

9th
CLASS

14
KIMEP
UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS



14
AUCA
STUDENTS



U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
GRADUATION
2019





THE FOUNDATION IS GRATEFUL FOR SUPPORT FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, ITS CITIZENS AND THE CENTRAL ASIAN-AMERICAN ENTERPRISE FUND, WHICH HAVE MADE ITS OPERATION POSSIBLE.

PHOTO CREDITS



BAKHROM TURSUNOV



DASTAN ZHUMAGULOV



U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
GRADUATION
2019



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Alumni
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GRADUATION BOOK 2019

9th

CLASS OF
STUDENT
FELLOWS

The 2019 U.S.-CAEF graduates represent the ninth class of Student Fellows to receive a university education through the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (the Foundation) Enterprise Fellowship Program. A total of 28 Fellows, 14 from each partner university, American University of Central Asia (AUCA) and KIMEP University, will celebrate their graduation on May 18 in Almaty, Kazakhstan and June 1 in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic, respectively.

U.S.-CAEF Student Fellows are academically gifted citizen residents of one of the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, or Uzbekistan who, without financial aid, would not otherwise be able to pursue a university education at one of the Foundation's partner universities. They have been awarded full undergraduate scholarships for study in the fields of business and, in some cases, economics. Student Fellows must meet the rigorous admission standards of their university and are selected by the Foundation's Board at the end of a selection process developed by both the Board and American Councils for International Education (American Councils), which administers the Foundation's fellowship programs. Each student selected for the program commits to meeting the ongoing requirements of the scholarship, including maintaining a 3.0 grade-point average for AUCA Student Fellows and a 3.25 grade-point average for KIMEP University Student Fellows and participating in the educational, vocational and social events of the Student Fellowship Program.

Graduation 2019 is the result of years of hard work by each Fellow and represents a major milestone in the lives of the graduating Student Fellows and their families. We recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of these future Central Asian leaders and members of the U.S.-CAEF family.

28 FELLOWS

 14 KIMEP
UNIVERSITY

 14 AUCA



HISTORY

The Foundation, a congressionally approved “legacy foundation” to the former U.S. Government-sponsored Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (Fund or CAAEF), is funded by a \$15.7 million grant from CAAEF and commenced operation in May 2007. CAAEF was one of the “U.S. Enterprise Funds” authorized and funded by the U.S. Government after the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. It was incorporated in 1994 as a not-for-profit corporation to encourage the creation and expansion of small- and medium-sized enterprises in the Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union (Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and operated in Central Asia for ten years until 2004. Like all Enterprise Funds, CAAEF was managed by a private board of directors and was required to liquidate its investments by a specified “sunset” date and either return the proceeds to the U.S. Treasury or develop a “legacy proposal” for an alternative use of these proceeds, consistent with the Fund’s mission.

During its operation, CAAEF had provided extensive training and education to the young Central Asian men and women who comprised its staff and worked in its lending and investing programs. The staff informed the CAAEF Board that this business education had proven invaluable. In conducting research for its legacy proposal, the CAAEF Board found that there was strong demand among private sector businesses in Central Asia for employees with a Western business education. Few opportunities existed, however, for academically qualified yet financially disadvantaged students to obtain an undergraduate business degree in Central Asia. The CAAEF Board determined that the cornerstone of its legacy proposal would be a financial need- and merit-based undergraduate scholarship at universities committed to the adoption of a Western-style curriculum. Recipients would pursue business-related fields and would be citizens of one of the five countries in which CAAEF operated.

In addition, the Board would include two complementary programs: a faculty development program and an internship program. After more than three years of efforts by its Board, the Fund received the necessary U.S. governmental approvals in May 2007, created the Foundation and launched the Enterprise Student Fellowship Program.

MISSION

The Foundation’s mission is to encourage and assist the development and growth of a vibrant open-market private business sector in Central Asia by: supporting the quality of and affordable access to Western business expertise and practices at selected institutions of higher education in the region that have adopted Western curricula and teaching methods; providing opportunities for educational, vocational, and cultural experience in countries that serve as positive examples of an open market economy operating within a democratic environment; and promoting other activities that will generate a favorable environment in Central Asia for private business to succeed and entrepreneurial spirit to thrive.



SINCE MAY 2007

NOTES

During its active operating years, CAAEF entered into 27 joint ventures with equity (or equity plus debt) financing totaling \$61.5 million, granted 352 loans to establish or expand small and medium-size enterprises (“SMEs”), and funded more than 3,000 micro-credit loans totaling \$10.4 million.

The Fund’s direct investments, SME and micro-loan programs & technical assistance activities were directly responsible for:

- * creating a diverse array of private business enterprises that continue to operate successfully and provide several thousand private sector employment opportunities;
- * developing the western business practice skills of its local staff, joint venture partners and managers, small business loan customers, and employees of the local partner banks that participated in the Fund’s SME loan program; and,
- * achieving a positive demonstration effect, by providing the close support and experience that now finds several of the Fund’s SME loan program Partner Banks offering small business term-loans directly to their customers, and other banks adopting similar lending activities that mirror the policies and procedures of CAAEF’s highly successful small business loan program.

PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

Our partner universities, AUCA and KIMEP University, were selected based on various criteria including their use of English, the international language of business, as the primary language for instruction; their adoption of a Western-style curriculum and teaching methodology; and a willingness to support the goals of the Foundation and its Student Fellows. The Foundation is most grateful for AUCA and KIMEP University’s dedication to providing their students with the technical skills, knowledge, and habits of critical thinking required for success in the business world, where our students will spend their professional lives, and their continued commitment to the highest quality education.



AUCA



KIMEP University

KIMEP University further supports the U.S.-CAEF mission by providing partial, matching scholarship support to many U.S.-CAEF Enterprise Fellows. We are most appreciative of KIMEP’s recognition of the value of the U.S.-CAEF program and its generous support for U.S.-CAEF Fellows.



PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR: AMERICAN COUNCILS FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

American Councils for International Education is a premier, international nonprofit creating educational opportunities that prepare individuals and institutions to succeed in an increasingly interconnected and rapidly changing world. Through academic exchanges, overseas language immersion, data-driven research, and educational development programs, American Councils designs and administers innovative programs and language assessments that broaden individual perspectives, increase knowledge, and deepen understanding.

Since 1974, American Councils has worked in 89 countries important to national security, prosperity, and peace, and built a community of more than 89,000 alumni, including national leaders, ministers, members of parliament, ambassadors, and CEOs.

THE FOUNDATION EXECUTES ITS MISSION THROUGH TWO PROGRAMS

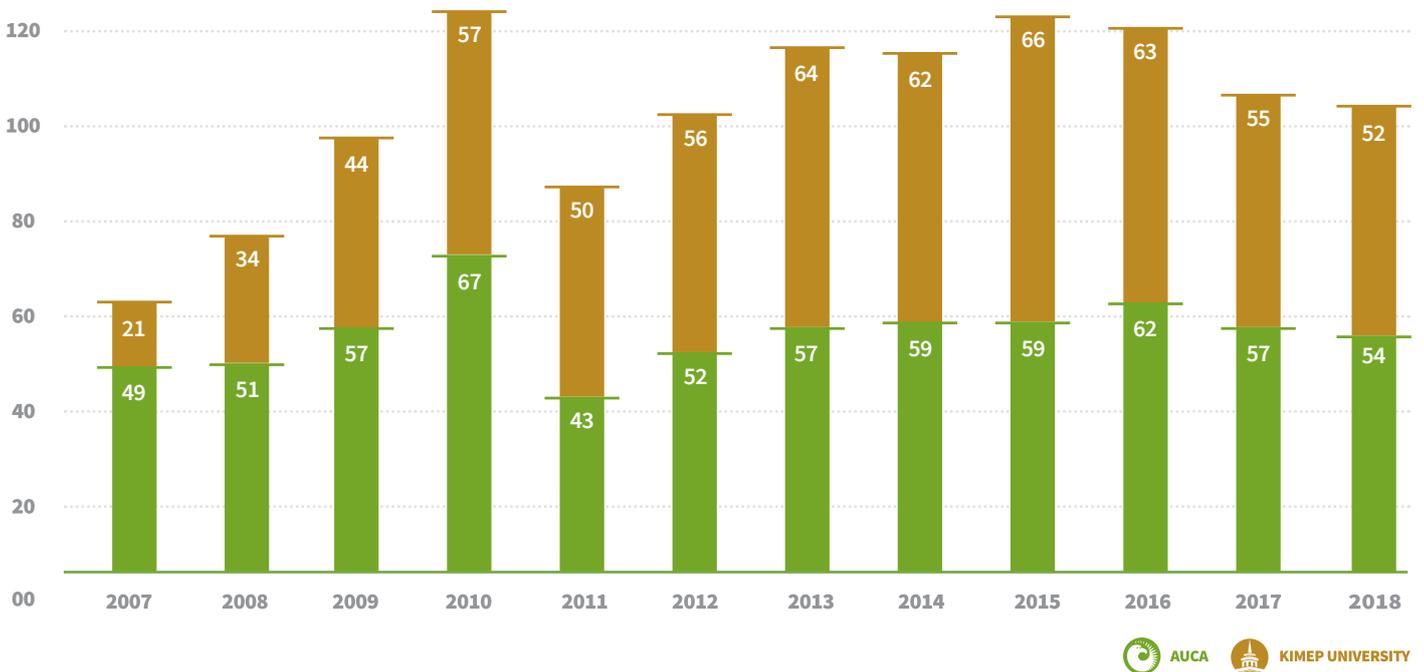
ENTERPRISE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

A financial need-based undergraduate business education scholarship program for academically gifted students who, due to financial hardship, would not otherwise be able to pursue a university education. Scholarships are provided at selected Central Asian universities to citizen residents of the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

ENTERPRISE INTERN FELLOWSHIPS

A program for select Enterprise Student Fellows to gain practical work experience within Central Asia, as well as educational, vocational and cultural experience in the United States or other countries that serve as positive examples of democratic open-market economies.

