Help prevent an unprecedented $30.5 million cut to the Fulbright Program!

By Stephen Reilly

Yes, you read that correctly. The President’s budget request includes a massive cut of $30.5 million or roughly 13.5% to the Fulbright Program. This would represent an unprecedented reduction in the number of grants and the U.S. commitment to the Fulbright program. As members of the alumni community we must act NOW to prevent these cuts from passing the final budget. Members of the appropriations committees in Congress are now discussing this funding so we must voice our strong opposition to these prospective cuts.

The President’s request for the Department of State’s Fiscal Year 2015 budget is available HERE (refer to pages B31-B32 for educational and cultural exchange programs). The Congressional Budget Justification is available HERE.

We are building a plan of action and advocacy platform for the future. By signing our petition and contacting your congressmen you will be part of our ongoing efforts to not only preserve and advocate for Fulbright funding but also to help bring greater awareness of the impact the Program has in the world. Our grass roots efforts will continue to engage thousands of members at the local level through our chapters. Our grass roots effort will engage alumni who have reached the highest levels of public service, business, academia, and more. These combined efforts over the next six months will increase legislators knowledge of our programs impact and hopefully stem the impending cuts.

Sign the SaveFulbright.org petition now!

What You Can Do About It Now

1. Sign the Petition. Sign the SaveFulbright.org petition to let President Obama, key Cabinet leaders and Congress know how valuable Fulbright is to the world and why cutting funds now, when international tensions are at a peak, would not be in our country’s best interest. Over 20,000 signatures have been collected but we need all Fulbright alumni and friends of Fulbright to support this effort immediately to have the most impact!

2. Write To Your Elected Officials Directly.

Get on your computer and draft an email, letter, tweet, or other means of communication, to key policy makers in Washington; outlining both the diplomatic and economic benefits of your Fulbright experience. Austerity of diplomacy should not be a Congressional policy. While every letter counts, reaching out to members on the Appropriations Subcommittees as well as your elected representatives is particularly important. Click here to learn more about how to contact those lawmakers directly.

3. Engage Your Social Media. Use #SaveFulbright on our Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn pages to demonstrate your support.

4. Become More Involved With The Fulbright Association. The larger and more vocal our organization, the more people know about our positive, lifelong impact across each sector, each continent, and each demographic. We are working to address the near term budget crisis while building a longer term effort to broaden our advocacy efforts on a more proactive basis. We need your continued support to build a stronger foundation to help preserve the program. Encourage Universities and fellow alumni to join or re-join in order to save funding to the program or continue the lifelong commitment to the ideals of Fulbright.

“It is critical the voices of the American and international alumni and supporters of the Fulbright program come out in force to support this effort!”

John Vogel, President, Board of Directors, Fulbright Association.

Have something newsworthy? Email shaz.akram@fulbright.org

Ukraine

By Isaac Webbs

2013-2014 Fulbrighter in Kyiv

U.S. Embassy staff in Kyiv like to describe the progression of events in Ukraine over the past three months as a “drip-drip” tension escalates slowly, leaving everyone glued to twitter feeds and news channels waiting for day that the levies finally burst. Drips frequently take the form of repressions of journalists and free speech advocates. As a journalist, each drip highlights the importance of my job as a Fulbrighter: I work to ensure that accurate information is freely disseminated to all corners of Ukraine.

I planned on using my Fulbright grant to speak with Ukrainians about the importance of the freedom of speech. However, it has been the will of Ukrainian journalists over the past three months that has reinvigorated my own commitment to fight for free speech. I have witnessed gross violations of freedom of speech in Kyiv and elsewhere in Ukraine. Former President Yanukovich’s regime routinely attacked journalists in Kyiv. Now, in Crimea, journalists face the same dangers, this time at the hands of Russian “self-defense” soldiers. But Ukrainian journalists have refused to give in to these campaigns of intimidation, boldly pursuing the truth despite receiving nearly constant threats.

