

RUMSFELD FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT



2024

WORDS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

We are pleased to report on another productive year of the Foundation's programming and activities in 2024. To our friends and partners, new and old, we thank you for following our work and supporting the vision of our founders.

Reflecting on the past year, I am reminded of a Rumsfeld's Rule:

“The success of an organization will depend on the people with which you surround yourself.”

The Foundation's successes throughout our journey, and certainly in the past year, are a testament to the leadership, ingenuity and comradery of our networks. As part of our Graduate Fellowship Program, we launched a catalog of new initiatives and speaker series, leveraging Fellows' extensive expertise to foster network-wide personal and professional development. Within our CAMCA Fellowship efforts, 2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the CAMCA Regional Forum's establishment, underscoring the CAMCA Network's important aim of navigating regional challenges through a decade of conversation and collaboration.



These achievements, among others, demonstrate the talented and thoughtful individuals who compose our networks and their incredible potential for future growth and impact.

In the coming year, we look forward to capitalizing on this momentum to forge new connections, develop existing partnerships and pursue innovative paths in advancing our mission: fostering leadership, public service and free political and economic systems at home and abroad.

We are grateful for your continued engagement and thank you for making the Foundation's success possible – following the wisdom of the aforementioned Rumsfeld's Rule, we are fortunate that the Foundation is surrounded by a truly terrific community, and we appreciate you being a part of it.

Sarah C. Tonucci

SARAH TONUCCI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

IMPACT SINCE 2007

Mission: *The Rumsfeld Foundation encourages leadership, public service and free political and economic systems at home and abroad. Across our focus areas, we are committed to providing opportunities for rising leaders, honoring service to nation and to promoting liberty.*

\$18.9M+

IN TOTAL GRANTS

212

GRADUATE FELLOWS

299

CAMCA FELLOWS

23

FELLOWSHIP NETWORK
CONFERENCES

10

CAMCA REGIONAL
FORUMS

51

BLOG POSTS



GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

We support a nationwide network of talented professionals selected for their demonstrated leadership, moral character and public service career aspirations. As members of the Graduate Fellowship Network, Fellows receive financial assistance during their graduate studies and are provided ongoing access to robust activities and resources designed to support them in their professional journeys. The network's year-round programming cultivates beneficial connections with like-minded colleagues committed to serving our nation and provides a platform to showcase members' expertise.



2024 FELLOWSHIP STATS

With the addition of 2024's Fellowship class, our Graduate Fellowship Program has supported 212 Graduate Fellows and awarded over \$4.1 million in grants since 2009.

Following the nominations made by our talented program Advisers teaching at universities across the country, 8 scholars were accepted into the Graduate Fellowship Network based on their demonstrated leadership potential as well as their commitment to public service, outstanding intellectual ability, moral character, academic achievements and civic contributions. Their degree studies include fields ranging from security studies and international relations to public policy and philosophy.

ALUMNI NETWORK

Fellowship recipients go on to work in important public service posts benefiting our nation. Such institutions currently include:

Air War College
Arizona State University
Central Intelligence Agency
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Federal Reserve Board
Governors' Offices
Harvard University
Indiana University
International Atomic Energy Agency
NASA

National Defense University
National Nuclear Security Administration
Naval War College
Office of the Deputy Under Sec. of the Army
Purdue University
Tufts University
U.S. Air Force
U.S. Congress
U.S. Dept. of Defense
U.S. Dept. of Justice

U.S. Dept. of State
U.S. Dept. of Treasury
U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Embassies abroad
U.S. GAO
U.S. Navy
U.S. Secret Service
U.S. Strategic Command
U.S.-China Commission
and many more...

2024 NETWORK ACTIVITIES

ALUMNI LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Our network's leadership body is composed of six exceptional network members who help us with planning and developing the network and its initiatives.

As a majority of our inaugural members' terms concluded at the end of 2023, we were pleased to onboard four new Councilmembers at the start of 2024. Their fresh perspectives were a terrific asset to 2024's programming and to mapping out the year ahead. *(See them pictured below after delivering a briefing at the 2024 Conference.)*

2024 SPRING RETREAT

In May, network members gathered in Annapolis, Maryland for our annual daylong retreat. Events included targeted networking, remarks from the former U.S. Amb. for Special Political Affairs at the UN, an alumni career paths panel, an interview with a network member on her experience as a founder of a new generative AI-focused company and a closing dinner on the picturesque Annapolis waterfront.

COLLABORATION

Outside of our events and formal programming, Fellows and Advisers collaborate often by co-authoring articles, inviting each other as speakers and sharing jobs, opportunities and helpful resources.

NETWORK CONNECT

Through our "Network Connect" mentorship initiative, we have made **40** Fellow-to-Fellow matches as of the close of the year. This valuable initiative provides tailored career advice and mentorship to Fellows in early stages of their careers or throughout professional transitions and serves as an avenue for more seasoned alumni to demonstrate leadership and service.

