.A., Political Science and Psychology, 2006

Proposed Oxford Course: Social Policy, Social Work

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### *Career Aspirations*

Education and social policy; public service; law



Scott Thompson is currently in his second year of teaching at the Theatre Arts Production Company School in the South Bronx as a member of Teach for America. Having taught seventh grade social studies and science last year, Scott now teaches eleventh grade United States history. In addition to teaching, he established and advises a middle school newspaper, the *TAPCo Times*, and founded and serves as the faculty advisor for the school's Gay-Straight Alliance. He also advises the Amnesty International group, College Prep club, and Junior Statesmen chapter, and coaches the middle school boys softball team, which won last year's league championship. Scott grew up in Lincoln, Nebraska, and graduated Phi Beta Kappa having received a Chappell-Lougee Scholarship and several research grants. Scott led a research team and wrote his honors thesis on cultural psychology, exploring "regional variation in sense of self and well-being across the United States." While at Stanford, Scott also organized a best practices hearing for welfare-to-work programs (as a summer fellow in the California State Assembly), worked on child and family policy at the federal Department of Health and Human Services, interned at the National Center for Youth Law, and was a head teaching assistant for undergraduate courses in social psychology and constitutional law. He was also a member of the Stanford Jazz Orchestra. An avid baseball fan, Scott's "greatest concern about Oxford is that I will be deprived of live baseball for two years."



District VI

Katherine H. A. Vyborny

(Georgia)

University of Georgia: B.A., Economics and International Affairs, 2005

Proposed Oxford Course: Economics



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*Career Aspirations*

Development policy

Kate Vyborny is program coordinator for the president at the Center for Global Development, an independent think tank in Washington, D.C., where she works with researchers and policymakers to improve the effectiveness of foreign aid. Previously, Kate served as a junior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where she assisted with research and outreach on the effects of trade agreements on poor countries. While a student at the University of Georgia, Kate was awarded a Foundation Fellowship which allowed her to study immersion Mandarin in Harbin, China, to intern with indigenous cooperatives in Ambato, Ecuador, and to interview local leaders and researchers in Kerala, India. She was also a University and North Georgia coordinator for Amnesty International. In Washington, Kate volunteers with a women's shelter and HIPS, an outreach organization for sex workers. Kate feels "incredibly lucky to join the Rhodes Scholars in Oxford," where she hopes to pursue studies in economics for development and research in economics. She aspires to a career in international development policy and is particularly interested in "improving urban development and quality of life." Kate enjoys yoga and "loves exploring DC and new places on my bicycle."



## The Sailing “Bon Voyage” Weekend, September 22 – September 26, 2007

FOR THIS YEAR’S Sailing (or “Bon Voyage”) Weekend in Washington, D.C., the 32 U. S. Scholars-elect were joined by three 2007 Scholars-elect from other Rhodes jurisdictions (one each from Jamaica, Bermuda, and Barbados) as guests of the Association. At the opening welcome and orientation session on Saturday afternoon, AARS President Stewart Early (Pennsylvania and Brasenose ’66) emphasized the mission of the AARS, the benefits of membership, and the functionalities of the new website in fostering richer community among Rhodes Scholars. That evening, the 2007 Rhodes Scholars-elect and assembled AARS Board members enjoyed an informal dinner and lively conversation at the home of Lissa Muscatine (California and Wadham ’77) in Bethesda, Maryland—a much appreciated, festive, and enjoyable opportunity for all to get better acquainted.



*Scholars-elect at the Saturday evening dinner*

On Sunday morning, the women in the class of 2007 joined roughly a dozen Rhodes Scholar alumnae for breakfast and conversation. The breakfast was followed by a panel discussion for all Rhodes Scholars led by Marissa Doran (Massachusetts and Balliol 2005), Steve Sachs (Missouri and Merton 2002), Kendra Harris (Montana and Green 2002), Julia James (New York and Green 2004), Adam Chandler (North Carolina and Queen’s 2006), Luke Norris (Pennsylvania and St. Antony’s 2006), David Robinson (Maryland/DC and Balliol 2004) and Neil Brown (Iowa and Merton 2002), who discussed the joys and practicalities of life in Oxford. The Scholars-elect then enjoyed getting to know each other further while spending the afternoon watching the Washington Nationals. That evening, the Scholars-elect enjoyed dinner at the home of American Secretary Elliot Gerson (Connecticut and Magdalen ’74).



