

2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Alliance
for International Exchange

Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown Hotel

Reconnect Renew Rebuild



November 4

Online

November 9-10

In person

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP

We extend a warm welcome to all our guests at the 2021 Annual Conference. Our Conference theme this year is **Reconnect, Renew, Rebuild.**

Most of the pandemic restrictions on travel and gatherings have continued, unfortunately, disrupting both our professional and personal lives. For many of us, the Alliance Conference will be the first time since the pandemic started that we are gathering with a large group of people. By crossing this significant milestone together, we are not only reconnecting with each other, we are also reaffirming our commitment to the exchange community and to the critical programs that we run.

Our sessions this year are designed to help you rebuild your programs as the pandemic recedes over time. We are blending online and in-person programming to reach as many of you as possible. For those joining in-person, you will find Alliance mainstays like the breakout sessions with various Federal agencies, including Commerce, Defense, and State and an update from Consular Affairs. For those joining online, you will hear, among other things, an update on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and a discussion with the leadership of the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Exchange. We are also beginning the in-person sessions with our luncheon and ending that day with a reception to help you renew your relationships with one another.

Whether you are joining in-person or online, we hope you will take the opportunity to reengage with colleagues as well as with our partners from the U.S. government.

While many of our challenges continue, there have been some silver linings, too. We are happy to report that public diplomacy programs consistently maintain bipartisan support. Congressional support for educational and cultural exchange funding continues to be very strong. The Administration rejected some of the restrictions sought last year and has worked instead to create more national interest exceptions for travel by exchange visitors. Moreover, the Department of State is finally preparing to lift the travel bans that have hurt so many of our programs. Abroad, interest by those who wish to study in the United States and to participate in privately funded programs is still significant. At home, interest among academic institutions, employers, and families in hosting exchange visitors continues to be deep.

The strength and endurance of our programs come from our collaboration, from the positive life-changing experiences of our participants and their hosts, and from fostering greater mutual understanding between people worldwide. So long as all those things continue to be true, and we continue to advocate together through the Alliance, international exchange programs will rebound in the years to come.

Thank you again for joining us at this year's Annual Conference. We look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,



CAROL JENKINS
BOARD CHAIR



ILIR ZHERKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Thank you for joining us for our Annual Conference and a warm welcome to all conferees. Firstly, I hope you and your families are continuing to stay healthy during this difficult time. While all of us have experienced another tough year, we are glad to be able to reconnect with you in person again and to advance our collective mission.

This year, the international exchange community has continued to face extraordinary challenges from ongoing program and travel restrictions associated with the global pandemic. We have also worked together to inform and influence many important policy discussions stemming from those challenges. As with past educational and advocacy efforts, many of the below successes reflect bipartisan congressional support and our community's partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). Here is a snapshot of our key efforts over the last year.

ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with Biden Administration

Once the Biden transition team was announced, the Alliance began advocating for our key priorities on behalf of our members. We encouraged the new Administration to take a number of critical steps to help rebuild international exchange, including: providing pandemic relief for the international exchange community, supporting a robust appropriations request for exchange programs, rescinding Presidential Proclamation 10052, withdrawing a proposed rule changing duration of status for international students, providing regulatory support, and enabling international travel and exchange program prioritization where possible. Additionally, we organized a coalition letter to then President-Elect Biden with 387 signers urging the rescission of the proclamation shortly after taking office.

Additionally, the Alliance was pleased to support the Joint Statement of Principles on International Education - the Administration's announcement of a first-ever coordinated national approach on international education. We have urged them to consider incorporating English language programs and other programs in which international students participate, such as Intern, Optional Practical Training, and Summer Work Travel.

Congressional Appropriations

In support of exchange program funding in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, the Alliance led an advocacy campaign to encourage an increased appropriation for exchange from \$741 million to \$1.1 billion. Thanks to the exchange community's united efforts, the House letter led by Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA) was co-signed by 92 Representatives, while the Senate letter submitted by Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) was co-signed by 30 Senators. Also, for the first time, both letters supported the Alliance's specific request for educational and cultural exchange programs. As with past 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.

Grassroots, Coalition, & Media Engagement

The Alliance launched grassroots letter-writing campaigns, resulting in letters to key governors, members of Congress, and the Biden Administration. We supported and/or organized multiple congressional letters to the White House supporting J-1 and international student visa processing, including a Senate sign-on letter urging rescission of Presidential Proclamation 10052. That collective engagement worked – the Administration allowed the Proclamation to expire. The Alliance also organized two coalition letters to Secretary Blinken. One was from over 500 businesses urging the Administration to take additional steps to process exchange visas.

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW CONTINUED

In lieu of our traditional in-person Advocacy Day and Exchange Week in the District events, we launched the Campaign for International Exchange. The Campaign was designed as a proactive effort for Alliance members that included online information sharing, meetings, media engagement, and advocacy. Through this Campaign, the Alliance facilitated member interaction with policymakers in four events throughout the year: Exchange Week in Washington, Exchange Week in the District, Exchange Day, and International Education Week. 36 Alliance members worked with 104 congressional offices across 33 states during the length of the Campaign.

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. Lastly, we promoted and supported media interest on the challenges facing our community. As a result of that work and the engagement of other stakeholders, there were hundreds of national and local media stories in 2021 covering our issues.

Travel Bans, Restrictions, & Challenges

The Alliance has been an early and engaged advocate for lifting travel bans in favor of individualized testing. We have also supported efforts to get embassies in banned countries to process visa applications, extend national interest exceptions (NIEs) for exchange visitors, and embrace visa interview waivers.

