

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.



GRADUATION 2014

GRADUATION 2014

MY CLOSEST FAMILY

BY MADINA DAMIR KYZY

“There is nothing like a dream to create the future.” - Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*

Four years have passed so fast. It seems like yesterday that we opened the doors at AUCA for the first time and wandered around like strangers, and now we know every corner of the university. We entered our alma mater empowered by our dreams of receiving high quality education in one of the most prestigious universities in Central Asia, and we have never doubted our choice. Back then we mistakenly believed that we will only get the best education in the region, but we did not realize that we would also acquire something more valuable-- the strongly-tied and united family of U.S.-CAEFers.

Looking back, I can say that it was extremely delightful for me to be a U.S.-CAEF fellow, and it cannot be simply measured by the monetary value of our scholarships. It was just so much more than that. My memory is simply overloaded with the bright and joyful moments we've had. I will always remember the training seminars on business dining etiquette, time management

and many others, and pizzas that followed, the beginning and the end-of-the-year meetings, the lunch we had with the Board members, and listening to Steve Shea's story about his transition from a baseball player to a banker. I will always remember preparing for the exam in Accounting and many other finals with my co-fellows, graduation banquets, the mountain trips and our continuous conversations during them, the joint KIMEP and AUCA conference and our night-time adventures in Almaty as well as continuous debates on the women's rights in the bus on the way back.

Yes, this is all about U.S.-CAEF, and it is not even a complete list! I would like to express my gratitude to the Board for their trust and giving us an opportunity to find ourselves and realize our dreams. We will make you proud and try not to disappoint you.

Finally, I want to mention that I am the only child in my family, and I always wanted to have siblings, and now I understand that my dream came true-- you, my precious U.S.-CAEFers, became my closest family. I love you, guys!!!

IN THIS ISSUE ▼

📌 **GRADUATION 2014**
Memories, advice and best wishes of the graduates
PAGE 1

📌 **FROM IDEAS TO ACTION**
Saidkabir Azizov creates two startups in Tajikistan
PAGE 3

📌 **ACQUIRING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**
Fellows share impressions about professional development conferences
PAGE 3

📌 **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**
Ignatii Kim implements a unique community project that ties generations together
Gulnaza Khalmambetova solves social problems through her engagement in social entrepreneurship
PAGE 5

📌 **OUR MULTITALENTED FELLOWS**
Timur Azizov's incredible "Stars on Ice" experience
Nasiba Nurmatova reveals her hidden talent to the world
PAGE 7

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MADINA DAMIR KYZY

I am a current senior student of American University of Central Asia, majoring in Business Administration and completing a minor in Psychology. I am highly interested in banking and financial sectors, and as a future entrepreneur, I recognize that my knowledge in psychology can lead to success in my future business. My lifetime goal is to establish the first commercial people-oriented bank the Kyrgyz Republic to protect the interests of the general public.

ADVICE FROM KIMEP GRADUATING FELLOWS



GUFRONJON AIUBJONOV

You are the luckiest students. Being a U.S.-CAEF scholarship recipient is a huge achievement. Don't miss your chance, use each single opportunity. Live these several years in a way that you remember them for a long time. Don't concentrate just on your studies; be active both in academic and social lives. "Study hard, party hard"-- this is the motto of many good students at many outstanding universities of the world. Be a source of pride for your family, country, and the community that surrounds you.



DILOBAR TUYCHIEVA

During the past four years that I have spent at KIMEP University I faced many different situations that made me believe that every event or challenge leads to a new experience in this diverse world. One of the most important things that I've learned is that you should keep dreaming, as dreams are reflections of our real desires and expectations. We base our goals on them. The next main point is the good beginning-- realization of our goals depends much on the first steps. Finally, most important is your will. Keep dreaming, strive toward your goals, meet all challenges with a great smile, and do not be afraid to face any difficulties.



KHEDZHERA SULEYEVA

I wish every current U.S.-CAEF fellow to be active and open-minded. Try to use every opportunity the university gives you. It is very important to find your niche, so try to participate in different organizations, competitions and exchange programs. Don't be shy, otherwise you may lose your opportunities. Every fellow should study hard not just to maintain a high GPA, but to become a confident and intelligent specialist by the time of graduation. Also, I advise the fellows to manage their time properly and balance academics and leisure. Finally, try to make many friends during your time at the university!



