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Stanford-bound student selected Newman Civic Fellow

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Stanford-bound student selected Newman Civic Fellow

For all that Magdalena Fitipaldi '15 experienced and accomplished at Dominican since the 2013 fall semester, it is no wonder that the honors Political Science and International Studies double major was named the recipient of a 2015 Newman Civic Fellow by Campus Compact.

Nominated for the honor by Dominican President Mary B. Marcy, Magdalena demonstrated her investment in finding solutions to the challenges that face communities throughout the country. [The Newman Civic Fellows](#), sponsored by the KPMG Foundation, recognizes students who represent the next generation of public problem solvers and civic leaders. They serve as national examples of the role that higher education can—and does—play in building a better world.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read Magdalena's Newman Civic Fellows profile.

The March 26 announcement was another crowning achievement for Magdalena. She learned earlier in the month that she will pursue her Masters degree in Latin American Studies at Stanford University Graduate School in Palo Alto in the fall of 2015.

“I am very excited and very happy for the acceptance,” said Magdalena, who also applied to UCLA, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara and Cal Berkeley. “This could never have been achieved without the continued support of my professors, in particular Dr. Gigi Gokcek and Dr. Rajeev Sooreea, who guided and helped me every step of the way. I am immensely blessed to be attending an institution that allows for students to have such interactions with their professors.”

Magdalena worked with Gokcek, an associate professor in the [Department of Political Science and International Studies](#) in the [School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#), and Sooreea, assistant professor of [International Business](#) in the [Barowsky School of Business](#), on her senior thesis. It was an ambitious research project centered in Uruguay, her native country, on women's roles in politics in an emerging market that ranks high among the world's least gender-biased country.

Magdalena's research took her from Uruguay to a study abroad trip to Spain and Europe then back to South America in July 2014 when she completed her fieldwork. The highlight came in January of 2014 when she finished interviewing 15 members of parliament including Senator Lucia Topolansky, the outspoken First Lady of Uruguay and wife of President Jose “Pepe” Mujica.

“I could do a whole project just on Topolansky,” said Magdalena, who graduated with her Bachelor of Arts degree in May. “It was very interesting to hear her perspective and opinion on female leadership. She explained her controversial life and her decisions in a way that made sense of her past. She was very forthcoming, which is something that other individuals at her level may not do.”

Prior to returning to Uruguay to distribute surveys, Magdalena had another remarkable adventure in Santiago de Compostela in Spain as part of [Dominican's Study Abroad Program](#).

Dominican provided her with the education and experiences that have prepared her for that in a unique way. In her first three years at the University, she joined the Siena Leadership team, Rotary Club, and Alpha Lambda Delta, Alpha Chi, and Pi Sigma Alpha honor societies. Not only has she interned at 10,000 Degrees and the Marin Chapter of the World Affairs Council, but also participated in the Public Leadership Education Network Conference, a platform that prepares women to lead.

Last year, Magdalena represented Dominican as a delegate at the 2014 Millennium Campus Conference (MCC) in Boca Raton, Florida. That event attracted more than 1,000 undergraduates from more than 200 universities and 50 countries worldwide.

In addition, while Magdalena was on an immersion trip to Uganda, she took a snapshot – which she labeled

[“Pray”](#) – and that photograph was accepted in October 2013 for the World Affairs Council’s juried “Global Visions 2013” exhibition in San Francisco.

“If there is one thing that I have learned from everything that I’ve done at Dominican, it is to pursue opportunities,” Magdalena said. “Just do it and see what happens!”