

Alliance
for International Exchange

Annual Conference

Embracing



Innovation & Change



October 18-19
Washington, DC 2022

Welcome Message from the Alliance Leadership

Welcome to the 2022 Annual Conference!

This gathering is a vital opportunity to work together as a community toward our shared goals and future. As the pandemic recedes as our primary concern, we're seeing more clearly the full picture of how our field has changed – as well as the need and opportunity for changes yet to come. This year's conference focus, Embracing Innovation and Change, is meant to recognize and encourage the collective creativity needed to navigate the evolving international exchange industry. We're so pleased that the conference is again fully in person and that we're welcoming more than 215 participants. The conference, like our community, is regaining momentum and strength. We're particularly happy to seize on this momentum as we look forward to our 30th anniversary year in 2023 and welcome Mark as our new Executive Director.

This year has seen many successes for the field as we've adapted to, and continue to emerge from, the pandemic. For example, federally funded exchanges began to return to in-person programming, and privately funded exchanges also had an in-person resurgence as travel restrictions were lifted. Virtual exchanges are continuing to thrive as a complement to traditional exchange programs. Embracing online exchanges as a mainstay of our programs is an example of our community successfully utilizing a necessary change as an opportunity for innovation.

Of course, we're all still feeling the effects of the pandemic on our work in significant ways. Visa processing challenges and recent travel disruptions have made running exchange programs more complicated. Our community continues to face decisions around maintaining remote work environments or transitioning to hybrid or fully in-person schedules. Staffing shortages and hiring

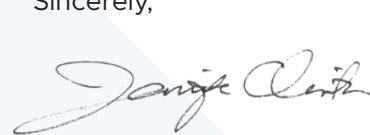
difficulties are felt across sectors, including for Alliance members and stakeholders.

We constructed the conference sessions to help our members, supporters, and stakeholders embrace these changes as opportunities for innovation and growth. We're thrilled to welcome a strong delegation from our partners at the Department of State Bureaus of Educational and Cultural Affairs and Consular Affairs. We look forward to hearing from a panel of Capitol Hill veterans who will give us a picture of the political environment as we head into the midterm elections. And we're pleased to offer plenary sessions on other key topics, including Consular Affairs activities, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), and the domestic impact of public diplomacy. We also encourage you to connect with your colleagues from across the field during our opening luncheon, networking breaks, and reception.

At this critical juncture for our field, we look forward to unifying behind our collective mission of promoting the growth and impact of the programs to which we have dedicated our careers.

Thank you for joining us at this year's Annual Conference.

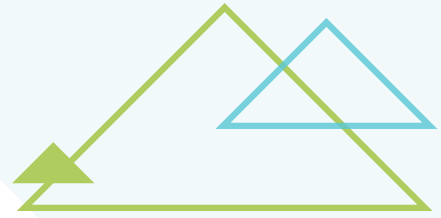
Sincerely,



Jennifer Clinton
Board Chair



Mark Overmann
Executive Director



2022 Year in Review

Thank you for joining us at our Annual Conference in Washington D.C. and a warm welcome to all attendees.

This year, the international exchange community has simultaneously faced the consequences of the global pandemic and an inflection point for the modern working world. In response, we have made significant efforts to rebuild and advance people-to-people exchanges, thereby strengthening our shared mission. As in past years, many of the successes highlighted below reflect continued bipartisan support in Congress and our community's partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). Below is a snapshot of our key efforts in 2022.

ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Advocacy Day and Exchange Week in the District

The Alliance's Advocacy Day returned this year, and for the first time, was held online. 92 Alliance member participants representing 29 member organizations met virtually with congressional offices in early March to advocate for international exchange programs. They met with 110 House and Senate offices, including direct meetings with Members of Congress, from 27 states around the country. In lieu of a Congressional Reception, the Alliance hosted a special online event with ECA's Assistant Secretary Lee Satterfield, marking her first address to the Alliance community since her confirmation.

As in past years, Alliance members reinforced the requests made during Advocacy Day through meetings with congressional staff in the state and district offices as part of Exchange Week in the District later in the spring.

