



## THE POWER OF GLOBAL COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EFFORTS FOR ISLAMBEK

ISLAMBEK ASHYRALIEV (CENTER) WITH HIS FRIENDS IN THE U.S.

In November, a member of our own U.S.-CAEF family, **Islambek Ashyraliev**, was diagnosed with a chronic kidney disease, for which he is still seeking treatment. Islambek, a freshman U.S.-CAEF fellow, is a wonderful student and friend who leaves a lasting impression on everyone he meets. Prior to becoming a U.S.-CAEF fellow, Islambek participated in the English Access Microscholarship Program and the FLEX Program. While attending Middletown High School in Maryland as a FLEX student, Islambek stayed with a loving host family and made many friends.

On January 5, we launched a GoFundMe fundraiser to support Islambek's medical fund. We have been overwhelmed and inspired by the generosity and compassion, and the power of global community shown throughout this process. Thanks to the GoFundMe campaign, over \$17,000 have been raised for Islambek's medical procedures and his family's living costs as he undergoes his treatment. We would like to thank all those who have donated and helped us spread the word about Islambek- the FLEX community, especially,



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### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF) Enterprise Student Fellowships is an undergraduate business education scholarship program for academically gifted students sponsored by the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (The Foundation) & administered by American Councils for International Education.

The Foundation, in partnership with the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek (AUCA) & the KIMEP University in Almaty, provides educational opportunities in business and other activities for students from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan to cultivate a principled entrepreneurial environment in Central Asia that fosters the growth of free enterprise and open markets.

Islambek's host mother Marcie Stutzman, and his friends, teachers, and coaches in the U.S.; the KIMEP and AUCA communities; the Kyrgyz Embassy in the U.S.; the Kyrgyz diaspora in the U.S.; Peace Corps volunteers in Kyrgyzstan; and, of course, the U.S.-CAEF Board of Directors, U.S.-CAEF alumni and current fellows, and the American Councils staff.

*"I feel happy and grateful for everything that people have done for me.  
I must do a lot of charity when I become a successful businessman,"*

shared Islambek who was deeply touched by the support from so many people in the US and Central Asia.

We are still actively seeking donations, so we encourage you to donate by using the following link to the GoFundMe campaign: [www.gofundme.com/Islambektransplant](http://www.gofundme.com/Islambektransplant). Please help Islambek, a valued member of our U.S.-CAEF community, get through this difficult time.



FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR ISLAMBEK ASHYRALIEV AT KIMEP UNIVERSITY

The KIMEP University community recently launched a series of fundraising efforts in support of Islambek Ashyraliev's medical fund. To solicit donations on a larger scale, students created a special video called "#WeAreOne and posted it on Instagram. #WeAreOne became the official slogan of the fundraising campaign at KIMEP University.

On February 7, the KIMEP Student Association and other organizations on campus held a bake sale and auction on campus. The most popular auction item was a date with famous Kazakh actor and model Tauyebel Mussilim. Well-known entertainers and KIMEP performers also volunteered their time and talents to the event.

The following day, another food fair and concert was held at KIMEP's Great Hall. Students and prominent local artists alike performed at the event. Popular acts included Newton Boys' Band, ABDR, Introvert, and Darkhan Juzz. The event, organized by KIMEP's Fun Club, was very well attended and overall a great success.

In addition to the funds raised at these events, KIMEP **President Chan Young Bang** made a generous donation to the cause. He expressed that the wellbeing of his students is extremely important to him, and that he is grateful for the support and compassion shown by the rest of the student body.

These extraordinary events have brought the KIMEP community even closer, and they will help give Islambek a chance to beat his kidney disease. With the help of these fundraisers, the KIMEP community raised about \$6,245 toward Islambek's medical fund. On behalf of Islambek and everyone associated with U.S.-CAEF, we would like to express our gratitude to KIMEP President **Dr. Chang Young Bang**, President of KIMEP Student Association **Magzhan Otantayev** and all the KIMEP student organizations that made this possible, including **Amanat, Art Revolution, KIMEP Art and Dance Association, KIMEP Cinema, KIMEP Comedy, KIMEP Friends, KIMEP English Language Theater, KIMEP International Student Association, and KIMEP Pie.** Thank you so much for showing that #WeAreUnited!

