



From the Office of the American Secretary

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American Rhodes Scholars-elect for 2025

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

DISTRICT 1

Massachusetts

Kate E. Herndon, Newburyport, is a senior at the University of Alabama completing a double major in Criminal Justice and History. Her academic work examines the origin of laws defining and punishing domestic violence and the evolution of this legislation over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Kate is a committed domestic violence advocate and serves as the director of the student government's SAFE Center Committee. She is a recipient of the Obama-Chesky Scholarship for Public Service, is managing editor of a law and public policy journal and maintains a yoga practice. At Oxford, Kate will pursue the M.Sc. in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

Vermont

Lena R. Ashooh, Shelburne, is a student at Harvard University, where she designed and is pursuing Harvard's first major in Animal Studies, with research in philosophy, psychology,

biology, political science and other disciplines. She grew up exhibiting dairy cows as a member of her local 4-H club, and at Harvard has worked with land law examiners as an intern at the Bureau of Land Management, and lobbied legislators on environmental justice at the Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment. Lena conducted field research on macaque monkeys in Puerto Rico, where she learned the faces and names of 150 individual monkeys while studying variation in facial behavior. She plays classical harp and has created a stop-motion animation film about the ethics of eating animals. At Oxford, she hopes to pursue a B.Phil. in Political Theory.

DISTRICT 2

New Jersey

Thomas Barone, Little Falls, is a student at Harvard University, where he is pursuing a B.A. in Social Studies. His academic work has contemplated intellectual history and political rhetoric, policy and decision-making. He has interned at the national politics desk of ABC News and serves as Editorial Chair of the Harvard Crimson, where he has won first place for editorial writing in the Society of Professional Journalists' Mark of Excellence awards for collegiate journalism. He hopes to pursue a career in journalism. At Oxford, he intends to study for an M.Phil. in History.

New Jersey

Gabriella M. Sorrentino, Monroe, is a senior at the United States Military Academy where she majors in both American History and Philosophy. Her research is highlighted in a forthcoming book: Henry O. Flipper, West Point's First Black Graduate: An Annotated Autobiography. Gabriella is an elite boxer on the West Point Boxing Team, graduate of Air Assault School, and recipient of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Sc. in Migration Studies followed by a Master's in Public Policy.

DISTRICT 3

New York - South

Luiza Diniz Vilanova, New York, graduated from Columbia University in 2024 with a B.A. in Political Science and Education. Born in the United States but raised in rural Brazil, she has founded multiple organizations supporting low-income Brazilian youth, including the

organization for which she currently serves as CEO, Tocando em Frente. Tocando em Frente has partnered with 24 Brazilian states to combat school dropout through community programming. Luiza is one of ten members of the UNICEF Youth International Council, where she has worked to advance global public health, and one of 23 winners of Brazil's Estudar Leaders Scholarship out of 46,000 total applicants. She enjoys running, roller skating, and Broadway musicals. At Oxford, she intends to pursue a Masters of Public Policy and an M.Sc. Education.

New York - South

Shepherd Y. Dzina, Tuxedo Park, is a student at the United States Military Academy, where he is pursuing a B.S. in economics. At the USMA, he is Brigade Executive Officer for the Corps of Cadets, serving as third in command of the Corps' 4,400 members, and editor of the West Point Journal of Politics and Security. Inspired by a childhood love of cooking, especially recipes based on his family's Taiwanese roots, he has pursued research into food insecurity in the armed forces and analyzed global poverty data for the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. Shepherd is a member of the nationally-ranked West Point curling team and the West Point bowling team. At Oxford, he hopes to complete an M.Phil. in Development Studies and pursue a career fostering peace and security through international development and cooperation.

DISTRICT 4

New York - North

Aneesh C. Muppidi, Schenectady, is a senior at Harvard University where he majors in Computer Science and Neuroscience. He has conducted research at Harvard's Computational Robotics Lab, Computational Cognitive Neuroscience Lab, and MIT's Fiete Lab. Aneesh's scholarship also informs his work on AI policy at the OSTP at the White House. Aneesh served as the President of the Harvard Computational Neuroscience Undergraduate Society, Co-President of the Hindu Students Association, and President of the Harvard Spikeball Club. At Oxford, he will pursue an M.Sc. in Advanced Computer Science and a Master's in Public Policy.

