



Cornell University

# CORNELLCHRONICLE

May 6, 2015

## Hannah McKinney wins JFK Award for prison advocacy work

Hannah McKinney '15, an American studies major and history minor in the College of Arts and Sciences, received the John F. Kennedy Memorial Award May 4 to help her pursue a career in public service.

The Class of 1964 established the JFK Memorial Award to encourage well-qualified Cornell students to enter careers in government or public service. The \$12,000 award endeavors to further President Kennedy's interest in

realizing the leadership potential of America's youth. The Class of 1964 bestows the award annually on a graduating senior who has proven his or her commitment to contributing to the public through a career in government or public service and demonstrated a high level of academic achievement.

Upon graduation, McKinney plans to begin a career in human rights advocacy, focusing on violations committed by the United States and injustices in the prison system.

"I am specifically interested in fighting for the reduction of prison populations and ending the death penalty, while working to end structural discrimination and racism in our nation's ostensibly race-blind policies," McKinney said.

She will use the JFK Award to supplement the "small income" she will receive working with an advocacy organization. The grant will aid her in contributing to the fight for human rights across the country and throughout the world.

While attending Cornell, McKinney volunteered with Auburn Prison Outreach, working with prisoners at Auburn (New York) Correctional Facility as well as with Prisoner Legal Services in



Dave Burbank

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Ithaca, where she supported staff attorneys.

She interned at the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project, at Advocates for Human Rights in Minneapolis and volunteered with UBELONG at a low-income daycare outside Quito, Ecuador.

McKinney served as president of the Cornell Historical Society, pledged Kappa Alpha Phi, Cornell's selective pre-law fraternity, and studied at Cornell in Washington during her sophomore year.

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