STUDENT FELLOWS BY INSTITUTION



ENTERPRISE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

For the recent 2018-2019 academic year, the Foundation awarded a total of 106 scholarships for 54 Student Fellows to attend AUCA and 52 to attend KIMEP University.

While the Foundation is committed to achieving geographic and regional diversity, its efforts have been challenged at different times by the inability to conduct active outreach in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Despite these challenges, it is notable that among the Student Fellows are citizens from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan. It is the intent of the Foundation to actively and continuously recruit in all these countries.

STUDENT FELLOWS BY CITIZENSHIP IN 2007-2019



2018-2019

106 SCHOLARSHIPS

54 AUCA **52 KIMEP University**



GRADUATION 2019

Celebrating the Accomplishments of our Student Fellows

Throughout their four years of study, this year's graduating Student Fellows have shown themselves to be true leaders and role models at their respective universities, and we are proud that they are part of the U.S.-CAEF family. They have continued the traditions initiated by earlier Enterprise Student Fellows. Their success is a credit to their parents, their families, their professors, their universities and their U.S.-CAEF family. They have mentored incoming Fellows, helped create and strengthen the U.S.-CAEF Student Association, taken campus-wide roles in student government and university clubs, managed entrepreneurial businesses, won opportunities to study overseas, and volunteered their time and skills to their communities. Most of our Student Fellows are fluent in at least three languages: the language of their home Central Asian country, English and Russian. Many have gained proficiency in additional languages.



Nurbakhsh Sartib (left) and Nekdil Abdulofizov (right)

At **AUCA**, fourth-year students with a cumulative **GPA of 3.8 or higher are placed on the “President’s List.”** Students in their second, third, or fourth years of study with a **GPA of 3.67 or higher are placed on the “Dean’s List.”**

At **KIMEP University**, full time students with a semester **GPA of 4.0 or higher are placed on the “President’s List,”** while those with a semester GPA of **3.75 to 3.99 are placed on the “Dean’s List.”**

The academic performance of this year’s graduating class has been exemplary. Of 28 Student Fellows, 17 have been recognized on the President’s or Dean’s Lists.

**GRADUATING SENIORS
RECOGNIZED ON THE
PRESIDENT’S & DEAN’S LISTS**

- Daniiar Abdiev
- Nekdil Abdulofizov
- Bekzhan Akbayev
- Aigerim Akimzhan
- Azatbek Alibaev
- Nigora Burhonova
- Haknazar Hallygyljov
- Aizhan Kerimbek kyzy
- Aleksandr Kinyakin
- Ahror Ikromov
- Kasiet Mambetkul kyzy
- Meerim Moldaliev
- Alisher Murtazaev
- Bakhtiyor Otambekov
- Nurbakhsh Sartib
- Nilufar Umarova
- Rustem Yesnazarov
- Mustafa Ziyatbekov

Currently, **eight Student Fellows** are on track to graduate with honors:



**DANIILAR
ABDIEV**
AUCA



**AZATBEK
ALIBAEV**
AUCA



**MEERIM
MOLDALIEVA**
AUCA



**AIGERIM
AKIMZHAN**
KIMEP University



**NIGORA
BURHONOVA**
KIMEP University



**ALEKSANDR
KINYAKIN**
KIMEP University



**NILUFAR
UMAROVA**
KIMEP University



**RUSTEM
YESNAZAROV**
KIMEP University

Our seniors have also taken advantage of highly competitive, enriching study abroad programs in Austria, France, Norway, Poland, South Korea, Turkey and the USA.

In the pages that follow, we offer profiles of these outstanding young men and women, written by the graduating fellows themselves.





AUCA GRADUATE PROFILES

Daniyar Abdiev



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2018

DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2017

**DANIYAR
HAS BEEN SELECTED
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
U.S.-CAEF INTERNATIONAL
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
IN WASHINGTON, DC
IN FALL 2019**

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BISHKEK



While I have always had plans for my future, they often remind me of stock prices: volatile and subject to rapid change. I find that one day I want to pursue one specialty, and another day I want to explore a different one. Nevertheless, the general direction has always been clear to me: I want to work with computers in an environment that encourages creativity. Thankfully, the first part of my vision has already been fulfilled, while I look forward to realizing the second part soon. U.S.-CAEF has certainly played an integral role in strengthening the vision and making it possible for me to think that I really do have the potential to fulfill my aspirations.

When I was admitted to AUCA and granted the privilege to study business, I understood that U.S.-CAEF had given me the opportunity to do something more with my life. I have considered the business education sphere as one of the best options to pursue my professional goals. I enjoy working with computers and coding very much, so software engineering also seemed like a worthy path to pursue. This scholarship provided the opportunity to engage in a variety of computer-related courses, gain practical experience at the U.S. Embassy's IT department,

complete a regional internship at an investment company as a website developer, and now at Beeline's Big Data department. U.S.-CAEF has always been supportive of my passion for computers, and now, more specifically, Artificial Intelligence. I was lucky to study business while simultaneously pursuing my passion for computers.

I am concurrently finishing my studies at AUCA and developing my professional skills at my position with Beeline. Graduation is certainly a bit sad for me, not only because it means my studies will end, but also because I will miss all the great professors, fun student life, and the amazing, inspiring people I have met here, with whom I look forward to continued friendship beyond AUCA.

While it is difficult to say anything certain about my future plans because, like stock prices, they will always change, I still have the same general vision as before. I will continue pursuing my goals to create a business driven by Artificial Intelligence. I am very thankful to U.S.-CAEF for allowing me to follow my vision. U.S.-CAEF gave me the opportunity to study at a great university, meet awesome people, and pursue my personal vision. Thank you, U.S.-CAEF.

“I was lucky to study business while simultaneously pursuing my passion for computers”

“... I believe a life where you are not able to leave a footprint is not worth living.”

Since a young age, I have known that education is a very important part of life in my family. My mom always used to say, “An educated person can make money without much physical effort; such a person will always be in demand, and it is up to you to decide which field to pursue.” Moreover, knowing an additional foreign language was something that I knew I needed. My two sisters and I chose the English language, as it would be helpful for our future.

In order to further improve my English, I felt it would be beneficial to attend a school where English was the main language of instruction. This was a great decision, and it allowed me to view the world of education from a new perspective. It meant education could be engaging and interesting for me. One of the classes that influenced my future career path was Business Studies, which helped me to identify who I was and what I wanted for my life.

In my final year of high school, I already knew the field I wanted to pursue for my future studies, but choosing a university was difficult since the ones I was most interested in were very expensive. I was even almost ready to give up my dream of studying at AUCA. But luckily, after meeting with AUCA representatives, I learned about the amazing opportunity that is U.S.-CAEF. My four years of education at the American University of Central Asia

went by quickly. Looking back, it feels as though it was a flash of light. Education at AUCA is quite different from other universities here; it promotes diligence and motivates students to advance their knowledge in unique ways. Students can choose their own track for their future, everything is solely based on their interests, and they are the true architects of their future. AUCA gave us not only theoretical knowledge, but practical knowledge by providing opportunities for internships. One such opportunity for me was an internship at PEPSICO Bishkek. This experience helped me to gain invaluable experience in the fields of human resource management and finance. I saw how recruitment processes are done from inside and how such a huge company is financially managed from inside. To be honest, I cannot even imagine studying at any other university.

My future plans can be divided into two parts: near future and life mission. For the next couple years, I am planning to spend some time working for the private sector and fully devote myself to gaining experience. Then, after completing a master’s program, I am planning to work for the government to help spark meaningful changes. It is quite important to me to help the society in which I live, as I believe a life where you are not able to leave a footprint is not worth living.

Azatbek Alibaev



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT’S LIST
FALL 2018

DEAN’S LIST
FALL 2017

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH

Gulzira Ashirali Kyzy



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BATKEN

If someone told me five years ago that I would become a U.S.–CAEF Fellow, I would probably laugh in disbelief.

I graduated from a high school in Batken with a strong mathematics and physics background which meant that my English skills were as strong. At that time, studying at AUCA seemed like an unattainable goal for me. But after I won a scholarship to the New Generation Academy, a preparatory program at AUCA, I learned about the unique U.S.–CAEF Fellowship Program. I knew this program would help me achieve my seemingly unreachable goals.

In 2015, my dream came true, and I became a U.S.–CAEF Fellow at AUCA. Now, I am a senior completing my studies in business administration. Four years flew by so fast, but this time was enough to enjoy AUCA's student life and have some great experiences.

During my studies at AUCA, I completed a public relations and marketing internship at Asanbay Center, an art gallery and restaurant. I participated in my second internship at Bishkek Services in the finance department.

I found a sense of community while participating in extracurricular activities at AUCA, such as volunteering at the Senior Friends charity club, Enactus, Mirrors, and the volleyball club. I was fortunate to serve on the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program's (YSEP) leadership team as the public relations manager in 2015, and the financial accounting manager in 2016.

