

12<sup>th</sup>

CLASS OF  
STUDENT  
FELLOWS



14 KIMEP  
UNIVERSITY



14 AUCA



# U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM GRADUATION 2022



 U.S. Central Asia  
Education Foundation



U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE  
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM  
GRADUATION  
2022



PHOTO CREDITS  
**BAKHROM TURSUNOV**



02 OVERVIEW

HISTORY  
MISSION  
PROGRAMS  
PARTNER UNIVERSITIES  
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

04 CELEBRATING  
THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
OF OUR STUDENT FELLOWS

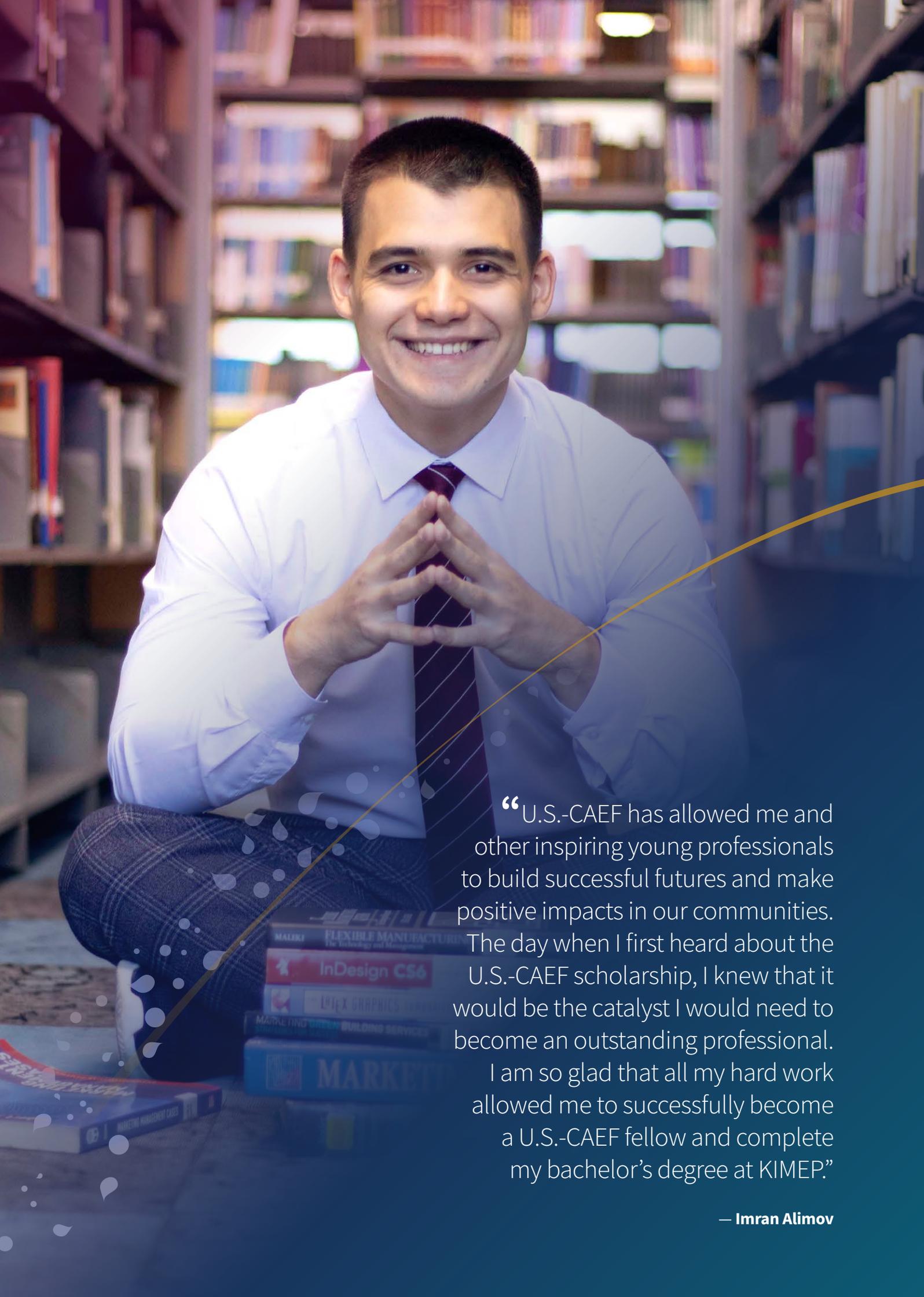
AUCA GRADUATE PROFILES  
KIMEP GRADUATE PROFILES

38 THE FOUNDATION'S  
INTERN FELLOWSHIPS

REGIONAL SUMMER INTERNSHIPS  
INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS

39 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION





“U.S.-CAEF has allowed me and other inspiring young professionals to build successful futures and make positive impacts in our communities. The day when I first heard about the U.S.-CAEF scholarship, I knew that it would be the catalyst I would need to become an outstanding professional. I am so glad that all my hard work allowed me to successfully become a U.S.-CAEF fellow and complete my bachelor’s degree at KIMEP.”

— Imran Alimov



# Graduation Book 2022

**12<sup>th</sup>**  
CLASS OF  
STUDENT  
FELLOWS

The 2022 U.S.-CAEF graduates represent the 12th 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 American University of Central Asia (AUCA) and 14 from KIMEP University, will celebrate their graduation on June 4 in Almaty, Kazakhstan and June 11 in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic, respectively. They are joining the ranks of 305 other U.S.-CAEF graduates who are forging successful careers and contributing to the development of their countries, the region, and our world.

U.S.-CAEF student fellows are academically gifted citizen residents of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, or Uzbekistan who, without financial aid, would not 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 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, which include maintaining a minimum 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.

## 28 FELLOWS

 14 KIMEP  
UNIVERSITY

 14 AUCA

Graduation 2022 is the result of years of hard work by each fellow and represents a major milestone in the lives of the graduating students and their families. We recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of these future Central Asian leaders and members of the U.S.-CAEF family.

It also represents the last class of U.S.-CAEF Fellows fully funded by the Foundation. The Foundation is grateful for the support it has received from KIMEP University and AUCA since 2007 and the educational opportunities that it has afforded to 12 classes of student fellows. Graduation 2022 at KIMEP University and AUCA is always a joyous experience, but this year is also bittersweet. The Foundation's Board expresses our deepest appreciation to KIMEP University, Dr. Bang and the wonderful professionals and professors who have made the KIMEP undergraduate experience transformational for our U.S. CAEF Fellows. AUCA, its Board, administration and professors similarly have dedicated themselves to providing an education designed to equip its students with the knowledge, skills, and values to navigate a complex world where accelerated change has become the norm.

While the Foundation is no longer funding undergraduate fellowships at AUCA, we are extremely fortunate that the U.S. Department of State committed to sponsor additional U.S.-CAEF undergraduate fellowships at AUCA, administered by American Councils, with the last U.S.-CAEF fellows currently scheduled to graduate AUCA in 2025.



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 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 told the CAAEF Board that this business education was invaluable. In conducting research for its legacy proposal, the CAAEF Board found a strong demand among private sector businesses in Central Asia for employees with a Western business education. Yet, few opportunities existed for academically qualified, financially disadvantaged students to pursue 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 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 had operated.

The Foundation also would have two complementary programs: a faculty development program and an internship program. After more than three years of efforts, the Fund received the necessary U.S. governmental approvals. In May 2007, it created the Foundation and launched the Enterprise Student Fellowship Program. The faculty development program and the internship program were subsequently launched. As cohorts of U.S.-CAEF Fellows begun to graduate, they created an alumni association, which the Foundation supports.

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 critical thinking habits 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



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.

PROGRAMS

The Foundation currently executes its mission through the two programs described below and provides assistance to the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association (the Association), which supports the involvement of Enterprise Fellowship Program Alumni through on-going professional development, communication, and service, as another means to further its mission. The Association has launched a strategic planning effort as it reviews how to meet the needs of its Alumni, strengthen the ties among them, and fulfill the U.S.-CAEF values as alumni numbers continue to grow.

**Enterprise Student Fellowships Program**

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.

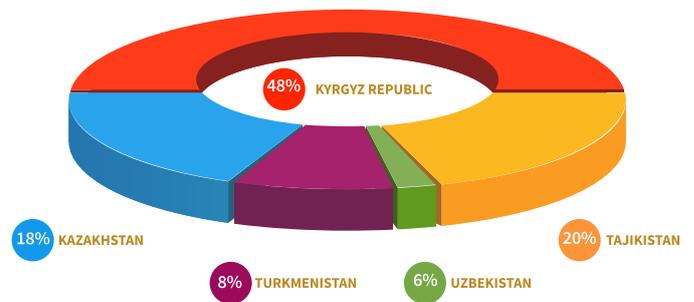
**Enterprise Intern Fellowships Program**

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.

