Mr. James Howard Meredith, American civil rights movement icon, a writer, and a political adviser will be the plenary speaker during our diversity luncheon on Friday, October 4th. In 1962, he was the first African American student admitted to the segregated University of Mississippi, an event that was a flashpoint in the American civil rights movement. Meredith continued his education, focusing on political science, at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. He returned to the United States in 1965 and attended law school through a scholarship at Columbia University earning a LL.B (law degree) in 1968. Meredith is the author of numerous books, including the most recent, A Mission from God: A Memoir and Challenge for America with William Doyle. In May 2013, Meredith was the recipient of Harvard University’s Medal for Education Impact, the Graduate School of Education’s highest award.
DR. EVERETTE B. PENN
Creating mutual understanding between at-risk teens and the police

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Dr. Everett B. Penn met with a group of students at Kashmere High School, which is located in one of the poorest neighborhoods of Houston, Texas. The students gathered at the very first Teen and Police Service (TAPS) Club meeting. That day, Dr. Penn met 15-year-old José. He was one of the 17 teens interested in creating a better relationship between teens and police. Sadly, less than four months later José was shot dead as he sat in a car with friends.

This is the reality Dr. Penn works with on a daily basis as he leads the Teen And Police Service Academy and TAPS Clubs out of Houston, Texas. TAPS Academy is a 15-week curriculum-based program funded by the Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office. TAPS Academy’s goal of reducing the social distance between at-risk youth and law enforcement is being accomplished through learning, interaction and discussion between at-risk youth and local law enforcement personnel. The success of TAPS Academy led to TAPS Clubs, a high school adaptation of the program.

Dr. Penn holds a Ph.D in Criminology and serves as Department Chair for Social and Cultural Sciences at the University of Houston Clear Lake. Due to his vast publications and knowledge of youth and the justice system he was invited to Egypt in 2005 as a Fulbright Scholar. He taught the American Criminal Justice System course at Cairo University. He now sits on the board of the Fulbright Association where he chairs the Diversity Task Force. “The principles of Fulbright led to the creation of TAPS Academy. The ideas of mutual understanding, respect and dialogue among groups are at the heart of reducing the social distance between teens, police and their communities,” said Dr. Penn.

TAPS programs place officers and teens in a comfortable environment in which both parties learn from each other. “TAPS is a place where I know I can talk to the police, without holding back,” mentioned a student. The program not only focuses on a 15-week curriculum but breeds engagement in the community. One community project TAPS is responsible for is the Garden for Greatness, in which teens and officers grow fruits and vegetables as they learn about nutrition, life cycles and the reality of sustainable food.

Research indicates TAPS programs place officers and teens in a comfortable environment in which both parties learn from each other. “TAPS is a place where I know I can talk to the police, without holding back,” mentioned a student. The program not only focuses on a 15-week curriculum but breeds engagement in the community. One community project TAPS is responsible for is the Garden for Greatness, in which teens and officers grow fruits and vegetables as they learn about nutrition, life cycles and the reality of sustainable food.

Research indicates TAPS is having a positive effect on teens as well as the police mentors. Of the teens members that were surveyed by a third party, respect, trust and connectedness toward the police increased by over 30% in all three categories as a result of the program. The officer’s poll even reflected a 5% increase in police perception of teens. TAPS has helped police officers understand better today’s youth. “TAPS is about helping teens make the right decisions and helping them understand the facts when they make life choices.” Dr. Penn further explained, “We also help police officers learn more about teens and their families, that way both parties are armed with the knowledge and skills to find a peaceful resolution when conflict occurs.”

Research from John’s Hopkins University defines a need for programs like TAPS and labels at-risk schools as “drop out factories.” At these high schools 40% of the freshman class does not make it to their senior year. These are the schools in which mentoring and positive relations between teens, police and their communities are needed most.