One of my most enjoyable experiences was my participation in the Work and Travel USA program during the summer of 2018, when I had a chance to work in the finance department at the Sunset Hotel in New York.

U.S.–CAEF gave me the lucky ticket to study for four years at AUCA and helped me build a solid foundation for my future. Without this program, I would not have been part of the U.S.–CAEF family and would not have been privileged to have such unforgettable experiences at AUCA. I am immensely grateful to this program and to my parents for their support, motivation and faith in me.

“U.S.–CAEF gave me the lucky ticket to study for four years at AUCA and helped me build a solid foundation for my future.”

Begimai Bolotbekova

Since childhood, I always had the goal in mind of studying business at an international institution where everybody speaks English. I am very happy that those thoughts materialized, and I am very grateful to the U.S.-CAEF program for its huge contribution.

Today, I am on track to receive my bachelor's degree. During my time at AUCA, I not only improved my language skills, but also realized myself as an individual with great ambitions. Over these four years, I have gained a wealth of experience from extracurricular activities, useful theoretical knowledge, and professional skills through internships.

During my sophomore year, I improved my professional skills by participating in workshops on writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing and career planning and development. On top of that, U.S.-CAEF has greatly helped me in boosting my career skills. I interned in the Procurement and Contracts Department of LLC Sky Mobile (™ Beeline) through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. It provided me with a valuable network and a clear vision of my future career.

My third year was full of new opportunities with the Business Clinic at AUCA and an exchange program at Kyung Hee University in South Korea. Skills I learned, such as

“This program gave me lifelong friends, a platform to develop myself academically and professionally, and a network of people who try to make the world a better place.”

conducting qualitative surveys and making comprehensive analyses, prepared me for my senior year. In addition, I realized while taking a Practicum in Data Analysis course that I am well-suited for the field of Data Analytics. Later, that course helped me in choosing my concentration track, Business Analytics.

I am really proud and honored to be a U.S.-CAEF Fellow. This program gave me lifelong friends, a platform to develop myself academically and professionally, and a network of people who try to make the world a better place.



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

JALAL-ABAD

Akhrorhon Ikromov



MAJOR:
ECONOMICS

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2016

TAJIKISTAN

QURGANTEPPA

When I was about to graduate from my Turkish High School in Tajikistan, I was looking for scholarships that would fully fund my higher education and reduce the financial burden on my family. One day, when I was filling out the U.S.-CAEF application, I came across the word “fellowship.” When I realized that this was a synonym for “scholarship,” I realized that U.S.-CAEF was what I had been looking for.

During my first year of study, I decided to fully focus on my academic performance. Consequently, I completed my freshman year successfully and was rewarded with a spot on the Dean’s List. I was glad to be among excellent students, especially since many of those excellent students were also U.S.-CAEF Fellows.

After the completion of my sophomore year, I was selected as one of the Regional Internship Fellows. Thanks to the Regional Internship opportunity, I was able to acquire firsthand professional experience in the accounting and finance department of Hyatt Regency Bishkek. It was a great learning experience- I met new colleagues, learned about new perspectives and faced new challenges.

The program allowed me to pursue my dreams and goals in the fields of my professional interests. As an example, with the help of the U.S.-CAEF coordinator in Dushanbe, I was granted the opportunity to complete an internship at Crowe-ACG, Dushanbe, one of the leading audit firms in Dushanbe. There, I learned about outsourcing, audit and consulting services. It was a great environment for learning new skills.

During my four years of study at AUCA, being a U.S.-CAEF Fellow helped me to be selected for conferences, civic engagement projects and top finance enterprises. U.S.-CAEF helped me to stand out among impressive candidates for these highly competitive opportunities and helped me to be selected. One such opportunity was being selected as a delegate for the Model United Nations conferences held in Bishkek and Astana. Moreover, my involvement in these events led me to being selected as a co-chair of the Model United Nations at International University of Central Asia.

Most importantly, I found a family with U.S.-CAEF, of which I am very proud to be a member. With a whole heart, I express my sincerest gratitude and wish all the Fellows the best of luck.

“U.S.-CAEF helped me to stand out among impressive candidates for these highly competitive opportunities and helped me to be selected.”

“Thanks to U.S.–CAEF, I was able to identify my strengths and define my career path... Interacting with the ambitious people around me has changed my mindset and taught me to look at problems from different perspectives.”

The past four years with the U.S.–CAEF community have been the brightest of my life.

There are thousands of high school students dreaming about studying at the American University of Central Asia; however, not all of them have the opportunity to study there due to the high costs. It is more difficult for these students to reach their full potential, because they are unable to reap the benefits of AUCA's supportive environment, which cultivates students' individuality, creativity and critical thinking.

Not only did the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship allow me to study at this university, but it also provided dozens of useful trainings and seminars for professional development. U.S.–CAEF has included me in its wonderful community of highly motivated and skilled people who are hungry for knowledge. Thanks to U.S.–CAEF, I was able to identify my strengths and define my career path. Volunteering at AUCA events taught me how to cooperate in team settings and achieve our collective goals. Moreover, I hosted several events myself, which helped me overcome my fear of public speaking.

I discovered the world of computer programming and the IT industry during my sophomore year and realized that I enjoyed it very much. I took part in several hackathons, burning the midnight oil to solve the problems at hand. The teamwork and enthusiasm in the eyes of my colleagues only motivated me to work hard and think outside the box to achieve success in our projects. Because of this, I now know the path I want to pursue after graduation. Difficult assignments have taught me to remain patient and persistent in problem solving, which will certainly help me in establishing a career in the IT sphere.

One of the greatest assets I have been privileged to acquire during these four years is the network of interesting people, a couple of whom eventually became close friends. Interacting with the ambitious people around me has changed my mindset and taught me to look at problems from different perspectives. Looking back at my years at AUCA, I remember only the brightest and greatest moments. For them, I express my sincerest gratitude to the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship.

Kemelbek Irsaliev



MAJOR:
ECONOMICS

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BISHKEK

Aizhan Kerimbek Kyzy



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2016

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

JALAL-ABAD

I have always maintained and will always maintain a thirst for knowledge, curiosity, and reasoning. Thus, I am infinitely grateful to have studied in an environment that not only helped me find answers to my questions, but more importantly, constantly inspired me to come up with new questions. My own family and my U.S.-CAEF family granted me this opportunity and made it possible to be where I am today.

American University of Central Asia (AUCA) is recognized for its quality education, diverse environment, and open atmosphere, and I am grateful that U.S.-CAEF allowed me the privilege to study here. During my studies at AUCA, I did my best to make the most out of all the opportunities presented to me. First, I maintained good academic standing and benefited from the quality classroom instruction that AUCA provides. Second, I obtained new life views thanks to the diversity of the campus community. Third, I got rid of many stereotypes and became more open to new innovations. Additionally, I used the opportunity to study abroad after I was selected for the fall 2017 IESEG School of Management Exchange Program in Lille, France. Finally, I was awarded a grant to conduct research in the education and migration sphere that developed my research skills and allowed me to make my own footprint in policy-making.

Having theoretical knowledge without applied practice is similar to seeing food on a table and not being able to taste it; therefore, I used every opportunity to implement theories I had learned in practice. In order to identify a favorite meal, one tries lots of them. Similarly, in order to identify my concentration, I interned and worked in various fields such as public relations, human resources, organizational development, marketing, supply chain management, general management, and education. Currently, I am working as an instructor of the Introduction to Economics and Counselling courses at Bilimkana-AUCA high school.

When I was applying to the U.S.-CAEF Program, I said, "I will definitely give all the knowledge and experience I receive back to society." I still repeat this statement when I apply to programs and conferences. I do try to give back to society by implementing various social, educational, or entrepreneurship projects. Even though my impact is a drop in the ocean for now, I believe that these drops will become new positive waves in the future. I hope one day I will be one of the people leading an organization, thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Program, which supports students in forming positive waves in their communities.

"Even though my impact is a drop in the ocean for now, I believe that these drops will become new positive waves in the future. I hope one day I will be one of the people leading an organization."

“The U.S.–CAEF Program appeared as a new key that opened new doors to many different opportunities...”

As Benjamin Franklin once said, “An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” I am thankful to my family for their guidance during my childhood, and their deeply established belief that knowledge is the key that opens doors to new opportunities. They have always believed in me, and have helped me grow into a successful, goal-oriented individual.

The first investment I made into myself was learning foreign languages. Indeed, I saw an immediate return on my investment: first, as an exchange student in Japan, and later, as a participant of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program in the United States. As a graduate of an American high school, I became a more determined and inspired person, and even more enthusiastic about investing in my knowledge. This led me to the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship. The U.S.–CAEF Program opened new doors to many different opportunities and provided the opportunity to study at AUCA.

AUCA is the perfect place to grow as a business leader. During my studies, I constantly tried to learn new things, develop myself personally and professionally, and take advantage of every opportunity provided to me. One of these opportunities was an exchange program to study at the IESEG School of Management in Paris, where I was selected to study during the fall 2017 semester. To further develop my professional skills and decide on my academic concentration, I completed

internships in different fields to find the right fit for my skills and interests. I completed my first internship in the accounting department of the young and developing company, Digital Technologies. This experience led to another job opportunity. As part of the Regional Internship Program, I completed my second internship with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), in a project entitled “Strengthening of Livelihoods through Climate Change Adaptation in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.” My third internship took place at the Ministry of Transport and Roads of the Kyrgyz Republic, in the department of External Relations and Integration. Finally, I had the privilege to work with AUCA’s Institute of Education (IOE) as a program assistant, where I was responsible for helping with planning, analysis, and administration of the MA in Teaching program.