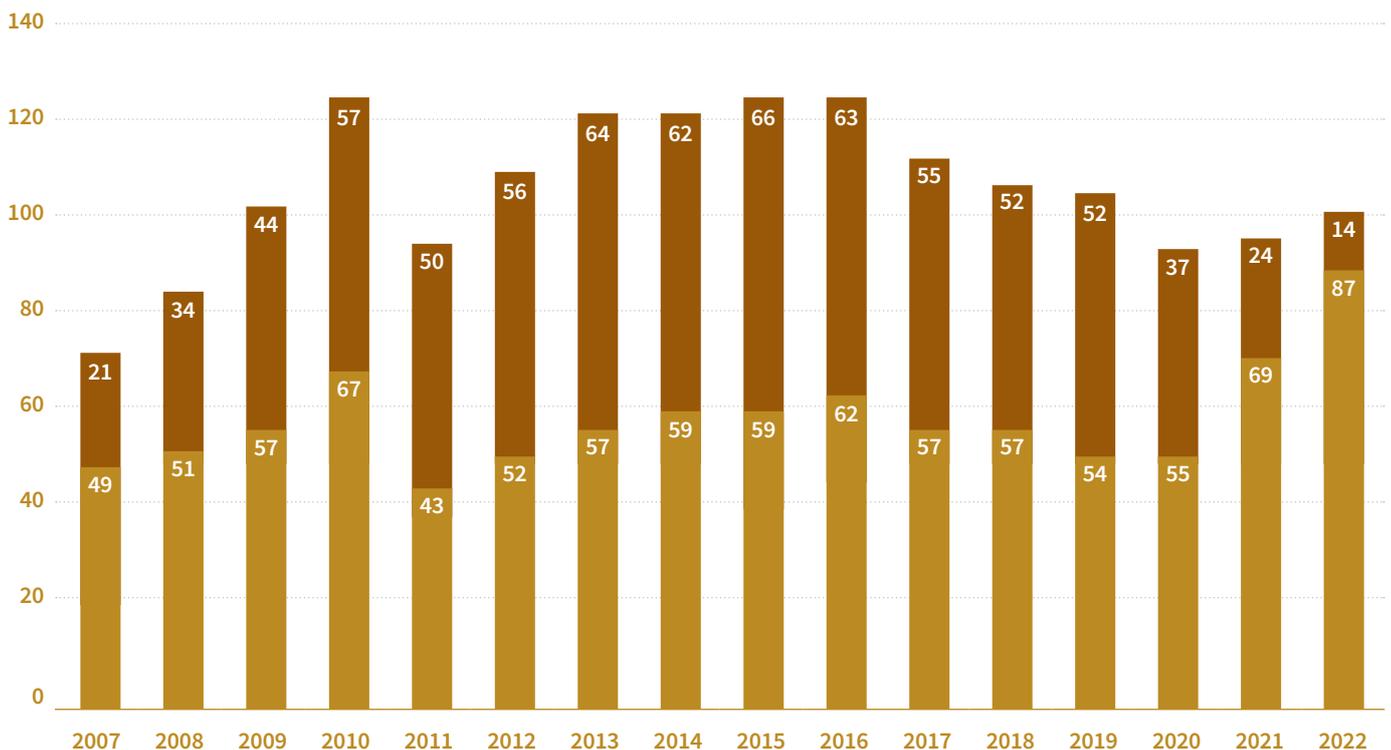
ENTERPRISE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

In the 2021-2022 academic year, **101** students were awarded U.S.-CAEF scholarships – 87 at AUCA and 14 at KIMEP University. This total includes 71 students (three cohorts of fellows at AUCA) sponsored by the U.S. Department of State who began their studies at AUCA in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

STUDENT FELLOWS BY CITIZENSHIP SINCE PROGRAM INCEPTION:



STUDENT FELLOWS BY INSTITUTION





GRADUATION 2022

# Celebrating the 12<sup>th</sup> Class of U.S.-CAEF Fellow Graduates

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. They have continued the traditions initiated by earlier Enterprise Student Fellows. Their collective 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 ventures, won opportunities to study overseas, and volunteered their time and skills to their communities. They have also weathered two years under conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many faced the additional challenges of remote learning from rural, and often mountainous homelands with intermittent internet connectivity. During a period in 2021, the closure of borders between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in response to the outbreak of violent conflict, impacted the Tajik fellows at AUCA. Notwithstanding these obstacles, our graduating student fellows managed to thrive, advance their education, and find new ways to assist their communities.

## GRADUATING SENIORS RECOGNIZED ON THE PRESIDENT'S &amp; DEAN'S LISTS

IMRAN  
ALIMOVGABDULGANI  
AUDEKOVALUA  
CHYNTEMIROVAYLYAS  
GARABAYEVIGLIK  
GINIYATOVDILARA  
JUMAGAZIYEVASEZIM  
KANATOVAZEVAR  
MAMADJONOVASAVSANGUL  
MAMADLOIQOVADARIYA  
MUSTAFINOVAERADZH  
NASRIDDINOVALTYNAI  
NURALIEVAARUYEL  
NURBEKOVASANZHAR  
ORMUKOVZEBOJON  
RASULOVADARYA  
REJEPALIYEVAAIANA  
RYSBEKOVABEKZAT  
SAILAUKAIRAT  
TAGAEVLIDIYA  
YAGODINA

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 the 28 fellows, 20 or 71% — have been recognized on the President's List or Dean's List.

Our seniors have also taken advantage of highly competitive, enriching study abroad programs in Austria, France, Kazakhstan, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, & the United Kingdom.





# AUCA Graduates

# Islambek Ashyraliev



**MAJOR  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

**AWARDS  
IDEA PITCH AWARD**

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

**TALAS**

“U.S.-CAEF is a big family full of love, support, and courage. I am proud to call myself a member of such an amazing family.”

I had an interesting journey to becoming a U.S.-CAEF fellow. Back in 2014, I was happy to find out that I had been accepted to the FLEX Program. As a FLEX participant, I spent a year full of achievements and transformations at Middletown High School in Maryland. After my exchange year, I returned to Kyrgyzstan motivated to change my community for the better. I began implementing many projects from teaching English to conducting sessions about human rights. I quickly started to realize that I wanted to improve not just my community, but also the whole country. In pursuit of this goal, I applied for the U.S.-CAEF Program and started my journey at KIMEP University. During my journey, I experienced a serious health issue, and U.S.-CAEF provided tremendous support for me by organizing a successful GoFundMe campaign, for which I will always be incredibly grateful. Due to my health concerns, I moved back to my native Kyrgyzstan, where I was able to continue being a U.S.-CAEF fellow while attending AUCA. Despite the obstacles I faced, I always tried to work toward my dream. I created so many great memories during my years at AUCA. While there, I won the “Best Speaker” award at a debate tournament and helped organize the first inter-university Case Cup competition between KIMEP and AUCA fellows.

During my studies at AUCA, I realized that by creating local companies and, thereby, creating local job opportunities, I would be able to influence my country’s growth, and I was excited to try to start my own business. With the support of my

business partner, we were able to launch a fast-food business, which we eventually rebranded to become a successful coffee shop called “Coffee Hogwarts.” As a Business Administration student with basic knowledge and experience, I was able to gain professional experience by interning at a non-governmental organization called ‘SheStarts,’ which aims to support and guide women entrepreneurs from rural areas of Kyrgyzstan, through a FLEX internship opportunity. This experience confirmed my belief that creating local companies with potential to grow globally has a huge impact on a country’s economy. I understood that IT products often have great potential to gain global popularity, so I decided to learn how to create web and mobile applications. I completed a six-month UX/UI design course from a school called “DevX” located in Chicago. When I was interviewed for the U.S.-CAEF Program, I stated that I wanted to open a school after graduation to help Kyrgyz students receive a better education. Now, I am working with DevX School on creating an IT institute in Kyrgyzstan, which will employ instructors from top companies such as Apple, Google, and Meta. Students will learn entrepreneurship and IT, and the ultimate goal is to develop the groundwork for more world-class startups from Kyrgyzstan.

My university experience was full of wonderful moments, achievements, and friendships, and I want to sincerely thank the U.S.-CAEF Program for all the support. I am looking forward to joining the Alumni Association and implementing great projects together with my U.S.-CAEF family.

# Avina Abytaeva



I am a girl from an ordinary school in the small Kyrgyz town of Toktogul who believed in herself and tried to take advantage of every opportunity that was presented to her. If someone had told me that I could study at the best university in the country, I would not have believed it. Like a magician with a magic wand, the U.S.-CAEF Program made the dream of that little girl come true. Thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Program, I had the opportunity to pursue my bachelor's degree at one of the best universities in Central Asia. I am honored to know other U.S.-CAEF fellows who are future leaders and change-makers of their countries. None of our achievements and future successes would be possible without the support of this incredible program!

Since my first year at AUCA, I worked on developing my leadership, analytical and organizational skills. I had a chance to work at the New Generation Academy (NGA) Mentorship Program and helped about 100 students succeed in their subjects, and implemented several projects, such as a spelling bee and a math competition. During my studies, I gained valuable experience through participating in different internships that boosted my career preparedness.

I worked as a marketing intern for a local fast-food chain, Burger House. As part of the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, I had the opportunity to work at First MicroFinance Company as a digital intern. I was lucky to be able to work in various departments of the company during this internship. For the first month of the internship, I worked on attracting foreign investments to promote online lending in Kyrgyzstan. I am thankful to my advisor, who taught me how to apply for grants with international organizations. During the second month of the internship, I was tasked with improving and promoting the company's new product, Ykcham. It was

a new product that offered online loans that could be used through the Elsom mobile application, the first of its kind on the market in Kyrgyzstan. I studied international online loans and helped improve the product. Through our hard work, we were able to develop and offer unique loans to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time many students were required to study online but could not afford to purchase laptops to continue their studies. I am proud that my colleague and peer **Altynai Nuralieva** and I were able to provide loans with low interest rates to support students during challenging times. By the end of the internship, I received a job offer from the CEO of the company himself. The experience I gained from this internship helped me discover the world of banking and taught me about digital tools that I can use to help make life easier for customers.

In addition, in my senior year, I started working toward earning my Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) accreditation. As a result, I successfully completed all ACCA subjects at the university. This achievement led to my employment with RELEVANCE Consulting.

Aside from my professional experiences, I had many opportunities to develop my leadership skills at AUCA. I was the only freshman who was selected to the leadership program ProKG initiated by successful entrepreneurs. I worked as a finance committee member of the AUCA Student Senate. Also, I was honored to serve as a mentor for several outstanding U.S.-CAEF fellows and five students at Kyrgyz-Global.

I am so thankful to the Board and the staff of the program, who believed in the potential of a little girl from a small town. Now, I am a confident, ambitious, and motivated professional with big plans for the future!

“U.S.-CAEF is not only about receiving a scholarship, but about belonging to a community of change-makers and leaders of their countries. I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF for giving me the best four years of my life!”

**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**CONCENTRATION**  
ACCOUNTING &  
AUDIT, FINANCE

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

TOKTOGUL

# Muhammad Boymatov



**MAJOR  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

📍 **TAJIKISTAN**

**KHUJAND**

My early curiosity in the field of business and entrepreneurship, along with my motivation to contribute to the development of my home country, prompted me to apply to AUCA and the U.S.-CAEF Program. From the moment I was accepted to both in 2018, my life changed dramatically. This was especially true in the case of U.S.-CAEF, as I was provided with life-changing opportunities that allowed me to realize my childhood dreams and fulfill my potential in the sphere of business management. My participation in these opportunities, as well as the effort I put into my studies, paid off, as I recently received a job offer. I was appointed as a manager within the company I work for to take the lead on a new product that is going to be implemented in Uzbekistan, a new market for the company.

