

## Minnesota Capitol Pathways Internship Program 2019 Cohort



**Hamdia Abdo**

Internship site: Ever-Green Energy  
St. Catherine University

Hamdia Abdo was born and raised in Texas. She moved to Minnesota in 2015. She is currently interning at Ever-Green Energy through Capitol Pathways and is a third year student at St. Catherine University. She is double majoring in Political Science and Public Health with a concentration in Public Policy and minoring in Philosophy.

She will be the first in her family to obtain a Bachelor's degree. Her interests include reading, writing, volunteering, music, theater, science, learning new things, and spending time with loved ones. She also hopes to one day run and win a seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives.



**Abyehn Aden**

Internship site: Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Abyehn is a junior at the University of Minnesota- Twin Cities. She is majoring in Political Science and Pre-law with a minor in the Sociology of Law, Crime and Deviance. Her educational aspirations consist of obtaining her bachelor's degree and continuing to law school where she hopes to become an attorney and one day run for public offices. Abyehn's vision is to become an elected official and use her position to give a voice to the marginalized and underserved community.

In the past couple of years, she has worked in Political Campaigns to gain a sense of how the schematics of running for public office works. She has also worked in a law firm to gain experience of her future profession. In her school, Abyehn was part of the founding members of Black Women Collegiate at her institution. Additionally, she was also the Public Relations officer of ASA, member of black student union, Pre-law club, participated in Model United Nations and was also a member or the speech and debate club at her school.

The reason Abyehn applied for Capitol Pathway is because the internship will provide her with the opportunity to learn more about the legislative process, gain valuable real-world experience in government and build a network of professional contacts, mentors and references. This internship will give her practical experience and allow her to utilize some of the ideas learned in school and provide a bridge between school and the professional world. Lastly, she believes this internship will help her develop leadership, communication, and teamwork skills while adding to her knowledge base and building confidence in her abilities as a professional.

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**Shamsa Ahmed**

Internship Site: Common Cause Minnesota  
Augsburg University

Shamsa Ahmed is a first generation second year student at Augsburg University, pursuing a double major in Political Science and International Relations. She is working with Common Cause MN to address issues such as gerrymandering, abuse of power and voting rights. She is passionate about social justice and grassroots organizing. When she's not at the Capitol Shamsa is involved within her community serving as a Class

President at Augsburg Day Student Government and Vice President of Muslim Students Association. Shamsa applied to the Capitol Pathways Program to get a real life understanding of the structures of power within our state government. As an Act Six Scholar Shamsa is aware that students of color from marginalized communities are not always given the opportunities to excel. A fun fact about Shamsa is that she is fluent in 3 languages and open to learn more!



**Abdihamid Badri**

Internship site: Education Minnesota  
Hamline University

Abdihamid is a second-year student at Hamline University, with a double major in political science and legal studies and a minor in global studies. Abdihamid is in his second year of a three-year term on the Board of Directors for the Seven Dreams Education Foundation; through which money is raised to provide hands-on learning programs and initiatives in the Robbinsdale Area School District. With his involvement in the Robbinsdale School District's Legislative Action Coalition, and the Education Policy

Fellowship Program with the Center for Policy Design, Abdihamid exemplifies his passion for advocacy in education policy. He believes that all children have a right to strong, equitable, and culturally responsive education.

At Hamline, Abdihamid is the Vice President of the African Student Association, the Political Affairs Chair for Hamline's Student Congress, and is a member of the Model United Nations team. Abdihamid works as a Fellow with the McVay Youth Voice; a program designed to provide afterschool and mentorship programs to youth across St. Paul. Abdihamid joined the Capitol Pathways program to understand and navigate the legislative process, in order to be an effective advocate for himself and his community. He believes that access is central to creating change for those that were historically left out of decision making.

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**Wanda Barradas**

Internship site: Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota  
Macalester College

Wanda Barradas is a sophomore at Macalester College interning at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota. She is double majoring in Political Science and Sociology with a concentration in Legal Studies. Wanda is involved in Adelante, the Latinx organization on campus, working with undocumented folks, and a POC publication showcasing art, fashion, and photography. She intends to pursue Law school to study Immigration Law. She has previously interned at Lavelle Law firm and DePaul University

College of Law to broaden her law experience. Wanda applied to Capitol Pathways not only to gain more perspectives on Minnesota politics but to also connect with other students of color who share similar interests.



