

13TH CLASS OF
STUDENT FELLOWS



1ST GRADUATES SPONSORED BY
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM GRADUATION 2023



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U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
GRADUATION
2023



CLASS OF 2023 IS THE
FIRST TO BE FUNDED BY THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



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YERKEBULAN ASKARBKOV, FINALIST
OF THE U.S.-CAEF CAPSTONE INTERNSHIP
PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON, DC IN FALL 2023





GRADUATION 2023

The 2023 U.S.-CAEF graduates represent the 13th class of student Fellows to receive a university education through the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF or the Foundation) Enterprise Fellowship Program.

This year's cohort is the first to be funded by the U.S. Department of State whose support for U.S.-CAEF has enabled the program to continue providing full, four-year Fellowships and career training to many of Central Asia's most promising young people. As the stories contained in this publication demonstrate, such opportunities are truly transformative.

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.

A total of **11 Fellows** will celebrate their graduation on June 3 in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic.

They are joining the ranks of **333** other U.S.-CAEF graduates who are forging successful careers and contributing to the development of their countries and the region.

Graduation 2023 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.

HISTORY

Established in May 2007, U.S.-CAEF is a not-for-profit corporation originally funded by a grant of \$15.7 million from the Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund. Originally created as a diminishing fund, the Foundation accepted its last cohort of students in August 2018.

In 2019, the U.S. Embassy Bishkek's Public Diplomacy Section awarded U.S.-CAEF a \$4 million grant to continue the Fellowship program at American University of Central Asia (AUCA), Bishkek. The award is just one example of the U.S. government's longstanding commitment to Central Asia's growth and development. It is also an endorsement of the achievements of the remarkable young women and men who have become part of the U.S.-CAEF family, first as undergraduate Fellows and now as accomplished alumni contributing to their families, communities, countries, region, and the wider global community.

The U.S.-CAEF Board of Directors continues to provide guidance and advice critical to the success of the program. The Foundation continues to co-sponsor the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internships Program and provides support for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association (the Association), which is developing the infrastructure, programs, and projects to strengthen the ties among alumni as their numbers continue to grow.

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 know-how and practices at select 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 for an entrepreneurial spirit to thrive.





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

U.S.-CAEF student Fellows sponsored by the U.S. Department of State are academically gifted citizen residents of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, or Uzbekistan who, without financial aid, would not otherwise be able to pursue a university education. They have been awarded full undergraduate scholarships for study in the fields of business, economics, and technology.

Student Fellows must meet the admission standards of American University of Central Asia, Bishkek and are selected by the U.S. Department of State and the Foundation's board at the end of a rigorous selection process conducted by American Councils for International Education, which includes English-language interviews and financial-need analysis. Each student selected for the program commits to meeting the ongoing requirements of the scholarship, which include a minimum 3.0 grade-point average, community service, and a broad range of educational, vocational, and career-development events.

Previously, U.S.-CAEF student Fellows also included academically gifted citizen residents from Turkmenistan and Fellowships also were offered at KIMEP University, Almaty Kazakhstan.

PARTNER UNIVERSITY: AUCA

The American University of Central Asia (AUCA) in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic, has been a partner university since 2007. It was selected according to several criteria, including the use of English, the international language of business, as the primary language for instruction; the adoption of a Western-style curricula and teaching methodologies; and the willingness to support the goals of the Foundation and its student Fellows. The U.S. Department of State designated AUCA as the partner university for its sponsored Fellowships.

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 80 countries important to national security, prosperity, and peace, and built a community of more than 94,000 alumni, including national leaders, ministers, members of parliament, ambassadors, and CEOs.

American Councils has been the program administrator since the Foundation commenced operation in 2007.





PROGRAM COMPONENTS

U.S.-CAEF implements its mission through the following program components:

ENTERPRISE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

A merit- and need-based undergraduate education scholarship program for undergraduate degree study at the American University of Central Asia for citizen residents of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

SUMMER REGIONAL INTERNSHIPS

A program for select Enterprise Student Fellows entering their junior year of study that allows Fellows to gain practical experience within Central Asia and expand their professional networks.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

Initiated and led by U.S.-CAEF Alumni, the Alumni Association seeks to build, maintain, and strengthen the connections among U.S.-CAEF Alumni wherever located so that they may serve as a personal and professional network for each other, promote professional development opportunities for alumni, engage with local business communities and entrepreneurs and develop projects that strengthen their communities, countries and the region. A long-term goal of the Association is to provide funding for Fellowships like the ones that changed the trajectories of their lives.