On February 18 the flood we’d been expecting for months finally breached the levies. Yanukovich’s violent crackdown claimed the lives of dozens of protesters and activists standing in Kyiv’s Independence Square. This hit close to home: two of my close friends were beaten unconsciousness by riot police. An unnamed hero carried them away from the front lines and through the sights of snipers perched on buildings nearby.

But rather than discouraging Fulbrighters living in Ukraine, the tragedies of the Euromaidan movement has reminded us of our mission, which is to share values and build intercultural understanding.

In Crimea, the drip-drip analogy is again pertinent. With each drip, each bout of violence against journalists and protesters, we’re reminded that a second flood may decimate Ukraine. I, however, take solace knowing that no flood can wash away Ukrainians’ desire for a democratic future free from corruption and tyranny.
Two days before our departure, by a Danish lawyer and his wife. A few days in Copenhagen hosted Krakow, Poland, concluding with more. Our plans included visiting a holiday trip in April 2010, turned short. Lviv deserves dedicated, prolonged attention, but we had planned only a few days there and then departed to the better-known, historic city of Krakow, Poland. Old Krakow is beautiful, but the thought of Ukraine remained with us. Already we thought of a possible return, due to the fine reception in Kyiv and initial acquaintance with Lviv’s history, beauty, cuisine, Italian renaissance architecture, European flair, fashion and culture.

My first stop in Krakow was the law school at historic Jagiellonian University, a short walk in the city’s old section where we stayed. The university’s origin is traced to 1364. The main law facility is a grand nine–teenth century neo-Gothic building. I was received by the immediate past dean and also spoke with a professor who recently added an emphasis on international commercial arbitration. A second positive response was received with regard to collaboration with the College of Law at Florida International University; the third was in Copenhagen. Soon after our return home, a request arrived from Lviv for my curriculum vitae. Later I received an invitation to teach and was given the discretion to select dates and conduct a course on international commercial arbitration in the Department of European Law, Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (named after another prominent Ukrainian cultural icon). The university is now celebrating its 350th anniversary. Two weeks of teaching and two days of free time were planned. In December 2010, I sent greetings to our former host in Kyiv indicating I would be spending time in the spring of 2011 at the University of Lviv and asked if we could possibly meet there. Within a day I received a rather direct request to change my schedule in order to accommodate another visit to the Institute in Kyiv. I happily honored his request, thinking it would be to give one lecture.

To be continued in April issue.
The Fulbright Board re-elected Tom Healy for a third term as chairman and elected Betty Castor vice chair, succeeding Susan Ness.

The Fulbright Board was established by the U.S. Congress in 1961 to select Fulbright award recipients, set policies, and publish an annual report. The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the State Department, is considered America’s “flagship international exchange program.”

Fulbright grants have funded 325,000 participants in more than 180 countries to study, teach, conduct research, and find “solutions to shared international challenges.”

Tom Healy is a writer and poet. His books include “Animal Spirits,” “What the Right Hand Knows,” which was a finalist for the 2009 L.A. Times Book Prize, and two forthcoming books of essays: “Not Untrue and Not Unkind” and “The Rest of the World: Smart Power and Public Diplomacy.”

Healy teaches at New York University and writes regularly about the Fulbright Program and international affairs for The Huffington Post. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Healy served on President Clinton’s Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and has worked on AIDS prevention and anti-poverty projects around the world. He served as president of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council in the years after 9/11 and was awarded the New York City Arts Award by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2005 for leading rebuilding efforts for the downtown arts community.

Healy studied philosophy at Harvard and received his M.F.A. in creative writing from Columbia University.

Betty Castor is the former President of the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, where she served as President from 1994 until 1999. Previously, she was the Florida Commissioner of Education for seven years and the first woman ever elected to the Florida Cabinet.

Castor also served as President and CEO of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and most recently as the Executive Director of the Patel Center for Global Solutions at USF. She is a former state legislator having served three terms in the Florida Senate.