**An Garagiola-Bernier**

Internship site: Second Harvest Heartland  
Hamline University

An Garagiola-Bernier is a nontraditional student and Jack Kent Cooke Scholar in her final year of study at Hamline University. She is double majoring in Sociology and Women's Studies with a focus on Inequality. A descendent of the Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe - Nett Lake, An is dedicated to decreasing poverty and increasing the representation of Indigenous students in higher education. In

recognition of her work combining food sovereignty theories with community organizing to ameliorate campus food insecurity, An is Hamline's 2018 Campus Compact Newman Civic Fellow, 2018 Roz Ridgway Forum Fellow, and an inaugural recipient of the Undergraduate Scholar Award in Honor of Dennis I. Belcher. On campus, An is co-founder of Feed Your Brain, a student organization committed to advocating for student poverty and basic needs access. Off campus, An is a mother of three, and works as a motivational speaker and mentor for students living in the crises of poverty, using her personal story to encourage others to never give up on their dreams.

An's Capitol Pathways host is Second Harvest Heartland. She is inspired by the political influx of Indigenous women and looks forward to learning more about how to advocate through the legislative process. An recently applied to graduate school, and hopes to pursue a career in policy research and advocacy.

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**Aime Bita**

Internship site: Great Plains Institute  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Aime is a first-year student the University of Minnesota. She is majoring in Political Science with a minor in Environmental Science and plans on going to Law school after getting her degree. At the U, she is involved in a variety of activities and clubs. This includes theatre, BSU, show choir, and bipartisan issues group. This semester, she will serve as the secretary of bipartisan issues group which is a club that strives to bring together students of all political backgrounds to talk about issues that impact people all across the country.

Aime was born outside of the U.S. and moved here at the age of 7. She has always had a passion for helping others and hopes to one day be a leader in public policy that helps members of marginalized groups. Reflected in her environmental science minor, she also cares deeply about the environment and sustainability. This is why she chose to go vegan and strives to make choices every day that have a positive impact on the earth. Choosing to intern for capital pathways was an easy choice for Aime because she knew that diversity at the state capital is very important.



**Jacqueli Yaurincela Bonete**

Internship site: O'Rourke Strategic Consulting  
Hamline University

Jacqueli Yaurincela Bonete is currently a senior majoring in Business Administration and pursuing her Spanish Proficiency Certification at Hamline University.

As an active student in and out of campus, she currently serves as the Hamline Undergraduate Student Congress (HUSC) Multicultural Alliance Representative, Site Leader for Hamline's Catalyst Alternative Spring Break trips, youngest serving board member at El-Colegio High School that builds upon the talents of bilingual, bicultural students and their families to become lifelong leaders and change agents. She is also a part of a Latinx student alliance that focuses on working with Latinx college student organizations around the state of Minnesota to organize and create a yearly conference that focuses on providing key essential leadership, networking, and financial skills for students. This year she will join various women around the nation to be a part of Harvard University's 2019 Leadership Empowerment and Development Conference that focuses on empowering Latinas and other minorities who plan on fulfilling leadership and other professional career-orientated paths.

Through her experiences, she aspires to grow and lead a fortune 500 company and eventually become an entrepreneur. She hopes to open new opportunities for women and first generation students.

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**Nashary Ovillo Cumbe**

Internship site: Fredrikson and Byron P.A.  
Hamline University

Nashary Ovillo is a second-year student double majoring in legal studies and women studies at Hamline University. Her dream is to become a lawyer and open non-profit organizations to help immigrants and women all over the country. She comes from a family of immigrants and moved from Ecuador to the United States when she was one year old. Her parent's biggest dream was to ensure their children reached a higher level of education than they ever did. This dream became a reality as both she and her brother are both attending college. Her parents are her motivation and they push her to strive for her dreams.

She became interested in law because she wanted to represent and create opportunities for immigrants. She wants to give her people a voice and make sure their needs are heard by advocating for laws and policies that serve their interests. She is very passionate about her dream and believes Capitol Pathways is a great stepping stone to help move her in the right direction. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn and gain experience by interning with Fredrikson & Byron and being mentored by a Capitol Pathways alumnus.



**Judith Marquez Duran**

Internship site: Minnesota Alliance with Youth  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Judith is currently a sophomore at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. She is currently undecided, but leaning towards majoring in Political Science or Global Studies. This spring semester she will be interning at the Minnesota Alliance with Youth. Judith is currently a President's Emerging Scholars Mentor at her University where she mentors incoming freshman students, making sure they are on track to graduate and have someone to turn to as they navigate the university as first generation college students and students of color. She has previously interned as both an Education Intern and Communication Intern with Hennepin County.