In addition to professional development, AUCA and the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship provided many opportunities to develop personally. I recently became an alumna of the ProKG Leadership Program, organized by the Club of Professionals of Kyrgyzstan. This experience brought me to a larger arena of leaders, where I learned from their experience and widened my network. I also completed the USG Alumni Mentorship Program, in which I formed an invaluable working relationship with my mentor. These two programs helped me shape my future career goals. I am very thankful for the key to new opportunities that is the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship.

Kasiet Mambetkul Kyzy



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
DEAN’S LIST
FALL 2017

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

NARYN

Meerim Moldalieva



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2016

MEERIM
HAS BEEN SELECTED
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📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH

Just as one single opportunity can open doors to ten others, the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship gave me the opportunity to be where I am now. These four years at AUCA have passed in a flash. They have been the most enriching and challenging years of my life, in which I took advantage of many valuable academic opportunities, extracurricular activities, and internship programs.

Studying at AUCA, one of the leading universities of Central Asia, among many bright, motivated, and ambitious people, has pushed me to be proactive and do my best in both academic and extracurricular activities. I had the wonderful opportunity to organize fundraising events as one of the first members of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP) to implement social projects at schools and orphanages.

Opportunities like my exchange semester at the SolBridge Business School in South Korea and the Global Volunteer program in Turkey were two of the most remarkable experiences during my university life. I also received a BECA scholarship to study at a cultural summer school in Spain, participated in the European Congress in Armenia, Model United Nations in Kazakhstan, and became a finalist at the Korean National Debate Championship in South Korea.

The U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship program offered a gateway to my future career. I interned in the Marketing Department of Coca-Cola Bishkek Bottlers. A second internship experience offered the opportunity to hone my skills in the business development department at Dos Credo Bank. Additionally, I worked with a project called Herb Café where I learned about challenges that startups face and solved logistical problems. Finally, I completed an internship at Textile Trans, the biggest manufacturer of knitted fabric in Kyrgyzstan. It was this latter experience that strengthened my passion for finance and led to my confirming finance as my academic concentration. These internships have been among the most valuable experiences in my professional development so far.

I have had many life-changing experiences throughout these years at AUCA thanks to U.S.-CAEF. Being an AUCA student means growing among highly motivated and educated students. Being a U.S.-CAEF Fellow means being a part of this family and opening doors to the futures we have all dreamed about. U.S.-CAEF continues to give numerous opportunities and great support, for which I am eternally grateful.

“Being an AUCA student means growing among highly motivated and educated students. Being a U.S.-CAEF Fellow means being a part of this family and opening doors to the futures we have all dreamed about.”

“Words cannot express my gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Program, which helped me find my place in the world, and a network of like-minded people.”

Education is very important in my family. During my high school years, I switched schools six times in search of better educational opportunities. I realized that in Tajikistan, my home country, many universities cannot offer a quality education, so I started to look at foreign universities. I chose AUCA, since my aunt graduated from this university and she highly recommended it. Because the English language was not widely taught at my school, I started attending extra English classes to prepare for my higher education.

After graduating from high school, I applied to New Generation Academy of AUCA to further improve my English. My time spent at NGA was very useful, since it helped me to prepare for AUCA exams and adapt to Bishkek and student life at AUCA. Then, I was lucky and blessed to receive the U.S.-CAEF scholarship, along with the opportunity to study in the Economics Department at AUCA.

My parents had warned me that my university years would pass incredibly quickly. Looking back, I know that the years spent at AUCA have changed me for the better. I met a lot of interesting people and made lifelong friends.

I started to look at things from completely different perspectives and discovered several different opportunities for myself, which I would have never founded out about if I had not been an AUCA student.

During my sophomore year, my friends and I bought a course about selling products on Amazon. After taking the course, I became really interested in Amazon, and step by step, I started to explore Amazon more which piqued my interest in e-commerce. After my third year, during my summer break, I had the opportunity to use the acquired knowledge while interning at Aliya, a fur company based in Bishkek. At that time, the company was going through rebranding and started to create their new website. It was a great experience to be part of this experience as it provided me with many valuable insights that I can use in the future.

In the future, I see myself as an entrepreneur in the field of e-commerce. Words cannot express my gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Program, which helped me find my place in the world, and a network of like-minded people.

Bezhan Niyozbekov



MAJOR:
ECONOMICS

📍 TAJIKISTAN

DUSHANBE

Elaman Saralayev



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

**ELAMAN
HAS BEEN SELECTED
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
U.S.-CAEF INTERNATIONAL
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
IN WASHINGTON, DC
IN FALL 2019**

KAZAKHSTAN

AKTOBE

My life is amazing. Since childhood, my favorite school subject has been English, and I have dreamed about visiting America. Thus, throughout my primary education and high school, I studied English and American culture with great curiosity, which eventually led me to one of the best universities in my region: the American University of Central Asia. Gaining admission to this university fulfilled one of my long-standing dreams: studying in an atmosphere saturated with American culture and having the opportunity to practice English in professional settings.

Acquiring higher education is so appealing because it provides a strong foundation for professional success. Even more appealing is a program like the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship, which is a wonderful gift that has helped me become confident in my future and strive for perpetual self-development. I would like to thank the U.S.-CAEF family for being so welcoming. Everyone in this family is ready to help each other.

During all these years studying business administration, I was able to determine my interests and strengths. Thanks to these high-level, challenging business, economics, and accounting courses, I was able to secure a position in the audit company, Kreston, and refine my skills in the field of audit where I want to build my career.

My university years were full of enjoyable events, many of which involved extracurricular activities. I was grateful to be elected to the AUCA Student Senate and volunteer in Orientation Week activities. These non-academic activities helped broaden my mind and taught me how to work in a team while making many new friends. The most memorable event for me was my exchange semester in Poland, which

“Thank you for providing me with a bright future, a happy present, and an unforgettable past.”

was a wonderful experience of learning a new culture and exploring European countries. It was a unique opportunity to acquire knowledge within

the European education system, which taught me to be more open, inquisitive, and cheerful. This trip provided me with many treasured memories and moments that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

My life sometimes feels like a fairytale, in which all my dreams are coming true. U.S.-CAEF has made this all possible. Thanks to U.S.-CAEF, I have developed both mentally and professionally. U.S.-CAEF gave me the opportunity to study at a top university with truly amazing people in my favorite culture and in my favorite language. All the while, I was surrounded by caring people, explored the world, and achieved a higher education from a top university. Thank you for providing me with a bright future, a happy present, and an unforgettable past.

Akmaral Shermamatova

“... all my achievements are directly linked to my participation in this program.”

During my studies in the English Access Microscholarship Program, I had the opportunity to learn English extensively and engage in social projects. Later, this program helped me receive the opportunity to study at the New Generation Academy. This AUCA preparatory program piqued my interest in Business Administration and inspired me to apply to the U.S.-CAEF Program.

U.S.-CAEF helped us not only financially, but also personally, by boosting our self-confidence. Over the past four years, we have learned great things with the help of this program. We had numerous training sessions and workshops on time management, strength-finding, development of communication skills and others. Also, it was very helpful to have additional math and English classes during our freshmen year provided by U.S.-CAEF. It meant a lot to all of us to feel such support.

Moreover, I was able to develop my professional knowledge. I interned in the digital marketing department of

Cultura Nomada Foundation, where I put my theoretical knowledge into practice. This internship helped me understand the difference between theory and real business cases.

After finishing my internship at Cultura Nomada, I applied to Metropolitan Logistic Company, where I worked as Third-Party Logistics (3PL). It is an outsourcing company, the headquarters of which are in New Jersey, USA. My job was to find line haul shippers that could deliver products to remote areas. There, I was able to improve my computer skills, and gain the ability to work with foreign partners. Also, I improved my communication skills by writing emails to companies and making deals with partners and clients.

I am very grateful to the U.S.-CAEF Program because all my achievements are directly linked to my participation in this program. In addition, it helped me to find great friends. I am very proud and happy to be part of this community.



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

CONCENTRATION:
MARKETING

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH

Bekzhan Tashbaev



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

KARAKOL

My grandma always told me that a quality education is the way to achieve success. I am forever thankful to my grandfather, who signed me up for extra English language classes, which became one of the most important steps in my academic journey. In 2013, I became a finalist of the FLEX program. I spent one academic year in Southwest High School in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. During the program, I grew personally and set new goals.

Then, in the beginning of 2015, I became a finalist of the U.S.-CAEF program. The knowledge that I would get to study at one of the best universities in Central Asia took my breath away. Four years passed very quickly, and I can barely believe that it is time to graduate and enter a new page in my life. At AUCA, I grew intellectually and gained invaluable life experiences. I always wanted to become an entrepreneur, and AUCA taught me skills that will help me to conduct an ethical and modern business. After graduating from

university, I plan to work in the field of audit, and I want to earn my first capital for future start-ups.

During my junior year, I completed an internship at the State Anti-Monopoly Regulation Agency of the Kyrgyz Republic through the FLEX to Internship Program. During the internship, I learned a lot about the work of state employees and acquired inside knowledge about the state structure of Kyrgyzstan.

I also took an active part in university life. I participated in Diversity Week multiple times, and I was part of the AUCA team in the CFA Challenge. I also organized several social projects and participated in projects organized by other activists.