DASTAN ZHUMAGULOV

Keep the fire inside of you burning. Indeed, the university period will shape your life for years to come. Therefore, take the most of it, while you can. You have been very lucky to get such generous support from U.S.-CAEF, you are the chosen ones. You got a chance to study at the best business university of the Central Asian region. With that in mind, do your best to justify the Foundation's trust in you. At the end of the day, it's you who have taken the challenge. Here, at KIMEP, you have every single opportunity to express and develop yourself in any possible direction. Study hard, participate in business games and social projects, do sports and music, or do whatever you feel passionate about and keep the fire inside of you burning. And remember-- there is a big U.S.-CAEF family that is always there to support you. I wish you all the luck in the world!



MALIKA PULOTOVA

Here are my wishes to all our fellows: Always know what you want. Take as much as possible from everything you do-- either it is studies, extracurricular activities or anything else. This life is very short, so find something that you are passionate about and go for your dream. Make friends while you study at KIMEP, never have free time, always do something and learn. Don't be upset if you make mistakes. This is life and it is given for us to learn from our mistakes. Never stop trying, try until you find what you want. I wish you a lot of success in your studies, always be grateful for everything you have! Be the person who can change this world and make positive contributions to it.



SAKINA YASAKIEVA

Remember that you are here at KIMEP University for a specific reason-- to study in order to build a bright future for yourself. My advice for you is to study hard and try to use all opportunities that KIMEP offers. Do not waste your precious time. Try to do your best in every task, even if you think that it is not so important. Never give up and just look forward and be on top. Enjoy every single moment of your life and never be afraid of any mistakes, because we become perfect by learning from these mistakes. Good luck!!!

FROM IDEAS TO ACTION

U.S.-CAEF FELLOW CREATES TWO STARTUPS IN TAJIKISTAN

BY SAIDKABIR AZIZOV

Four years ago, when I was just applying for the U.S.-CAEF scholarship, during the interview they asked me questions about how Tajikistan could develop and how I see my role in that process. I asked them to let me go and learn so that I could find an answer to these questions. We laughed together and decided to postpone the answer. Now I think I've found some answers, and hope that they are correct ones.

I am majoring in marketing and finance, so I started taking real actions towards my career. Last summer, together with my friends, we opened two companies - "Aa Research" and "Aa Traders." We find these startups very indispensable for Tajikistan's market.

What is "Aa Research"? It is a market research company that focuses on different aspects of the client company and helps their brand become more recognizable and successful. Marketing in Tajikistan is still in its development stage. There are big international companies in Tajikistan such as Coca Cola, Procter & Gamble, and Mars which have their own marketing departments, and they are doing very well. But local companies lack marketing strategies and therefore are not doing well. We saw demand for a company that would help local businesses learn about new marketing trends and how use advertising and branding tools. "Aa Research" focuses on market research, developing marketing strategies, trouble shooting, training, advertising, and public relations. Our goals is to help Tajik brands to become stronger and more productive, and also in the long term to gain international recognition in Central Asia and then in a bigger arena.

The second company, "Aa Traders," focuses on trading stocks. Financial investments, the stock exchange, and trading are underdeveloped in Tajikistan. In fact, Aa Traders is the first licensed company in Tajikistan where people can learn about investments and other financial services. Aa Traders provides the following services:

- Trading stocks, futures, currencies, and options on the most popular markets of the world;
- Educational programs for traders working both in American and Russian markets;
- Dealing rooms for trading on RTS (FORTS), MICEX, NYSE, CME, NASDAQ, AMEX;
- Services for algorithmic traders: co-location in the exchange data-center, fastest data feeds, low latency, and cost-effective execution, fund raising for proven strategies;
- Assistance in developing a business in the financial sphere.

These two companies are very young, and we hope to develop and help others develop with us. I am very happy that now we started operating and found investors to help us. Four years ago when I was just applying for the U.S.-CAEF scholarship, during the interview they asked me questions about how Tajikistan could develop and how I see my role in that process. I said something about agriculture and that I do not know much now, and I asked them to let me go and learn so that I could find an answer to these questions. Now I think I've found the answers, and hope that they are correct ones.



