

# FEDERAL & GLOBAL TIMES

*Connecting Federal Fellows and Global Fellows Alumni Since 2014*



## Letter from the Director

*Dr. Joan Burton, Federal & Global Fellows Director*

### 2018 OVERVIEW

#### 1: LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Burton discusses her vision for the Federal & Global Fellows Program.

#### 2: FELLOWS BY NUMBERS

Get a snapshot of where students are interning, what majors these students study, and the growing size of the alumni network.

#### 3: FEDERAL ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Erin Hylton shares her work as a defense contractor for Concurrent Technologies Incorporated.

#### 4: GLOBAL ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Irene Solaiman presents a professional career shaped by international experiences.

#### 5: STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Ashwin Suryavanshi demonstrates the importance of hard work, determination, and networking.

#### 6: PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT

Chip Usher elaborates on his experiences at the CIA.

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A sampling of awards received this year by current students and alumni.

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Learn how to get involved!

Dear Glorious Alumni,

In a rapidly changing world, with opportunities and challenges galore, a constant for all of us is pride in you—for your public spirit, generosity, can-do attitudes, and dreams of making a positive difference in the world. I was asked to articulate, in this letter, my vision for these programs. My vision is student-centered, alumni-centered, and earth-centered. I want us to contribute in whatever ways we can toward helping you all to thrive, to flourish, to navigate the world, and to make good lives for yourselves. Of course, I speak not just for myself but also for the rainmakers: my accomplished, talented colleagues Jay Arasan and Naz Beyranvand, and all our dedicated student assistants. We have built these programs to provide a bridge to the professional world; to help you integrate your academic backgrounds with the work environment; to demonstrate the myriad ways you can contribute in the world, whatever your majors; to show how to be flexible and resilient, whatever comes; and to encourage you to look out for one another, and for strangers. We have designed the programs to offer a welcoming environment and opportunities for alumni and students to come together, assist one another, and pay it forward through mentorship, leadership and friendship. We are so proud of all that you have done! We are immensely gratified to have been able to contribute to your growth and learning at the University. We want to stay a part of your lives for the future.

I also want to share with you some excellent news about program growth! The Federal and Global Fellows Programs came into being as a result of grand collaborations between the Office of Undergraduate Studies, the Office of the Provost, the Office of International Affairs, and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, with strong support from the School of Public Policy. This year, we added a new concentration in

Political Engagement and Advocacy, and next year we will be launching a new concentration in Water Security and Global Health—the result of a brilliant new partnership between the Clark School of Engineering, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the School of Public Health, the Office of International Affairs, and the Office of Undergraduate Studies—which will bring our total number of concentrations to nine.

We have been blessed with extraordinary alumni leadership, starting with Aisha Hasan and Lauren Greeley, and now the current leaders Amanda Obenland (president) and Namchi Le (vice-president), and everyone who has served on our Alumni Board. We are grateful to the extraordinary expert practitioners who give their knowledge, time and energy to teach our students and prepare them to excel in internships and future careers. We are grateful to the exceptional mentors and connections throughout the DC Metropolitan Area, who welcome our students into their workplace and ensure they have meaningful, significant learning experiences through their internships. We are grateful, most of all, to the University of Maryland, and a magnificent spectrum of colleges, programs and individuals across the university—without their encouragement and support, these programs would not be possible!

And now a special request: if you have ideas of ways we can better serve our students and you, our wonderful alumni, please let us know! That is our great mission. We fervently believe that by developing and fostering these programs as best we can, by helping you to build good lives, we are contributing toward making the world a better place. Please stay in touch!

