



*From the Office of the American Secretary*

November 21, 2015

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## American Rhodes Scholars-elect for 2016

*(Subject to ratification by the Rhodes Trustees after acceptance by one of the colleges of Oxford University)*

### DISTRICT 1

#### Massachusetts

**Grace E. Huckins**, Weston, is a Harvard senior concentrating in Neurobiology and Physics. Her passion is computational and theoretical neuroscience. She hopes to uncover the mathematics that govern the networks of neurons that make up the brain, and particularly those that create the thought and feelings that differentiate human beings. She has done research in neuroscience in the U.S., Japan, and France. Grace is also the Arts Chair of the *Harvard Crimson*, and was the President of the Radcliffe Union of Students. She has qualified several times for U.S. National and Junior Olympic fencing championships. Grace plans to do a D.Phil. in Neuroscience at Oxford.

### Massachusetts

**Garrett M. Lam**, Wellesley, is a senior at Harvard College, with a joint concentration in Neurobiology and Philosophy. He is interested in philosophical problems of free will, moral responsibility, and punishment, and has career interests in criminal justice reform. He is an active advocate of the effective altruism movement, was editor-in-chief of the *Harvard Review of Philosophy*, was one of two undergraduates on Harvard's Committee on General Education, and is Executive Editor of the *Harvard Crimson*. He also holds the Guinness World Record for the longest time standing on a Swiss Ball. Garrett will do the B.Phil. in Philosophy at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 2

### Connecticut

**Russell C. Bogue**, Guilford, is a senior at the University of Virginia, where he will receive a B.A. in Politics. His interest in politics led him to found *Seriatim*, the University's first journal devoted to American politics and political theory. Russell leveraged *Seriatim* as a platform to engage the University in a discussion on how to best protect survivors of sexual assaults. In the realm of political theory, he has investigated a meta-constitutional framework for governing Taiwan and China. He is a Truman Scholar, serves on the UVA Honor Committee, and is Opinion Editor of *The Cavalier Daily*. Russell has conducted service work in Haiti, and plays on the University's squash team. He intends to do the M.Phil. in Political Theory at Oxford.

### New Jersey

**Evan J. Soltas**, Rumson, is a senior at Princeton University, where he majors in Economics. While still in high school, his economic blogging led to his becoming a regular contributing writer to both *Bloomberg News* and the *Washington Post*, where he prepared the daily workbook newsletter. His continued passion for economics led him to study and continue to write extensively on economic issues, including an in-depth study of the impact of food stamp benefits in reducing hunger in impoverished households. Evan is Team President of Princeton's Federal Reserve Challenge, where he led his team to a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish nationally in a presentation to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. At Oxford, he will do an M.Sc. in Applied Statistics, followed by an M.Sc. by research in Statistics.

## DISTRICT 3

### New York

**Neil M. Alacha**, Rockaway Park, is a senior at Harvard College, concentrating in Social Studies. For his senior thesis, he is studying global human rights institutions and examining their effect on local practices in Jordan. He is head captain of the Harvard Mock Trial Association, and the CEO of the Harvard Model Congress, the country's largest annual simulation of the U.S. government for high school students. Neil is also active as a peer tutor. He is the son of a Syrian immigrant and is interested in the movement for Islamic human rights. He plans to do the M.Phil. in Modern Middle Eastern Studies at Oxford.

### New York

**Andrew N. Kaplan**, New York City, graduated from Brown University in 2015, where he majored in Political Science and graduated with highest honors. His senior thesis related to rising homelessness in New York City. Since graduating, he has been an Urban Fellow in the New York Mayor's Office of Operations, where he focuses on efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness and improve current shelter conditions and capacity. While at Brown, Andrew co-founded Common Sense Action, the first national bipartisan grass roots advocacy organization of Millennials, which he grew to more than 40 university chapters in 20 states, and which has since merged with Run for America. At Brown, he also did extensive work in medieval history, Chinese, and literature. He intends to do the M.Phil. in Comparative Social Policy at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 4

### Pennsylvania

**Jennifer C. Hebert**, Pittsburgh, is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania with a concentration in the Biological Basis of Behavior. A varsity oarswoman and a member of the U.S. National Rowing Team, she competed in the Under-23 World Rowing Championships in Linz, Austria. She is also an adaptive rowing instructor, assisting and instructing physically and cognitively disabled rowers. Elected as a junior to Phi Beta Kappa, she has studied the mechanisms underlying memory, and has been drawn to drug addiction

research. She is currently conducting research for her senior honors thesis exploring the effects of nicotine exposure or stress on neural circuitry. At Oxford, Jennifer plans to pursue an M.Sc. by research in Psychiatry.