The U.S.-CAEF Program taught me not only to set ambitious goals for myself, but also to work hard to achieve them, showing that anything I set my mind to is attainable. I would like to express my gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Program, a truly life-changing opportunity.

“The U.S.-CAEF Program taught me not only to set ambitious goals for myself, but also to work hard to achieve them, showing that anything I set my mind to is attainable.”

“Thanks to U.S.–CAEF, I have gained a large family, quality education, and invaluable confidence that I can reach my goals.”

The period of studying at AUCA's New Generation Academy was decisive in the sense that it helped me identify the path of my future career and life. It was during this period that I firmly decided how I will contribute to my country as an entrepreneur. Consequently, I began thinking about how I could achieve this goal to the best of my ability. When I learned about the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship, I knew it was the first step towards reaching my goals.

When applying to AUCA and the U.S.–CAEF Fellowship, I was excited to learn that I would have the opportunity to gain a quality education, grow as a student, as a professional, and as a person. My confidence increased significantly during my internship experience in the marketing department of Asanbay art center. This internship in the private sector was very useful for me as I am planning to create my own start-up in the future.

These four years at the university of my dreams have passed too quickly. During this period, U.S.–CAEF has always supported each one of us in both our academic pursuits and extracurricular endeavors. Tutoring sessions in

Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and other challenging courses organized by U.S.–CAEF helped us achieve academic success. Moreover, I am thankful to the program for enriching our social life by organizing regular teambuilding events and trainings such as StrengthFinders and workshops on developing communication skills. These activities allowed us to learn not only from the instructors but from each other as well and brought all Fellows closer. In addition, I volunteered in several community projects. The most valuable experience was volunteering for AIESEC's "Impact NGO'17" program in Turkey. Through participation in this event, I enhanced my analytical skills and gained great public speaking skills.

Thanks to all these experiences that I have learned in and outside the classroom, I feel prepared to start the new stage in my life. Before I enrolled at AUCA, I had thought that my capabilities were limited. Now I feel confident that I can reach my goals. Thank you, U.S.–CAEF, for opening a whole different world for us!

Meeringul Toktosunova



MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

JALAL-ABAD





KIMEP UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROFILES

Nekdil Abdulofizov



MAJOR:
HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2015
FALL 2016
SPRING 2017

TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG

From the earliest years of my education, I have consistently utilized each unique opportunity for professional and personal development. Among the most formative opportunities was my selection as a finalist to the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program, and the year I spent as a high school student in Minnesota, USA. Through this program, I became more independent and took advantage of all there was to discover in this new environment.

In 2014, I was granted another opportunity: to study finance as a U.S.-CAEF Fellow at KIMEP University. After completing some initial courses in business, I realized human resource management is a field in which I can develop a career for many years to come.

These four years provided me with so many opportunities to grow my knowledge and skills in the human resource management field. I participated in my first internship with the Mountain Societies Development Support Program (MSDSP) in Khorog, Tajikistan. In addition to learning more about MSDSP's mission, which is to coordinate relief and humanitarian assistance after war, the Human Resources management team

introduced me to several sub-sections of their department. Most of my responsibilities included assisting the Human Resources manager with new employee documentation and preparing for applicants' interviews. I am grateful to have gained many new skills through these experiences.

As a college student, I was involved in several extracurricular activities, such as debate and sports teams. It was within these groups that I gained leadership skills and made many friends, both local and international. It was an honor to be recognized as the best soccer player during my freshman year. I have also volunteered with the CCI Greenheart Exchange, a U.S. work and study program, by teaching English in orphanages. Volunteering is an important part of my life.

As a young and ambitious graduate, I plan to continue my studies and become a strong specialist in the field of human resources management. With the skills I have gained from the U.S.-CAEF Program, I look forward to contributing to the advancement of living conditions in my country by providing employment opportunities to many future graduates.

“With the skills I have gained from the U.S.-CAEF Program, I look forward to contributing to the advancement of living conditions in my country by providing employment opportunities to many future graduates.”

“Going forward, my life will be about contributing to the creation of an environment in which all Central Asian students who are determined and work hard to reach their fullest potential.”

I cannot believe I am graduating! When I was a freshman, this all felt like a dream. Writing this profile has been one of the biggest challenges simply because so much has happened in the last four years and it is difficult to know where to begin.

It has been a long road full of adventures. During my time at KIMEP University, I took advantage of all kinds of extracurricular activities, while simultaneously striving to excel in my studies and professional development. The most significant highlight is my membership in one of KIMEP’s oldest and most recognized organizations: KIMEP Periodical Information-Entertainment (PIE). I was eventually elected president of KIMEP PIE, which allowed me to gain invaluable leadership experience – it turns out managing a large team of unpaid people is really tough!

I was also fortunate to intern, and later accept a job offer, at Philip Morris International, a large multinational tobacco manufacturing company. There, I participated in a global event held in the company’s operations center in Lausanne, Switzerland,

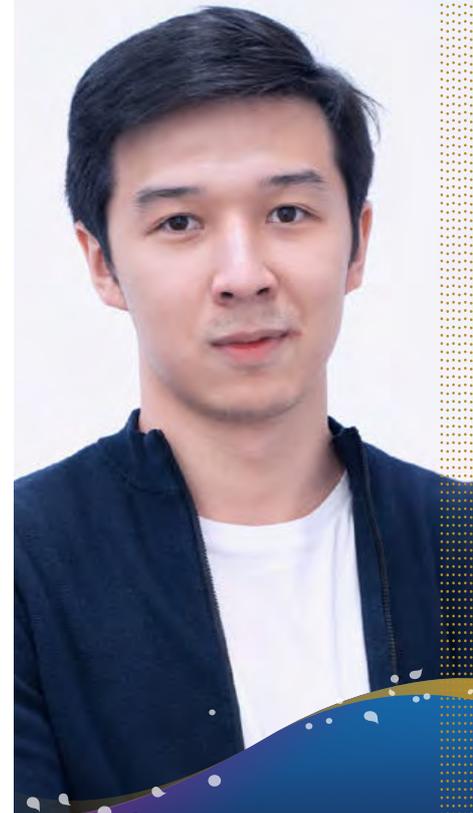
where 26 former interns from 14 different markets gathered to solve a real-life business challenge. I was honored to represent Kazakhstan at this international event.

All the Fellows graduating this year have had remarkable achievements over the course of the past four years. None of this would have been possible without the U.S.–CAEF scholarship, which we are all fortunate to have received.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone involved in this great program. I appreciate all the efforts to empower us as leaders.

There are many memories from these four amazing years, but there is one thing I know I will never forget. During one of our annual meetings with the Board of Directors, Mr. Weinroth voiced an interesting thought: we Fellows are so determined and work hard to become successful, but are limited by our environment. Going forward, my life will be about contributing to the creation of an environment in which all Central Asian students who are determined and work hard to reach their fullest potential.

Bekzhan Akbayev



MAJOR:
CORPORATE
FINANCE

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT’S LIST
FALL 2015
SPRING 2016

DEAN’S LIST
FALL 2017

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

ALMATY

Aigerim Akimzhan



MAJOR:
AUDITING

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2016
SPRING 2017
FALL 2017
SPRING 2018

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

📍 KYZYLORDA

“U.S.–CAEF truly gave me the opportunity to widen my horizons and become the best version of myself. Thousands of thanks for making it possible for Central Asian students to receive an education from leading universities and fulfill our dreams.”

I learned about the U.S.–CAEF Program with the help of our coordinator at Nazarbayev Intellectual School in my native city of Kyzylorda. I never thought my acceptance to the program would be possible, but as all our Fellows say, “Dreams do come true!” Thus, I began my studies at KIMEP University in 2015 and immediately dove into the opportunities of student life, most prominently, as a member of the Kazakh national dance team and Amanat student organization.

2016 brought new opportunities, including my participation in Smart Way: Infinity Generation training sessions. With the help of these sessions, I made the decision to focus my studies on accounting and audit. I also participated in Winter Universiade 2016 as a volunteer attaché for foreign sports delegates. This experience was very inspiring, as I met many interesting people from all over the world.

In the spring of 2018, there were plenty of opportunities to gain experience in my professional field. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of the “Big Four” audit companies, hosted the Accounting Olympiad and the Smart & TAXy Case Competition. I won third place in both competitions!

Additionally, because of the skills and knowledge I demonstrated at the case competition, I received an offer to intern with the Tax & Legal Department at PwC in August 2018. It was a great experience, which provided the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and skills in the tax sphere.

I continued to work hard as a senior. Recently, I fulfilled the role of delegate at the Leadership Development Day organized by the international youth organization AIESEC, where I had the opportunity to meet professionals in various fields. Additionally, together with three of my friends, I am taking part in the Generation Contest Case Competition organized by SF Education Center. Finalists receive a paid internship opportunity, which is a great prize for recent graduates. Thus, our team – the Consulting Wizards – strives to become those lucky finalists!

U.S.–CAEF gave me the opportunity to widen my horizons and become the best version of myself. Thousands of thanks for making it possible for Central Asian students to receive an education from leading universities and fulfill our dreams.

A girl's college education was always questioned in my big, conservative family. Despite this mindset, and our family's financial difficulties, my mother saw my happiness in studying. She dedicated many resources to pay for additional classes, so I could learn English. My mother's belief in me inspired me to study hard and apply for the U.S.-CAEF Program and pursue my dream of studying at KIMEP University.

