
**CENTRAL ASIA-CAUCASUS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
Fall 2018 Session Report**

The Fall 2018 group of Fellows from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Mongolia completed a six-week program of high-level meetings and research in Washington, D.C. from October 2 to November 9, 2018. The group included *Ms. Hadeia Amiry (Afghanistan)*, a Special Adviser to the National Security Adviser to the President of Afghanistan; *Ms. Anna Sarkisyan (Armenia)*, an international security expert recently with the Defense and Security Program of Transparency International Armenia and the Open Governance Research & Development Unit Project at UNDP Armenia; *Mr. Rufat Abbasov (Azerbaijan)*, the founding partner at Synergy Partnership, a leading public relations and marketing company in Azerbaijan; *Ms. Natia Gvenetadze (Georgia)*, the Head of the Professional and Institutional Development Department at the Defense Institution Building School at the Ministry of Defense of Georgia; *Mr. Ruslan Kozhakhmetov (Kazakhstan)*, a Vice-Rector for Corporate Development at Almaty Management University; *Mr. Nurlan Kyshtobaev (Kyrgyzstan)*, a partner at GRATA Law Firm, a legal consulting firm; *Mr. Enerelt Batbold (Mongolia)*, the Director of the Finance Department and Chief Financial Officer at the Mongolian Railways State-Owned Shareholding Company; *Mr. Munkhnaran Bayarlkhagva (Mongolia)*, a Policy Analyst at the National Security Council of Mongolia; *Ms. Zarrina Abdulalieva (Tajikistan)*, a Country Officer at the World Bank in Tajikistan; *Ms. Hilola Muminova (Uzbekistan)*, the Director and Co-founder of Business Development Group, a consultancy company and a business school; and *Mr. Malik Mukhitdinov (Uzbekistan)*, a Program Officer at the Japan International Cooperation Agency's Uzbekistan Representative Office.

The Fellows had an intensive schedule of group meetings with representatives of the U.S. Administration, U.S. Congress, business community, media, think tanks, academia and NGOs, as well as attended conferences, seminars and workshops at different institutions that helped them understand how opinion-making and policy-making work in Washington, D.C.



Fellows with Ambassador John Bolton, U.S. National Security Advisor

(Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead)



Fellows with Governor Tom Ridge, Former Secretary of Homeland Security

The Fall 2018 group met with National Security Adviser to the President of the United States *Ambassador John Bolton*; U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development *Dr. Ben Carson*; the 46th Vice President of the United States *Richard Cheney*; former U.S. Secretary of Defense *William Cohen*; former U.S. Secretary of Labor *Ann McLaughlin Korologos*; former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security and former Governor of Pennsylvania *Tom Ridge*; former U.S. Homeland Security Advisor *Frances Townsend*; former U.S. Senator from Indiana and President of The Lugar Center *Senator Richard Lugar*; Former Deputy National Security Advisor *Dr. J.D. Crouch II*; former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy *Michèle Flournoy*; former U.S. Ambassadors *John Herbst*, *Richard Hoagland* and *Robert Cekuta*; as well as with members of the current Administration including representatives of the Departments of State, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, USAID, Open World Leadership Center and many others. The group was also hosted by the Ambassadors of Afghanistan and Georgia at their respective embassies in Washington, D.C.



Fellows with Richard B. Cheney, Former Vice President of the United States

In addition, the group had the opportunity to meet with business leaders and representatives of the media, think tanks, non-profits and other organizations including Editorial Page Editor of *The Washington Post* *Fred Hiatt*; Host of Special Report on Fox News and chief political anchor *Bret Baier*; CEO of arts organization Dupont Underground *Susan Corrigan*; Senior Vice President of Strategic Enterprise Initiatives at Lockheed Martin Corporation *Robert Rangel*; renown American economist and Founder and CEO of Laffer Associates *Dr. Arthur Laffer*; Chairman and CEO of Revolution investment firm and Co-Founder of America Online *Steve Case*; Chairman of the Kellogg Executive Leadership Institute at Northwestern University, Founder and CEO of ConantLeadership and former CEO of Campbell Soup Company *Douglas Conant*; as well as leadership and staff at the Heritage Foundation, Center for Strategic and International Studies, American Foreign Policy Council, Hudson Institute, Middle East Institute and others.