Congressional Appropriations

In support of exchange program funding in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, the Alliance continued the advocacy campaign to encourage an increased appropriation for exchange from \$753 million to \$1.1 billion. Thanks to the exchange community's united efforts, the House letter submitted by Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA) was cosigned by 107 Representatives, while the Senate letter led by Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) was cosigned by 36 Senators. We are happy to report that both letters again supported the Alliance's specific request for educational and cultural exchange programs. As in prior years, the Alliance sent written appropriations requests to congressional offices, organized follow-up engagement with those offices, and submitted written testimony in support of our \$1.1 billion request.

Visa Processing Challenges

The Alliance engaged often with ECA and the Bureau of Consular Affairs on behalf of our members experiencing significant visa processing challenges. Throughout 2022, we have urged the State Department to prioritize visa applications for BridgeUSA applicants. We also consistently raised this issue with congressional offices. The Alliance signed on as a supporter of House Resolution 901 reaffirming bipartisan congressional support for BridgeUSA programs, which also requested prioritization of BridgeUSA visa processing. Additionally, we supported the drafting and encouraged cosigners of a House letter urging prioritized visa processing for these programs. The bipartisan letter to Secretary Blinken, led by Rep. Chris Pappas (D-NH), Rep. Blake Moore (R-UT), Rep. John Curtis (R-UT), and Rep. Ann Kuster (D-NH), had 21 cosigners.

2022 Year in Review continued

Also, the Alliance submitted a comment letter opposing a 53% increase in visa processing fees for students and exchange visitors proposed by the Department of State. We developed the letter after collecting comments from our members.

Rebuild BridgeUSA Initiative

Given the especially significant impact of the pandemic on privately funded sponsors, the Alliance launched the Rebuild BridgeUSA Initiative (RBI). Through this initiative, we convened Alliance members across the privately funded programs to address overlapping issues and find collective solutions. Priorities for the RBI Working Group include mitigating the visa processing challenges outlined above, program expansion, and modernizing the DS-2019 form. The Working Group's Steering Committee met with ECA staff to share recommendations regarding these priorities to aid in rebuilding people-to-people exchanges.

Grassroots & Media Engagement

The Alliance also worked actively to inform and keep stakeholders involved through the People for International Exchange initiative ("P4"). We regularly updated them through our news digests and hundreds joined our coalition letters. Some are also joining us at this Conference. We promoted and supported media interests on the challenges facing our community.

Au Pair Program

The Alliance continued to engage with ECA in our push for a regulation clarifying that Federal Au Pair program regulations supersede state and local laws. In support of the Au Pair program, we filed an amicus brief in the *Posada* case with the First Circuit Court of Appeals. The brief explained in detail the purpose of the Federal Au Pair cultural exchange program – to advance U.S. foreign policy – as well as the crucial role of sponsors administering the program on behalf of the U.S. Department of State.

Afghan Exchange Alumni

Following our work around the Afghan International Exchange Alumni Task Force organized in late 2021, the Alliance supported a House letter urging the Departments of State and Homeland Security to issue a blanket waiver of the two-year residency requirement for all Afghan Fulbright students. The letter to Secretaries Blinken and Mayorkas was led by Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) and signed by twelve cosigners.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPRESENTATION

Surveys & Fact Sheets

The Alliance, with the support of InterExchange, finalized the second iteration of the 2021 impact survey for Summer Work Travel and Camp Counselor host employers to understand how the reduced numbers of J-1 Visa Exchange Visitors impacted business' peak seasons. One of the most powerful tools we have are the fact sheets that outline the wide participation and financial impact of exchange programs in each state. We updated those fact sheets to showcase more effectively the impact of privately and publicly funded exchange programs on a local level. The Alliance also developed a new section on our website with resources related to efforts by the Afghan Task Force.

Exchange Day

This year marked the return of widespread in person Exchange Day celebrations. Alliance members and partners hosted more than 75 Exchange Day events across 27 states and the District of Columbia, which is comparable to pre-pandemic celebration numbers.

2022 Year in Review continued

Representation

The Alliance represented its members at key conferences, including WETM in Malta, AIEA in New Orleans, and NAFSA in Denver. The Alliance Executive Committee also represented the membership and its key interests in meeting with Assistant Secretary Satterfield and her Senior Leadership team early in her tenure.

