

# FEDERAL & GLOBAL TIMES

*Connecting Federal Fellows and Global Fellows Alumni Since 2014*



## Letter from the President

*Amanda Obenland, Alumni Board President*

### 2017 OVERVIEW

#### 1: LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Amanda discusses her vision for the Alumni Board and network.

#### 2: BY THE NUMBERS

Track the Federal and Global Fellows Programs' explosive growth in the past ten years.

#### 3: FEDERAL ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Program alumnus Michael Ng, Senior Research Assistant at the Federal Reserve, talks about how hard work can pay off.

#### 4: GLOBAL ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Program alumna Aimee Tandoi talks about her experience working at a non-profit organization.

#### 5: STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Join Sofia Alsamadi as she discusses her internships at the U.S. Department of State.

#### 6: FACULTY PROFILES

An introduction to the two professors from Science Diplomacy.

#### 7: FEATURED SCHOLARS

A sampling of awards received this year by current students and alumni.

#### 9: ALUMNI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Learn how to get involved!

Dear Federal and Global Fellows Alumni,

As the new Alumni Board President, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself and share my vision for the alumni community. I became a Federal Fellow during my sophomore year as a member of the Energy and Environmental Policy 2015 cohort and continued my involvement with the program as a Teaching Assistant the following year. During my senior year, I served as the Program Assistant and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to support the 150+ students in the Federal and Global Fellows 2017 cohort.

I can honestly say that being a Federal Fellow impacted my career like no other experience has. The skills I developed and the experiences I had because of these Fellowship programs were instrumental in helping me develop a strong foundation for my future career. As graduation approached, I knew it would be difficult to leave a community that had impacted me so profoundly, so I was thrilled to be asked to serve as Alumni Board President! I knew this would be a great way to continue my involvement with the programs and give back to a community that has given me so much.

Over the years, both the Federal and Global Fellows Programs have been a place of development, mentorship, and community for all of us. Whether we came in with a clear idea of what we

wanted to do with our careers or just wanted to discover what was out there, these programs gave us the opportunity to explore our interests, develop ourselves, and create a network of like-minded peers.

Fortunately, this community does not end at graduation! With a network of 800+ alumni from many different career paths and diverse backgrounds, our network is truly amazing. Since we all have something unique to offer, I would like to invite every one of you to be an active member of the Alumni community! Whether it is networking at happy hours, applying to be a mentor, serving on the Alumni Board, or just keeping in touch with the office, every contribution is valuable.

If you are interested in helping with any of the events we host or would like to learn more about getting involved with the Board, please send me an email at [amanda.obenland@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.obenland@gmail.com)! Also, please feel free to reach out if you have any suggestions for events or programs you would find helpful or interesting for us to organize.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve our vast Alumni network as President and look forward to continuing to develop our wonderful community!

Best,  
Amanda Obenland



*Jay, Nai, Dr. Burton, Naz, and Amanda at the 2017 Federal and Global Fellows Final Reception*