Dr. Penn states: “The short life of José shows that we have a tremendous amount of work to do as we build TAPS Clubs and Academies around the country. Perhaps through the vast network of Fulbright Alumni we can see TAPS programs in all of the 2,000 at-risk high schools in the United States and other similar institutions around the world.”

More information about the Teen and Police Service Academy and Clubs is found at www.tapsacademy.org
The Lois Roth Endowment, in partnership with the Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), announced the winners of its 2013 awards for excellence in cultural diplomacy at a ceremony in the Department’s Dean Acheson Auditorium on June 6, 2013. The response to this year’s call for nominations showed the depth and breadth of excellence in cultural diplomacy, with a total of 30 nominations from all corners of the globe. The award ceremony was presided over by ECA Assistant Secretary Ann Stock and ECA Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Adam Ereli and Richard Arndt, Founder-Chair of the Lois Roth Endowment, delivered the award plaques.

Three awards recognize three different groups of professionals who help American cultural diplomacy reach people throughout the world. The Lois Roth Award recognizes a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. State Department. The Ilchman-Richardson Award recognizes an ECA employee who has made significant contributions in the domestic management of cultural diplomacy. The Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Award, established this year, recognizes a national resident employed by the U.S. State Department at an Embassy or Consulate in the field of cultural and/or educational diplomacy, who has made outstanding contributions to the most important objectives of the US and the host country.

This year, the exceptional quality of nominees for the Lois Roth Award led to the selection of two recipients. Julia Fendrick, currently stationed in Rome, was nominated for her work in Islamabad. As the longest serving Public Diplomacy officer in Pakistan in over a decade, Fendrick showed both courage and commitment in carrying out the management of programs, leadership of staff, originality and utility of proposals, energy, decisiveness, and – especially important in always-challenging Pakistan – a positive outlook and can-do attitude. Her citation reads: “For sustained excellence and exceptionally dedicated leadership in Pakistan in academic and professional exchanges and alumni programs that, in the spirit of Lois Roth, lay the groundwork for long-term cooperation and understanding among Pakistanis and with the US.”

This year’s Ilchman-Richardson Award, named after two former ECA Assistant Secretaries, Alice Stone Ilchman and John Richardson, went to Julia Walters, Senior Program Officer in the Office of English Language Programs. Walters was recognized for her skill in recruiting and supporting the English Language Fellows and English Teaching Assistants who serve abroad. She has invigorated and modernized these programs by applying her deep understanding of the academic and personal qualities it takes to do these jobs, her cultural sensitivity, and her integrity and generosity in all her relationships.

The new Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Award went to George Beukes, Cultural Affairs Specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia. The program Beukes has developed as a national employee—to de-stigmatize HIV/AIDS, reduce discrimination against disabled youth, build gender equality and begin to roll back pervasive anti-Americanism—have had a positive, long-term influence on how the U.S. Embassy has approached cultural and educational programming in Namibia. Beukes’s citation reads:

“For his vision, persuasiveness and skill in using every tool of cultural and academic exchange in the fight for the worth and dignity of every individual.”

Congratulations to this year’s award winners and our thanks for the good work they do around the world! For more information about how to support these awards, please email Richard T. Arndt at dickarndt@gmail.com or Anne Barbo at anne@abarbaro.net.

The Awards for Excellence in US Cultural Diplomacy, sponsored by the Lois Roth Endowment, were established in memory of Lois Roth (1931-86). Roth joined the U.S. Foreign Service in January 1967 after a Fulbright year at Sweden’s Uppsala University and service with the American Scandinavian Foundation. In the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), she served with distinction in Tehran, Rome and Paris; her last post in Washington was as director of Arts America. Roth also made significant contributions to Foreign Service professional organizations, first as Secretary of the American Foreign Service Association (1972-74) and then as President of the Women’s Action Organization for USIA (1982-86).
EMMANUEL JOHNSON IS the first undergraduate student from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCA&T) to receive a Fulbright award in the school's history. He is en route to the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom this year to complete a master's degree in robotics.