Annual Conference

After two years of online and hybrid programming, the Alliance returns to hosting the Annual Conference fully in-person. Sessions and panels emphasize best practices to help attendees embrace change through innovation. Leaders in the exchange community will join panels to discuss innovation, diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, public diplomacy, and updates from various State Department bureaus. The conference also features the traditional breakout sessions with program staff from ECA. Throughout the conference, attendees can connect with each other during organized networking sessions.

2023 AND BEYOND

This past year has brought many challenges and changes for the international exchange community. On the global health front, the pandemic continues, but the world has learned how to better manage its impact. Our community may also be impacted by the results of the upcoming midterm elections and the shift in Washington D.C.'s political dynamics they pose. This being said, it is an exciting time for the Alliance as it undergoes a new leadership transition. As we move into 2023, we can use these changes as opportunities to innovate and adapt the international exchange industry to the current circumstances. Given our wide support among Congress and within the Administration, the Alliance will continue to inform and help influence policy issues critical to educational and cultural exchange. It is also encouraging to see that the interest in participating in these important programs remains incredibly high, which bolsters our efforts to rebuild and strengthen the Alliance community going forward.

We look forward to our continued collaboration in 2023 and beyond.



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Conference Agenda

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18

10:30 – 11:30 AM

General Session

Business Meeting

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM

Rock Creek Main Lobby

Networking Coffee Break

12:30 – 2:00 PM

General Session



Opening Luncheon with Keynote Speakers
Sponsored by Sunset Pool Management, Inc.

2:15 – 3:30 PM

General Session

Plenary Panel – Embracing Change Through Innovation

› **Moderator:** Jennifer Clinton, *Cultural Vistas*

› **Panelists:** David Patton, *American Councils for International Education*
Lynn Shotwell, *Worldwide ERC*
Christopher Washington, *Franklin University*

3:45 – 5:15 PM

Concurrent Sessions: Breakout Meetings with ECA Program Staff

Meeting Room 8/9

Academic Programs

- › Fred Boll, *Office of American Spaces*
- › Joe Bookbinder, *Office of English Language Programs*
- › Marianne Craven, *Office of Academic Programs*
- › Anthony Koliha, *Office of Global Educational Programs*
- › Stephen Money, *Office of Academic Programs*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Beverly Attallah, *FHI 360*

Meeting Room 3

Au Pair

- › Darra Dirska, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Cristina Hatfield, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Sarah McNamara, *AuPairCare*

Meeting Room 4

Citizen Exchanges/IVLP

- › Anne Grimes, *Office of International Visitors*
- › David Kennedy, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- › Matthew McMahon, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- › Alison Moylan, *Office of International Visitors*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Mark Rebstock, *Meridian International Center*

General Session

Summer Work Travel

- › Ethan Bursofsky, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Gia Crawford, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Tanya Burovtseva, *InterExchange*

Meeting Room 2

Teacher

- › Olga O'Neil, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Lymari Torres Reyes, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Daniel Ebert, *Greenheart International*

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Potomac
Ballroom
Salon 1



Reception

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19

8:30 – 9:30 AM

General Session



Breakfast Plenary Panel – Washington Update

Sponsored by High Sierra Pools, Inc.

- › **Moderator:** Katherine Brown, *Global Ties U.S.*
- › **Panelists:** Parker Novak, *U.S. Global Leadership Coalition*
Romesh Ratnesar, *Bloomberg Opinion*
Tracy Taylor, *Alignment Government Strategies*

9:45 – 11:15 AM

Concurrent Sessions: Breakout Meetings with ECA Program Staff

Meeting Room 4

Camp Counselor

- › Ethan Bursofsky, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Gia Crawford, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Andrew Newberry, *AIFS - Camp America*

Meeting Room 2

Grants

- › Mary D'Amico, *Grants Division*
- › Jason Moxley, *Grants Division*
- › Lana Muck, *Program Management Division*
- › Blair Robinson, *Grants Division*
- › Elizabeth Royal, *Grants Division*
- › Deborah Thompson, *Grants and Assistance Division*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Lisa Choate, *American Councils for International Education*

General Session

Intern/Trainee

- › Darra Dirska, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Amy Kenney, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › Glenn Marquez, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Gennady Babankov, *Society for Human Resource Management*

Meeting Room 3

J-1 High School

- › Olga O’Neil, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Program Administration*
- › Melinda Quigley, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Linda Mori, *Cultural Homestay International*