When I arrived at KIMEP, I realized how lucky and blessed I was to be selected as a U.S.-CAEF Fellow, not only because of the financial support, but because of the numerous opportunities provided for students to flourish in different ways. I immediately engaged in a variety of student organizations: the KIMEP Times student newspaper, KIMEP International Student Association, Tree Huggers environmental club, and the Case Club. Membership in these organizations allowed me to learn to work in a team, communicate with people, write articles, become a mentor for students, organize projects, and solve business cases. The knowledge and experience I gained from these organizations helped me complete two internships: one at the Association of Kazakhstani Internet Business, and the other with KIMEP University's accounting department.

"I realized how lucky and blessed I was to be selected as a U.S.-CAEF Fellow, not only because of the financial support, but because of the numerous opportunities provided to every student to flourish in different ways."

During my junior year, I was fortunate to take part in the Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders on Civic Engagement in Seattle, WA, US. This was a five-week program where I learned about the importance of community service, women's leadership, effective public speaking, and U.S. history. The same year, I received the Ernst Mach scholarship to spend a semester at IMC University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria. Studying abroad helped me experience a different learning environment and meet amazing people. In November 2018, I was selected to represent Central Asia at the 44th International Business Today Conference organized in New York City by Princeton University. Taking part in these different programs allowed me to expand my worldview, network with peers and mentors, and exchange ideas with youth from many different countries.

Throughout these four years, I tried to grab every opportunity and participate in as many conferences and training programs as possible. I will never stop thanking U.S.-CAEF for giving me the opportunity to pursue my dreams and change my life. Now I am ready to step out and find my mission in the world.

Nigora Burhonova



MAJOR:
ACCOUNTING & AUDIT

MINOR:
MARKETING

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
SPRING 2016
SPRING 2017
SPRING 2018

DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2015, FALL 2016

NIGORA HAS BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE U.S.-CAEF INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON, DC IN FALL 2019

📍 TAJIKISTAN

KHUJAND

Haknazar Hallygylyjov



MAJOR:
FINANCE

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2015

DEAN'S LIST
SPRING 2016
FALL 2017

📍 TURKMENISTAN

GULUSTAN (MARY REGION)

I am thankful to the U.S.-CAEF Program for the investment into my education and professional development. These four years enriched my academic knowledge and personal life and helped me discover myself and different cultures around the world.

My journey to discover myself and the world began a few years earlier, in August 2011, when I was selected as a finalist of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program. I spent one academic year in Texas, USA. This life-changing program allowed me to realize that dreams do come true if a person sets realistic goals, and the first step for me was to acquire a world-class international higher education.

My acceptance to the U.S.-CAEF Program provided me with a platform to further develop my life personally, academically, and professionally. In July 2016, I became an alumnus of the Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN) sponsored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In a few months, I was nominated for the CAYN Study Tour to the OSCE headquarters in Vienna, Austria. The tour included meetings with OSCE's various departments and a visit to a Permanent Council session at the

Hofburg Palace. This tour helped me gain a deeper understanding of how political organizations operate.

My two semesters abroad on two different continents were also crucial to my growth. In spring 2017, I studied at the University of Applied Sciences in Steyr, Austria. The exchange helped me dive deep into the European education system and acquire knowledge by adapting to different teaching methods. In spring 2018, I won a Global UGRAD scholarship to study at Nazareth College, Rochester, New York. I took full advantage of this opportunity by simultaneously studying and interning with Upstate Capital Association of New York. The company's goal is to connect investors and businesses through the organization of networking events. In this role, I gained practical knowledge about business negotiations and important networking skills.

After returning from the US in May 2018, I completed an internship in the investments branch of Halyk Bank in Almaty, Kazakhstan. I am currently interning in the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration in Almaty, Kazakhstan. I believe these experiences will provide a solid base for my professional career.

“My acceptance to the U.S.-CAEF Program provided me with a platform to further develop my life personally, academically, and professionally.”

Zhanna Kenzhebekova

“I am happy to be a U.S.-CAEF Fellow because this has provided me with favorable circumstances to become a future leader of Kazakhstan.”

They say that knowledge is power. I would add that education is the key to success. The process of applying to the U.S.-CAEF Program was a challenge, but I had a strong academic background after studying at the Nazarbayev Intellectual School and I was highly motivated to succeed.

I have always enjoyed working with people, so it makes sense that I have always been interested in management. I dreamed of earning a bachelor’s degree at a university where I could gain knowledge and skills that would lead me to this field. In 2015, I became a U.S.-CAEF Fellow and a freshman at KIMEP University, where I found many opportunities for self-development. The faculty and staff significantly influenced my personal and professional growth, specifically at the language center, where I improved my foreign language proficiency. I enjoyed this experience, because it helped me find friendships with foreign students and converse in English.

I enjoyed the opportunity to become a part of KIMEP Periodical Information-Entertainment (PIE), a leading organization at the university that produces a magazine and organizes student events such as commencement and the KIMEP Awards. The latter is an annual charity event which usually raises 200,000 KZT (approximately 530 USD) per year. I also gained two new athletic skills after joining KIMEP’s women’s soccer club and

later participating in the “Stars on Ice” student project. Additionally, I developed professional skills while working with KIMEP’s Human Resources department as the assistant to the visa coordinator. I gained a new understanding about migration laws in Kazakhstan, which will surely serve me in my future career.

Despite all barriers, I keep climbing the metaphorical ladder and I am excited for this new stage in my life. Thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Program, I am ready to perform as a young professional. There are so many new possibilities. I want to express my gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship for giving me the opportunity to study at one of the best universities in Central Asia and become a future leader of Kazakhstan.



MAJOR:
HUMAN
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

KOKSHETAU

Aleksandr Kinyakin



MAJOR:
FINANCE

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2015
SPRING 2016
FALL 2016

📍 TURKMENISTAN

ASHGABAT

These four years at KIMEP University have been full of new experiences and personal discoveries. Since my first year, I have actively engaged in a variety of student organizations. I became a part of the Intellectual Debate Club, an environmental organization called Tree Huggers, the Open Hearts charitable society, and the business-consulting association Case Club. My membership in these organizations provided a set of valuable skills including creative thinking, teamwork, and responsibility.

In addition to an active student life, I looked forward to the opportunity to study abroad as an exchange student. I was fortunate to receive two full scholarships to study for one semester at Juniata College, Huntington, PA, US through the Global UGRAD Program, and for one year at the University of Applied Sciences in Austria. The difference in teaching methods, student lifestyle, and cultural diversity helped me become even more open-minded.

My professional network in Central Asia expanded significantly after the Central Asia Youth Network (CAYN) conference, first as a student participant, and later as an alum. The objective of the conference is to design and implement a business model to tackle the social problems of extremism and radicalism among

youth. I enjoyed sharing ideas with intelligent peers and working together on several initiatives.

During the summer of 2017, I interned with the finance department at Choco Family Holding, an e-commerce coupon service. I interned the following summer with the commerce department at Kimberly-Clark's Central Asia & Caucasus office. There, I learned the importance of corporate culture and which hard skills to prioritize as I prepare to enter the job market. I greatly appreciate my supervisor, who delegated serious projects to me. Thanks to these assignments, I noticed a drastic improvement in my presentation and analytical thinking skills.

Finally, my passion for foreign languages led to my co-founding of the KIMEP French Club. I am also a current president of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association, where my responsibilities include organizing teambuilding and professional development events for Fellows' enrichment. The U.S.-CAEF Fellowship has changed the lives of hundreds of gifted young people from Central Asia, and I am certainly no exception. Who I am now is thanks to this wonderful scholarship foundation, which has helped make my dreams come true. I look forward to supporting this amazing program as an alum.

“The U.S.-CAEF Fellowship has changed the lives of hundreds of gifted young people from Central Asia... Who I am now is thanks to this wonderful scholarship foundation helping to make my dreams come true.”

Education is the driving force for the improvement of mankind, and anyone who receives an education maintains the means to change the world. I express my sincerest gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship and KIMEP University for giving me the greatest opportunity to become someone who could change the world.

I was born in the small town of Khorog in eastern Tajikistan, where, from a young age, I dreamed of a greater future for myself. Fortunately, I was selected as a finalist of this great program. I was immediately proud to call myself a U.S.-CAEF Fellow and a freshman at KIMEP University, where I knew I would enjoy studying business and finance.

Practice makes perfect, so I am lucky that the U.S.-CAEF scholarship provided the opportunity for us to participate in the Regional Internship Program. In the summer of 2017, I interned with the finance and accounting department at AUCHAN Tajikistan, one of the biggest retail stores in Tajikistan. This proved to be the most significant professional experience during my time as a student. Due to the nature of this department, I had the unique experience of working on both finance and accounting assignments. I also assisted in other departments of the organization and was able to apply my new practical knowledge to my studies upon returning to classes in the fall semester.

I was able to continue developing my professional experience during the school year through my

“To repay for the immeasurable impact and support of U.S.-CAEF, we all must work hard and contribute to our society and humanity.”

part-time job at KIMEP University’s procurement department. Although widely considered as a low-priority position, I gained many new professional skills, such as more effective time management and networking. I was also able to have a lot of fun with membership in various student organizations. The most memorable of these was my participation in KIMEP Cinema, where I had the pleasure of shooting films and working on post-production projects.

It is amazing how fast these four years passed, leaving the greatest memories of our lives and preparing us for future challenges. If I could do it all again, I would. To repay for the immeasurable impact and support of U.S.-CAEF, we all must work hard and contribute to our society and humanity.