# MAXIMIZING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Fellows have participated in numerous professional development opportunities within the past months. Stories from the Fellows about their recent experiences can be found below.



## PRICELESS EXPERIENCE AT MARS CEAB

BY AIDAI TOPCHUBAEVA

In the beginning of April, I started my internship in the finance department of Mars CEAB, the regional unit of the global pet food and confectionery manufacturer, Mars Inc. The Mars Almaty office is responsible for operating the business in 11 countries of the Central Eurasia and Caucasus area. As a business trainee, I was assigned to develop a process of governance and control trade investments within the company. My project was part of the follow-up actions on several internal audit observations in the previous year that led to an unfavorable (yellow) rating of the unit on a global level. During the nine months of my internship, I ran the project constantly working on improving the process. It included extensive

communication with several distributors, protecting the company's interests in policy compliance issues, restating the relevant policies of the company and participating in field audits. After the visit of the internal audit team on November 13-24, 2017 (I was the frontline presenter on specifics of the new process), the unit received the green rating! This was truly a challenging and intense journey, which taught me leadership and teamwork skills, and passion for excellence. I worked with the brightest professionals, embraced all the benefits of Mars' unique corporate culture, and dived into the business in the FMCG industry. It was a great experience that will help me throughout my future career path.



## HONING LEADERSHIP SKILLS THROUGH CHANGELLENGE

BY JAHONGIR RAHIMOV

From September to November, I had the chance to work as the project manager of the largest business case competition in Kazakhstan – Changellenge>> Cup Kazakhstan 2017. This experience taught me to plan ahead, manage people, get the job done despite many obstacles, and to deal with stress.

When I participated in business case championships before, I didn't realize that the organizational part was so challenging. Due to the workload, I had to carefully distribute my time between work and studies. I worked directly with universities all over Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, communicated with their representatives, conducted presentations for

students explaining the benefits of participating in Changellenge, gave tasks to my team, and prepared posters, brochures, and emails.

This was the biggest project in my life so far, and the results were astonishing. Statistics show that each year about 1,000 students participate in the championship, and this year we achieved a 60% increase, raising the number of participants to 1,602. Because of this experience, I grew as a person and as a professional. I am thankful to Ekaterina Rashidin, the director of Changellenge>> in Kazakhstan, for providing me with such an opportunity and empowering me to organize a high-level event.

JAHONGIR RAHIMOV (CENTER)



## HERB CAFÉ:

# BUILDING A STARTUP FROM SCRATCH

BY MEERIM MOLDALIEVA

One of the major reasons I am pursuing the Business Administration major at AUCA is to establish a business that could help reduce the unemployment rate in Kyrgyzstan. I believe that realizing my goals depends not only on excellent academic performance, but also on practical experience that I gain outside of AUCA. Therefore, I joined the project “Herb Café” to learn about developing a business from the very beginning.

I served as Business Development Manager for a team of four people, which included the executive manager, cashier, driver, and me. The goal of the project was to start a new concept with a flower-café in Bishkek. The idea was to open a café and flower shop together, like in Europe and South Korea, where flower-café are numerous. We aimed to serve customers high-quality herbal teas and sell potted herbs and bouquets.

I gathered all required documents for the LLC, searched for a place to rent, arranged business meetings with prospective partners, negotiated with suppliers, and promoted the company’s products and services. I faced many challenges, as some people did not take me seriously because of my age. This resulted in suppliers breaking promises and delaying orders. However, it was a good experience and it taught me how to turn an idea into a business plan and implement it.

Overall, I had a very interesting, challenging, and exciting experience. I learned a lot about establishing a business, developed my negotiation and conflict-solving skills, and expanded my professional network.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Fellows recognize the need to bring a global perspective to the economy of the Central Asian region. Therefore, they use every opportunity to enrich their knowledge and experience through participation in various international events and programs.



