

# **Maria B. Benes**

(Formerly Maria B. Van Etten)

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## **Education**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE**

**Ph.D. Student, Political Science**

**Expected 2020**

- Specializations: Comparative Politics and International Relations
- Cumulative G.P.A. as of Spring Semester 2016: 3.875

**The George Washington University, Elliott School of International Affairs, Washington D.C.**

**M.A. International Affairs**

**Received 5/11**

- Concentration: Conflict and Conflict Resolution
- Cumulative G.P.A.: 3.91

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE**

**B.A. International Studies and Political Science**

**Received 8/07**

- G.P.A.: 3.818
- Honors Program and Dean's List for the College of Arts and Sciences (Fall 03 - Summer 07)
- Summer Studies Abroad:
  - Vietnam (6/06) and Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca (7/06- 8/06)
- Thesis: "Role of Faith-Based NGOs in Nation-Building"
  - Provided research support for the book *Taming Ethnic Hatred: Ethnic Cooperation and Transnational Networks in Eastern Europe* by Dr. Patrice McMahon

## **Teaching**

- Political Science 470: International Human Rights
- Political Science 361: *United Nations and World Politics* (Online Course)
- Helped grade tests and homework for Political Science 100: *Power and Politics in America*

## **Research**

- Ongoing research projects on transnational actors and water governance  
Advisor: Dr. Patrice McMahon  
Research sponsored by the NU Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute

## Presentations

- Benes, M. "Water from the Spider's Web: A Review of the Literature on Transnational Networks and Water Security," International Studies Association Midwest Conference, St. Louis, MO, November 2015
- Benes, M. and McMahon, P. "Moving Beyond Borders: Transnational Actors, Networks and Water Security," NU Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute Research Forum, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, May 2016

## Working Papers:

- Benes, M. "The Many Faces of 'Water Security: Diffusion of Water Security Norms Within the UN-Water Network," preparing this paper for potential publication
- Benes, M. and McMahon, P, "An Ethnographic Case Study of the Ethiopian Water Security Network"

## Honors and Scholarships

### *Graduate*

- Assistantship from the UNL Department of Political Science:  
\$16,000 per year (renewable for 5 years)
- Student Research Support from the NU Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute:  
\$16,000 per year (renewable for 3 years)

### *Undergraduate*

- Nebraska Undergraduate Bankers Association Scholarship (\$1000 per year for four years)
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Honors Undergraduate Program Textbook Scholarship
- UNL Pepsi Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences Grant (\$4,400)
- Nebraska Society of Washington D.C. Scholarship for the Homeland Security Department Internship (\$2,000)

## Policy and International Affairs Professional Experience

**Office of Representative Jeff Fortenberry (NE -1st District), Washington D.C. and Lincoln, NE**

**Writing Assistant**

**1/11-7/11**

- Drafted a congratulatory letter from the Congressman to President Salva Kiir Mayardit on the occasion of South Sudanese independence
- Wrote a letter to U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, with the Congressman's concerns about election irregularities and political intimidation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Other special projects related to foreign policy
- Constituent correspondence

**Center for Peace Building International, Washington, D.C.**

**Research Assistant**

**5/10 -12/10**

- Conducted cumulative impact assessments for youth programs in fragile environments
- Literature review about the effects of large numbers of unemployed youth in developing states
- Grant writing

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security Privacy Office, Washington D.C.**

**Intern**

**6/05-7/05**

- Conducted an international comparative analysis of government data retention policies
- Wrote draft of a speech given by the Chief Privacy Officer at an international data protection conference
- Attended a transatlantic dialogue between the U.S. and the EU on data protection

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln International Affairs Office, Lincoln, NE**

**Intern**

**9/03-12/03**

- Planned events for campus multicultural awareness
- Promoted the English Conversation Partners Program which paired American students with international students as an avenue for cultural exchange