

Jillian Berger

Majors: Government and Law & Anthropology and Sociology

Awards/Honors/Special Recognitions or Interests/Prizes

Minerva & Emil V. Novak Prize in Government and Law Spring 2026

- Presented annually to a student majoring in government and law based upon overall excellence in academic work and citizenship in the campus community.

Paul Bernon Memorial Prize in Sociology Spring 2026

- Awarded each year by the faculty in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology to the graduating senior most outstanding in sociology.

Paul Tully Memorial Prize Spring 2026

- Presented to the student who best exemplifies the progressive principles of social and political service, and the democratic ideals to which Paul Tully devoted his life.

Order of Omega Fall 2025-present

- Leadership honor society for fraternity/sorority members that recognizes juniors and seniors who have exemplified high standards in the areas of scholarship, leadership, involvement within their respective organization and within the fraternity/sorority, campus, and local communities.

Phi Sigma Alpha Spring 2025-present

- National Political Science Honors Society, recognizing high academic achievement in the field of political science.

Presidents List Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2025

- Awarded to FSL members who have achieved a semester average of 4.0.

Deans List 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

- Awarded to those who have achieved a semester average of at least a 3.6.

Academic Engagement/Activities

Senior Honors Thesis AY 2025-2026

- The American Bully Pulpit: Analyzing Presidential Speeches on Poverty and Welfare
- My analysis of major presidential addresses shows that U.S. presidents consistently frame poverty around deservingness, responsibility, and the role of government, though their approaches vary. Over time, rhetoric has shifted from Johnson's broad, government-led focus to later administrations' selective, responsibility-centered framing, often reflected in, but not fully realized by, enacted policy.
- This research is fundamental because it provides a landscape for understanding how the most influential political figure in American society frames and addresses poverty and the poor, one of the most pressing issues faced by some of the most vulnerable in our society. This research reflects my commitment to applying scholarship to meaningful social impact.

Studied Abroad at College Year in Athens Spring 2025

- Studied Greek culture through immersive coursework relating to gender studies, the history of adornment, transhumanism, immigration, and the culture of rebels.

Campus and Community Engagement/Activities

Kaleidoscope

August 2023-present

Program Director

- Serve as a lead organizer for campus-wide programming that encourages Lafayette students to take an active role in promoting intercultural exchange and exploring issues of multiculturalism, equity, and social justice.
- Facilitated an orientation event for 700+ incoming students on the college's history through a social justice lens
- Organize and lead 20+ workshops and presentations each year, both by request and for the broader campus community
- Established, coordinate, and oversee four committees: Media, Outreach, Recruitment, and Research & Education
- Grew organization from 12 members to 38 members this past year through two cycles of recruitment
- Transformed attendance from ~6 to 30 participants at each campus-wide presentation through a revival of our social media presence and a methodical outreach system that enabled us to connect with more faculty and students
- Host and lead both the executive board and general body meetings each week
- Earned NASPA's Certified Peer Educator (CPE) certification

Landis Center for Community Engagement

Fall 2022-present

Peer Education Team

July 2025-present

Program Director

- Design and lead seminar-style presentations on ethical, community-centered engagement, equipping students with tools to enhance their service work in the Lehigh Valley

Pre-Orientation Service Program (POSP)

Summer 2022-Fall 2025

First Year Student

Summer 2022

- Participated in meaningful community engagement prior to the academic year through education, direct service, and reflection
- Engaged in direct service at LaFarm and local community gardens in Easton, developing sustainable agricultural practices

Firth Staff Member

Spring 2023-Fall 2024

- Organized and led Collaboration camp station for kids at Firth Youth Center, a camp for vulnerable youth, to develop teamwork skills
- Supported and guided first-year students as they adjusted to college life and participated in service and learning at the Youth Center
- Supported reflection sessions for students engaging in community service at the Youth Center

Firth Executive Assistant Director

Spring 2025-Fall 2025

- Oversaw and contributed to the development of Firth Staff Member's stations at the Youth center
- Prepared presentation on community engagement practices for first years and staff members engaging with children at the Youth center
- Fostered relationship with the community partner and continuously collaborated to develop schedule for POSP
- Led and supported reflection sessions on community engagement to support best practices for first year students and staff

- Organized the POSP/International Orientation BBQ for ~130 students, coordinating catering, space booking, and game orders.

