
Alumni Feature, November 2021

Presidential Management Fellows, Lindsay Robbins '18 and Lily McFeeters '16



Honors alumni Lindsay Robbins '18 (left) and Lily McFeeters '16 (right)

By Sheariah Yousefi, '13

For more than decades, the Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF), operated by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, has been the Federal government's premier leadership development program specifically for advanced degree candidates or graduates. Designed to develop the next leaders in government, those selected for admittance into the prestigious PMF program are given the title PMF Finalists and are eligible to apply for positions within participating agencies. Upon receiving an appointment with an agency, PMF Finalists transition in title to "fellows" and thus begin their 2-year career with the federal government.

For this month's feature, the Honors College (HC) is proud to highlight not one but two PMF program fellows from our alumni base. Providing insight and guidance, both fellows describe in detail the journey they took through the program and how it has impacted their life.

Lindsay Robbins – Presidential Management Fellow, Current

Majoring in International Studies and minoring in Economics and Spanish, Lindsay graduated from Towson University (TU) in 2018 and from the University of Maryland (UMD) with a graduate degree in Public Policy in 2021. During her final UMD year, Lindsay applied to the PMF program and upon acceptance, received her initial placement with the Department of Health

and Human Services (HHS). Although currently working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services supporting the implementation of the *No Surprises Act*, her passion for immigration, especially as it relates to youth development and issues faced by refugees, is the focus field which she hopes to pursue.

In fact, this passion grew and manifested in the work she completed with the TU organization Students Helping Honduras. For each of her 4 years at TU, Lindsay traveled to Honduras, where she learned firsthand how extreme poverty and violence impacts the population. Many of the Hondurans she had the privilege of working with were children, whose vulnerability left an impact on her that deepened her desire to serve. It, therefore, comes as no surprise that when she was awarded another opportunity serve, she jumped at the chance; after graduating from TU, she worked as an AmeriCorps VISTA at the Esperanza Center in Baltimore, which is a comprehensive resource center for immigrants. While at the center, she helped coordinate the Youth ESOL program, which provides immigrant children with the opportunity to learn English in after-school or summer programs. She loved her time there and fondly recalls the importance it played in her life.

Although currently not working on immigration policy, Lindsay shared how a passion to serve, especially those most vulnerable, resides at the core of what she does, from assisting the implementation of policy to leading a life of civic service. In every facet, she leans in, takes advantage of opportunities, and works to make a difference, and this is an approach she strongly encourages HC students pursue. Whether it takes the form of independent studies and internships or study abroad and volunteer opportunities, Lindsay encourages HC students to dig deep, put in the work, “do your part and do as much as you can.”

Lily McFeeters – Presidential Management Fellow, Alumnus

Graduating from TU in 2016, Lily double majored in International Studies and Asian Studies and minored in Political Science and Spanish. Before attending TU, Lily participated in the High School Model United Nations that Dr. Alison McCartney currently organizes, hosts, and leads at TU. The experience was incredible, and it was from this and her connection with Dr. McCartney that she decided upon TU.

After getting her master’s degree in Asian Studies at Georgetown University, Lily began work with the PMF program. Throughout the 2-year period with PMF, she conducted three rotations all within the International Trade Administration at the Department of Commerce. The experience was invaluable as it offered a variety of viewpoints and increased her adaptability. Throughout the rotations, one common theme was the exposure to technology policy. Due to the combination of her experiences in the PMF rotations, Lily grew to appreciate the importance of technology policy throughout every aspect of international relations. In fact, after she completed the PMF program, she began pursuing a job in this field and recently accepted a position with the Office of Multilateral Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (State). In her position, Lily develops and implements U.S. policy positions related to the digital

economy and emerging digital technologies, with a focus on artificial intelligence (AI) in multilateral forums such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad), the Group of 7 (G7), the Group of 20 (G20), and the International Telecommunications Union at the United Nations.

Regarding her time at the HC, Lily shared that one class and assigned course book stood out to her the most. The class in question, “Reforming Urban Schools,” was taught by Dr. Jessica Shiller and the book was *Brown in Baltimore* by Howell Baum. For Lily, not only did the academic association of the class offer vital content and cultural awareness, but the book proved to be a guide that engaged students in intensive, comprehensive understanding of life in Baltimore. Working with Baltimore City students at a charter school was particularly impactful for her.

In addition to the class serving as a lasting impact, Lily also notes that in her current position with State, she puts into practice what she learned from Dr. McCartney regarding multilateral negotiations, particularly what was taught during the ICONS course. As Lily shared, “I am incredibly grateful for all the support I received from Dr. McCartney throughout my journey going from the 2010 High School Model UN at Towson to now serving as a Multilateral Engagement Officer at State.” For Lily, her life has been impacted greatly by the HC and the invested faculty members who daily serve students in the program. She’s thankful the HC offered her the opportunity to pursue passions and grow in her field of study.

If you have any questions for or are interested in connecting with either Lindsay or Lily, please contact the Honors College office at honors@towson.edu.

About the author: Sheariah is a founding member of the Honors Alumni Council and creator of the Alumni Feature. She began writing the features while she and her husband lived in South Korea but more recently, she completes the interviews and stories from her home here in Maryland. Sheariah currently serves as the Chief of Staff for State Delegate Mike Griffith and is the Vice-Chair of the Harford County Young Republicans.

Have an idea for an Alumni Feature? [E-mail honors@towson.edu](mailto:honors@towson.edu) to have your idea passed along to Sheariah.