SAIDKABIR AZIZOV



ACQUIRING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

CONFERENCE IN COLOGNE: INTERVIEW WITH SAPAR IBRAEV

BY ANISA ATALOVA

During the past semester our U.S.-CAEF peers attended international conferences. Two of them would like to share their impressions with us and give some valuable tips. Senior Sapar Ibraev attended one of the most famous youth conferences in the business field, World Business Dialogue in Cologne, Germany, in March, 2014.

ANISA: Can you please tell us in a few words about the conference you attended. What was the main idea of the conference? Where was it held and who attended it?

SAPAR: World Business Dialogue is an annual conference organized by a team of students from Germany. It is the biggest student-run conference in the world. This year it was held for 17th time. Initially, it was for German students, but in mid-ninetieth they made it

world-wide. Many famous businessmen and leaders attend the event-- e.g., in 1995 Bill Gates was an honorable guest speaker.

This year the conference was held in the University of Cologne, Germany, March 13-15, 2014. The topic was "Disruptive Innovation"-- the innovations that destroy existing markets and create new ones. The conference was interesting, informative, inspiring, and entertaining too.

The main idea of the conference is to bring the brightest youth from all over the world to share their ideas with each other and top managers of various companies. The organizers invited leaders of such big companies as Lufthansa, Daimler, Nokia, Bayer, Claas, KPMG, Microsoft, International Federation of Robotics (IFR), and many others as speakers for lectures,

"... I did not realize that most things happen much sooner than I expected."

workshops, talks, and panels. I learned about so many innovative ideas that are already being implemented such as 3D-printing, service robots, autonomous driving, cyborgs, and so on. Most of these ideas will work only after decades, but the fact that there are already people who are doing it is amazing.

ANISA: What was the application process like? Why do you think you were selected?

SAPAR: I filled out my application and wrote essays on disruptive innovations. I wrote about cyborgs and autonomous driving. They chose 300 students out of 1400 from all over the world. The evaluators told me that they selected candidates who were able to express genuine interest in this year's topic and could contribute to the discussions during the conference.

ANISA: A lot of students are really concerned about the financial part of attending conferences. How did you deal with it?

SAPAR: I didn't have time to apply for scholarships because I was on the waiting list, so I had to pay all expenses myself. But surely, you can apply for a conference scholarship. But there are only few scholarship providers. Other delegates from Kyrgyzstan applied to the SILC (Student Intellectual Life Committee) program of AUCA, which helped them cover their travel costs.

ANISA: What has changed in you after the conference?

SAPAR: The conference changed my perception of the world. Before attending the conference, I did not realize that most things happen much sooner than I expected. For example, I saw with my own eyes how a 3-D printer produced a model of a human skull. That was pretty amazing! Also I met a person who makes a cyborg of himself by putting different chips into his body. One of these chips measures his body temperature, pulse, etc.. He writes the programs himself and installs them under his skin.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



ANISA ATALOVA

Anisa Atalova is a sophomore studying business administration at AUCA. In addition to her studies at AUCA, she loves reading the classics, studying chemistry, and participating in debates.

HARVARD PROJECT: INTERVIEW WITH NURSULTAN ABDUKHALILOV

BY ANISA ATALOVA



Nursultan Abdukhalilov attended the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations conference in Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA

ANISA: Could you tell us about the conference?

Nursultan: The conference took place at Harvard University, Massachusetts, and was organized by the Harvard Business School. The main idea of this conference is to bring together young leaders from all over Asia to discuss the most important economic, political, and social issues relevant to the region. I was in the Business Leadership Panel.

ANISA: Did you meet any people who influenced you?

NURSULTAN: About half of the participants I met last year at the conference World Business Dialogue (WBD) in Germany. They all are pretty impressive. But the most outstanding person who inspired me a lot was my Japanese friend whom I first met at WBD. After graduating from college, he was employed by Apple in California. Now he is an investor who has shares in the Southeast Asian companies. The most remarkable thing is that he started investing during his university years. And now, just in a year after his graduation, he has earned about \$2 million.

I met a lot of such outstanding individuals-- e.g. young men from India and Pakistan who were en-

"...another take away from the conference was to learn that unlike the developed countries, where the wages are really high, countries like Kyrgyzstan offer good atmosphere for entrepreneurship."

gaged in IT start-ups in the Silicon Valley. These individuals really impressed and inspired me.

ANISA: A lot of students are really concerned about the financial part of attending the conferences. How did you solve this problem?