Pennsylvania

Mikayla I. Tillery, Cranberry Township, is a senior at Stanford University completing dual degrees in Urban Studies and African and African American Studies. Her honors thesis focuses on Black American cartographies of the twentieth century. A Truman Scholar and Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, Mikayla has served on a Stanford Board of Trustees Committee, received a number of campus awards and scholarships, and has been a leader at Stanford to increase recruitment for Black students. She has also completed multiple internships, including with the State Department, the Greenlining Institute, and the Department of Energy. At Oxford, Mikayla will pursue a Master's in Public Policy and an M.Sc. in Comparative Social Policy.

DISTRICT 5

District of Columbia

Noa J. Offman, Washington, D.C., is a senior at Georgetown University where she majors in Justice and Peace. Noa's academic work is informed by her experience studying the Nordic prison system in Denmark. While at Georgetown, Noa led Restorative Georgetown and Sexual Assault Peer Educators which contribute to restorative justice infrastructure on campus. She has also served juvenile lifers who are eligible for early release and contributed to multiple investigations to expose prison conditions. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Sc. in Criminology and Criminal Justice followed by an M.Phil.

District of Columbia

David C. Oluigbo, Washington, D.C., is a senior at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he majors in Artificial Intelligence and Decision Making. David has published over six peer-reviewed articles and has volunteered with the National Institute of Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and the McGovern institute for Brain Research. His research focuses on applying artificial intelligence to address complex medical challenges and systemic healthcare challenges. David, or 'DJ Chidi', also uses artificial intelligence to transform musical beats and serves as an EMT in his spare time. At Oxford, he will pursue an M.Sc. in Applied Digital Health followed by an M.Sc. in Modelling for Global Health.

DISTRICT 6

North Carolina

Madeline C. Dierauf, Pisgah Forest, is a senior at Davidson College where she majors in English and is writing an honors thesis examining the intersections of affect and ethics in the novels of J.G. Ballard and Muriel Spark. Madeline is a professional fiddler and bluegrass musician who is also a manager and composer for bands in Appalachia and Boston. As the student performers chair for Davidson's Union Board, Madeline hosts weekly events to foster a vibrant arts culture on campus. She has also conducted research on folk traditions, including independent research with musicians across Ireland and Northern Ireland. At Oxford, she will pursue the M.St. in English and American Studies and the M.St. in Philosophical Theology.

North Carolina

Jenna A. Smith, Scotch Plains, New Jersey, is a senior at Duke University where she majors in International Comparative Studies. She currently serves as the President of the Duke Justice Project, which partnered Duke with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice to provide leader development programs for local youths. While at Duke, Jenna has focused her research and teaching on the criminal-legal system, to include a course on correctional systems and the prison reentry process. At Oxford, she will pursue a M.Sc. in Criminology and Criminal Justice followed by an M.Sc. in Comparative Social Policy.

DISTRICT 7

Florida

Sofia L. Corona, Delray Beach, is a student at Harvard University studying for a B.A. in Applied Mathematics and Economics. She has designed her course of study to develop a multidisciplinary perspective on issues in transportation policy, including infrastructure development, clean energy governance, and community decision-making. Sofia has supported prosecutions of federal transportation oversight cases at the U.S. Department of Transportation, researched community participation and renewable energy implementation at the Allen Lab for Democracy Renovation and analyzed alternative vehicle upgrades for car models at BMW. She has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, Denali and Aconcagua. At Oxford, Sofia plans to study for an M.Sc. in Economics for Development and an M.Sc. in Sustainability,

Enterprise, and the Environment, and aspires to continue her bartending career at the Turf Tavern.