In addition to financial and academic support, U.S.-CAEF provided me with professional support through the Regional Internship Program, which allowed me to gain my first work experience in 2020 at an IT startup called Neobis. There, I interned for three months in the position of project manager. Over time, I realized how much the knowledge I gained during this internship truly helped me to succeed in a real work environment. Within the past couple of years, I completed three large-scale IT projects while complying with all our objectives, deadlines, and budgets.

U.S.-CAEF also provided me with the opportunity to network and collaborate with like-minded, talented, and ambitious peers that have become like family to me. Since 2018, my peers and I have worked on more than five social entrepreneurship projects, organized two major case competitions, and participated in three other case championships. As a result, I was delighted to become Co-President of the Case Club at AUCA, which was

“U.S.-CAEF provided me with the opportunity to network and collaborate with like-minded, talented and ambitious peers that have become like family to me.”

created by U.S.-CAEF fellows in 2015. This experience led me to conduct three financial literacy trainings in Tajikistan with more than 500 participants since the beginning of the pandemic.

Thanks to the exceptional educational and professional development I received throughout my journey at AUCA, I can say with confidence that the U.S.-CAEF Program has played a key role in my life, and I will be grateful for that forever.

# Sezim Kanatova



Being a member of the first cohort of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) at Bishkek International School opened many doors for me, including one that led to an unforgettable experience throughout my four years as an undergraduate, the U.S.-CAEF scholarship. I studied Business Administration with a Marketing concentration at AUCA. The diverse curriculum included other courses too, such as foreign languages, filmmaking, and software engineering.

Having studied German during my freshman year, I traveled to Germany over the summer break, where I had an opportunity to work and practice my speaking skills. Then, in 2021, I was provided with the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) Scholarship to study intensive German language courses in an online format.

In my sophomore year, I attended programming courses for nine months. Upon completion of my studies, I was among the top three students in my class and received an opportunity to intern at Demir Kyrgyz International Bank. After two months at the internship, I was offered a part-time job as a full-stack developer.

The virtual format of classes since the start of the pandemic provided me an opportunity to take some Open Society University Network (OSUN) courses provided by Bard College. I took a class where we created a short film about social problems in our community.

Our film, 'Gender Stereotypes about Women in STEM' took 2nd place among films by other students participating in the OSUN film festival.

In my senior year, I was selected for an internship/preparatory course offered by an ex-Google employee. This course

“My university years showed me how to try new things and never be afraid of failure.”

boosted our algorithmic and soft skills within the software engineering field.

The experience helped me receive a job offer from a German software company, where I currently work remotely as a front-end developer.

Having now graduated from AUCA, I am planning to apply for a master’s degree in Business Informatics to be able to expand my theoretical knowledge about engineering.

I am so thankful to U.S.-CAEF and AUCA. I had such a wonderful time over the last four years and gathered wonderful memories and knowledge, which has dramatically changed my world view. This community taught me that I should not only take, but also give. Thus, with all the interests and experiences I have accumulated, my ultimate goal is to launch a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) boarding school for girls.

**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



NARYN

# Altynai Nuralieva



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2021  
DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2019  
FALL 2020

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

**TALAS**

“Although I entered university as an inexperienced teen, today, I am graduating as a confident young woman who has obtained professional experience, academic excellence, personal growth, life-long bonds, and limitless inspiration.”

I would like to thank everyone involved with the U.S.-CAEF Program for believing in me, sometimes even more than I believed in myself. While the financial support from the scholarship was crucial for me, it seemed there was almost no limit to the other benefits and opportunities the program offered fellows like me.

Now, looking back at my four university years, I can clearly see how impactful the program was for me.

I sometimes call my freshman year a time of trial and error because it was a year when I seized every opportunity to be actively engaged in community service, business events, and social activities. I was an active member of the AUCA Case Club, which enabled me to reach the finals of Bishkek Case Cup 2019, and to co-organize a business case event at SOSI Educational Center in Sokuluk for high school students in May 2019. Later, during my junior year, I participated in the FinOlimp Case Championship 2020 organized by Bank of Asia in partnership with Baker Tilly, a leading audit company in Kyrgyzstan, and came in second out of 224 participants.

I am also proud to have contributed to the coordination of seven social events and projects during the 2018-2019 academic year. I even tried my hand at entrepreneurship by launching an English language teaching course in spring 2019.

After a busy freshman year, I focused my sophomore and junior years on narrowing down my professional interests and strengthening particular skills. The highlight of this period was my internship at the First MicroFinance Company, which I participated in through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. As a result of this internship, I became even more interested in accounting and finance, and this led to me becoming an accounting and writing tutor at AUCA and joining the management team in the AUCA Accounting Club. I spent the fall semester of my senior year at IAE Lille, University School of Management, France, through the Erasmus+ scholarship, which was another formative experience.

Looking back on my journey at AUCA as a U.S.-CAEF fellow, I can see that although I entered university as an inexperienced teen, today, I am graduating as a confident young woman who has obtained professional experience, academic excellence, personal growth, life-long bonds, and limitless inspiration.

I am lucky to have received guidance and motivation from mentors, mentees, fellows, and alumni. I received everything I need to be fully equipped for a successful career, and I am eternally grateful to U.S.-CAEF for helping me become who I am today.

# Sanzhar Ormukov



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**AWARDS**  
DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2019

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BISHKEK

I could have never imagined that I would become a student at AUCA – I always thought that this university was out of reach. However, thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Program, something that seemed like a pipe dream for a simple Kyrgyz teenager became reality. U.S.-CAEF helped me not only to study at one of the best universities in Central Asia, but also to discover my passions, gain professional experience and make lifelong friends.

I applied to AUCA while I was participating in the FLEX Program in 2017-18. As a FLEX participant, I became a member of an amazing family and community in Winterset, a town in the wonderful state of Iowa. Even before my FLEX journey began, Uranbek Turdumbaev\* advised me to apply for the U.S.-CAEF scholarship.

There has not been a single day that I regretted following his advice, as it was the beginning of many new opportunities for me.

Being a member of different clubs at AUCA such as Enactus, Business Clinic, Neobis and AUCA Case Club helped me determine where I saw myself in the future and which fields I was most interested in. Namely, I realized that I wanted to gain professional experience in IT. Therefore, I participated in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program 2020 at Neobis as a backend developer. There, I worked on a few different projects, for which I contributed by creating servers for mobile applications and websites.

I was also interested in the corporate finance field, and in order to gain practical experience in this sphere, I prepared a financial analysis report for Eurocash S.A., a Polish corporate group that owns numerous enterprises. I gained this experience during my exchange semester in Poland in spring 2021. I also learned how to perform calculations of investment projects and how to analyze profitability measurements with the help of the R-programming language, which was a very new skill for me.

After returning from Poland, I continued to explore my professional interests. I interned at John Galt business accelerator with the research and development team, where I learned about startup ecosystems and how they must be established in order to efficiently create and support startups. Every week, I was assigned new tasks and topics that I had to research, which definitely increased my analytical and critical thinking skills.

I am glad that everything turned out the way it did. I had dreams to gain professional experience in the IT sphere, to achieve excellent academic results, to establish life-long bonds with outstanding people and to participate in various extracurricular activities. Fortunately, with the constant support of the U.S.-CAEF Program, my dreams came true, and now I am ready for the next step in my journey.

“U.S.-CAEF helped me not only study at one of the best universities in Central Asia, but also to discover my passions, gain professional experience and make lifelong friends.”

\* Mr. Turdumbaev is a program specialist for American Councils in Bishkek who is responsible for U.S. CAEF Programs administration in Kyrgyzstan.

# Zebojon Rasulova



**MAJOR**  
ECONOMICS

**AWARDS**  
DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2019

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 TAJIKISTAN

KHUJAND

The U.S.-CAEF Program provided me with an excellent opportunity to study at one of the leading universities in Central Asia. The liberal arts education I received there was pivotal in my ability to acquire knowledge in my field, develop critical thinking skills and grow in my professional development.

From my first year, I dedicated myself to my studies and earned a spot on the Dean's list in 2019 for academic excellence. In addition to my studies, I became a member of the AUCA Case Club, where I was able to put my theoretical knowledge into practice by solving real business cases. Moreover, I was a member of the management team, and helped organize the Bishkek Case Cup and the U.S.-CAEF Case Cup in 2019, which gave me valuable experience in managing case competitions.

After freshman year, in summer 2019 I served as a global volunteer for the AIESEC program, an international organization based in Istanbul, Turkey that provides students with leadership training and internship opportunities. During my time volunteering and organizing workshops for Turkish students, I worked with international volunteers and represented Central Asia in the Global Village for Future Leaders of Business. During my sophomore year, I became a coordinator for AIESEC Kyrgyzstan and worked specifically on the Teenagers in Free Enterprise (TIFE) project organized by Enactus Club. I also completed an internship at the public foundation Techaim, where I worked on social media and projects related to promoting STEAM education for women.

My academic knowledge and internship experience prepared me to participate in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in 2020. That summer, I served as a marketing intern at Fresco, an ice-cream company, which provided me with practical experience in the marketing field. During my junior year, despite the challenges related to the pandemic, I decided to lead AUCA Case Club, as I had some experience in management.

During the fall 2020 semester, 30 AUCA students became members of the club, 16 of whom were U.S.-CAEF fellows. In the spring 2021 semester, I studied abroad at Opole University in Poland. During my exchange semester, I took interesting courses in finance and marketing.

I met many other international students through the Erasmus program and was lucky to visit eight European countries throughout the semester, including Italy, France, and the Netherlands. My academic accomplishments in economics helped me to be accepted as a Writing Academic Resource Center (WARC) tutor, where I helped freshman and sophomore students with their economics courses.

My internship experience in marketing also helped me receive a job offer with the international fashion brand LC WAIKIKI as a social media specialist. I am thankful to U.S.-CAEF for providing me with four years of studies, which helped me grow as a professional.

“I am thankful to U.S.-CAEF for providing me with four years of studies, which helped me grow as a professional.”

“I will forever appreciate each person who makes the U.S.-CAEF Program possible and plays a part in influencing fellows’ lives.”