### FEDERAL & GLOBAL FELLOWS STAFF



Dr. Joan Burton  
*Director*



Jay Arasan  
*Assistant Director*



Naz Beyranvand  
*Coordinator*



Nai Le  
*Graduate Assistant*



Mirish Shah  
*Graduate Assistant*



Amanda Obenland  
*Program Assistant*



Eliya Harnood  
*Student Worker*

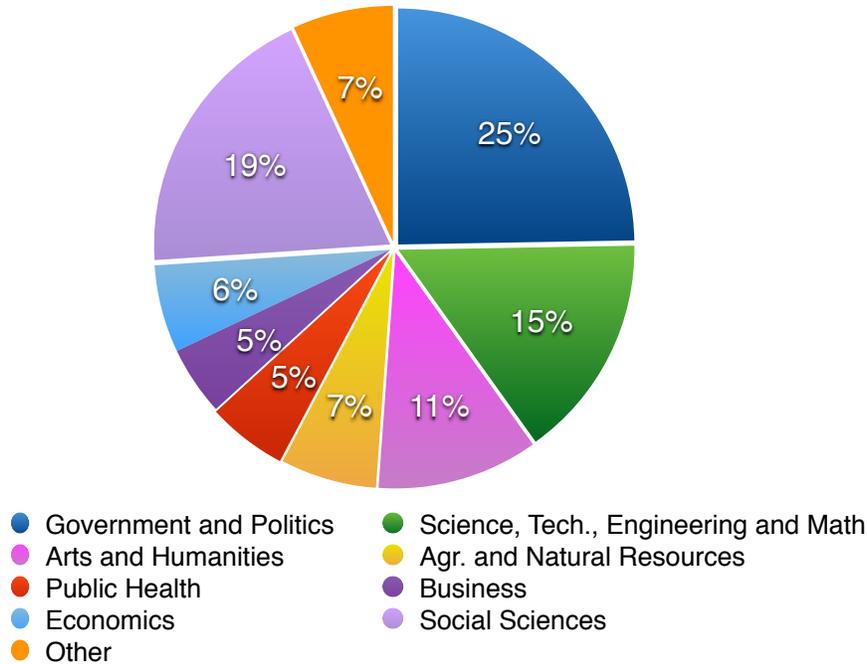


Nina Dinh  
*Student Worker*

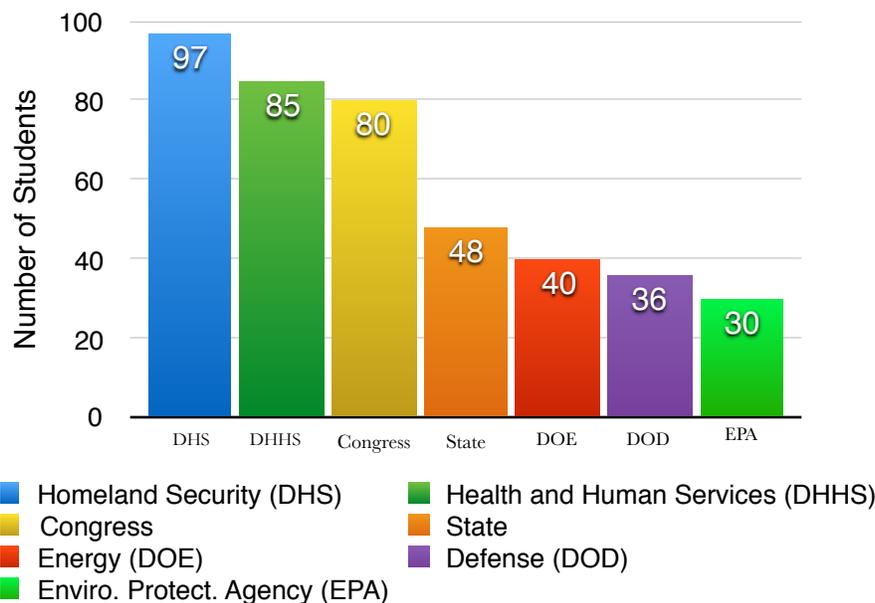
# FELLOWS BY THE NUMBERS

*A quantitative breakdown of the Federal Fellows and Global Fellows programs, 2008-present*

**Breakdown of Student Majors**



**Top Internship Placements**



**FEDERAL &  
GLOBAL  
FELLOWS  
NETWORK**

**800+**  
Program Alumni and  
Current Students

**350+**  
Different Internship  
Locations

**8**  
Program Staff &  
Assistants



Mike with Federal Reserve Chair, Janet Yellen

# Federal Alumnus Spotlight

**Michael Ng - Senior Research Assistant, Federal Reserve Board**

## *How have you been able to obtain employment?*

Seeking out a new position always seems to be a big process. While an undergrad, I started networking and making a list of jobs the summer going into my senior year of college. It was really important for me to reach out to people early and ask for help and advice, rather than just assuming I would get referrals or recommendations as they became important. I found that sincerity, persistence, and flexibility were the most important traits to channel. Ultimately, I was lucky enough to get good recommendations from professors with whom I have kept in touch, and to have found a job at the Federal Reserve after many applications and far fewer interviews. As I began looking for new jobs after the Fed, even after having a job for two years added to my resume, I still applied to around 50 places.

## *How did your Federal Fellows experience prepare you to take on post-graduate life?*

The Federal Fellows program above everything, taught me the need to be assertive and to advocate for myself. Part of being successful in the working world, especially at an entry-level, is about being comfortable with being uncomfortable. It is about speaking confidently but modestly with others that are far senior to you. By placing me in various internships, Federal

Fellows put me in situations in which I had to get out of my comfort zone and assert myself to find work or make myself valuable in an office that otherwise would have gotten along fine without me. Moreover, Federal Fellows put me in situations that pushed me to interact and network with many different people and to be confident with myself in such an environment.



## *What advice would you give to young professionals?*

Find a way to balance your passion and interests with a sense of humility. I have found that being sincerely interested in a topic and having a true willingness to achieve a wider goal is valued, and proves to people that you will be self-motivated. But

equally important is the need to understand your place in an organization and not to overstep your bounds. This does not mean not to take risks, but to be measured and strategic in how you take them. The balance is difficult, but vital in making yourself an asset to whatever organization of which you are a part.