Meeting Room 8/9

Virtual Exchange

- › Edward Findlay, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- › Molly Kress, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- › Pedro Martin, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- › **Alliance Facilitator:** Christine Shiau, *Stevens Initiative at The Aspen Institute*

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
General Session

ECA Senior Leadership Panel

- › **Moderator:** Marcie Schneider, *Intrax*
- › **Panelists:** Stacy White, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges*
Ethan Rosenzweig, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs*
Rafik Mansour, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy*
Nicole Elkon, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange*

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Working Lunch Concurrent Sessions

General Session

Navigating DOS and U.S Consulates with the Bureau of Consular Affairs

- › **Presenters:** Julie Stufft, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services*
Rebecca Wall, *Visa Office, Field Operations*

Meeting Room 2

Domestic Impact of Public Diplomacy

- › **Presenter:** Vivian Walker, *U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy*

Meeting Room 4

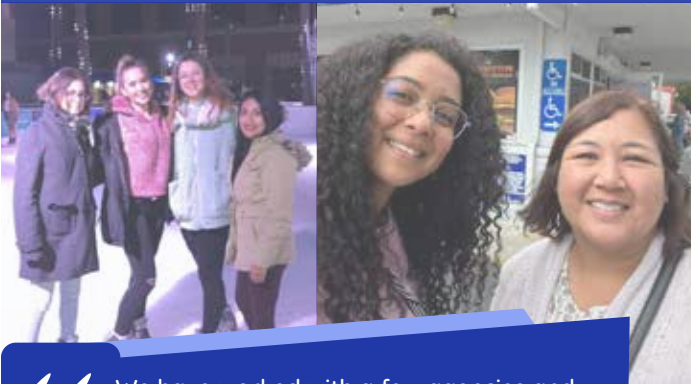
ECA Update on DEIA

- › **Moderator:** Wagaye Johannes, *World Learning*
- › **Presenter:** Stacy White, *Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges*

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Speaker Biographies



Katherine Brown

President and CEO | Global Ties U.S.

Katherine Brown works with nearly 90 member organizations to implement transformative international exchange and sub-national diplomacy programs that work to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. Before joining Global Ties U.S. in 2018, Katherine was a Public Policy Manager at Facebook, Inc., where she was also in residence as a Council on Foreign Relations' International Affairs Fellow. Her U.S. government experience includes serving as the Executive Director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; Professional Staff Member at the House Foreign Affairs Committee;

Communications Advisor at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan; and Assistant to the National Security Advisor at the White House. She received her Ph.D. in communications from Columbia University in 2013. Her book, "Your Country, Our War: The Press and Diplomacy in Afghanistan" was published by Oxford University Press in March 2019. Katherine is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Georgetown University's Security Studies Program and a member of Board for the Alliance for International Exchange, University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy, and the Truman National Security Project.



Jennifer Clinton

President and CEO | Cultural Vistas

Jennifer has devoted her career to international education and business because of a deep passion for bridging cultures, people, and ideas. She is best known for developing, implementing, and managing bold organizational transitions, as well as helping individuals and nonprofits to realize their full potential.

Jennifer joined Cultural Vistas, a nonprofit exchange organization that annually provides global skill-building experiences for over 6,000 individuals and organizations in the United States and more than 135 countries every year, as its President and CEO in November 2017. Prior to joining Cultural Vistas, she served for five-and-a-half years as President and CEO of Global Ties U.S., where she led a grassroots network of 120 community-based organizations in 45 states and 21 countries around the world that engage 40,000 volunteers who implement public diplomacy and international exchange programs in close partnership with the U.S. Department of State. Prior to Global Ties U.S., Jennifer held leadership roles at the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars, the Telecommunications Industry Association, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

Jennifer serves on the boards of Women's Foreign Policy Group, the Alliance for International Exchange, and Open DC. She earned her executive MBA at the University of Maryland, Robert H. Smith School of Business; Ph.D. in French Literature at the University of California, Davis; and her bachelor's degree in political science and French from Marquette University. Jennifer grew up outside of Detroit and lives in Maryland with her husband and son.