The Alliance joined a legal action that was successful in getting a court to hold in *Kinsley v. Blinken* that the Federal government could not systematically stop processing visas in banned countries. We were also successful in working with other stakeholders and our partners at the Department of State to embrace NIEs for academic exchange programs and, under certain

circumstances, for Au Pair applicants. The Department also instituted very limited interview waivers for other exchange program applicants who had a visa in 2020.

The Alliance also led a coalition effort in reaction to the Department’s overhaul of the travel advisories, which led to a dramatic shift in the number of countries being added to the “Level 4: Do Not Travel” list. We quickly organized a coalition of 11 international education associations, more than half of whom are not Alliance members. We shared our recommendations with the Department which adjusted their criteria and provided more context from Americans seeking to study abroad. Their changes led to travel advisories for many countries being lowered to Level 3 or lower.

Most importantly, our advocacy combined with that of others outside and inside the Administration eventually led to a decision to lift the travel bans in favor of a vaccination mandate. While we applauded the Administration, we also urged the Department to create exceptions for people coming from countries that are struggling to vaccinate their people.

Consular Affairs, Au Pair, and Secondary School

The Alliance engaged the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. We continued our push for a regulation clarifying that Federal Au Pair program regulations supersede state and local laws. The Alliance also supported the J-1 high school program in opposing the introduction of the FBI fingerprint-based process as a requirement for background checks – the Department decided not to pursue this idea for now. We also worked with the Department on several accommodations, including the incorporation of academic J-1 visas in the expansion for visa interview waivers and a clarification for secondary school sponsors regarding documentation of academic credit.

*2021 YEAR IN REVIEW CONTINUED***Afghan Alumni Task Force**

The Alliance convened a task force to respond to the challenges facing at-risk Afghan exchange alumni. The Afghan International Exchange Alumni Task Force, led by Global Ties, aims to coordinate advocacy efforts between Alliance members, and provide resources and support for organizations seeking to help Afghan alumni.

COMMUNICATIONS and CONVENINGS**Surveys**

The Alliance conducted three surveys this year to support our goals of informing the Administration about the impact of their visa policies and to urge them to facilitate more exchange visitors to the United States. The Alliance, with the support of InterExchange, launched 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. We also surveyed our members on visa issuance. As of early July, they reported a 75 percent decrease in visa processing of participants this year compared to 2019. Lastly, in partnership with AIRC, the Alliance surveyed educational institutions and agencies abroad, which captured specific locations where student processing was difficult or nearly impossible.

Fact Sheets, Website, & News Digests

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 new sections on our website including pages related to the pandemic, on-going efforts in support of the Au Pair Program, and an archive for past executive actions and advocacy campaigns. Additionally, we reorganized our e-newsletters and began sending Exchanges Digests to congressional

offices and stakeholders, and periodic Alliance Digests to our members with more detailed updates.

Annual Conference

The Alliance returned to hosting the Annual Conference in person, while offering online sessions for those who were not able to attend. The online sessions were also expanded to U.S. host institutions and international partners for the first time. As in past years, we offered unique opportunities for networking and sponsorship. We also developed new sessions to address topical issues. Panel discussions focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, best practices for sponsors, hosts, and international partners, as well as how the U.S. can maintain its competitive edge in international exchange. As per tradition, the Conference also featured program sessions with staff from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

2022 AND BEYOND

Many predict that the pandemic will most likely recede in the United States in 2022. If that occurs, international travel will likely increase, especially from countries where vaccinations are widely available. Barring the emergence of a new deadly Covid variant, many in the exchange community will, therefore, be able to rebuild their programs next year. The Alliance is well positioned to take advantage of these changing circumstances. Because we enjoy wide support among policymakers and access to opinionmakers, the Alliance continues to inform and help influence exchange-related policy issues in Congress and within the Administration. Moreover, many stakeholders have participated in our advocacy campaigns and membership applications have returned to normal levels. All of that combined with a healthy reserve fund will make it possible for the Alliance to rebuild next year, as well. We look forward to facilitating the work of our members and other stakeholders in the years to come.



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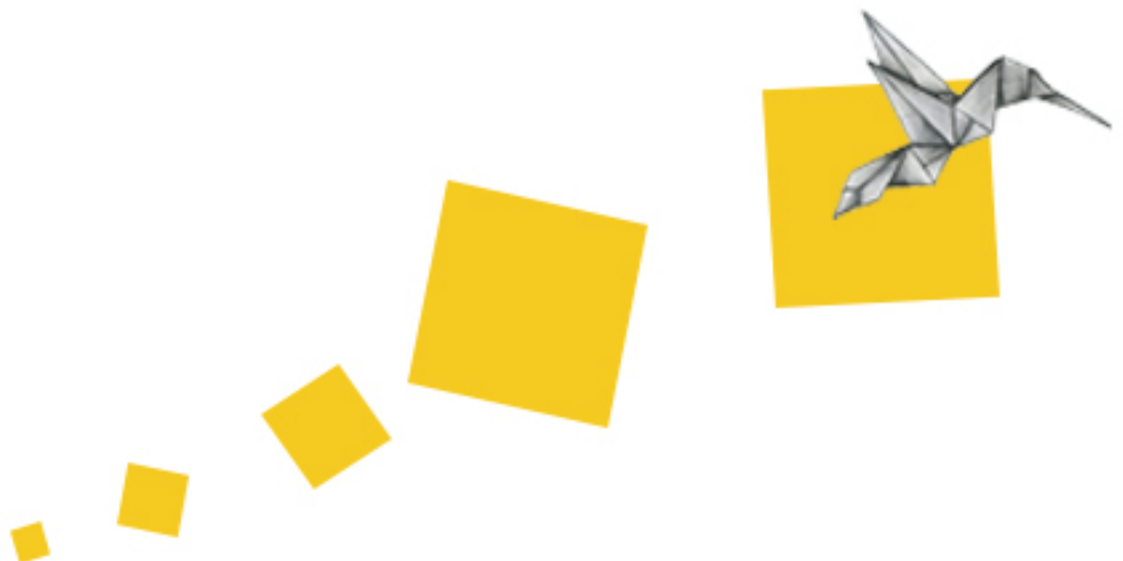
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ONLINE & IN PERSON AGENDA