## *From your perspective, what does it take to be a leader?*

More often than not the people that turn out to be leaders are just the people that show up. Leaders are the ones that have ideas about which they

ABOUT MIKE

**GRADUATION YEAR:**  
2015

**MAJORS:**  
Economics, Government and Politics

**FEDERAL FELLOWS CONCENTRATION:**  
Homeland and National Security Policy (2013)

**INTERNSHIP SITE:**  
Law Media Group, Inc.

**CURRENT OCCUPATION**  
Senior Research Assistant,  
Federal Reserve Board

are passionate and find some way to implement them because no one else is doing so.

## *What's something you wish you had known five years ago?*

You will not end up where you plan to be, and that is okay. Plans change and people change, and that is a signal of growth, not of failure. Even failure is a sign that you are taking risks and learning. If you have not failed or been rejected in some way, then you probably aren't pushing yourself far enough.



# Global Alumnus Spotlight

**Aimee Tandoi - Program Coordinator, Health Security Partners**

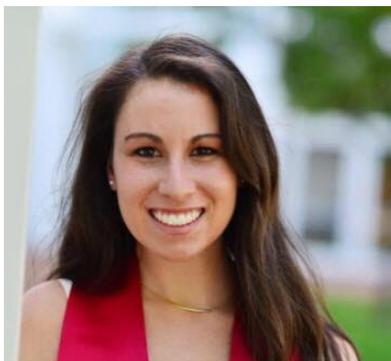
***Can you talk a little about your position at Health Security Partners? What opportunities has it exposed you to?***

My time with Health Security Partners thus far has been incredible. We are a really small and close-knit team, with only 7 staff members in our Washington, D.C. office. Although our team is small, we manage 18+ programs in 9+ countries around the world. Our programs help to educate and train scientists, healthcare workers and academics on proper biosafety and biosecurity measures. Our team is comprised of three Program Managers, who are responsible for managing our budgets and grant money mainly from the US Department of State. My role specifically is as a Program Coordinator, and I serve to support our three Program Managers. My responsibilities include a lot of logistical arrangements for workshops and events, and management/upkeep of finances. Basically, I help to ensure that our programs run smoothly. Seeing as this company is extraordinarily global-minded, international travel is encouraged. I have been afforded the rare opportunity to travel abroad three times already, to Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. Additionally, I have had the great opportunity of working with some of the most renowned and successful scientists in the world.

***How did your Global Fellows Experience Prepare you for your position?***

I can confidently say that I would not have been offered this position had it not been for my experience with the Global Fellows program. It's almost as if this position was written for an alum of the program. While in the program, I was in the Science and Technology Diplomacy course, and was later a TA. My memos during this course focused on antimicrobial resistance and dual use research of concern as related to

vaccines. HSP's main focus areas are global health, science diplomacy and sustainable development, while working specifically on antimicrobial resistance, dual use research of concern and disease surveillance/reporting. I could not have been more qualified. Even more exciting was that during my interview, I found out that Dr. Margolis had worked with my interviewee (and CEO of the company) at the State Department!



***What advice would you give to students who are thinking about working at a non-profit organization?***

Do it! Non-profit organizations have a great work environment and culture and the people generally *want* to be there. It's important for your work to be passion-driven, not finance-driven.

***What does "public service" mean to you?***

Public service means ensuring that the government is working in favor of the public. It ensures that the people are not held down by their government, but rather lifted up. The funding that HSP receives from the USG is put toward improving the health and well-being of communities around the world through sustainable programs and trainings. I believe this is a great example of public service.

## ABOUT AIMEE

**GRADUATION YEAR:**  
2016

**MAJOR:**  
Community Health

**GLOBAL FELLOWS CONCENTRATION:**  
Science Diplomacy (2015)

**INTERNSHIP SITE:**  
Department of Health and Human Services,  
Administration of Children and Families, Office of Public Affairs

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:**  
Program Coordinator, Health Security Partners

***What is something you wish you had known five years ago?***

I wish I had known that schoolwork is important, but that it's not the only important part of college. I spent the majority of my time in college perfecting my assignments and my study habits to earn the highest possible marks in my classes. While this is undoubtedly crucial, it is also important to open your mind to other things outside of your schoolwork. I wish I had joined more clubs during my time at Maryland. I wish I had expanded my network of friends. I wish I had taken advantage of the amazing opportunities to meet new people and learn new things, rather than placing most of my focus on my grades.