In the Spring Judith is a Co-Trainer for Brooklynk, a program that allows high school youth of color to gain internship opportunities. She trains youth on career and professional development skills, preparing them for internship positions. Judith is passionate about social justice and advocating for communities of color. She applied to Capitol Pathways because she wanted to gain the opportunity to work with an organization that supports increasing minority representation in government and gain a better understanding of public policy and the legislative process. She is excited to learn, be challenged and gain new skills.

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### **Jeannine Erickson**

Internship site: Minnesota Secretary of State  
St. Catherine University

Jeannine is a senior double majoring in Critical Studies of Race and Ethnicity and French at St. Catherine University. Post-graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in law as a Criminal Justice and Immigration Policy lawyer.

Jeannine's goal is to dismantle racism as well as other forms of institutionalized oppression in the judicial system. Oppressive systems such as the Prison Industrial Complex and the School to Prison Pipeline and how they uniquely impact both men and women of color is her main initiative. Advocating for ex-convicts voter rights is another point of interest for Jeannine's future career.

As a student at St. Catherine University, Jeannine has engaged in various leadership opportunities. She was president of the French Club where she hosted a community event discussing the veil ban in France in collaboration with the Muslim Student Association. She served as a MIPS Peer Mentor and also participated in the First Step Program as a First Step Coordinator empowering women of color and indigenous women that are interested in pursuing higher education. With a passion for social justice, equality, and education Jeannine applied for the Capitol Pathways Program to get a better understanding of the legislative process and the laws that inform the legal/ judiciary system.



### **Victoria-Jo Gapuz**

Internship site: SEIU Local  
Macalester College

Victoria-Jo Gapuz is a sophomore at Macalester College majoring in Sociology and Educational Studies with a minor in Political Science. She is a first-generation college student from Plainfield, Illinois, but came to Minnesota for college as a QuestBridge Scholar. In the future, she hopes to pursue public policy in graduate school and eventually work in international education policy.

Rooted in her identity as a Filipina-American, Victoria-Jo has participated in multiple leadership opportunities that allow her to reclaim her narrative. At Macalester, she co-founded SPACES, a creative, student-led publication that showcases the POC experience in navigating higher education. She is also a Bonner Community Scholar which is a four-year civic engagement program focused on community building and accessible education. Victoria-Jo serves as the public relations officer for the Filipino Association at Macalester (FAM) and the Asian Pacific Islander American In-Coalition (APIAC) organizations to increase Asian American representation in her community.

Through discussions and activities that increase cultural awareness, she works to empower underrepresented youth. As a part of the Capitol Pathways cohort, she hopes to gain a better understanding of the legislative system so that she can advocate for policies that amplify marginalized voices in spaces where they are historically silenced.

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### **Amaris Holguin**

Internship site: Minnesota Council of Nonprofits  
University of St. Thomas

Amaris is a first-generation college student in her third year at the University of St. Thomas pursuing degrees in communication and journalism and justice and peace studies. Her most recent work experience involves working with multiple nonprofit organizations dedicated to serving communities across the Twin Cities.

During her second year at the University of St. Thomas, Amaris served as a mentor for first-year students in the Linkages Mentoring Program, as the president of the Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Achievement, and an intern in the Student Diversity and Inclusion Services department. Last semester she participated in a study abroad program through Augsburg University titled “Social Change in Central America: Exploring Peace, Justice, and Community Engagement.” This experience helped her gain a higher appreciation of diverse cultural understanding through authentic and meaningful cultural exchange. She hopes to use what she learned abroad to challenge others to analyze issues within a larger context.

Amaris applied to the Minnesota Capitol Pathways Program to discover how she can use her degrees, experience, and passion collectively to work for the advancement of others. She is eager to showcase her commitment to equity and learn more about public policy and the legislative process while providing quality service as a Capitol Pathways Intern at the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.



### **Nicholas Jenkins**

Internship site: Legislative Coordinating Commission, MNLegislature  
Hamline University

Nicholas is currently a junior majoring in Psychology, with a minor in Political Science and Sociology at Hamline University. He hopes to pursue a career in law and public service. His career interests lie in trial litigation and public policy. Nicholas has served in numerous leadership roles. He serves as a director of Hamline’s First Generation student organization and also sits on the first gen committee. Nicholas is an

elected official for the student congress and Hamline’s Honor’s program Executive Council.