### Pennsylvania

**Rivka B. Hyland**, Philadelphia, is a Harvard College senior who majors in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Islamic Studies). Her primary academic interest is the common intellectual heritage of medieval Islamic and Christian theologians. With advanced proficiency in eight modern and classical languages, she is especially interested in how medieval philosophy, with roots in ancient Greece, can offer insights into modern attitudes towards international and intercultural understanding. She is a leader in community and campus work, especially addressing the problem of sexual assault. Rivka is also captain of her intramural rowing team. She will do the M.Phil. in Scholastic Theology at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 5

### Maryland/DC

**Hannah G. Schneider**, Hamden, Connecticut, graduated this year summa cum laude from Georgetown University, with a major in Russian. Her thesis was titled “Heroes and Villains in Putin’s Russia”. A distinguished violinist and an aspiring conductor who has performed around the world, she deferred her admission to Georgetown to study at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. She is fluent in Russian with advanced proficiency in Chinese and Hebrew. She won a Georgetown prize for work on the frontiers of social justice, and developed and ran a project endorsed by Carnegie Hall working with musicians in the North Caucasus region of Russia. She currently works for the Mariinsky Theatre. She plans to do the M.Phil. in Music at Oxford, specializing in composition.

### Maryland/DC

**Isaac M. Stanley-Becker**, Washington, DC, is a senior at Yale University, where he majors in History. He is writing his senior essay on industrial transformation and civil disobedience in the port city of New London, Connecticut. Isaac is an award-winning journalist and a passionate historian of modern urban society. He served as Editor in Chief of the *Yale Daily*

News and interned at the *Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Isaac also founded the Hillhouse High Journalism Project to teach journalism to New Haven public high school students. He enjoys spending summers working on the docks and hauling lobster traps on an island off the coast of Maine. At Oxford, he intends to complete an M.Phil. in Economic and Social History.

## DISTRICT 6

### Georgia

**Machmud A. Makhmudov**, Lilburn, is a senior at Oberlin College, where he majors in Politics, with minors in Environmental Studies and International Studies. His senior thesis is on the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and Climate Change. He immigrated to Atlanta from Uzbekistan. A Truman Scholar, he has served as an intern for the White House Domestic Policy Council, for the City of Atlanta Office of Sustainability, the Environment Defense Fund, and the office of Congressman John Lewis. He is vice president of his class and president of and liaison to the Oberlin College Student Senate. He is a pitcher on the Oberlin varsity baseball team. He intends to do the Master's of Public Policy at Oxford.

### Georgia

**Leah S. Michalove**, Atlanta, is a senior at Emory University where she majors in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, and minors in Anthropology. Following a semester in Morocco, she is writing her senior thesis on young Moroccans' self-identity in an increasingly interconnected world. She is active in theater at Emory as an artistic director and production manager. Leah chairs the Emory J Street U and represents Emory regionally and nationally at conferences relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She is a tutor in both Hebrew and Arabic and has been active in Georgia political campaigns. She plans to do the M.Phil. in Social Anthropology at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 7

### Alabama

**Zachary S. Fine**, New Orleans, Louisiana, is a 2015 summa cum laude graduate of New York University with a B.A. in Art History. Since 2014, he has been studying the evolving use of photographic technologies by law enforcement. Zachary has been a contributor to magazines

and newspapers including *Harper's*, *the New York Times*, *the Financial Times*, and *Boston Review*. He has also developed a program to enable museums to better showcase their artwork to the public that is being implemented in collections in five states. He intends to pursue an M.St. in the History of Art and Visual Culture and an M.Sc. in Criminology and Criminal Justice while at Oxford.

### Mississippi

**Ericka M. Wheeler**, Carrollton, is a senior at Millsaps College, where she is a pre-med student with majors in History and English. Her honors thesis “Crime, Race and Police Brutality through Historical Fiction” navigates complicated historical and autobiographical issues. Ericka is President of Millsaps College Intercultural Student Organization and Co-President of Millsaps College Gospel Choir. She is an Alzheimer’s disease social activist who has sought to assist Alzheimer’s patients capture their memories in short-story booklets. Raised in the heart of the rural Mississippi Delta, Ericka has a passion for social justice borne in a desire to return from her studies to pursue issues of race and health in Mississippi. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Phil. in Medical Anthropology.

