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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING RECIPIENT



Elizabeth Donaway

Elizabeth Donaway is a doctoral student in Government (Public Law) and Methodology at The University of Texas at Austin, entering the dissertation-writing stage of her work.

From May to July 2026, Elizabeth interned with the National Democratic Institute in Tirana, Albania, supporting projects on state audit and civic education. She attended meetings with state audit experts and members of the Albanian Parliament, researched state capture at the municipal level, and examined civic education initiatives designed to give young people a greater voice in Parliament's work. She also attended an Open Day at the Albanian Parliament, where school-age children took part in activities, toured the building, and spoke directly with members of Parliament.

Her time in Albania reinforced that democratic institutions require more than political expertise and administrative capacity; they also depend on a knowledgeable and engaged citizenry that believes it has a meaningful role in government. That lesson was especially visible during a summer when Albania was experiencing the protests known as the “Flamingo Revolution.” The experience sharpened Elizabeth's interest in how institutions can preserve meaningful opportunities for participation and self-government.