



# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Duke  
SANFORD

POLIS: CENTER *for* POLITICS

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*Above: PUBPOL155, 301, and PSC students and faculty at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Washington D.C.*

# Welcome

Dear Friends of Polis:

The Polis team is delighted to share our annual report for AY 2022-23. As we reflect on a banner year full of inspiring programs, events, and projects, we are struck by the extraordinary contributions that our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends made to the Polis community this year. It is with deep gratitude that we offer this account of the work we've done together.

Our all-star cohort of Polis Distinguished Fellows—Huma Abedin, Reggie Love, Minh-Thu Pham, and Congressman David Price—continues to inspire us with wisdom drawn from outstanding careers in leadership and public service. The Polis Student Committee (PSC) has grown into a vibrant hub for more than 120 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who share an interest in politics and strengthening democracy. We hosted events with remarkable leaders including Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt, White House staff members, Duke alumni, student leaders, and many others who have shared big ideas and useful tools for making a positive difference in the political landscape. And, we were the proud co-sponsor of numerous events, including Project Citizen, the first-year orientation program that welcomed more than 100 in-coming first-year students to Duke's campus last August; and the Healing Politics candidate training school, which brought an extraordinary group of nurses and midwives to campus to develop the skills needed to advance to the frontlines of politics and public service.

One of the most common laments that I hear regarding the state of our democracy is the notion that people—and young people in particular—are apathetic and uninterested in politics, and that they are unprepared or simply unwilling to lean fully into their roles as democratic citizens. Our vibrant Polis community belies this claim, offering powerful examples of the concern, engagement, and commitment to problem solving that inspire so many of us to work to improve politics and enhance democracy every day.

Thank you for joining us in our work to strengthen democracy by promoting powerful politics research, fostering transformative political discourse, and helping a new generation of leaders find on-ramps to public service. We hope you will enjoy learning about our efforts in this year's annual report.

All our thanks and very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deondra Rose, Ph.D." The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping initial 'D'.

Deondra Rose, Ph.D.  
Kevin D. Gorter Associate Professor of Public Policy  
Associate Professor of Political Science and History  
Director, Polis: Center for Politics  
Sanford School of Public Policy  
Duke University

# Mission Statement

Established in 2015, Polis: Center for Politics is committed to increasing our understanding of politics locally, nationally, and globally. Our mission is to strengthen democracy by promoting powerful politics research, fostering transformative political discourse, and helping a new generation of leaders find on-ramps to public service.



*Above: Students at a Project Citizen workshop*

# Our People

## DEONDRA ROSE

### *Director*

Deondra Rose is the Kevin D. Gorter Associate Professor at the Sanford School of Public Policy with secondary appointments in the Department of Political Science and the Department of History. She is also the Director of Polis: Center for Politics and Co-director of the North Carolina Scholars Strategy Network (SSN). Her research focuses on U.S. higher education policy, political behavior, American political development, and the politics of inequality, particularly in relation to gender, race, and socioeconomic status.



Rose is the author of *Citizens by Degree: Higher Education Policy and the Changing Gender Dynamics of American Citizenship* (Oxford University Press, 2018), which examines the development of landmark U.S. higher education policies--including the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the Higher Education Act of 1965, and Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments--and their impact on the progress that women have made since the mid-twentieth century.

Her new book, *The Power of Black Excellence: HBCUs and the Fight for American Democracy* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming), examines the crucial role that historically Black colleges have played in American political development.

## MEG BITTLE

### *Assistant Director*

Meg provides developmental oversight and management of programs while assisting with strategic planning for the center.

Prior to her career at Duke, she worked with the Finance and Administration team at George Washington University's School of Business. She spent three years working in higher education and interning at various political think tanks in Washington, DC before moving back to her hometown of Durham. Meg's studies in International Relations & Political Science, and focus on East Asian Studies at North Carolina State University, demonstrate her dedication to gaining a deeper understanding of political dynamics and international relations.



## QUAZHA NETTLES

### *Administrative and Communications Assistant*

Quazha's primary responsibilities include offering support and assistance to the director and assistant director as well as the development and administration of the Center's core programs and events.