During my academic exchange year in the USA as a participant of the FLEX Program, I had an exceptional opportunity to study accounting and assist with running a school merchandise store at Galena High School, Galena, Illinois. This experience was one of the factors that influenced my decision to study business. I pursued this goal, and was fortunate to begin my bachelor’s degree in Business Administration at AUCA through the U.S.-CAEF Program. I have always believed that my life and career goals and the values of the U.S.-CAEF were a great match, and that the program would help me make positive changes in my community.

University life itself would not have been as exciting and impactful without U.S.-CAEF. Each event and opportunity coordinated and shared by the program made a tremendous difference in both my professional and personal development. I will forever appreciate each person who makes the U.S.-CAEF Program possible and plays a part in influencing fellows’ lives.

While studying at AUCA, I learned to see opportunities within other opportunities. For example, I was able to leverage my high academic performance by becoming a math tutor at the Writing and Academic Resource Center (WARC). International exposure also played a key role in my university experience. I was chosen to represent Kyrgyzstan at the Central Asian Youth Talks and Model OSCE conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. This experience enhanced my knowledge of international relations and the economic development of Central Asia. Through self-motivation and perseverance during my Erasmus+ exchange semester in Poland, I was chosen to participate in a training course on entrepreneurship in

Bulgaria. Thanks to this program, I gained unique insights into how businesses in Kyrgyzstan can develop through investments and acquiring specific skills.

Throughout my studies, I actively challenged myself to obtain practical experience in the business field. I completed several internships in different types of organizations, such as NGOs, banks, and international companies, in order to narrow down my interests. After being selected for the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, I seized the opportunity to intern at Kompanion Bank, and gained profound insights on digital banking. I gained experience in additional business sectors by interning in the Strategic Consulting Department at Baker Tilly.

The U.S.-CAEF community taught me the importance of appreciation and contribution. As such, it was always important to me to participate in various volunteering and extracurricular activities. I served as a management team member of AUCA Case Club, President of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP), President of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association, and President of Accounting Club, and became an alumna of the ProKG Leadership Program, a mentee of the American Chamber of Commerce, and a mentor to four incredibly talented U.S.-CAEF fellows.

Looking back, I realize that U.S.-CAEF and AUCA molded me into the type of role model I had always looked up to. Now, I have all the abilities, knowledge, and like-minded people around me to create better conditions for economic growth in Kyrgyzstan and all of Central Asia.

## Aiana Rysbekova



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT’S LIST:  
FALL 2021  
DEAN’S LIST:  
FALL 2020  
FALL 2019  
Student Life  
Excellence Award:  
FALL 2021

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

**📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

**SOKULUK**

# Bekzat Sailau



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**AWARDS**  
DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2019

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

TARAZ

While studying at Nazarbaev Intellectual School, representatives of the U.S.-CAEF Program came and presented their outstanding opportunity to pursue a bachelor's degree at an internationally recognized university. At that time, I was still deciding whether to study business, as I was also interested in engineering. However, I remembered a quote by Richard Branson: "If somebody offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes – then learn how to do it later." As such, I accepted the offer and never looked back.

Since the first semester of my studies, I focused on my business career by participating in business clinics at AUCA, where I analyzed local business environments and began interacting with them. I was able to further my professional growth by taking part in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in 2019. That summer, I completed an internship at Sky Mobile LLC (Beeline Kyrgyzstan), where I conducted market research, launched multiple projects, interacted with suppliers and assisted in the management of 75 offices all over Kyrgyzstan.

In order to improve my networking, I assisted in the AUCA Alumni Office in my sophomore year, which allowed me to frequently communicate with alumni. In this position, I collaborated with Emil Begimkulov to launch the AUCA Alumni Mentorship Program. To expand my network outside the AUCA community, I took part in an exchange program at KIMEP University in fall 2020 to study and gain professional knowledge in finance.

At KIMEP University, I participated in qualification programs for the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange and European Business Association of Kazakhstan, used KIMEP resources to take CFA accredited courses and worked in the HR Department of Home Credit Bank to conduct research on the Kazakhstani recruitment market. I was able to use all of this knowledge in the following semester, when I worked at Demir Bank. The extensive financial knowledge I gained at KIMEP also helped me work as a credit

assistant, and I was eventually promoted to the position of IT system analyst. Currently, I am working as a financial advisory consultant at Mazars, where I assist companies and banks all over Central Asia to accurately predict financial performances, launch internal control studies and help create profitable business models.

Also, during my time at AUCA, I won multiple international case championships and Olympiads like "Case4Success," "Challengellenge Cup Russia," "Idea Sprint Challenge," and "FinOlimp 2021." The competitive spirit I was exposed to at these events helped me grow from a beginner to a professional in the business field. I appreciate the constant support of U.S.-CAEF and I am ready and excited to use all the experience and knowledge to facilitate economic growth in Central Asia.

“U.S.-CAEF truly prepares future business leaders in Central Asia by providing constant support to fellows and providing invaluable career development.”

# Aigul Saparova



My homeroom teacher in elementary school once asked me what I would like to be when I grew up. Seven-year-old me replied, “a company manager.” That dream started to become closer to reality in 2018, when the U.S.-CAEF Program awarded me a once-in-a-lifetime scholarship to study business administration at one of the most prestigious universities in Central Asia.

I am so grateful to have met the program managers, mentors, and lifelong friends as a member of the program. Adapting to AUCA and learning new processes felt natural even from the very early days of my studies.

In the spring semester of my junior year, I participated in an exchange semester at Gdansk University of Technology in Poland. This was a really exciting time for me; it brought back memories of 2017, when I was accepted to the FLEX Program and spent a year at the University Preparatory High School in California, USA.

As a freshman at AUCA, I interned as a PR and Event Management Officer at the American Chamber of Commerce in Bishkek. Working closely with over 90 local businesses and communicating with top female company executives, I was inspired to organize social projects. Through the Student Initiative Development Program at AUCA, I coordinated educational projects related to girls’ empowerment, child development trainings for parents and mentorship programs for high school students. Thanks to these experiences, I learned how to set priorities and network with different groups of people.

I had always been interested and involved in managing projects, but I did not know it was something I was very passionate about until I participated in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. I consider this opportunity, which I was granted in 2020, as a turning point for my professional development.

My internship took place at Neobis, where I worked as a project manager and contributed to the development of two

“The last four years impacted my life significantly and helped me develop core qualities that will undoubtedly serve me well in my future career.”

software products. As a result, I was offered to lead the advanced level IT project for the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

In my senior year, I was hired by Mad Devs, an IT company headquartered in London, UK. I now co-manage a team of 15 software developers who work on the internal processes of automation products that focus on AI and Big Data.

The last four years impacted my life significantly and helped me develop core qualities that will undoubtedly serve me well in my future career.

On top of that, I am very happy that by sharing my knowledge, I am able to share U.S.-CAEF’s educational values with more people and communities in Central Asia.

**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

**📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**



# Kairat Tagaev



**MAJOR**  
ECONOMICS

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2021  
DEAN'S LIST:  
SPRING 2020  
FALL 2019

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BISHKEK

Four years ago, the U.S.-CAEF selection committee believed that a 17-year-old boy from Kyrgyzstan had the capacity to become a change-maker in his community. I had just completed my FLEX exchange year at Alcona High School in Michigan, and did not fully realize how lucky I was to be selected for one of the best scholarship programs in Central Asia. U.S.-CAEF is not just a program that sponsors your education; it helps you grow into a leader who is a representative of your family, community, and country. My life motto is “Carpe Diem” (“seize the day”); I lived by this every day over the last four years, and the journey with U.S.-CAEF and AUCA has been full of amazing and memorable experiences.

As an Economics major, I had a rare opportunity to take classes taught by leading economic experts who held top positions in such organizations as The World Bank, The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Ministry of Statistics. I took advantage of this opportunity and worked hard to excel academically. My efforts paid off, as I was recognized on both the President’s List and Dean’s List.

The invaluable knowledge I gained in my AUCA classes allowed me to take part in an internship with Burger House, a restaurant chain. I put my academic knowledge into practice in order to improve the restaurant’s marketing efforts. The effort I put into my work impressed the CEO, and I was invited to head the marketing department of the whole company.

Through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, I completed an internship at

an IT startup called MyWay, and this experience helped reveal my true passion for business. I was in charge of the whole development and marketing processes of the organization. We were able to partner with the IT Attractor school and develop software for a product that would help Kyrgyz citizens to travel around the country. Moreover, we were selected to take part in the Accelerate Prosperity accelerator project, organized by the Aga Khan Foundation, and we received first place at the Google Startup Weekend event.

My whole journey with U.S.-CAEF made me the person I am today and helped me find the right tools to contribute to the development of my country. It also allowed me to discover my ultimate passion, entrepreneurship.

Consequently, with the support of the program, knowledge from my classes, and the invaluable internship experiences I gained, I founded Ganador Textiles. Ganador Textiles is a sewing manufacturer focused on imports and attracting foreign counterparties to Kyrgyzstan. We are changing the industry through our focus on excellent quality and service. Many in the U.S.-CAEF community provided unwavering support and invested in my company, which was crucial for its growth.

Looking back at my university journey, I can proudly say that I ‘carpe’d’ every diem, and these four years will hold a special place in my heart as some of the most warm and happy memories. I want to thank the U.S.-CAEF Program for molding me into a confident, patriotic, and goal-oriented professional.

“U.S.-CAEF is not just a program that sponsors your education; it helps you grow into a leader who is a representative of your family, community and country.”

“U.S.-CAEF gave me confidence in my ability to achieve any goal that I choose.

The program also helped me expand my perception of the world, so that I can grasp more opportunities in life to be a better person for my community.”

When I was in high school, I knew that I could achieve some small goals in life, but I never believed I would be provided with the opportunity to go to the university of my dreams and make lifelong friends with incredible people. Through the U.S.-CAEF Program, I challenged myself and learned new skills, which helped me grow as a professional and as a person.

When I first started at AUCA, I joined the debate club. I developed critical thinking skills, which helped me to understand the world better. Being able to join one of the smartest groups of students at AUCA was something that I knew would help me in my future. Furthermore, I eventually became president of the debate club, and I became confident in my leadership skills when my counterparts won some of the most prestigious debate tournaments in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia. All of our hard work led to us collecting several titles and becoming the best debate club in the city.