Florida

Angelin T. Mathew, Davie, is senior at Yale University where she double majors in Humanities and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology. Her medical research focuses on palliative care and cancer treatment and she has founded an international research team working across the fields of theology, public health, and clinical medicine to improve end-of-life care. She has won international awards for her research and also launched a lip-care startup focused on the needs of chemotherapy patients. Angelin performs Indian classical dance, is a powerlifter, and speaks three languages fluently. At Oxford, she intends to pursue an M.St. in the Study of Religions and an M.Sc. in Medical Anthropology.

DISTRICT 8

Texas

Jae J. Kim, Fort Lee, New Jersey, is a senior at Rice University where he majors in Integrative Biology and minors in Environmental Studies. Jae currently serves as the President of the Rice University Student Association. He is the founder of Hermes Free Telehealth, a nonprofit that provides free telehealth services to victims of natural disasters. Jae has volunteered extensively with the Mission:Wolf Sanctuary and Memorial Hermann Hospice. He also plays the flute both orchestrally and individually. At Oxford, he will pursue an M.Sc. in Environmental Change and Management followed by an M.Sc. in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation.

Texas

Ariana Palomo, McKinney, is a student at Brown University, where she is pursuing a double major in International and Public Affairs and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. At Brown, she served as editor-in-chief of the Brown Journal of World Affairs and interned at the U.S. Department of State. Born in Mexico, Ariana is a first-generation American whose family experience with migration has informed her research interests in transnational crime, governance and immigration policy, as well as her work conducting research and case interviews with asylum clients at the Brown Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice. A talented linguist, she has pursued studies in Portuguese and Arabic, as well as her native Spanish. Ariana also

performs as first violinist with Mariachi de Brown. At Oxford, she intends to pursue an M.Sc. in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies and M.Sc. in Global Governance and Diplomacy.

DISTRICT 9

Virginia

Samuel T. Crowe, Charlottesville, is a senior at the University of Virginia, where he majors in Astronomy-Physics and History. He is the first undergraduate to work with the James Webb Space Telescope, the premier telescope facility in Astronomy, where he works on massive star-forming regions in the Milky Way. As a scientist and historian, Samuel has participated in the ground-based asteroid occultation program in support of NASA's Lucy mission. During his time at the University of Virginia, he served as the President of the Astronomy Club and Vice President of the Forestry Club. Samuel is also fluent in Spanish and enjoys bodybuilding. At Oxford, he will pursue a D.Phil. in Astrophysics.

Virginia

Sayda Martinez-Alvarado, Leesburg, graduated from Yale University in 2023 with a B.A. in Psychology and a certificate in education studies, and currently works as a Senior Policy Analyst at EdTrust, where she advocates for improving the accessibility of federal financial aid and conducts research and policy analysis on issues in higher education. At Yale, she has mentored peers and younger students in a variety of roles, including as student ambassador for first-generation, low-income students, lead counselor for first-year students in her residential college, and head advising fellow for a national nonprofit. She also worked as an education policy intern at the National Coalition on School Diversity, led a project to improve the representation of diverse alumni in Yale portraiture, and was head conductor of the Davenport College Pops Orchestra. At Oxford, Sayda hopes to further her work to promote an inclusive education system that fosters social and economic mobility by completing an M.Sc. in Education and an M.Sc. in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation.

DISTRICT 10

Illinois

Om H. Gandhi, South Barrington, is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania where he is completing a B.A. in Neuroscience and Public Health as well as an M.S. in Bioengineering. His research focuses on novel cancer immunotherapies, and he has completed research experiences at the Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania Center for Childhood Cancer Research and Penn Medicine. Om does extensive volunteer work with individuals with substance use disorder. He is also a student leader of the Wharton Undergraduate Healthcare Club and the Penn Hindu-Jain Association. As editor-in-chief of the Penn Healthcare Review, Om oversaw a major expansion of the journal's application pool and editorial staff. At Oxford, Om will pursue a D.Phil. in Oncology.