Somon Mavlonazarov



MAJOR:
FINANCE

TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG

Alisher Murtazaev



MAJOR:
CORPORATE FINANCE

MINOR:
MANAGEMENT

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
SPRING 2016
FALL 2016
SPRING 2017

ALISHER
HAS BEEN SELECTED
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
U.S.-CAEF INTERNATIONAL
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
IN WASHINGTON, DC
IN FALL 2019

TAJIKISTAN

KHUJAND

In 2013, I had the privilege to be selected as a finalist of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program, and spent an academic year in Alaska, USA. This program was very impactful and helped me develop myself as a leader, but I did not know at the time what was waiting for me in the future. I soon learned that the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship would become another life-changing opportunity that would help me grow and leave lasting memories.

In 2015, the U.S.-CAEF Program became an important part of my life when I was awarded a scholarship to study at KIMEP University. In addition to my academic focus in corporate finance, I had the unique opportunity to gain professional experience as an intern in the fields of management, sales, and marketing, which significantly expanded my knowledge of those fields. I believe that, to become a professional in a particular field, it is beneficial to work in other departments and even companies specializing in different spheres. I have always sought to acquire any professional work experience both in and beyond my specialization, and this is a practice I look forward to continuing.

I had the unique opportunity to work as the Sales Support Specialist at Samsung Electronics Central Eurasia. My responsibilities included analysis

of different types of promotional activities for the markets in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and the increase of sales and forecast of future sales performance for smartphones in these countries. I currently hold the position of Junior Specialist Intern in the Product Management department of Toyota Motors Kazakhstan.

Beyond classes and internships, I actively participated in a variety of social projects, business case competitions, and development programs and conferences. Involvement in social projects and helping my community have been my lifelong passions, since I grew up witnessing the effects of lack of quality educational opportunities. I believe in the notion that every individual in our world should have equal opportunities and access to healthcare, education, and secure jobs. I am confident we will find ourselves in a better society with these components soon.

I would like to thank the U.S.-CAEF Program for all the support provided to me and the other students. Without it, my achievements would not have been possible. Thanks to various teambuilding activities and professional growth opportunities, it seems that these four years began only yesterday. Thank you for creating this opportunity.

“Involvement in social projects and helping my community have been my lifelong passions, since I grew up witnessing the effects of lack of quality educational opportunities...”

“The most important gift was the discovery of this amazing U.S.-CAEF family. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by the best students and highly motivated young professionals, who inspire each other to succeed and become better every day.”

From a young age, I have been fortunate to study at high-level schools where doors have opened for me to develop my skills through continuous learning and prepare for my future. I was honored to be selected for the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program in 2013, wherein I received the opportunity to study for one year at a high school in Georgia, USA. The FLEX Program helped me to take the biggest step in my growth towards becoming an independent person.

One year after my FLEX experience, I was selected as a finalist for the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship, which provided the opportunity to pursue my bachelor's degree in corporate finance at KIMEP University.

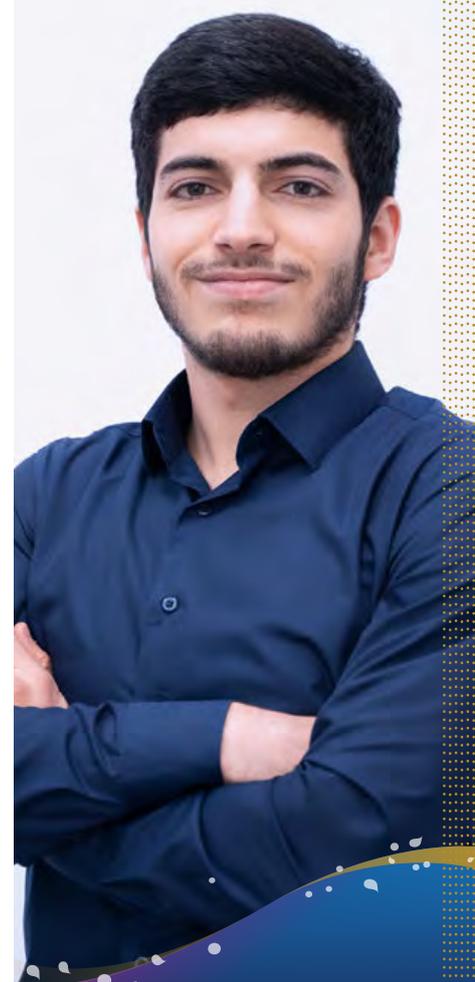
As a naturally active person, I immediately became involved in academic and extracurricular activities. I participated in numerous financial case contests, debates, and intellectual competitions. One of the most significant of my student-life experiences was that of the Kazakhstan English Language Theater (KELT), where I not only learned about acting, but also found a huge family of people who embodied positive attitudes and active lifestyles. KELT gave me the opportunity to perform on stage for

hundreds of people, where I both gained confidence and developed my leadership and communication skills. I was also an active participant in the Suleyman Demirel University debate championship in Almaty, and the U.S. Department of State's C5+1 Central Asia Business tournament in Bishkek.

In addition to several enriching extracurricular activities, I had the opportunity to complete an internship with the Network Management department at Toyota Motor Kazakhstan. There, I gained excellent professional experience and a new appreciation for the fact that an excellent grasp of business theory is vital for development in a corporate environment. In this role, I became more familiar with financial analysis and forecasting which will be essential skills for continued success in my future career.

Everything this program has given me is invaluable, but the most important gift was the discovery of this amazing U.S.-CAEF family. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by the best students and highly motivated young professionals, who inspire each other to succeed and become better every day. We were a family during these four years, and we will remain a family forever.

Bakhtiyor Otambekov



MAJOR:
CORPORATE
FINANCE

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2015
SPRING 2016
FALL 2016

📍 TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG

Nurbakhsh Sartib



MAJOR:
MARKETING
COMMUNICATION

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST
SPRING 2016

TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG

Following the philosophy of our Tajik poet Abuabduullo Rudaki, who said, "Life is a river which is always in motion, so build a ship to pass it," I have always done my best to continuously pursue self-development, both intellectually and physically. Rudaki always underlined the importance of education and emphasized that one can learn in any situation. Thus, it seems appropriate to reflect on the most significant achievements and learning opportunities that have brought me to this point in my life.

After advancing in the application process twice, I was selected as a finalist for the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program in 2013. This opportunity enabled me to represent my country in the United States, improve my English language skills, and develop myself as a leader. This program provided a fundamental knowledge of how to be international – I lived in a community with a completely different way of life and culture, studied at an American high school, and shared knowledge about my native country and culture. Moreover, I was selected to participate in the Civic Education Workshop in Washington, D.C, where we learned about the federal system

of American government and met with legislative leaders on Capitol Hill. Upon returning to Tajikistan, in addition to pursuing a challenging academic curriculum, I became the first master of Taekwondo in Tajikistan from my region.

I knew all my hard work paid off when I was selected as a finalist for the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship after high school graduation. This has been an incredible chance to study at one of the best Central Asian universities, acquiring a wealth of knowledge and experience through hard work and determination. I also had the privilege to take part in the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internship Program at Coca-Cola İçecek in Dushanbe. In this role, I was able to apply theories from marketing classes to understand and maximize the practical experience of working in an actual corporate environment. This helped me understand theories in class more deeply when I returned to the university. It will undoubtedly make it easier for me to adjust to the corporate lifestyle in my first professional experience after graduation.

I would like to thank the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship Program for giving me the opportunity to receive invaluable knowledge and find my path in life.

"I would like to thank the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship program for giving me the opportunity to receive invaluable knowledge and find my path in life."

“The U.S.-CAEF Fellowship provided me with the key to open the door of education, which in turn has opened hundreds of new doors to a better future.”

I was fortunate to grow up in a family where education was a strong value. Therefore, I am grateful to my family for their support, and to U.S.-CAEF and KIMEP University for allowing me to gain useful knowledge and become who I am today.

I have always strived to use every opportunity to learn something new. The first significant opportunity I had to do this was in 2014, when I became an exchange student with FLEX and spent one year studying at an American high school in Nevada, USA. After this experience, I was granted yet another incredible opportunity to advance my knowledge as a U.S.-CAEF Fellow at KIMEP University.

From the beginning of my first year, I tried to be as active as possible. With the recommendation of a KIMEP professor, I was selected for an internship at the United Nation’s Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in Almaty. There, I was involved in the organization of the Regional Platform event that took place in Dushanbe in the summer of 2016. One year later, I had the privilege to complete the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in the marketing department of JYSK Tajikistan: a Scandinavian retail supplier of home

goods. This internship allowed me to gain new practical experience and confirmed my desire to pursue a career in marketing. I returned to JYSK Tajikistan for another internship next summer and was fortunate to receive an offer of full-time employment.

My time at KIMEP was also filled with many extracurricular activities. I was elected President of the environmental organization Tree Huggers. Our team executed several “Go Green” projects, including Recycling Week, Vegetarian Day, and Free Market. In addition, I won an Ernst Mach scholarship to study at the IMC University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria in the fall 2017 semester. The experience helped me better understand that different countries’ populations have different consumer demands, which is practical knowledge I will use in my future professional roles.

These four years have shaped me in a way that will certainly influence all of my future endeavors. As a senior at KIMEP, I now clearly understand that the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship provided me with the key to open the door of education, which in turn has opened hundreds of new doors to a better future.

