

Benjamin Risley
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Government & Law and Economics
Data Science

Awards/Honors/Special Recognitions or Interests/Prizes

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| Omicron Delta Epsilon, National Honor Society for Economics | 2026 |
| 2026 Economics Award for Excellence in Research | 2026 |
| Pi Sigma Alpha, National Political Science Honor Society | 2026 |
| Dean's List | Fall 2022-Fall 2025 |
| Interstate Oratory Contest: 3 rd place | 2025 |
| National Speech Championship | 2025 |
| • Finalist: Informative Speaking (4 th place), Persuasive Speaking (4 th Place) | |
| National Forensics Association | 2025 |
| • Quarterfinalist: Persuasive Speaking | |
| • Octo-finalist: Informative Speaking, Extemporaneous Speaking | |
| Pi Kappa Delta Award | 2024 |
| National Speech Championship | 2024 |
| • Finalist: Prose Interpretation | |
| Pennsylvania Forensics Association | 2024 |
| • State Champion: Extemporaneous Speaking, Rhetorical Criticism | |
| • Individual Sweepstakes 2 nd place | |
| Gladstone T. Whitman '49 Intern Scholar Award | 2024 |

Academic Engagement/Activities

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|---|---------------------------|
| Honors Thesis Economics | AY 2025-2026 |
| • The Impact of Mobile Methadone Units on Crime Rates | |
| GovLab, Lafayette College | 2025-present |
| • Research Lead(Spring 2026): Leading a sortition project using student perspectives to address problems in the first-year experience at Lafayette. Coordinating a concurrent project with Lafayette College Admissions to create data visualizations and analyze applicant information in support of their recruitment and enrollment goals. | |
| • Research Associate(Fall 2025): Administered a campus-wide survey about student life in collaboration with the Easton City Council, Landis Center, and Meyner Center for Local Government. Coordinated a program for survey outreach that achieved a 40% campus response rate. Compiled data into figures and presented findings to affiliated organizations. | |
| • Research Assistant(Summer 2025): Assisted in the launch of a civic consulting group that provided data services to local organizations. Organized and presented hiring data for local government job applications in collaboration with the Meyner Center. Developed a streamlined system to track student engagement with the Landis Center and compiled data from their past projects. | |
| Excel Scholars Program, Government & Law Dept., Lafayette College | Spring 2024, 2025-present |

- Designed and implemented two survey experiments in collaboration with Professor Groves and researchers in Tanzania using SurveyCTO. Conveyed the results in two working papers that are being prepared for publication using STATA, RStudio, and LaTeX.

Economics Department, Lafayette College

Summer 2025

- **Research Assistant:** Cleaned and organized raw data from the American National Election Survey for a paper analyzing the political realignment of low-income voters. Conducted logistic regression analyses in STATA and prepared comprehensive findings reports with statistical tables and visualizations in LaTeX. Presented research to Econ 205: Markets and Democracy.

Washington Semester Program, American University

Fall 2024

- Courses: Applied Econometrics II, Globalization in Crisis, The American Presidency

Summer School, London School of Economics and Political Science

Summer 2024

- Courses: Financial Markets and the Global Economy, The Political Economy of Public Policy

Campus and Community Engagement/Activities

McKelvy Scholar's Program, Lafayette College

2023-present

- **President (Fall 2025-present):** Organized weekly interdisciplinary discussions led by the various members of the program. Hosted collaborative events with other campus organizations including the Lafayette Arts Society Haunted House, the All-Scholars Reception, and the Salsa Club. Reached out to the College Hill community through Porchfest, Chalk-fest and a Little Free Library.
- **Treasurer (Fall 2023-Spring 2025):** Organized and distributed program funds by coordinating with the executive board and Lafayette College faculty.