Nettles joined Duke as a communications intern for the Duke Center for International Development within Sanford School of Public Policy as part of the Duke-North Carolina Central University (NCCU) Internship program. She earned a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication with a concentration in Journalism from NCCU. During her undergraduate studies, she joined the NCCU Campus Echo as chief writer and worked in the NCCU Television Studio.



# Programs

## POLIS DISTINGUISHED FELLOWS

The Polis Distinguished Fellows Program brings accomplished political practitioners, public servants, and organizers to campus to engage with our community and to dedicate some portion of their time to a project that promises an innovative solution to a problem of contemporary politics and that involves students in the process.

The program honors extraordinary leadership in politics and public service. Fellows are prominent figures who bring expertise and experience from their roles as practitioners in politics and governance, campaigns, activism, journalism, media, etc.



*Above: Polis Distinguished Fellow Ambassador Miriam Sapiro with NYT journalist Eric Schmitt*



## MEET THE 2022-2023 FELLOWS



Huma Abedin

Top Aide and Longtime Advisor to Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

Reggie Love

Senior Advisor, Apollo Global Management & Former Personal Aide to President Barack Obama



Minh-Thu Pham

Co-Founder of New American Voices & Former Director of Global Policy, United Nations Foundation



David Price

Former U.S. Representative for North Carolina District 4



# PROJECT CITIZEN

This year, Polis co-sponsored “Project Citizen,” an experiential orientation program that gave 118 first-year Duke students a unique opportunity to build new connections and to develop skills to become more active, global, and compassionate citizens through programming in Durham and Washington, DC.

**118**

First-Year Students

**3**

Days in D.C.

**1**

Week of Programming



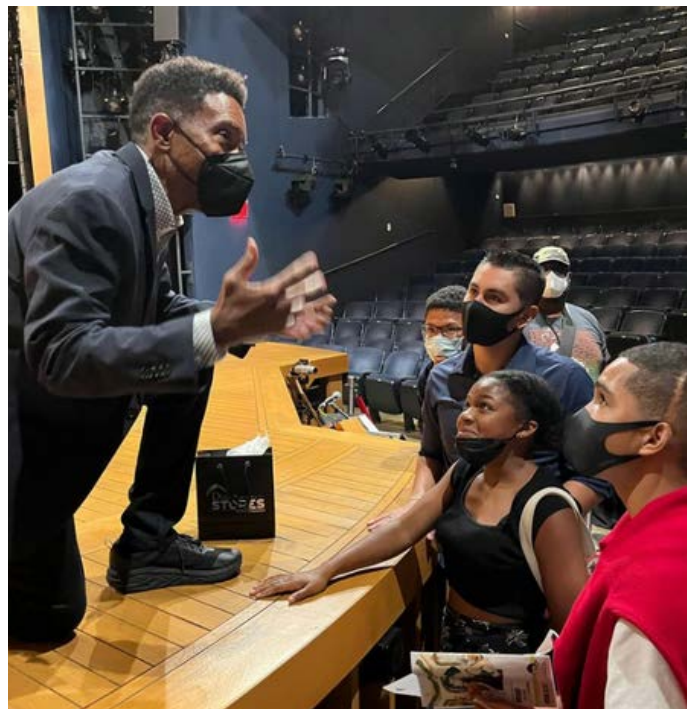
*Above: Project Citizen students in front of the White House*



*Above: Project Citizen students inside the U.S. Capitol Building*

During the D.C. programming, students had the opportunity to visit the U.S. Capitol Building, Oxfam headquarters, Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, and the Embassy of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Students also attended the musical *American Prophet*, directed by Duke alum Charles Randolph-Wright. The musical chronicles the life and legacy of Frederick Douglass, a human rights leader and abolitionist, as well as an author, orator, and statesman. After the play, students were able to talk directly with Randolph-Wright and the cast.



*Above: Project Citizen students meet playwright and Duke alum Charles Randolph-Wright*

## JORDAN PHILLIPS ('26)

When I called home to my nervous parents after my first day at Duke, they asked how things were going. “Amazing” was the only word I could articulate.