In my junior year, I found an interesting career path and began to pursue it. With the support of one of my professors, I found a mentor, who is currently a marketing professional at Google, who taught me her craft and imparted a lot of useful knowledge to me. I learned

and practiced my skills in search engine optimization by observing and analyzing cases from local and European companies. With these experiences, I came to realize that the next step in my career path would be acquiring web development skills. Consequently, after learning more from other members of U.S.-CAEF who were interested in IT development, I focused on learning front-end programming. Currently, I am a search engine optimization (SEO) intern at a local company and plan to apply for a job at a bigger corporation after graduation.

One of the most valuable outcomes of my U.S.-CAEF experience was finding a community of close friends who took part in this program. I firmly believe that we can become leaders in Central Asia.

In the end, I can definitively say that I became the best version of myself with the support of U.S.-CAEF. I understand myself better and know the steps I need to take to develop even further. Additionally, I believe that we must be grateful for everything we receive in our lives, so I will definitely try to bring the experience and skills I gained over the past four years back to the people of my country once I become a successful professional.

## Sultanbek Temirbaev



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH

# Nurmukhamad Turkbaev



**MAJOR**  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

**📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

**BATKEN**

“The U.S.-CAEF Program is not just about financial aid. It is about building connections with people, embracing a unique spirit, and receiving eternal support from those who surround you.”

My journey to becoming a U.S.-CAEF fellow was quite unique! I was named an alternate candidate when I first applied to the program, but half a year later, I was successfully accepted as a fellow. Since then, U.S.-CAEF became my second family. It provides a community full of motivation, support, and inspiration.

My academic journey started with being selected for the competitive Global Korean Scholarship program, through which I spent the summer of 2019 at Keimyung University in Daegu, South Korea studying economics and international trade. My summer program was very intensive, but also provided many adventures and new acquaintances.

At the end of my second year at AUCA, thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, I interned at Kreston International, an audit company in Bishkek. I spent a productive summer making inception reports, reviewing financial statements, participating in tenders and editing commercial offers to clients. This internship served as the foundation of my professional career, and led to my acceptance to other prestigious internships and programs.

My junior year was the most successful of my years at AUCA because I was able to participate in a business competition called Business Okul Ata, where I had the opportunity to win \$100,000 for my startup. The show was organized for the first

time in the history of Kyrgyzstan and was essentially structured the same way as the show ‘Shark Tank.’ My business idea was about processing and exporting dried fruits such as apricots, apples, nuts, etc. that are grown in local greenhouses. The journey lasted for six months, from November 2020 to April 2021. Among 3,500 applicants, I became a finalist and ultimately won the investment and a fully funded trip to Antalya, Turkey.

In addition to my studies, I volunteered a lot over the past four years. I started a project called Central Asian Nomad Youth (@cany.kg) in November 2018, through which my peers and I have worked with more than 1,800 youth from rural and border areas of Kyrgyzstan. We focus on improving education, mitigating conflicts in border zones, and preventing early marriages.

To conclude, I would like to say that the U.S.-CAEF Program is not just about financial aid. It is about building connections with people, embracing a unique spirit, and receiving eternal support from those who surround you. I will miss this place a lot; my U.S.-CAEF fellows, food in the kitchenette, my lovely volleyball team, and even the security guard who reminds me to wear my mask every morning.

If I was given a chance to study at AUCA one more time, I would definitely do it, just to feel the U.S.-CAEF spirit once more!

# Suiunbu Zootbekova



**MAJOR  
BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

During my final years of high school, I became concerned about my country’s socio-economic issues. The more I learned about these issues, the more I was driven to become an influential person who can contribute to Kyrgyzstan’s development. Thus, choosing my future profession was a really important decision in working toward this goal. During that time of reflection, a life-changing event happened. U.S.-CAEF fellows came to Talas to conduct an enlightening workshop for students at my school. They impressed me with their energy, unity, and aspirational spirit. I realized that I wanted to be surrounded by these people, with whom I shared many values and goals.

The past eight semesters at AUCA provided me with a breadth of knowledge and skills, many invaluable opportunities, and, certainly, plenty of challenges. I wanted to try myself in different areas to find out in which area I would like to work in the future. I looked forward to applying my knowledge in real life situations. Thus, after my freshman year, I completed an internship at Bai Tushum Bank, where I learned an extensive amount about banking processes. Later, I developed an interest in the public sector. So, I chose to participate in an internship with “Kyrgyz Tourism,” a state enterprise under the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

Due to the pandemic, a lot of academic and professional growth was paused. However, the lockdown provided some good opportunities for giving and sharing.

I was happy to be part of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP) team and help families in need during the pandemic. I was able to lend my teaching skills by serving as an education mentor in my former school.

At AUCA, I gained skills and experiences from multiple departments. I mostly took courses related to public administration, and focused heavily on learning more about ethical governance. To support this goal, I completed a course called “Anti-Corruption” offered by the University of Pennsylvania. In my senior year, I had the privilege to attend the third annual ‘Global Transformation in Central Asia’ conference organized by OSCE Academy in Bishkek. The conference made me more aware of the issues Central Asia faces in terms of development. Another important experience I gained was working with International Observers at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) during the Parliamentary Elections in 2021. I worked as an Assistant to Short-Term Observers from Great Britain and Germany during the elections.

Studying at AUCA gave me a broad spectrum of opportunities to better myself. U.S.-CAEF reshaped my thinking, mindset, and vision of the world. Thanks to the U.S.-CAEF Program, I became a global thinker, a responsible citizen, and a confident professional. I am immensely grateful to the Board of Directors, coordinators, and other fellows for their life-long investment in my future and my country’s future.

“Thanks to the U.S-CAEF Program, I became a global thinker, a responsible citizen, and a confident professional. I am immensely grateful to the Board of Directors, coordinators, and other fellows for their life-long investment in my future and my country’s future.”

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC





# KIMEP University Graduates

## Imran Alimov



**MAJOR**  
MARKETING &  
HOSPITALITY  
MANAGEMENT

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
SPRING 2019, 2020, 2021  
FALL 2019, 2020 & 2021

DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2018

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 TAJIKISTAN

KHUJAND

“Being a U.S.-CAEF fellow does not only mean having financial support, but also having a family, a community of professionals and inspiring peers who are there by your side to provide support and guidance.”

U.S.-CAEF has allowed me and other inspiring young professionals to build successful futures and make positive impacts in our communities. The day when I first heard about the U.S.-CAEF scholarship, I knew that it would be the catalyst I would need to become an outstanding professional. I am so glad that all my hard work allowed me to successfully become a U.S.-CAEF fellow and complete my bachelor's degree at KIMEP.

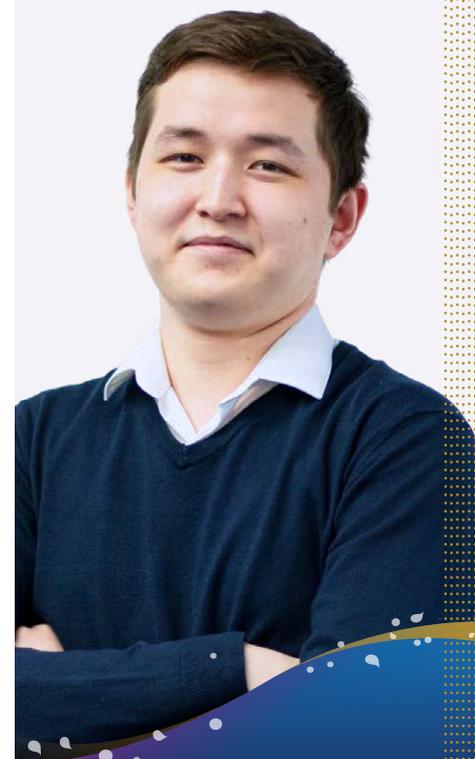
For me, university is not just about gaining knowledge, but rather it is also about learning from failures and developing various skills that will help you to smoothly adapt to any changes or new environments. Thanks to the immense support from U.S.-CAEF, I was able to focus on developing my personality and not worry about financial stressors during my studies.

As a freshman, I joined five student organizations. There, we organized various social, entertainment and charity events, but most importantly, we learned how to effectively work as part of a team, find common ground with people and master time management skills. Later that year, I received an invitation to join the human resources team for a large international consulting firm – GRATA. There, I began to better understand my professional goals, and therefore decided to change my major to marketing and take several leadership courses.

In addition, I actively participated in various debates, case competitions and Model UN conferences. Understanding other people's opinions, observing problems from various perspectives and being able to constructively support your point of view are some of the important skills I was able to gain from these activities. I also became a member of the Central Asian Youth Leadership Academy, where I developed many important soft skills. During the pandemic, I earned a spot in courses organized by the European Business Association of Kazakhstan, which focused on HR management and Marketing and Public Relations. During the courses, I learned a lot from real business experiences shared by top professionals. I realized later that these courses were crucial for me in successfully performing the duties of a Project Manager and Chief of Staff at a local educational NGO, TajRupt. Although I had to move to the capital of Tajikistan for this opportunity, I was able to accept this offer thanks to financial support from the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program.

Being a U.S.-CAEF fellow does not only mean having financial support, but also having a family, a community of professionals and inspiring peers who are there by your side to provide support and guidance. It is and always will be an honor for me to be a U.S.-CAEF fellow and I am sure that one day all of us will give back to our wonderful community.

## Gabdulgani Audekov



“The phone call on July 13, 2018 changed my life, because at that moment I received a call from U.S.-CAEF...”

During my last year of high school, I realized that I wanted my life to be related to the business sphere in some way.

I started researching the best universities in Kazakhstan. As a result, KIMEP University consistently showed up as the best place to study business. Since KIMEP University is a private university, I never thought it would be possible to receive a scholarship to study there. U.S.-CAEF allowed me not only to study here, but also to improve other skills.

After comparing U.S.-CAEF to other scholarship options, I learned that it is quite unique in the way it organizes team-building sessions, business meetings, and alumni meetings, and offers a large network of current fellows and alumni.

This is to say, U.S.-CAEF provides a big, supportive family. Whenever I experienced a problem or difficult situation, I was sure that other U.S.-CAEF fellows or my mentor would help me.

During my time at KIMEP, I participated in trainings like ‘Trade on KASE: from A to Z’ in September 2020. As a result, I was able to use this information in the KASE EXCHANGE SIMULATOR in December 2020. I received a lot of useful information about the Leadership Development Program at KIMEP from different CEOs and top managers.