ONLINE AGENDA

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

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|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:00 – 12:15 PM | Opening Remarks |
| 12:20 – 1:20 PM | Best Practices for Sponsors, Hosts, and International Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator: Robyn Walker, <i>Cenet</i>• Panelists: Rick Ruth, <i>Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (Retired)</i>; Marcie Schneider, <i>Intrax</i>; Casey Slamin, <i>InterExchange</i> |
| 1:30 – 2:20 PM | Rebuilding International Exchange- Updates from Washington DC <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presenter: Ilir Zherka, <i>Alliance for International Exchange</i> |
| 2:30 – 3:15 PM | ECA Leadership Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator: Ilir Zherka, <i>Alliance for International Exchange</i>• Nicole Elkon, <i>Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange</i>• Nini Forino, <i>Deputy Assistant Secretary (Acting) for Policy</i>• Chris Miner, <i>Deputy Assistant Secretary (Acting) for Citizen Exchanges</i>• Ethan Rosenzweig, <i>Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs</i> |
| 3:30 – 4:30 PM | Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator: Dr. Fanta Aw, <i>American University</i>• Panelists: Monica Malhotra, <i>Mobility International USA (MIUSA)</i>; Maryum Saifee, <i>Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion</i> |

IN PERSON AGENDA

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:30 – 2:00 PM
<i>General Session</i> |  Opening Luncheon with Keynote Speaker
<i>Sponsored by Meridian International Center</i> |
| 2:15 – 3:30 PM
<i>General Session</i> | Maintaining U.S Competitive Edge on International Exchange <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator: Kristin Lord, <i>IREX</i>• Panelists: Richard Crespín, <i>CollaborateUP</i>; Steven Bloom, <i>ACE</i>; Mark Taplin, <i>American Councils</i> |

IN PERSON AGENDA CONTINUED

3:30 – 4:00 PM

Rock Creek Lobby

Networking

4:00 – 5:15 PM

Concurrent Sessions: Program Breakout Meetings with ECA Program Staff

MR 15

Academic Programs

- Fred Boll, *Office of American Spaces*
- Joe Bookbinder, *Office of English Language Programs*
- Marianne Craven, *Office of Academic Programs*
- Mary Kirk, *Office of Academic Programs*
- Anthony Koliha, *Office of Global Educational Programs*
- David Plack, *Office of Academic Programs*
- **Moderator:** Melissa Oppenheimer, *World Learning*

MR 9

Au Pair

- Christina Hatfield, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration*
- Karen Ward, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- **Moderator:** Jean Quinn, *AuPair in America*

MR 10 & 11

Citizen Exchanges/ IVLP

- Alistair Baskey, *Office of International Visitors*
- Anne Grimes, *Office of International Visitors*
- David Kennedy, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- Matthew McMahon, *Office of Citizen Exchanges*
- **Moderator:** Rebecca Taylor, *CRDF*

General Session

Summer Work Travel

- Gia Crawford, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- Diane Culkin, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- **Moderator:** Katie Porter, *GeoVisions*
- **Moderator:** Kaitlin Sinclair, *Intrax*

MR 16

Teacher

- Melinda Quigley, *Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation*
- **Moderator:** Paul Champaloux, *Cultural Vistas*

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Renaissance
Main Lobby**Networking Reception***Sponsored by High Sierra Pools, Inc.***WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

