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## SPGS 2014 Annual Newsletter



The mission of the [School of Politics and Global Studies](#) is "to generate and diffuse knowledge that contributes to society's understanding of politics and governance, at local, national, and global levels." We have continued in our pursuit of that mission with great success in 2014.

Across a wide variety of events, including the Night of the Open Door and our Awards Recognition Ceremony, we showcased the skills and intellect of our students and faculty to the community.

Our faculty took center stage through conferences that featured the beautiful desert campus of ASU, and breakthrough research about women and politics and international relations and conflict.

We hope to continue to inspire students to change the world curricular and co-curricular activities and by forming a network of alumni that spans the globe.

Next year, we plan to send even more students to Washington D.C., to the Arizona legislature, and abroad to gain real world experiences, strengthen their skills, and ultimately to make a difference in whatever career path they choose.

We hope you enjoy this inaugural newsletter, which features stories about many of our student and faculty activities over the past year. Many of these activities were made possible by the generous contributions of friends of the School of Politics and Global Studies.

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

## Alumnus Brian Kopf's gift benefits students, faculty

The School of Politics and Global Studies benefited in 2013 from a generous gift from a 1980 alumnus.

Thirty-five years ago, Brian A. Kopf earned his B.S. in Political Science from Arizona State University. As a college student, Brian worked at Fry's grocery stores. He also attended DeVry Institute, becoming an expert in information technology. He retired from J. P. Morgan Chase Bank as a vice-president in 1952.

Kopf also was dedicated to helping the less-fortunate through St. Vincent de Paul, where he was named volunteer of the year, and to the Sun Valley Animal Shelter. Kopf's loyalty to ASU remained strong and he enjoyed his association with his alma mater, particularly as a long-time member of the Sun Angels. He also supported Channel Eight, Sun Devil Athletics and now, his estate gift

benefits our students, faculty and staff. Kopf passed away in 2012.

Cameron Thies, Director of SPGS, remarked, "Rather than identify a specific purpose for his generous gift, Brian allowed the School of Politics and Global Studies at ASU to identify our most important emerging priorities and invest in them. These unrestricted gifts are rare. We are grateful for Brian's vision and his support of our continuous efforts to attract and retain our world class faculty, inspire our active and engaging students, and provide diverse opportunities and areas of research to the campus, local, national and global communities."

The following events happened thanks to the Brian A. Kopf Fund:

#### **The Politics of Race, Immigration and Ethnicity Consortium**

This January conference hosted by Dr. Rodolfo Espino invited a dozen scholars to take part in discussions about topics such as Medicaid eligibility for immigrants, photo I.D. laws for voting, and legacies for refugees.

#### **Founder's Day**

This annual University event takes place in the spring semester and brings to together ASU's alumni, faculty and supporters to honor those who create new ideas to create a more sustainable world. The Alumni Association celebrates those currently representing the spirits of founders of the Territorial Normal School of Arizona. The Brian A. Kopf Fund provided for a SPGS table at the event for faculty and alumni.

#### **Inaugural Working Group Conference on Women, Media and Politics**

In April, faculty from SPGS specializing in women and politics invited other specialists from the U.S. and abroad to discuss new and innovative work on gender and politics. Topics of [presentations](#) ranged from gender stereotypes in campaigns and media coverage and gender responses to negative news to media coverage of political daughters running for office. The papers from this conference will be published in a special issue of the academic journal *Politics & Gender*.

#### **Capital Scholars**

The ASU [Capital Scholars Program](#) develops future leaders by providing undergraduate students with hands-on training in the public policymaking process in Washington, D.C., while it enhances the university's and the state's reputation in the nation's capital. Each year since 1998, ASU has provided an opportunity for up to 25 undergraduate students to spend a summer in Washington, D.C., interning with Congress, federal agencies, advocacy groups, the media, nonprofit organizations, think tanks and policy research groups. The Brian A. Kopf Fund provided scholarships for 10 students to participate.

#### **Early Start Program**

SPGS participated in developing the pilot for an Early Start Program designed to smooth the transition to ASU for underprepared students. Twenty SPGS students participated in the two-week program. While funded primarily by the CLAS, SPGS also augmented the technology available to students through the Brian A. Kopf Fund.

