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CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2018

In keeping with traditions established by previous cohorts, the 2018 graduating class upheld the high standards of the U.S.-CAEF program, completing their studies at AUCA and KIMEP University with impressive results.

Of twenty-nine senior Fellows, 16 (or 55%) graduated with honors:

SUMMA CUM LAUDE

MAGNA CUM LAUDE

CUM LAUDE



DASTAN AKHTAYEV



ZHAKSAT BASSEN



ADYLBEK KENZHEBEK



MERYEM KARAKHASANOVA



GULIZA ALMAZBEK KYZY



ZUHRO GANJIBEKOVA



ZHIBEK KAMALBEK KYZY



AZATBEK ISMAILOV



KAMILA BEKBAGANBETOVA



KARIMKHON BUKHADUROV



OSIYA OLIMNAZAR

16
FELLOWS
GRADUATED
with
HONORS



ALTYNAI MELISOVA

new
U.S.-CAEF
RECORD



SHAHLO JONMAMADOVA



JAHONGIR RAHIMOV



KANAT OSMONOV



ZULFIYA URUNOVA



CHYNGYZ BEGIMKULOV

Throughout their four years of study, the graduating Fellows have shown themselves to be true leaders and role models at their respective universities.

This summer, the recent graduates joined the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association bringing the total number of the program alumni to **228**. Within a month after their graduation, about **73%** of the graduates have already been employed, started their internships or enrolled in graduate programs.

THE GRADUATES REPRESENT ALL 5 REPUBLICS OF CENTRAL ASIA:

- KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: 13**
- KAZAKHSTAN: 5**
- TAJIKISTAN: 8**
- TURKMENISTAN: 2**
- UZBEKISTAN: 1**



THE STEVEN F. SHEA EXCELLENCE AWARDS



During the graduation receptions, U.S.-CAEF Directors announced recipients of the Steven F. Shea Excellence Awards for graduating seniors and alumni. The Award was established by the U.S.-CAEF Board in May 2015 to commemorate Mr. Steven F. Shea, a founding director of U.S.-CAEF and its first President. The awards are presented to outstanding alumni and graduating fellows in recognition of their significant academic and professional achievements, service to the community, and active commitment to the economic growth of Central Asia. Two graduating fellows, one from each partner university, receive the top honor of \$1,000 and a plaque of recognition. From among the alumni, one individual from AUCA and one from KIMEP University are selected to receive the top honor of \$1,000 and a plaque of recognition. In addition, four honorable mention candidates, two from each university, are also selected to receive a certificate of recognition and a monetary grant of U.S. \$250.

WINNERS OF SENIOR AWARDS 2018

In special recognition of the exceptionally high quality of this year's graduating fellows at both institutions, the directors granted SSEAs to two graduating fellows from each university, making a total of four awards for new graduates in 2018. Recipients of the award will include:



ZHAKSAT BASSEN

Zhaksat (left) grew up in Aiteke Bi, a provincial town and the administrative center of Kazaly District in Kyzylorda Region of Kazakhstan. An Accounting and Audit major, Zhaksat graduated from KIMEP University summa cum laude by earning a GPA of 4.31 (of 4.33 maximum), the highest among the U.S.-CAEF Fellows of all cohorts in Almaty. In 2016, Zhaksat won the "Best Student of Almaty" competition and received the Erasmus+ scholarship to study at Tomas Bata University in Zlin, Czech Republic. Prior to his semester abroad, he had completed the E2 Educational Services Transformational Leadership training in Almaty and was selected to participate in the Entrepreneurial Leadership Program in Seattle and Chicago in the summer of 2016. In addition to excelling in his academic pursuits, Zhaksat has served as an office assistant in various departments at KIMEP, including the Office of the President, the Internal Audit Department, and the Finance and Planning Department. In 2017, Zhaksat's successful participation in the Accounting Olympiad led to his internship with PricewaterhouseCoopers. In addition, Zhaksat received several leadership awards and certificates for his involvement with the International "Oil & Gas" Exhibition, the Turan Model United Nations, the Nauryz Family Days, and the Special Olympics Games in Almaty. In fall 2018, Zhaksat will be one of the six U.S.-CAEF fellows selected by the Board to take part in the Capstone Internship Program in Washington, DC.