## REPRESENTING CENTRAL ASIA AT BUSINESS TODAY IN NEW YORK

BY KARIMKHON BUKHADUROV

On November 18-21, I attended the 43rd Princeton University Business Today International Conference "Redefining Innovation: Leading the 21st Century Revolution" in New York, United States, organized by undergraduate students of Princeton University. I was chosen as the only delegate from Central Asia and one of 130 attendees from a pool of 2100 applicants from top universities around the globe. The conference brought 70 C-level executives, including the Chairman and CEO of McCann Worldgroup, the President and Chief Legal Officer of Microsoft, and the President and CEO of Marsh & McLennan, who shared their perspective on disruption, innovation, and sustainability in the current business world. During the conference, I

listened to keynote speakers, participated in panel discussions, and attended executive seminars on Change Management and Value Creation, Disruption in the Media and Entertainment Industry, and Sustainability in the Banking Industry. In addition, students competed in the Millennium Challenge, where we came up with a business plan in two days to solve social issues, such as health, environment, globalization, and education, and pitched it in front of a panel of judges. My teammates and I came up with the idea of creating an app to match electric vehicle owners with electric charging stations. We were selected as one of the 4 finalists out of 25 projects. As a bonus, participants of the conference were featured in the Wall Street Journal.



## ACADEMICS THROUGH A GLOBAL LENS: A SEMESTER IN AUSTRIA

BY NIGORA BURHONOVA AND NILUFAR UMAROVA

Two U.S.-CAEF fellows of KIMEP from Tajikistan – **Nigora Burhonova** and **Nilufar Umarova**, were awarded with the Ernst Mach scholarship by the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD-GmbH) to spend a semester at the IMC University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria.

**Nilufar:** “From the very first day, I was impressed with the department of International Relations of the university, which brought all incoming students together and organized many events and teambuilding activities for us to be able to share our diversity with each other. I truly believe that one of the reasons to take part in exchange programs is to expand your world view by meeting people of different nationalities and cultures.

During the semester, I was mostly enrolled in marketing classes and even had to take two Master's degree courses in order to be able to transfer the credits. Marketing courses require a lot of practical application of theoretical knowledge through group projects, and my classes were no exception. I was involved in a small marketing research project about consumer behavior and gained adequate experience that I think will be very useful in my future career.”

**Nigora:** “The teaching system at IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems differs from the one in KIMEP University in many ways. For example, in KIMEP the duration of classes does not exceed 75 minutes, whereas in Krems I had classes that lasted from 3.5 to 6 hours. At first, it was difficult to digest all the information consumed during these long classes, but in the end I got used to it, and from now on the 75 minute classes at KIMEP won't seem as long as they did before.

I was taking marketing courses that involved a lot of group projects and guest lectures, one of which was from the Coca Cola marketing team. The lecture was very interactive and it evoked my interest in this field. Therefore, I decided to minor in marketing back at KIMEP University.”

# Gachon International Fair

## FIRST AUCA STUDENT AT GACHON UNIVERSITY, SOUTH KOREA

BY OLGA PYKHOVA

I spent this fall semester at Gachon University, South Korea as an exchange student. It was the first time that Gachon hosted exchange students from AUCA, and I was one of them. My time living in the Korean society taught me a great lesson- I need to work as hard as possible to achieve my goals. Moreover, this experience helped me find my passion and talent.

At Gachon University, I took Strategic Management and Organizational Behavior courses and through studying them, I understood that I am interested in learning management, and how organizational culture can affect productivity. Now, management is a field that I want to study deeply. Also, I took Business English & Job Skills courses, where I learned to give presentations and to write a CV. One of my professors told me that I have a natural talent for public speaking. It gave me a desire to improve myself in this field. Public speaking became my new passion. I was nominated to participate in the competition among the best speakers at Gachon. I also took part in many cultural events in Gachon. I organized a Kyrgyz booth during a 3-day school festival in the beginning of September. Also, on October 31st, there was the first Gachon International Fair, where my friend and I opened the ceremony with traditional Kyrgyz dance. During the event, we had a chance to talk to one of the most powerful women in Asia, Ms. Lee Gil Ya, the President of Gachon University.

Another highlight of my exchange program was visiting Samsung Electronics and Korea District Heating Cooperation. It motivated me to study harder so that I can work at such great companies, or create an enterprise that will be as valuable in Kyrgyzstan as Samsung is in Korea.