## DISTRICT 8

### Texas

**Thomas M. Carroll**, Chandler, Arizona, is a senior at Rice University, where he will receive a B.S. in Biochemistry and Cell Biology and a B.A. in Classical Studies. He is doing a senior research project in oncology at M.D. Anderson and writing a senior thesis on the Indo-European roots of the Prometheus myth. In his work relating to cancer, he combines tools from different disciplines, especially from cancer biology and immunology, and he also applies his interests in the humanities to both the scientific and ethical dimensions of cancer research. He has done research at the National Cancer Institute, the Baylor College of Medicine and the Cleveland Clinic. Tom is also president of his residential college, and president and co-founder of the Rice Classics Club. At Oxford, he will do a D.Phil. in Clinical Medicine.

## Texas

**Laura C. Roberts**, Dallas, is a senior at Duke University, where she majors in History and has double minors in Religion and Political Science. She has a passion to apply her knowledge of history to promote women's rights through advocacy and international law. Her historical work is focused on questions of gender and religion in the early modern period. Laura has worked with the Rwanda Girls Initiative and Freedom House, and to support the Women's Institute for Secondary Education and Research in Kenya. She is an active volunteer with Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and works with refugees arriving in the Durham area. Laura intends to do the M.Phil. in British and European History at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 9

### Indiana

**John (Jay) C. Ruckelshaus IV**, Indianapolis, is a senior at Duke University, where he majors in Political Science and minors in Philosophy, History, and English. He has a passion for combining advocacy, politics, and philosophy to help marginalized populations. Shortly before he was scheduled to begin his undergraduate studies at Duke, he broke his neck and severely injured his spinal cord in a diving accident. Despite his quadriplegia, he went on to earn many distinguished awards, including the Duke Faculty Scholars Award, a fellowship to New College, Oxford, a Truman Scholarship, and an internship with Governor Mike Pence. Jay founded the nonprofit Ramp Less Traveled, Inc. to support students with spinal cord injuries in the pursuit of higher education. Jay serves as a student representative on the Duke University Board of Trustees, in Duke Student Government, and as co-founder and co-editor of the *Eruditio* and *Duke Political Science Standard* academic journals. He will do an M.Phil. in Political Theory at Oxford.

### Kentucky

**Logan C. Jackson**, Lexington, is a senior at Northeastern University, where she concentrates in structural engineering. She has earned a perfect academic average while doing considerable research relating to the detection of structural collapse, and has done cooperative education work with some of the world's leading construction firms. Logan is President of the Northeastern chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers, and a violist in her

university's symphony orchestra. She has also been a leader in community services relating to local refugees in Kentucky, low-income housing and employment, tutoring and mentoring. Logan is Northeastern's first Rhodes Scholar. At Oxford, she will do the M.Sc. in Evidence-based Social Intervention and Policy, and the M.Sc. in Education.

## DISTRICT 10

### Ohio

**Ilhan A. Dahir**, Columbus, graduated from Ohio State University in May with a degree in English and Political Science. She is now on a Fulbright Fellowship teaching English in Turkey. Her senior thesis was on the role of western foreign fighters in ISIL, and their threat to global peace. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security sent her to represent the U.S. in Brussels for an international discussion on countering violent extremism. The daughter of Somali immigrants who fled that country's civil war, she has been very active in inter-faith efforts in Ohio and throughout the world. At Oxford, Ilhan plans to do an M.Sc. in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, and an M.Sc. in Global Governance and Diplomacy.

### Ohio

**Ashley E. Orr**, Columbiana, is a senior at Youngstown State University, where she is in the University Scholars Program in the Honors College and majors in Mathematics and Economics. She is President of the YSU Student Government Association, co-founder of a poverty awareness program in the city of Youngstown, and is extraordinarily active in a wide range of volunteer service in her community. She has studied at the London School of Economics, has worked at the Federal Reserve Bank in Cleveland, and done research projects focused on public housing, crime, and on poverty generally. Ashley is the first Rhodes Scholar to be elected from Youngstown State University. She plans to do the M.Phil. in Economics at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 11

### Michigan

**Sarah B. Kovan**, Okemos, is a senior at Michigan State University, where she will receive a B.A. in Comparative Cultures and Politics and a B.S. in Human Biology. She has a passion



for not only understanding issues in global health, but also in acting on them. While studying abroad at Hebrew University, Sarah spent her free time serving in Israel's national ambulance corps. Her academic research has included evaluating options for economic development in Sri Lanka for low-income women. Within her own community, she has provided bedside care to local hospice patients. While pursuing service at home and abroad and engaged in two rigorous academic majors, she has been the starting midfielder for Michigan State's varsity soccer team. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Phil. in Development Studies.