AZATBEK ISMAILOV

Azatbek is originally from Osh, Kyrgyz Republic. He graduated from the School of Entrepreneurship and Business Administration (SEBA) of AUCA with the magna cum laude distinction in June 2018. During his time at AUCA, Azatbek served as the Finance Manager of the ENACTUS Enterprise Club, a Regional Counselor with “Camp of America,” a FLEX Project Leader for “Green Leaf,” Finance Manager and Vice President of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Project (YSEP) and participated in the Model United Nations conference at Ata-Turk University, where he received the Distinguished Delegate Award. In 2016, he co-founded the AUCA Case Club and served as the organization’s president. In April 2018, together with two other U.S.-CAEF fellows, Azatbek won the international Mars case competition bringing the first victory to AUCA. In addition to these accomplishments, Azatbek also held internships at Kyrgyzstan’s State Antimonopoly Agency, SortD On Demand Service Company, “Sky Mobile” L.L.C. and the Central Asian Free Market Institution in Bishkek. In recognition of his remarkable achievements, Azatbek was selected to participate in the U.S.-based Capstone Internship Program in fall 2018.



ZHIBEK KAMALBEK KYZY

A native of Padek village, Jalalabad, Kyrgyz Republic, Zhibek is an outstanding AUCA Fellow who has demonstrated academic excellence and impressive leadership abilities. She has graduated from AUCA summa cum laude. During her semester abroad at the SolBridge International School of Business in Daejeon, South Korea in spring 2017, Zhibek earned high grades as well. In the summer of 2017, Zhibek won a FLEX Alumni grant to organize a social project “TechMothers” to teach basic computer skills to 35 women from Naryn and Jalal-Abad, the economically disadvantaged areas where digital resources are limited. The project intended to enhance workplace productivity for employed women and to improve employment prospects for unemployed participants. In addition, Zhibek organized “Better Understanding for a Better World” conference in 2016, as well as a special project for Children’s Day which raised money for children in the Korean Development Center in Ivanovka. Zhibek also participated in the ProKG Leadership Program and the Cultural Diplomacy Club, the ENACTUS Club, and led the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Project (YSEP). Zhibek continued to expand her work experience by interning at Beeline and the United States Embassy in Bishkek. In fall 2018, Zhibek will be taking part in the U.S.-CAEF International Capstone Internship Program in Washington, DC.



JAHONGIR RAHIMOV

Jahongir (left) comes from Chkalovsk, Sughd Province, Tajikistan. A Finance major, Jahongir graduated from KIMEP University cum laude in May 2018. In the 2017 fall semester, Jahongir studied at the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Steyr through the Ernst Mach grant. Upon his return from Austria, Jahongir as finalist of the Eurobak Academy competition took part in the activities of the Marketing & PR University of Practical Knowledge. During the same year, he successfully completed the Bloomberg Market Concepts course, and his team won 1st place out of 65 teams at the CIMA Business Challenge. Jahongir was also Kazakhstan’s winner of the Procter & Gamble CEO Challenge Europe, and was selected to travel to Moscow, Russia as a finalist. In addition, Jahongir served as Vice President of Finance and President of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association. Jahongir’s work experience includes internships at IMON International, M-KAT Group, and Magnet Oil & Gas Group. He also held a position as Director Assistant with a U.S.-CAEF alum’s company, CREATE3D, and most recently served as a project manager with Changallenge Kazakhstan. In recognition of his remarkable achievements, the Foundation selected Jahongir to participate in the fall 2018 U.S. Capstone Internship Program in Washington, DC.

WINNERS OF ALUMNI AWARDS 2018



KARINA KUSSAINOVA

AUCA CLASS OF 2014

JUNIOR MERCHANDISER, BUSINESS GROWTH INITIATIVE, USAID
FOUNDER, BED SET

After graduating from AUCA in 2014, Karina began her career as a translator and assistant at Inspire Consulting. With her help, Inspire grew from 3 to 15 employees and introduced Gallup's StrengthsFinders Program, which they still use to this day. In 2016, Karina and two partners started Bed Set, a business that offers fitted sheets. All of Bed Set's profits go to charity, which so far have supported a widow with two children who are now able to take English classes. In addition to running her business, Karina 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 and has independently led preparation for the international trade fair, Apparel Sourcing Paris. Additionally, Karina served as the Vice President for Professional Development with the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association and spearheaded the creation of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Project (YSEP) in May 2016. Run by current U.S.-CAEF Fellows, YSEP organizes educational and fundraising activities for people from economically disadvantaged communities.



MOLDIR KUSSAINOVA

KIMEP CLASS OF 2012

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, FOXOUT.KZ

Moldir recently took a gap year from her job at Beiersdorf in order to pursue her passion of being an entrepreneur. At Beiersdorf, she served as a Shopper & Customer Marketing Manager, and pioneered the first category management project in Kazakhstan and Georgia with international retail chains Ramstor and Carrefour. The project, called "Path to Purchase," won an award for Best Practice in Hamburg, Germany, and helped Beiersdorf increase their sales by 300% in Central Asia. During her gap year, Moldir used her savvy business skills and the help of a factory in China to develop a unique, environmentally friendly product meant to hold GPS devices and other products in cars. It features a clever design to ensure that items placed on it do not fall off while the car is moving. Moldir quickly and strategically developed the brand, and was able to sell the product in America through Amazon.com. The product has become a 5-star product on Amazon and has received numerous positive reviews. In December 2017, Moldir successfully launched her startup, Foxout.kz, sponsored by Idea Wave Labs, a Singapore-based IT company. Foxout serves as a ticketing platform for various events.

