



# GLOBAL LEADERS OF PENN STATE

Global and International Studies  
Monthly Email Newsletter



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## WELCOME

by **Gianna Pinto, Managing Editor**

Hello! Welcome to the September issue of *Global Leaders of Penn State*, the Global and International Studies (GLIS) program newsletter. To start, thank you so much for reading. We would love to give a warm welcome back to campus and a reminder to stay healthy and studious. My name is Gianna Pinto, and I am a senior with majors in GLIS (Culture and Identity pathway) and Spanish. I will be this year's editor of the GLIS newsletter.

In this issue, we will introduce you to junior student Kristen Miller, GLIS alumnus Chris Egg-Krings '21, and Dr. Joseph Wright, professor of political science. GLIS students have some of the most culturally enriching and rewarding experiences, and our team enjoys highlighting them. Likewise, our GLIS faculty and alumni can provide helpful insight on how to make the most of your GLIS education at Penn State.

If you have any feedback or would like to submit a story, please email [glis@psu.edu](mailto:glis@psu.edu). We look forward to hearing from you and cannot wait to show you all the opportunities that GLIS has to offer.



**PennState**  
College of the Liberal Arts

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

by Gianna Pinto, Managing Editor



Kristen Miller

**“All of my internships and education abroad experiences have helped me develop the soft skills needed to pursue a career in federal government, consulting, or human capital management. I have learned what it means to communicate and lead in multinational, multicultural, and multilingual environments.”**

## **Kristen Miller '23**

**Hometown: Port Matilda, Pennsylvania**

**FLAS Fellowship Recipient**

Kristen Miller is a junior student majoring in GLIS (Culture and Identity pathway), Labor and Human Resources, Latin American Studies, and Spanish. In addition, Kristen is currently completing a minor in Portuguese. During her time at Penn State, Kristen has completed internships with Trafika Europe Radio and Global Youth Engagement Program (in partnership with the Club of Rome and Penn State Sustainability Institute). Most recently, Kristen worked with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. In this remote internship (May–September 2021), she worked as a public diplomacy intern to develop their Regional English Language Office. In addition to these internships, Kristen has studied abroad for a year in Gujarat, India, a year in Santa Fe, Argentina, and will be completing an education abroad program in Valencia, Spain this spring. Some of Kristen's current research interests include global workers' rights, youth in conflict zones, and bilingualism.

Kristen was awarded two Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships to study Portuguese. This summer, she used one of the fellowships to attend classes through the Stone Center for Latin American Studies at Tulane University. For the academic year, she is using the second fellowship to take advanced language courses and to study abroad.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

by Kelly Zahour, Alumni Relations

**Chris Egg-Krings '21**  
**Teach for America**

**“GLIS is a great community  
of like-minded people  
who are curious about  
the world.”**



Chris Egg-Krings in Hawaii  
for Teach for America

Penn State alumnus Chris Egg-Krings '21, was drawn to Global and International Studies because of the freedom to pursue a large range of classes that were interesting to him. Chris came into Penn State as a Finance and Math double major, but switched to GLIS early on to allow for more flexibility in the classes he took and to graduate early. He explained that majoring in GLIS gave him insight into new perspectives and critical thinking skills and also taught him to be open-minded. Chris took classes in the Wealth and Inequality pathway, and his desire to give back to the community is what led him to join Teach for America after graduating from Penn State. Teach for America is a nonprofit organization that works toward providing quality and equitable education for low-income students. Through Teach for America, Chris will spend the next two years teaching students in Hawaii and wants to pursue a career in finance when he finishes. While at Penn State, Chris was the president of Enactus, an organization that encourages entrepreneurial leaders to use innovation to improve the world, which led to his passion for community service and giving back to those in need.

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

by Kelly Zahour, Alumni Relations

## Joseph Wright, Ph.D.

Professor of Political Science

How does migration from the Global South shape democracy? Professor Wright's most recent book, *Migration and Democracy*, argues that when migrants leave the Global South to work in the Global North, the remittance income they send home changes the internal balance of resources and power in autocratic countries. Worker remittances are not only the largest source of foreign income in most autocratic countries; but, in contrast to revenue from natural resource exports, foreign aid, and even international investment, remittances flow directly to citizens, largely circumventing autocratic governments. Using global data and surveys from Africa, our collaborative research shows that remittance income in recipient autocracies increases political opposition resources, thus boosting nonviolent protest against dictatorships. We also find that remittances decrease government dependency, making citizens less likely to vote for autocratic governments at election time. These two mechanisms—more protest and fewer votes—help undermine dictatorships and foster democracy in the Global South.

