

Joseluis Ayala

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AFIO Scholarship Essay

I am interested in pursuing a career in the US Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research with a specialization in Russian Affairs. The analysts within the INR Bureau of State are regarded as some of the best in the United States Intelligence Community and are the most prominent advocates, and practitioners, of all-source analysis. For a prospective Intelligence Officer, this career path appeals to me.

My academic majors and extracurricular activities demonstrate my willingness to seek a successful career in a field pertaining to US National Security. I am majoring in International Studies with a thematic concentration in conflict, peace, and diplomacy in the Eurasian region. My second academic major is foreign languages: Arabic, Russian, and Farsi. I am a first generation American. I am fluent in both English and Spanish.

My participation in the Intelligence Community Centers for Academic Excellence National Security Studies Program at the University of New Mexico has been successful and rewarding. As a scholar in the program, I have produced an 18-page research paper profiling the various armed groups involved in the Syrian Civil War. Because of the quality of my paper, I was selected to present my findings at the annual IC-CAE Five Eyes Analytical Conference in the spring of 2014. I have also participated in an NSSP organized CIA threat analysis simulation at the University of New Mexico. I was also selected to participate in a prestigious, two-week study abroad program in Europe. I was a member of a group of high achieving students who traveled to Belgium, Brussels, Vienna, Austria, Zagreb Croatia, and Munich, Germany. During the trip, we were briefed by NATO, the US Mission to the European Union, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the University of Zagreb, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Austrian Institute of International Affairs. Recently, I have been selected for an Internship with the US Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Overseas Security Advisory Council for the summer of 2015. Because of my keen interest in the Department of State, I was recruited for the Hispanic Employee Council of Foreign Affairs Agencies Internship for the summer of 2016.

During my freshmen year, I was enrolled in Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Unit at the University of New Mexico. I was ranked in the top 10 of the entire battalion and earned the coveted ROTC Military Excellence Medal, which commemorates leadership in an NROTC battalion. I was a founding member of UNM's NROTC Special Warfare Club, where other dedicated midshipmen would train for preparation of NROTC's Mini BUD/s. I was also a member of the UNM NROTC United States Marine Corps Bulldog Platoon. Bulldog Platoon would go beyond simple calisthenics, and truly challenge a midshipman in order to prepare for the rigors of the USMC's Officer Candidate School. I have been nominated to the United States Naval Academy by Congresswoman Michelle Lujan-Grisham, and by both United States Senators from New Mexico, Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall. I was disqualified from the UNM

NROTC program because I exceeded the limit for academic credits before I was able to obtain an ROTC scholarship.

It is my belief that, based upon my academic and practical preparations, a career as an Intelligence Officer in the US Department of State Intelligence and Research Bureau with a specialization in Russian affairs is a viable option for my future career goals.

Very Respectfully,

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