

Aruzhan Muratbek

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EDUCATION

Northwestern University in Qatar, Doha, Qatar

Bachelor of Science in Journalism and Strategic Communication; Minor in Media & Politics (Joint Program with Georgetown University in Qatar) — Expected May 2028

Cumulative GPA: 3.84/4.00 | Dean's List: Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring 2026

JOURNALISM & MEDIA EXPERIENCE

Altai TV (Qazaqstan TV Regional Branch), Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan

May – Jul 2025

News Reporter Intern — funded by Northwestern's Summer Internship Grant Program

- Wrote and edited 8+ on-air news segments covering regional social issues for daily broadcast
- Conducted on-camera interviews with public officials; collaborated with producers and editors to meet broadcast deadlines

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Summer Undergraduate Research Grant (SURG), Northwestern University in Qatar

Summer 2026 – present

Independent Researcher, "Lost in Translation: Evaluating AI Performance in the Kazakh Language and Its Consequences for Information Access"; mentored by Prof. Wajdi Zaghouni

- Designed a comparative evaluation testing ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude on parallel Kazakh- and Russian-language prompts to measure performance gaps
- Interviewed Kazakh-speaking users to document real-world barriers to AI-mediated information access

Institute for Advanced Study (IAS), Northwestern University in Qatar

Jan 2026 – present

Global Undergraduate Fellow, "It's Just a Meme": Digital Humor as Soft Political Critique in Kazakhstan".

- Designed and conducting independent research on political memes as a form of soft dissent in Kazakhstan's authoritarian context
- Sourced and analyzed an original dataset of 100+ memes across 50+ analytical dimensions

MARSAD Lab, Northwestern University in Qatar

2025 – present

Research Assistant to Prof. Wajdi Zaghouni

- Contributed 2,000+ evaluation prompts for Kazakh-language AI model safety testing
- Annotated 2,500+ Instagram posts analyzing Gen Z political participation patterns using a systematic coding methodology

LEADERSHIP AND AWARDS

"Beyond the 'Banking' Model: Transforming Mandatory Courses through Agency and Sensory Learning," Conference Presentation, TEACHx 2026, Northwestern University; May 2026

AI in Journalism Workshop with Pulitzer Center AI Accountability Fellows, Northwestern University in Qatar; October 2025

Film Discussion Club, Founder & Leader, Nazarbayev Intellectual School; 2022 – 2024

"InfoNIS" Online Newspaper, Editor, Nazarbayev Intellectual School; 2022 – 2023

SKILLS

Journalism:	Proficient in broadcast scriptwriting, on-camera interviewing, fact-checking, and AP-style editing
Research:	Proficient in qualitative and mixed-methods coding, discourse analysis, and LLM prompt evaluation; experienced in IRB protocol design
Technical:	Proficient in Adobe Premiere Pro, CapCut, Canva, and Microsoft Office. Working knowledge of Figma and Adobe Firefly
Languages:	Native in Kazakh and Russian. Fluent in English. Basic Turkish