### Wisconsin

**Colin T. Higgins**, Madison, graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 2015 with a B.A. in Geography, History, and Environmental Studies, and is currently completing a Master of Public Affairs in Policy Analysis, also in Madison. A passionate environmental advocate, he spearheaded the creation of a Green Fund, increased the amount of locally sourced food sold at campus facilities, and created a "conservation captain" program. He is especially interested in the complex philosophical, political, and ecological questions involved in mediating conflicting land uses. A Udall Scholar, Colin's award-winning senior thesis on a biodiversity offsetting program in the U.K. will be published. At Oxford, Colin will study for an M.Phil. in Geography and the Environment.

## DISTRICT 12

### Iowa

**Jeffrey Ding**, Iowa City, is a senior at the University of Iowa where he is pursuing three degrees, a B.B.A. in Economics, a B.S. in Political Science, and a B.A. in Chinese. While interning at Hong Kong's Legislative Council in 2014, he wrote speeches and developed voting models for a legislative councilor during the pro-democracy demonstrations. He is a Truman Scholar, and served in 2015 as an intern for the U.S. State Department's East Asia Pacific Bureau. As a participant in the University of Iowa's Climate Narrative Project, Jeffrey presented in-depth research, field studies, and personal interviews with farmers and agricultural experts that was featured on a nationally syndicated public radio program. He is

vice president of the University of Iowa Student Government, and as a member of the Chinese Church of Iowa City, he has aided international students in adjusting to life in Iowa City. Jeffrey intends to pursue an M.Phil. in International Relations at Oxford.

### Missouri

**Richard J. Lu**, Ballwin, is a senior at Princeton University, where he majors in Chemistry and minors in Global Health and Health Policy. He plans to become a physician and has strong interest in global health policy. He is collaborating with the Mayo Clinic to complete his senior thesis in Chemistry on nerve regeneration potential, and he is writing a second independent thesis on the barriers to efficient vaccine production and distribution in Africa. Richard conducted research on vaccine technology transfer at Biovac Institute in Cape Town, South Africa, and helped provide health care access to rural populations at Tropical Clinics in Kakamega, Kenya. He won the Global Health Scholar fellowship at Princeton, where he also serves in student government and as a Residential College Advisor for incoming students. Since 2011, he has worked as a research intern in radiology at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. He intends to do the M.Sc. in International Health and Tropical Medicine and the M.Sc. in Global Health Sciences at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 13

### Colorado

**Emily M. Mediate**, Colorado Springs, graduated from the University of Notre Dame in May with a B.A. in Africana Studies, and a minor in International Development Studies. Following graduation, she has worked as a junior desk officer for Ethiopia at the U.S. State Department, and then, for a year, on a USAID project for vulnerable children in Uganda. She also built a library and entrepreneurship center for Ugandan students, and is now in Kampala designing and implementing an evaluation for a project that helps families in communities affected by HIV/AIDS. Emmie has received many prizes and grants for her academic work in international studies and liberal arts. At Oxford, she plans to do an M.Sc. in Evidence-based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation.

### South Dakota

**Rachel E. Mullin**, Humboldt, earned her B.A. in Political Science and History from the College of Saint Benedict. A Truman Scholar, her focus on understanding and combatting the causes of genocide and forced migration has carried her around the world. She spent a summer in Bosnia Herzegovina interviewing Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats to support two undergraduate theses on the 1990s genocide in Bosnia. Rachel co-directed a documentary and led a film crew in Thailand to understand the migrant experience of the Karen minority population. She also traveled to India as part of a documentary crew exploring comparisons between how mental illness is treated differently in the U.S. and India. She is now teaching English in Malaysia. She will pursue an M.Sc. in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies and an M.Sc. in Global Governance and Diplomacy at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 14

### Oregon

**Jared C. Milfred**, Portland, is a senior at Yale University, where he will receive a B.A. in Ethics, Politics, and Economics. He has combined research in political theory and political science with a passion for social justice advocacy and campaign finance reform. He founded the nonpartisan student advocacy organizations Democracy United, serves as the Chief Executive of the National Council of City Public Financing Agencies, and chairs the City of New Haven Campaign Finance Board. Jared worked as a speechwriter for U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch and is Editor-in-Chief of Yale's *Journal of Political Thought*, as well as the Ethics Editor of the *Yale Philosophy Review*. He volunteers as an EMT for Yale Emergency Medical Services and as a reader for blind students at Yale's Office on Disabilities. At age 17, Jared became the youngest licensed nuclear reactor operator in the United States. He will pursue an M.Phil. in Political Theory at Oxford.