PARD Projects

January 2024-December 2024

Program Coordinator

- Conducted consistent outreach to campus networks to spread awareness of community engagement opportunities
- Organized and led clearance workshops, service events, and volunteer initiatives for students

PAX Partners

Fall 2024

Volunteer

- Volunteered at Paxinosa Elementary School to promote elementary school attendance through fun incentives, including collaborative LEGO-building sessions with Lafayette students

Meals at the Market

Fall 2022-Spring 2024

Volunteer

- Engaged with other volunteers to prepare and cook healthy meals for at-risk women and children at the Third Street Alliance, a homeless shelter in Easton

Creative Minds

Fall 2022-Fall 2023

Volunteer

- Volunteered at the Northampton County Prison, developing projects based in growth and empowerment for and with incarcerated individuals

Alpha Phi, Eta Sigma Chapter

August 2023-present

Director of Community Engagement

August 2023-December 2024

- Conducted outreach to campus and community-based organizations to partner, design, and facilitate social justice workshops for chapter members

Pennsylvania College Food Insecurity Cohort

Summer 2025-present

Founder, President

- Lead and coordinate cross-campus initiatives with Lehigh students to combat student hunger, including developing SNAP education workshops and expanding access to food pantry services and meal swipe donation programs

Bread for the World (BFW)

August 2024-May 2025

Campus Student Leader

- Moderator on BFW food security conferences
- Conducted extensive in-person and virtual outreach for conferences to engage campus community on anti-hunger initiatives, bringing together over 30 individuals
- Attended and contributed to conferences in preparation for the launch of Nourish Our Future Campaign

Alpha Phi Omega

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

Member

- Participated in a co-ed service fraternity that offered accessible community engagement opportunities to support the aging community in Easton.

Employment Experiences On/Off Campus

Through Our Eyes

December 2020-present

Author

- I am writing a book that documents individuals' journey before, during, and after their homelessness to break down the detrimental stigma associated with homelessness while simultaneously uplifting the often ignored and neglected voices of individuals who have experienced homelessness. This book is written in the first-person, highlighting that this story is their own, as they see it, through their own eyes, as the title signals.
- Throughout this process, I have fostered relationships with organization directors of homeless shelters that have introduced me to those I have interviewed. Following that, I have developed the content for the interviewing process and led the interviews. Afterwards, I have transcribed the interviews of those I have met. Lastly, I have photographed the eyes of those I have interviewed for the cover art of the book, which will feature all the eyes of the participants, a further nod to the title.
- As I move forward, I will be putting together all of the stories, fundraising for publication costs, and self-publishing and distributing this book, importantly, to those that I have interviewed while also disseminating copies to other organizations and libraries.

Bread for the World (BFW), Washington, DC

Summer 2025

Next Generation Intern

- Co-chaired the College Action Conference, engaging 150 student advocates in initiatives to combat campus food insecurity, featuring an address by Congresswoman Bonamici
- Organized and presented in four regional webinars (50 attendees each) on mobilizing advocates and leading effective congressional meetings
- Organized 17 in-district meetings with Pennsylvania legislators to promote anti-hunger policy
- Coordinated outreach and logistics with 50+ individuals to implement the Offering of Letters campaign
- Developed a 15-page advocacy guide detailing how to schedule congressional meetings, research elected officials, and advocate for co-sponsorship of the Modern WIC Act to be sent to BFW network (900+ people)
- Co-led the creation of a bipartisan focus group on food insecurity with Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick
- Collaborated on and featured in a documentary addressing college hunger

Congressional Hunger Center, Washington, DC

Summer 2024-2025

Host Site: Montgomery County Food Council, Bethesda, Maryland

Zero Hunger Initiative Intern

Summer 2024

- Researched, established, and supported the End Childhood Hunger Collaborative, leveraging research and advocacy to influence child nutrition policy
- Structured and conducted interviews with community partners and affected residents for MCFC's website, newsletters, & social media
- Participated and provided support to the Food Recovery and Access Workgroup and the SNAP Outreach and Enrollment Work Group
- Organized and led a Food Assistance event of 100 people, mobilizing cross-sector partners to advance district policy solutions addressing childhood food insecurity

- Developed and presented a comprehensive research proposal with policy recommendations to a conference of 100 people, examining how dollar stores contribute to food insecurity, worsen public health outcomes, and negatively impact rural economies in Western states
- Led 3 meetings with congressional representatives on the Hill, advocating for the Opportunity to Address College Hunger Act

Mentor

Summer 2025

- Coordinated and scheduled biweekly meetings with student interns, providing constructive feedback and assistance on cohort research project, interview, resume, and policy writing techniques
- Connected student to anti-hunger organizations and events to broaden network

Raise Your Voice to End Poverty (RESULTS)

January 2025-present

RESULTS National Fellow

- Scheduled and led 9 member-level meetings on the Hill to encourage legislators to support domestic food security and global health crises — met with Senator Fetterman, Senator McCormick, Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, Congressman Mackenzie, etc
- Devised Op-Eds and Letter to the Editors related to congressional candidates and food security policy for publication
- Collaborated with state-level coalitions in Pennsylvania and California to produce data-driven policy briefs on anti-hunger initiatives

Golden West Food Group, Los Angeles, CA

Summer 2023

Law Intern

- Oversee and ensure all tasks are fulfilled for team of attorneys and paralegals, gaining early exposure to policy implications of business law
- File and renew DBAs & SOIs (licensing documents)
- Research, review and amend contracts
- Create logistical tracking systems

Other

- Proficiency in Spanish and Farsi
- Founded and led an organization in high school called Feeding Our City to provide meals for the homeless