While Johnson's accomplishment is the first for his university, it is important to note that few minorities choose to study abroad which makes this award momentous. Students of color comprise only 17 percent of the U.S. study abroad population, according to a 2007 study conducted by the Institute of International Education (Redden, 2007). According to that study, “Even as study abroad participation by American students has more than doubled over the last decade, data from the Institute of International Education and the U.S. Department of Education show that participation rates have been stagnant for African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students.”

According to the United States Department of State (2013) North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is ranked in the top participating schools in North Carolina with academic exchange programs. However, North Carolina student applications for Fulbright awards represent only 18 of the total applications which provide opportunities for U.S. students to gain global competitiveness. Other programs reporting grants targeting low income and diverse candidates, such as the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship program, indicate that of 649 applicants from North Carolina students, 256 received awards from 2007 - 2011 (United States Department of State, 2013).

In January, 2011, NCA&T began working with the American Council on Education to promote international learning at historically black institutions, a project partly funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Minnie Battle Mayes, director of NCA&T’s Office of International Programs said, “It can be hard to get students who are from small towns, and without any worldly frame of reference, to look beyond the campus. For instance, many times our students are North Carolinians, and coming to Greensboro is like coming to the big city.”

Johnson first heard about the Fulbright program as a junior at NC A&T State University while searching for graduate school opportunities. As he began looking into the various programs, he came across the University of Birmingham’s one year master’s degree in robotics. He first met with Anna White, of NCA&T’s University Honors Program, who informed him about the Fulbright U.S. Student Programs. She then guided him to the Office of International Programs who then assigned him to Dr. Paula Faulkner, board member of the North Carolina Chapter, a 2010 Fulbright-Hays recipient, and a Fulbright Committee member at the University. While developing his proposal and personal statement, he contacted Dr. Richard Deaden, (the robotics program head) at University of Birmingham, to discuss research goals. Once Emmanuel completes his Master’s degree, he plans to join the Fulbright Alumni Association and share his experiences with others—especially students. He also wants to tutor/mentor young children to pursue degrees and careers in STEM fields. His background in public service and education research will enable him to contribute to his Fulbright project by providing a unique insight about student learning in the U.S.

Johnson plans to return to his alma mater to share the benefits of a Fulbright student award, and this will undoubtedly increase the number of minority students studying abroad. Johnson plans to also serve as a resource by answering questions about the application process, encouraging students to seek help with editing their essays, giving tips for interview preparation, and providing guidance in identifying the host country and a program that best meshes with their educational objectives.

Emmanuel Johnson’s goals underscore the need for Fulbright Alumni Association members to continue organizing events at local campuses, with the assistance of the state chapters such as the North Carolina Fulbright Alumni Association. Members of the North Carolina chapter seek to accomplish this by volunteering their services to the state chapter, as a pay forward effort. It is especially important for alumni from underrepresented groups, such as Johnson, to participate in panel presentations and/or serve on the state alumni chapter board. Additionally, Fulbright recipients who have served in some of the least traveled countries are encouraged to help others become aware of these opportunities, for which there is often less competition.
Virginia Tech University and Blue Ridge Chapter cohost Fulbright dinner reception

BY TOBIAS ECKER

In conjunction with Virginia Tech’s International Street Fair on April 6th, the Virginia Tech University Honors and the Blue Ridge (VA) chapter of the Fulbright Association cohosted their first Fulbright Recruitment Dinner Reception.

The event, with support from the Virginia Tech graduate school, attracted many undergraduate, graduate students and faculty from departments all across Virginia Tech interested in the scholarship opportunity. The participants took the chance to actively engage with current Fulbright scholars from Ecuador, India and the Dominican Republic.

Honors Director Dr. Terry Papillion made opening remarks emphasizing the importance of the program and Virginia Tech’s continuous support of it. Subsequently, U.S. Fulbright Alumni gave insights on their transformative experiences as researchers, English Teaching Assistants and Seniors Specialists and how they aligned with the Fulbright spirit in a lively question and answer panel session.