## **An Early Start to Success**



Two weeks before the start of the 2014 fall semester, the halls of Manzanita Hall were already filled with students.

These students were freshmen from across the county who were invited to take part in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences pilot Early Start Program. The Early Start Program was designed to help students who by virtue of their background may not be as prepared for college as needed to succeed. Rather than run the risk of having such students drop out, this program helps students transition from high school to college.

Led by Political Science instructors and faculty mentors Professors Gina Woodall and Richard Herrera, the group of 20 students were kept busy with bonding experiences, classroom learning and more.

Starting college is a stressful time for anyone, but starting two weeks before the official date and entering into a time-intensive program with only 20 students can be even more stressful. However, the Early Start Program offered benefits that easily combated these fears.

"It made the school smaller," said student Oscar Vazquez. "I come from a school of 400 people and wanted a large college experience, but this was an easy transition."

A political science session was taught every morning. Guest speakers like Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema and Representative T.J. Shope from the AZ Legislature came and talked with the students about their journeys to their current professions.

"We talked about elections, campaigns, federalism, had students role play and engage in a political debate, and they read Justice Sonia Sotomayor's 'My Beloved World,' which is Sotomayor's memoir focusing on life challenges that she ultimately overcame," said Woodall. "It was a jam-packed two weeks."

Students also said they learned time management skills, how to utilize University resources and how to balance activities with school work.

Lessons on how to be the ideal Sun Devil were just the beginning, as career options in the field of political science were also discussed. Joined by alumni and visitors, the students were able to get a look into what their future as a political science student may hold.

"We had a guest speaker come in, an alum named Marilyn Purvis," said Woodall. "She is a very successful lobbyist and a dynamic speaker. A student asked her, 'How can I become you?' 'How do I get there?' This was a great question and this is the point of the program- helping students imagine who they will become and then working on reaching their goal every day."

The students felt the same way.

"It really clarified what you wanted to do," student Brian Ladesich said, who is interested in joining the Air Force.

Students were not the only ones to take away something from the program.

"The program was extremely time-intensive but also a lot of fun," Woodall said. "I know these particular students better than other students and, most importantly, the students are extremely close, given the special experience they shared this summer. It's fun to see them hanging around one another and going to class together now."

The Early Start Program was funded by CLAS and by the Brian A. Kopf Fund donated to the School of Politics and Global Studies.

## Thank You for Your Support



In 2015-2016, we plan on bringing more of the world to the ASU campus through speakers and conferences as well as sending our students abroad to sharpen their skills and gain real world experience.

In the spring, we will be hosting scholars from around the world to exchange ideas with our faculty on important topics, thanks to the Brian A. Kopf Fund.

In January, Professor Daniel Rothenberg will welcome participants to discuss human rights documentation and analysis at the conference "How Do We Know What We Know?"

Following in February, Professor Michael Hechter will host the "Ethnic and Religious Conference" and bring together ethnic studies professors and religious studies professors to discuss ethnic and religious groups, politics and violence.

As mentioned in our mission statement, we hope to diffuse knowledge that will lead our students to making a difference on all levels, whether it is on a local, national or global level.

In 2015, we hope to support even more of our students through donations to our internship programs including travel funds for Global Studies interns, scholarships for Capital Scholars or monetary support for graduate students through the SPGS Graduate Fund.

We are able to provide scholarships, offer travel funds and organize special events for our students due to the generosity of people like you. Our programs allow students to acquire the skills they need to succeed after college, whether it is through experiences in a foreign country or right here at the state capitol. Your donations also help students to purchase textbooks, pay tuition and meet their general living expenses while at ASU. Arizona resident students are paying over \$10,000 in tuition and fees each year; nonresidents are paying over \$24,000.

Please consider investing in our students by visiting the [SPGS donation page](#) to see the multiple programs and scholarships we have available for students that could use your support. We also invite you to visit SPGS anytime or at event such as Night of the Open Door on Feb. 28 to see the many projects, studies and adventures of both our faculty and students that wouldn't be possible without the help of donors.

We thank you in advance for your continued support of the School of Politics and Global Studies.