Ohio

Meredith G. M. Lehman, Dover, is a senior at Eastern Mennonite University where she majors in Biology and Political Science. Her research on drug delivery systems for anticancer drugs has been funded by the National Science Foundation and she has an extensive record of scientific publications. Meredith is president of the student government association, has served as a student representative in the President's Cabinet, and co-designed and co-taught an honors course on sustainable fashion design. She has done volunteer work to provide legal services to asylum seekers and is active with the Virginia Young Democrats. At Oxford, Meredith intends to complete an M.Phil. in International Relations.

DISTRICT 11

Michigan

Francesco P. Rahe, Hillsdale, is a senior at the University of Chicago where he majors in both Religious Studies and Fundamentals: Issues and Texts. While at the University of Chicago, Francesco founded Critical Understandings of Liturgies and Traditions, or C.U.L.T., which is the university's first student organization devoted to fostering inter-faith discourse and overcoming religious intolerance. Francesco wrote his first novel at the age of nine and is actively working on three, one of which is a retelling of the Iliad. He is proficient in six languages to include Sanskrit, Persian, German, Biblical Hebrew, Latin and Arabic. At Oxford, he will pursue an M.Phil. in Classical Indian Religion.

Minnesota

Sarah S. Cao, Plymouth, is a cadet at the United States Military Academy, where she is pursuing a B.S. in International Affairs and Chinese. She has interned for the Center for Naval Analyses and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, where she prepared daily briefings for the Pentagon. At West Point, she served as second in command of over 1,600 cadets, and won the ‘Master of the Sword’ award as the top-ranked female cadet in physical fitness. Sarah is a first-generation American and the first in her family to serve in the military. She’s also a talented jumper on the diving board and out of airplanes, diving on West Point’s Division one team and winning the national championship in collegiate skydiving two years in a row. At Oxford, she intends to pursue an M.Sc. in Global Governance and Diplomacy and M.Sc. in Contemporary Chinese Studies.

DISTRICT 12

Iowa

Paras B. Bassuk, Iowa City, is a student at the University of Iowa completing a B.S. in Psychology. A recipient of the University of Iowa’s top merit award for undergraduates, Paras has conducted and published neurocognitive research on child development and studied human rights and social movements in Argentina. Paras is campus leader on LGBTQ+ issues, including as a senator in undergraduate student government, and serves on the Johnson County transgender advisory taskforce and the University of Iowa’s transgender inclusivity coalition. Paras is a jazz drummer, classical bassist, and bass guitarist in multiple ensembles and also pursues photography. At Oxford, they will pursue the M.Sc. in Comparative Social Policy and M.Phil. in Socio-Legal Research.

Missouri

Katherine G. Ameku, Independence, is a senior at Coe College where she majors in Mathematics and Statistics. Katherine’s academic work has centered on computational material science, X-ray spectroscopy, and the numismatics of Japanese-American internment camps. Invigorated by the intersection of science and public service, Katherine serves as the President of her school’s Physics Club and became the youngest elected official in the state of Missouri, serving on two Democratic committees. At Oxford, she will pursue a B.A. in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics.

DISTRICT 13

Nebraska

Ava O. Spinar, Lincoln, is a senior at the United States Military Academy where she majors in Life Science. Ava serves as a Regimental Commander, overseeing the academic, physical and military development of 1100 cadets. She has interned at the Walter Reed National Military Medicine Center, is a member of the West Point Pre-Medical Society, a volunteer with the Clinic with a Heart Foundation, and a graduate of the Air Assault School. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Sc. in Global Health Science and Epidemiology followed by an M.Sc. in Genomic Medicine.

New Mexico

Abrianna E. Morales, Placitas, graduated summa cum laude in 2023 from the University of New Mexico with a B.S. in Psychology and Criminology. She currently works as a program manager at the National Organization for Victim Advocacy, a project she launched while still an undergraduate. The country's first-ever national victim services corps program, NOVA is funded by a grant from the Department of Justice. A Truman Scholar and a McNair Scholar, Abrianna has published reports on youth service and is a frequent contributor to panels, roundtables, and media forums. At Oxford, Abrianna will pursue an M.Phil. in Politics.

