

## Fantastic Updates from our Inaugural Class!

It has now been two years since the Urban Institute Academy's inaugural class graduated from college. The Academy team is proud and delighted to report on the phenomenal strides that members of the Class of 2008 are making in their public policy careers. Below are just some examples:



**Vanessa Cruz**

*BA in Political Science, DePaul University, 2009*

Ms. Cruz is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at the University of Michigan. Ms. Cruz has won a Ford Foundation Predoctoral Award, which includes 3 years of fellowship support. The Ford Foundation Fellowship award is based on Ms. Cruz's survey experiment design to test racial priming effects on the political socialization of immigrant families. Her dissertation will focus on expanding social group identity and Latino immigrants' political socialization processes.



**Jonay Foster**

*BA in Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, 2009*

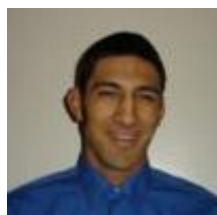
Ms. Foster is currently a J.D. Candidate at the University of Arizona where she received the Gust Rosenfeld Scholarship and the Dean's Achievement Scholarship. This summer she is a legal intern in the Office of the General Counsel at the US Department of Health and Human Services, as part of the Government Honors Program. Prior to starting law school, Ms. Foster was a Wellstone Fellow for Social Justice at Families USA where she prepared briefs on health care policy for low-income individuals.



**Parfait Gasana**

*BA in Sociology and Economics, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, 2009*

Mr. Gasana will begin his Masters in Economics, with a specialization in policy, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign this fall. Previously, Mr. Gasana was a Policy Analyst at the Applied Public Policy Research Institute for Study and Evaluation in Princeton New Jersey where he worked on energy policy.



**Thomas Gonzalez**

*BA in Economics, University of Chicago, 2009*

Mr. Gonzalez is a researcher at American Institutes for Research where he will be working on issues related to teacher quality, student mobility, and school turnaround. For the past two years he was a Research Assistant in the Urban Institute's Education Policy Center.



**Blanche Roblero**

*MA in Sociology of Education, New York University, 2011*  
*BA in Economics and Sociology, Hunter College, 2009*

Ms. Roblero completed a Masters in the Sociology of Education from New York University in May 2011. She recently won a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Graduate Fellowship and will be working on Capitol Hill this coming fall.

Join us in DC on August 12th for the Class of 2011 Research Conference and Closing Ceremonies! [Learn More Here](#)