*At the Cosmos Club*

On Monday, the group traveled to Howard University for a morning colloquium on the life and thought of Alain Leroy Locke (Pennsylvania and Balliol ’07), the first Black and the first known gay American



*Stewart Early, Wesley Clark, and past president John Morrison*



*At dinner before the Locke symposium*



*The Alain Locke panel at Howard University*



*At the Cosmos Club*

Rhodes Scholar. Panel and plenary presentations by noted Locke scholars sparked thoughtful and lively conversation about Locke, about prejudice past and present, and about the role of the arts and philosophy in fighting the world's fight. Some Scholars-elect remained at Howard in the afternoon to continue to discuss matters of prejudice raised by the Locke event, while John A. Roome (South African College School and Lady Margaret Hall '83) and Hunter Monroe (North Carolina and Balliol '84) hosted the scheduled program briefing at the International Monetary Fund/World Bank building. The formal presentations on various IMF/World Bank initiatives were followed by a lively question and answer period about various aspects of international development. That evening, the group was generously entertained by the British Embassy at a reception at the home of the Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission, Alan Charlton, and his wife, Judith.

On Tuesday morning, Senator Richard G. Lugar (Indiana and Pembroke '54) and retired Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (Maryland/DC and Balliol '54) hosted a breakfast and conversation at the U.S. Capitol for the Scholars-elect, who were joined by Representatives Tom Allen (Maine and Wadham '67), Jim Cooper (Tennessee and Oriel '75), and David Vitter (Louisiana and Magdalen '83). The Senators gave informal remarks and responded to questions about American politics, foreign policy, and politics as a career. Senator Sarbanes then led the group on a tour of the Capitol. Following an informal time for

Scholars-elect to explore Washington on their own, the group reconvened that afternoon at the Supreme Court, where University of Virginia Professor A. E. Dick Howard (Virginia and Christ Church '58) offered brief remarks on the Court and its Justices before introducing Associate Justice David H. Souter (New Hampshire and Magdalen '61). Justice Souter spoke informally to the Scholars about the Court and his education, and graciously responded to questions from the Scholars for more than an hour. That evening, the new Scholars were hosted at small group dinners by Board members and Wash-



ington-area Rhodes Scholars who shared their experiences at Oxford and beyond. On several occasions during the weekend, the Scholars-elect were joined by members of the American Rhodes class of 1957 who were enjoying their 50th reunion adjacent to the Sailing Weekend events.

The annual Departure Luncheon was held at the Cosmos Club on Wednesday, September 26th. The Scholars-elect were guests of the Association. A number of Board members and several spouses as well as many other Rhodes Scholars were present. Following the introduction of the Scholars-elect by the Rhodes Trust's American Secretary, Elliot Gerson, the keynote address was given by Retired General Wesley Clark (Arkansas and Magdalen '66), former NATO Commander, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe, who led the Bosnia and Kosovo interventions. The new Scholars departed that evening by air for London Heathrow, where they were met the next day by American Rhodes Scholars of 2006 and accompanied to Oxford.

The 2007 Bon Voyage Weekend Committee was chaired by George Keys (Maryland/DC and Balliol '70). Thanks are also due to Dick Howard for his help in arranging the Supreme Court visit, to Lissa Muscatine and Elliot Gerson for generously hosting the Saturday and Sunday dinners, to Brett House and John Roome in making the IMF/World Bank visit possible, to Neil Brown for arranging the Rhodes Scholar panel and helping arrange the baseball game and Congressional breakfast, and to the hosts of the 12 small group dinners and other Rhodes Alumni guests who do so much to welcome the new Scholars to the AARS community. This year's Sailing Weekend is scheduled for September 27 to October 1, 2008, again in Washington, D.C. The Sailing Weekend and the Departure Luncheon are sponsored by the AARS and are supported entirely by the contributions of its members.