8:00 – 9:30 AM

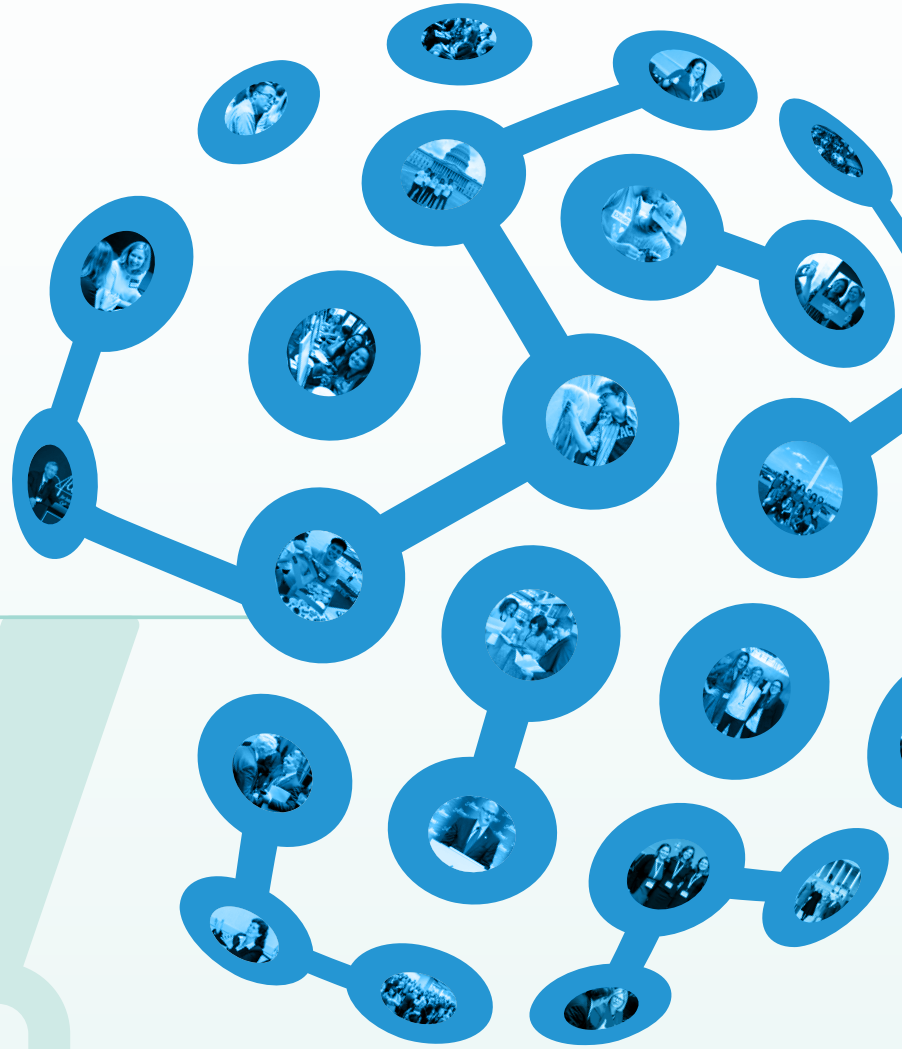
General Session

**Business Meeting Working Breakfast***Sponsored by AIFS*

IN PERSON AGENDA CONTINUED

9:45 – 11:00 AM		Program Breakout Meetings with ECA Program Staff
MR 16	Camp Counselor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gia Crawford, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation</i> • Diane Culkin, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Engagement</i> • Alliance Facilitator: Sarah Morgan, <i>IENA</i>
MR 9	Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lana Muck, <i>Program Management</i> • Deborah Thompson, <i>Grants and Assistance Division</i> • Alliance Facilitator: Lisa Choate, <i>American Councils</i>
General Session	Intern/ Trainee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darra Dirksa, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration</i> • Stacey Gomelsky, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation</i> • Alliance Facilitator: Nick Jones, <i>Odyssey International</i>
MR 10 & 11	J-1 High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethan Bursofsky, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration</i> • Melinda Quigley, <i>Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation</i> • Alliance Facilitator: Keri Dooley, <i>AFS-USA</i>
MR 15	National Security Education Programs (NSEP): Language. Culture. Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Sam Eisen, <i>Defense Language and National Security Education Office, U.S. Department of Defense</i>
11:15 – 12:30 PM		Concurrent Sessions
MR 16	U.S. Department of Commerce Resources for International Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters: Martyn Miller, <i>Temple University</i>; Gabriela Zelaya, <i>U.S. Department of Commerce</i>
MR 10 & 11	Everything You Need to Know about Nonresident Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters: Neil Duffy, <i>Sprintax</i>; Enda Kelleher, <i>Sprintax</i>; Ryan Ludden, <i>Sprintax</i>
General Session	Order Out of Chaos: Managing in Uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Glenda Eoyang, <i>Human Systems Dynamics Institute</i>
1:00 – 2:00 PM		Working Lunch Concurrent Sessions
General Session	Consular Affairs and Alumni Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Jennifer Marson, <i>Bureau of Consular Affairs</i> • Presenter: Asha Beh, <i>Office of Alumni Affairs, ECA</i>
MR 10 & 11	Virtual Exchange: Opportunities, Resources, and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Katherine Brown, <i>Global Ties, U.S.</i> • Panelists: Stefanie Ortiz-Cidlik, <i>iEarn</i>; Christine Shiau, <i>Stevens Institute</i>

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for International Exchange



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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

DR. FANTA AW

Vice President of Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence • American University



Dr. Fanta Aw is Vice President of Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence at American University in Washington, D.C., where she provides senior executive leadership for 15 departments responsible for the student experience. Aw is also responsible for leading, coordinating, and assessing institutional work related to strategic plans for inclusion, diversity, and equity. In addition, she works with university leadership on student engagement and campus internationalization and leads the University's COVID-19 response.

As Senior Professorial Lecture at AU' School of International Service, Aw teaches graduate courses related to immigration, higher education internationalization, and international higher education policy. She received the 2013 University Award for Outstanding Teaching in an Adjunct Position.

With over 30 years' experience in higher education administration, Aw also served as President and Chair of the Board of Directors of NAFSA, the largest membership association of international educators with close to 10,000 members. She has led workshops and trainings for numerous organizations, including the Department of State, Institute of International Education, AMIDEAST, College Board, and NAFSA. She currently serves on the advisory board for THE (Times Higher Education).

Dr. Aw earned all her degrees from American University: BS in Accounting, MA in Public Administration with a concentration in organization development, and Ph.D. in Sociology with a concentration in international education, social stratification, and transnational migration.