Castor is a member of the Tampa Bay Committee on Foreign Relations and the LeRoy Collins Institute. In 2010 she received the Distinguished Woman in International Commerce Award from the World Trade Center of Tampa Bay. She began her educational career as a secondary school teacher in Uganda and continues her support of the Teachers for East Africa Alumni Foundation. Castor received her Bachelor’s degree from Rowan University and her Master’s degree from the University.

For further information, please contact ECA-Press@state.gov or Catherine Stearns at Stearns-CL@state.gov

Roth Endowment

On May 23, at Senator Fulbright’s alma mater Pembroke College, Oxford, Professor Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University, Nobel Prize in Economics (2001) and one of the world’s most distinguished developmental economists, will deliver the fourth annual Fulbright Legacy Lecture. Prof. Emma Rothschild of Cambridge will already have given the second lecture in the 2014 series at the University of Edinburgh on May 21, speaking of Internationalism in History. Dr. Stiglitz’ second lecture will take place at Kings College London in the fall.

The Legacy Lectures grew out of a discussion between Oxford dons, the US-Fulbright Commission, and the Washington-based Lois Roth Endowment. This steering committee was convoked by UK Pembroke alumnus Brian Wilson, admirer of the Senator. Wilson was intent on supporting Pembroke’s expansion and ultimately the addition of a Fulbright Professorship, joining the time-honored Harmsworth (1922) and Eastman (1929) Chairs which for nearly a century have brought US scholars into Oxford teaching and research.

The initial meeting focused on Pembroke’s plan as a cause which American Rhodes, Marshall and Fulbright Scholars might support. At that meeting, it became obvious that large-scale assistance could not be found quickly. The first-stage proposal: to draw attention to Pembroke’s role in the life of its most prominent US graduate, who spent four years there as a Rhodes Scholar in the 1920s. Cooperation pledged by the US-UK Fulbright Commission, the US embassy in London, and the Roth Endowment in Washington encouraged Wilson to support the idea of an annual series of lectures in three UK universities, centered at Pembroke. Later steps would follow: a Fulbright Lectureship growing into a Professorship, amidst Fulbright studies and research.

The inaugural lecture was delivered at Oxford in May 2011 by then-professor Anne-Marie Slaughter of Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School, freshly returned to academic life after two years as Director of Policy and Plans for the State Department (Dr. Slaughter now heads the New America Foundation).

In May 2012, the program expanded to three sites and a model took form as the University of Edinburgh and Kings College in London joined Pembroke; follow-up graduate seminars were added. The second speaker in 2012 was Ambassador Thomas A. Pickering, a much-honored US diplomat who in retirement is endeavoring to remind the world that wars are not justified until diplomacy fails, hence that diplomacy must be strengthened and fully exploited before military force is envisaged. He examined diplomatic problems “From the Pillars of Hercules to the Hindu Kush.”

The 2013 lectures brought US Nobelist in Cancer Research ’89 Harold Varmus, underlining a Fulbright conviction—that diplomacy is not done by diplomats alone. Dr. Varmus, former Director of the National Institutes of Health and Sloan-Kettering in New York, now heads the NIH institute of Cancer Research. In three lectures and seminars, he analyzed the unchangeable global nature of modern science and highlighted the political decisions, support-systems and people underlying the success of three projects in Africa, including the giant PEPFAR project for AIDS research and care.

In the US that same year the Roth Endowment, drawing closer to the FA and aware that the Pembroke project had attracted FA attention but could not yet be funded, doubled its contribution “on behalf of” FA, at the suggestion of Vice-Chair Sky Arndt-Briggs (Fulbright Germany).
my Brother’s Keeper: A New White House Initiative to Empower Boys and Young

A model for the Fulbright Program

Cross-posted from the White House Blog. Valerie B. Jarrett is a Senior Advisor to President Barack Obama. Broderick Johnson is Assistant to the President and Cabinet Secretary.