Dr. Joe Wright is a professor here at Penn State in the Department of Political Science and is the co-director of the Global and International Studies program. He teaches the courses Dictators and Their Demise, Global Pathways, and Foreign Policy and Authoritarian Politics at the undergraduate level and Comparative Authoritarianism, Comparative Politics Seminar, and Politics of Development at the graduate level. He additionally was the co-author of numerous books, including *Foreign Pressure and the Politics of Autocratic Survival* (2015), *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse* (2018), and *Migration and Democracy: How Remittances Undermine Dictatorships* (forthcoming in 2022). In 2016, Dr. Wright spent time in Cape Town, South Africa, where he was a visiting scholar for Economic Research Southern Africa, a research program focusing on the industrial organization and the economics of digital transformation in South Africa.



Dr. Joseph Wright,  
Professor of Political Science



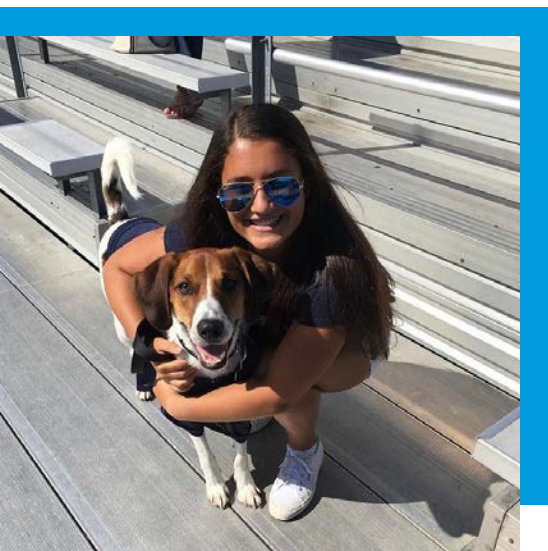
## Ashley Naraine '22

Ashley Naraine is a senior majoring in Global and International Studies. For Ashley, it's been quite a journey within this major and her time at Penn State. She decided to major in GLIS as someone who absolutely loves studying different countries, culture, media, history, and social norms. Ashley says she believes that being a GLIS major not only makes herself more socially aware of how we view others in the world in terms of nationality and ethnicity, as well as how others view the United States, but also how we can perceive the social cues and expectations of cultures outside of the United States. As such, GLIS gives Ashley an overall better understanding of the world and how she can interact with others.



Ashley Naraine

Ashley is currently in Penn State's Air Force ROTC, and upon graduation this spring hopes to become a military intelligence officer. Her main goal of majoring in GLIS and commissioning in the Air Force is to have that background experience to one day work in a U.S. Embassy overseas (possibly in Hong Kong or Taiwan), as she is using her GLIS background to further her studies in Mandarin Chinese. Therefore, having this background in GLIS (especially in the Culture and Identity pathway) has taught Ashley a great deal about diversity in all wavelengths.



Lauren Brooks

## Lauren Brooks '23

Lauren Brooks chose to major in GLIS because she wanted to deepen her knowledge of international studies. Lauren wanted to learn about the importance of global studies and its impact in the way we view current issues. To Lauren, GLIS means the study of global interworkings not only on a broad level, but the ability to narrow down and find our interest in a specific pathway, which in the long run allows us to specialize our learning. Majoring in GLIS with a pathway in Human Rights helps Lauren meet her goals of understanding how to best help people and maintain this mentality as she pursues law school.



Gianna Pinto  
Managing Editor  
GLIS and Spanish majors  
Culture and Identity pathway  
Senior



Christina Fomunoy  
Student Outreach  
GLIS and International Politics majors  
Culture and Identity pathway  
Spanish minor  
Junior



Kelly Zahour  
Alumni Relations  
GLIS major  
Human Rights pathway  
Psychology and  
Political Science minors  
Senior

***Global Leaders of Penn State is looking to expand our team! If you are interested in contributing or submitting a story, please email us at [glis@psu.edu](mailto:glis@psu.edu).***



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