HONORABLE MENTION AWARDS 2018



NAZOKAT ALIMOVA

AUCA CLASS OF 2014 | GENERAL LEDGER ACCOUNTANT, RAE SECURITY INC.

Upon her graduation 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. She later won the NASDAQ-CEU Business School Scholarship to study in the Master of Science in Finance program at Central European University's Business School. During her studies, she worked on different startups and helped entrepreneurs with financial planning of their businesses. More recently, Nazokat won the Google Developer Challenge Scholarship for her idea to create an app about child development. The app will be in the Kyrgyz language and keep parents informed about health and development issues regarding children and how to maintain healthy practices during pregnancy. In addition to the app, Nazokat plans to hold trainings and distribute informative booklets to young parents with the help of partnerships with UNICEF and the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic during her summer vacations. Recently, Nazokat won a Green Card and moved to Houston, Texas where she is currently employed as General Ledger Accountant, RAE Security Inc.



MALIKA PULOTOVA

KIMEP CLASS OF 2014 | CONTRACTS & PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST, ZHAIKMUNAI LLP

Upon graduating from KIMEP, Malika completed the U.-S.-CAEF International Capstone Program in Washington, D.C. in 2014. After the program, she returned to Kazakhstan and gained work experience from two private companies: International Advertising Agency APEX Interactive LLP, Almaty, and Leisure & Catering Services Company AEWG LLP, Atyrau. In order to study business from the client's side, Malika then found employment at one of the key players in the oil and gas sector in West Kazakhstan – Zhaikmunai LLP. 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 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. In the future, 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 attributes her successes largely to her education and the opportunities provided by KIMEP University and U.S.-CAEF. This appreciation led Malika to serve for two years as Vice President for Membership and Outreach for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association.



ELENA SOBOLEVA

AUCA CLASS OF 2011 | CO-FOUNDER AND CFO, HONORLOCK INC.

While studying in the MBA program at Florida Atlantic University, Elena Soboleva formed Honorlock LLC with fellow student Adam Roth to prevent academic cheating. They developed a tool that sends a copyright notice to websites with illicit test content, a patent-pending technology that identifies students who try to access blacklisted URLs, and notifications to instructors of suspicious behavior. Since the duo created Honorlock LLC in 2014, they have received over \$1 million from investors, applied for several patents, and expanded their team to 12 employees. Schools are using the team's proctoring solutions across the U.S. and abroad, and they have received positive recognition from some of the world's leading publishers, such as Pearson and McGraw-Hill Education. In 2017, Honorlock opened a satellite office in Bishkek which employs 9 people in Kyrgyzstan, and they plan to hire 7-10 more employees in the coming year. Honorlock closed 2017 with a revenue of \$355,000 and estimates 2018 will close with a revenue of \$1,200,000.



TEMUR UTEGENOV

KIMEP CLASS OF 2012 | FOUNDER, UTEGENOV T.M.

A native of Uzbekistan, Temur along with his brother, founded an individual entrepreneurship logistics firm in Almaty which provides delivery services of goods within CIS countries. The company's revenue was over \$30,200 in 2016 and over \$74,000 in 2017. The company has steadily increased its number of clients and has successfully arranged and delivered over 800 shipments in Kazakhstan and Russia in 2017 alone. In addition to growing their business, Temur and his brother have 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 and reveal which companies are reliable and which ones are unreliable or fraudulent. As part of this initiative, they created an in-house database used by 20,000 logistics professionals in Kazakhstan and helped a leading logistics website (www.fa-fa.kz) to build an interactive feedback database. Temur attributes his company's success to this project and hopes the business will continue to grow in the coming year.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: CASE COMPETITIONS



FELLOWS WON THEIR WAY TO FINAL ROUND AT ASIA PACIFIC BUSINESS CASE COMPETITION

AUCA students took part in HSBC/HKU Asia Pacific Business Case Competition held in Hong Kong June 4-8, 2018. The HSBC/HKU Asia Pacific Business Case Competition is an annual event that takes place at The University of Hong Kong and aims to bring together students from around the Asia Pacific region and beyond to give them the opportunity to stretch and apply their quantitative, qualitative and communication skills. Undergraduate students compete against each other in teams of four in business strategy and presentation. The competition is judged by senior members of the regional business community.