With warm wishes to all,  
Dr. Joan Burton

#### FEDERAL & GLOBAL FELLOWS STAFF



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*Director*



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*Assistant Director*



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*Program Manager*



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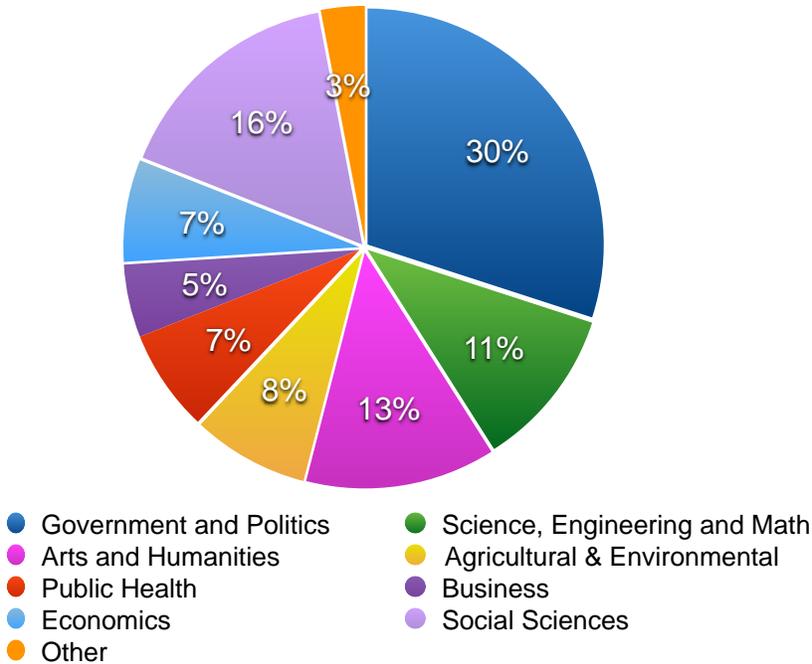


Jillian McGuffey  
*Office Assistant*

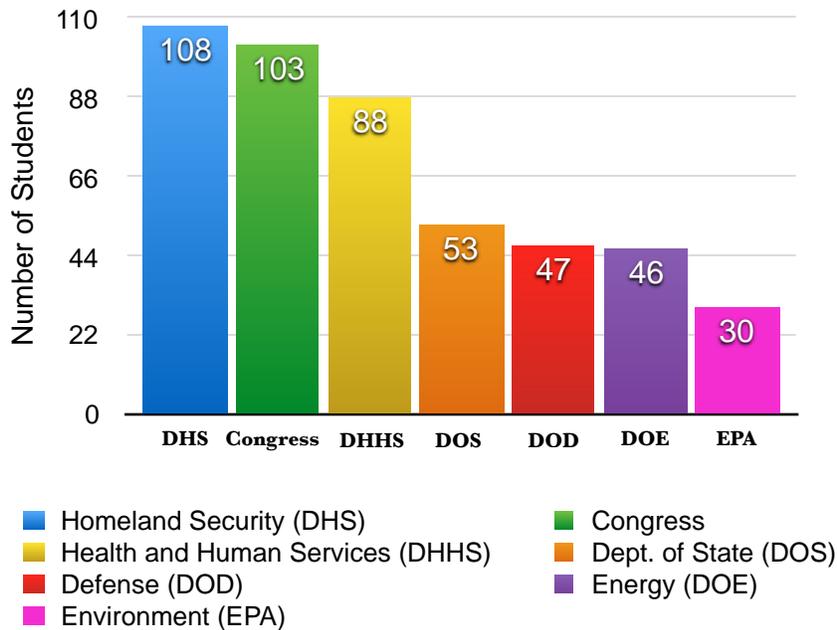
# FELLOWS BY THE NUMBERS

*A quantitative breakdown of the Federal Fellows and Global Fellows programs, 2008-2018*

**Breakdown of Student Majors**



**Top Internship Site Placements**



**FEDERAL &  
GLOBAL  
FELLOWS  
NETWORK**

**1000+**  
Program Alumni and  
Current Students

**350+**  
Different Internship  
Locations

**8**  
Program  
Concentrations



# Federal Alumna Spotlight

**Erin Hylton - Water Policy Analyst for U.S. Air Force  
at Concurrent Technologies Corporation**

## **How did your Federal Fellows experience help you prepare for post-graduate life?**

My approach has been to keep as many doors open to myself as possible by cultivating three main skill sets under the broad heading of environment and development: technical competency, social science competency, and basic professional skills. My engineering major prepared me for the former, and Federal Fellows laid the foundation for growth in the latter two. Leaving UMD as an undergrad, I was an E.I.T. with a BS in civil engineering and experience with laboratory-based research and applied engineering design. I had also spent a semester in Denmark taking graduate-level coursework on environmental economics and subsurface hydrology; a few weeks in São Paulo, Brazil researching the social and environmental impacts of an Amazonian mega-dam; and another year in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil studying and learning Portuguese.

I work as a water policy analyst at Concurrent Technologies Corporation, where I support the Secretariat of the Air Force in the development of a water resources management program to ensure access to an adequate water supply for all 153 domestic Air Force installations.

Federal Fellows gave me the confidence and skill set to sell myself, both in my interview and in my work with the Pentagon.

## **What advice would you give to young professionals?**

The current job market puts you in the catch-22 of needing experience to get hired, but being unable to get experience

until you are hired. Take every opportunity to prove your skill in your area of interest, so when that interview question comes – what is your experience in this field? – you're armed with strong evidence of your capabilities.

