

## Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Lady Ajayi

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Dr. Lady Ajayi

The Heravi Peace Institute and Utah State University's Department of Political Science are delighted to welcome Dr. Lady Ajayi, a scholar-practitioner whose work bridges international relations, gender, and peacebuilding.

Dr. Ajayi earned her Ph.D. in International Relations from Covenant University in Nigeria in 2018. Her research and teaching explore some of today's most pressing global issues—gender-based violence, human rights, migration, and international development. With years of experience in academia, advocacy, and community engagement, she brings both a global perspective and a deep commitment to service in every space she enters.

Driven by a passion for human rights and social justice, Dr. Ajayi works to advance equity and protection for underrepresented populations. Her research sheds light on systemic oppression and empowers vulnerable

communities to achieve meaningful change in their lives and societies.

Her dedication has earned her several notable awards and fellowships. In 2021, she received the American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Postdoctoral Fellowship, which supported her work as a visiting scholar and Assistant Professor in the Department of Politics at Ithaca College, New York. In 2018, she was awarded the African-German Network of Excellence in Science (AGNES) Junior Researcher Grant for her study on migration, refugees, and gender. That same year, she was part of a research team at Ithaca College that received the Academic Challenge Grant for their project, *"Mutating Patriarchies and the Struggle Against Domestic Violence."*

In addition to her teaching and research, Dr. Ajayi is an active member of several professional and advocacy networks, including the International Political Science Association (IPSA) and the African Studies Association. She serves as Chair of the Standing Committee on Projects for the African Studies and Research Forum (ASRF), sits on the editorial board of the *Journal of International Women's Studies*, and has volunteered as a Commissioner for the Tompkins County Human Rights Commission.

Since joining Utah State University and the Heravi Peace Institute in August 2025, Dr. Ajayi has quickly become a beloved presence on campus, engaging with students through HPI programs and community initiatives. Outside of work, she's been enjoying the chance to explore Utah's stunning landscapes and welcoming communities.