ENTERPRISE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

In the 2022-2023 academic year, **74 students** were awarded U.S.-CAEF scholarships at AUCA.

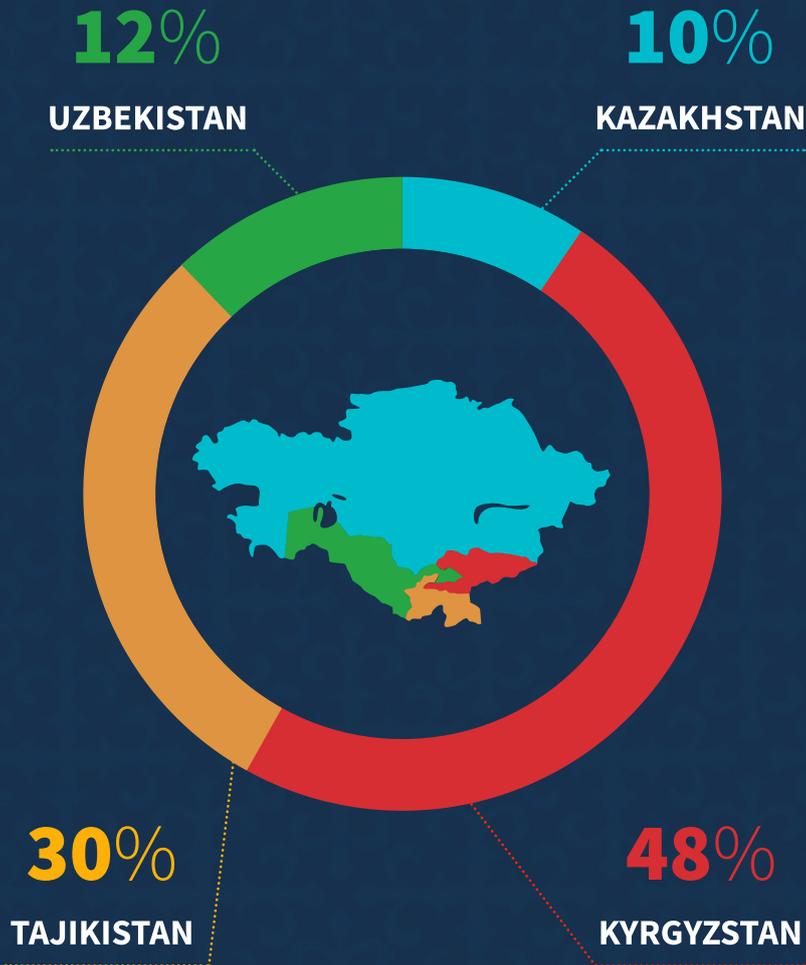
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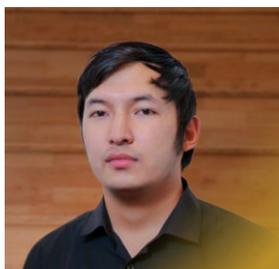
Celebrating the 13th Class of U.S.-CAEF Graduates

Throughout their four years of study, this year's graduating student Fellows have shown themselves to be true leaders and role models, continuing the traditions initiated by earlier Enterprise Student Fellows. They also have lived through a global pandemic. Showing remarkable resiliency and the determination to succeed in the face of adversity, which seems to be the hallmark of U.S.-CAEF Fellows, the graduating student Fellows found ways to thrive even though they were forced to abandon the AUCA campus and engage in remote learning—no easy task from the remote, rural, and oftentimes mountainous regions where Internet connections are unreliable. Tajik Fellows faced further challenges. Even if they did not live in the border areas engaged in conflict with the Kyrgyz Republic, restrictions on travel between the two countries posed challenges for Tajik Fellows traveling to and from the AUCA campus.

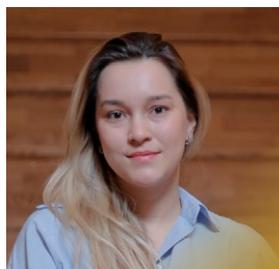
The collective success of the graduating student Fellows is a credit to their parents, their families, their professors, their university and their U.S.-CAEF family. They have mentored incoming Fellows, helped create and strengthen the U.S.-CAEF Student Association, taken campus-wide roles in student government and university clubs, managed entrepreneurial ventures, won opportunities to study overseas, and volunteered their time and skills to their communities.