This experience was life-changing for me. I found what I love to do and gained a desire to work harder to improve Kyrgyzstan's economy. I believe that there are no boundaries when it comes to business.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Many Fellows have taken on leadership roles in their respective projects, and have demonstrated a commitment to developing their leadership skills by giving back to their communities.



## REPUBLIC OF MEGAMOZGIYA

BY ALTYNAI MELISOVA

On November 6-7, 2017, my wonderful team and I organized the “Megamozgiya” project in At-Bashy village, Naryn region. The project was interactive and extremely creative. We literally founded a republic of Megamozgiya, where 50 high school students had to apply for Mega visas, become citizens, attend universities, invest money in Mega and be engaged in several other civic activities. It was a simulation of metropolis life for teenagers who live in remote regions of Kyrgyz Republic and are far away from urban areas. The key purpose was to encourage kids in rural communities to believe in themselves, develop critical thinking skills and take actions toward their dreams! Social entrepreneurship has become my hobby.

This was my seventh social project. My goal is to run 100 civic initiatives throughout my life.

Several students from AUCA and Kyrgyz National University help organize the project. I am especially glad that among the volunteers were our U.S.-CAEF Fellows Elvira Shekeeva and Atai Amanatov. This is what Atai said about the event: “The thing I liked most about this project was the desire of participants to learn all the useful information we were giving them. During the project, I acquired a good understanding of how important it is to help students from villages through such projects. Through organizing workshops, I developed my managerial skills. Now, I want to conduct similar projects in Osh and Batken next year.”

Our young Megamozgers were so happy to participate in such a fun project, and they passed their excitement to us. In two days, we became incredibly energized and returned to Bishkek full of positive emotions!



## EDUCATION FAIR IN TALAS

BY BEKZAT SADYRBAEV

During the fall break, U.S.-CAEF fellow Jyldyz Apyshova and I organized a social education fair. There were 25 children from schools and villages in Talas. The main goal was to motivate them to apply for different programs and teach them time management skills. Many teenagers in Talas do not know how to use their time appropriately, and many of them do not know about opportunities to study abroad or to receive full scholarships here in Kyrgyzstan. The target group was teenagers from 15-17 years, as that is usually an ideal time to start preparing for university. Fellows motivated them with videos and stories of U.S.-CAEF fellows who received scholarships. Also, they invited a FLEX alum who shared his story about the FLEX program. Moreover, fellows explained what time management is and

created a one-year schedule for students. At the end of the day, students were awarded with prizes.

This idea came to us while observing how teenagers in schools do not know where they need to apply or what programs exist. When I studied at school, some students from universities also came to Talas and described many opportunities that are available, especially during school years. Thus, we wanted to share our experience with school students too.

Now, almost 15 of them are applying for U.S.-CAEF and 10 of them are learning English to apply to schools abroad. I hope that all of them can achieve their dreams, and that one day they will share their own success stories with other students.



## HELPING NGA STUDENTS THROUGH MENTORSHIP

BY UULZHAN AITNAZAROVA

UULZHAN AITNAZAROVA (CENTER)

I have been a coordinator of the AUCA's New Generation Academy (NGA) mentorship program since January 2017. Since that time, we have organized various academic and nonacademic events for current preparatory program students. Being an alumna of this program, I am aware of NGA students' needs and fears. Thus, our mentorship program aims to motivate students to achieve great things, to create conditions for unlocking their potential and help them with their entrance exams at AUCA.

One of the most significant annual projects that the mentorship program organizes is TOEFL, Math and essay classes conducted by the NGA alumni. My favorite project was organizing a series of guest

lectures. Informal meetings with successful and interesting people help enhance students' knowledge in different fields, expand their network and believe in their dreams. Also, together with Shaislam Shabiev, a U.S.-CAEF sophomore, I arranged the "Spelling Bee" competition for more than 200 students. In addition, my team conducted Math competitions, and motivational meetings with the NGA alumni. Being a coordinator of the NGA mentorship program gave me fantastic leadership experience. I have learned the importance of distributing responsibilities among team members and creating good relationships, and developed my organizational and communication skills. I enjoy helping other motivated and talented students to achieve their goals and dreams.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT 2ND ANNUAL BLACK TIE EVENT

Of the many events that the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association organized this year, the most popular was by far their second annual “Black Tie Event” in Bishkek. Planning for the event began early in the summer, and was carried out by four Alumni Council members and three current U.S.-CAEF fellows. Alumni Association Treasurer **Adel Sultanbekova** and VP for Regional Outreach **Chyngyz Zhanybekov** led the organizing efforts.