The two-hour event ended with a presentation by Bonnie Fairbanks on her Fulbright research residence in Botswana.

OUTREACH TO K-12: Visitors enrich foreign language classrooms

IN AN EFFORT to increase awareness for the importance of foreign language study and multi-cultural awareness, teachers in the Foreign Language Department, grades 5-12, are hosting visiting Fulbright teachers in their classes this school year.

Through this exchange, Fulbright visitors are able to build bridges of international understanding by sharing the language and culture of their home countries.

“Foreign Language study is increasingly important as our world improves international communication through technology. Understanding other languages and cultural differences enhances international relationships in all fields of study like politics, business, education and healthcare. These are skills that are best acquired through person to person interactions,” says Fulbright Alumni President of the Eastern New York Chapter, Lynne Ogren. Ogren is also a 5th and 6th grade Spanish teacher at Sand Creek Middle School.

Crystal Hilton, Sand Creek’s 7th grade teacher with 11 years in South Colonie Schools, organized a visit for her interdisciplinary team of students from Vinthiya Balachandran of Sri Lanka. Vinthiya is pursuing her Master’s degree from the College of St. Rose through the Fulbright program. “This program provides a unique experience for our students and teachers to interact firsthand with a foreign visitor. The Fulbrighters share information on what it’s like to attend schools in their country while explaining cultural practices and nuances of another language. The students learned how to say “hello” and “goodbye” from Vinthiya. Our teachers found they also learned a lot about Sri Lanka from her visit.”

Ms. Balachandran was impressed with the courtesy of the 7th grade students and pleased with their interest in her presentation. We hope to be able to continue the Fulbright visits in years to come. Students react with excitement when the visitors bring in authentic materials and pictures from their countries. “I liked learning about the things they showed us and the history that goes with it,” said Allie Dongelewic, 5th grade.

Seth Michaels and Kenny Doan both commented on the fun toys and pictures, “it’s fun to learn about culture.”

TEDxFulbright 2014

WASHINGTON, D.C.

APPLY NOW to join the Organizing Team of TEDxFulbright 2014! Applications are due by July 5th. The Information Brochure about the program and application process details the structure of the Organizing Team and potential positions with full descriptions of each role.

Alumni with expertise in production, web design, graphic design, and video technology are particularly encouraged to apply. All applicants will receive a response by July 14th, and organizing will begin immediately for the event in April, 2014.

For questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the organizers at Roselin@tedxfulbright.org and Juliane@tedxfulbright.org.
Alumni recent accomplishments


The book reflects Smith’s efforts in working with nearly 120 U.S. community colleges in promoting peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and international education. From 2005-2012 he was a senior program officer at the U.S. Institute of Peace where he focused primarily on promoting global peacebuilding and international education in colleges and universities. At the 2011 Fulbright Association Meeting, Smith hosted a meeting at USIP for those attending the DC conference.

The book is a collection of stories from 24 educators and professionals providing their insights on teaching about peacebuilding in 2-year colleges. Most of the writers are community college faculty who have focused their careers on international education and conflict resolution. The book includes syllabi, outlines, and activities that can be used with students.

If you want to order this book published by USIP Press, click here.

“Because of their diversity, range of programming, and open admission, community colleges are often thought of as ‘democracy’s colleges.’ Nearly half of U.S. undergraduates and increasing numbers of foreign study students are choosing community colleges,” comments Smith. “As a result, to promote a nation and world that is peaceful and secure, promoting peacebuilding in community colleges is critical.”

Prior to joining USIP, Smith was an associate professor at Harford Community College in Bel Air, Maryland (1992-2005). It was at Harford that he was a 2003-2004 U.S. Fulbright Scholar teaching peace studies and conflict resolution at the University of Tartu in Tartu, Estonia. He says, “My Fulbright experience was seminal for me personally and professionally. Upon returning to the U.S., I changed the trajectory of my career and have since focused on building peace.”