ASHA BEH

Digital Strategist/Alumni Outreach Specialist • Office of Alumni Affairs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs



As a digital strategist and alumni outreach specialist at the U.S. Department of State, Asha Beh oversees alumni engagement and digital content for the Office of Alumni Affairs, in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Asha uses her background as a multimedia news producer (CNN, CNBC.com, NBC, and NPR) and as a social media/online community manager (at the federal government and embassy level) to lead and host MentorTalks, a 30-minute live talk show-style program. She also supervises and co-produces Voices of Exchange, a new narrative-style podcast. During her time in Alumni Affairs, Asha has facilitated regional trainings with alumni coordinators and career development seminars for alumni across the U.S. and overseas.

Prior to working in Alumni Affairs, Asha co-organized the first full day User Experience (UX) event for State; managed a social media community of over 1,900 virtual interns and alumni for the Virtual Student Federal Service (VSFS) team; developed an environmental social media community of 3 million people for State's international audience; and, led and expanded online

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

and social media outreach for the U.S. Consulate in Chennai, with a brief stint running Mission India's social media outreach.

Asha earned her B.A. in Communication from the University of Buffalo (Buffalo, NY) and her M.A. in Journalism from American University (Washington, DC).

STEVEN BLOOM

Assistant Vice President, Government Relations • ACE



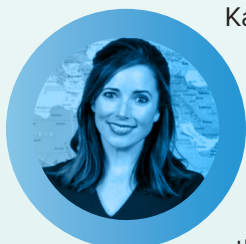
Steven M. Bloom came to ACE from the Independent Sector, where he served as Senior Lobbyist and Director, Government Relations. As Assistant Vice President of Government Relations at ACE, Bloom's primary focus is on tax issues, endowments, health care reform, immigration and international issues, labor and employment, and undue foreign influence. His work involves representation before the U.S. Congress, administrative agencies and the federal courts. As an expert voice on behalf of colleges and universities, he is quoted widely in the national media on higher education issues in his public policy portfolio. In the fall of 2002, he served as counsel to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in the Labor Policy Office of Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA). He also worked at the United Jewish Communities as Senior Legislative Associate.

Prior to coming to Washington, D.C., Bloom was a practicing attorney for 10 years in Boston, focusing on litigation including employment law, federal civil rights, torts, and commercial disputes. He also clerked for the Massachusetts Appeals Court. Before attending law school, he served as a fellow of the Oberlin Shansi Memorial Association in India. He is a board member and currently vice president of the McLean Community Foundation, and a member and past chair of the Fairfax County Human Services Council.

Bloom graduated from Oberlin College (OH) in 1983 and the Northeastern University School of Law (MA) in 1992.

KATHERINE BROWN

President & CEO • Global Ties U.S.



Katherine 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.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

RICHARD CRESPIN

CEO • CollaborateUP



Richard advises businesses, governments, and non-profits on how to work together to solve big problems. He provides strategic advice on how to co-create potential solutions to shared problems. He also serves as a Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies as part of its Project on Prosperity, conducting research and multi-sector dialogue on improving lives in emerging economies while addressing US foreign policy goals. During his career, Richard has worked across the private, public, and civil sectors, on projects with the US

Department of Defense, the US Agency for International Development, the US Global Leadership Coalition, the American Red Cross, the Inter-American Development Bank, serving as Executive Director of Corporate Responsibility Officers Association, and as President of SharedXpertise Media, the publishers of Corporate Responsibility Magazine.

Richard has served on multiple boards for companies and NGOs, including The Corporate Responsibility Association, the Office Depot Foundation, and the Energy & Enterprise Institute. He currently chairs the Finance Committee and serves on the Board of Directors of the Global Electronics Council and he also chairs the Governance Committee and serves on the Board of Directors of the Falls Church Education Foundation. He has been an adjunct professor in The George Washington University School of Business teaching on public-private partnerships and a featured lecturer on social innovation at Georgetown University and at the Harvard School of Public Health. Richard is an alumnus of both The George Washington University and the Harvard Business School.

NEIL DUFFY

Associate Vice President • Sprintax



A previous J program participant in the US, Neil has been assisting nonresidents with their US Federal and State tax returns for over 5 years. He has the IRS VITA Foreign National qualification and has delivered more than 250 tax workshops and webinars all across the US for sponsors, agents, educational institutions and corporations.

SAM EISEN

*Director of Programs • Defense Language and National Security Education Office,
U.S. Department of Defense*



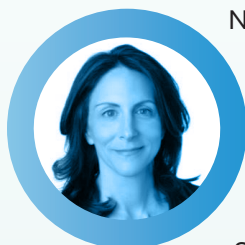
Dr. Sam Eisen is the Director of Programs at the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) at the Department of Defense. In this capacity, he oversees a portfolio of innovative language programming with overseas study for well over 1,000 students annually and grants to approximately 50 Institutions of Higher Education for domestic language instruction for thousands of undergraduate and graduate students, and DoD civilian, military and reserve personnel. Before joining the federal government, Dr. Eisen taught Russian language, literature,

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

and culture as Assistant Professor of Russian Studies at American University in Washington, DC. He has served at the U.S. Department of State in the Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia coordinating FREEDOM Support Act academic and professional exchange programs with the former Soviet Union. Before coming to DLNSEO, Dr. Eisen served as the Director of the Advanced Training and Research Group in International and Foreign Language Education at the U.S. Department of Education where he provided oversight for Title VI and Fulbright Hays programming. He holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Russian Language and Literature from Stanford University and a B.A. in Russian from Amherst College.

NICOLE ELKON

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange (ECA/EC)



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.