OTHER INITIATIVES & EVENTS

In 2024 we launched a "Meetup Fund" to facilitate Fellows getting together outside of Foundation events, as well as an "Adviser Hours" initiative which allows Fellows direct access to the knowledge of our **20** talented program Advisers.

We also hosted **12** events which included the kick-off of three new series: "Audience with the Author," "Career Conversations" and our "Network Showcase," all which highlight the vast professional expertise and specializations within the network. Through in-person and virtual gatherings, Fellows and Advisers offered unique insights on topics like the federal career hiring process and applying for the Presidential Management Fellowship, trends in supply chain security, nuclear deterrence, U.S. foreign policy and much more.



2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 21-22 - WASHINGTON, D.C.

Our Graduate Fellowship Network's 12th annual flagship gathering featured important policy discussions and expert speakers; extensive networking; a tour of the Pentagon and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial; and a rooftop welcoming reception and closing dinner in downtown D.C.

Fellows and Advisers led roundtable discussions on the following subjects: the future of democracy in America, effective research and analysis in national security, and the development of U.S. tech policy; in addition, a panel of Fellows discussed the major trends, challenges and opportunities in their respective fields, as well as the necessary skills to excel within their sectors (*panel pictured on page 3*).



External speakers included: Amy Walter, (*pictured above*) Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the Cook Political Report, on the 2024 presidential election; Peter Garretson, Senior Fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council, on space and national security; Dr. Mara Karlin, former Assistant Sec. of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities, on writing and implementing a National Defense Strategy; and Luke Coffey, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, on Ukraine's path forward and NATO's future.



At the closing dinner, the **2024 Alumna of the Year Award** was presented to Dr. Meg Reiss (*pictured below*), founder and CEO of SolidIntel Inc. and Alumni Leadership Council member, for her important contributions in her previous service as a National Security Advisor in the U.S. Congress as well as her active engagement, leadership and mentorship in the Fellowship Network. Read more on Meg's outstanding accomplishments in our [2024 award feature blog post](#).



CAMCA FELLOWSHIP

We bring exceptional rising leaders from Central Asia, Mongolia, the Caucasus and Afghanistan (CAMCA) to the U.S. for a high-level, intensive exchange experience designed to forge enduring personal and professional connections among its participants. The Fellowship aims to encourage intraregional cooperation among the program countries as well as to foster stronger relations between the U.S. and the CAMCA region, and serves as a starting point for continued collaboration among the innovative regional leaders that comprise its alumni network.



2024 FELLOWSHIP STATS

With the addition of our two 2024 Fellowship cohorts, we have now supported **299 CAMCA Fellows** throughout **29 Fellowship sessions** in partnership with the **Central Asia-Caucasus Institute** at the **American Foreign Policy Council**.

The 2024 Fellows participated in over **120** meetings in Washington, D.C. and dozens more throughout their travels to **5** cities where they learned about governance and economic development at the local level: Philadelphia, PA; Albany and New York City, New York; and Norfolk (*pictured above touring the Naval Station Norfolk and the USS Porter*) and Williamsburg, Virginia.

2024 FELLOWS

The 2024 Fellows represent a new generation of leaders dedicated to regional connectivity from the **10 CAMCA countries** including: **Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.**

2024 Fellows held the following positions:

- Chairman of the Association of Berry Growers of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Anaklia Sea Port
- Chief of Party for USAID's "Safe Migration in Central Asia" Project
- Co-Founder and Co-CEO of an insurTech company
- Country Director for the regional USAID Trade Central Asia Activity
- Head of Corporate Communications and PR at a prominent Azerbaijani group of companies
- Head of the Financial Markets Department at the National Bank of Tajikistan
- Head of the Georgian National Tourism Administration
- Policy Director of EuroChamber Mongolia
- Senior Multimedia Journalist and Broadcaster at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Armenian Service

PROGRAM MEETINGS

2024 Fellows met with top leaders and experts including: Damon Wilson, CEO of the National Endowment for Democracy; Dr. John Hamre, President and CEO of CSIS; Amb. Kurt Volker, former U.S. Amb. to NATO; Dr. Brianne Todd, Director for Central Asian Affairs at the U.S. National Security Council; Stephen Biegun, Senior Vice President of Global Public Policy at Boeing; key region-focused officials at the U.S. Departments of State and Defense and USAID; and with representatives at the United Nations, World Bank, Bank of America and more.



A special highlight from our Fall 2024 Fellows’ program was a Pentagon tour during which Fellows visited our founder’s two official Secretary of Defense portraits. (Pictured above.)

Thank you to all of our friends and partners who met with the 2024 Fellows!

CAMCA NETWORK

The Fellowship’s alumni group, the **CAMCA Network**, organizes year-round network events and activities, in addition to developing joint projects focused on regional cooperation. The nearly 300-member group is led by the **CAMCA Network Board**, composed of a representative from each country, whose members meet regularly.