They shared their own experiences with us each Thursday. I also gained my first experience with a business start-up at KIMEP when I created a YouTube channel with content about nature in Kazakhstan.

In addition, I played on the volleyball team at the university. My biggest achievement in this regard was winning 3rd place in the Almaty Volleyball Competition 2019. I also participated in the all President Cup table tennis competitions, which were held for students throughout all of Kazakhstan in 2018, 2019, and 2021.

I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF and KIMEP University for the opportunity to become a qualified professional, for unforgettable moments, and for allowing me a chance to make new friends and gain new experiences. It is an honor to be part of the U.S.-CAEF family.

**MAJOR**  
FINANCE

**AWARDS**  
DEAN’S LIST:  
FALL 2020

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

SHYMKENT

# Alua Chyntemirova



**MAJOR**  
ACCOUNTING  
& AUDIT

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2018 & 2020  
SPRING 2020 & 2021

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

ALMATY

“I am so thankful to have found support and trust in the U.S.-CAEF Program. It opened many doors for me that I didn't even expect to knock on.”

As someone who has always been a dreamer with ambitious plans, I am so thankful to have found support and trust in the U.S.-CAEF Program. It opened many doors for me that I did not even expect to knock on.

During my time at KIMEP University, I matured significantly — emotionally, intellectually, and professionally. I was a member of KIMEP PIE, where I worked on organizing events for students and assisting with projects in different departments.

This experience helped me come out of my shell and boosted my communication skills. It also helped me become a valuable member of the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association team, where I was able to intern for one year. I joined KIMEP Case Club, through which I participated in many case competitions while gaining expertise and winning an internship at the head office of an international household appliances retailer. Furthermore, I served as President of the KIMEP Chess Team, an experience that became a crucial part of my student years. My teammates and I participated in the Republican Universiade in Spring 2019, the International University Sports Federation (FISU) World University championship online in 2020, and many local tournaments.

Another major experience I had at KIMEP was participating in an exchange semester at the University of the Basque Country, Bilbao, Spain. One thing I learned there is that every new location I discover shifts my perception of the world a little bit.

That semester in Europe, which was filled with adventures, new acquaintances, and cultural exploration, gave me so many insights that it impacted my way of life even when I was back at home. I returned to Kazakhstan with a Spanish level B1 certificate, basic knowledge of laws and policies of the European Union, and a desire to contribute to improving the environment and recycling habits around the world.

Majoring in accounting at KIMEP provided me with many opportunities in the finance field. I worked for the international brokerage firm Freedom Finance as part of the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in summer 2021. As it was my first experience being part of the big corporate world, I became inspired and motivated by the ambitious professionals around me.

In part because of that experience, I now have substantive ways to contribute to the development of my home region by connecting it with global leaders. My current job involves assisting in finding foreign direct investments from the U.S. and Canada.

I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF for the constant support during these four years and I am honored to be a part of this community.

## Ailina Duisen



**MAJOR**  
ACCOUNTING

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

ZHETYSAY

Studying at KIMEP University was a dream come true, and U.S.-CAEF is the magic wand that turned a dream of mine into reality.

I was born and raised in a small town located in the very south of Kazakhstan called Zhetysay. Studying in a big city like Almaty always seemed like something that would be out of reach for me. But I was fortunate enough to be given an opportunity to receive a high-quality education at KIMEP, one of the best universities in Central Asia.

During my four years at KIMEP, I received valuable knowledge from very experienced professors and business professionals. Furthermore, KIMEP offered many opportunities through clubs, championships, and different events where one can apply theoretical knowledge in practice. One of the most memorable events I participated in was the Enactus Case Competition in Fall 2019.

Many teams participated, solving cases, and offering solutions and ideas. It was during this event that I discovered that I like solving cases using theoretical knowledge from classes in real-life situations. Currently, I am considering an offer for an Internship at a French company, Schneider Electric, in the Finance Department.

Outside of my studies, I had the opportunity to volunteer to organize numerous events that took place on campus. These are some of the best memories I have about student life at KIMEP University. In addition to the various opportunities KIMEP provided in terms of professional growth, I want to highlight the tremendous impact the past four years had on my growth personally. The ups and downs that every university student faces definitely made me more patient, stronger and wiser.

All the memories, experiences, and knowledge I have today are because four years ago, back in 2018, U.S.-CAEF believed in me and provided me with the best quality education, a memorable student life, friends I can always count on and immense support. I am extremely grateful for the opportunities I got throughout my student life.

Now, I firmly believe that both the academic and non-academic experiences I gained while studying at KIMEP University will provide a solid foundation for the journey towards my future, and will allow me to contribute to the development of my country and Central Asia as a whole.

“All the memories, experiences and knowledge I have today are because four years ago, back in 2018, U.S.-CAEF believed in me and provided me with the best quality education, a memorable student life, friends I can always count on and immense support.”

## Ylyas Garabayev



**MAJOR**  
INFORMATION  
SYSTEMS IN BUSINESS

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2020 & 2021  
SPRING 2021  
DEAN'S LIST  
SPRING 2020

**TURKMENISTAN**

**ASHGABAT**

All my life, I have been driven by an eternal desire to try something new, to test the limits of my possibilities and gradually become better at what I do. While growing up in Ashgabat, I studied anything and everything I could learn in search of my future profession.

This process led to both my success in high school and my participation in various courses and volunteer organizations. I got excited about entrepreneurship, business, and finance, and devoted my final school years in my home country to those spheres. After discovering this passion, KIMEP and U.S.-CAEF were clear avenues to further my knowledge, so one can imagine my happiness when I was awarded a scholarship from U.S.-CAEF.

Moving to Almaty and KIMEP, I quickly adapted, absorbed new knowledge, and continued to challenge myself. I participated in several student organizations where I performed roles like president and vice president, project manager and HR, radio host, video maker, and photographer. I highly doubt that I would have been able to try myself in such a wide variety of roles in such a short time anywhere else.

In my opinion, a lot can be observed about a person based on their ability to adapt, their ability to change the course of their life at the right time and their openness to trying something totally new. During my first two years at KIMEP, I interacted with various people and became driven by the desire to pursue a career in the IT field. I consistently worked to fulfill this desire and improve myself, then, halfway through my studies at KIMEP, I decided to change my major to Information Systems in Business. At times it was difficult and scary for me, but I never gave up and now I can proudly call myself a junior IT specialist. I am glad to say that I have never regretted my decision to change my field of study.

I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF and KIMEP, as well as my family, for the opportunities they provided me, for helping me understand who I am and what I am capable of, for supporting my decisions, and, most of all, for helping make my university years the best time of my life.

“U.S.-CAEF and KIMEP University are much more than an opportunity for a bright career; they are the places where I realized who I am and who I want to be.”

## Iglik Giniyatov

“My experience at KIMEP provided me not only with learning tools, but also with the confidence to follow my dreams.

I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF for these amazing years and opportunities.”

I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF and KIMEP for providing amazing moments and memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. These years helped me mature as a young professional who has a clear plan for their future.

I grew up in Aktobe, Kazakhstan, dreaming about studying at KIMEP, and I am so glad that my dream came true. Since my high school days, I have dreamt about studying information systems in business. In 2018 KIMEP launched the Bachelor of Information Systems in Business (BISB) program, alumni of which can become system analysts. It is a new specialization in Kazakhstan.

Experience is everything. Therefore, I took every opportunity to engage in community service and social projects, conferences, and internships. After my second year of study at KIMEP, I got an internship at Transtelekom in the Sales Department. I was involved in some important projects, including several prospective business plans for the company and updating clients' databases.

Last summer, I held an internship in Chaplin Cinemas' Finance Department through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. During that time, I learned a lot of information and enhanced many of my skills. I was also able to apply my theoretical knowledge in practice.

Throughout my internship, I supported my team by performing the following tasks: supporting the creation, optimization and standardization of reporting templates and the overall reporting architecture, as well as documenting the instructions for the reporting processes; supporting the creation and improvement of the headquarters' operations report with automated financial tables including relevant information for the different stakeholders; assisting in building a dynamic report on the Finance Department's financial steering; independently updating and reviewing financial reporting models in Google Sheets on a monthly basis for further use of the Finance Department team; and many more.

To stay active in the university life at KIMEP, I was a member of the KIMEP PIE student organization. There, I gained experience publishing magazines and negotiating with sponsors. I also met a lot of people and enhanced my communication skills.

In conclusion, I would like to say thank you to U.S.-CAEF for giving me an opportunity to study at KIMEP and gain significant work experience. All these achievements were only possible with the support of the U.S.-CAEF scholarship and KIMEP professors. I believe that this is only the beginning, and I look forward to achieving much more in the future.



**MAJOR**  
INFORMATION  
SYSTEMS IN BUSINESS

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST  
SPRING 2019 & 2020

DEAN'S LIST  
FALL 2019 & 2020

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

AKTOBE

# Dilara Jumagazyieva



**MAJOR**  
MARKETING

**MINOR**  
MANAGEMENT

**AWARDS**  
DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2018

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

URALSK

Studying at a math- and science-focused school all my life prior to university, it did not occur to me that I might not be passionate about these fields. Fortunately, at the age of 18, one of the most amazing events in my life happened to me – receiving the U.S.-CAEF scholarship.

I was honored to become a recipient of a scholarship that covers all the costs of studying at one of the best universities in our country. For an 18-year-old girl, this opportunity was a major turning point in my life. The U.S.-CAEF scholarship gave me the opportunity to realize my dream: to study entrepreneurship and start my own business in the future.

These four years of studies contributed a lot to my academic and personal growth. I successfully completed two study abroad programs – one at the University of Basque Country in Spain during the spring 2020 semester, and one at Bilkent University in Turkey in spring 2021. These experiences truly changed my overall perception of life and education abroad.

Working together with an exchange student from Spain, I came up with an idea of creating an educational company called AVA, which provides quality consultation services to students who aspire to partake in study abroad programs. I also had opportunities to

use my theoretical knowledge in practice through internships in local and foreign tourism agencies, where I was a part of the management team. Through these work and internship experiences, I developed a clear understanding about the world of business.

My student years at KIMEP also presented me with great experiences in the student organization called KIMEP FRIENDS, where I gained skills in organizing various events, looking for sponsors and making presentations. I was also a member of the KIMEP Debate Student Organization, through which I participated in the regional debate grand tournament at KIMEP and received 3rd place.

