

Meet the 2023 Jamie Fox Program Scholars. On May 17, 2023, the James P. Fox Memorial Fund marked its five-year anniversary with the induction of the 2023 Class of Fox Scholars: five students from The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) and two from Saint Peter's University (SPU). In addition to TCNJ and SPU, the program is offered during the summer at Rowan University. The Fox Scholars Program connects college students who are enthusiastic about public service to professional mentors and internships. Our program prioritizes first generation college students and those who do not have access to helpful career networks. All students receive a stipend so that they can forgo income from paid job to participate. Thank you to our institutional partners, student mentors, and generous donors for giving these aspiring leaders career opportunities they might never have experienced.

Shah Bano, TCNJ, '24
Political Science Major

During my time in the program. I was able to broaden the scope of my career options as a political science major. I was a bit confused, and my mentor helped me find different areas I could find a passion for. We also talked about the things that I needed to work on, especially my confidence when meeting professional people. My mentor helped me work through that. The program gave me valuable experience and advice for which I am very thankful.

Kian Buena-Agua, SPU '23
Public Administration Masters
Criminal Justice Bachelor

Prior to my internship, I had no idea about the world of politics and what I was going to do when I graduated. I was set on law enforcement. But this program broadened my horizons. By working in an Assemblyman's office, I got to understand the skills that I already have and that I can apply my degree in a different field.

James Chiriboga, TCNJ '24
Special and Elementary Ed., and Woman,
Gender, and Sexuality Studies Master

Government and policy were never on my radar. But my interest was sparked after the COVID-19 pandemic because it really affected the K through 12 education system. My mentor introduced me

to many people who work in education, policy, and lobbying. I was able to see the work that is being done to support teachers and students and all that goes on behind the scenes. This program opened my eyes to something I never really knew about. I have no connections to politics and no one in my family is involved in this field, so policy was not on my radar. My plans now include policy work after teaching.

Kelly Perez, TCNJ '24
Public Health and Women's, Gender, and
Sexuality Studies Major



Prior to this program, I never understood what public service entailed. But after completing the program, I can say that

I have truly gained an appreciation for it. My mentor asked me to write a list of people that I wanted to meet, and I met a lot of powerful and influential people in government. I found comfort in the fact that there are people doing the work we need.

James P. Fox Memorial Fund, Inc.

Madeline Breeze, TCNJ '24
Political Science/Public Policy Major

Speaking with professionals can be intimidating. But my mentor was so kind and gave me lots of opportunities to speak to people one-on-one. I also learned the different avenues there are to create change through public policy. I learned how passionate people are in public service and that their goal is to create change and help their constituents. People always talk about polarization, but everyone I met was willing to collaborate and work with the other side, just as Jamie Fox did.

Nikki Farber, TCNJ '23
Political Science Major, Italian Minor

When I applied to this program, I mostly wanted to figure out what specific policy field I would go into, and I was looking for someone to point me in a direction. Through this program, I was able to

network with people at the State House and hear the pathways of getting to where they are now. This program offered me a terrific way to figure out where I could make myself useful. I would say too that it built my confidence. Without this program I think I would have graduated and asked, now what? Now I have more security and am looking forward to the future.

Sandy Rodriguez, SPU '23
Political Science Major, Communications Minor

As a political science student, I was learning everything from a textbook. Before I went into the program, I was not a fan of local government. But through my internship in a Jersey City Council office, I fell in love with local government, and I am still in it. [Sandy stayed on after the internship ended]. In local government you are impacting individuals with a direct benefit. I got to experience it firsthand.

Thank You To Our Program Partners

2023 Mentors

Stephanie Albanese

River Crossing Strategy Group

Justin Braz, Chief of Staff

Assistant Commissioner of Transportation Policy
New Jersey Department of Transportation

Kevin Hagan

Princeton Public Affairs Group

Colleen Schulz-Eskow

Senior Director of Public Policy
New Jersey Children's Foundation

Sharon Shinkle Gardner, Chief of Staff

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Executive Director, Guarini Institute for Government and Leadership

Director, Master of Public Administration Program

Associate Professor, College of Arts and Sciences
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Benjamin A. Dworkin, Ph.D.

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