Described by Alumni Council members as “the most awaited event of the year for both U.S.-CAEF alumni and fellows,” the event took place on November 11th and was held at Vu-ala restaurant in Bishkek. The planning committee brought several influential speakers to the event: Talant Sultanov and Gulnura Toralieva, advisers to the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic; Cholponbek Zhumashukurov, CEO of Highland Capitals investment firm and Harvard Business School alum; Nazira Beishenalieva, Chairman of the Bank of Asia and Harvard Business School alum; and Aida Sulova, CEO of the first art center in Kyrgyzstan, Asanbay Center. Each speaker was asked to make a short presentation within the prompt, “What is success for me?” and shared valuable personal and professional advice to the U.S.-CAEF alumni and fellows. Those in attendance at the event agreed that the highlight was hearing from the speakers and having an opportunity to network with professionals that they would not have otherwise met.

Following the banquet, the Youth for Social Entrepreneurship Project (YSEP) President, **Meerim Zhanybek Kyzy**, spoke about various projects that the club had planned and would be implementing in 2018. Later, attendees participated in games, raffles, and dances and enjoyed being able to bond with and create a further sense of community among other U.S.-CAEF alumni and fellows. Alumni Association members are delighted with the success of 2017’s Black-Tie Event and hope to continue the tradition for years to come.

Guests agreed that the event was a hit, and organizers hope to build upon their success by planning an equally fun and informative event next year. Below are just a few quotes where attendees share their feedback about the event:



### Meerim Moldalieva

“The Back Tie Event was a great U.S.-CAEF family reunion where I learned about new opportunities for my professional career from both our alumni and guests, and I had a chance to know more about current fellows. Sharing inspiring stories, receiving helpful advice, getting motivation and feeling as part of this unique community - that was what the Black Tie Event was about.”



### Zhibek Kamalbek Kyzy

“This day was filled with speeches by successful people and they motivated me to become a person like they are and benefit my society. I got to meet new alumni, and of course, had a lot of fun! I like how it brings students even closer to each other, and strengthens the alumni and fellows’ networking skills.”



### Azim Tilekov

“I met new people in this event and had a chance to talk with them on interesting topics. Moreover, it was nice to hear personal success stories of each speaker and get motivation for myself as well. This is my 2nd Black Tie Event and I noticed that the event is getting better by involving more U.S. CAEF fellows and alumni. I would like to thank the organizers of this event for such a great atmosphere.”

# AUMNI CLOSE-UP



## KARINA KUSSAINOVA

Junior Merchandiser, Business Growth Initiative, USAID  
 Founder, Bed Set

Upon graduating from AUCA in 2014, Karina began her professional career at Inspire Consulting as a Translator and Assistant. During her time there, Karina translated American training materials into Russian, developed PR materials, and continued to work as a trainer and coach. She helped Inspire grow from 3 to 15 employees, and introduced Gallup's StrengthsFinders Program to the company, which they still use to this day.

In 2016, Karina and two partners started their own business, Bed Set, which offers fitted sheets. She soon began running the business single-handedly, and was able to quickly identify her target market and create advertisements accordingly. As of fall of 2017, 100% of Bed Set's profits go to charity, which is a draw for consumers. So far, the proceeds have supported a widow with two children, who are now able to take English classes.

In addition to running Bed Set, Karina currently holds a position with USAID's Business Growth Initiative project in the Apparel Sector. In her role as Junior Merchandiser, she serves as the liaison between local factories and clients from Russia and Europe. In the fall of 2017, she independently led preparation for the international trade fair, Apparel Sourcing Paris. As a result of the trade fair, LAT Apparel (Disney's subcontractor), Inditex group (brands like Zara, Massimo Dutti, Bershka, etc.), JED Textiles, and other European brands agreed to plan visits to Kyrgyzstan to assess factories for future production.

