

Tower Center NEWSLETTER

Summer Student Highlights



Owen Bartosh

Owen spent the summer in Prague, Czech Republic, through the SMU Abroad Internship Program, where he interned with AMIGA, an NGO that supports refugee integration and promotes mental health. His work involved strengthening AMIGA's financial sustainability by building partnerships with the private sector and contributing to reports for the UNHCR. He also collaborated with the Czech Ministry of Labour and European Commission experts on educational and language programs for Ukrainian refugees. One of the most impactful parts of his internship was leading the English Conversation Club for displaced professionals.

[STUDENT BLOG](#)

Kennedy Moore

Kennedy attended the Public Service Weekend hosted by the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs in Austin, Texas, in partnership with the Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Program. The event brought together students from across the country to learn about emerging public policy issues in Texas and the American South. During the weekend, Kennedy participated in lectures and discussions led by professors from the LBJ School of Public Affairs and UT Law, as well as local community advocates focused on serving the people of Texas.

[STUDENT BLOG](#)



Tessa Peterson

Tessa participated in the ACFR Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C., where she led a diplomatic meeting at the French Embassy. She conducted research on the Irish War of Independence in Dublin and Galway through a Richter Fellowship, building on an independent study with an SMU professor, Dr. Arbery. She studied British and European history at the University of Oxford through SMU-in-Oxford and attended the Hoover Institution's Summer Policy Bootcamp at Stanford. She received the **Marian Tower Scholarship** and the **Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Undergraduate Fellowship** from SMU's Tower Center.

[STUDENT BLOG](#)

Student Fellowships

Nicole Busch

Henry S. Miller Undergraduate Fellowship

Kitty Eid

Marian Tower Study Abroad Fellowship

Courtney Godfrey

Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Scholarship
Undergraduate Fellowship

Emiliano Hernandez Posada

Al G. Hill, Jr. Undergraduate Research Fellowship
Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Undergraduate Fellowship

Nicholas Iwaniuk

Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Scholarship
Undergraduate Fellowship

Bailey Kamau

Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Undergraduate Fellowship

Tessa Peterson

Edwin L. Cox Undergraduate Fellowship
Kelli and Gerald J. Ford Undergraduate Fellowship

Grace Pigeon

Tom Bryant Medders, Jr. Undergraduate
Fellowship

Lelin Spriggs

Rubottom Foreign Service Scholarship

Arianna Villarreal Jacome

Jack C. and Annette K. Vaughn Foreign Service
and International Affairs Internship



Summer Events

KGU-SMU Sun & Star Symposium in Japan

Kwansei Gakuin University and the SMU Tower Center co-hosted the KGU-SMU Sun & Star Symposium in Japan 2025 at the KGU Nishinomiya Uegahara Campus. Themed *U.S.-Japan Relations and the New International Order?* the event welcomed over **160 participants** in-person and online. Experts from academia, journalism, and government, including Dr. Michael Beeman (SMU graduate and former U.S. Assistant Trade Representative) and Norito Kunisue (journalist and Project Professor, University of Tokyo), shared insights on global security, trade, diplomacy, and the war in Ukraine.

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Keimei Gakuin High School Students Visit Dallas from Japan

From August 3rd to 10th, twelve students from Keimei Gakuin High School, along with three of their teachers, visited SMU and Dallas as part of the exchange program that SMU has maintained with Kwansei Gakuin University (KGU) since 1980. During their stay, they experienced the culture of Dallas by participating in English classes, attending a special chapel service, visiting 1Finity Americas, spending the weekend with their homestays, and watching the Rangers win with a walk-off home run against the Yankees.

The Medal of Freedom

At the SMU Tower Center, we believe in honoring those who illuminate our understanding of democracy and civic life. We recently had the great privilege of awarding the Tower Center Medal of Freedom, our highest honor, to **Jon Meacham**, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, biographer, and presidential scholar. From his acclaimed biographies of U.S. presidents to his thoughtful commentary on history and current affairs, Meacham's work reflects a profound commitment to intellectual integrity, democratic values, and civic responsibility. His deep understanding of America's past, and his ability to connect it meaningfully to the present, has made him one of the most trusted voices in the national conversation. The Medal of Freedom is reserved for individuals who exemplify principled leadership, public service, and a dedication to informed, civil discourse. By honoring Jon Meacham, we reaffirm our mission to foster thoughtful engagement with the most critical issues facing our country and world. Congratulations to Jon Meacham on this well-deserved recognition and thank you for continuing to advance the conversation on democracy, leadership, and the responsibilities of citizenship.