Of the 11 graduating Fellows, six have been recognized on the President's List and Dean's List



YIMAN ALTYNBEK UULU
APPLIED MATHEMATICS
& INFORMATICS
KYRGYZSTAN



DINA MAMADJANOVA
ECONOMICS
UZBEKISTAN



FARANGIS MIRZOBEKOVA
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
TAJIKISTAN



AISULU RYSPAIEVA
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
KYRGYZSTAN



DANIEL TAIROV
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
KYRGYZSTAN



SARFAROZ YUNUSOV
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
TAJIKISTAN

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.

Our seniors have also taken advantage of highly competitive, enriching study abroad programs in France, Poland, and the U.S.

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

AUJCA





Yiman Altynbek Uulu

MAJOR:

APPLIED MATHEMATICS
& INFORMATICS

AWARDS:

DEAN'S LIST - 2021
PRESIDENT'S LIST - 2022

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH



Thanks to U.S.-CAEF presenting me with an opportunity to pursue a degree in Applied Mathematics and Informatics at AUCA, I am now a specialist in my field with extensive career possibilities. As a result of my education, I am able to identify problems related to my area of study and develop solutions.

Although as U.S.-CAEF Fellows our achievements helped us get into AUCA and the U.S.-CAEF Program, it was our responsibility to utilize the tools and resources provided by the university and the U.S.-CAEF community to support our career and personal growth. In my first year at AUCA, I joined the programming club NEOBIS. I developed skills in designing and programming mobile applications for the Android platform.

I was privileged to learn and work with talented peers, who were already experienced IT specialists; as a team, we developed social projects in fields ranging from education to medicine. I still have fond memories of winning a club project showcase with our educational project. After exploring different areas of the IT field, I finally found the niche in which I felt I could realize my full potential.

In my second year, I stumbled upon the field of data engineering, and ever since then, I have been hooked. By participating in the Regional Internship Program through U.S.-CAEF, I was able to intern for a bank called Bank Kompanion in Bishkek, in the Department of Data Monitoring and Analysis. My primary duty was to build visualizations of different sets of data.

At the end of my junior year, I was offered an internship at TimelySoft after undergoing a competitive selection process consisting of a problem-solving exercise and a technical interview, ultimately becoming one of 30 interns out of over 300 applicants. I especially enjoyed being placed in my specific department, which focused on data engineering, headed by the company's CEO, Andrey Gurinov. My counterparts and I learned essential tools for working with data and worked on building a system that generates a standardized resume format from the data of all employees' resumes.

I also had the opportunity to take part in an internship with a science station outside Bishkek. There, I parsed and visualized data about Earth's electromagnetic field using Python. In addition, I filled gaps in the data by using numerical methods, interpolation, and some statistics libraries in Python.

I still have a lot to learn to reach my goals in mathematics, but because of the experiences I had over the last four years, I can visualize my career path much more clearly than I could before attending AUCA. Eventually, I hope to pursue a master's degree in Applied Mathematics to improve my knowledge in the field. I aspire to contribute to and popularize natural sciences in my home country, participate in projects of national importance, and improve people's lives. Of course, U.S.-CAEF was a key factor in reaching this point, and it is time for the next major step in my journey.

“ I can visualize my career path much more clearly than I could before attending AUCA. I aspire to contribute to and popularize natural sciences in my home country and improve people's lives.”

“ I had the privilege of meeting a diverse group of fascinating peers who taught me a great deal in both personal and professional fields. They came from different backgrounds and cultures, and I greatly appreciate their unique insights and perspectives.”

The origins of my journey date back to my high school years in my hometown, where I discovered my passion for mathematics, physics, and informatics. I spent countless hours in the classroom, pouring over complex equations and theories, and in the labs, experimenting with cutting-edge technologies. It was through these experiences that I came to appreciate the importance of the integration of science, modern technologies, and business. I understood that these fields are not isolated, but rather they are interconnected and have a significant impact on shaping the world we live in.

After graduating, I contemplated taking a gap year to explore other avenues beyond university. I wanted to gain new perspectives and expand my horizons, test my abilities in unfamiliar settings and see what else the world had to offer.

To give myself options, I also applied to some universities, and I was presented with the opportunity to apply for the U.S.-CAEF Program. Despite my initial uncertainty and fear, I was intrigued by the scholarship and the community it promised to provide. I knew that this program would provide me with a

unique opportunity to learn from experts in my field, collaborate with other motivated and talented individuals, and gain hands-on experience in the field.