Don't be afraid to count opportunities other than full-time employment as experience. My job listing asked for 4-6 years of experience, and I used a combination of my graduate education, paid/unpaid internships and research projects to argue my qualifications.

Most importantly, you can't get there if you don't apply! I was skeptical about my qualifications for the Marshall

Scholarship, but I found a graduate geography program at the University of Oxford that was a perfect fit for my desired blend of technical and social science coursework, so I decided to take a shot. UMD has phenomenal resources to support you as

you move through these competitive application processes, and I encourage you to look into programs that may be a good fit for you.

## **What is something you wish you had known five years ago?**

It's important to think not just about what field you would like to work in, but also what kind of workplace environment you prefer. Compensation is important, but sometimes it may be worth a slight pay cut to be able to spend 40+ hours a week in a personally compatible environment with strong opportunities for professional growth.



## ABOUT ERIN

**UNIVERSITY OF MD  
GRADUATION YEAR:  
May 2013**

**MAJOR:  
Civil and Environmental  
Engineering**

**FEDERAL FELLOWS  
CONCENTRATION:  
Energy and Environmental  
Policy (2011)**

**INTERNSHIP SITE:  
U.S. Environmental  
Protection Agency (EPA)**

**CURRENT OCCUPATION  
Water Policy Analyst for  
U.S. Air Force at  
Concurrent Technologies  
Corporation**

## **From your perspective, what does it take to be a young leader?**

Leaders need to be able to see larger trends and figure out how they come together, especially in today's globalized world. Read widely. Have the passion to advocate for issues that are important to you, and understand how to build coalitions for action. For young leaders especially, advanced communication skills are necessary to build support, network, win grants and precisely calibrate your message to fit the audience.

# Global Alumna



**HARVARD**  
Kennedy School

## Spotlight

**Irene Solaiman - Pursuing Master in Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School**

***Can you talk about your global experiences? What opportunities have they exposed you to?***

Having grown up in a household with multiple languages and cultures, and with supportive friends and family, I am fortunate to have fostered an innate curiosity for global experiences. My grandparents' immigration stories and constant encouragement to be open to new experiences inspired academic pursuits.

On my first day at UMD, I came straight from the airport after completing a French language program at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. Since my mother grew up in Geneva, connecting with part of my heritage made the city more meaningful than just an immersive classroom. I took that approach to my other studies abroad with the Individual Studies Program. Treating each adventure as a new home helped me not only appreciate my experience, but also contribute to the local community. From semesters in Spain and Singapore, to interning at the U.S. Embassy of Tanzania, I worked most effectively when I studied language and culture. Still, there is always more to learn; on my first day of graduate school, I came directly from the airport having studied in India with the Critical Language Scholarship. A global experience applies most to the U.S.—I have had the most diverse experiences in my own country and my same lessons learned apply.

***How did your Global Fellows Experience help prepare you for graduate school?***

Global Fellows is an unparalleled program. In addition to the talented and accomplished seminar leaders, guest lecturers, and student community, the coursework is practical and real-world applicable. The internship component is an opportunity to experientially learn,

either building field expertise or going outside your comfort zone. I went directly into graduate school and I continue research and collaboration with government agencies. I use my memo writing and communication skills from that seminar; I actually used my memo for the Secretary of Defense in our class simulation at graduate school for Secretary Ash Carter in one of his study



groups! The U.S. Diplomacy and Policymaking's seminar leader was the Secretary's Special Assistant and had approved my memo. Keeping in touch with people from the program has helped guide my active projects and career considerations.

***What advice would you give to students who are thinking about finding a way to do good in the world?***

First, do not limit yourself. There are infinite ways to affect positive change and it's okay to be unsure of your direction and cause. It's okay to completely change directions and causes. Do not limit yourself to external pressures and trends because the best work comes from inner dedication. Secondly, doing good has no scale. Serving a local community is as

### ABOUT IRENE

**UNIVERSITY OF MD  
GRADUATION YEAR:  
May 2017**

**MAJOR:  
International Relations  
(through IVSP)**

**GLOBAL FELLOWS  
CONCENTRATION:  
U.S. Diplomacy & Public  
Policymaking (2017)**

**INTERNSHIP SITE:  
U.S. Senate**

**CURRENT  
OCCUPATION:  
Pursuing Master in Public  
Policy degree at Harvard  
Kennedy School**

admirable as serving a state. Giving up your metro seat made at least one person's day better. Rescuing a shelter cat changed that animal's life. Don't discredit the good you do because of its scale. Finally, you have an obligation to yourself. Regardless of aspirations, you are most effective when you take care of yourself and your mental health.