Translator and writer Ross Ufberg (ETA Russia, 2007) and journalist Michael Z. Wise have cofounded New Vessel Press, an independent publishing house specializing in the translation of foreign literature into English. Their first title, The Missing Year of Juan Salvatierra, by Argentine author Pedro Mairal, is a tale of art, intrigue and family ties. It goes on sale July 15. New Vessel Press will feature works from Italy, Poland, Moldova, Israel, Austria and Argentina in their inaugural catalogue. All their titles are available in ebook and paperback formats.

Stefana Albu (Germany, 2010-2011) recently published her book ‘We Never Learned This in Class!’ It discloses secrets for success to college graduates in the twenty-first century.

Many recent college graduates and Fulbright alums could benefit from the work as well. Albu set out to write a contemporary handbook disclosing the essential approaches for financial independence, building strong relationships, and establishing a profession-all milestone on a revised timeline for today’s twenty-somethings. Her fresh perspective on the challenges millennials face offers an insider look into navigating life after college in an ever-changing economy. Click here to read a description of this “millenial manifesto.”

The paperback is available on Amazon. The Kindle version is still being properly converted.

INSTITUTIONAL GRANT

STEP-UP RFA USAID effort to support higher education in Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN’S HIGHER EDUCATION system has many pressing problems and is still rebuilding after years of conflict and neglect.

According to the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP: 2010-2014), outdated curricula, under-qualified faculty members, lack of adequate classrooms, laboratories, and information technology, and under-resourced libraries are among the most significant issues the system faces.

An inefficient, centralized ministry structure prevents public universities from managing programs and finances.

Ultimately, the university system lacks sufficient academic programs and capacity to prepare qualified workers with the relevant knowledge and skills to meet the employment needs of modern business, industry, and government.

USAID is looking for applications from HBCUs and community colleges. Colleges and Universities: Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities (including minority serving institutions, community colleges, and women’s colleges) may apply for USAID funding under this RFA. USG and USAID regulations generally treat colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations; hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible. Click here for details on how to apply.
NANCY HARGROVE, Five Fulbrights AND 50 YEARS LATER

BY NANCY HARGROVE

THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM has had an enormous impact on both my personal and professional life as well as the lives of my husband, children, and grandchildren.

In the spring of 1963, I returned to Agnes Scott College from spring holidays to find a thick letter in my mailbox informing me that I had received a Fulbright Fellowship to study French Literature in Grenoble, France during the coming academic year. Quite simply, that year determined the course of my life. I fell in love with France and French culture; I learned to speak and read French fluently; and I met a Fulbright Ph.D. student in voice named Guy Hargrove, whom I would marry two years later and with whom for 50 years this October I have shared a love of France and numerous European countries.

Having both attained Ph.D. degrees—he in vocal performance and literature and I in American Literature—and gotten positions at Mississippi State University, our next Fulbright adventure came when I received a Junior Lectureship to teach at the Centre Universitaire de Savoie (as it was then called) in Chambéry, France for 1976-7. With our two children, aged eight and five, we spent a wonderful year there. I taught five courses(!), we made life-long friends, our children attended a French school and learned to speak fluently, and we learned to ski, quite an accomplishment for a family from the South of the United States.

In 1984-5, I received a Senior Lectureship to teach at the Université Bruxelles in Brussels, where I taught American Literature of the 1920s, and at the Université de Liège, where I taught two graduate seminars, one on William Faulkner and the other on Tennessee Williams. We lived in Brussels, where we appreciated all the advantages of a cosmopolitan city. Our children, then 16 and 13, attended a French-speaking school in Waterloo, not far from our neighborhood. We were chosen to go to a weekend Fulbright conference in West Berlin, a highlight of our year.