This was not your average field trip. Our days in DC consisted of panels discussing everything from political extremism to life on Capitol Hill, in addition to behind-the-scenes experiences like touring the Saudi Arabian embassy and visiting the US Capital. One night was spent watching Charles Randolph-Wright’s (T’78) incredible American Prophet on the life of Frederick Douglass. This was followed up by an inspiring conversation with Mr. Randolph-Wright and the creative team after the show. Each experience served as a testament to the idea that changemaking is interdisciplinary, and everyone – regardless of field of study – can exemplify the values of good citizenship.

Project Citizen’s time in DC helped each of us define the ways we want to function within the Duke community. Some, like me, had even more fuel added to their love of politics and public policy. Others recognized the ways they can bridge their passions in the arts or sciences with the intentional leadership and changemaking that Project Citizen encouraged.

*"THOUGH WE EACH TOOK AWAY SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM PROJECT CITIZEN, THERE WAS ONE COMMON SENTIMENT: DUKE IS WHERE WE ARE MEANT TO BE."*



*Above: Jordan Phillips in front of the Capitol Building*

# POLIS STUDENT COMMITTEE



**126**  
Members

**5**  
Executive  
Board  
Officers

This year Polis launched the Polis Student Committee (PSC). The PSC is a community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at Duke University who share an interest in politics, democracy, and public service.



The PSC aims to promote greater understanding of—and engagement with—politics at the local, state, national, and global levels. PSC members are official members of the Polis community who participate in the center’s events and activities, gain access to special perks and unique opportunities, and play a valuable role in helping to shape Polis’s programs.

*Top: PSC Members at a post-Midterm Election press briefing with international journalists and the State Department*

*Above: PSC Members give Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt and his son a tour of Duke*

## SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- Durham Civil Rights Walking Tour
- Dinner & Discussion: NC Midterm Election
- Midterm Election Watch Party
- Interview with NHK World-Japan
- Press Briefing on the 2022 Midterm Elections
- PSC Executive Board Election
- Trip to Washington D.C.
- Office Hours with Congressman David Price



*Above: PSC Members on the Durham Civil Rights Walking Tour*

## BOARD OFFICERS



### **Jaquell Sneed-Adams**

Co-President - Graduate

“My main goals for the PSC this year are to create active space for graduate students to share their expertise and learn alongside undergraduate students with a shared passion for political action and civic engagement and for the PSC to reach beyond campus to learn from and collaborate within the surrounding Durham community.”



### **Annaleise Linkenhoker**

Co-President - Undergraduate

“I’m excited to chart a strategic vision for the organization, be accessible to PSC members and undergraduates, extend Polis’s presence and engagement in the Duke and Durham communities, develop and execute new ideas, and cultivate a fun, rewarding experience for PSC members and the broader Duke community.”



### **Sam Danner**

Vice President of  
Membership



### **Lauren Steele**

Vice President of  
Events



### **Julia Young**

Secretary

# Events

## SUMMARY

### AUGUST

Project Citizen

### SEPTEMBER

Casting your Ballot for Environmental Justice

Discourse for Democracy: Discussing our Right to Vote

Title IX @ 50: Talking About Gender Equity

### OCTOBER

Discourse for Democracy: Discussing our Boundaries

Gen Z and the Politics of 2022 and 2024: An Evening with John Della Volpe

Polis Student Committee Kick-Off

Discourse For Democracy: Discussing our Pocketbooks

Democracy Day: State of Democracy Discussion with Michael Steele



## **NOVEMBER**

Discourse for Democracy: Discussing our Health

PSC Dinner & Discussion: NC Midterm Election

Gathering Power and a Counter-Narrative: Rebutting the Normalization of Racialized Injustice

Polis Midterm Election Watch Party

PSC Press Briefing on the 2022 Midterm Elections

Changing the Game: Politics, Policy, and 21st Century Leadership with Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt

## **JANUARY**

Welcome Reception for Polis Distinguished Fellow Congressman David Price

## **FEBRUARY**

Class Visit and Dinner with Polis Alumni Guide J.J. Johnson (Duke '88)

Polis Student Committee Executive Board Election

A Conversation with Justin M. Bibb, The Mayor of Cleveland

## **MARCH**

PEP Dinner: Polis Distinguished Fellow Congressman David Price

## APRIL

Washington D.C. Trip with PUBPOL 155 & 301

Braver Angels Debate: Does QuadEx Strengthen Duke's Campus Community?