Karina also serves as Vice President for Professional Development in the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association, and spearheaded the creation of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Project (YSEP) in May of 2016. YSEP organizes various fundraising initiatives and professional development events, including the Strengths Quest workshop, which sought to help fellows and alumni improve their professional endeavors by identifying their strengths. She hopes to continue to share her expertise with U.S. - CAEF fellows and motivate them to start businesses in Central Asia. Her long-term goal is to create a network of businesspeople who use their money and power to solve pressing social issues.



## NAZOKAT ALIMOVA

Accounting Analyst,  
 General Electric Global Operations

After graduating from AUCA in 2014, Nazokat took a job at General Electric Global Operations Finance in Budapest, Hungary as an Accounting Analyst for the Cash and Banking Team. In 2015, she won the NASDAQ-CEU Business School scholarship to study in the Master of Science in Finance program at Central European University's Business School. This scholarship is given to accomplished leaders from emerging economies and requires outstanding GMAT scores. During her studies, she worked on different startups and helped entrepreneurs with the financial planning of their businesses.

Recently, she won the Google Developer Challenge Scholarship for her idea to create an app about child development. The scholarship will enable Nazokat to learn in detail how to design and launch a new app. With the scholarship support, Nazokat hopes to launch her new app in spring 2018. It will be designed to keep parents informed about health and developmental issues regarding their children, teach women how to maintain healthy practices during pregnancy, and help parents recognize signs of atypical development.

In addition to creating the app, Nazokat plans to hold trainings and distribute informative booklets for young parents. She has developed partnerships with UNICEF and the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic to help her reach her goal. Nazokat hopes that her efforts can improve children's lives, as she believes all children deserve the opportunity to realize their full potential.

Currently, Nazokat is on maternity leave and is spending more time on volunteer activities such as teaching English to migrants and refugees, helping them to write resumes and prepare for interviews, fundraising for schools by baking and selling cakes, tutoring students in math, and donating clothes and books. She is also helping students who have financial difficulties, since she was once in their place. She hopes to help them find avenues to reach their goals, just as U.S.-CAEF has helped her to reach her own.



## MOLDIR KUSSAINOVA

Business Development Manager  
Foxout.kz

After graduating from KIMEP in 2012 with a Major in Finance and a Minor in Marketing, Moldir worked for Henkel Central Asia & Caucasus as a Trade Marketing Manager. During her time there, she was responsible for trade marketing activities in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Mongolia. Her work was recognized in 2013 when she won 2nd place for Best Practice in Sales among Central and Eastern European countries in Vienna, Austria. Because of her outstanding work, Moldir was recruited by another one of the world's leading consumer goods companies, Beiersdorf, and left Henkel after 2.5 years.

At Beiersdorf, Moldir served as a Shopper & Customer Marketing Manager, and was responsible for trade marketing for local and international retail chains, as well as distributor relations. She pioneered the first category management project in Kazakhstan with the Ramstor retail chain in Almaty and the international chain, Carrefour, in Tbilisi, Georgia. In 2014, her project "Path to Purchase" won an award for Best Practice in Hamburg, Germany, due to its help in increasing Beiersdorf's sales in Central Asia by 300%.

Following three successful years at Beiersdorf, Moldir took a gap year in the hope of fulfilling her entrepreneurial passion. With the help of a factory in China, she developed an environmentally-friendly nano-mat designed to hold GPSes and other devices in cars. Moldir developed the brand and was able to sell the product in America through Amazon.com. It has become a 5-star product on Amazon, and has received numerous positive reviews.

In addition to this project, Moldir worked on a Singapore-based IT startup, Foxout.kz, which will serve as a ticketing platform for various events. She and her partner plan to launch the project in Almaty in December 2017 and in Dubai in January 2018.

Moldir also served as Vice President for Social Activities for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association after she graduated from KIMEP. She prides herself on being able to create a positive impact on her community, and is most proud of a social project she initiated in 2015 which raised \$21,070 for children with hearing loss in Almaty. The proceeds were used to purchase high-quality hearing aids for deaf children from underprivileged families. "I believe anyone can have a positive impact on their society," says Moldir. "I try to give something whenever I can, even if it's something really small."