My next Fulbright came in the spring of 1992, when I taught at the University of Lund, Sweden. There we made many friends, including the major Swedish Eliot scholar (with whom I will participate at the T. S. Eliot Summer School in London this July). We went almost daily to the morning coffee hour in the English department, where we learned to drink coffee that was so strong that “a spoon would stand up in it,” as our Swedish colleagues told us. I taught four courses, Guy and I gave several special programs in the department, the favorite being “Language of the American South,” which included a skit using many Southern expressions, and Guy gave several vocal concerts. Although our children were young adults and did not accompany us, both came to visit.

Despite—or perhaps because of my previous Fulbrights—I received the Fulbright Distinguished Chair Award in American Studies at the University of Vienna for the Fall semester of 2005, and we set out for Vienna just hours before Hurricane Katrina struck the Mississippi coast. Again I taught four courses and, as always, was very impressed with my students. I also learned at the end of the first class that Austrian students knock on their desks if they enjoyed the lecture, a wonderful custom that I loved. I was gratified when the students in my Modern Poetry course asked if I would do an out-of-class presentation on Sylvia Plath, and Guy and I gave a program for the department on American Literature, Art, and Music, which had standing-room only. We attended many musical offerings in Vienna and, along with other Fulbrights, got to attend one of the famous Viennese balls.

So my Fulbrights took us to many countries, contributed to all three of my books and numerous articles, and gave us many enduring friendships and an appreciation of various cultures. We believe that we served as ambassadors of goodwill for the United States, often in somewhat trying times. Although I can never fully repay the Fulbright program for all it has given me and my family, we “pay it forward” by serving as mentors and friends to international students in our community and the university and by giving numerous programs on our Fulbright experiences.
Skloot: Sharing Holocaust theatre expertise in UK

BY KERRY G. HILL

ROBERT SKLOOT DESCRIBES himself as “a believer that the arts must play a role in the discussions of issues of serious social importance.”

Skloot, who has taught and directed plays at the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 1968, is among the few scholars who specialize in theatre and the Holocaust.

“The arts create different ways of knowing and feeling, often emotion-filled and directed at the heart as well as the head,” he says. “The worlds created by theatre artists, choreographers, poets and filmmakers, report back to audiences the historical experience of victims, perpetrators and bystanders through the emotions as well as rationally. When they do that, their impact of their work is likely to be greater and more lasting.”

Skloot retired in 2008, but the professor emeritus of Theatre and Drama, and Jewish Studies continues to share his unique expertise, near and far.

This summer, supported by the Fulbright Specialist Program, Skloot will be contributing to a pair of academic conferences in the United Kingdom – Trauma & Memory: the Holocaust in Contemporary Culture (University of Portsmouth, July 11-13) and The Future of Holocaust Studies (University of Southampton, July 29-31). Participants will include established and up-and-coming scholars from around the world, as well as teachers and students.

The conferences will feature readings and discussions of If the Whole Body Dies, Skloot’s one-act play about Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish lawyer whose obsession with stopping “genocide” – a word Lemkin coined – led to the ratification of the U.N. Treaty Against Genocide in 1951.

Skloot’s role also includes lecturing on the theatrical contributions and challenges to understanding and responding to the Holocaust today and into the future. And he is collaborating with Matt Fletcher of Southampton Solent University (SSU) and James Jordan of the University of Southampton to lead a week-long workshop to introduce SSU students to the complexities and responsibilities inherent in theatre performance that deals with the Holocaust.

“This isn’t the first time that Skloot has received Fulbright support to teach and direct abroad. He has previously served as a Fulbright professor in Israel, Austria, Chile and the Netherlands.

“This award is another layer of my Fulbright cake that I have enjoyed, together with my family, throughout my academic career,” he says. “I have often remarked to students and colleagues that two ways to ‘enlarge’ your world and to be more fulfilled in life is to have contact with the arts and to travel internationally. Now, five years after my retirement from the UW, I’m still able to do both. How wonderful is that!”

Robert Skloot, a professor emeritus of Theatre and Drama, and Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is among the few scholars who specialize in theatre and the Holocaust.