From the East Room of the White House, President Obama launched a new effort aimed at empowering boys and young men of color, a segment of our society which too often faces disproportionate challenges and obstacles to success. These obstacles are found in our schools, our communities, our criminal justice system, our families, and even in the minds of our young people themselves.

The President is committed to build a broad coalition of backers to help break down barriers, clear pathways to opportunity, and reverse troubling trends which show too many of our boys and young men of color slipping through the cracks in our society.

To launch the “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative, the President was joined by local and national leaders in philanthropy, business, government, faith communities, and media. The challenges facing boys and young men of color are broad and multidimensional, and so must be the team to bring to the table to begin fostering solutions.

On hand were General Colin Powell, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Adam Silver, Congresswoman Marcia Fudge, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Congressman Ruben Hinojosa, Magic Johnson, and many more leaders from key national and regional philanthropic foundations and major businesses, all of whom understand what is at stake with this effort.

When we let this many boys and young men fall behind – we are crippling our ability to reach our full potential as a nation.

For decades, opportunity has disproportionately lagged behind for boys and young men of color – particularly in our African American and Latino communities. As recently as 2013, only 14 percent of black boys and 18 percent of Hispanic boys scored proficient or above on the 4th grade reading component of the National Assessment of Educational Progress compared to 42 percent of white boys and 21 percent of black and Hispanic girls. Youth who cannot read “proficiently” by third grade are four times less likely to graduate high school by 19.

By the time students have reached 9th grade, 42 percent of black male students have been suspended or expelled during their school years, compared to 14 percent of white male students.

While black youth account for 16 percent of the youth population, they represent 28 percent of juvenile arrests, and 37 percent of the detained population. While just over 6 percent of the overall population, black males of all ages accounted for 43 percent of murder victims in 2011.

The fraction of young men not working or enrolled in school is nearly twice as high for blacks than whites. Those neither working nor in school are not building the skills and experience needed to ensure their ability to succeed later in life.

Across the country, communities are developing and implementing promising and proven approaches to help put our young people on paths to opportunity and success. Using intensive tutoring, the Becoming A Man program and the University of Chicago are demonstrating that dramatic improvements in math performance can be cost effectively made with middle school boys in Chicago.

The Miami public school system is serving thousands of students in dozens of schools with targeted interventions to lower dropout rates. Restorative Justice programs used in Los Angeles contributed to a 38 percent reduction in suspensions, cutting black student suspensions in half.

In New York, the Young Men’s Initiative is validating the significant impacts the ASAP program is having on the college persistence rates of African American and Latino young men. These efforts are cause not only for hope, but for a renewed sense of urgency. As we learn more about what works, our resolve to act now must strengthen. This initiative is about building on successes and promising ideas in the field by testing, implementing, and scaling-up strategies which have been shown to have the greatest impact at key moments in these boys’ lives.

Valerie B. Jarrett is a Senior Advisor to President Barack Obama. Broderick Johnson is Assistant to the President and Cabinet Secretary.

Fulbright Association Assists Fulbright Legacy Lectures in UK

89 and 2010, University of Massachusetts), noting the common cause both organizations serve.

In February 2014 FA decided to match the Endowment’s $1500 grant. Welcoming this decision, Roth Endowment Chair Richard T. Arndt, past-president of FA (Fulbright France ’49, chair of Commissions in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Iran, Italy, France) wrote to FA Chairman John Vogel: “We are grateful for your help to this important and promising project. For us, your action is one more link between our two organizations, both dedicated to Senator Fulbright’s ingenious plan to bring the Rhodes experience within the reach of every American graduate student of talent, not only at Oxford but everywhere, as well as to young people from every country in our world.”
Alumnus of the Month

Photojournalist Michael Forster Rothbart swims after photographing in the Susquehanna River near his home in Oneonta, NY. Photo by: Alana Smith

Michael Forster Rothbart

My Fulbright year: how I moved to Chernobyl and discovered the unexpected

One month into my Fulbright year, I moved near Chernobyl. I am a photojournalist; in my Fulbright project I documented people who still live near the nuclear disaster site.