# 2017 Student Spotlight

**Sofia Alsamadi - U.S. Department of State Intern, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs, South Central Asia region**

## *What are your responsibilities as a Department of State intern?*

I have interned at the State Department twice. The first experience was at the Political-Military Affairs Office of Iraq under the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau (NEA-I-PM). My second and current one is at the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor: Office of South and Central Asia (DRL/SCA). Both offices have different missions so the tasks differ but the responsibilities are generally similar. The overarching responsibilities of my internships have been researching, analyzing, and drafting. At the Iraq Desk I was more responsible for conducting research for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. I was also responsible for drafting answers for questions from Congress when the Secretary of State had hearings on the Hill.

At my current internship, my main project was researching and drafting policy on lethal and non-lethal arms transfers to countries in the South Asia region. I worked on "Munitions Matrices" to decide which types of arms are permitted to be exported based on that country's history (and current actions) of human rights violations. I was also tasked with assisting the drafting of the U.S. Statement and recommendations for the 2017 United Nations Universal Periodic Review of India. Other responsibilities included researching, verifying, and editing the 2016 DoS Human Rights Report for India; drafting an issue paper on the current human rights situations regarding police and security force violations in South Asian countries; and orally brief senior DoS officials on my issue paper.

## *You have had two internships with the Department of State. What has been the most interesting part?*

I would definitely say the highlight of both experiences was at my first internship with

NEA-I-PM. My supervisor encouraged me to be a volunteer at the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit hosted in D.C. I volunteered over the course of the two day conference in the International Media Center. This was the highlight of my internship because I assisted with President Obama's last press conference. I was able to sit right behind the White House Press Corps and finally see President Obama, a huge dream of mine! Being that close to him was surreal and I was ecstatic to listen to the President speak.



Another highlight of this conference was helping word a question that was asked to the President. A reporter from Azerbaijan sat next to me while we were waiting for the President to come on stage. The reporter asked me to help her phrase a question in proper English for her to ask in case the President called on her. I typed out her

question on her phone and of course, the only reporter that President Obama called on for a question outside of the Press Corp Team was the reporter next to me. She asked the question that I helped her write. All of which was being filmed and it was aired on cable news. This experience never would have happened if I didn't work at the State Department!

## *What has been the most rewarding part of your experience?*

The most rewarding part of my experience is actually making a difference. The feeling of contributing to the office's mission is a great one. My internships have not been the stereotypical "grab coffee and run errands" type of deal. I have been assigned with tasks and projects that advance the mission of the office. When supervisors and colleagues thank me for my work because it ultimately makes their job much easier, it is such a rewarding feeling.

## ABOUT SOFIA

**GRADUATION YEAR:**  
2018

**MAJOR:**  
Government and Politics

**GLOBAL FELLOWS CONCENTRATION:**  
Responses to Global Challenges (2016)

**INTERNSHIP SITE:**  
Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Iraqi Affairs Desk, Political-Military Affairs of Iraq

**CURRENT INTERNSHIP:**  
Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs, South Central Asia region

## *What has been the most helpful aspect of the Global Fellows program for you? What do you think makes the Global Fellows program unique?*

The supportive FGSM Team headed by Dr. Burton is the most helpful aspect of the program, as well as the most unique. I have never been a part of a program that cares so deeply about its students and will go the extra mile to help those students succeed. The FGSM Team is like a family on campus and you know that their office is always a home for its students. The Team is so sincere and genuine about their desire to help us and it really shines through. It is great to know that a program on campus will help you in every step of your journey. I can always count on the FGSM Team and that is a really comforting feeling. Thank you for all that you have done for me and continue to do!

# Global Fellows Professor Spotlight:

## *Science Diplomacy*

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**Griffin Thompson:** *Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Transformation*

*What advice do you have for young professionals today?*

The best advice I have for young professionals is to adapt the good habits they have formed as students to the work environment. Essentially this means, “do your homework” for learning never ends and the talent of critical thinking endures. Given the turbulence and dynamism of the economy, young professionals will inevitably find themselves in career positions for which they did not explicitly study. The task is therefore to apply the basic skills of reasoning, communication, and problem solving. I’d also highly recommend that young professionals spend considerable time watching, listening and learning from those around them, particularly leaders in the organization where they work. Mimicking the behavior and actions of proven leaders can help guide the young professional towards a path of their own success. I have developed “four keys to success” based on my own career in the public and private sectors and observing leadership in various organizations, but you’ll have to take the “Science Diplomacy” class to hear them.

