

**CENTRAL ASIA-CAUCASUS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
Announcement of Spring 2018 Fellows**

Today the Rumsfeld Foundation announced the 12 professionals who were selected to participate in the Spring 2018 session of the Central Asia-Caucasus Fellowship Program. Launched in 2008, the Program is a partnership with the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at the American Foreign Policy Council which brings rising young leaders from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Mongolia to the United States to promote better understanding and stronger relations among the people of the ten countries of the region, as well as between the United States and the region. The Program aims to foster dialogue and an exchange of ideas among exceptional young professionals working across all sectors and encourages increased regional cooperation.

As participants of the 20th Fellowship session, the Spring 2018 group will join the Program's growing alumni network of 184 former Fellows.

Throughout their six-week program, the Fellows will attend a series of private high-level meetings with top policy-makers, business leaders, journalists, academics, military personnel and regional experts exposing them to inside perspectives on how opinion making, decision making and policy making processes work in the U.S. The group will also spend a week traveling to additional cities including Asheville, NC and Chicago, IL for meetings with local businesses and officials, providing them with a view of the U.S. beyond the nation's capital. In addition to group meetings, the Program staff will assist Fellows in arranging individual meetings for their independent research projects and provide opportunities for professional development and networking. The Fellows will also participate in a group presentation at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute public forum toward the end of their program, where they will engage with representatives from local embassies, businesses, universities, the media and others interested in current perspectives from the region.

The Spring 2018 Fellows consist of a diverse group of talented regional leaders:



Mr. Omaid Sharifi – Afghanistan – Co-Founder and President of ArtLords, a leading urban art management organization in Afghanistan and a grassroots movement of artists and volunteers for social transformation and behavioral change; an Atlantic Council Millennium Leadership Fellow and an Asia Society 21 Fellow. **Research topic: “Urban Art for Social Change in Afghanistan and Central Asia”**

Ms. Arevik Anapiosyan – Armenia – Founding member and the Executive Director of the Institute of Public Policy in Armenia; an adjunct faculty member at the American University of Armenia and at the Centre for European Studies at Yerevan State University. **Research topic:** *“The Role of Think Tanks in International Cooperation for Democracy Building and Sustainable Regional Development”*



Mr. Sarkhan Hashimov – Azerbaijan – Director-General of Microsoft for Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan; Board Member of Microsoft for the CIS countries. **Research topic:** *“Made in CAMCA Software Products”*

Ms. Ekaterina Gvelesiani – Georgia – Chairperson and Founder of Data Research, Analysis and Planning Center; Partner at E.G. Holding. **Research topic:** *“Georgia as a Hub for Promoting CAMCA Regional Cooperation”*



Ms. Tamuna Liluashvili – Georgia – Investment Adviser for Enterprise Georgia, an Agency under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia promoting entrepreneurship and facilitating FDI. **Research topic:** *“The History of Georgia’s Reforms: Lessons for the CAMCA Region”*

Mr. Iskander Akylbayev – Kazakhstan – Executive Director of the Kazakhstan Council on International Relations; Senior Fellow at the Institute of Diplomacy at the Academy of Public Administration; Fellow at the Pacific Forum CSIS Young Leaders Program. **Research topic:** *“Russia-China Security Partnership in Central Asia”*





Mr. Yernar Zharkeshov – Kazakhstan – Chief Executive Officer and Managing Partner at the Center for Strategic Initiatives in Kazakhstan. **Research topic:** *“What Does Good Governance Mean to the CAMCA Countries?”*

Mr. Azim Azimov – Kyrgyzstan – Public relations and political communications consultant; Founder and CEO of Media Kitchen, an award-winning creative company focused on producing feature films, documentaries and commercials. **Research topic:** *“Promoting Regional Cooperation through Dialogue between Professional Networks in the CAMCA Region”*



Ms. Khulan Davaadorj – Mongolia – Founder, Director and Chief Technologist of Natural Essentials LLC; Founder of the “Finding Your Passion” program. **Research topic:** *“Can Social Inclusiveness in CAMCA Countries Contribute to Sustainable Economic Development?”*

Mr. Farukh Sulstonov – Tajikistan – Director of the Tajik Norwegian Centre for Sustainable Development (TajNor Consulting); Partner at Think Global, a Norway based consultancy firm. **Research topic:** *“Industry 4.0: Challenges and Implications for Central Asian Countries. Is There a Role for the United States?”*



Ms. Nurjemal Jalilova – Turkmenistan – Program Analyst on economic diversification, governance and inclusive growth at the UNDP Country Office in Turkmenistan. **Research topic:** *“Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Central Asia”*

Mr. Bakhrom Radjabov – Uzbekistan – Policy Analyst at ‘Bilig Brains’ Central Asian Analytical Network; a political economy issue expert for the online media outlet www.redpen.uz; an invited expert at the Center for Development Strategy in Uzbekistan. *Research topic: “Critical Analysis of UNDP Supported Social Innovations in Governance: Case Studies of Armenia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan”*



To learn more about the Central Asia-Caucasus Fellowship Program please visit:

https://www.rumsfeldfoundation.org/greater_central_asia/central_asia_caucasus_fellowship_program.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

David Soumbadze
Director, Rumsfeld Fellowship Program
509 C Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Tel: (301) 257-5753
E-mail: soumbadze@afpc.org

Sarah C. Tonucci
Executive Director, Rumsfeld Foundation
1030 15th Street, NW, B1, # 366
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel: (202) 944-1304
E-mail: s.tonucci@dhrlc.net