

International relations grad aims to make an impact on global migration

By Alexandra Bice, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

During fall 2024, Julian Mydlil, an ASU Online international relations student from Seattle, visited Arizona State University's Tempe campus to meet faculty.

While on the sixth floor of Lattie F. Coor Hall, where the [School of Politics and Global Studies](#) is located, he struck up a conversation with Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies Tara Lennon.

"Julian stood out for his thoughtful and well-informed approach to discussing international relations," Lennon said, noting his experience working part time at the World Affairs Council of Seattle in Washington, in addition to his studies.

Mydlil's dedication to global affairs has also earned him the title of fall 2025 Dean's Medalist of the School of Politics and Global Studies. He is graduating this semester with a bachelor's degree in international relations.

"Being proactive and meeting my professors got me to learn about a host of interesting opportunities available to ASU students," Mydlil said. His curiosity and leadership showed through the opportunities he pursued, including the school's [Policy Design Studio and Internship Program](#) — an embassy simulation led by ambassadors Roderick Moore and Ed O'Donnell — and the [Junior Fellows Program](#), where he supported research on migration policy across Latin America with Associate Professor Lindsey Carte.

"He embraced the challenges of conducting research with initiative, maturity and creativity — he was more of a collaborator than a student," Carte said. "Julian is a remarkable young scholar driven by deep curiosity and a commitment to understanding the important political issues of our time."

Mydlil has his sights set on pursuing graduate school in the European Union, with a focus on migration policy.

Question: What was your “aha” moment, when you realized you wanted to study the field you majored in?

Answer: It was more of a gradual realization that the international relations field was right for me. For quite a while, I was planning to pursue a computer science program. In 2021, though, I was offered a field organizer job on a local political campaign in the Seattle area and I tremendously enjoyed getting to talk with voters about their concerns and ideas.

In 2022 and 2023, I worked on additional campaigns at the regional and state level, where I had the opportunity to manage voter outreach, volunteer engagement and candidate communications. All of this made for very enriching personal and professional experiences. In between campaigns, I would travel internationally. I think this combination of working on politics and international travel, plus a long-held passion in global affairs and geography, effectively persuaded me to switch my path upon returning to school after this brief hiatus.

Q: What’s something you learned while at ASU — in the classroom or otherwise — that surprised you or changed your perspective?

A: I think the sum of my experiences at Arizona State University, alongside my overlapping and prior professional experiences, has truly convinced me of the value of an evidence-based public policy approach to global issues. In other words, the value of bridging the local to the global, and vice versa.

Being part of the Diplomacy and Policy Design Studio class, for example, really made me look closely at on-the-ground problems faced by localities within Mexico and seeing how other places addressed those challenges. In large part due to my experiences at ASU, my desire to continue my education along these lines has grown.

Q: Why did you choose ASU?

A: I entered ASU while serving as a coordinator for professional international exchange programs. Being able to apply my academic coursework in international relations directly to my professional role, and vice versa, significantly enriched both experiences. Considering my other options, the ease of transferability from a community college was another major consideration for me.

Finally, I appreciated the options that ASU offered in terms of problem-based courses and research assistance — namely the Junior Fellows program, the Diplomacy and Policy Design Studio class, and "Do You Want to Build a Nation?"

Q: What’s the best piece of advice you’d give to those still in school?

A: I would encourage you to meet with and get to know your professors! Being proactive and meeting my professors got me to learn about a host of interesting opportunities available to ASU students. For me, this included the Junior Fellows program, where I supported a research project on migration policy in Chile and across Latin America. Meeting with my professors also got me to learn about the Diplomacy and Policy Design Studio course. All of these experiences undoubtedly enhanced my learning experience at ASU. Be proactive!

Q: If someone gave you \$40 million to solve one problem on our planet, what would you tackle?

A: I would want to use this amount of money for a low-cost yet high-impact purpose. As such, I would want to stand up or bolster a program related to global engagement at the local level. So many challenges our local communities face today would benefit from global perspectives.

With this in mind, I would personally choose to spend the \$40 million towards an intensive "global-to-local" exchange and peer network program narrowly focused on migration policy. Migration has been one of my foremost academic interests during my time at ASU, and it represents a defining challenge and opportunity to strengthen our communities. I believe \$40 million would effectively support a program that builds powerful global ties between government and civil society leaders working to advance evidence-based, human-centered approaches to migration and integration.

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Text image(s)



Julian Mydlil, courtesy photo