GLENDA EOYANG

Executive Director • Human Systems Dynamics Institute

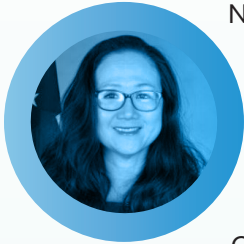


Glenda Eoyang thrives at the edges: Between theory and practice, between order and chaos, between past and future. Since 1986 she has drawn lessons from complexity science to help people thrive in turbulent and uncertain environments. Today, more than ever, her work offers insight, options for action, and well-being for people around the world. As the founding executive director of the Human Systems Dynamics Institute, Glenda leads a global community of over 800 scholar practitioners. They work across sectors to build adaptive capacity for individuals, teams, institutions, and communities. For more information about Glenda and her work with HSD, visit: www.hsdinstitute.org.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

NINI FORINO

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy (ECA/P)



Nini Forino is the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and the Director of Alumni Affairs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Prior to this, she was the Director for Press and Public Diplomacy for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. She joined the State Department as a Foreign Service Officer in 2000 and has served overseas in Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Ho Chi Minh City. In Washington, Ms. Forino has served in the Offices of Japan and Korea Affairs and Regional Security and Policy in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and the Office of Regional Strategy in the former Bureau of International Information Programs. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Ms. Forino worked for the State Department at U.S. Embassies in the Philippines and Thailand. She has received several State Department awards, including Superior Honor and Meritorious Honor Awards, as well as the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association award for her work leading the State Department's participation in the 2012 Yeosu Expo in the Republic of Korea. She speaks Mandarin, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Tagalog, and holds advanced degrees from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

ENDA KELLEHER

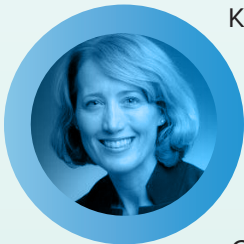
Vice President • Sprintax



Enda has been assisting nonresidents with their US Federal and State returns since 2014. He has the IRS VITA Foreign National qualification and is currently studying to become an IRS enrolled agent. Over the last 8 years he has delivered more than 500 tax workshops and webinars all across the US. During the same time period Sprintax has assisted more than 400,000 nonresidents with their taxes.

KRISTIN LORD

President and CEO • IREX

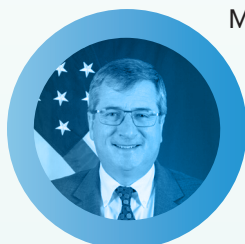


Kristin Lord is the President and CEO of IREX, a global education and development non-profit organization that promotes more just, prosperous, and inclusive societies by investing in people and the conditions that help them to thrive. She brings more than twenty years of experience in the fields of education, foreign policy, global development, and security and peacebuilding to this role. Prior to joining IREX in 2014, Kristin served in leadership roles at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Center for a New American Security (CNAS), Brookings Institution, and George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. She has also served in a senior advisory role at the U.S. Department of State and currently serves as a board member of the United States Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) and InterAction. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. from Georgetown University and her B.A. from American University.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

RYAN LUDDEN*Associate Vice President • Sprintax*

A previous J program participant in the US, Ryan has been assisting nonresidents with their US Federal and State tax returns for over 5 years. He has the IRS VITA Foreign National qualification and has delivered more than 250 tax workshops and webinars all across the US for sponsors, agents, educational institutions and corporations.

MATTHEW LUSSENHOP*ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY • BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS*

Matthew Lussenhop joined the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) in July 2019. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, and has served his country as a Foreign Service Officer since 1990.

Prior to his arrival at ECA, he served as Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the Embassy of the United States to the Kingdom of Belgium, August 2016-June 2019, including 18 months as Chargé d'affaires. From 2013-2016, he was the DCM at the U.S. Embassy to the Kingdom of Morocco, including ten months as the Chargé d'affaires. Mr. Lussenhop previously served in ECA as a Senior Advisor for Policy from 2011-2013.

Mr. Lussenhop has served in the field of public diplomacy and strategic communications in numerous posts overseas, including Public Affairs Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan from 2010-2011. Other overseas assignments include positions at U.S. embassies in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Kuwait; Muscat, Oman; Rabat, Morocco; Sofia, Bulgaria; and Manila, Philippines.

In Washington, DC, Mr. Lussenhop has served in the State Department's Bureau of Near East and North African Affairs, and as Director of Public Diplomacy Training at the Foreign Service Institute.

Mr. Lussenhop is the recipient of multiple State Department Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards. He speaks Arabic and French, and is a native of Minnesota and a summa cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

MONICA MALHOTRA

*Program Manager- National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange •
Mobility International USA*



Monica Malhotra is a Program Manager with the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange at Mobility International USA, which aims to increase participation of people with disabilities in inclusive international exchange programs. Previously, Monica worked for 10 years at The University of Texas at Austin, where she assisted with admission, immigration, disability support, student counseling, and sponsored student programs as the Senior International Student Coordinator for ESL Services and as International Student Advisor at the International Office. Her past experience includes serving four years on the board for the Multicultural Refugee Coalition and interning with the EastWest institute in New York. Monica earned her Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Texas at Arlington and her Master's degree in International Studies from the University of Exeter, UK.

MARTYN MILLER

Assistant Vice President • Office of International Affairs, Temple University



Martyn J. Miller was raised in Aleppo, Syria, and Beirut, Lebanon, and moved permanently to the U.S. in 1985. Miller took a bachelor's degree in English at the American University of Beirut (Lebanon) and a master's and doctorate in fantasy and medieval English literature at The University of Georgia (Athens, GA). After nine years as department chair of The University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education American Language Program, Miller joined Temple University in March 1999 as Director of the Office of International Services, and he currently leads the university's international student service units. Miller also serves a co-chair of NAFSA's Middle East Interest Group and as inaugural chair of Study Pennsylvania.

