

SINE INSTITUTE
of POLICY & POLITICS

Background on the Project

The Sine Research Team

Amy Dacey

Amy K. Dacey is Executive Director of the Sine Institute of Policy & Politics at American University. For more than two decades, she managed prominent national organizations, advised leading elected officials and candidates, including President Barack Obama and Senator John Kerry, and counseled a variety of nonprofits and companies. Before joining AU, Amy was President of AKD Strategies, a strategic firm working with non-profits, and foundations in the progressive policy space. During the 2016 presidential election, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Democratic National Committee. During the 2004 elections, she worked for then-Senator John Kerry on his presidential campaign and, following his narrow loss, helped to lead Kerry's political operation. She also managed Rep. Louise Slaughter's congressional campaign in 1998. From 2010 to 2013, Amy served as Executive Director of EMILY's List, the organization dedicated to electing Democratic women to national, state, and local offices, and led the organization's revitalization, restructuring and rebranding efforts.



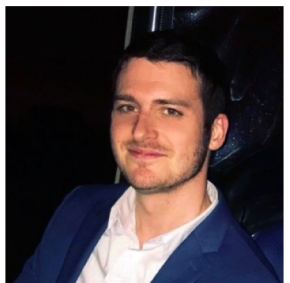
Molly O'Rourke

Molly O'Rourke is an Executive in Residence in the School of Communication at American University and also serves as the Director of the MA program in Political Communication. She teaches undergraduate and graduate level courses in Research Methods, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches. She has more than 20 years' experience in the field of public opinion research, most recently as a partner at Hart Research in Washington, D.C. where she led multiphase research project for dozens of advocacy and nonprofit organizations, political candidates, and media outlets, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Human Right Campaign (HRC) and NBC News.



Benjamin Bryant

Benjamin Bryant joined the Sine Institute as communications director in June 2022. Prior to his current role, he worked for six years on Capitol Hill, serving as the deputy press secretary for Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and communications director for Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA). Benjamin is originally from Rhode Island. He graduated from the University of Connecticut in 2012 and worked for several years in local Rhode Island radio news before coming to Washington D.C. in 2014 to serve as a policy communications extern at Facebook (Meta's) Washington, D.C. office.



Generation Lab

Generation Lab is a data intelligence company that translate youth views and behavior for media, academia, businesses, government, and the American public. Generation Lab uses proprietary methods that streamline the polling process for respondents, maintain exceptional data integrity, and enhance data collection. Generation Lab specializes in studying young people and the trends that shape the future and works to “pursue youth truth” for clients and the American public. Generation Lab’s work has been featured in such media outlets as AXIOS, PBS, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and others.



Close Up Foundation

Founded in 1971, Close Up Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic education organization that believes a strong democracy requires active, informed participation by all citizens. Close Up seeks to serve young people from all communities and all backgrounds, regardless of race, religion, gender, socioeconomic level, or academic standing. For over 50 years, we have partnered with schools nationwide to serve more than one million students and educators through experiential programs in our nation’s capital and in local communities, virtual programs, professional development, and curriculum and resource design. Close Up Washington DC’s issue-centric, nonpartisan curriculum gives participants a deeper understanding of history, government institutions, current issues, and the role of citizens.



The Millennial Youth Action Project

The Millennial Youth Action Project is an organization dedicated to renewing American democracy. In collaboration with dozens of Millennial leaders across the country, and with the generous support of visionary philanthropists, the Millennial Action Project was formed and officially launched in 2013. The Millennial Action Project works directly with our nation’s leading young policymakers on both a national and state level to bridge the partisan divide and lead a new era of collaborative governance. As a national, nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to activating millennial and Gen Z policymakers, MAP gives our nation’s young leaders the resources and support to develop and pass innovative policy solutions — and forge productive partnerships on the issues affecting the youngest generations of Americans.



The Sine Student Advisory Panel

The Sine Institute worked with an advisory group of visionary AU graduate and undergraduate students from across the university to help design the poll, formulate its questions, and provide feedback on the survey methodology and results, as well as offered suggestions for further research topics.

Ifeanyi Ruth Umunna is an undergraduate student at American University in Washington, D.C. She studies Political Science and African American Diaspora Studies. She is from Boston, MA, where she attended The Winsor School. Upon her graduation, she hopes to pursue MPP and JD degrees. She is interested in public defense law. At American University, she served as a Resident Assistant for American University's Black Affinity Housing in its inaugural year, as well as a Teaching Assistant and Student Director for the School of Public Affairs Leadership Program, a Peer Advisor in the School of Public Affairs, a Resident Assistant, and as President of the University's Black Student Union. She interned at Audrey Denney for Congress, the Center for Policing Equity, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, the Office of Representative Ayanna Pressley, and the Trone Center for Justice and Equality at the ACLU National Office. Her other undergraduate achievements include receiving the inaugural Professor Elizabeth A. Sherman Prize for Social Justice and the Robert and Christine Johnson Scholarship from the School of Public Affairs, as well as being elected to the American University chapter of The Phi Beta Kappa Society. For more information about her professional, academic, and volunteer experience, please view the rest of her LinkedIn page.



Logan Galimi is a 2nd year Politics, Policy, and Law three-year Scholar at American University. He has an interdisciplinary array of interests, including democracy, psychology, economics, and philosophy. At the moment, Logan is particularly focused on the concepts of workplace democracy, moral error theory, and urban planning. Outside of the academic world, Logan enjoys jazz drumming, singing, and bicycling. He spent the first 18 years of his life in Southern California, and although he loves DC, he does miss the beach.