DISTRICT 14

Oregon

Anushka Nair, Lake Oswego, is a senior at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where she is simultaneously completing bachelor's and master's degrees in Computer Science and Engineering. Her research focuses on the intersection of artificial intelligence and ethics, and her graduate thesis examines how large language models can be used to identify harmful misinformation that is less easily identifiable by human fact-checkers or other automated systems. She has completed internships at Tesla, Oracle, and the United Nations. Anushka is a classical violinist and an amateur filmmaker. At Oxford, she will pursue a D.Phil. in Social Data Science.

Washington

Ayush Noori, Bellevue, is a senior at Harvard University, where he is studying for A.B. and M.Sc. degrees in computer science and neuroscience. His research uses artificial intelligence to learn from large-scale biomedical data to identify diagnosis and treatment options, and he has developed an AI model that can be deployed to predict treatment outcomes in bipolar disorder, Parkinson's disease and neuropathic conditions. He has coauthored over 20 peer-reviewed papers in top journals and was awarded the prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarship for natural sciences. Ayush is the co-founder and co-president of Harvard Undergraduate OpenBio Laboratory, where he manages a team of 36 students and has raised over \$60,000 to support undergraduate biology research projects and support a free summer research program for high school students with backgrounds underrepresented in science. He hopes to complete an M.Sc.(R) in Clinical Neurosciences and an M.Sc.(R) in Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics.

DISTRICT 15

California - North

Francesca Fernandes, Saratoga, is a senior at Stanford University where she majors in Physics. Her work has focused on the phenomenon of antipodal duality and the mathematics of formal systems related to spin chains and quasicrystals. While at Stanford, Francesca has taught physics and quantum mechanics to local high-schoolers. She is an actress in the Stanford Asian American Theater Project and a soprano in the Stanford Talisman a cappella group.. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Sc. in Mathematical and Theoretical Physics.

California - North

Kate E. Tully, Sacramento, is a senior at Stanford University where she is completing an undergraduate degree in Political Science. Her honors thesis, which focuses on insurrectionist violence in sub-Saharan Africa, aims to understand factors contributing to democratic regression. She has completed research internships at the Department of Defense, the State Department, and the United Nations. As a member of the board of directors of the Sacramento Urban Debate League, Kate recruits and mentors at-risk debate students and has worked to expand debate programs at six inner-city schools in Sacramento. She is also an amateur boxer and member of the Stanford Boxing Club. At Oxford, she will pursue an M.Phil. in International Relations.

DISTRICT 16

California - South

Alvin H. Lee, Riverside, is a senior at Stanford University, where he is completing a B.A. in Political Science. His academic research has focused on California's educational governance system. Alvin is founder and executive director of GENup, California's largest youth-led education advocacy organization. He has also completed internships at the White House, for the Mayor of Los Angeles, and for the California Department of Education. At Oxford, Alvin will pursue a Masters' in Public Policy and an M.Sc. in Education.

California - South

Sean N. Wu, Chino Hills, is a senior at Pepperdine University where he is completing B.S. in Computer Science and Mathematics. His research focuses on the intersection of machine learning and medicine and has engaged topics from glaucoma to improving medical diagnosis to reducing exposure to X-ray radiation. A Goldwater scholar, Sean has an extensive record of academic publications, including in peer-reviewed journals. He is an accomplished tuba player and member of the Pepperdine orchestra. At Oxford, he intends to pursue an M.Sc. in Advanced Computer Science and an M.Sc. in Applied Digital Health.

PLEASE NOTE: Given the time challenge and complexity of 16 concurrent district selections across the United States, initial versions of the short bios and winners' list included with this press release may contain small errors, typographical and otherwise. Most are corrected within 24 hours, so always check www.rhodesscholar.org for the most up-to-date versions. In addition, you may find photos of the winners on the global Rhodes Trust website, www.rhodetrust.ox.ac.uk, where they will be uploaded as soon as practicable. For questions, please contact admin@rhodesscholar.org.