Student Opportunities

Join The Dialogue

Now is the perfect time to get involved with The Dialogue, SMU's political studies journal published by the Tower Center. Whether you want to submit your work or take part as an editor, it is a valuable opportunity to engage in writing, editing, and political analysis alongside a community of passionate peers.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

NexPoint Tower Scholar Application

The application to become a NexPoint Tower Scholar opens **October 1, 2025!** All freshmen interested in international affairs and public policy are welcome to apply. Applications close **February 1, 2026.**

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Student Forum

Join the Tower Center Student Forum through SMU 360 to stay up to date on global policy events, exclusive speaker sessions, and networking opportunities. Be part of a dynamic community shaping conversations on campus and beyond.

[SMU 360](#)

Upcoming Events

National Security Lecture

Bipartisanship in U.S. Foreign Policy: Why is it Declining? How Much Remains?

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

[Dr. Jeffrey Friedman](#), Associate Professor of Government, Dartmouth College

[RSVP FOR EVENT](#)



Tower Center Forum

Trump, Tariffs, and Trade

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

[Dr. Benn Steil](#), Senior Fellow and head of the international economics program at the Council on Foreign Relations

TOWER CENTER FORUM MEMBERS ONLY

[BECOME A FORUM MEMBER](#)



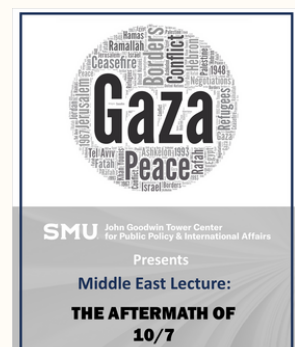
Middle East Lecture

The Aftermath of 10/7

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

[Brian Katulis](#), Senior Fellow Middle East Institute

[RSVP FOR EVENT](#)



2025 National Security Symposium

U.S. Military Alliances: Where Do We Stand? (And Where Do We Go From Here?)

Thursday, November 13, 2025

[RSVP FOR EVENT](#)



Open Houses

Dedman College

We were pleased to represent the Tower Center during Dedman College's Open House: an inspiring event that showcased the incredible work happening throughout our university community. From groundbreaking research to impactful student programs, it was an exciting opportunity to highlight the role of our Center in advancing Dedman College's mission.



Tower Center x Political Science

On September 19th, we co-hosted an open house highlighting the diverse majors, minors, and opportunities offered through the Tower Center and the Department of Political Science at SMU. The event enjoyed a strong student turnout and featured refreshments for all attendees.

Faculty Updates

Strategies for Approval

Building Support for Military Intervention at the UN Security Council

Dr. Stefano Recchia, the Tower Center's Chair in International Politics, recently published a new book: *Strategies for Approval: Building Support for Military Intervention at the UN Security Council*. Drawing on extensive archival research in several countries, the book explains how powerful countries, including the United States, can continue to reap the legitimacy benefits of UNSC approval for their military interventions, even when veto-wielding permanent members, such as Russia and China, appear strongly opposed at the outset.



[BOOK DETAILS](#)



Career Achievement Award *American Political Science Association*

Dr. James Hollifield was awarded the inaugural **Career Achievement Award** by the **APSA Migration & Citizenship Section** at the APSA Annual Meeting in Los Angeles in recognition of his outstanding and sustained contributions to the field. Nearing three decades, his prolific and innovative scholarship has shaped the agenda of migration and citizenship studies. The award celebrates his lasting impact and leadership in the discipline.

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Our Experts

Texas-Mexico, a global success story under threat

Tariffs can undermine a unique partnership rooted in decades, even centuries, of trade.

Written by the Director of the Tower Center and Acting Director of the SMU Mission Foods Texas-Mexico Center, **Dr. James Hollifield** and Texas-Mexico Center Fellow, **Raymond Robertson**

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Trump raises the ante in Ukraine

After pingpong of praise and criticism of Putin and Zelenskyy, U.S. may finally have gotten it right.

Written by Tower Center Senior Fellow and Board Member, **Robert Jordan**

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Scoring Trump's trip to the Persian Gulf

The president landed some big deals, departed from Bibi orthodoxy, and displayed his aircraft envy.

Written by Tower Center Senior Fellow and Board Member, **Robert Jordan**

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