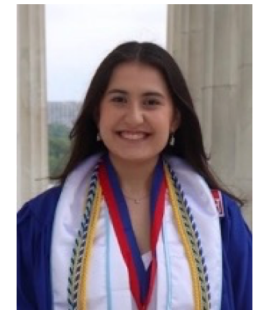
Rohan Singh is a third-year undergraduate student at American University's School of International Service focusing on the Middle East and North Africa. Rohan is an Undergraduate Research Assistant to the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University, a Peer Mentor, and intern at the US Mission to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. He is also a member of the Student Advisory Board at the Sine Institute of Policy and Politics. Rohan has recently been selected to present a research paper at the International Association of Political Science Students (IAPSS) 2023 World Congress in Montreal, Canada. He has been published in The Friday Times.



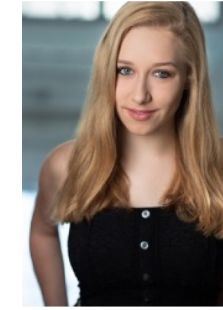
Kaniya Harris is a junior double majoring in Justice, Law, & Criminology (JLC) and Sociology with a Business & Entertainment minor. Kaniya is involved in the School of Public Affairs (SPA) Leadership Program, Collaborative Leadership Certificate Program, School of Public Affairs Honors Program, and AU Honors Program. Additionally, Kaniya has been the Director of Students for Change (SFC) for two consecutive years; SFC is an intersectional organization that is responsible for creating and delivering responsive, effective, and educational programming to address a wide range of issues through the lens of gender and sexuality. In addition to being the Director for Students for Change, Kaniya is the Co-President for the Black Student Union, an AUx Peer Facilitator, and a Teacher's Assistant for the SPA Leadership Program. When she is not on campus, Kaniya works as the Events Associate for the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.



Emily Warshaw graduated Cum Laude from American University with a BA in Elementary Education and minors in Sociology and Special Education. She is currently a graduate student at American University completing a Masters in Special Education. She has completed six internships including at the Smithsonian Gardens and she was a volunteer teacher for Columbia University's Youth Remote Learning Initiative. She is currently serving as a Fellow at the Lab School of Washington and was selected as a Student Associate for Anna Deavere Smith through American University's Sine Institute. She is passionate about science, American Sign Language (ASL), performing arts, singing, and rowing.



Jane Caroline Fusco is a sophomore in the School of Communication majoring in Journalism, with an emphasis in Broadcast. She is currently working as an intern at CNN as part of the production team on *The Lead with Jake Tapper*. Jane is also an anchor and reporter at ATV, the school's student-run television station. Last summer, she worked as a news intern at WECT in Wilmington, North Carolina, where she reported and produced stories that appeared on the air. Jane is a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Juan P. Villasmil graduated from American University with a degree in international studies. Aside from his work in the foreign policy world, writing for publications like *The National Interest* and *International Policy Digest*, JP also has domestic policy and journalism experience. He interned with Senator Marco Rubio, participated in Heritage's Young Leaders Program, and assisted former Governor Doug Ducey as a Sine Institute Student Associate. He was one of the main contributors in *The Wall Street Journal's* Future View Snapchat show, and he has been featured on Telemundo, Fox News, MSNBC, *The American Spectator*, and others.



Travis Meuwissen is a second-year masters student studying Public Policy student at American University. Before arriving in DC, Travis spent eight years working in Oregon politics ranging in fields from campaign management, legislative staff, and health care advocacy. Travis was born and raised in Oregon. True to his Pacific Northwest roots, his favorite activities include hiking, swimming, and finding new local craft brews.



Samantha Hessel is a freshman undergraduate student at American University currently studying Political Science. Originally from Breckenridge, Colorado, Samantha has always had an interest in policy and politics, and is constantly inspired whilst attending school in Washington, D.C.



More Information about the Sine Institute



The Sine Institute is a laboratory for university-wide collaboration and an incubator for policy innovation, convening the best and the brightest in the public, private, academic, and nonprofit sectors, as well as journalism.

Today's interconnected world offers an unprecedented opportunity to bring together experts, top scholars, and students in research and scholarship to work on the nation's most pressing challenges in a way that promotes common ground and nonpartisan policy solutions. The Sine Institute of Policy & Politics seizes that opportunity at a defining moment for our democracy and the world. American University's capital city location at the nexus of government and a growing international business center connects diverse perspectives from around the world.

Alongside world-class academics and research-experienced practitioners in international and domestic affairs, leaders in business, nonprofits, and government, and one of the most politically-active student bodies in the U.S., Sine works toward real, lasting change in policy and politics. The Sine Institute stands apart through its focus on the role of business and the nonprofit community in public policy, the rise of importance of economic regions in the United States, and the impact of international policy issues.

Drawing on their expertise in government, politics, academia, journalism, nonprofits, business, and other areas, Sine Institute Fellows uncover new policy solutions and problem solving methods informed by evidence and cross-sector perspectives. Each Fellow is asked to explore a timely aspect of policy and politics that will benefit from these dynamic conversations. In our interconnected world, policy changes ripple through our nation at the federal level and have significant consequences at the regional level. Those ripples cross sectors and impact international and national affairs as well as our local communities. This complex influence is at the core of the conversation topics discussed and debated by Sine Fellows.