Nicholas has a deep passion for public service and has started his public service as a Human Rights Commissioner for the city of Bloomington. He served as a committee member for the Bloomington Police Departments Multicultural Advisory Committee. Nicholas went on to serve on Bloomington Police Body Worn Camera Policy Committee, Bloomington School District Diversity Advisory Committee Member, Governor Dayton’s Civic Engagement Steering Committee, and Minnesota Human Rights Commissioner Kevin Lindsey Local Human Rights Committee. In his free time, Nicholas is an assistant football coach for DeLaSalle High School.

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**Sanjana Ketchum**

Internship site: Minnesota Environmental Partnership  
Hamline University

Sanjana is currently a Senior at Hamline University with a double major in Political Science and Global Studies and a minor in Spanish. She has participated in the collegiate level of Model United Nations for two years and has become a Head Delegate for her final year of college where she will help guide her team at the National Model United Nations conference in New York City. Additionally, she has carried many leadership roles throughout her time at Hamline University as the Treasurer and then the President of the campus organization called Students of South Asia where she educated and shared about South Asian cultures to the community. Sanjana applied for Capitol Pathways for first-hand experience of policy making and to expand her understanding of the legislative process and has been placed with the Minnesota Environmental Partnership.



**Savior Allen-Knight**

Internship site: EdAllies  
Hamline University

Savior is a freshman at Hamline University double majoring in Education and Philosophy with a minor in Feminist Studies. After college he intends to go to graduate school and pursue a doctorate in Philosophy in which he plans to use in his career as a philosophy professor. Deeply interested in seeing alternative perspectives to expand his thought, he joined the capitol pathways program to better understand policy and education from the lens of the government. With this he has hopes of someday being a local representative to mend ground level injustices facing every people. He also tutors and teaches students 3rd-6th at an after school program called ANEW BAM. Apart from academics he is passionate about art in all mediums including fashion, photography, and graphic design. Savior was paired with EDAllies who strives to get equal education throughout Minnesota



**Denise Lor**

Internship site: Minnesota Budget Project  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Denise is a third year at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities where she studies Geography with a minor in Digital Media Studies. Her experience in community organizing with Asian American Organizing Project has led her to become interested in the relationship between cities and its communities. Denise currently seeks to understand issues that affect local communities through a policy-oriented lens. Denise is placed at Minnesota Budget Project where she will be able to actively learn about policy and how to advocate for change. She also hopes to grow professionally and develop strong leadership skills. Denise is excited to use this experience to explore careers to best serve her community.



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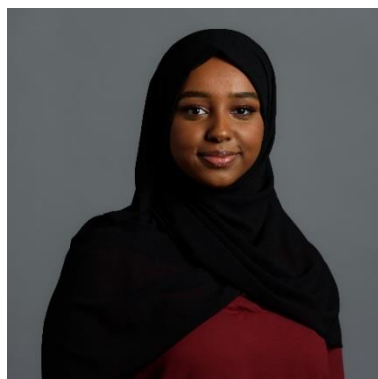
### **Ra'Wi Mahamud**

Internship site: Minnesota Dept. of Employment & Economic Development  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Ra'Wi Mahamud (she/her/hers) is a senior at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities studying Political Science and Journalism (Strategic Communications) with a minor in Comparative US Race and Ethnicity. Ra'Wi is a first-generation college student and has interests in media, education, and cultural trends. Ra'Wi hopes to pursue a career doing work in economic development. As a student at the University of Minnesota

Twin-Cities, she has served in numerous leadership positions.

Ra'Wi was the President of the Somali Student Association, Vice President of 180 Degrees Consulting, Vice President of the Roosevelt Institute, and served as an At-Large Representative in the Minnesota Student Association. Outside of school, Ra'Wi has interned for different organizations in both the nonprofit and public sectors. Ra'Wi will be working at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development this semester and is currently working on finalizing her post-graduation plans. Ra'Wi is passionate about social justice and learning more about ways in which economic development can empower communities and nations. She is excited about her opportunity to network within Capitol Pathways and hopes to connect with individuals who share similar interests.