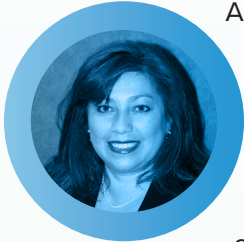
CHRIS MINER

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Citizen Exchanges (ECA/PE)



Chris Miner is the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges, responsible for overseeing a broad array of professional, youth, cultural and sports exchange programs for U.S. and foreign audiences, including those supported by the Offices of International Visitors and Citizen Exchanges. She has held program and management positions within ECA since 1993. Her other positions have included: chief of the Europe/Eurasia Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, where she oversaw the administration of grants in the Newly Independent States, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe, and Deputy Director of the Office of Citizen Exchanges. In 2011, she received the U.S. Department of State's Ilchman-Richardson Award in recognition and appreciation for her sustained outstanding performance, leadership, vision and integrity in advancing the mission of mutual understanding around the world. Chris graduated from Hollins University, majoring in French and German, and received her M.A. in French Language and Literature from the University of Virginia.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

STEFANIE ORTIZ-CIDLIK*Executive Director • iEARN-USA*

A visionary strategist and change catalyst, Stefanie Ortiz-Cidlik has over 20 years of non-profit leadership experience. On March 18, 2019, she assumed the role of Executive Director of iEARN-USA (International Education and Resources Network). Stefanie began her career raising funds for environmental and citizen rights organizations. Since then, she focused her career on youth development organizations, spending several years in the alcohol, tobacco, drug, and delinquency prevention field where she led a team that trained school teachers, guidance counselors, and other youth workers to deliver a nationally-awarded prevention program. Prior to joining iEARN-USA, as the Chief Executive of USA Girl Scouts Overseas, Stefanie led Girl Scouts' overseas operations and a team on three continents that brought the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to girls and families in nearly 90 countries around the world.

Stefanie has always been passionate about issues that impact women and youth. She served multiple terms on the Lancaster County, Nebraska Women's Commission during which she started and hosted a television talk show focused on topics that impact women. She's had the honor of serving as a member of Girl Scouts of the USA's delegation to the WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) World Conferences in Hong Kong, China, and New Delhi, India. Stefanie remains active in local, national, and international organizations to advance opportunities for women and youth. Most recently, Stefanie was elected to a two-year term on iEARN International Executive Council. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management and a Master of Arts in Business Management from Doane University.

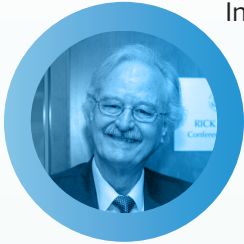
ETHAN ROSENZWEIG*Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs (ECA/A)*

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.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

RICK RUTH

Senior Advisor (Former) • Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs



In a career spanning more than four decades with the United States Information Agency and the Department of State, Rick Ruth has received numerous awards, including the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Service, the Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy, the Lois Roth Foundation's Ilchman-Richardson Award for contributions to cultural diplomacy, and the Alumnus of the Year Award from the College of Humanities of the University of Arizona.

Rick served as deputy chief of staff to the last four directors of the United States Information Agency (1988 to 1999) and with the integration of USIA and the Department of State, he organized the office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and served as its first chief of staff. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Rick was the sole public diplomacy representative on the senior level steering committee responsible for coordinating the U.S. State Department's response to the attack where he originated the first high school exchange program for the Arab and Muslim world (now known as the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program).

MARYUM SAIFEE

Senior Advisor • Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion



Maryum Saifee is a Senior Advisor in the Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the U.S. Department of State. She is contributing to this panel in her personal capacity and her views do not represent the U.S. Department of State.

Maryum started her Foreign Service career in Cairo during the early days of the 2011 uprising. She later served in Baghdad and Erbil, as well as most recently as spokesperson at the U.S. Consulate in Lahore. In Washington, she has worked as an advisor in the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues, Office of Religion and Global Affairs, and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

Prior to the State Department, she was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jordan and an AmeriCorps Volunteer in Seattle. She has consulted for the Ford Foundation, Acumen Fund, and the United Nations Development Program.

Ms. Saifee was also a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow, Truman National Center for Policy Senior Visiting Fellow, and Presidential Leadership Scholar.

She recently led the Truman Center for National Policy task force on "Transforming the State Department into a More Just, Equitable, and Innovative Institution."

She has a graduate degree in international and public affairs from Columbia University.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

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.

CHRISTINE SHIAU*Director of the Stevens Initiative • Aspen Institute*

Christine Shiau is Director of the Stevens Initiative at the Aspen Institute. In this role, she leads strategy and program development, cultivates international and philanthropic partnerships, and ensures effective management and oversight of the program. Christine joined the Initiative following a career in the public and private sectors. She blends strategic insight and rigor with creativity to help champion the virtual exchange field. Christine graduated from the University of Illinois-Chicago with a BS in accounting and a minor in marketing. She received a Master of Business Administration from the University of Maryland.

CASEY SLAMIN*Senior Vice President of Programs • InterExchange*

As an international cultural exchange professional for more than twenty five years, Casey has collaborated with international agencies, NGOs and various governments to help expand exchange opportunities for youth from around the world. In addition to his work with InterExchange, Casey has been active in international education and exchange organizations including WorldTeach, The Center for International Humanitarian Cooperation, the WYSTC Confederation, WYSE Work Abroad, and the Alliance for International Exchange.