As Antoine de Saint-Exupery once said, “The unknown frightens men. But once a man has faced the unknown, that terror becomes known.” I am glad I used this as a guiding principle.

I am grateful that I received the chance to become a part of the U.S.-CAEF family. Through the program, I had the privilege of meeting a diverse group of fascinating peers who taught me a great deal in both personal and professional fields. They came from different backgrounds and cultures, and I greatly appreciate their unique insights and perspectives.

From my first days in the program, I was actively involved in student life and various projects, including the debate club and case study championships. I even founded and managed my own club for software and mathematics studies called InnoLab. This experience allowed me to develop my networking abilities, improve my critical thinking and communication skills, and discover new areas of interest and passions.

As I approach my final year of study, my focus is on the intersection of mathematics, business, and IT, where I can apply the vast array of skills and knowledge I acquired at AUCA to different areas of life. The U.S.-CAEF scholarship provided me with this opportunity and helped me maximize my potential in this regard. It also enabled me to share my experiences with others, not just within my home country, but also on a global level. My education and overall experience through this program prepared me very well to tackle complex challenges of the modern world and to make meaningful differences in the lives of those around me.



Yerkebulan Askarbekov

MAJOR:
APPLIED MATHEMATICS
& INFORMATICS

📍 KAZAKHSTAN

TARAZ



Dastan Baktybekov

MAJOR:
SOFTWARE
ENGINEERING

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

BALYKCHY

“ From the very beginning of my studies, I looked up to the alumni of this program with admiration and a desire to achieve similar results... together with other U.S.-CAEF Fellows from AUCA and KIMEP, we won the Business Case Cup. I also had the great experience of organizing the first accounting championship in Bishkek.”

Four years ago, when I heard the news that I was accepted into the U.S.-CAEF Program, I was sure it would be the beginning of an exciting journey, but even then, I did not know how much this program would affect my future, my dreams, and my outlook on life. The U.S.-CAEF Program and community opened many doors for me, and I am so grateful.

From the very beginning of my studies, I looked up to the alumni of this program with admiration and a desire to achieve similar results.

Because of them, my U.S.-CAEF peers and I were motivated freshmen at the time, eager to succeed in our respective fields. Living together in the dormitory helped us get to know each other better and start working on projects as a team. Together with other U.S.-CAEF Fellows from AUCA and KIMEP, we won the Business Case Cup. I also had the great experience of organizing the first accounting championship in Bishkek with my U.S.-CAEF peers.

I also participated in hackathons with my team in my freshman year, and the successes we achieved and mistakes we made during those activities were crucial for further development.

Another highlight of my extracurricular life was representing AUCA at the

Republican University Chess Olympiad and winning first place.

I took part in an internship at Andro.media through the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internship Program after my sophomore year, which made a tremendous impact on my future career.

It was there that I was able to put all my knowledge I gained in classes to use, and to discover the specific specialty I wanted to focus on within my area of study.

In the first half of my senior year, I worked as a freelancer to improve and practice my skills in creating websites and applications for clients. All these wonderful opportunities were a result of that life-changing phone call in which I found out that I had become a U.S.-CAEF Fellow.

I am confident that every student in this program has improved in many ways and will be ready to make an impact in Central Asia upon graduation.

The skills and values I gained through this program pushed me to start developing the field of IT in Kyrgyzstan. These values will always be with me, and I will do my best to pass them on to others.

With the goal of reaching a bright future and one day running my own business, I applied for and received a scholarship through the U.S.-CAEF Program to pursue my bachelor's degree in Business Administration at AUCA. The U.S.-CAEF Program was a golden ticket to my dream life, as it opened so many doors for my personal and professional development.

Starting in freshman year, I immersed myself in the diverse student life at AUCA by participating in various cultural, academic, and extracurricular activities. Upon completing my first year, I took part in a virtual internship at Aga Khan Education Service in Pakistan.

Through the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internship Program, I was also able to intern at the Aga Khan Foundation, which is one of the biggest agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Tajikistan.

“ I am extremely grateful to the U.S.-CAEF Program for the values it instilled in me, including knowledge, responsibility, and commitment. I am definitely the person I am today because of this program.”

After my junior year, to improve my practical skills further, I completed the Coca-Cola Tajikistan Internship Program, where I reported to U.S.-CAEF alumna Mohinav Amonulloeva.