Nilufar Umarova



MAJOR:
MARKETING

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT’S LIST
FALL 2015
SPRING 2016
FALL 2016
SPRING 2017
SPRING 2018

NILUFAR HAS BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE U.S.-CAEF INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON, DC IN FALL 2019

TAJIKISTAN

DUSHANBE

Rustem Yesnazarov



MAJOR:
ACCOUNTING

AWARDS:
PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2015
FALL 2017

DEAN'S LIST
SPRING 2016
SPRING 2017
SPRING 2018

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

ALMATY

My first significant life-changing moment occurred when I received notification of my status as a finalist for the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program in 2014.

As I waited to board my plane back to Kazakhstan at Dulles International Airport in Washington, D.C, I learned about the opportunity to apply for a scholarship to study in one of Central Asia's most open universities as a U.S.-CAEF Fellow. Surprisingly, many other FLEX finalists did not know about this opportunity. Despite my initial hesitation, I decided it was worth a try. After successfully passing all rounds of the selection process, my second most significant life-changing moment came in the form of a notification that I was accepted to the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship program. To be honest, I have no idea where I would be now if I had not received this life-changing opportunity.

KIMEP University has always been famous for its high academic standards and diverse international faculty. Most importantly for me, KIMEP offers a Western-style curriculum, which certainly helped me adapt more easily after spending

a year studying at an American high school. KIMEP is also known for its vibrant student life, which is why I immediately joined an organization called KIMEP Friends during my first semester. Participation in this club taught me lessons in responsibility and teamwork, which is beneficial in personal and professional contexts. I also had the opportunity to attend many lectures organized by the Leadership Development Program, DAMU Entrepreneurs Program, and others that broadened my international perspective. At first, I found it difficult to juggle my responsibilities in both academics and my student organization; however, I received help and support from my classmates and other members of KIMEP Friend, which made everything manageable and only improved my academic performance.

Reflecting on my years at this university, there are very few things that I would change. All in all, it was a journey full of friendships, joy, and bright days. I am endlessly grateful to have had this experience, and I hope the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship is able to continue changing lives for the better life.

“It was a journey full of friendships, joy, and bright days...I hope the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship is able to continue changing lives for the better.”

Mustafa Ziyatbekov



I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the U.S.-CAEF Fellowship Program for giving me such an amazing opportunity to follow my passion and study the field in which I have always wanted to pursue a career. I am also grateful to KIMEP University for providing me with a better education and student life than I ever could have dreamed about.

In 2013, I was selected as a finalist of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program and studied for one year at a high school in California, USA. Upon returning to Kazakhstan and approaching graduation at my Kazakh-Turkish high school, I could not even conceive the possibility of studying at KIMEP University with a full scholarship. Nevertheless, it all came true in 2015.

During my freshman year I tried to actively participate in KIMEP's student life. I joined the student organization KIMEP Friends and became the head of its sponsorship department in the spring of 2016. I also received a certificate for my contribution to KIMEP's student life after modifying one of the events for freshmen students.

I was always eager to learn more, which is why I participated in both the KIMEP International Research

“I have become
wiser, smarter,
and more confident
in myself because
I am a U.S.-CAEF
Fellow.”

Conference, and a business training run by the DAMU organization. At the beginning of my junior year, I knew I needed to concentrate on my professional development. Thus, I completed a two-month internship at Weatherford, LLP, which was a valuable first experience in the finance department of an oil company.

At the end of my time at this university, I realize that time has flown by very fast. I do not know for sure what my future holds, but I look forward to expanding my skillset in a variety of companies to realize my true calling. I know for certain that I have become wiser, smarter, and more confident in myself because I am a U.S.-CAEF Fellow during these four years.

MAJOR:

CORPORATE
FINANCE

AWARDS:

PRESIDENT'S LIST
FALL 2015
SPRING 2016

DEAN'S LIST
FALL 2016

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

AKTAU

ENTERPRISE INTERN FELLOWSHIPS

Through the Enterprise Intern Fellowships, the Foundation seeks to afford its Student Fellows the opportunity to gain (1) practical work experience within Central Asia early in their university careers through our Regional Summer Internship Program and (2) a post-graduate educational, vocational and cultural experience in the United States or other countries that serve as positive examples of democratic open-market economies through the International Capstone Internship Program.



Nilufar Umarova

REGIONAL SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Since 2009, the Foundation has operated the Regional Summer Internship Program, which is made available on a competitive basis to a limited number of Student Fellows completing their second year of university study. Both AUCA and KIMEP University require their business and economics students to undertake a formal internship towards the end of their third year of study. The Foundation's Summer Regional Internship Program, which includes orientation and support for the interns, is intended as an opportunity for participants to become familiar with the business environment, enhance their skills and gain practical experience that will help them make informed choices about their degree-required internships in the following year.

A total of **nine** graduating seniors took part in the summer 2017 U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in Bishkek and Dushanbe:

Daniyar Abdiev

Beginimai Bolotbekova

Akhrorkhon Ikromov

Aizhan Kerimbek kyzy

Sartib Nurbakhsh

Kasiet Mambetkul kyzy

Somon Mavlonazarov

Meerim Moldaliev

Nilufar Umarova

The Foundation is grateful to the companies in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan that hosted the Enterprise Interns in the summer of 2017:

THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC:

Coca-Cola Bottlers

Beeline

Beyond Investment Group

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

State Sector for Human Resources Management

Hyatt Regency

TAJIKISTAN:

JYSK

Coca Cola

Schiever

POST-GRADUATE INTERNATIONAL CAPSTONE INTERNSHIPS

The International Capstone Internship Program, launched in 2011, is a four-month work-study program in the U.S. designed to complement four years of university study. Student Fellows who successfully complete their studies and graduate from AUCA or KIMEP University are eligible to apply for the competitive international internship. Six outstanding Student Fellows from the graduating class have been selected to take part in the International Capstone Internship Program in fall 2019:

Daniyar Abdiev, Meerim Moldaliev and **Elaman Saralayev** from AUCA, and **Nigora Burhonova, Nilufar Umarova** and **Alisher Murtazaev** from KIMEP University.

The Foundation's International Capstone Interns take part in an established and success-proven program operated by The Washington Center (www.twc.edu) in Washington, DC. In addition to the vocational and educational components of the internship, Enterprise International Interns benefit from joining a diverse group of peers from the U.S. and other countries in their program. During their time in the U.S., interns engage in valuable networking opportunities and extensive interactions with experts and leaders from public, private and nonprofit sectors, as well as a wide range of activities arranged by American Councils.



Capstone alumni with Uranbek Turdumbaev, U.S.-CAEF coordinator

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association (the Association) fosters and enhances the involvement of Enterprise Fellowship Program alumni in supporting and complementing the mission and goals of the Foundation through communication, service and leadership.

U.S.-CAEF alumni work in large international corporations, leading domestic enterprises, and small- or medium-sized businesses throughout Central Asia. Several have demonstrated outstanding entrepreneurial skills and have started their own businesses in often challenging economic environments, while others have decided to further their education and are pursuing MBAs.

This year, **28 new graduates** join the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association, bringing the total number of program **alumni** to **257**. The alumni leadership team represents both AUCA and KIMEP University and four countries of Central Asia—Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan:



Zulfiya Urunova

PRESIDENT, KIMEP CHAPTER
OFFER MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR,
METRO CASH & CARRY LLC, ALMATY



Azatbek Ismailov

VP FOR OUTREACH, AUCA CHAPTER
INTERN, DEAL ADVISORY
DEPARTMENT, KPMG, ALMATY



Zhibek Kamalbek kyzy

PRESIDENT, AUCA CHAPTER
AUDIT ASSISTANT,
KPMG, BISHKEK



Jahongir Rahimov

VP FOR OUTREACH, KIMEP CHAPTER
FINANCIAL CONSULTANT,
KPMG, ALMATY



Guliza Almazbek kyzy

VP FOR PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT, AUCA CHAPTER
MARKETING SPECIALIST,
COCA-COLA BOTTLERS BISHKEK



Amina Iqbolzoda

VP FOR PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT, KIMEP CHAPTER
FINANCIAL ANALYST, EBRD, ALMATY



Anisa Hojjeva

REGIONAL ALUMNI
COORDINATOR, TAJIKISTAN
EDUCATIONUSA ADVISER,
AMERICAN COUNCILS, DUSHANBE



Bahtiyar Jalilov

RRREGIONAL ALUMNI
COORDINATOR, TURKMENISTAN
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE PRODUCER,
TRIBALANDS, ASHGABAT



Karina Kussainova

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT
ADVISOR, AUCA CHAPTER
FOUNDER, BEDSET & INJOY
STUDIO, BISHKEK



Moldir Kussainova

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT
ADVISOR, KIMEP CHAPTER
CO-FOUNDER AND CEO
FOXOUT.KZ, ALMATY



The Association hopes that the graduating class of 2019 will join in their efforts to establish an important platform for communication and cooperation between all program alumni, current fellows and local business communities to complement the Foundation's goals in fostering the U.S.-CAEF mission, promoting professional development and contributing to an entrepreneurial spirit and the economic prosperity of Central Asia.

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U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation

124 U Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001

Phone: (1) 202.800.8560

Fax: (1) 240.597.0870

Email: Holly Burns

hollyburns.uscaef@gmail.com

us-caef.americancouncilsnetwork.org



American Councils for International Education

1828 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036

Phone: (1) 202.833.7522

Fax: (1) 202.822.1689

Email: David Patton

patton@americancouncils.org

americancouncils.org

