



American Institute  
for Contemporary  
German Studies

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

## AICGS' New Transatlantic Exchange Program for Young Minorities: Giving Voice to Future Leaders

### Participant Biographies



#### **ALEX ALVARADO**

*York Law*

Alex Alvarado is currently a paralegal at York Law, LLC in Denver, Colorado. His previous positions include working as a paralegal at the law office of Jennifer M. Smith and as a Democracy Fellow for the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition. Mr. Alvarado completed a B.A. in History with a minor in Chicana/o Studies at the Metropolitan State University of Denver. He has been working in community involvement and advocacy programs, such as the CIRC Action Fund, the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network, and the Asociacion de Jovenes Unidos en Accion (AJUA).



#### **REBECCA BETANCES-IRLANDA**

*University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez*

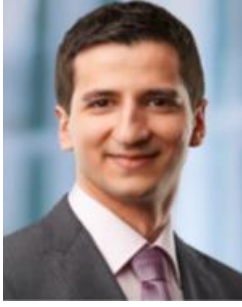
Rebecca Betances-Irlanda is currently pursuing a degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, with an expected graduation date of May 2016. Ms. Betances-Irlanda has engaged in research in this field both at this university and in summer programs at MIT, Yale, and Cornell. Currently she is a Coop-student in the Process Engineering Department at Lilly del Caribe, Inc. She is also involved with several professional organizations, including Ciencia Puerto Rico, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, and the Biomedical Engineering Society at her university.



#### **TUGBA DEMIR**

*University of Bremen*

Tugba Demir currently studies law at the University of Bremen, where she also completed a B.A. in Public Health and Health Sciences. Ms. Demir has worked for Harro R. Böhme Solicitor, the World Health Organization, the Behavioral Medical Center for Addiction Diseases, and in other professional capacities. Furthermore, she is a member of the Social Democratic Party, the Turkish-German Platform, and has volunteered in several local communities.



**YUNUS HAN EMRE**

*Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz*

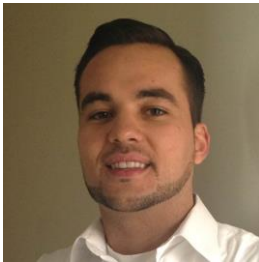
Yunus Emre is a student at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, where he studies Law. He currently owns Emre Motor Vehicle Assessor Service and works for the Volker Beck Law Firm as a legal assistant. Previously, Mr. Emre interned for the CDU State Parliamentary Group in the state parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate and in the Federal Parliament, among many other positions. Additionally, Mr. Emre was a candidate of the CDU for the City Council of Mainz in 2014 and Chairman of the state network of Integration politicians of the CDU Rhineland-Palatinate.



**FULDEN ESKIDELVAN**

*University of Cologne*

Fulden Eskidelvan is a Master's student at the University of Cologne, pursuing a degree in Political Science with a minor in Social Policy. In addition, she serves as a fellow of a research lab entitled "Constitutional Politics in Turkey." Previously, she achieved degrees in Economics and Cultural and Social Anthropology from the University of Muenster. Ms. Eskidelvan has been working as a student assistant at the Political Science department at the University of Cologne, received a DAAD scholarship, and worked for the Economic Development Foundation in Istanbul.



**CARLOS GONZALEZ-TOSTADO**

*Boston University*

Carlos Gonzalez-Tostado currently attends Boston University, from which he expects to graduate in May 2016 with a Master of Education degree in School Counseling. Mr. Gonzalez-Tostado previously received a B.A. in Latina/o Studies from San Francisco State, as well as an Associate's Degree in Behavioral Sciences from the City College of San Francisco. His work experience includes the Boston University Initiative for Literacy Development (BUILD), College Track of San Francisco, and the Migrant Education Program, among other positions. He has also volunteered for several organizations, including Play-works and PODER SF.



**MEHMET OSMAN GÜLYESIL**

*Humboldt University of Berlin*

Mehmet Osman Gülyesil is pursuing a PhD in law at the Humboldt University of Berlin, covering "Islamophobia and the Law." Mr. Gülyesil received a degree in Law from the University of Göttingen in 2012 and a B.A. in Islamic and Arabic Studies in 2013. He has worked for the judicial district of the Higher Regional Court of Braunschweig, as a tutor, a proofreading assistant, and as an academic research assistant in the past. Mr. Gülyesil has also volunteered as a tutor and reviewer and as a seminar participant at an international legal seminar in Turkey.



### **YUNUS-EMRE GÜNDOGDU**

*Free University Berlin*

Yunus-Emre Gündogdu is a student at the Free University Berlin, majoring in English Philology and Political Science, which will lead to a B.A. in Education. Mr. Gündogdu's professional background is diverse: he has worked as a private lecturer on oriental music, as a student assistant, as a mobile interviewer at a call center, and as a diversity trainer at several primary and high schools in Berlin. He has also volunteered for the JUMA project and lectured in refugee camps.



### **SOUFEINA HAMED**

*University of Osnabrück*

Soufeina Hamed is a graduate of the Masters of Science in Intercultural Business and Social Psychology program at the University of Osnabrueck. She currently is project manager at LEAD | Mercator Capacity Building Center for Leadership and Advocacy. She has collaborated with Hellmann Worldwide Logistics GmbH & Co. KG, Exzellenzcluster Cognitive Interaction Technology, and Zahnräder Netzwerk e.V. She has also worked in the realm of leadership, having volunteered for a network inclusion leadership program and as an Ariane de Rothschild Fellow in the United Kingdom.