### **Naema Mustafa**

Internship site: Medica  
St. Catherine University

Naema is currently a junior at St. Catherine University pursuing her Bachelors of Science degree in Public Policy with a minor in Sociology. She deeply values family, religion, and community. She is passionate about helping others and hopes to use her degree to work with nonprofit organizations that aim to improve issues within marginalized communities.

Naema has taken many leadership roles throughout her journey. She is a MIPS Peer Mentor, where she works closely with multicultural students to guide them through their college experience. She was a First-Year Orientation leader and also served a term as Public Relations for Muslim Student Association. Naema works closely with her local Masjid and is a part of a leadership team for young girls in her community. She applied for the Capitol Pathways internship program in hopes to gain more knowledge of the legislative process and experience working in the Capitol.

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### **Tunrayo Olanrewaju**

Internship site: Capitol Hill Associates  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Tunrayo Olanrewaju is a senior at the University of Minnesota studying political science and business law. She was originally born in Nigeria but immigrated to Minnesota when she was 10. She studied abroad in London last semester and interned at Greenways Law and Westbourne Park family Centre.

She will be working at Capitol Hill Associates and is excited to be involved in Minnesota politics. She applied for the program after hearing about it from a friend and loved the idea of putting people of color in areas they usually do not have easy access to. She is passionate about immigration and education. She hopes to become an immigration lawyer after attending law school. Last summer, she was an urban scholar at the city of Minneapolis with election and voter services. The summer before, she interned at Minnesota Management and Budget. She is also involved at her school with the African Student Association where she serves as Vice President and served as treasurer the previous year. She enjoys putting on events for students and being involved with her community.



### **Jazinae Patterson**

Internship site: City of Minneapolis Dept. of Intergovernmental Relations  
University of Northwestern - Saint Paul

Jazinae is a third year student at the University of Northwestern St. Paul where she is studying criminal justice and psychology. Jazinae is very passionate about seeking justice, racial equity, and the influence of policy and law. She is an Act Six Scholar, which is a leadership based scholarship that takes emerging leaders out of their communities and equips them with the tools needed to go back and help their communities. She started a Black Student Union on her campus and was the President of it for a year and she was also elected Senator for Student Government at her university. She also, played collegiate basketball for her university for two and a half years. Jazinae works for an organization called IGF (Irreducible Grace Foundation). This organization holds workshops around educating people on social issues and mental health throughout many communities with a focus on people of color and those in the foster care system.

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**Yuri Garcia-Pena**

Internship Site: Minnesota Dept. of Commerce  
Augsburg University

Yuri is a senior at Augsburg University and is double majoring Political Science and International Relations with an International Business concentration. Yuri's career aspirations include working in local government to be an advocate for change to better serve the communities that local government impacts daily. She also aspires to discover the world. After spending the fall semester abroad in Spain and traveling throughout Europe Yuri knows that the change she wants to aspire is global as well.

Yuri believes that to be able to help others it is necessary to learn how to lead. Throughout her time at Augsburg, she has held various leadership positions such as Vice President of Augsburg Latin American Students and Treasurer of the Augsburg Day Student Government. Since the summer of her sophomore year, she has interned at the State of Minnesota through the Urban Scholars program in different departments including the Department of Public Safety: State Patrol and the Department of Employment and Economic Development: Minnesota Trade Office. As a member of the Capitol Pathways, 2019 cohort Yuri hopes to continue to strengthen her professional experience and to continue to be able to serve her community.



**Jordan Peoples**

Internship site: Minnesota Dept. of Transportation  
Augsburg University

Jordan is a junior at Augsburg University and is currently pursuing a major in Sociology with minors in Urban Studies and Leadership Studies. Born and raised in Minnesota, Jordan exemplifies the meaning of "Minnesota nice". He is passionate about living a healthy lifestyle, enjoys working out, is an avid sports fan, and loves spending time with family and friends. He describes himself as a strong leader who is confident, courageous and compassionate. Jordan believes deeply in human rights and social equality for all people. He is passionate about promoting the values of respect, dignity and human rights and believes in ensuring that vulnerable people are given a voice. Jordan plans to attend graduate school to pursue a Master's degree. He hopes to follow a career path in Public Policy addressing racism, social inequality and human rights. His goal is to help improve the social welfare and quality of life for all citizens and make a positive and lasting impact on his community and beyond.

Jordan applied to Capitol Pathways in hopes of learning more about the political and legislative process. He is looking forward to building relationships with policy leaders, expanding his network, strengthening his leadership qualities and developing his professional skills to help pursue his career.