### Washington

**Mason Y. Ji**, Shoreline, is a senior at Yale, majoring in Global Affairs. He was also a student at the School of International Studies at Peking University. His senior thesis explains how deepened East-West dialogue has given rise to multicultural dispute resolution mechanisms. Mason was also, at age 18, the youngest U.N. delegate, and adviser to the Mission of the

Republic of the Seychelles, and co-authored a document that influenced the 2014 U.S.-China joint statement on climate change. He has interned at the White House and for one of China's largest law firms, is a competitive table tennis player in the U.S. and China, and a principal oboist for the Yale Concert Band. He will do the M.Phil. in International Relations at Oxford.

## DISTRICT 15

### California - North

**Megan G. Musilli**, El Dorado Hills, is a senior at the U.S. Naval Academy, where she majors in Mathematics and is training to become a physician in the Navy. Her research spans the study of traumatic brain injury and MRI scanning techniques at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, satellite tracking at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and the concept of genetic algorithms and state machines in data compression at the Naval Academy. Megan has served as squad leader, platoon commander, and regimental commander at the Naval Academy. She earned a scholarship to study abroad at Koç University in Istanbul, Turkey, and served in medical and surgical clinics on the U.S. Navy hospital ship *Comfort* in a 2015 humanitarian deployment to Panama and El Salvador. Megan's varsity women's crew team won the Division I Patriot League Championships and participated in the NCAA Women's National Rowing Championships. Megan plans to do the M.Sc. in Medical Anthropology at Oxford.

### Hawaii

**Katherine K. Clifton**, Honolulu, is a 2015 magna cum laude graduate of Princeton, where she earned a B.A. in English and a minor in Theatre. Dedicated to both facilitating dialogue across and within marginalized migrant communities and bringing the arts to a broad audience, she spent a year in Serbia after high school creating an English language program for Roma youth. After graduating, she has returned to Serbia for a year in order to develop and stage an original documentary play exploring hostilities between the Serb and Roma peoples. While a senior, Katherine tutored inmates at New Jersey correctional facilities as part of the Prison Teaching Initiative. She served in Princeton Student Government from her sophomore year on, and was a member of the Bhangra Punjabi dance Team. At Oxford, she will do an M.Sc. in Russian and Eastern European Studies and an M.Sc. in Migration Studies.

## DISTRICT 16

### California - South

**Cameron M. Platt**, Santa Barbara, is a senior at Princeton University, where she will receive a Bachelor of Arts in English with Certificates in Theater and Medieval Studies. Among many awards for her scholarship, she was awarded the Class of 1870 Old English Prize awarded annually to Princeton's top scholar in the fields of Old English, Medieval, and Early Modern Studies. Cameron currently serves as the President of Princeton University Players and has participated in both production and acting roles in multiple performances and theaters. As Development Director for the Princeton University Players, she oversaw the production of the annual Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS benefit concert. Her senior thesis at Princeton offers new critical ways to understand female selfhood in English literature. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.St. in English and American Studies and the M.St. in Medieval Studies.

### California - South

**Hassaan Shahawy**, Pasadena, is a senior at Harvard University, where he is pursuing a double major in History and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. He has devoted himself to working with marginalized communities to correct social injustices and improve access to opportunity, while also studying Islamic jurisprudence and global health and medicine. He worked with Los Angeles County inmates with the American Civil Liberties Union, as an intern in rural health clinics in Kenya with Vecna Technologies, and as an analyst with small-business lender Liwwa Inc. in Amman, Jordan. He has also conducted research on transplant surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital and on the causes of Saudi Arabia's private sector labor shortage at the Harvard Center for International Development. Hassaan is the Vice President of the Harvard Islamic Society and Co-Founder of the Ivy League Muslim Council. He has volunteered at the Children's Cancer Hospital in Cairo, Egypt and mentors prison inmates in Norfolk, Massachusetts. He will do an M.Phil. in Islamic Studies and History at Oxford.