All these accomplishments were only possible with the support of the U.S.-CAEF scholarship. I am so grateful to this program for the endless opportunities it provided. For me, U.S.-CAEF is not just a simple scholarship program, it is a family that supports you throughout these four crucial years in all aspects of your life.

I am proud to be a part of this family. I am confident that the experience and knowledge I gained in both academic and non-academic activities will provide a strong foundation for numerous other opportunities and accomplishments to come.

“I am so grateful to this program for the endless opportunities it provided.

For me, U.S.-CAEF is not just a simple scholarship program, it is a family that supports you throughout these four crucial years in all aspects of your life.”

## Zevar Mamadjonova



**MAJOR  
AUDITING**

**AWARDS**  
DPRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021  
SPRING 2019 & 2020

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 **TAJIKISTAN**

**KONIBODOM**

“As a U.S.-CAEF fellow,  
I opened doors I would  
not have imagined possible  
for both professional and  
personal growth.”

Growing up in a small town in Tajikistan, I always dreamed big and had a goal of studying abroad. I never stopped working hard, both on personal and academic accomplishments, and in 2017, I became a finalist of the FLEX program.

My journey started at St. Paul Central High School in St. Paul, Minnesota, where I learned and experienced the importance of education and study abroad opportunities for youth. Later that year, I applied for the U.S.-CAEF scholarship and got accepted to KIMEP University. This was the beginning of a string of successes in my life, and thanks to U.S.-CAEF, I realized my dream of studying at one of the best universities in Central Asia.

I am now almost a qualified professional in the auditing sphere, and I am proud of the four amazing years I have spent at KIMEP University. I tried my best to learn and take advantage of the opportunities I was provided.

In Spring 2020, I was awarded an Erasmus+ scholarship to study abroad for a semester in Sweden, where I studied in a new environment and learned about a new culture, all while representing Central Asia among locals and international students. Additionally, I completed the KASE comprehensive program on trading securities offered by EUROBAK University.

To complement all this knowledge, I participated in case competitions and won notable prizes. My team won 2nd place in the MARS Case competition organized in part by FLEX Alumni, and in the U.S.-CAEF Case Cup organized in Bishkek.

Finally, I was actively involved in the organization of case competitions with student organizations like KAFC (KIMEP Accounting and Finance Club) and Case Club.

Practical knowledge was one of the most significant aspects of my education. Throughout my studies, I gained two professional work experiences at TMF Kazakhstan and Crowe ACG. At TMF Kazakhstan, I applied my accounting knowledge in practice by working in 1C, recording transactions, and communicating with clients. This experience gave me a basis for my next experience at Crowe ACG, which I completed through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. Crowe introduced me to real-life assurance service processes, analytics of financial statements, and the overall workings of the firm.

I completed projects related to a wide range of assurance services like auditing, micro assessment, and spot check processes, all of which helped to enrich my experience portfolio. During these internships, I learned and grew professionally and personally while making connections in the real business world.

U.S.-CAEF was the start of all these amazing experiences I had. As a U.S.-CAEF fellow, I opened doors I would not have imagined possible for both professional and personal growth.

# Savsangul Mamadloiqova



**MAJOR**  
MARKETING

**AWARDS**

PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2019, 2020 & 2021  
SPRING 2020

DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2018  
SPRING 2019

FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022

TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG

After returning from the FLEX Program, I was extremely uncertain about where I would pursue my undergraduate studies.

After a while, though, it became clear that KIMEP was the right fit for me. With all my heart, I wanted to study at KIMEP University, and receiving the U.S.-CAEF scholarship was a dream come true.

This scholarship gave me a home away from home and assisted me in building a foundation on which to expand for both my personal and professional interests.

I have always aspired to give back to my community, which led to my receiving a grant in my second year of university from the U.S Department of State to co-organize the Street Law Kazakhstan project at a boarding school for visually impaired students. The project focused on raising awareness among high school students about their human and legal rights.

Moreover, I completed my first internship with the largest online ticket-selling company in Kazakhstan, Ticketon.kz, under the supervision of the HR director of the company. The internship developed my understanding of how the Human Resource Department operates, and what role it plays in achieving the organizational objective.

In the summer of 2021, I took part in an internship at the HR Department of Coca Cola Icecek Tajikistan through the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. CCI is one of the six biggest bottlers of the Coca Cola company and is known for its strong corporate culture and work ethics.

Simultaneously, I pursued an online internship in the HR Department at the Poverty Elimination Program through the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which focuses on eliminating poverty through targeting and providing resources to financially vulnerable communities around the globe. Participating in these internships enriched my knowledge regarding how multinational corporations and nonprofit enterprises work, and allowed me to observe organizational structures from two different angles.

In addition to these experiences, I received an Erasmus+ scholarship to participate in an exchange semester at one of the top 100 universities in the world, Uppsala University in Sweden. During my exchange semester, I realized how Scandinavian institutions prepare their students to contribute to the development of their country's economy.

Finally, throughout my studies at KIMEP University, I actively engaged in extracurricular activities and became Vice President of the Tree Huggers student organization, which focuses on promoting eco-friendly actions at the university and raising awareness about global climate issues.

To conclude, my student life as a U.S.-CAEF fellow had a tremendous impact on my professional and personal skills. I am now ready to move to the next chapter of my life and face what the future holds for me.

“This scholarship gave me a home away from home and assisted me in building a foundation on which to expand for both my personal and professional interests.”

## Dariya Mustafinova



Ever since I can remember, I have always pursued educational opportunities with tenacity. While studying at the Nazarbayev Intellectual School, I dreamt of receiving a quality education in the field of business for my undergraduate degree. Motivation, diligence, and the U.S.-CAEF scholarship helped me earn a great opportunity not just to study at KIMEP University, but also to build a strong foundation for my personal and professional growth.

During my time as a student at KIMEP, I tried myself in different fields in order to hone my skills and knowledge. In my first two years, I strengthened my professional communication skills by working as a tutor, teacher's assistant, and office assistant of the university's administration office. I was also a member of a student organization and contributed to carrying out several events where I learned a lot about teamwork while liaising with each department of the organization.

I participated in seminars through the Ernst and Young Business School, with the goal of improving my leadership skills. I am so thankful to the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program for supporting me in finding a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical experience. As a result, during my third and fourth years, I gained invaluable professional experience at the international company GROHE AG.

Initially, I came to the company as a project channel assistant for a student program. However, after four months, I received a full-time job offer as a project manager in Central Asia. The experience of working at GROHE taught me to correctly allocate my resources and prioritize tasks according to their importance. I learned that proper allocation of limited resources, such as time and energy, will result in maximum benefit.

Student life at KIMEP is full of so many opportunities. So, in addition to working on campus and participating in various competitions, I volunteered and contributed

to student life through the student organization KIMEP PIE. I believe that student life depends primarily on students themselves, and the more actively we accept participants in it, the more successfully the organizations will flourish.

Thank you for believing in me four years ago and for supporting the flame of motivation burning inside of me. I will always be proud to be a part of this program.

“Thank you for believing in me four years ago and for supporting the flame of motivation burning inside of me. I will always be proud to be a part of this program.”

**MAJOR**  
INFORMATION  
SYSTEMS IN BUSINESS

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021  
SPRING 2019, 2020 & 2021

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

PAVLODAR

## Eradzh Nasriddinov



**MAJOR**  
CORPORATE  
FINANCE

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT'S LIST:  
FALL 2018 & 2019  
SPRING 2019 & 2020

DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2020

TAJIKISTAN

DUSHANBE

U.S.-CAEF is a life-changer. It transformed a boy who had no idea about his life into an ambitious and determined person.

I now have plans and ideas that I want to turn into reality, and thanks to this program, I believe I can. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who contributed to this program.

Because of the great example that our alumni and upperclassmen set from the start, I knew I would succeed on this four-year journey at KIMEP. Since my first year, I tried hard to excel academically and professionally.

I gained my first professional experience in 2019 at Ticketon, the largest ticketing company in Central Asia. I worked in the Accounting and Account Management Departments and gained valuable experience in business development.

After successfully completing my journey at Ticketon, I worked as a tax intern at one of the largest multinational copper companies in the world, Kaz Minerals. Through my dedication and hard work, I established myself as a valued employee, so I recently received an offer to work for this company. My most recent work experience was with Coca-Cola Tajikistan, as part of the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program.

As for my academic achievements, participating in the Erasmus + exchange program at the University of Glasgow in 2021 was one of my greatest accomplishments.

In addition, majoring in Corporate Finance, I conducted research on mergers and acquisitions and presented it at the KIMEP International Research Conference in 2021. During the COVID-19 pandemic, my educational path was full of difficulties and challenges, but in the end, I am proud that I was able to overcome them.

In addition, in 2018, I became the chess champion among all universities of Almaty. I am also the current champion in chess and table tennis at KIMEP.

I recently took second place in one of KIMEP's most prestigious competitions, the President's Cup 2021. I also won second place in the Case 4 Success case competition in 2019.

The U.S.-CAEF Program prepared me well for the challenges of life ahead. I am about to embark on a new journey full of ups and downs, challenges, and victories.

“The U.S.-CAEF Program has prepared me well for the challenges of life ahead. I am about to embark on a new journey full of ups and downs, challenges, and victories.

I am confident in my future and ready for the next step.”

“As the final U.S.-CAEF cohort graduating from KIMEP University, our mission should be to preserve the tradition of the U.S.-CAEF family by consistently striving for success and sharing each other’s achievements.”

I am very honored to be a part of the U.S.-CAEF family and a graduate of KIMEP University. During my studies at KIMEP, I tried to maintain a high academic performance and was listed on the President’s List in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Aside from my studies, I also focused on extracurricular activities like case championships and student organizations. For instance, I won 1st place at the Technodom Case Championship and 3rd place in the U.S.-CAEF Case Cup 2019.

In addition, I served as the President of the Enactus student organization for a year and a half starting in 2019. The main aim of the organization was to create sustainable business ideas and organize case championships and intellectual events. For instance, at the Digital Startups contest, our Enactus team won 1st place and a 1,000,000 tenge award for developing a mobile application focused on promoting sustainability.

