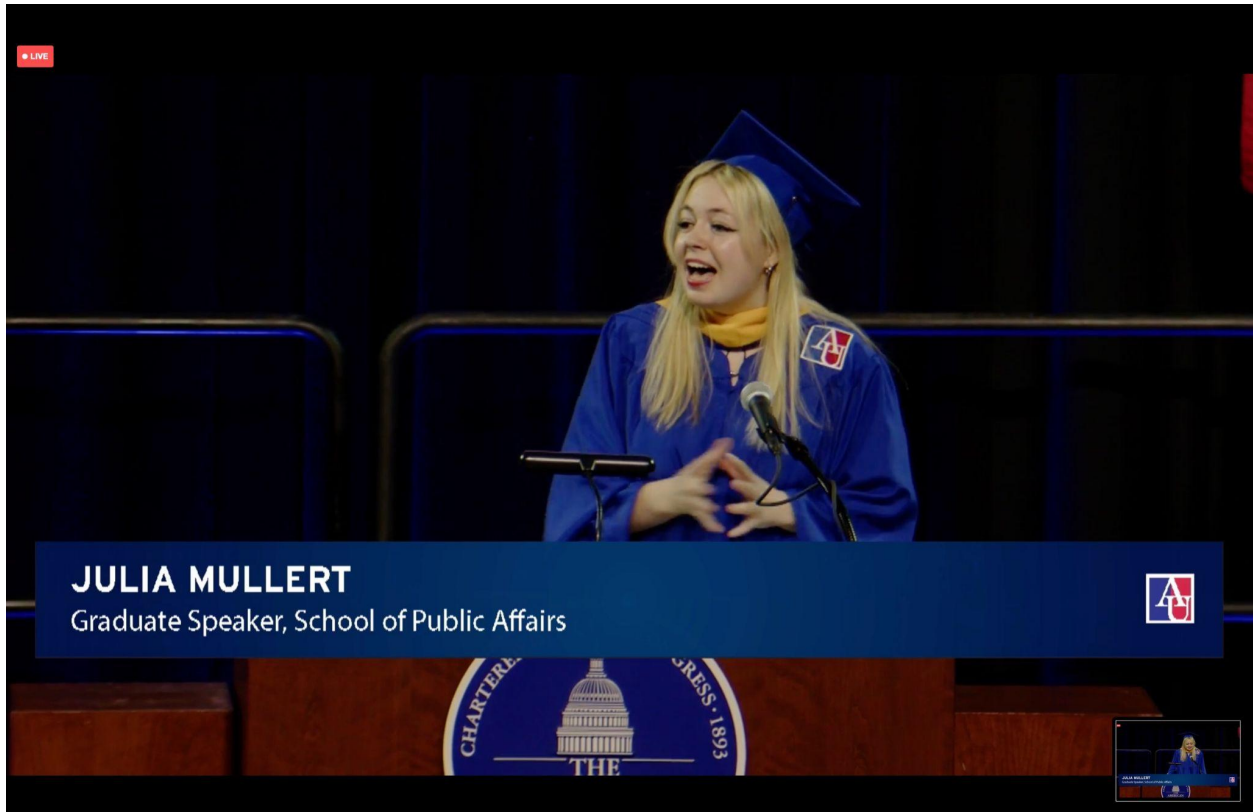


Julia Mullert '17



Julia Mullert, Commencement Speaker for American University School of Public Affairs, December 2022

“It all started with my love for Model UN at Ursuline.” This is what Julia Mullert, class of 2017, says when asked how she ended up where she is now: studying as a Fulbright Scholar in The Netherlands’ capital city and government center, The Hague.

Mullert embodies the intellectual curiosity and impassioned drive of an Ursuline girl, and we could not be more proud of her success. Fulbright scholarship is highly selective; the Fulbright Scholarship Program is a nationally prestigious academic exchange program founded in 1946.

Mullert will call The Netherlands her home for nine months, as she conducts an independent research project investigating how member states of the European Union implemented the EU’s 2020 counter-terrorism agenda in their domestic counter-terrorism approaches as it pertains to foreign fighter returnees.

After graduating from Ursuline in 2017, Mullert enrolled at Boston University and majored in International Relations where her interests in human rights and security solidified. She continued

to shine in Model UN, eventually captaining BU's team which travels nationally and internationally for conferences.

Mullert then moved to Washington, D.C. and graduated from American University with a Master's in Terrorism and Homeland Security Policy, and a niche in violent extremism. Her success in independent research at American University resulted in her teachers' encouragement to apply for Fulbright scholarship, which she did in October of 2022. In March 2023, after interviewing with a Fulbright committee, Mullert received the exciting news that she would be a member of the esteemed Schuman Program for European Union related research. Through the program, she is a Visiting Fellow at the TMC Asser Institute and affiliated with the Brussels International Center and Danish Institute for International Studies.

"I never imagined this for myself," Mullert admits. "I've learned that life is all about showing up and trying your best."

Ursuline's academics and extracurriculars pushed Mullert to explore what makes her passionate, which topics intrigue her, and in what domains she can challenge herself to grow. "Mr. Mayer's AP English course has taught me more about writing than any other class. It taught me how to read critically, how to extract meaning from a work, and how to write solidly." Mullert relies on this knowledge and skill set, learned in an Ursuline classroom, in her professional and academic life.

While at Boston University and American University, Mullert felt compelled to attend office hours because of her connections with teachers at Ursuline. "I can't emphasize enough how important it is to make connections like this," Mullert says. "It opened so many doors for me."

Mullert has not forgotten the importance of undertaking a challenge, as modeled by her decision to apply to be American University's School of Public Affairs' Commencement Speaker in December of 2022 "I actually wrote my commencement speech while I was procrastinating writing a paper for my cyber security class," Mullert shares, smiling. "Ursuline girls will relate to that. We are all about 'productive procrastination.'"

At Ursuline, everything is about "girl power." Mullert shares that she didn't realize until she got to college how important it is that Ursuline graduates implement these same morals into the world they encounter after UA graduation. Academia is competitive and the field of terrorism and violent extremism is male-dominated. To Mullert, it is important for women in her field – and in the professional world at large – to be there for one another.

After completing her Fulbright in 2024, Mullert plans to pursue her PhD. "I remember feeling lost when I was younger, wondering what I was going to do with my life and what I wanted to

pursue,” Mullert says. As one can see from her trajectory so far, Mullert is an advocate for taking risks, trying something new, and for building and maintaining relationships. As she says, “life is about showing up and trying your best.” With every new adventure come challenges, but with hard work, creativity, and gratitude, the possibilities are limitless.

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