Through these internships, I greatly enhanced my knowledge and skills, which I believe will be a great asset for my future career.

In addition to these internships, my U.S.-CAEF peers and I also implemented the “Girls Empowerment Bootcamp” and “Uni Prep” projects for youth in Tajikistan, sponsored by the Student Initiative Development Program (SIDP) and the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP).

I also participated in various trainings and workshops conducted by Ernst & Young (EY), Global Encounters, the Institute of Ismaili Studies, Open Society University Network (OSUN), and others. During my sophomore year, I volunteered with the Global Encounters Tajikistan Alumni Hub, where I collected data and oversaw various social media accounts. I also had the opportunity to conduct several interviews and publish articles for the U.S.-CAEF newsletter.

My academic achievements in writing also helped me become a writing tutor with the Writing and Academic Resource Center (WARC) at AUCA. This experience helped me hone my writing abilities and improve my soft skills. It also proved to be a great way to give back to the AUCA community.

Even though the beginning of my time at AUCA was challenging, the U.S.-CAEF Fellows and my peers helped me to get through this journey smoothly. I am extremely grateful to the U.S.-CAEF Program for the values it instilled in me, including knowledge, responsibility, and commitment. I am definitely the person I am today because of this program.



Gulnoz
Faizakova

MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

TAJIKISTAN

KHOROG



Bekjon Makhmudov

MAJOR:
SOFTWARE
ENGINEERING

AWARDS:
AUCA PRESIDENTIAL
RESEARCH & EDUCATION
FUND (PREF) GRANT
RECIPIENT

📍 UZBEKISTAN

NAMANGAN

When I was about to graduate from high school, I spent a lot of time trying to find the perfect university for me, both in terms of education and cost. Having studied briefly at Johns Hopkins University as an Education USA program participant, I decided that I wanted to continue my education at a university with an American-style education system. Once I was accepted to the U.S.-CAEF Program, there were no doubts left as to which university I wanted to choose. The American University of Central Asia (AUCA) was absolutely the right choice for me. From the moment I arrived in Bishkek, I knew that the next four years would offer me experience and knowledge that would positively affect my whole life. Now, as a senior at AUCA, I can confidently say that it far exceeded my expectations.

The most remarkable part of my university years was the period of time where life was upended by the pandemic. Even during quarantine, U.S.-CAEF supported Fellows by organizing various virtual events and competitions. These events allowed me to keep in touch with other Fellows and lift my spirits. As a prize for the talent contest, I won access to a course on full-stack development that gave me an opportunity to determine whether the field of programming would be one I wanted to pursue seriously. Over the following years, I took any opportunity I could get to further improve my knowledge and experience in programming.

Another positive memory of my time at AUCA was participating in the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internship Program, which allowed me to start my journey into the corporate world by interning with the Bank of Asia in Bishkek. The program allowed me to get a glimpse of what my future could look like as a database developer.

U.S.-CAEF is a program that gathers some of the most promising minds of Central Asia, and the competitive yet friendly and supportive environment it fosters creates a camaraderie that is unmatched. Many of my friends and peers in the program motivated me to participate in various projects and events. For example, my first experience in case championships was the AUCA Case Cup, which was organized by U.S.-CAEF Fellows.

The Case Cup opened up a world of competitive tournaments for me. It also motivated me to participate in different youth-powered organizations and programs, such as C5+1 Youth Council, Everest International Model United Nations (EIMUN), and Model Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

U.S.-CAEF helped me find my specialty and construct my future career path, and it allowed me to discover my abilities and motivated me to become an active leader in Central Asian society.

“ U.S.-CAEF cultivates a strong network of talented students capable of achieving high results in a variety of professional fields.”

Studying at the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) would not have been possible without the professional and financial support of the U.S.-CAEF Program. Attending AUCA was a pivotal factor in determining my future goals; thanks to the skills and knowledge I gained there, I realized one of my main career aspirations is to apply economic processes to the government sphere.

My studies at AUCA provided me with a solid foundation in economics upon which to base further graduate-level work. In particular, I learned a lot about theories behind micro and macroeconomics, allowing for further, in-depth exploration of specific topics like economic development and industrial, international, and public economics. This foundation also enabled me to join AUCA's Writing and Academic Research Center (WARC) as an economics tutor.

Over the last two years, I assisted other students with understanding and mastering the economics curriculum. This allowed me to not only keep my subject-specific skills fresh and relevant but also to develop and sharpen other competencies like communication, discipline, and research.