Furthermore, as a result of my strong motivation to expand my knowledge, I won an Ernst Mach grant to study in Austria in the spring 2021 semester. Likewise, in the summer of 2019, I won a Shanghai Cooperation Organization scholarship to learn the Chinese language in Shanghai.

Moreover, to apply my theoretical knowledge in practice, I applied for various internship opportunities during my studies. My first such experience started in 2018 at TMF Group audit

company as an assistant to an accountant. Following this experience, from 2018 to 2020, I worked as a tutor in various subjects. Finally, most recently, I was employed as a valuation intern at EY Consulting Services; I have been interning there since October 2021.

All these achievements are a result of not only my merit, but the tremendous support I am lucky to have from the people around me. Because I know I am lucky to have received such wonderful support, I try to lend my own support and skills to communities and people who need help. I volunteered at KIMEP scientific conferences, contributed to the health and wellness of people in my city by volunteering at the Almaty Marathon 2019, organized an annual Christmas charity ball for children with cancer in 2019, and taught for five months in the inclusive theater for children called “Igra.”

As the final U.S.-CAEF cohort graduating from KIMEP University, our mission should be to preserve the tradition of the U.S.-CAEF family by consistently striving for success and sharing each other’s achievements.

I hope our connection remains strong, and that we continue to be a friendly, close-knit community that helps one another and the world around us to become better.

## Aruyel Nurbekova



**MAJOR**  
CORPORATE FINANCE &  
INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT’S LIST  
FALL 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021  
SPRING 2019

DEAN’S LIST:  
SPRING 2020

**FINALIST OF THE  
U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM  
IN WASHINGTON, DC  
IN FALL 2022**

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

ALMATY

# Darya Rejepaliyeva



## MAJOR

MARKETING  
COMMUNICATION  
& BRANDING

## AWARDS

PRESIDENT'S LIST  
FALL 2020, SPRING 2021

DEAN'S LIST:  
FALL 2018  
SPRING 2020  
FALL 2021

## TURKMENISTAN

ASHGABAT

Have you seen movies about how university students enjoy their campus life, socialize with friends, and attend various events? Well, I have. A lot. Maybe that is why, since I became a teenager, I always dreamed about having similar experiences and feeling this atmosphere for myself. I was not always sure where I wanted to study or what I wanted to do. But I knew I wanted a similar educational and social experience to what I saw in the movies. Then, one day, I found out about the U.S.-CAEF Program and the opportunities it provides. After a lot of researching, dreaming, and preparing, I applied for the scholarship and finally received a phone call from Almaty. I was accepted! I could not believe it - my dream was finally coming true.

These four years at KIMEP were the best of my life. Many people say, "The university years are the best of your life," and I am so glad that this turned out to be true for me and many of my peers. I will never forget all the events that the university organized for us, all the projects I worked on with my classmates, and all the friends I met on campus.

As an active student who participated in several student organizations, I was able to greatly improve my communication and managerial skills. I participated in the organization of Nauryz Day and represented my own country, Turkmenistan, at the event. Moreover, I was a member of the student organization KIMEP Geeks, which coordinates cultural and social events for students. We organized several entertaining events, but the most memorable was Geek'o'ween, a Halloween-themed party.

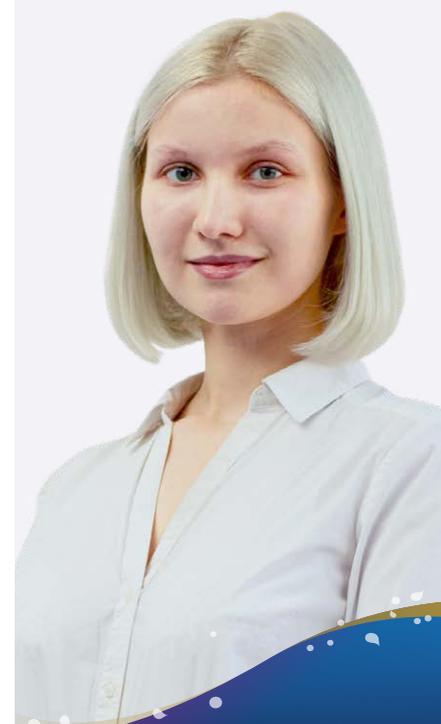
I am quite keen on this holiday, and I was very proud of what we accomplished with that event. I also actively volunteered in mentoring new international students. In my first year, I was such a student myself, and I got lost a lot. Due to this experience and my desire to help, I assisted many non-Russian-speaking students and visited some notable places in the city with them.

During classes, I developed my strategic and critical thinking. I am a "book smart" type of person, and for me, theoretical knowledge is really valuable. I was lucky to have great professors who saw my potential and guided me on how best to reach it. They were also able to point out my weaknesses and provide constructive criticism, which helped me improve myself in many ways.

After four years of being part of the KIMEP and U.S.-CAEF community, I became more self-confident, goal-oriented, and an overall happier person.

"After four years of being part of the KIMEP and U.S.-CAEF community, I became more self-confident, goal-oriented, and an overall happier person."

## Lidiya Yagodina



For me, education means more than just a university diploma. Education serves as a constant motivation to explore and expand the boundaries of my mind. I am always striving to discover new things. So, when I was granted a chance to attend an excellent university in the heart of Central Asia, I was so eager and grateful to accept the opportunity. Especially considering the fact that I could not afford to study at KIMEP on my own, U.S.-CAEF made an enormous impact on my life.

I come from a small city called Nukus, where there are few educational programs, so it would have been challenging to fulfill my dream of becoming a specialist in the audit sphere there. Thus, in 2018, I applied and was accepted to KIMEP as an undergraduate student majoring in Accounting & Audit. Being an introvert by nature, I devoted a lot of time to my studies, which I hope is evident from my grades and GPA.

However, in summer 2020, I began to realize that I was not truly satisfied with accounting & audit, and I felt I might need to change my major. I was anxious about my future, but I felt it was necessary to fundamentally change my field of study. Thankfully, U.S.-CAEF gave me permission to change my degree to Information Technologies in Business and pursue a major in Computer Information Technologies. As a result of this change, I began to feel great satisfaction with what I was studying and learning.

Since that time, I learned the foundations of programming and digital graphics, and I gained skills in mobile app development, front- and back-end development, analyses of big data and much more.

In summer 2021 I participated in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, and this was also one of the most important and life-changing periods in my life. I had a chance to intern as an analyst at an IT startup in Tashkent.

“The U.S.-CAEF Program gave me more than opportunities, it gave me a dream – to build a successful IT career and develop the IT sphere in my home region, Uzbekistan.”

Through this experience, I was able to dive deeply into the IT market in Uzbekistan, communicate with IT specialists and gain invaluable professional knowledge.

With this experience, I fulfilled my dream of contributing to the development of the IT sphere in Uzbekistan.

With all my heart, I am grateful to U.S.-CAEF for all these amazing opportunities that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

**MAJOR**  
COMPUTER  
INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGIES

**AWARDS**  
PRESIDENT’S LIST:  
FALL 2018 & 2020  
SPRING 2019 & 2021

DEAN’S LIST:  
FALL 2019 & 2021

📍 UZBEKISTAN

NUKUS

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.

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.

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. Ten outstanding student fellows from the graduating class have been selected to take part in the International Capstone Internship Program in fall 2022: **Zebojon Rasulova, Aiana Rysbekova, Aigul Saparova, Kairat Tagaev, and Nurmukhamad Turkbaev** from AUCA, and **Imran Alimov, Alua Chyntemirova, Zevar Mamadjonova, Savsangul Mamadloiqova, and Aruyel Nurbekova** 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.

A total of **17** graduating seniors took part in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program. The Foundation is grateful to the companies in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan that hosted the Enterprise Interns:

**Avina Abytaeva**  
THE FIRST MICROFINANCE COMPANY | BISHKEK

**Imran Alimov**  
TAJRUP, DUSHANBE

**Muhammad Boymatov**  
NEOBIS, BISHKEK

**Alua Chyntemirova**  
FREEDOM FINANCE | ALMATY

**Iglik Ginyatov**  
CHAPLIN CINEMAS | ALMATY

**Zevar Mamadjonova**  
CROWE ACG | DUSHANBE

**Savsangul Mamadloiqova**  
COCA-COLA TAJIKISTAN | DUSHANBE

**Dariya Mustafinova**  
GROHE | ALMATY

**Eradzh Nasriddinov**  
COCA-COLA TAJIKISTAN | DUSHANBE

**Altynai Nuralieva**  
THE FIRST MICROFINANCE COMPANY | BISHKEK

**Sanjar Ormukov**  
NEOBIS | BISHKEK

**Zebojon Rasulova**  
FRESCO | BISHKEK

**Aiana Ryspekova**  
KOMPANION BANK | BISHKEK

**Aigul Saparova**  
NEOBIS | BISHKEK

**Kairat Tagaev**  
SPACER | BISHKEK

**Nurmukhamad Turkbaev**  
KRESTON | BISHKEK

**Lidiya Yagodina**  
DAVINCI CONSULTING, TASHKENT



The Association hopes that the graduating class of 2022 will join in their efforts to establish an important platform for communication and cooperation between all program alumni, current fellows and local business communities.

Such efforts will 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.

#### 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 **333**.

The Foundation is grateful for the support of the U.S. Government, its citizens, and the Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund, which have made its operation possible.



**Stephen D. Weinroth**  
CHAIRMAN / PRESIDENT & CEO  
DIRECTOR  
HOVNANIAN ENTERPRISES, INC.



**Margaret M. Grieve**  
VICE CHAIR  
PRESIDENT  
PMG MANAGEMENT, INC.



**Mary S. Ginsberg**  
FORMER CURATOR  
CHINESE COLLECTIONS  
THE BRITISH MUSEUM



**Alan Brumberger**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
EMERALD POINT  
CAPITAL PARTNERS, L.L.C.



**Holly Burns**  
SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

AUDITORS



CUMMINGS, LAMONT  
& MCNAMEE, P.A.





**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](mailto:hollyburns.uscaef@gmail.com)

[us-caef.org](http://us-caef.org)



**American Councils for International Education**

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

Phone: (1) 202.833.7522

Fax: (1) 202.822.1689

[uscaef.dc@americancouncils.org](mailto:uscaef.dc@americancouncils.org)

[americancouncils.org](http://americancouncils.org)