***What does the phrase "public service" mean to you?***

Public service is effecting positive change. For patriotic reasons, public service includes serving my federal government, but public service is not limited to government or structure. Ultimately, as I learned in 8th grade history class, it is by the people, for the people.



# 2018 Student Spotlight

**Ashwin Suryavanshi - East Africa Programme Development Associate at Chemonics International**

## **What are some of your most rewarding experiences as a Chemonics intern and now full-time employee?**

One thing that has remained an integral part to my overall experience as both an intern and a full-time employee one year later is the plethora of interesting people and their diversity in thought and experience. To me, what makes any place interesting and exciting is always the people, and Chemonics has no shortage of amazing individuals. Everyone you talk to has incredible professional and personal accolades, such as participating in Peace Corps, being awarded Fulbright fellowships, traveling to dozens of countries, speaking multiple languages, and earning degrees from the world's top universities. I walk in the door and realize how much there is to learn about the world, and Chemonics gives me the opportunity to be surrounded by people who can teach me just that. Apart from the people, Chemonics, as a corporation, puts a heavy emphasis on professional development by offering in-house language lessons, an education stipend, and plenty of internal opportunities to try out and acquire new skills. Both of these aspects, the people and the emphasis on professional development, prove that Chemonics doesn't just give you a job, it gives you a career that can truly help you achieve your long-term aspirations.

## **What are some of the most helpful aspects of the Global/Federal Fellows program for you?**

To me, the most helpful aspect of the Global and Federal Fellows programs is the dedication to the whole person. Every time I walk into the program's office, not only am I greeted with a huge smile, but I also am treated with respect in regards to my personal interests and aspirations. The office



makes a huge commitment to understanding each student on an individual level and can tailor advice to whatever it is you want to do. Whereas some academic departments are responsible for advising over 1,000 students, the Global and Federal Fellows Programs has a relatively small number of students, due to the selectivity of the programs, so each session with an FGSM staff member is highly personal— they are able to make internship/career suggestions and general life advice to each person on a level that is hard to find at other places at such a large university. Being a part of this program made me a lot more confident because I had a strong academic and professional support system through FGSM. Additionally, the fact that FGSM staff are willing to sit down one-on-one to go over as many resumes and cover letters as you need demonstrates their commitment to each and every student.

## **What advice do you have for young people still completing their education at UMD?**

One thing I would stress to students at UMD, especially those who study social sciences, like me, is to pursue technical and quantitative skills even if you are not taught them in your typical classes. Although they may seem difficult or not as interesting, coursework in statistics, economics, calculus, etc. can really pay off down the road. Even a course in basic statistics can be a great resume booster. In the field of international development especially, monitoring and evaluation of development programs plays a huge role in the success of future projects. In order to have effective monitoring and evaluation, one must be well-versed in the aforementioned topics.

## **ABOUT ASHWIN**

**UNIVERSITY OF MD  
GRADUATION YEAR:  
May 2018**

**MAJOR:  
Government & Politics**

**FELLOWS  
CONCENTRATION:  
Responses to Global  
Challenges (2017)**

**Homeland & National  
Security Policy (2018)**

**INTERNSHIP SITE:  
Partnership for Public  
Service**

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:  
East Africa Programme  
Development Associate at  
Chemonics International**

Most of the programs I have been looking at for graduate study require some kind of prerequisite economics and statistics courses.

## **What do you think makes the Global Fellows program unique?**

In my opinion, what sets FGSM apart from other such programs on campus are the partnerships across the federal and global government space. Their strong partnerships across government and non-governmental firms allow students to get experience that can set them up for success down the road. I was able to get an internship with the Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Inspector General because of a partnership that agency has with FGSM, and it was this internship that gave me the federal experience to eventually pursue an internship and job at Chemonics, a large federal contractor.

# Global Fellows Professor Spotlight:

## *U.S. Diplomacy & Public Policymaking*



**Chip Usher:** *Senior Manager, Central Intelligence Agency*

**What is your current job and how did you arrive there?**

I am a senior manager at the Central Intelligence Agency in our Near East Mission Center. I applied during my senior year at Duke University, which was pretty late in the game for an undergraduate. Unlike a lot of our Global Fellows, I did not think too hard about getting my first job when I was a freshman or sophomore. And it cost me! The Agency's application process took so long, I was well out of school before I actually started as an Intelligence Analyst trainee in 1991. But once I got there, I fell in love with the work and the challenge of understanding foreign cultures and organizations and serving our country. Much of what I work on is secret of course, but what I can tell you is that during my Agency career I have worked on over a dozen different issues ranging from Northeast Asia, to Russia, and now the Middle East.