I started out in Kyiv, but the Ukrainian capital is a modern cosmopolitan city—it has more in common with Boston or Philly than it does with rural Ukraine. The cultural gap was too great for me to drop in and hope to understand daily patterns of life in these villages.

Fulbright is primarily an exchange program—a key goal is encouraging mutual understanding. So I moved to Sukachi, a village of 1,200, ten miles from the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone.

What’s it like to live near Chernobyl? It depends who you ask. “Is it even safe?” they asked in Kyiv. “Why would you want to live up there, in the middle of nowhere?” But when people in Sukachi asked where I lived, I said I rented a room from Nina. “Oh, how convenient,” they’d say. “That’s right in the middle of the village!”

I made friends. I drank vodka with my landlord Nina. I drank tea with Viktor. I photographed my neighbors. Sasha, a recovering alcoholic, taught me how to cut hay. Slava, a doctor at the Chernobyl plant, taught me to make borsch. I went to church. I went to the bar.

My commitment to this project began when I discovered how most photojournalists distort Chernobyl. They visit briefly, expecting danger and despair, and come away with photos of deformed children and abandoned buildings.

This sensationalist approach obscures the more complex stories about how displaced communities adapt and survive.

In contrast, I sought to create full portraits of these communities. I saw suffering, but also joy and beauty. Endurance and hope. Living directly in the villages where I photographed gave me access to events and people with an insider’s perspective impossible from afar, and I remain deeply grateful to the Fulbright program for making it possible.

The fellowship gave me freedom; away from newspaper deadlines, I found myself photographing more artistically, exploring moods and memories as much as documenting facts.


For many, losing their original homes was as traumatic as the accident itself. I heard compelling stories about alcoholism, mental illness, unemployment, medical care, cancer, birth defects and corruption. Some overcome these difficulties; others surrender to them.

I’ll be honest: it wasn’t easy. I don’t miss trips to the outhouse on winter nights, or trips to the nearest city to check my email. Worse than such discomforts was a sense that I had important work to do but felt unsure where to focus my attention. Everyone I met had significant stories to share.

Eventually I realized that my work is not authoritative: witnessing is a deeply personal act. My goal became, simply, to listen carefully and observe deeply, and to record these experiences. Like many Fulbrighters, I think, my witnessing is not about change but reflection: I’m holding up a mirror.

Now when I have Chernobyl exhibits, I seek to engage communities in frank discussions about their own local issues. At my forum near the beleaguered Vermont Yankee plant, I watched as nuclear plant workers and anti-nuke activists truly heard each other for the first time. It was inspiring: this is a way I can give back.

Many Fulbright alumni say their experiences changed them. It’s true for me. I grew as a photographer, becoming surer of how I want to work. I grew professionally—opportunities like university and museum exhibits, and speaking at the UN and on CNN—all happened because of my Fulbright. Most importantly, I grew personally.

I became more compassionate. The families who I documented welcomed me into their homes and trusted me with their stories. Over time, they became not just my subjects but also my friends.
Lynne Ogren is the President of the Eastern NY Chapter of the Fulbright Alumni Association. She participated in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange to Cartagena, Colombia (1988-89); the Fulbright Hayes Summer Institute to Mexico in the summer of 1998; and the Fulbright Teacher Exchange to Mexico from 1999-2000. Lynne is currently a National Board Certified Spanish teacher in South Colonie Schools, Albany, NY, as well as a professional development instructor with the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center for Effective Teaching. Lynne also loves to teach yoga and mindfulness to both young people and adults. Working with the visiting Fulbrighters is a highlight to being part of this organization. “I love working with the visitors and learning about their countries and languages. We have lots of fun together.”