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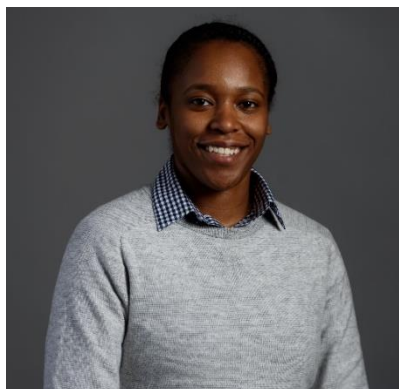


### **Keliyah Perkins**

Internship site: Minnesota Citizens for the Arts  
Gustavus Adolphus College

Keliyah Perkins is a senior Philosophy major with a Film and Media Studies and English double minor. She is currently an intern at Nexus Community Partners under the North Star Cooperative Fellowship branch. She aspires to be a jack-of-all-trades dabbling in community engagement and development, free-lance writing, education advocacy and development, the arts, and a world traveler. She dedicates her spare time to leading an organization that she founded in the spring of 2018

called The Radicals, which uses different art mediums to give voice to injustice through multiple lenses. This past year she asked herself what she wanted for Christmas, she said, "A better me!"



### **Beyza Pierre**

Internship site: NAMI Minnesota  
St. Cloud State University

Beyza Pierre is an upper-class student at St. Cloud State University (SCSU) studying Criminal Justice and Human Relations. As a student at SCSU, Beyza worked as an overnight domestic violence advocate and became President of a student organization, Org. For the Prevention of AIDS in Africa. More recently, she was appointed a cabinet position on the Young Women's Initiative as a policy lead; helping create a better Minnesota for girls across our state. These experiences have crafted Beyza's interest in advocacy, policy, and victim services. Following her experiences working with victims Beyza completed internships with Carver County Court Services, Minnesota Department of Corrections, and now Capitol Pathways.

Beyza joined this program to learn how she can be more civically engaged in policies that have influenced communities she's working with. Beyza enjoys working in small coffee shops, painting, and listening to music.

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**Maddie Shumacher**

Internship site: MENTOR Minnesota  
Macalester College

Maddie Schumacher is a fourth-year American and Urban Studies major at Macalester College. They are working as the legislative assistant for MENTOR MN, an organization devoted to supporting mentoring relationships for disadvantaged youth throughout the state.

In the past, they have worked for Ujamaa PLACE, the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, and the federal Office of Minority Health under the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. This spring, they are excited to continue volunteering for the Women's Prison Book Project and to learn African Based Movement at school!



**Dani Stevens**

Internship site: Lutheran Social Services  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Dani is a third-year student at the University of Minnesota majoring in Anthropology with minors in English and African American Studies. As a President's Emerging Scholar, she is also a member of the Martin Luther King Program, in which she has been involved in Immersion Programs with focuses in social justice and African American history. She is also part of the 2019 cohort of the University of Minnesota's Social Justice Leadership Retreat. Dani has spent time volunteering at a local organization called Communities United Against Police Brutality and is also a fellow for the Minnesota Historical Society. Through academic, professional, and personal experience, she has learned about community organizing and has developed a passion for social justice and understanding cultures.

Dani's personal history and experience of being in oppressed and marginalized communities has driven her to gain experience on how public policy can have a close impact on our communities. As a Capitol Pathways intern at Lutheran Social Service, she hopes to expand her knowledge on policy work affecting issues such as homelessness, education, health, criminal justice, and human rights.

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**Peneal Tiruneh**

Internship site: Ewald Consulting  
North Central University

Peneal Tiruneh is a senior at North Central University with a major in Social Work, a minor in Biblical Studies, and Pre-Law. She came to the United States with her family at the age of 9 from Ethiopia. She plans to pursue international law in order to be a bridge between the western and eastern context. She hopes to attend law school, gain various experiences, all of which will propel her eventual career in the United Nations. She has previously worked with the Multicultural Office at North Central and

Lutheran Social Services.

She is currently an Act Six Scholar, an urban leadership program, and is the president of the Student Social Work Association. Through the Capitol Pathways program, she will be hosted by Ewald Consulting in the government relations department. She hopes that this experience will help her build a foundation on the intricacies of public policy.