Democracy in America: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of How to Strengthen Democracy

## MAY

Healing Politics Campaign School For Nurses & Midwives



*Above: Polis Student Committee students at the Midterm Election Watch Party*

# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## DEMOCRACY DAY: STATE OF DEMOCRACY DISCUSSION WITH MICHAEL STEELE

*October 28*

The North Carolina Young People's Voting Alliance and Duke Votes teamed up to host a Duke Democracy Day to motivate students to vote in the upcoming midterm elections.

Polis served as a proud co-sponsor of the day long activities as well as a State of Democracy Discussion with Michael Steele, former RNC Chairman and Lt. Governor of Maryland, and Political Analyst for the MSNBC. Michael Steele discussed the state of American democracy, the importance of civic engagement, and how students can shape America's future.



*Above: Michael Steele & Jack Fuchs ('25)*



*Source: Steve Hartsoe, Duke Today*

*“IF YOU’RE NOT WILLING TO STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, THEN SIT DOWN UNTIL YOU ARE. THAT’S WHAT THE TEST OF DEMOCRACY IS RIGHT NOW, FOR ALL OF US”  
- Michael Steele*

## CHANGING THE GAME: POLITICS, POLICY, AND 21ST CENTURY LEADERSHIP WITH OKLAHOMA CITY MAYOR DAVID HOLT

*November 14*

Described as a “rising star” in politics, Mayor David Holt (R) is the youngest mayor that Oklahoma City has had in nearly a century and the first Native American to serve in the position. He joined POLIS for a conversation about his pathway to public service, his strategies for governing a “purple” city in a highly partisan age, and his conviction that elected officials can



*Above: Professor Kristin Goss and Mayor David Holt*



and should tell voters difficult truths. The discussion was moderated by Sanford Professor Kristin Goss.

In rounding out his conversation of college and the foundation it set for his political career, Mayor Holt called on the students in attendance to get involved in public service. “Your community has invested in you,” he said, “and we need you now.”

*Left: Quinn Smith (PPS '23), President of Duke's Native American/Indigenous Student Alliance (NAISA)*

## WELCOME RECEPTION FOR POLIS DISTINGUISHED FELLOW CONGRESSMAN DAVID PRICE

*January 19*

Polis: Center for Politics hosted a reception for Congressman David Price, celebrating his return to Duke as a Polis Distinguished Fellow. Additionally, the former Congressman joins Duke University as an Emeritus Professor of Political Science and Public Policy Studies, rejoining the faculty of which he was a member prior to his election to the House of Representatives in 1987. Price served as representative for North Carolina's 4th District from 1987-1995 and 1997-2023.

Professor Deondra Rose welcomed Congressman Price as a Polis Distinguished Fellow for the 2022-2023 academic year, to help students “think big about how they can promote democracy in local, state, and national politics.” Polis is excited for the Congressman to contribute to “transformative conversations to replace polarization and division on our political landscape.”



*Above: Professor Deondra Rose and Congressman David Price*

## A CONVERSATION WITH JUSTIN M. BIBB, THE MAYOR OF CLEVELAND

February 22



Above: Dr. Deondra Rose & Mayor Justin Bibb

Mayor Bibb contends that we are living in an era of localism. Congress isn't going to solve America's problems, he says, instead "It's going to come down to America's mayors." He continues, "every consequential issue" including police reform, reproductive rights, and climate change are "now on our front doors."

*"MAYOR BIBB'S ENTHUSIASM FOR CLEVELAND AND FOR U.S. CITIES GENERALLY WAS CONTAGIOUS. HE REMINDED US FUTURE POLICYMAKERS THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL IN DRIVING CHANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY, SINCE LOCAL OFFICIALS OFTEN HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY TO BE INNOVATIVE AND ADAPTIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS."*

*- Alena Antonowich (MPP '23), President of Sanford's Urban Policy Club*

# HEALING POLITICS CAMPAIGN SCHOOL FOR NURSES & MIDWIVES

May 24 - 27



*Above: Students and Organizers of the Healing Politics Campaign School*

Polis: Center for Politics and Healing Politics hosted an inaugural Campaign School for Nurses & Midwives at Duke University.