Now, I am confident in applying theory to empirical research and I am working on my thesis on conspicuous consumption as an indicator of ethnic income inequalities in Kyrgyzstan. Having acquired this training and experience and having earned multiple spots on AUCA's Dean's List and President's List, I feel ready to start my master's degree and career journey.

Apart from advancing my knowledge in economics, I engaged in multiple extracurricular activities while at AUCA. I took part in the Central Asian Journalism Institute 2021, participated in a round table discussion on transport corridor potential within the Central

Asian region as a C5+1 Youth Council alumna, and founded the ECON Club at AUCA with the aim to expand knowledge of basic economic principles among Bishkek high school and university students.

The club received financial support from the AUCA Presidential Research and Education Fund grant, which helped to implement two events.

I am grateful to my parents for letting me be part of the first generation in my family to study abroad; I am grateful to the U.S.-CAEF Program for valuing the importance of an affordable education; and I am grateful to AUCA for broadening my horizons and globalizing educational and career experiences within the region.

“ I am grateful to my parents for letting me be part of the first generation in my family to study abroad; I am grateful to the U.S.-CAEF Program for valuing the importance of an affordable education; and I am grateful to AUCA for broadening my horizons and globalizing educational and career experiences within the region.”



Dina Mamadjanova

MAJOR:
ECONOMICS

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST - 2020, 2021
PRESIDENT'S LIST - 2022

📍 UZBEKISTAN

TASHKENT





Farangis Mirzobekova

MAJOR:

**BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION:
ACCOUNTING & FINANCE**

AWARDS:

**DEAN'S LIST - 2020, 2021
PRESIDENT'S LIST - 2022**

TAJIKISTAN

SHUGNAN

I was born and raised in a small village in the Shugnan district of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan. I was the fifth of six children in my family, but despite our limited resources, my parents made sure I got a proper education and became the person I am today. By the end of high school, I got accepted to several universities, including AUCA.

I was also thrilled to have been selected by the U.S.-CAEF Program and the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan as a scholarship recipient. After extensively weighing my options, I chose U.S.-CAEF because I knew this program would provide me with the guidance and safety that I was seeking.

Starting from the first semester at AUCA, I took data science courses on Tableau and Python in addition to my business courses, which later served me well in my internships.

At the beginning of my second semester, I joined an educational company called EASYSOURCE.KG as an administrative intern and gained my first experience in the field of entrepreneurship.

During my sophomore year, with the help of my sister, I opened the first photo studio in Khorog and named it "Khushruy" ("Beautiful"). Alongside this experience, I implemented the University Preparation Club with the help of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP), which aimed to prepare high school students for applying to universities and the U.S.-CAEF Program. In April 2021, I moved to Dushanbe and practiced accounting for one month at the Credit Information Bureau of Tajikistan. As a part of the U.S.-CAEF Summer Regional Internship Program, I participated in a three-month internship at the Finance Department of Coca-Cola. This experience led me to

“ After extensively weighing my options, I chose U.S.-CAEF because I knew this program would provide me with the guidance and safety that I was seeking.”

volunteer for Accelerate Prosperity (AP) Tajikistan, and I later signed a five-month contract as an Investment Analyst Intern.

I applied to the Wonder Women Mentorship Program and got accepted as their youngest participant for the fall 2021 cohort. With the help of my mentor, I improved my time management skills, and it also motivated me to launch the Girls Empowerment Program together with other U.S.-CAEF Fellows and funding from the Student Initiative Development Program (SIDP) of AUCA.

Another highlight from the last four years was taking part in an exchange semester at Poznan University of Economics and Business (PUEB) in Poland. After my exchange semester, I came back with new ideas, energy and motivation and applied for an internship at Mentium Finance, where I learned about financial technologies and the digitalization of money.

During my years at AUCA, I earned spots on the Dean's and President's lists, completed Finance and Accounting concentrations, gained exemptions from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and gained significant work and volunteering experience. After graduation, I am excited to return to Tajikistan and start my journey in the field of consulting.

As an Applied Mathematics major at AUCA, I had a challenging but rewarding journey throughout my time at the university. The road was not always easy, but my scholarship and support from U.S.-CAEF was like snow on that road, consistently providing cushion and comfort for each step of my academic and professional pursuits.

I started my journey in programming in 2015, and I gradually developed my skills in this area over the years.