**Pachia Thao**

Internship site: Fresh Energy  
St. Olaf University

Pachia Mailinda Thao is a senior at Saint Olaf College, majoring in Political Science and Asian Studies. She is a first generation Hmong-American woman college student. Pachia is part of the TRIO Student Support Services at St. Olaf and a Page Scholar. She just came back from studying Japanese abroad in Japan for the first semester of school. On campus, Pachia was involved in a multicultural student organization at St. Olaf called Hmong Culture Outreach (HCO) that teaches and promotes Hmong

Culture on campus, and to the local community.

Throughout her three years in HCO, she served as; Secretary, Public Relations, Co-Chair and currently as an Event Coordinator. Pachia is passionate about social equity and helping people, especially disadvantaged groups. Through the Capital Pathway internship experience, she hopes to learn more about public policy and gain insight into the various career paths within the field. After graduation, Pachia is interested in possibly pursuing a Master's in Public Administration and Public Policy

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**Becca Tran**

Internship site: Xcel Energy  
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

Becca is a current second year at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities planning on graduating in May 2020. She is double majoring in Sociology and Global Studies with a focus in Political Economy and Environmental Change. On campus, Becca participates in Model UN and can often be found at the climbing wall. She also enjoys taking music classes in her extra time and volunteers weekly at a women's shelter.

Becca plans to pursue a graduate degree in public policy or human rights, and hopes to find a career where she can influence change on a policy level and do hands-on work to help her community. Growing up, she was taught the importance of community service through her parents' work at their nonprofit, A Better Society, and is a strong advocate of building community through service. This semester, she hopes to gain experience with the legislative process and learn more about environmental policy while interning with Xcel Energy.



**Alexandrah Walker**

Internship site: Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
University of Minnesota -Twin Cities

Alexandrah is a senior at the University of Minnesota majoring in American Indian Studies. A member of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, or Meskwaki Nation, Alexandrah grew up on the Meskwaki Settlement and moved to Minnesota in 2015 for college. She hopes to attend law school and eventually use law as a tool to address issues in Indian Country. She has worked with two nonprofits, the Children's Defense Fund and the Division of Indian Work in the

Minneapolis Public Schools. In her free time, Alexandrah enjoys playing traditional lacrosse or baaga'adowewin (Ojibwemowin) with Twin Cities Native Lacrosse.

As a resident of Minnesota, Alexandrah believes it's important to address that we are living on stolen land that belongs to the Dakota and the Ojibwe. For the majority of Native American tribes, their identity is rooted in their location and their locations are sacred. She believes as Minnesotans that we all have an obligation to its original inhabitants to respect the environment and work on making the land and waters safe and clean for future generations to come. Alexandrah's top choice was the DNR and she looks forward to learning more about public policy and the environmental relationship between the state and the tribal nations of Minnesota.

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**Raniya Yimam**

Internship site: ClearWay Minnesota  
Minneapolis Community and Technical College

Raniya is a sophomore at the Minneapolis College and plans to double major in public health and public policy. She is a member of the feminist organization club and the sisterhood of Africa American club. She is also involved with the Phi Theta Kappa honor society where she works as the public relations officer and is the president of the Ethiopian Association.

She aims to improve the health conditions of communities and enable people with mental disorders to live a quality life. Her dream is to open a non-profit hospital and an orphanage where the intellectually disabled, poor people and women can find solace from their suffering. She hopes to open opportunities that will enable young girls from her community to get a quality education.

Participating in Capitol Pathways will help move her toward her studies of Public Health and public policy. She will also get the opportunity to learn new skills and increase her understanding of the legislative process. This internship will also help her build strong network of highly capable and motivated students who also want to create a positive impact in the world.



**Amy Zhou**

Internship Site: Minnesota Housing Finance Agency  
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Amy is currently a sophomore at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities majoring in Political Science with a minor in Urban Studies. She plans on pursuing a graduate program in public policy following graduation, with hopes to have a career in public service. Her interests lie in community development and international relations. She is especially passionate about the empowerment of marginalized groups in the United States and internationally.

At the U she's held leadership positions around campus. She serves as the Public Relations Manager to UMN's Model UN chapter and as an Ambassador Team Lead for Admissions Ambassadors, the volunteer tour guide group on campus. She's additionally a member of the Student Legal Services Board and CLAgency. Outside of school, she's been a History Day Mentor for two years, which involves working with students in urban schools. She wanted to be a Capitol Pathways fellow as a way to better connect with her identity as a woman of color and immigrant. Amy believes earnestly in representation in government, and hopes to gain hands-on experience with policymaking and legislation.