#### From The American Secretary:

**F**OLLOWING THE third year of the new single-tier selection system, I conducted a survey of our institutional representatives across the country, most of whom have positions as the formal advisors for overseas scholarships and for other nationally competitive graduate awards and fellowships. I selected a representative sample of 107 institutions and have received responses from 55 of them. They include 32 private institutions (including 17 liberal arts colleges and five Ivies) and 23 public universities. They are located in 31 states, large and small, and range from the most nationally selective in admissions to ones regionally and locally distinguished. A few have a student who wins most years, the vast majority have a successful candidate only occasionally, and a few never have. Additionally, 19 are located in states whose residents or students had the good fortune in the previous two-tier selection system to have extremely favorable odds to receive an interview—I wanted to test whether attitudes might be somewhat different at such institutions (and overall, surprisingly, they are not).



This was an opportunity not only to collect reactions to and comments about the Rhodes Scholarship selection process, but also to assess the continuing appeal of the Rhodes Scholarships generally. This is the first survey of its kind conducted in many years, and I thought it could be especially illuminating in the context of expanding international educational opportunities of all kinds for American college students—including a range of new scholarships and fellowships for foreign study, as well as the increasing popularity of years and semesters of American university-sponsored study abroad.

The results of the survey were encouraging.

While students of course lack experience that would allow them fairly to compare the former selection process (which had state and then regional phases) with the new one-stage regional system, most of our advisors have that experience. Only eight of the 55 responding, or about 15 percent, felt the new process had a discouraging effect on students' decisions to apply. But only three of those eight felt that any of their stronger candidates were discouraged by the more difficult chances to receive an interview.

We hope of course that no candidate with a realistic chance for selection would not apply because of the structure of the new system. Final selection odds are no harder than they ever were. And we continue to believe the new system is not only more efficient but more fair (for a number of reasons I have explained in this letter in previous years). Also to our knowledge, we still interview more candidates than any similar international fellowship. It is undeniable that the odds for interview selection are now much more difficult than they used to be for students in most states, and especially those from ones that typically had small applicant pools—and of course that change is most noticeable to those institutions the majority of whose candidates traditionally benefited from that advantage. But I was struck by the fact that, of the 19 representatives from institutions that had formerly benefited from especially better odds for first-round interviews, only three felt the new system discouraged their students from applying, and only one of those three felt the new system discouraged their most qualified applicants.

It is apparent that the Scholarship (now in its second century) and Oxford remain at the highest level of aspiration for the country's most talented graduates. Eighty-seven percent of representatives responding said the Rhodes Scholarship is as prestigious as ever, or even more so—94 percent of the private (small and large) universities' representatives thought so, and 78 percent of the public universities' representatives agreed. Other scholarships and fellowships are surely very attractive, especially (we were told) due to perceived (or real) better chances, and in some cases due to fewer referral letters, or sometimes due to the lack of an age requirement—or, for some subjects, a perceived better match at other British institutions. But the questionnaire results give little reason to doubt the representative who said that the Rhodes Scholarship “remains in a category by itself.”

Institutional representatives indicated that expanded opportunities such as junior years abroad have only increased the appeal of a Rhodes Scholarship, and that Oxford remains supremely attractive across all disciplines. Only two rep-



representatives reported declining interest because of such increased opportunity, and indeed many volunteered that the opposite is the case. With respect to any possible declining interest in general of their very best students in overseas study, only six of the university representatives reported any. Those who saw some declining interest pointed primarily to career pressures faced by some scientists and pre-professionals.

With respect to Oxford itself, only 14 percent said that there is declining interest. Oxford remains, as one representative said, the “gold standard.”

With respect to the administrative aspects of the application process, about 60 percent of the representatives felt that an on-line system would be more attractive to students and faculty than our traditional hard-copy, mailed system. But some representatives are as adamantly opposed to change (due it seems mainly to occasional glitches) as others are strongly in favor of moving to an on-line system. We will continue to consider on-line options, guided by comments we receive about what we should emulate in other scholarships’ on-line applications. And there may be some partially on-line reforms we can institute more quickly that are likely to be well received by almost everyone.