Three of the four participants in the AUCA team were our U.S.-CAEF sophomores- **Sevara Tadzhibaeva**, **Meerim Zhanybek kyzy** and **Zhanna Marchenko**. Although the students did not win, they became the first Central Asian participants to compete in the final round of this internationally acclaimed competition. The Fellows were honored to represent the Kyrgyz Republic and AUCA and highly valued the experiences and knowledge that they gained in Hong Kong. In the passages below, the Fellows share their feedback about the event.

Sevara Tadzhibaeva: “After winning the local case cup, our team consisting of Anara Kyshtoobekova as well as U.S.-CAEF sophomores Meerim Zhanybek kyzy, Zhanna Marchenko and I were selected to represent Kyrgyzstan at this prestigious global cup.

A total of 24 teams from the US, Japan, Canada and other countries took part in this competition. Our team was the youngest, as other teams were composed of university graduates.

In the first round, we competed against Taiwan and France. With the highest points in the 1st round, we advanced to the next round where we competed against the Canadian team. We were placed in a room with no Internet access; all we had were A4 papers, some markers, a calculator, the case description and an observer. We had 3 hours to read, analyze and come up with recommendations and make a paper-based presentation. Unfortunately, we did not

get a prize but the experience and network we got were worth it. This contest helped me learn to make fact-based business recommendations, shape my public speaking skills, make decent financial calculations and work in a team efficiently under pressure. In addition, we had a chance to present our ideas to top senior managers and communicate with the CEOs of leading companies.”

Meerim Zhanybek kyzy: “For me personally, this competition showed what the business world is really about. I realized that when we solve business cases, it is extremely important that our recommendations are realistic, yet innovative and creative. We presented in front of judges who were CEOs of big companies and they were looking for business recommendations that are viable, which was a big lesson for us. By participating in the International Business Case competition for the first time, I realized what skills we should improve.”

INTERNSHIPS: THE GATEWAY TO FELLOWS' FUTURES

U.S.-CAEF Fellows actively seek professional development opportunities to better prepare for their future careers. Internships help Fellows develop important soft skills, learn about local industries, establish important business contacts, and explore potential career paths. Fifteen sophomore Fellows are currently taking part in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in Bishkek and Dushanbe while many Fellows across other cohorts sought out internship opportunities independently. In the quotes below, Fellows shared their feedback about their internship experiences.



MEERIM MOLDALIEVA

TEXTILE TRANS

“I had a two-month internship in the accounting department of LLC ‘Textile Trans’. The company was established in 2008 and is regarded as the largest hosiery producer as well as the only textile manufacturer in Kyrgyzstan. In early 2017, the company launched the production of knitted fabric with the capacity of 10 tons of finished products a day which will support the increasing growth of the Kyrgyz sewing industry and lower the country’s dependence on imported textile products. This internship was of special interest to me as I have always been interested in the textile industry. I even mentioned that in my essay when I applied for the U.S.-CAEF program. My duties included assisting with research, filing, data entry, and maintaining accurate and complete financial records. I also assisted with preparing financial reports, balance sheets, income statements, invoices, and other documents for tax services. In addition, working with bookkeeping software was especially important for me as I am a beginner. Overall, it was a very interesting internship with a lot of perspectives for me. I have learned not only about accounting in practice, but also about the whole textile industry in Central Asia.”



TAKHMINA ZAKIROVA

THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

“In April, I started my long-awaited internship in the Sustainable Economic Growth Department at UNDP. Although I was an intern, I had a chance to organize a 4-day mission for an international consultant coming from Geneva, Switzerland, which included 2 days of trainings on Green Economy Policy Instruments and Assessment Methods for the representatives of the Kyrgyz government, private sector and civil society. During the three months of my internship, I learned a lot about the UNDP’s work and I love that it works in collaboration with other organizations, which allows me to expand my network and learn about new trends and ideas for future projects.”



BEKZHAN TASHBAEV

STATE AGENCY OF ANTIMONOPLY REGULATION

“Inspired by my experience at this agency, together with another intern I implemented a project called ‘Fair Competition- Fair Business’. We developed brochures on fair competition and general information about the antimonopoly agency. The brochure was very useful because most consumers do not know about the antimonopoly agency, thus they do not know where to go in case of violation of customer rights.”



NAZIRAKHON KHOLTURAEVA

EURASIA INSURANCE AND JYSK TAJIKISTAN

“I joined the organizational committee which was involved in a 4-month preparation for the 14th International Risk Management Conference held at Ritz Carlton on April 19-20 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. My major task was to contact members and create an invitation list. I made more than 3000 international calls to people who work in the insurance or reinsurance companies. Besides this, I found insurance companies that recently entered the market, and prepared a database with their contacts and other information. This internship helped me improve my communication skills and to understand how the insurance industry works. However, the most important skill I gained was networking. During the internship and at the conference, I met so many new people from this industry. I believe that the experience will be very helpful for my future development and career.