### **OZAN KESKINKILIC**

*Free University Berlin*

Ozan Keskinkilic is currently a Master's student at the Free University of Berlin, where he is pursuing a degree in International Relations. Previously, he completed his undergraduate education in international development studies at the University of Vienna, Austria. Mr. Keskinkilic's professional experience includes contributing as a research assistant to a project entitled "Sites of Memory" at the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin and working at the German Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal. In addition, Ozan Keskinkilic is spokesperson of the Jewish-Muslim initiative "Salaam-Schalom" in Berlin. He gives lectures and leads workshops on Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and critical Jewish-Muslim relations in Germany.



### **MELIKE KIRAL**

*Cooperative State University Baden-Württemberg*

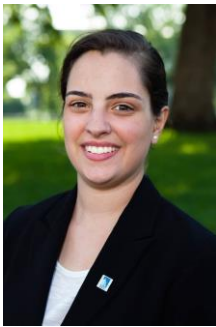
Melike Kiral studies Economics and Media and Communication at the Cooperative State University Baden-Württemberg. Prior to her studies, Ms. Kiral trained as an industrial clerk for MAIRDUMONT GmbH & co. in Baden-Württemberg. Her work experience includes serving as an international sales consultant for MAIRDUMONT in the field of export management.



**NARINTOHN LUANGRATH**

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Narintohn Luangrath earned her B.A. from Boston College in May 2014. She is interested in countries' policies towards forced migrants unprotected by the UN Refugee Convention, in particular, those forcibly displaced due to natural disasters or generalized violence and conflict. Narintohn currently serves as a Truman-Albright Fellow in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), where she studies refugee social service policy. Previously, Narintohn served as a student trainee in the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), researching the unique protection needs of unaccompanied immigrant children as well as the "credible fear" and defensive asylum application processes. Narintohn is a 2013 Harry S. Truman Scholar from Oregon.



**ANA MOAS**

*City Year Miami*

Ana Moas completed a year as an AmeriCorps Member with City Year Miami, in which she co-taught 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in under-resourced math classes. Previously, she worked for the U.S. House of Representatives and for Camp Kesem Miami. Ms. Moas graduated from the University of Miami with degrees in Psychology and Economics. She also served on the Campus Liaison council for the student government at this University.



**HASHER NISAR**

*Middlebury College*

Hasher Nisar is a student at Middlebury College majoring in Political Science and Economics and with an expected graduation date of May 2016. Mr. Nisar's experience includes serving as a research assistant for the political science department at Middlebury, being selected as a Humanity in Action Fellow, serving on the Pearson Student Advisory Board, and co-authoring a policy paper on integration challenges for a conference at Yale University.



**JOSÉ RAMÍREZ-RIVERA**

*Columbia University*

José Ramírez-Rivera, a Pickering Fellow, is currently pursuing a Master's degree in International Security Policy and Latin American Studies at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. Mr. Ramírez-Rivera attained a B.A. in International Studies from American University, where he specialized in International Politics and Latin America. He has worked for the U.S. Department of State, the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and at the Wilson Center for International Scholars, among others.



### **CANAN-CANSU SELTE**

*Ludwig Maximilians University Munich*

Canan-Cansu Selte is a student of dentistry at the Ludwig Maximilians University Munich. Her experience in the dental and medical fields is expansive, dating from 2007 and including internships in a dental office, a pharmacy, and a clinic. Additionally, Ms. Selte works in a mentoring program affiliated with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, as well as with a Multicultural Youth Center in Munich.



### **ÖZGÜN TANRIKULU**

*Justus-Liebig-University Giessen*

Özgün Tanrikulu is a Global Health major at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, where he has been a student since 2012. Currently he is working on an international study researching morphology and risk factors of abdominal aortic aneurysms. Mr. Tanrikulu's volunteer experience includes working as a mentor at Education Against Tobacco, serving as the speaker of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung's scholars in Gießen, and working for different other social and political initiatives.



### **ANTHONY TORRES**

*American University*

Anthony Torres studies at American University's School of Public Affairs, from which he will graduate in May 2016 with degrees in Political Science and Environmental Studies. Mr. Torres has worked for the Coastal States Organization as a Policy and Communications Intern, for American University's Office of Sustainability, and for the New York League of Conservation Voters. Additionally, he has participated as an organizer with Fossil Free AU and as a member of American University's School of Public Affairs Leadership Program. Mr. Torres is currently a youth delegate with SustainUS to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.



### **ANGELA VELARDE**

*Franklin & Marshall College*

Angela Velarde graduated from Franklin & Marshall College in May, 2015 with degrees in Public Health and Business, Organizations, and Society. Ms. Velarde has participated in internships in Pennsylvania, California, and India – teaching science classes, organizing volunteers, and fundraising for various groups and organizations. Additionally, she has served as a Level Up Ambassador at Franklin & Marshall, with Catastrophic Relief Assistance, and Mi Gente Latina.



### **MARIAN REBECCA ZELAYA**

*Ellison Elementary School*

Marian Rebecca Zelaya is a bilingual teacher at Ellison Elementary School in San Antonio, Texas. Ms. Zelaya received a B.S. in Neuroscience and a MA in Teaching from Trinity University. Her teaching and tutoring experience has been fostered through experience with Upward Bound, Boy With a Ball, Woodridge Elementary School, and at a school in San José, Costa Rica.