Speaker Biographies



Nicole Elkon

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Nicole Elkon joined the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange in September 2021. Until June 2021, Ms. Elkon was the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Human Rights First, an independent advocacy organization focused on human rights and the rule of law. Prior to her position as COO, Ms. Elkon was a Senior Advisor at Results for America (RFA), a non-profit organization focused on advancing data-driven, evidence-based public policy at all levels of government. She also served as Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of ECA and was Director of the Office of Public Private Partnerships at ECA working to leverage strategic partnerships to enhance Administration foreign policy priorities. From December 2001 through January 2003, Ms. Elkon was the Chief of Staff and Director of Communications of the 9/11 United Services Group (USG). Prior to joining the USG, Ms. Elkon was Vice President, International Communications and Strategic Planning at Merrill Lynch. She also worked in The White House as the Director for Planning for the National Security Council and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Scheduling from 1995 to 1999. Ms. Elkon is a native New Yorker. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.



Wagaye Johannes

Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer | World Learning

Wagaye Johannes is the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer for World Learning. She is responsible for driving the implementation of World Learning's DEI priorities across the organization's operations and programs. She works to foster a more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace, learning environment, and culture, in addition to supporting the entire World Learning team's contributions to lasting, cultural change. Wagaye has extensive experience at the intersection of DEI and international education. She was the former director of operations and organizational development at Diversity Abroad, where she led efforts to strengthen the organizational infrastructure and visibility and led DEI consulting projects, including an assessment of World Learning and the School for International Training in 2020-21. Before this, she worked for the Institute of International Education (IIE) where she launched Generation Study Abroad, a campaign involving a network of more than 700 institutions to increase and diversify participation in study abroad. She also led the organization's first diversity and inclusion task force and headed internal global communications. She has experience designing programs with a global, inclusive lens and facilitating DEI trainings, and brings with her a global perspective, having worked in Japan, Germany, Hungary, and the Netherlands.

Speaker Biographies



Rafik Mansour

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, Rafik Mansour is currently the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy at the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. From 2019 to 2021, he served as the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires/Chief of Mission in Singapore, leading an embassy of 24 U.S. government agencies which strategically strengthened bilateral and regional ties ranging from security cooperation to economic prosperity in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Prior to his assignment to Singapore, he served as Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan, Armenia (2016-2019). Earlier in his career, he was the Senior Deputy Director of Public Diplomacy (PD) in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, helping lead PD efforts, policy, and resources in 50 countries. Other assignments include Public Affairs Officer in Libya and Algeria, Cultural Counselor in Iraq and France, Political Officer in Italy, and Political/Economic Officer in Russia. He started his Foreign Service career as Vice Consul in Haiti. Mr. Mansour is the recipient of numerous Superior and Meritorious Honor awards from the State Department. The Italian President awarded him the Italian Order of Merit in 2019. In 2009, he was the runner-up for the Edward Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy for exemplary use of soft power in combating violent extremism in Algeria.

Mr. Mansour obtained a B.S. in Biology and a B.A. in French Literature from the University of California, Irvine. He later received a master's degree in National Security Strategy from the National War College. He speaks Arabic, Russian, French, Italian, and Creole.



Michael McCarry

Former Executive Director | Alliance for International Exchange

Michael McCarry served as the Alliance's Executive Director from 1994 until his retirement in 2015. During his tenure, the Alliance membership more than doubled in size, and the Alliance established itself as the collective policy voice of the U.S. exchange community.

Prior to joining the Alliance, he was a USIA Foreign Service Officer with assignments in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Beijing. In China, he negotiated the restoration of the bilateral Fulbright program, which the Chinese government suspended after the Tiananmen Square violence. He has studied Thai and Chinese.

While in the Foreign Service, he also served as Staff Director in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

He is a graduate of Notre Dame and the University of Texas (Austin), and was a graduate fellow at Melbourne University.

Speaker Biographies



Parker Novak

Deputy Government Relations Director | U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

Parker Novak is the Deputy Government Relations Director for the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, a bipartisan advocacy group that works to make America's development and diplomacy programs a keystone of U.S. foreign policy. He previously served in several roles at the International Republican Institute (IRI), including as Resident Program Director in Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Novak has over 14 years of experience working across foreign policy, government, and politics. To date, he has lived in six countries and worked on 14. He is frequently called upon as a subject matter specialist and his analysis has been featured by several media outlets, including ABC Australia, Asia Times, Australian Financial Review, The Diplomat, The Interpreter, Nikkei Asia, and Voice of America.



