

Tower Center NEWSLETTER

Student Opportunities

Become a NexPoint Tower Scholar

The Tower Scholars Program offers select SMU undergraduates a unique opportunity to pursue a minor in Public Policy and International Affairs while gaining hands-on experience through policy simulations, research, and professional engagement. The program prepares students for leadership and careers in public service, policy, and international affairs.

The application deadline is February 1!

APPLY NOW!



NexPoint Tower Scholars at an event hosted by Jeanne and Berry Cox

Submit Your Research

Are you a student with a research paper, policy analysis, or essay you're proud of? The Tower Center's student-run academic journal, *The Dialogue*, welcomes submissions from all undergraduates. Sharing your work is a great way to engage with the SMU community, build your resume, gain feedback, and contribute to discussions on public policy and international affairs.

The deadline to submit is February 15!

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE



Editors of *The Dialogue*: Lelin Spriggs, Tower Center Rubottom Intern, and Valentina Barros

Alexander Hamilton Society

The Alexander Hamilton Society (AHS) invites SMU students to a timely discussion on the future of Venezuela featuring **Dr. Ryan Berg** (CSIS) and **Dr. Jay Young** (Tower Center Fellow). Drawing on their experience in foreign policymaking and regional security analysis, the speakers will examine Venezuela's political trajectory and implications for regional stability.

Organized by **Arianna Villarreal**, Tower Center Vaughn Intern and Ford Fellow, and **Keaton Steen**, editor for the Tower Center student journal: *The Dialogue*.

Thursday, February 5, 2026
CEEC 0140, Crum Auditorium



CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

Upcoming Events

Sun & Star Lecture

Politicizing Business: How Firms are Made to Serve the Party-State in China

Monday, February 9, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

Big Challenge Series on Understanding Migration

The Refugee System: A Sociological Approach

Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute in collaboration with the Tower Center

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

2026 Japan Currents Innovation and Growth

Urbanization and Globalization in the U.S.-Japan Partnership

Japan-America Society DFW (JASDFW) in collaboration with the Tower Center

Sun & Star Program

Friday, February 20, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

Middle East Conference

The Path Ahead for the U.S. and the Middle East

Thursday, February 26, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

National Security Lecture

Constructed Success: How Leaders Manage Perceptions of Intervention Outcomes

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

Annette Strauss Internationalizing Dallas Lecture

Cuba and Venezuela: Crises and Exodus

Monday, March 30, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

National Security Lecture

Featuring Dr. Jack Lewis Snyder, Columbia University

Thursday, April 9, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

The FIFA World Cup and the Trilateral Economy:

Impact on the United States, Mexico, and Canada

SMU Mission Foods Texas-Mexico Center in collaboration with the Tower Center

Thursday, April 16, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

Tower Center Forum

Featuring Dr. Shannon K. O'Neil

Monday, April 20, 2026 (Tower Center Forum Members only)

BECOME A
FORUM
MEMBER

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Symposium *in Japan 2026*

In collaboration with the Institute of Geoeconomics and Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology, University of Tokyo

Friday, July 24, and Saturday, July 25, 2026

RSVP FOR
EVENT

Faculty Board Updates



Congratulations Dr. Schwartz

We are proud to share that **Dr. Avshalom Schwartz**, Tower Center Associate, has been named a **Term Member of the American Academy of Sciences and Letters**. Term membership is a highly selective five-year honor awarded to early and mid-career scholars who demonstrate exceptional scholarly achievement. Dr. Schwartz's research explores the role of imagination in ancient and early modern political thought, and his work has appeared in the *American Journal of Political Science*, *History of Political Thought*, and *History of European Ideas*.

Publications

Dr. James Hollifield has made significant contributions to the study of migration and immigration policy. He co-authored "*Labour Market and Fiscal Impacts of Immigration: A Europe-US Comparison*" with Pieter Bevelander, included in *The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of Migration in Europe*. He also co-authored the chapter "*Japan as an Emerging Migration State: A Litmus Test of Liberal Democracy?*" in the book *No Island Is an Island*.



THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK

NO ISLAND IS AN ISLAND



WATCH PANEL

Civil Discourse Series

Dr. James Hollifield spoke on the panel for the Civil Discourse Series program, *Reimagining Immigration: Toward a Just and Functional System*, held at the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum. The discussion explored the complexities of immigration, including historical context and current policies, and emphasized thoughtful, informed, and empathetic dialogue on creating a fair and functional immigration system.

Alumni and Associates Board



NexPoint Tower Scholar Alumna Lily Derr Cited in the Financial Times

Research by J. Scott Davis and NexPoint Tower Scholar alumna, **Lillian Derr** examines how transfer payments and household savings contribute to U.S. deficit growth. Derr, now on the **Tower Center Alumni and Associates Board**, played a key role in the work, which was recently cited in the *Financial Times*, highlighting its impact and her ongoing contributions to the field.

READ ARTICLE

Student Achievements

SCUSA at West Point

Two of our NexPoint Tower Scholars, **Kennedy Moore** and **Kitty Eid**, were invited to attend the **SCUSA conference at West Point**, an honor that recognizes their academic excellence and leadership potential. The experience provided them with a unique opportunity to engage with military and policy leaders while deepening their understanding of national security and strategic affairs.



Student Senate

This semester, Tower Center students made notable contributions in the SMU Student Senate. NexPoint Tower Scholars, **Tessa Peterson**, **Margaret Turpel**, **Max Keating**, and **Arnav Vig** were appointed as the inaugural Student Justices for SMU's new Judicial Branch. **Fajor Ahmed**, Tower Center Student Forum Officer, helped write and unanimously pass legislation creating a Director of Health and Wellbeing position. In addition, NexPoint Tower Scholar, **Owen Bartosh**, co-authored a bill that established the protection of free speech on campus.



Junior Year Policy Seminar

The **Class of 2027 Tower Scholars** ended the term with a mock National Security Council exercise, stepping into cabinet roles to tackle a simulated crisis. This hands-on experience strengthened their critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership skills, leaving them better prepared for the challenges ahead.



Practicum Presentation

The semester culminated with **seniors** presenting on their policy practicum, highlighting real-world insights from placements across diverse policy organizations. Their work reflected months of dedicated work, a strong commitment to evidence-based public service, and the care they bring to improving their communities.



Will Cain Show

Kitty Eid was interviewed on **The Will Cain Show on Fox News**, where she discussed how Gen Z is entering a job market increasingly transformed by AI. She highlighted the challenges and opportunities this shift presents for young professionals navigating a rapidly evolving workplace.



Event Recaps



Medal of Freedom

Pulitzer Prize–winning historian Jon Meacham received the SMU Tower Center Medal of Freedom on September 15 at the George W. Bush Presidential Center, honoring his contributions to democratic ideals through his influential books, commentary, and scholarship on American history and leadership.

[SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER](#)

National Security Lecture

On October 8, 2025, the SMU Tower Center hosted Jeffrey Friedman, who argued that U.S. foreign policy polarization reflects presidents seeking new uses of American power, not a rejection of Cold War principles.

[READ MORE](#)



The Aftermath of 10/7

On October 21, 2025, the SMU Tower Center hosted Brian Katulis, who analyzed the Trump administration's policies on Iran, Syria, and Israel-Palestine, questioning if its transactional approach can ensure lasting regional security.

[READ MORE](#)

National Security Symposium

On November 13, 2025, the SMU Tower Center's National Security Symposium explored the future of U.S. military alliances, featuring a keynote by Kore Schake, AEI Senior Fellow, on sustaining them through strong policy and diplomacy.

[WATCH ON YOUTUBE](#)

[READ MORE](#)



Our Experts

A free future in Iran will come from its people

Supporting the end of the Islamic Republic is good strategy for U.S.

Written by Tower Center Senior Fellow, Diplomat-in-Residence and Board Member, **Robert Jordan** and Tower Center Board Member, **Darab Ganji**

[CLICK HERE TO READ](#)



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