## MALIKA PULOTOVA

Contracts & Procurement Specialist  
Zhaikmunai LLP

Upon graduating from KIMEP, Malika completed the International Capstone Program in Washington, D.C. in 2014. Following this, she returned to Kazakhstan and gained almost two years' worth of work experience from two private companies: International Advertising Agency APEX Interactive LLP, Almaty, and Leisure&Catering Services Company AEWG LLP, Atyrau. She learned business methods and tactics from the perspective of a service provider. Though she enjoyed her work, she wanted to study business from the client's side. As such, Malika found employment at one of the key players in the Oil&Gas sector in West Kazakhstan – Zhaikmunai LLP. She has now worked there for 1.5 years, and has helped the company save significant financial resources by using a cost-effective approach in procuring materials for field operations.

Even in a short time at Zhaikmunai LLP, Malika has worked her way from an entry-level position to a skilled negotiator working closely with all areas of upper management and outside vendors. Malika's main duty is to bring new vendors and suppliers to the company, thereby contributing to the development of the economy of western Kazakhstan.

Malika believes that her job has made her a skilled business professional because it requires strong interpersonal skills, clear communication, the ability to work under pressure, attention to detail, a current and relevant understanding of every aspect of the company's costs, extensive legal knowledge, and negotiating with different suppliers for price, quality, and timeliness.

In order to further her career development, Malika hopes to start a consulting firm to help companies identify savings opportunities, establish savings targets and delivery benefits, and develop supplier performance management tools.

Malika was recently recognized for giving the top C&P performance in her division (field operations). Her managers trusted her to lead several proposals about materials and equipment suppliers, which were critical for operations.

Malika attributes her successes largely to her education and the opportunities provided by KIMEP and U.S.-CAEF. This appreciation and a desire to contribute to the organization encouraged Malika to serve for two years as Vice President for Membership and Outreach for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association from KIMEP University.



## TEMUR UTEGENOV

Founder  
Utegenov T.M.

Following his graduation from KIMEP in 2014 with one of the highest GPAs in his cohort, Temur started working for one of the largest corporations in Kazakhstan, Tengishevroil LLP (TCO). His role there was that of Expense Reports Lead Accountant in the Accounts Payable Group, where he worked on a project that automatized expense reports. The project made the expense report process more efficient and convenient for accountants and other employees.

Temur's hard work on the project was rewarded in 2013 when he was offered the position of Lead Financial Analyst for the Future Growth Project within the same company. The FGP's primary objective was to increase the company's oil production, and Temur's main responsibility was checking contractors' invoices before making payments, in order to ensure that expenses were compatible with their contracts.

After leaving TCO at the end of 2015, Temur moved to Almaty where his older brother taught him how to work in logistics. A few months later, Temur founded an individual entrepreneurship logistics firm which provides delivery services of goods within CIS countries. His company works on an agreement basis with shipping companies and private carriers with a fleet of over 10,000 trucks. The company's revenue was over \$30,200 in 2016, and over \$74,000 in 2017. Despite current economic hardships within Kazakhstan, Temur's company has steadily increased its clientele and has successfully arranged and delivered more than 800 shipments in Kazakhstan and Russia in 2017. Temur believes that one of the keys to his company's success is reliability, and the trust that it has developed over time with clients.

In addition to building his company from the ground up, Temur and his brother developed a social networking group for hundreds of logistics industry representatives. The group serves as a platform to share feedback on transportation firms and clients, often revealing which companies are reliable and which companies are unreliable or fraudulent. As part of this initiative, they also developed an in-house database used by 20,000 logistics professionals in Kazakhstan, and helped a leading logistics website ([www.fa-fa.kz](http://www.fa-fa.kz)) to build an interactive feedback database. Temur attributes this project's success to his company's good reputation; he hopes that it will only continue to grow in the coming year.



