



SAKINA HAJI
JUNIOR
ECONOMICS

SAKINA HAJI WAS BORN IN INDIA AND LIVED ABROAD UNTIL SHE WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD. When her family moved to Houston that year for her father's job with Exxon, she didn't even know what the United States was. Now, a little more than a decade later, the junior Economics major has competed in high school Model U.N. competitions, lobbied on Capitol Hill and argued for Baylor's mock trial team.

Incoming Baylor students may recognize Haji's name and voice. When she's not focused on her corporate attorney ambitions, she moonlights as an admissions telecounselor, describing and answering questions

about Baylor to prospective Bears. But she hadn't always planned on going to Baylor.

"When I actually visited campus, that's what changed my mind and really made me want to come here," she said. "I knew it was a Christian school, so I didn't know what it was going to be like, but I felt really welcomed by everyone I met and everyone I talked to. I could see myself here."

As a Muslim student, Haji admits it was a bit daunting to attend a Baptist university.

"I didn't know what to expect," she said. "I had never been in a very religious living community before. When I came here, I actually learned there are more similarities than differences. I've always been kind of conservative. I have a conservative

family and upbringing, so that really made me happy to come to Baylor, and that really made my parents happy."

If it was intimidating at first, it didn't take long for Haji to find her place at Baylor. As a pre-law student, she joined the mock trial team and Baylor Ambassadors, a student lobbyist organization, her freshman year. Last fall, she went to Capitol Hill with Baylor Ambassadors to lobby for religious freedom and federally funded grants.

"I thought that was a really far-reaching issue for just us college students to talk about, but I think we actually had a good impact on it," Haji said. "When we went to D.C., we met with the Office of Faith-based Initiatives [sic] and congressmen. We got to sit in on the House and the Senate and were there for the passing of the budget this year. It was exciting."

With her interest in law and government, a Political Science major seems a more natural inclination for Haji, but she insists Economics is a much better fit.

"I think Economics is forward looking where a lot of other [majors] are kind of backwards looking," Haji, who is minoring in Arabic and Philosophy, said. "Economics tries to make predictions about the future, and that really appealed to me because that's what I want to do as a lawyer. Understanding the forces that have shaped the past and how they affect the future, that's what I'm trying to get out of the degree. I wanted to be a part of that to affect change."

Haji doesn't plan on slowing down anytime soon. This semester, Haji is studying abroad at St. Andrews University in Scotland, and next summer she hopes to get an internship in Washington, D.C. 🏠



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