Mark Overmann

Executive Director | Alliance for International Exchange

Mark Overmann re-joined the Alliance as Executive Director in October 2022, having also served as Assistant and Deputy Director from 2009-2016. Mark has nearly 20 years of experience in the international education and exchange, university, and federal consulting sectors. He previously served as a Senior Manager at Accenture Federal Services supporting global health and diplomacy programs, Vice President of External Affairs at InterExchange, Director of College Communications at Georgetown University, and Program Associate for Communications at Global Ties U.S.

Mark has a BA in English from the University of Notre Dame and an MA in International Communication from American University's School of International Service. He is coauthor with Sherry Mueller of *Working World: Careers in International Education, Exchange, and Development* (Georgetown University Press, 2008, 2014).

Speaker Biographies



David Patton

President and CEO | American Councils for International Education

David P. Patton, PhD, became President and CEO of American Councils in August 2019, following his tenure as acting president since March 2019. Previously, Dr. Patton served as an executive vice president, with primary responsibility for the oversight of American Councils' regional offices, higher education portfolio, and development efforts. In 1993, Dr. Patton joined American Councils to serve as the New Independent States (NIS) regional director in Moscow. He was named the vice president for field operations in 2002, overseeing more than 50 field offices in 15 countries in Europe and Eurasia. Earlier in his career, Dr. Patton served as deputy director of the NIS Exchanges and Training Project, a major USAID-funded program for short-term professional development for NIS citizens. He also worked as the assistant director of The Ohio State University Center for Slavic and East European Studies. Dr. Patton also serves as the president of the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research. He has studied and worked in the NIS region and Central Europe since 1983. He completed his PhD in Slavic linguistics at The Ohio State University. His dissertation is on analytic development in the modern Russian language. He completed his bachelor's degree in Russian studies at the University of Oregon.



Romesh Ratnesar

Deputy Editor | Bloomberg Opinion

Romesh Ratnesar is a member of the editorial board of Bloomberg Opinion, where he oversees the board's coverage of national security, immigration and education. He is also a regular contributor to Bloomberg Businessweek and a contributing editor at Washingtonian magazine.

From 2015 to 2017, Ratnesar served in the U.S. Department of State as senior advisor and chief of staff to the Under Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy. He was also a senior policy adviser on Michael R. Bloomberg's 2020 presidential campaign. Prior to joining government, Romesh was the deputy editor and international editor of Bloomberg Businessweek. He previously spent more than a dozen years as a writer, editor and correspondent at Time, serving as the magazine's foreign editor and deputy managing editor. He is the author of *Tear Down This Wall: A City, a President and the Speech that Ended the Cold War* and has written for The New York Times, The Washington Post, The New Republic, Slate, Washington Monthly, Mother Jones and Air Mail. Ratnesar is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a lecturer in journalism at Brandeis University and a former New America international security fellow. He has an M.A. and B.A. in history from Stanford University and lives with his family in Washington, D.C.

Speaker Biographies



Ethan Rosenzweig

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Ethan Rosenzweig joins ECA/A from Atlanta, GA, where he worked at Emory University's School of Law as Associate Dean overseeing enrollment management and student services including international recruiting and engagement activities. A graduate of Emory Law, Ethan clerked for the Honorable G. Ernest Tidwell of the U.S. District Court of Northern Georgia and then practiced law in Charleston, South Carolina. Before Emory, he completed a Presidential Management Fellowship at the U.S. Department of Education and received his undergraduate and master's degrees in public policy from American University. Originally from Louisiana where his family still resides, he says he doesn't return often enough and misses the crawfish and jambalaya.



Marcie Schneider

President | Intrax

Marcie Schneider has been a Senior Executive in the International and Cultural Exchange Industry for over 25 years. During these years Marcie has successfully led Global teams in Au Pair, Work and Travel, Internship, High school exchange, Language, Volunteer, and Study Abroad. She is passionate about the impact that cultural exchange starting at an early age has on participants and views the industry as critical for making the world a better place for all.

