

Sabrina Battiston

Graduation Year: Sophomore

College: Arts & Letters

Major(s): Program of Liberal Studies

Minors(s): Business Economics

Scholar Group Membership: No

Did you received other funding for this project?: No

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance?

Project Title: RebLaw 2017 Conference

Project Location: Yale University

ND Faculty Mentor: Thomas Marullo

Project Type: Conference - Attendance

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Prepare for professional school (MD, MBA, JD), Career discernment and/or preparation

Did your funded experience help you:

[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]: Very Much

[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]: Very Much

[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]: Yes

[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]: Very Much

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]: Yes

Tell us about your experience.

I attended various panels, however, the two that I felt were most formative were the Title IX and Disability Justice panels. The Title IX panel discussed the role of the law in sexual assault cases, including criminal, civil, and Title IX cases within schools. It addressed the questions of what the appropriate punishments are for those convicted of sexual assault, the university's role in protecting survivors, and the public's perception of sexual assault cases. The other panel was regarding disability justice, which covered a wide range of topics. This included everything from the mass incarceration of disabled people to how disabled people are treated in the workplace to the intricacies of the ableism movement within other social movements. When we weren't in panels, we were meeting with other Yale students who are involved with campus organizations and compared our experiences working with social causes on campus.

Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.

Attending the RebLaw conference opened my eyes to various aspects of the social movements and causes that I am interested in and work with on campus. Specifically, it was formative for my work with Student Government in regards to what policy initiatives we need to be focusing on in

order to implement progressive social policy at the University. Our goal is that all students feel represented on campus. One idea I had while sitting in the Disability Justice panel was to start an ableism campaign on campus, since this is a crucial facet of the disability rights movement. I formulated various other ideas while at the conference, especially regarding Title IX education and disability awareness that I may not have never thought of without listening to the perspectives of some of the foremost minds of various social justice movements.

Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.

Getting to experience a law conference at the #1 ranked law school in America was exhilarating. It solidified my desire to attend law school in the future, and opened my eyes to the various opportunities within the legal profession to further causes that I am passionate about. Even if I don't go into the legal profession, I would be interested in policy advising or non-profit work, especially in the area of disability rights. The RebLaw conference introduced me to what it looks like to work in these areas and devote one's life to social justice.

What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?

I would highly encourage them to attend conferences that they are interested in because a crucial part of the undergraduate experience is pursuing knowledge outside of one's classes. There's no better way to learn about a topic than by listening and discussing with the greatest minds in the field. The travel component itself is important too because it forces you outside of your comfort zone on a different level than just attending a conference itself would.