Currently, I am interning with JYSK Tajikistan (a Danish furniture store chain) in Dushanbe. My manager demands good quality work, but he does not micromanage me. JYSK Tajikistan is the company that treats its interns as employees and trains them seriously. They give you serious tasks and provide all necessary information and data required for that assignment I have already analyzed the expenses of our marketing department and will be presenting the report to the Board of Directors soon. Currently, I am working on an ABC analysis (an inventory categorization), which is completely new to me. It is challenging but interesting and very useful.”



ATOBEK RAKHIMSHOEV

COCA-COLA İÇECEK (CCI) TAJIKISTAN

“I am lucky to have my internship in the summer as it is the busiest season in the beverage industry. The highlights of these initial three weeks are: having a chance to be part of Coca-Cola Kick Off which was organized by a U.S.-CAEF alumna Anisa Hojjeva (marketing specialist); introduction to the corporate financial programs led by another U.S.-CAEF alumna Mohinav Amonulloeva (an ambitious commercial finance analyst); and the official launch of the Fuse Tea production with new technology in Tajikistan. In addition, I had a chance to participate in several meetings with the organizations that work with CCI Tajikistan. During these three initial weeks, I got good impressions about the company and I am planning to make the most out of this great opportunity provided by U.S.-CAEF.”



SHAISLAM SHABIEV & MEERIM ZHANYBEK KYZY

BEELINE

Shaislam: “Beeline recently switched to digital development, which makes my internship in this company even more enjoyable and useful. I am an intern in the Digital Development Department. I like the atmosphere inside the company, because everyone is working on team projects. I do perform certain tasks as a staff member, not as an intern, and this is also a positive side of my internship. And yes, I really like my desktop!”

Meerim: “Summer Internship in the Sky Mobile “Beeline” became the most important step towards my successful career! It changed my view of work life and taught me to live with joy while working, which keeps me so inspired! I am thankful to U.S.-CAEF for this internship opportunity at one of the biggest international companies in Asia!”



OLGA PYKHOVA

GAZPROMNEFT ASIA

"During my internship, I've acquired skills that are helpful not only in the sphere of marketing, but also in many spheres of life. I feel that I will become an Excel guru by the end of my internship. Additionally, Gazpromneft Asia gives a great opportunity for employees' development. We have workshops conducted by top instructors in Bishkek twice a week. I enjoy working in this big company because it broadens my mind and understanding of how complicated the business world is."



FARZONA KHAIDAROVA & MIRZOJON SHIRINJONOV

BDO LLC

Farzona: "I am interning at BDO as a marketing analyst and HR assistant. I have been working on strategies for increasing the company's brand recognition and customer satisfaction. Moreover, I am involved in the organization and coordination of the Accountants' Summer School where we teach recent graduates, not only, accounting, but law, taxes, Excel and 1C. Our school's graduates will have an amazing opportunity to intern with BDO upon their successful completion of the program."

Mirzojon: "I am interning in the audit department and have already learned how the audit in Tajikistan is done. I am also learning how to do outsourcing services. I am also studying the tax code of Tajikistan, which is very important in the accounting and audit sphere."



SEVARA TADZHIBAEVA

QUASAR

"I am currently interning in the business analytics and marketing departments of recruitment company "Quasar". So far, it has been a very fascinating experience. My major task is to analyze the current situation of the companies in Bishkek and prepare marketing recommendations. However, sometimes I get to work with other departments, for example, with BTL (the advertising department). I was involved in organizing Tengri Music Festival. I was lucky to witness the real logistic work and organizational part as well as marketing strategies of Samsung, main sponsor of the festival."



MAKSUD RAHIMOV

RSM TAJIKISTAN, LLC

"The Regional Internship Program gives a perfect opportunity to get to know the market of Tajikistan. There were six different companies to choose from and my choice was RSM Tajikistan. RSM is a powerful network of audit, tax and consulting experts with offices all over the world. Although my major is Corporate Finance, I am gaining knowledge in consulting and audit at RSM which will be useful for my future career. During the first month of my internship, I interned in the outsourcing and audit department, later I'm planning to gain some experience in the consulting department. My colleagues and supervisors are very friendly and are always there to help me understand the work process and gain valuable experience."



SAIRA DUISHONBEKOVA

OLIVE HOTEL

"As an intern in this boutique hotel belonging to Promotank the company that also provides business consulting services, I am getting to know the work process of two different types of businesses. Whenever there is not much work at the hotel I am involved in business consulting. I feel very blessed to get my internship here because I would not be able to get this diverse experience. The internship allows me to learn such professional skills as conducting business research, preparing financial reports and writing reports on business projects. I am very happy for using my time productively and having a chance to learn many new things. In this company I have met five AUCA alumni, which made me feel so proud. I love to wake up every day and go to work with a pleasant feeling as if you are a real employee."