Marcie has been instrumental in integrating sales/operational and strategic issues using global teams. Contract negotiation at international and government levels has been a key feature in her years in the industry. New revenue opportunities have been of key interest to Marcie as well as developing partnerships and friendships in many countries. Marcie has expertise at building winning cross-cultural teams and partner networks both domestically and globally and is passionate about New Business Development to positively impact revenue and bottom-line growth.

Marcie is currently President at Intrax Inc. based in San Francisco. Her career has taken her to over 80 countries, and she has lived in Tel Aviv, London and multiple U.S cities. In her spare time, she loves to hike, travel and enjoy new cultures together with her husband and family.

Speaker Biographies



Lynn Shotwell

President and CEO | Worldwide ERC

Lynn Shotwell is President and CEO of Worldwide ERC, the world's leading association for professionals engaged in global talent mobility. She is a mission-focused, visionary leader with unique expertise in the intersection of international employment law, global talent mobility and corporate social responsibility. For over two decades, Lynn has helped top organizations create global workforces by developing education and networking programs for HR, immigration and mobility professionals, as well as advancing public policy by building coalitions with key stakeholders in the U.S. and abroad.

Prior to joining Worldwide ERC®, Shotwell served as Senior Vice President, Global Outreach and Operations for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the world's largest HR professional society. Earlier in her career, Lynn served as Executive Director at the Council for Global Immigration (CFGI)/American Council on International Personnel (ACIP), where she drove significant growth and led the organization's merger with SHRM in 2018.

Shotwell currently serves as co-chair of the Business Migration Advisory Group to the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Most recently, Lynn served as chair-elect of World Education Services, and prior to that, as secretariat of the World Federation of People Management Associations. Shotwell also participated in the B20 Education and Employment Working Group, as chair of the Alliance for International Exchange, the European Union Expert Working Group on Economic Migration, Consortium of HR Management Associations, Compete America, Multinational Employers for Working Spouses and the Executive Working Group on Global Mobility Policies. Lynn is a frequent lecturer on global mobility policy. Shotwell testified before the US Congress, United Nations, and World Trade Organization, and she appeared on numerous television and radio shows.

Lynn received her JD from the University of Michigan and BA from Michigan State University and holds GMS certification.



Julie Stufft

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services | Bureau of Consular Affairs

Julie M. Stufft assumed the role of Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services in the Bureau of Consular Affairs in August 2021. Prior to assuming her current position, she served as Managing Director for Visa Services. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister-Counselor, Julie previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission in the U.S. Embassies in Moldova and in Djibouti. Previously, she served in the National Security Council, Russia, Ethiopia, and Poland, and in the State Department Operations Center. She is a 2021-22 International Women's Forum Fellow, and was a 2014-15 Fellow to Seminar XXI, MIT's Center for International Studies. She is the recipient of seven Superior Honor Awards, and the American Foreign Service Association's Award for Constructive Dissent by a Senior Officer. Julie is originally from Ohio, and holds degrees from Case Western Reserve University and Duke University. She speaks Russian, Romanian, French and Polish.



Tracy Taylor

Counsel | Alignment Government Strategies

Tracy has over twenty-five years of experience in legislative, regulatory, and public policy advocacy at the federal level. Prior to joining Alignment Government Strategies, she was a partner at the law firm of Williams & Jensen, PLLC for twenty years. Tracy has experience in the executive and congressional branches, having started her career on Capitol Hill for then-Congressman Jim Courter (R-NJ-12), followed by a position in the administration of President George H.W. Bush as director of a federal advisory committee and head of a grant program at the Agency for International Development. Tracy also was staff director for International Programs at two Republican National Conventions, worked on the 1988 presidential inaugural, and was involved with media for the Florida state party during the 1992 election cycle.

Tracy has volunteered on a variety of political campaigns and conventions around the country. She is a member of the California and District of Columbia bar associations. Tracy is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and George Washington University Law School.