NURSULTAN: Raising money is not easy. When you ask for money, you should be ready to explain to people how they could benefit from this investment. This year I was lucky. Andrew Wachtel, President of AUCA, supported me.

ANISA: What were your overall impressions of this conference?

NURSULTAN: I was really impressed, especially by the participants and the Harvard students, by their ability to think globally, and seek for solutions for

global problems. Also, another take away from the conference was to learn that unlike the developed countries, where the wages are really high, countries like Kyrgyzstan offer good atmosphere for entrepreneurship.

ANISA: What are your next steps?

NURSULTAN: Honestly, I am getting tired of conferences. Now, I want to take some action using all the knowledge I have acquired. Currently, I am the Chairman of the Economic Department of Youth Parliament. And in this role I would like to focus more on developing entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan.



NURSULTAN ABDUKHALILOV THE NEW BUSINESS LEADER OF ASIA

COMMUNITY OUTREACH TYING GENERATIONS TOGETHER

BY NASIBA NURMATOVA

U.S.-CAEF fellows organized great projects for Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), a coordinated annual event which gathers young people around the world in conducting various projects that benefit their communities.

Ignat Kim, one of the most active U.S.-CAEF fellows, held an interesting and very useful project, "Ties of Generations". The idea of the project was to increase awareness of some of the challenges seniors may face and build a bridge between youngsters and elderly people.

The project consisted of two parts. During the first day, Ignat and all volunteers led workshops for little children in the central malls of Bishkek. Children learned to make postcards and jewelry which were

sold later. Using this money, Ignat held the second part of the project. Volunteers purchased a variety of necessary items for senior citizens and visited them. In two days Ignat helped more than 300 elderly people who needed food and clothes. Now, Ignat and other students are planning to visit a retirement home on May 9. They will distribute more items they have gathered through the help drive. They have also prepared a concert for senior citizens.

Inna Tsoy, Valentina Khomenko, Nasiba Nurmatova and Jamilya Klycheva also contributed to the Global Youth Service Day 2014 by organizing their own projects. In total, there were about 1000 people who took part in GYSD, and more than 1000 people who received help from volunteers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



NASIBA NURMATOVA

Nasiba is a junior fellow in the Business Administration Department of AUCA. Her hobbies are poetry and ceramics. Currently, Nasiba works part-time as a FLEX alumni coordinator and interns at the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek.



IGNAT KIM HANDING OUT AWARDS TO CHILDREN

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INSPIRING SOLUTIONS

BY GULNAZA KHALMANBETOVA



GULNAZA KHALMANBETOVA (SECOND LEFT) WITH ROZA OTUNBAYEVA, FORMER PRESIDENT OF KYRGYZSTAN (CENTER), & OTHER PARTICIPANTS

On February 28, I attended an international conference sponsored by the U.S. Embassy which took place in the Jannat Hotel in Bishkek. It was organized by the Association of Social Entrepreneurs. The leader of this association, Mirbek Asangariev, believes that social entrepreneurship can help address and solve social problems. The mission of the conference was to popularize and develop this kind of entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan.

One of the main speakers of the conference was Ashok Regmi, director of the Youth Action Net program, an initiative of the International Youth Foundation (IYF). Youth Action Net pursues a bold mission: to strengthen and expand the impact of youth-led social ventures around the globe. Ashok Regmi conducted sessions about the development of social entrepreneurship in different countries and how youth uses unique ways to solve social issues.

Roza Otunbayeva, ex-president of Kyrgyz Republic, attended the conference as a guest speaker. "I know nothing about social entrepreneurship, let's do it together, let's learn about the new style of entrepreneurship -social entrepreneurship," said Ms. Otunbaeva. Her speech amazed me, because not all respected people like her would say "I do not know this, let's learn together".

The conference was not open for everyone. I had a chance to attend it because I am a member of the Club of Young Social Entrepreneurs. So I was invited

to present my project "Art Rocks". The purpose of my project is to teach disabled people to make art crafts and earn money by selling them. It was amazing that after my presentation Ashok Regmi shook my hand, and told me that my project was a unique example of social entrepreneurship.

This conference and the people I met inspired me to move forward and develop my project further. I saw Roza Otunbayeva face-to-face for the first time, and her speech fascinated me. Ashok Regmi's sessions were so informative and full of new ideas. I wrote down all of them when I came back home. I met many other interesting people, e.g. entrepreneurs from Osh with whom I exchanged contact information and discussed possibilities for future cooperation.