In 2020, I landed my first job with a Ukrainian company, which provided me with valuable industry experience and allowed me to apply the knowledge and skills I acquired in my studies. This experience also further solidified my passion for programming and mathematics.

My academic achievements include consistently receiving high grades in programming and mathematics-related coursework, as well as completing a double major in Applied Mathematics and Informatics. In addition to academics, I was also actively involved in extracurricular activities while at AUCA.

Together with my U.S.-CAEF friend from Kazakhstan, I co-founded the Innolab IT club at the university, which provides students with opportunities to learn and grow in the field of IT. I also participated in several programming competitions and hackathons, securing top positions in many of them.

Currently, I am working as a lead engineer at Marketing Analytic Company, which specializes in big data, marketing, and data analysis. This opportunity allowed me to further develop my skills and contribute to the growth of the company. It also provided a great opportunity to work with big data, an ever-growing field. The company's focus on big data, marketing, and data analysis aligns perfectly with my interests and passions, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a dynamic and innovative team.

My passion for programming and mathematics, along with my industry experience, set me up for a successful career in the field. I am grateful for the opportunities and experience I had and look forward to continuing to grow and develop in my professional and personal pursuits.



Mirzaali
Ruzimatov

MAJOR:
APPLIED MATHEMATICS
& INFORMATICS

“ My journey as a student at AUCA was a challenging but rewarding one. My passion for programming and mathematics, along with my industry experience, set me up for a successful career in the field...I am grateful for the opportunities and experience I had and look forward to continuing to grow and develop in my professional and personal pursuits.”





Aisulu Ryspaeva

MAJOR:
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST - 2021, 2020
PRESIDENT'S LIST - 2022

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

ANANIEVO



Before applying to the U.S.-CAEF Program, I had a narrow view of the possibilities and opportunities that are available to university students.

Luckily, I found out how important an undergraduate education is in developing values like tolerance, openness, punctuality, and community improvement. In order to pursue my dream of helping my country's economic development, I chose to major in Business Administration.

To this day, I believe everything I achieved is a result of the constant support from the entire U.S.-CAEF family, especially Uranbek Turdumbaev.

In my freshman year, I dedicated myself to building an excellent academic foundation and actively participating in AUCA and U.S.-CAEF student life. During my sophomore year, I opened a volunteering club at AUCA and became a university representative of the FLEX Program and American Councils, through which I organized fundraising events and launched a series of podcasts for visually impaired people at the Equal Opportunities center in Bishkek. I am deeply thankful to U.S.-CAEF, as receiving support during these early university years made a huge impact on my personal development.

To stay involved in the program, I worked as a reporter for the U.S.-CAEF Newsletter and as an SMM manager for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association, both of which provided excellent opportunities to engage with our ever-growing community of Fellows and notable alumni. I am also particularly grateful that I was selected to take part in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program, where I interned in the marketing department of Coca-Cola Bishkek Bottlers.

The internship gave me valuable experience working with creative and

inspiring professionals in the marketing sphere. This inspired me to complete an accredited marketing track at AUCA.

Junior year was a turning point in my student life, as I became President of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program (YSEP) club and was elected to the Student Senate of AUCA. I also embarked on an enriching exchange semester at Poznan University of Economics and Business (PUEB) in Poland.

My classes at PUEB were complemented by an active student life in which I was able to proudly represent the U.S.-CAEF community, study with master's students from all over the world, and explore new cultures.

As a senior, I have a lot of responsibilities related to my extracurricular leadership positions, my senior thesis, future career prospects, and my regular coursework. Nevertheless, I continue to prioritize U.S.-CAEF in all aspects of my life. I like to give back because I am grateful to the U.S.-CAEF community that helped me become the person I am today, the person I always envisioned and aspired to be.

“ To this day, I believe everything I achieved is a result of the constant support from the entire U.S.-CAEF family, especially Uranbek Turdumbaev. ”

“AUCA helped me build a foundation of knowledge in my field and the U.S.-CAEF Program reshaped my vision of the world.”

During my exchange year in the U.S. in 2018, I became amazed by how advanced the field of computer science was there. My US experience inspired me to start learning more about programming and to pursue it as a future career; I realized I wanted to found my own IT startup that would create job opportunities in my region and collaborate with and outsource to companies worldwide.

I am so thankful that the U.S.-CAEF Program provided me with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study in the software engineering department of the most prestigious university in my country, encouraging me to take the first steps on my way of fulfilling that dream.