FUTURE LEADERS



LEADERSHIP PROGRAM BRINGS TOGETHER FELLOWS AND ALUMNI

BY UULZHAN AITNAZAROVA

On May 18-19, nine U.S.-CAEF Fellows and Alumni participated in a 3-day intensive leadership training workshop sponsored by ProKG Professionals' Club, which is a public organization created in 2009 by young professionals who are graduates of leading universities and work in companies and organizations around the world. ProKG's Leadership Program offers intensive trainings, mentorship, guest lectures and great networking opportunities. Each year, the selection committee chooses 20-25 young leaders from more than 200 students from all universities in Kyrgyzstan. This year 7 current fellows (**Altynai Melisova, Guliza Almazbek kyzy, Kasiet Mambetkul kyzy, Atai Amanatov, Sezim Zhenishbek kyzy, Olya Pykhova** and **Uulzhan Aitnazarova**) and 2 U.S.-CAEF alumni (**Samat Osmonov** and **Azim Tilekov**) proved themselves as bright, ambitious and worthy candidates for the Leadership Program.

Among the topics of the training were principles of personal and professional development, core values, goal setting, emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership. All speakers were highly qualified professionals, prominent business people and graduates of leading universities such as Harvard School of Business, Harvard

School of State Administration and Ball State University. The Fellows enjoyed each session and commented that the training was substantive, informative and inspiring. At the end of the training each participant was assigned a mentor from the field of his/her career aspiration. The mentors will meet with trainees regularly and help them succeed in their career of choice.

"Three days of trainings with ProKG leadership program were very productive. We learned new concepts, new skills and gained valuable knowledge. Especially, I liked the training about fundamental values which allowed me to look at myself from a new perspective. I am sure that the fact that I am a U.S.-CAEF student played a great role in being selected for the Leadership Program. U.S.-CAEF is like a well-known brand. When people know that you are a U.S.-CAEF Fellow or Alum they know that you are a motivated, responsible and talented person. This brand of the U.S.-CAEF program builds trust between you and the admission committee. They know if they invest in you, they won't be mistaken," shared **Guliza Almazbek kyzy**, a recent AUCA graduate, about the event.

"U.S.-CAEF is like a well-known brand. When people know that you are a U.S.-CAEF Fellow or Alum they know that you are a motivated, responsible and talented person. This brand of the U.S.-CAEF program builds trust between you and the admission committee. They know if they invest in you, they won't be mistaken."

- Guliza Almazbek kyzy

ENHANCING LEADERSHIP SKILLS THROUGH MODEL UN



Every year, U.S.-CAEF Fellows take part in Model UN conferences where through a focus on real-world global challenges and experiential learning they enhance the leadership and communication skills vital for their academic success and professional development. Two Fellows who recently took part in Model UN conferences in Almaty and Katmandu share their experiences with us.



Gavkharkhon Mamadjanova: "On April 27, I took part in Model UN New Silk Way 2018 where I represented a tiny country located between France and Spain – Andorra. As a member of the Economic and Social Committee, I was involved in the discussions on the topic called 'Sustainable Infrastructure Development in Global South'. It was amazing to meet enthusiastic young adults willing to change the world by solving global problems. This conference gave me a lot – from networking to widening my outlook and improving my knowledge of global economic problems."



Sezim Zhenishbekova: "On May 6-11, I participated in the Everest International Model United Nations conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal. Gathering 200 young men and women from 15 countries, EIMUN aimed at engaging, educating and empowering the youth around the world. I was lucky to be one of them. Different committees- UNSC, IMF, UNHRC, UN WOMEN, UNDP- were involved in discussions about peace and security, corruption, promotion of gender equality, youth unemployment, women in politics, and eradication of poverty in developing countries for achieving sustainable development goals. I was representing Afghanistan in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) committee. Thanks to EIMUN 2018, I had an awesome chance to widen my global network. In addition, I have improved my public speaking, writing, negotiating and debating skills which strengthened my confidence."

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS



SUR-PLACE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

BY SULTAN MOLUTOV

I became one of the 30 winners of the Sur-Place Scholarship Award. The Sur-Place is a monthly gratuitous cash payment, which is awarded by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) for a period of 5 months. KAF is a German political foundation which promotes democracy, the rule of law and social market economy. KAF has 78 offices and runs programs in over 120 countries. The foundation supports gifted young people who aspire not only to reveal their abilities in their studies, but are also willing to devote their knowledge, strength and initiative to promote democratization and civil society development.