Casey holds a B.A. in Political Science from Hobart College and an International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance from the Center for International Humanitarian Cooperation (CIHC) at Fordham University. In his free time, Casey enjoys travelling and sports.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

MARK TAPLIN

Trustee • American Councils for International Education



Mark Taplin is a Trustee of the American Councils for International Education and Chair of the Board's Advancement Committee. He is a former U.S. diplomat who held a number of senior positions during his thirty-seven year career. From 2015-17, Taplin served in a series of leadership roles in the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), including as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and as acting Assistant Secretary.

From 2010-2014, Taplin was Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, France during a period of expanding U.S.-French cooperation. From 2005-2008, he served as Chargé d'Affaires and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest, Romania where he helped promote a close partnership between the U.S. and Romania. From 2002-2004, he was Director for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus at the State Department. He also held a number of overseas public diplomacy assignments, including in Ukraine, Russia, Brazil, Haiti and Mauritius.

In 2008-2010, Taplin taught, organized events and conducted research as the Public Diplomacy Fellow at George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.

Mr. Taplin holds a bachelor's degree in humanities and international affairs from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and a master's degree in strategic studies from the University College of Wales (Aberystwyth). He is the author of *Open Lands: Travels Through Russia's Once Forbidden Places* (Steerforth Press, 1997, 1998; Canongate Books, 1999).

ROBYN WALKER

Executive Director • Cenet



Robyn's international experience began in 1987, when she studied abroad on the island of Malta. After completing her bachelor's degree, Robyn moved to Tuscany, where she spent six months as an international intern. She returned to Malta to complete her graduate degree in education, and then began teaching at Malta's Verdala International School. Five years later, she relocated to Copenhagen, where she taught for the next 12 years, first at the International School and eventually at the bi-lingual Copenhagen Euro-School. Robyn joined Cenet in 2005, and has served as its Executive Director since 2009. She is almost fluent in Danish and frequently returns to Copenhagen, where she still maintains a home.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONTINUED

GABRIELA ZELAYA

*Global Education Team Leader • U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce
Global Education Team*



Gabriela Zelaya is the Global Education Team Leader for the U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce Global Education Team, a position she has held since 2014. In this role, she manages U.S. Commercial Service Education Team programs that assist U.S. educational institutions with promotion and recruitment efforts. She also oversees U.S. Commercial Service collaboration with partners both domestically and abroad. With more than 15 years in the field, Gabriela was honored as Silicon Valley’s “40 under 40” recognizing her as an up-and-coming leader in Silicon Valley for her leadership, community work, and impact in her respective field.

Gabriela led the creation of Study California to promote international education opportunities in the state, and is co-creator of USA: A Study Destination, a national engagement to promote the United States as a study destination. Gabriela received her bachelor’s degree in political science/law and society from the University of California, Riverside and master’s (honors) from the University of Miami.

ILIR ZHERKA

Executive Director • Alliance for International Exchange



Ilir Zherka is the Executive Director of the Alliance for International Exchange. The Alliance serves as the collective public policy voice for the exchange community. In addition to congressional advocacy, the Alliance organizes program impact reports, conducts media outreach, develops best practice workshops, and hosts an annual public policy conference. Ilir has served as the head of three other organizations. He gained policy and political experience working on Capitol Hill, on presidential campaigns, and as a political appointee. He is the author of *Winning the Inside Game: The Handbook of Advocacy Strategies*. Ilir is a graduate of Cornell University and the University of Virginia School of Law.

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NEW MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE

We are thrilled to welcome three new organizations to the Alliance membership. A warm welcome from the Alliance to our new members: [Gravity International Programs](#), [Institute of Global Exchange](#), and [Stevens Initiative](#). Please join us in welcoming them to the community.

NEW MEMBERS



[Gravity International Programs](#) was founded in 2018 in New York, NY. They were recently designated as a sponsor of the intern and trainee programs. Gravity International Programs' mission is to promote diverse opportunities for participation in educational and cultural exchange programs. Their goal is to provide cultural exchange programs that bring people from around the world together for the common purpose of expanding capabilities, enriching experiences, and forming lasting connections. Their programs are intended to increase participants' understanding of American culture and society, and to enhance Americans' knowledge of foreign culture and skills.



[Institute of Global Exchange](#) was founded in 2008 and is a sponsor of the Exchange Visitor Program. The Institute of Global Exchange is a non-profit organization that aims to provide students and young professionals with dynamic experience through cultural and educational exchange programs between the United States and other countries in the world.



[IRH Property Management LLC \(International Residence Hall\)](#) is part of Holtz Companies and provides housing almost exclusively to J-1 Visa visitors and other international visitors. Since 2013, they have owned and operated a dormitory style housing campus in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, and are now bringing their model to other locations. IRH provides housing almost exclusively to J-1 Visa visitors and other international visitors and has become a leader in this area.



[Stevens Initiative](#) was created in 2015 and is committed to helping expand the virtual exchange field through three pillars of work: investing in promising programs, sharing knowledge and resources, and advocating for virtual exchange adoption. The Stevens Initiative is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, with funding provided by the U.S. Government, and is administered by the Aspen Institute. It is also supported by the Bezos Family Foundation and the governments of Morocco and the United Arab Emirates. Their goal is to make life-changing, cross-cultural experiences available to all young people.

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