Rebecca Clothey is a faculty member at Drexel University’s School of Education in Philadelphia, where has she worked since 2006. She has a passion for international education that began when she attended boarding school in India as a youth and since that time she has lived on three different continents. Dr. Clothey served as the Director of Drexel’s Global and International Education program from spring 2008 to fall 2011, and Director of Drexel’s Higher Education program from spring 2007 to spring 2010. Previously Dr. Clothey lived in China for 6 years, where she worked at various higher education institutions including Capital Normal University in Beijing, Beijing Institute of Education, Southwest Jiaotong University in Chengdu, and Xinjiang Normal University in Urumchi. She had a Fulbright Dissertation Fellowship in Beijing, China, during the 2001-2 academic year. She was also selected for a Fulbright Fellowship to Uzbekistan in 2004. She was elected as the president of the Board of the Fulbright Association of the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley chapter in 2012. In the past Dr. Clothey also conducted elections training for the U.S. State Department in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where she lived for 6 months. Dr. Clothey publishes and presents internationally on the topics of higher education policy and equity and access in higher education. She recently published an edited book, “Post-secondary education and technology: A Global Perspective on opportunities and obstacles to development” (with Stacy Austin-Li and John Weidman; Palgrave MacMillan, 2012). She has a PhD in Administrative and Policy Studies from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education.

Ronald Harvey (Bulgaria, 2009-2010) will soon defend his PhD in Community Psychology at DePaul University. He is currently a Project Director of a large, multi-year NIH-funded study of alternative aftercare housing for formerly incarcerated men and women substance abuse problems. He hopes to do similar research in Bulgaria and Eastern Europe pending grant approvals in 2014. He is the current President of the Fulbright Association, Chicago Chapter. His hobbies include travel, attending classical music concerts, local, national, and international ballet, architecture, art galleries, and reading. Harvey is also an avid fan (and student) of improv comedy having taken classes at the Second City and Chicago’s world-famous iO Theater.

Sandy McQueen is an educator who has worked in a variety of settings. As a PTI (part time instructor) at Georgia State University she supervises student interns and student teachers in early childhood settings in metro Atlanta school districts. Her main objective is to ensure that students are truly ready to function as positive early childhood educators in diverse public education settings after graduation. Sandy worked for much of her career as an educator of gifted students and English language learners in elementary and middle school settings, specializing in the area of social studies. Her work with the Georgia Geographic Alliance, Georgia TOEFL, Six-Star Refugee Partnership, the Georgia Council for International Visitors, and the Olympic Games has provided opportunities to interact with people from various areas of the world. The majority of her time outside the USA has been in Asia (Fulbright-Hays to Thailand and various educational roles in other Asian countries) and in areas of Eastern Europe, also in educational roles. Currently she helps the youth of the refugee families sponsored by Six-Star Refugee Partnership enter and complete college, and helps coordinate an interfaith women’s group addressing issues of concern to women of all faith communities.
» Thomas Moga

Thomas Moga is a partner in the Washington, DC office of Shook, Hardy & Bacon. A registered patent attorney, his experiences include the development of domestic and foreign patent portfolios, the acquisition of registrations for trademarks and copyrights, licensing, litigation, dispute resolution and mediation, and policy development. Mr. Moga is an experienced patent prosecutor in the mechanical, chemical, biochemical and pharmaceutical arts. In addition, Mr. Moga manages patent enforcement and anti-counterfeiting actions in Asia. A frequent speaker on the TRIPS Agreement of the WTO and on global patent portfolio development and enforcement, Mr. Moga organized and participated in several intellectual property delegations to Asia, both governmental and non-governmental. He was a visiting foreign expert in law at Xiamen University, China, and worked as a foreign legal expert for a patent and trademark office in Taipei. Mr. Moga spent the first half of 1997 as a Fulbright Scholar in China where he taught patent law at Jilin University and served as a foreign advisor to China’s State Intellectual Property Office. Mr. Moga is the author of “China’s Utility Model Patent System: Innovation Driver or Deterrent” (U.S. Chamber of Commerce) and “Patent Practice and Policy in the Pacific Rim” (West Publishing), a multi-volume treatise on patent law and practice in Asia.