*How do you find teaching for the Global Fellows program?*

I think the Global Fellows program is a wonderful program for a variety of reasons but one reason that distinguishes itself from others and which lies at the heart of its success is that it draws students from all backgrounds and academic disciplines. The multiplicity of geographic and cultural perspectives combined with the diversity of academic majors makes for a wonderful crucible of learning and discursive exchanges. In this sense, the program represents a microcosm of the classic liberal arts environment where diverse students with eclectic interests and ambitions come together to learn not only the fundamentals of how our government works, but how our society addresses issues and topics of perennial importance, drawing on a range of scholarly disciplines and normative orientations.



**Jonathan Margolis:** *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Science, Space, and Health*

*What have you enjoyed most about teaching at UMD?*

The enthusiasm of the students. When they have described their reactions to the role playing or simulation exercises that Griff and I have conjured up, it is clear that they are totally immersed in the experience and thoroughly engaged in integrating the ideas into their thinking. It makes me want to teach all the more.

*What do you hope students [learned] in your class?*

Two things really. First some practical skills for when they find themselves in a professional setting and are wondering, “how do I get my colleagues to agree with and support my idea?” or “how do I keep my boss informed on what’s going on?”. Second, an approach that may help guide them in whatever professional path they choose so they can figure out “what questions do I need to answer to be effective?” or “what do I need to know and pass on?”. I guess it’s embracing knowledge seeking.

# FEATURED SCHOLARS

*A Sampling of Awards Received by Students and Alumni this Past Year*



**Shabnam Ahmed (Public Health Policy 2017)**  
Boren Scholarship  
*India*



**Jamie Capron (U.S. Diplomacy 2016)**  
Boren Scholarship  
*Tanzania*



**Sam Enokian (U.S. Diplomacy 2017)**  
Boren Scholarship  
*Kazakhstan*



**Marina Farrugia (Homeland Security Policy 2016)**  
Boren Scholarship  
*Morocco*



**Susan Price (U.S. Diplomacy 2015)**  
Boren Scholarship  
*Tanzania*



**Kalyan Cai (Responses to Global Challenges 2017)**  
Critical Language Scholarship  
*Meekness, Morocco*



**Margaret Ebacher-Rini (Critical Regions 2017)**  
Critical Language Scholarship  
*Suzhou, China*



**Gurleen Kaur (Responses to Global Challenges 2015)**  
Critical Language Scholarship  
*Chandigarh, India*



**Irene Solaiman (U.S. Diplomacy 2017)**  
Critical Language Scholarship  
*Kolkata, India*



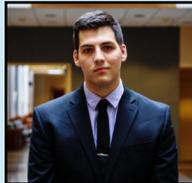
**Sana Haider (Public Health Policy 2016)**  
Fulbright U.S. Student Program Award  
*Philippines*



**Gavri Schreiber (Critical Regions 2017)**  
Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Award  
*Taiwan*



**Mohammad Zia (U.S. Diplomacy 2012)**  
Fulbright Award  
*Morocco*



**Willem Klajbor (Science Diplomacy 2017)**  
NOAA Hollings Scholarship Recipient  
*University of Alaska*



**Adwoa Boateng (Responses to Global Challenges 2016)**  
Public Policy and International Affairs Fellow  
*Princeton University*



**Ana Ortez-Rivera (Responses to Global Challenges 2017)**  
Public Policy and International Affairs Fellow  
*Carnegie Mellon University*



**Joyce Dudley (Responses to Global Challenges 2015)**  
Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship  
*American University*



**Sarahann Yeh (Science Diplomacy 2015)**  
Rangel International Affairs Fellowship  
*John's Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies*

# ALUMNI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

*Ways to get involved, contact information, and features from the Mentorship Program*



*The 2016-2017 Alumni Mentorship Program began with a joint mentor/mentee dinner, pictured above.*

## Special thanks to all of our amazing Alumni Mentors this year!

Sarah Brown  
 Claire Doyle  
 Wayne Evans  
 Lauren Greeley  
 Emily Hurwitz  
 Nikita Kandpal  
 Jennifer Kulp  
 Jeremy McDonald

Thomas Minter  
 Mike Ng  
 Amanda Obenland  
 Joseph Park  
 Michael Penansky  
 Pamitha Weerasinghe  
 Sitara Weerasuriya  
 Jessica Weinber

And a warm thanks to Dr. Alton Wallace!

### INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MENTOR?

- If interested in becoming an Alumni Mentor contact Lauren Greeley at: [ljgreeley07@gmail.com](mailto:ljgreeley07@gmail.com)
- Please contact Naz Beyranvand with news, opportunities, or suggestions for our next newsletter at: [nbeyran@umd.edu](mailto:nbeyran@umd.edu)