In 2024, the network established an official membership fee which will fund network projects and initiatives. Additionally, the network’s sector-based Working Groups organized meetings to discuss joint opportunities within their fields.

Hosted alongside the 2024 CAMCA Regional Forum in Bishkek, the network’s annual in-person meeting included updates from the Chairs of each Working Group and the annual CAMCA Network Alumni Award presentations. The network also organized the 2nd ESTEC Conference, a Forum sideline event focused on regional education reform and innovation.

In addition, a delegation of women leaders from the network traveled to the UAE in September to forge beneficial partnerships between the CAMCA and MENA regions. (Read more on page 9.)



CAMCA REGIONAL FORUM

JUNE 2024
BISHKEK, KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

As part of our efforts to encourage intraregional cooperation among the CAMCA countries and to support and engage our CAMCA Fellowship's alumni network, the Foundation annually organizes the CAMCA Regional Forum in partnership with the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and the CAMCA Network.



The **2024 CAMCA Regional Forum** was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic over June 12th-13th, convening over **300** attendees from **25** countries including **65+** speakers to discuss key regional issues and developments surrounding the 2024 Forum theme, "**CAMCA's Way Forward: Advancing Through Innovation and Strengthened Intraregional Ties.**"

Keynote speakers included: Edil Baisalov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic; Amb. Terhi Hakala, EU Special Representative to Central Asia; and Nuria Kutnaeva, Minister of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic. Other panelists represented top industry leaders and experts from organizations like MIT, Google, Big Sky Capital, American University of Central Asia, International Energy Agency, IFC, CIPE, U.S. Institute of Peace, Baku International Sea Trade Port and many more.

Forum sessions featured topics such as: regional cooperation amidst current geopolitics and geoeconomics; entrepreneurship; digital development; infrastructure projects; women's empowerment; education; media; investment opportunities and more.

Representatives of regionally-focused companies and organizations also participated in the Forum's Business Expo, showcasing their unique products and initiatives across the CAMCA region.

WORDS FROM OUR CAMCA FORUM COMMUNITY:

"The leaders of the CAMCA Network are united by the desire for progress, prosperity and people-to-people networking in the CAMCA region...I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all whom organized this Forum in Bishkek. Their efforts help to strengthen ties and develop cooperation in our region."

"The Forum is a premier annual event bringing together top leaders and professionals from across the CAMCA region...Thanks to the event organizers for this fantastic opportunity to be connected with influential leaders and contribute to the dialogue on enhancing intraregional cooperation and collaboration."



WE LOOK FORWARD TO HOSTING THE 2025 CAMCA REGIONAL FORUM IN ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA OVER JUNE 19TH-20TH! LEARN MORE AT WWW.CAMCAFORUM.ORG.



2024 NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

CAMCA FELLOWSHIP - NETWORK DELEGATION VISITS THE UAE

A delegation of women from the CAMCA Network visited the UAE this past fall to advance the network's connections with the MENA business community and to attend the **2024 WE EMPOWER Summit**, an international women's empowerment convening, organized by the U.S. Embassy in the UAE. The delegation was spearheaded by longtime CAMCA Network member, Nazira Beishenalieva, a current resident of Dubai and native of the Kyrgyz Republic. Nazira facilitated several key meetings for delegates to discuss promising opportunities for cross-collaboration between the UAE and CAMCA business communities. Composed of leaders from six countries with wide-ranging backgrounds, the delegates showcased the region's talent in entrepreneurship, education, banking, finance, design, communications and more. Read more in our ["CAMCA Going Global" blog post](#). *(Picture at top.)*

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP - WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FIRESIDE CHAT

Our Board President, Torie Clarke, hosted a festive December reception and fireside chat on "**Women's Leadership in National Security, Defense and Public Service**" at her home in Washington, D.C. for the women of our Graduate Fellowship Network. Fellows heard important insights on navigating leadership from a talented panel including Torie; Michèle Flournoy, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Sec. of Defense for Strategy; and Mary Claire Murphy, former Special Assistant & Director of Protocol to the Secretaries of Defense. *(Picture below.)*



SUPPORTING OUR WORK

TO OUR DONORS

Your generosity plays a direct role in supporting the next generation of U.S. and CAMCA leaders. Thank you for being a part of their journeys and our mission.

“The network has provided me with a cadre of other professionals who can contribute to my success...and offer me their experiences that help me grow as a student, an analyst, and a human.”

- Graduate Fellow

“Participating in the program was a groundbreaking and transformative experience for me that fundamentally reshaped my thinking.” - CAMCA Fellow

For those interested in supporting our targeted efforts and programming, tax-deductible contributions can be made online or mailed by check.

\$1 MILLION+

In profits from Don Rumsfeld’s projects - his memoir, *Known and Unknown*, the *Churchill Solitaire* app and his last book, *When the Center Held* - have benefitted our programs.

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