» Stanley Katz

Stanley Katz is President Emeritus of the American Council of Learned Societies, the leading organization in humanistic scholarship and education in the United States. Mr. Katz graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1955 with a major in English History and Literature. He received his M.A. from Harvard in American History in 1959 and his Ph.D. in the same field from Harvard in 1961. He attended Harvard Law School in 1969-70. His recent research focuses upon the relationship of civil society and constitutionalism to democracy, and upon the relationship of the United States to the international human rights regime. Formerly Class of 1921 Bicentennial Professor of the History of American Law and Liberty at Princeton University, Mr. Katz is a leading expert on American legal and constitutional history, and on philanthropy and non-profit institutions. The author and editor of numerous books and articles, Mr. Katz has served as President of the Organization of American Historians and the American Society for Legal History and as Vice President of the Research Division of the American Historical Association. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Newberry Library, the Social Science Research Council, the Copyright Clearance Center and numerous other institutions. He also currently serves as Chair of the American Council of Learned Societies/Social Science Research Council Working Group on Cuba. Katz is a member of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, the American Antiquarian Society, the American Philosophical Society; a Fellow of the American Society for Legal History, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Society of American Historians; and a Corresponding Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society. He has honorary degrees from several universities.

» Laura Skandera Trombley

President Pitzer College, Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Laura is an internationally renowned Mark Twain scholar, authoring several books and dozens of scholarly articles on Twain. She appeared in Ken Burns’s Mark Twain documentary and, as a graduate student, discovered the largest known cache of Mark Twain letters. In addition to Mark Twain’s Other Woman, Laura’s other works on Twain include Mark Twain in the Company of Women and Constructing Mark Twain: New Directions in Scholarship. Laura was raised in Southern California, and at age sixteen she attended Pepperdine University, where she earned her BA and MA. She then attended the University of Southern California, where she earned a PhD in English literature. She earned tenure in three years as an associate professor of English at SUNY Potsdam, and held several administrative posts. In four more years, she was named full professor, and she later became dean of the faculty and vice president of academic affairs at Coe College. In addition to being an author, Laura is also the president of Pitzer College. Since she took office in 2002, the College has moved up 35 places in U.S. News and World Report rankings and was named the 20th most selective higher education institution in 2012. A proponent of environmental sustainability, she has overseen the construction of eight LEED Platinum- or Gold-certified buildings and the creation of the Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability. The College has been the leader in student Fulbright Fellowships for four consecutive years and per 1,000 students for 10 years. In 2013, President Barack Obama appointed Laura to the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. In 2013, she summited Mt. Whitney after hiking 190 miles on the John Muir Trail with a group of Pitzer students, faculty. Laura has also been a speaker at the TEDxFulbright Conference organized by the Fulbright Association in Washington DC.

ALUMNA of the Month

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On February 14th, DMCS launched the Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) website. The website aims to bring together the USA Exchange program alumni, strengthen the network and disseminate the information among its members. The Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) supports and promotes the Fulbright Program of international educational and cultural exchange. AFAA aims to strengthen academic, professional, and human contacts among Albanian and US institutions and individuals; to contribute to individual development, solidarity among members, and public prestige and understanding of the Fulbright, Humphrey, and Ron Brown Programs; to create a forum for sharing ideas and experiences in diverse fields, thus playing a significant role in programs and projects which would contribute to national democratic development. Currently, Mr. Dritan Mezini, Administrator of DMCS, is carrying out his duties as President of AFAA, and Board Member of USA Exchange Program Umbrella Association.