Through a different questionnaire, we also learned more than we knew before about the selection processes that institutions use to make their endorsements for Rhodes Scholarships. One-hundred thirty-one college representatives told us how many students sought Rhodes endorsements, something about the campus review process they used, and how many endorsements were granted. Extrapolating the results conservatively, approximately 1,420 students sought a Rhodes endorsement last year; 764 received one. Of these, 209 received district interviews. And you have now read the short biographies of the 32 who won.

This year’s class—as the new survey results might suggest—is as impressive as any before it. As in recent years, most will do graduate degrees, with one choosing the superb B.A. in English (as I have noted regularly, a second B.A. can still occasionally be the best choice for someone, even though all our winners are easily qualified for graduate degrees). Sixteen plan to do two-year masters, some of whom will progress in their first year to a three-year course leading to a doctorate in the same field. Ten will do a one-year masters to be followed by a different one-year masters, and five will proceed immediately to a D.Phil. With respect to Oxford colleges applied to, 15 different colleges were the first choice of at least one Scholar-elect this year.

While the interests and backgrounds of this year’s class are diverse, the winners share, as always and in abundance, both academic excellence and intellectual and other-directed ambition. We send them to Oxford with confidence that they will each find ways to make a difference.

ELLIOT F. GERSON  
*American Secretary to The Rhodes Trust*

## About the Rhodes Scholarships

THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS were established in 1902 by the Will of Cecil Rhodes, the British philanthropist and colonial pioneer. Rhodes hoped that the Scholarships might improve “the lot of humankind through the diffusion of leaders motivated to serve their contemporaries, trained in the contemplative life of the mind, and broadened by their acquaintance with one another and by their exposure to cultures different from their own.” Rhodes intended that his plan of bringing able students from throughout the English-speaking world and beyond to study at Oxford University would “aid in the promotion of international understanding and peace.” (See further *Oxford and The Rhodes Scholarships*.) Each year, 32 Americans are among approximately 85 Rhodes Scholars selected world-wide to take up degree courses at Oxford.

Cecil Rhodes wrote that Rhodes Scholars should “esteem the performance of public duties as their highest aim” and outlined four criteria of selection: 1) literary and scholastic attainments; 2) fondness for and success in sports; 3) truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindness, unselfishness, and fellowship; and 4) moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in one’s fellow beings.

*Interested applicants are encouraged to consult the fellowship office of their own college or university, or the American Secretary of the Rhodes Trust: Elliot F. Gerson, 8229 Boone Blvd., Suite 240, Vienna, VA 22182. Phone: (703) 821-5960. Fax: (703) 821-2770. E-mail: amsec@rhodesscholar.org. Or visit the web site at: www.rhodesscholar.org.*



## About the Association of American Rhodes Scholars

THE MISSION of the AARS is to bring Rhodes Scholars in the U.S. together in support of the Rhodes Scholarship and Oxford University through events, publications, networks, and the web. We provide the social, intellectual and professional outreach to reflect on our shared experiences and extend our perspectives. We promote exchange and goodwill among the peoples of the diverse countries from which Rhodes Scholars and other Oxonians are drawn.

AARS plans and supports several activities including national and class reunions, regional events, and the Bon Voyage Weekend/Orientation for new Scholars. The Association publishes this annual newsletter, *The American Rhodes Scholar*, as well as the quarterly journal, *The American Oxonian*, which includes articles, book reviews, class letters and the annual Address and Occupations List of American Rhodes Scholars and other Oxonians. It also hosts the website [www.americanrhodes.org](http://www.americanrhodes.org). It administers the Eastman Professorship Trust and the American Trust for Oxford (ATFO). AARS members pay modest dues annually; many members also make generous additional donations. AARS does not receive funding from the Rhodes Trust, nor does it have responsibility for the Rhodes Scholar selection process in the U.S.

*For membership and further information, contact Nicholas W. Allard, AARS Secretary, c/o AARS, 8229 Boone Blvd., Suite 240, Vienna, VA 22182. Or visit the AARS link on the internet from: [www.rhodesscholar.org](http://www.rhodesscholar.org) or directly at: [www.americanrhodes.org](http://www.americanrhodes.org).*



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