## NILUFAR MATYAKUBOVA

Financial Analyst  
Baker Tilly Turkmen LLC

Nilufar is a hardworking individual who constantly seeks out opportunities to develop the skills necessary for her career. Upon graduating from KIMEP in 2013, where she majored in Finance and minored in Accounting, Nilufar pursued a Master's Degree at Huddersfield University in the UK. She completed the program with honors. Since then, she has received a certificate for becoming a Certified Accounting Practitioner (CAP), which is awarded to individuals who complete the Financial Accounting 1, Managerial Accounting 1, and Taxes and Laws exams, and have at least one year of work experience with a professional organization. She has also successfully completed two exams administered by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), the results of which will be distributed in 2018. Though the exams are only offered outside of Turkmenistan, Nilufar recognizes the outstanding benefits they have on her professional development, and makes a conscious effort to participate in them.

At the end of 2014, Nilufar returned to Turkmenistan and began working as an Assistant Auditor for Accusa Auditing Company. Soon, due to her diligence, attentiveness, and professional attitude, she was offered an Auditing Assistant position in Baker Tilly Turkmenistan, one of the biggest auditing companies in the country. In less than a year, she was promoted to Auditor in the same company. After staying in this position for two years, Nilufar switched roles to become a Consultant/Financial Analyst for Baker Tilly Turkmen. The company's trust in Nilufar's ability to perform multiple roles is a testament to her exceptional time management and teamwork skills. During her time at Baker Tilly Turkmen, Nilufar engaged in multiple pro-bono cases, including one involving the UN office in Turkmenistan which aimed to develop financial policies and procedures. Her involvement in these types of cases displays not only a willingness to advance her career, but a desire to help different communities in Turkmenistan.

# MEET OUR NEW ALUMNI OFFICERS



## SITORA SHAGAMBAYEVA

Vice President for Outreach

I graduated from KIMEP in 2017 with a major in Marketing. During my student years at KIMEP, I served as Vice President of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association. In addition, in 2014 I participated in my first international internship in cooperation with UNHCR (UN Refugees) in Malaysia. During my third year at KIMEP, I had an opportunity to spend a semester as an exchange student in Latvia. After graduation, I was enrolled in the Leadership Development Program in Danone in Moscow, Russia. Recently, I moved back to Almaty and am now looking for new career opportunities. As the new VP for Outreach in Kazakhstan, I bring valuable experience and a 'can-do' spirit and passion to our Alumni Association. I look forward to conducting meetings and events for our alumni.



## YULIYA DAVYDENKO

Vice President for Regional Networks  
Assistant to Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Turkmenistan

I graduated from KIMEP University in 2016 with a major in Finance and minor in Marketing. While at KIMEP University, I practiced financial analysis at a leasing company, took part in an exchange program and studied marketing at Ljubljana University in Slovenia, and gained experience in recruiting while working as an Assistant at the Career and Employment Services of KIMEP University. I was very lucky to participate in the U.S. – CAEF Capstone International Internship Program after my graduation and intern with Manchester Trade Inc., one of the leading advisory firms in Washington D.C. It is a great honor to join the Alumni Association and work closely with our alumni for the development of the association and further success of our generation.

### CONTACT INFORMATION



#### WASHINGTON D.C.

1828 L Street NW, Suite 1200  
Washington D.C., USA 20036

**Phone:** (202) 833-7522

**Fax:** (202) 833-7523

[us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org](mailto:us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org)

#### ALMATY

20A, Kazibek Bi Str.,  
4th floor

Almaty, Kazakhstan 050010

**Phone:** +7 727 291 9226

**Fax:** +7 727 259 8805

[accels@americancouncils-kz.com](mailto:accels@americancouncils-kz.com)

#### BISHKEK

187, Sydykov str., office #29.

Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic 720001

**Phone:** +996 312 91 09 89

**Fax:** +996 312 91 09 87

[accels@elcat.kg](mailto:accels@elcat.kg)

#### DUSHANBE

86 Tolstoy Street

Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734003

**Phone:** +992 37 221 1795

**Fax:** +992 37 221 1795

[mamajanova@americancouncils-tj.org](mailto:mamajanova@americancouncils-tj.org)

[us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org](mailto:us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org)

[www.americancouncils.org](http://www.americancouncils.org)

[www.us-caef.com](http://www.us-caef.com)