Healing Politics, founded by Kimberly Gordon and Lisa Summers, aims to foster civic engagement in the healthcare community and help nurses and midwives develop the skills and knowledge needed to run for public office. Over the course of three days, participants dug deep into such topics as campaign planning, budgeting, and fundraising; communications strategies and media training; and grassroots organizing and voter mobilization.

# Research & News

## NOTABLE RESEARCH

### A CALL FOR LEADERSHIP: POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND CIVIL DISCOURSE AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

*By Chloe Nguyen (PPS '24)*

After reflecting on the importance of civil discourse and depolarization for democracy, Nguyen outlines a pilot program for first years that can help set norms which encourage discourse, collaboration, and relationship building on campus. It also outlines a series of suggestions to improve conversations on difficult topics in lecture halls, seminars, and extracurricular programming to set up future leaders to improve our democracy.



*Above: Chloe Nguyen (PPS '24)*

### THE BATTLE FOR CHIPS: SEMICONDUCTORS CRUCIAL ROLE IN AI DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S.-CHINA STRATEGIC COMPETITION

*By Peter Connolly (PPS '23)*

Connolly explores the intersection of semiconductors and AI through a geopolitical lens and identifies the crucial player as U.S. semiconductor companies. He argues that their dominant market share, enormous R&D budgets and global network of suppliers places them in the middle of the U.S.-China strategic competition and the ongoing global race towards rapid AI development and implementation.



*Above: Peter Connolly (PPS '23)*



# AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AT A CROSSROADS: PROPOSALS FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM AND RENEWAL

*By Professor Hildebrand's PUBPOL590S Class*



*“HOW CAN WE  
DEFEND THE  
IMPERFECT  
DEMOCRACY WE HAVE  
AGAINST THE SERIOUS  
THREATS IT FACES,  
WHILE ALSO  
REBUILDING AND  
RENEWING IT TO  
MOVE IT CLOSER TO  
PERFECTION?”*

*Above: Students presenting proposals for voting and election integrity to Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson*

Fifteen Duke students - graduate and undergraduate, with diverse identities, beliefs, and lived experiences - examined three defining challenges facing American democracy today: polarization and partisanship, political inequality, and threats to voting and election integrity in Professor Asher Hildebrand's “American Democracy at a Crossroads” (PUBPOL590S), a seminar at Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy, during the Spring 2023 semester.

Working in teams, the students analyzed the causes and consequences of each challenge, identified and debated potential solutions, and engaged with experts from the Duke community. Each student then selected a single solution to develop into a longer proposal, presented here in one page format.

This report thus represents the culmination of the seminar’s work: 15 distinct proposals for democratic reform and renewal, authored by students whose generation’s commitment to democracy will determine our future.

# MEDIUM BLOG

Polis has released a new blog on Medium featuring student op-ed pieces from Professor Deondra Rose's Spring '22 and '23 Political Analysis for Policymaking (PUBPOL301) class. Check out valuable student insights at [medium.com/@dukepolis](https://medium.com/@dukepolis)

## SPRING '22

*Top Policy Issues:*

1. Education Policy
2. International Relations & Security
3. Gender, Race, and Identity
4. Healthcare
5. Democracy & Governance

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**40**

Student Op-Eds

## SPRING '23\*

*Top Policy Issues:*

1. Education Policy
2. Social Policy
3. Democracy & Governance
4. Gender, Race, and Identity
5. Abortion
5. Healthcare

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**78**

Student Op-Eds

*\*To be rolled out during AY23-24*

# Acknowledgements



*Above: Project Citizen students at the closing session*

The Polis team would like to thank our supporters including (but not limited to) the Polis Distinguished Fellows, Polis Alumni Guide J.J. Johnson, our Polis Student Committee members and student assistants, our Steering Committee, the Duke in DC team, the Sanford School of Public Policy, and Duke University.

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