Fellows with Secretary Ben Carson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
(Photo by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

Since the fall of 2011, the Fellowship Program has partnered with the Open World Leadership Center to organize local programs with host communities outside of Washington, D.C. to help demonstrate American democracy on the grassroots level, how business and government work on the local level, and how people are empowered to take responsibility for themselves and others in their community. This fall the Fellows traveled to *Milwaukee, Wisconsin* and *Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*. The group then traveled to *New York, New York* where the program included meetings with leadership and representatives of the *Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy*, *Concordia* and *the Wall Street Journal* including Editorial Page Editor and Vice President *Paul Gigot*. Additional New York meeting highlights included a meeting with Fox News commentator, author and former White House Press Secretary *Dana Perino* and a tour of the *United Nations Headquarters*.

At the end of their program, the Fellows made a presentation at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Forum on the topic of *“How CAMCA Countries Can Help Rebuild Afghanistan.”*

The next group of Fellows will visit Washington, D.C. from April 1 to May 10, 2019. The participants of the Fellowship Program for the Spring 2019 session will be announced in March of 2019.



Fellows with Dana Perino, Former White House Press Secretary and FOX News Host

Munkhnaran Bayarlkhagva: “Mind-expanding and uniquely-placed to fill a geographical, intellectual and policy gap. The Fellowship is also a two-way street for ideas and dialogue that provides participants privileged access to the principal policy-makers and influencers both inside and outside of the U.S. government.”

Rufat Abbasov: “This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me. There is something about the way the program brings Fellows together that is very special that I haven't seen anywhere else. The program is designed to allow participants time to get to know each other outside of their countries in a meaningful way. One of the reasons I wanted to join this program was to round out my quantitative capabilities, but more importantly, I wanted to grow my business by opening doors that I didn't otherwise have access to and in some cases didn't even know existed. Being able to attend meetings that were particularly entrepreneurially driven -- where I could get significant feedback from business leaders and Fellows on my own projects -- allowed me to see different openings, windows and doors that I could explore, push and expand.”



Fellows with Senator Richard Lugar, Former U.S. Senator and President of The Lugar Center



Fellows with Steve Case, Chairman and CEO of Revolution investment firm

Enerelt Batbold: “This Program has created true dynamism in the CAMCA region. It has built a platform for regionalism that has brought together prominent leaders representing various sectors and has enabled cooperation and connectivity between the U.S. and Greater Central Asia. I am astounded by the Fellowship Program’s ability to organize intimate meetings with the most elite policy makers, lobbyists, think tanks, businesses and regional experts that Washington, D.C. has to offer. It is a truly unique opportunity to learn about the U.S. and the CAMCA region in depth and an extraordinary chance to be part of the foundation for a future path towards strengthened cooperation between the U.S. and our region.”



Fellows with William S. Cohen, Former U.S. Secretary of Defense

Hadeia Amiry: “This amazing program gives you an incredible opportunity not only to meet and interact with influential American political and business leaders and experts, but also to learn more about the CAMCA region, all in one platform. These six weeks will have everlasting influence on my life.”

Ruslan Kozhakhmetov: “The Program was an ideal mix of high-level meetings, cultural experiences and social programming. The Fellowship gave me an invaluable perspective on the opportunities across the CAMCA region and I am delighted to be welcomed into its network of more than 200 prominent leaders from the region.”

Hilola Muminova: “By participating in this Program I had an opportunity to see how America works and to meet with the people who have had a part in making U.S. history. It was both inspiring and motivating. The main asset of the Program however, is the network that you gain from meeting the other bright minds participating. I’m happy to know that I have friends across all of Central Asia now.”

Nurlan Kyshtobaev: “It has been a milestone event in my life and I will be returning home with many new ideas and concepts that require further analysis and reflection. I feel fortunate to be an alumnus of this Program and be part of the ever-growing family of Fellows from the CAMCA region.”

Anna Sarkisyan: “This Program turned out to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I consider the Fellowship a true leadership accelerator given the level and volume of the intellectual and emotional wealth we acquired within those six weeks.”

Malik Mukhitdinov: “Overall, I enjoyed every single day of the six-week Program. It was an incredible experience to be a part of the diverse group of Fellows from the CAMCA region. Not only did we have the unique opportunity to meet and speak with current and former senior U.S. government officials and prominent professionals from the academic and business communities, but we also were able to share our own knowledge and experience on greater intra-regional and extra-regional cooperation with these speakers.”

Natia Gvenetadze: “A unique opportunity to meet with world-renowned leaders and experts who encourage you to transform your mindset and think outside the box.”



Fellows with Ann Korologos, Former U.S. Secretary of Labor