

**The following are Talia Wilcox's remarks at GBPSR & IPPNW's 2024 Global Health and Peace Awards:**

Hi everyone, I'm Talia, a senior at Tufts University, and I am beyond excited and honored to be here accepting this award with my amazing colleague and friend Maria Udalova. Maria is a senior in high school, and if you asked me in high school if I thought I'd be accepting an award for youth prevention of nuclear war, I would've laughed so kudos Maria! But not because I didn't believe in myself or believe myself capable of making change, but until recently, I had no idea this threat existed. I have learned and become passionate about preventing nuclear war in these last three years; this learning disconnect that exists among young people and those of us doing this work is what drives me to teach others and advocate for change.

I arrived as a freshman at Tufts, knowing I wanted to major in international relations. I'd watched *Madam Secretary* throughout high school and was highly competitive in Model United Nations. But that's about where the certainty ended. I had no idea what I was going to do with my IR degree when I graduated. However, that all changed in an hour and 15 minutes, when Dr. Jim Walsh of MIT gave a guest lecture to my Introduction to International Relations course at the end of my freshman spring semester. Dr. Walsh introduced me to the nuclear threat, past nuclear disarmament movements, and the nuclear disarmament project he spearheads at MIT. I immediately emailed him and said I have no idea what you do but I desperately want to learn. I am now in my third year of interning with Dr. Walsh at his project, the Nuclear Crisis Network and thank him for his inspiration.

At Tufts, I have absorbed so much information about the state of the nuclear threat and taken as many classes as I can to dive deeper. I wrote my capstone project about why we didn't use nuclear weapons during the Berlin Crisis of 1958, and I searched for organizations where I could put this learning into practice. Through this process, I found the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. I worked with NAPF this past summer, and it was a transformational experience. Not only was I sponsored to attend a conference at Soka University of America to engage with more students passionate about this field, but also I was given the opportunity to travel with NAPF to Geneva to the NPT Prep Com in July, where I met some of you! I want to thank NAPF President Ivana Nikolic Hughes for believing I could research and write in a male-dominated field, and for being an amazing female role model in nuclear security studies. I would not be where I am today without you. I also want to thank the staff of Nuclear Politics 2024 at Soka University of America. I attended their conference in June and was again impressed with the community of young individuals who want to make change. Specifically, thank you to Tetsushi Ogata, who has continued to encourage me to get involved with as many nuclear disarmament projects as I can.

One of those projects is the reason I am here: Students for Nuclear Disarmament. I learned of SND at SUA and immediately knew I wanted to be a part of it. The Steering Committee offered me a position, and I have been working with them since June. I am currently working on setting up the Tufts Chapter which will be called Tufts University Nuclear Activists, or TUNA. Thank you so much to Dr. Helfand for your continuous mentorship and guidance. I look forward to continuing this impactful work with you all during my senior year at Tufts.