Almost two months have passed since the conference but I still feel its impact. I've been using the tips I learned during the conference. I have already reached out to the mayor's office in Osh, and they've agreed to provide a place for my project "Art Rocks". So attending conferences is not always about writing notes in your notebook and forgetting about them, but it is about expanding your network of business contacts and learning about new things which you can actually implement in reality.

"... attending conferences is not always about writing notes in your notebook and forgetting about them, but it is about expanding your network of business contacts and learning about new things which you can actually implement in reality."

OUR MULTITALENTED FELLOWS STAR ON ICE

BY TIMUR AZIZOV

“Stars on Ice” taught me a lot of other things other than ice-skating.

This spring I had a really unique opportunity to represent my university in a figure skating show called “Stars on Ice”. Throughout my high school and university years I’d taken part in many events and projects, but “Stars on Ice” is probably one of the most interesting, fascinating and challenging experiences.

“Stars on Ice” is an annual figure skating show originally organized by the students of the KIMEP’s Association for Sports Development last year. Last year’s participants were only from KIMEP University, but this year there were 20 participants from 5 different universities. “Stars on Ice” is similar to the American show where 10 couples with the help of professionals compete with others by creating an original and creative performance in three months. The participants were chosen by a two-step audition. Initially, there were 150 participants. It was a big honor for me to be among the top 20 skaters and participate in the final show.

I never thought that I would ever skate in my life, and I was probably the only participant who had never skated before. The first practice was awful; I fell about 25 times only in one practice, but this actually was a good motivation for me to become a good skater. Next step was to choose a concept for our performance. We had about 10-20 ideas and it was really hard to choose the best one, because, honestly, we were not technically very strong in comparison to other couples. So we had to be very creative in order to make a good show.

“Stars on Ice” taught me a lot of other things other than ice-skating. It taught me to be patient, to be creative in any situation and, last but not least, to listen to other people’s opinions.



COMMUNICATING THROUGH POETRY

BY NASIBA NURMATOVA



NASIBA IN BAKU

Poetry has always been something special for me. It is the way of communication with my internal world, my thoughts and feelings. My first poem was published in the youth newspaper "Aidanek" when I was in third grade at elementary school.

When I was little I wrote poetry because it was fun to rhyme words. In high school, I wrote poems for my parents and friends, but I rarely shared them. Since writing poetry is my internal dialogue with myself, I do not always feel comfortable sharing it with others. Even though, every poet strives to have as many readers as possible.

A few months ago I found out about the 2nd International Forum of Young Poetesses in Baku, Azerbaijan. It was the time when I started feeling more comfortable about sharing my poetry. I filled out the application and sent my portfolio with poems. A couple of weeks later, I received an award letter. Among all applicants from Kyrgyzstan, I was selected to represent my country.

At the forum, I met more than 26 young poetesses from around the world. This forum's goal was to unite and develop networking of young poetesses all over the world. During the conference we discussed women's role in literature and how poetry can influence the world. Every poetess through her poetry described the history, values, traditions and culture of their countries. It was awesome to see how poetry replaced regular presentations about culture. That showed me that poetry can be a means of communication not only with the internal but also with the external world.

Today I would like to share a piece of my poetry with you. I like writing motivational and philosophical poetry. For technical information, I write regular poems and haiku, a Japanese form of poetry. Mostly I write in Russian, however I write also in Kyrgyz and English. And I usually do not give names to my poems.

While desert waits for rain,
Or stranger waits for train,
While mother waits for child,
I keep my dream in mind.
My faith in magic's strong,
I wait for it so long.
I know the dreams come true,
I've seen it, haven't you?

The desert gets its rain,
The stranger takes the train,
The mother hugs her child,
My dream is still in mind.
I am not obsessed with it,
I live, I sleep, I eat.
The dream is light of life,
To wait—means be alive

"...poetry can be a means of communication not only with the internal but also with the external world."



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

ALMATY
20A, KAZIBEK BI STR.,
4th FLOOR
Almaty, Kazakhstan 050010
Phone: +7 727 291 9226
Fax: +7 727 259 8805
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

DUSHANBE
86 Tolstoy Street
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734003
Phone: +992 37 221 1795
Fax: +992 37 221 1795
mamajanova@americancouncils-tj.org