On April 27-29, I attended a seminar for the KAF scholars entitled "Youth & Labor Market Chances for Everybody". At the beginning of the event, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Rolf Mafael, and the Head of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation,

Office Kazakhstan Mr. Thomas Helm gave welcoming speeches and presented the scholarship certificates to the award winners. Such public figures and great speakers as Ex-Vice Minister of Investments and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan Rakhim Oshakbayev, Chairman of the Association of Environmental Organizations of Kazakhstan Aigul Solovyova and Deputy of the Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan of the 4th (2007) and 5th (2012) convocations Murat Abenov took part in the panel discussions during the event.

I am very happy to be part of this global network as I am particularly interested in politics. I already attended three conferences on different topics. These meetings allow me to expand my knowledge and network.

U.S.-CAEF FELLOW AMONG TOP STUDENTS OF KAZAKHSTAN



Dilnaz Imeramzayeva has been included in the book of best students of the Republic of Kazakhstan called "Zhas Kyran" (Young Eagle). This is the first edition of the book which was sponsored by the public organization Bridges of Accord. "On April 26, I was honored to be included in 'Zhas Kyran'. During the award ceremony, I met many successful and talented young people who came from different regions of my country. Representatives of various business communities and public authorities were also invited to the ceremony. Among them there was the author of the coat of arms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Zhandarbek Malibekuly, who presented the awards to us. This project made me believe that everything is possible if you try your best," shared Dilnaz.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

U.S.-CAEF 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.



VOLUNTEERS IN ASIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT IN THAILAND

BY DILRABO SAYDALIEVA

On June 22-24, I was honored to attend the VIA (Volunteers in Asia) Alumni Leadership Summit in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The event was one of its kind as it gathered the VIA alumni among 20 plus programs it has been hosting since 1963. As an alumna of Exploring Social Innovation (ESI), I was curious to learn more about other VIA's programs. The Summit included a meet and greet with the alumni and storytelling evenings. The instructors held various leadership activities filled with insights I found useful for development of my leadership and management skills at KIMEP University. I am highly passionate about innovation and change-making; therefore, the summit was a great reminder of what I really like and motivated me to take action.

I was also selected as program coordinator for VIA ESI August 2018 in Silicon Valley, San Francisco. Since April I have been involved in recruitment, marketing, and informing young passionate innovators from Central Asia and beyond, of ESI program. It was my first time performing some of these duties, and I believe my knowledge of Principles of Management and Marketing helped me to be successful. I will be joining the ESI August program soon. It is exciting to coordinate the program for young professionals in the field of social innovation.



OSCE CENTRAL ASIAN YOUTH NETWORK (CAYN)

BY ALISHER MURTAZAEV

On June 25-29, I participated in the annual Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN) seminar organized by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Program Office in Astana, Kazakhstan. Young individuals from different Central Asian countries, including Mongolia and Afghanistan, took part in the seminar.

Participants of the program were divided into groups, consisting of citizens of each Central Asian country thus creating a diverse community. Although the program was short, we managed to come up with a solution to the main issues that Central Asian countries are facing nowadays, such as disaster resilience, water pollution and education.

Our team worked on disaster resilience, namely, earthquakes. We interviewed 12 people to identify current problems in the area. Four days and nights of hard teamwork resulted in a presentation of our solutions in front of the OSCE team and local entrepreneurs.

The CAYN seminar and the challenges that we managed to overcome, extended my knowledge and understanding about the issues that our Central Asian region face and international organizations like OSCE work on. I would like to encourage everyone to take part in the CAYN conference because it is a great opportunity for networking and meeting interesting people from all over the Central Asia.

ALUMNI STORIES



SILICON VALLEY COMES TO BISHKEK

BY ULUKBEK ABDUBALIEV | AUCA CLASS OF 2015

In November 2017, I visited California to invite 14 Silicon Valley professionals from such global companies as Facebook, Google, Apple, LinkedIn, Uber, and SAP to mentor social entrepreneurs in Kyrgyzstan. I was happy that my request was met with a lot of enthusiasm. The visiting team of Silicon Valley professionals were willing to support the entrepreneurship environment in Central Asia.

On June 18-22, together with these 14 facilitators I organized a 5-day InkubasiaLab Business Model Validation accelerator in Bishkek for early-stage Kyrgyz entrepreneurs that are tackling social and

environmental problems such as youth education and employment, poverty, and healthcare. The program was designed to help these entrepreneurs identify and validate the foundational assumptions of their businesses. 12 mentors from local companies such as Ololo Haus, Kulikovski Confectionery, BizExpert, and Lalafo were assigned to each startup to make sure they receive support after the training as well. The training week also included bigger discussions at the American University of Central Asia with 3 panels of speakers on the following topics- "Let's Teach Girls How to Code!", "Startup: Personal Experience in Silicon Valley", and "Design Thinking".