The Istanbul Fulbright Scholars Association, founded by Fulbright scholar Prof. Dr. Haydar Ozpinar in 2009, launched its website on November 2013 (www.istanbulfulbrightbursiyerleri.org). The organization sponsors the participation of its members for public events, panels and seminars. At the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Week in November, Selcuk Akgul M.A. & M. Sci., secretary of the association, gave various seminars on Innovation and Entrepreneurship to professionals, students and the public, all of which were sponsored by the Istanbul Fulbright Scholars Association. Before this event, Fulbright members also met in September to join the seminar given by one of the iconic figures of Turkish academia and another Fulbright scholar, Dr. Dogan Kuban. The association is also open to any kind of collaboration and partnership with other Fulbright scholars around the globe. Mr. Akgul is calling on all Fulbright scholars from anywhere in the world to join online seminars during which new business ideas, projects, innovation and partnerships can be created at the attendance of university students, as well.

If you would like to collaborate with Istanbul Fulbright Scholars Association, please contact Mr. Selcuk Akgul at selcuk@istanbulfulbrightbursiyerleri.org

Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) website
Date: February 14, 2013 Category: Alumni Association • Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) • News
On February 14th, DMCS launched the Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) website. The website aims to bring together the USA Exchange program alumni, strengthen the network and disseminate the information among its members. The Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) supports and promotes the Fulbright Program of international educational and cultural exchange. AFAA aims to strengthen academic, professional, and human contacts...
Toshiko d'Elia grew up amid the chaos and ravages of post-war Japan and went on to become a pioneer in women's running, setting numerous world and American records at every age division and distance. She came to the United States in 1951 on a Fulbright Scholarship and took up running at 42. She died Wednesday, February 19 at her daughter's home in Allendale, NJ, due to a brain tumor discovered in December. Prior to her diagnosis, d'Elia swam one mile, collapsed, and claimed she would never do that again.

In 1980, d'Elia became the first woman over the age of 50 to run a sub three-hour marathon at the World Veteran's Marathon Champions in Glasgow, Scotland, finishing in 2:57:25. To commemorate her achievement, she was given the Runner's World Magazine's Paavo Nurmi Award. She was also the first woman over 65 to run a sub seven-minute mile indoors. In 1996 she was inaugurated into the first class of the Masters division of the USATF National Track and Field Hall of Fame.

Toshiko d'Elia was born in Kyoto, Japan on January 2, 1930. She was raised in a traditional manner, upholding classic Japanese culture. When she received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in the United States she appealed to her father to fund the trip. He responded that he would rather spend the money on a new horse than waste it on an education for a female. Despite his resistance, she attended Syracuse University and received a degree in special education for the hearing impaired. She also got married and had a child.

Two years later her husband left her. She returned to Japan only to be told by her father that she had disgraced the family and must put her daughter up for adoption. Her mother gave her money to return to the states and start a new life.

She lived in the Bronx and taught at the New York School for the Deaf. In 1961 she married Manfred d'Elia of Ridgewood NJ, and she and Erica moved into his home. d'Elia ran her first marathon in January 1976. She only trained to run 13.1 miles (half the marathon) to see if she could do the distance. When she reached the halfway point she kept running and finished in 3:25. Three months later she ran the Boston Marathon in 3:15. Seven months later she ran the New York City Marathon and was the third women's finisher in 3:08:15.

After being away for 16 years and vowing she would never return, she went back to Japan a woman's hero. A book about her life, “Running On” and a movie based on the book was released in Japan and translated in the United States.

After every race, the first thing d’Elia did was to remove her shoes and thank her feet for taking care of her. Then she would have a beer. She enjoyed introducing running to first-timers, teaching them to love the sport first before getting competitive. She viewed running as a friendship that requires nurturing.

“I view running as a necessary tool to help get me through life, so I do everything I can to nurture it, take care of it, and appreciate it. I want to hold on to my friend for as long as I live.”