**What do you like most about your job?**

What I like most about CIA is the incredible opportunities it offers to have a real, tangible impact on US national security. My colleagues do things every single day that make the US safer and give our policymakers a decisive informational advantage over America's adversaries and competitors. We are a relatively "flat" organization without too many management layers, and we value expertise. This means even if you are a junior officer you might have the opportunity to meet a foreign leader or write an assessment for the President. Few organizations I know of empower its people that way and it is a key reason I spent my career there. As a senior manager, I enjoy developing the next generation of CIA officers. Our young leaders have amazing backgrounds and talent; all they need is a little encouragement and room to spread their wings!

**What advice do you have for young professionals today?**

No matter which specific path you take, if you are going to pursue a career in international affairs then you ought to focus on honing what I call the "core skills": critical thinking, writing, and oral briefing. They are essential if you are going to succeed and we focus a lot on practicing them in my course. The reason is simple: the international affairs arena is the quintessential "people business." While obviously it is important to know things about US and international history and about foreign culture and language, what sets apart high-performing professionals is their ability to communicate persuasively. Employers value people who can diagnose challenges accurately, think creatively, and express themselves clearly and succinctly. If you are like most people, this takes a lot of practice to learn and develop.



**How do you find teaching for the Global Fellows program?**

I thoroughly enjoyed my first year of teaching and am looking forward to this upcoming semester. What impressed me most was the motivation and intellectual curiosity of the students. They are very engaged and come to the conversation with a diverse array of experiences. Compared to my generation, many of my students also have well-formed ideas about America's place in the world and many are passionate about trying to solve today's global challenges, such as climate change, over-population, and refugees. Rarely are there any "right" answers when it comes to solving national security challenges, and it is refreshing to have the students offer new ideas. They improve my own thinking on these issues.

# FEATURED SCHOLARS

*A Sampling of Awards Received by Students and Alumni this Past Year*



## **Sofia Alsamadi (Responses)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Amman, Jordan*



## **Donald De Alwis (Science Diplomacy)**

2018 NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship



## **Amelia Avis (Energy)**

2018 Udall Scholarship  
*For Environmentalism*



## **Catherine Baker (Responses)**

2019 Rangel International Affairs Fellowship



## **Rachel Baldwin (Critical Regions)**

2018 Critical Language Scholarship  
*Xi'an, China*



## **Candela Cerpa (Energy)**

2018 NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship



## **Zachary Goldblatt (U.S. Diplomacy)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Meknes, Morocco*

# FEATURED SCHOLARS

*A Sampling of Awards Received by Students and Alumni this Past Year*



## **Samuel Koralnik (U.S. Diplomacy)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Malang, Indonesia*



## **Griffin Riddler (U.S. Diplomacy)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Beijing, China*



## **Bronwen Schriml (Responses)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Dakar, Senegal*



## **Joshua Silverman (Critical Regions)**

2018 Boren Scholarship  
*Meknes, Morocco*



## **Lillian Sun (Science Diplomacy)**

2018 Goldwater Scholarship  
*For Promising STEM Students*



## **Gabriel Wach (Critical Regions)**

2019 Gilman International Scholarship  
*Tübingen, Germany*

# ALUMNI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

*Ways to get involved, contact information, and features from the Mentorship Program*



*The 2017-2018 Alumni Mentorship Program began with a joint mentor/mentee dinner, pictured above.*

## **Special thanks to all of our amazing Alumni Mentors this year!**

Sade Ayinde  
Caroline Corbett  
Claire Doyle  
Wayne Evans  
Jennifer Kulp  
Nai Le  
Thomas Minter

Michael Ng  
Amanda Obenland  
Michael Penansky  
Jessica Weinberg  
Pamitha Weerasinghe  
Coreene White  
Aminat Yahaya

And a warm thanks to Dr. Al Wallace!

### **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MENTOR?**

- If interested in becoming an Alumni Mentor contact Lauren Greeley at: [ljgreeley07@gmail.com](mailto:ljgreeley07@gmail.com)

### **WANT TO BECOME A MORE ACTIVE ALUM?**

- If you wish to volunteer in some way, be available for an informational interview, or join the Alumni Board, contact Naz Beyranvand at: [nbeyran@umd.edu](mailto:nbeyran@umd.edu)