Students Demand Action

Spring 2026-present

DiscipleMakers Christian Fellowship

Fall 2025-present

Lafayette Forensics Society

Fall 2022-Spring 2025

- **President (Fall 2023-Spring 2024):** Hosted team practices, meetings, and peer-coaching sessions. Competed in 5-6 tournaments each semester. Collaborated with the Director of Forensics to manage the annual Ochoie tournament on Lafayette's campus.

Spikeball Club, Lafayette College

Fall 2022-present

- **Treasurer (2024-2025)**

Employment Experiences On/Off Campus

Academic Resource Hub, Lafayette College

Spring 2024 & Fall 2025-present

Supplemental Instruction Leader

- Guided students through Macroeconomics by holding hour-long sessions and drop-in hours twice a week to provide additional assistance. Designed and implemented study materials for the sessions. Created worksheets, practice exams, and other study materials to illustrate important concepts.

Admissions, Lafayette College

Spring 2023-present

Ambassador of Lafayette

- Led tours for prospective students 2-4 times a week. Memorized information about the campus and regularly managed large groups of people. Participated in smaller programs that reached out

to admitted and engaged students including Fridays at Lafayette, Leopard for a Day, social media takeovers, Leopard Connect, and student panels.

NYC District Attorney's Office, New York City, NY
Extern

Winter 2025

- Engaged in case preparation by attending strategy meetings, reviewing discovery materials, and observing court proceedings.

US House of Representatives, Washington, DC
Intern

Fall 2024

- Worked 25 hours per week Connecticut's 1st District Congressional Office. Drafted bill and letter recommendations for Congressman John B. Larson and compiled daily news into a brief memo. Attended and wrote reports for committee hearings, markups, and constituent meetings. Trained for and led frequent tours of the U.S. Capitol Building.

Economic and Social Research Foundation, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Research Fellow

Summer 2024

- Managed and organized data for a research project examining the impact of radio messaging on knowledge, attitudes, and uptake, of essential health services. Designed surveys and reported data for government and private sector use. Collaborated with ESRF employees gaining exposure to diverse cultural backgrounds and insights into regional socio-economic issues.

Georgia's Restaurant and Pizza, Amston, CT
Server

Summer 2022 & 2023

- Worked 20-25 hours per week during the summers. Waited on tables, operated the take-out window and organized the opening and closing of the restaurant. Regularly interacted with customers over the phone and in person and acted as restaurant during multiple weeks.

Other

Publications:

- Risley, Benjamin. 2025. "Chasing Dollars, Not Justice: The Case Against Bounty Hunting." Winning Orations, Interstate Oratorical Association, reprinted in The Forensic, Pi Kappa Delta.

Working Papers:

- Rizvi, S. Abu Turab, Moira Humphrey, and Benjamin Risley. 2025. "From Class to Identity: Understanding the Political Realignment of U.S. Low-Income Workers in an Era of Rising Inequality." Working paper, Lafayette College.
- Nyonzo, Francis, Kate SantaMaria, Benjamin Risley, and Dylan W. Groves. 2025. "The Authority Gap: Differential Effects of Judicial and Religious Elite Messages on Social Policy Attitudes in Tanzania." Working paper.
- Zakaria, Zakayo, Benjamin Risley, and Dylan W. Groves. 2025. "Journalism and Blame Attribution in Hegemonic Party Regimes: Evidence from Tanzania." Working paper.

Conference Presentations:

- Risley, Benjamin. 2026. "The Impact of Mobile Methadone Units on Crime Rates." Paper presented at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Richmond, VA, April 13-15.
- Risley, Benjamin. 2025. "Journalism and Blame Attribution in Hegemonic Party Regimes: Evidence from Tanzania." Paper presented at the Pennsylvania Political Science Association Annual Conference, Penn State Harrisburg, Harrisburg, PA, April 11.
- Risley, Benjamin and Dylan W. Groves. 2024. "Journalism and Blame Attribution in Hegemonic Party Regimes: Evidence from Tanzania." Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, December 12-14.

Peasantman: Half Steel Distance Triathlon
Regular Attendee of College Hill Presbyterian Church

August 2023