Speaker Biographies



Vivian Walker

Executive Director | U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

Vivian S. Walker is the Executive Director of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Currently an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a member of the *Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board*, she has also served as a Faculty Fellow in the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California and the Guest Editor for the CPD *Perspectives* series. She has taught at Central European University's School of Public Policy and served as a Research Fellow at the CEU Center for Media, Data and Society. She is a former Professor of National Security Strategy at the National War College in Washington, DC and the National Defense College of the United Arab Emirates. In her 26-year career with the State Department, she rose to the senior rank of Minister Counselor. She twice served as a Deputy Chief of Mission (Croatia and Armenia), twice as an Office Director (Southeastern European Affairs and the Office of Press and Public Diplomacy for Europe), a Public Affairs Officer (Kazakhstan, with coverage of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan), a Cultural Affairs officer (Tunisia) and an Information Officer (Haiti). Other assignments include a two-year professorship in strategic studies at the National War College, a yearlong assignment as the State Department's Regional Border Coordinator in Afghanistan, and a fellowship on the US Atlantic Council, where she led the first interagency discussion on public diplomacy in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks.

Dr. Walker has published and lectured extensively on the practice of public diplomacy in complex information environments. She graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and earned her doctorate in English language and literature from the University of Chicago. She speaks French, Russian and Croatian.



Rebecca Wall

Visa Policy Analyst | Bureau of Consular Affairs

Rebecca Wall joined the State Department in 2008 and previously served in Dakar, Dhaka, Bangui, Bangkok and Djibouti. She is currently working in the Visa Office in Washington, DC. Hailing from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she has a four-year-old daughter and a rowdy Bangladeshi street dog.

Speaker Biographies



Christopher Washington

Executive Vice President and Provost | Franklin University

Dr. Christopher Washington serves as the Provost and Executive Vice President at Franklin University, a private, nonprofit institution of higher education located in Columbus Ohio. Franklin University actively pursues innovations in academic program offerings and student engagement, in corporate and international academic partnerships, and in the use of academic technology as a way to increase student access and success, adapt to the changing needs of learners, and that respond to disruptions in society and the professions. As an agent of international cooperation, supporter of international exchange, and facilitator of leadership development, Dr. Washington serves as the immediate Past Chair of the Board of Directors of Global Ties U.S., on the Board of the International Visitor's Council in Columbus Ohio and as a member of the America 250 Commission's International Advisory Council. He is the recipient of numerous academic and professional awards including eLearning! Magazine's "eLearning! Champion" Award; Western Illinois University's "Distinguished Alumni" Award; Pi Lambda Theta's "Leadership in Education" Award; Ohio Magazine's "Excellence in Education" Award, and The Ohio State University's 2021 College of Education and Human Ecology "Career Achievement" Award.



Scott Weinhold

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Scott Weinhold joined ECA from the leadership team of the Department of State's Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE). He served as Assistant Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan 2020-2021, where he managed the State Department team during the August 2021 civilian evacuation of over 124,000 people from the HKIA airfield. Mr. Weinhold joined the Foreign Service in 1992 and is a career member of the U.S. Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor. He served as Acting Deputy Chief of Mission in Ankara, Turkey 2017-2019, serving concurrently as Minister Counselor for Public Affairs. Prior to that he was Consul General at the U.S. Consulate General in Shenyang, China. His previous positions include Public Diplomacy postings in Beijing, Tokyo, Canberra, Ulaanbaatar, Ho Chi Minh City, Taipei and Chengdu. He is the recipient of the Department of State's Distinguished Honor Award for his service in Kabul as well as multiple Superior Honor Awards. His languages are Mandarin Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Mongolian and basic Japanese.

Mr. Weinhold is originally from Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Virginia in 1989 with a double major in African Studies and Asian History.

Speaker Biographies



Stacy White

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Stacy E. White joined the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges in January 2021. In that role, she is responsible for overseeing a broad array of professional, youth, cultural, sports and tech camp exchange programs for U.S. and international participants, including those supported by the Offices of International Visitors and Citizen Exchanges. Since 1988, Ms. White has served as an American diplomat abroad at U.S. embassies in Canada, Mexico, Finland, Panama, Malaysia and Indonesia. In Washington, D.C., Ms. White has served in the Bureau of the Western Hemisphere and in the Foreign Service Institute as the Deputy Director of Public Diplomacy Training. In 2005, she represented the State Department as its Senior Fellow at The Atlantic Council. She previously served as the Director of the Office of International Visitors (2016-2018) and the Chief of Cultural Programs in the Office of Citizen Exchanges (2012-2015).

She is a great believer in the transformational power of people-to-people exchanges. Before entering the Foreign Service, Ms. White was an award-winning broadcast journalist in Texas and Oklahoma.

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