NAZERKE AIBAR ORGANIZES FIRST SCO YOUTH CONFERENCE IN CHINA

BY ANISA ATALOVA | PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.-CAEF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Nazerke Aibar (Zarlykhanova), KIMEP Class of 2016, who is currently pursuing her master's degree in Chinese Studies in Economics and Business at Peking University, was one of the three members of the organizing committee for the first Model SCO [The Shanghai Cooperation Organization] Youth Conference. 17 master's degree, 3 undergraduate and 2 PhD students from 12 countries attended "SCO Model-2018" held at the SCO Headquarters in Beijing on June 3, just a week before the leaders of the 18-nation Eurasian group met for their annual summit in China's eastern coastal city of Qingdao. The activists of the SCO Youth League tried to model a SCO summit.

The participants exchanged views on a broad range of international and regional economic development issues as well as on prospects and measures for intensifying youth policy cooperation in the SCO space to

further strengthen mutual understanding and friendship between SCO member states. Their ideas were incorporated into a joint communiqué which was presented to SCO Secretary-General Rashid Alimov.

The conference was highlighted in more than 20 mass media sources of 8 countries including CCTV, CGTN, Shanghai Cooperation Organization official website, TASS, etc. After the conference, Nazerke was interviewed by China's largest international television channel CGTN as a representative of Kazakhstan to talk about the youth perspective on Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The screening was broadcast as part of "The Point with Liu Xin", a 30-minute current affairs program on CGTN. In the interview, Nazerke provided her feedback about the conference and expressed her expectations about the upcoming annual SCO Summit in Qingdao, China on June 9-10, 2018.



INTERNSHIP WITH WIMMER SOLUTIONS

BY FIRUZA HASANOVA | KIMEP CLASS OF 2016

Currently, I am having my traineeship in Seattle, WA as an Associate Tech Recruiter at a company called Wimmer Solutions Inc. My primary responsibilities include sourcing tech candidates for major companies such as Microsoft, Amazon, Nordstrom, Disney, Starbucks and many more. The position offers great opportunities both for networking and improving interviewing and communication skills. In addition, it allows me to be aware of the most recent technological advances in the greater Seattle area. I am happy to be part of the Wimmer Solutions team and be able to offer recruiting services for Fortune 500 corporations.

My near future plans include providing placements within Microsoft teams. After I finish my traineeship, I would like to explore the marketing area, since it's always been my passion. Specifically, I am interested in digital marketing for tourism and outdoor activities of unexplored places. Thus, I will be able to both enhance my professional skills and my hobby, which is hiking. My long-term plans include earning a master's degree and becoming a marketing expert. I am also planning on launching my own blog dedicated to outdoor activities and making it an additional source of revenue. Stay tuned!

SUMMER EXPERIENCE IN FLORIDA



BY IZAT OSMONOV | AUCA CLASS OF 2013

After the completion of my first year of a 2-year Economic Policy in Global Markets MA program at the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest, I received my US visa and came to Florida to intern as assistant to the editor of the Good Governance Worldwide (GGW) web platform. In the past several years, GGW has published or republished scores of articles and commentaries about innovative efforts to improve governance around the world. For the most part, they focus on challenges and strategies for remediating ill-effects and, typically, some measures of early gains. Rarely, however, do these articles report on measurable program outcomes that are sustainable.

In the coming months, my main responsibility will be to revisit many of the published articles and lay out an agenda for "looking back" to learn what outcomes were actually achieved once the dust settled and to what extent these gains have become the new normal, and, quite possibly, have led to other unforeseen governance improvements.

I plan to continue in the role of assistant to the editor when I return to Budapest this fall, and I hope to join (as a student member) the ASPA's (American Society for Public Administration) annual conference in Washington D.C. in early March 2019. Next year's conference theme "A Call for Action: Advancing Public Service" is a perfect opportunity to revisit many of these good governance practice efforts with an eye towards ensuring quality outcomes and advancing the gains.

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.

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

ALMATY

20A, Kazibek Bi Str.,
4th floor
Almaty, Kazakhstan 050010

Phone: +7 727 291 9226

Fax: +7 727 259 8805

uscaef@global.americancouncils.org

BISHKEK

187, Sydykov str., office #29.

Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic 720001

Phone: +996 312 91 09 89

Fax: +996 312 91 09 87

uscaef@americancouncils.kg

DUSHANBE

86 Tolstoy Street
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734003

Phone: +992 37 221 1795

Fax: +992 37 221 1795

uscaef@americancouncils-tj.org

us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org

www.americancouncils.org

www.us-caef.com