Studying at AUCA taught me to work consistently on small skills in order to achieve big results. That is how I maintained a high GPA and was invited to join the Writing and Academic Resource Center (WARC) as a math tutor for three years. In order to develop my skills as a programmer, during my freshman year I participated as a team leader in the Justice Accelerator program sponsored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), where I worked with a team to identify and provide solutions to problems affecting our local community.

As a sophomore, I furthered my skills by taking part in the United Nations

Development Program (UNDP) Youth Leadership Program. In my junior year, I learned more about the private sector by interning at Pricer, a Japanese IT company, where I focused on the backend of web development. This experience was crucial for me as I gained professional experience in international collaboration between Kyrgyzstan and clients in other countries, and I learned the value of networking.

In addition to these experiences, I became a mentee in the AmCham Mentors Club mentorship program, which allowed me to pursue my goal of meeting people who have achieved success in their fields and learning from them. This program helped immensely in expanding my knowledge not only in business and entrepreneurship but also in financial technology, and led to my securing an internship at Bay-Tushum Bank as an iOS developer.

This internship helped me get one step closer to fulfilling my ultimate dream of founding a unique IT startup. AUCA helped me build a foundation of knowledge in my field and the U.S.-CAEF Program reshaped my vision of the world. I am eternally grateful to the U.S. Department of State, the U.S.-CAEF Board of Directors, coordinators, and other Fellows for their invaluable contribution to my life, and for providing me with the knowledge and tools to become the version of myself I always wanted to be.



Daniel
Tairov

MAJOR:
SOFTWARE
ENGINEERING

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST - 2021, 2020
PRESIDENT'S LIST- 2022

📍 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

OSH



Sarfarozi Yunusov

MAJOR:
SOFTWARE
ENGINEERING

AWARDS:
DEAN'S LIST - 2020, 2021
PRESIDENT'S LIST - 2022

PIE SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT - FALL 2021

TAJIKISTAN

KHUJAND



On July 27, 2019, I received an acceptance letter from the U.S.-CAEF selection committee, marking a significant milestone in my academic journey. The letter was highly awaited, and the emotions I experienced reading it and realizing that I would receive a full scholarship to study at AUCA are still fresh in my memory. U.S.-CAEF made it possible for me to pursue my interest in software engineering at AUCA and develop professionally and personally in many key areas of my life.

My four years at AUCA were filled with excitement and accomplishments, even despite a global pandemic! In addition to being recognized on the Dean's list for academic excellence three years in a row, I was privileged to be chosen as a member of the Student Senate at AUCA and C5+1 Youth Council. This experience provided me with valuable knowledge in managing projects and greatly enhanced my ability to communicate effectively with students from various cultural backgrounds. I was also inspired to launch my own social initiative, "Youth Opportunities Tajikistan," in which two team members and I supported our local community by sharing valuable educational resources and offering tutoring services through social media platforms. During my junior year, I was fortunate to win a scholarship and spend an academic semester at Bard College in New York. The experience was truly transformative, as I was able to not only immerse myself in a new culture and make lasting connections, but also to challenge myself academically and personally by engaging in high-level courses and activities on campus.

In order to develop my professional skills in software engineering, I completed my first technical internship after my first year of university at Livo, a leading IT company in Tajikistan. This experience provided an opportunity to meet other young and motivated individuals who are passionate about making a positive impact on society. In the summer of 2022, I began working at Abad Technologies, where I was involved in developing an iOS mobile application for one of the major telecommunications companies in the country, Megafon Tajikistan. This app includes functionalities such as an electronic wallet and live chat with consultants. Through working on this major software project, I was able to engage in every stage of the project lifecycle, from design and implementation to testing and maintenance. Most recently, I became a programming tutor at the Writing and Academic Recourse Center (WARC), helping students with various programming assignments. I find it rewarding to observe the progress I made throughout my time at AUCA, and I am deeply grateful to U.S.-CAEF for giving me this opportunity.

U.S.-CAEF played a significant role in my experience at AUCA. The support and guidance provided by the U.S.-CAEF Program's directors, coordinators, and Fellows made my four years at university the most enjoyable and fulfilling of my life. Despite the challenges and obstacles I encountered, the resources and support I received from U.S.-CAEF enabled me to overcome them and reach my full potential.

“The support and guidance provided by the U.S.-CAEF Program's directors, coordinators, and Fellows made my four years at university the most enjoyable and fulfilling of my life.”

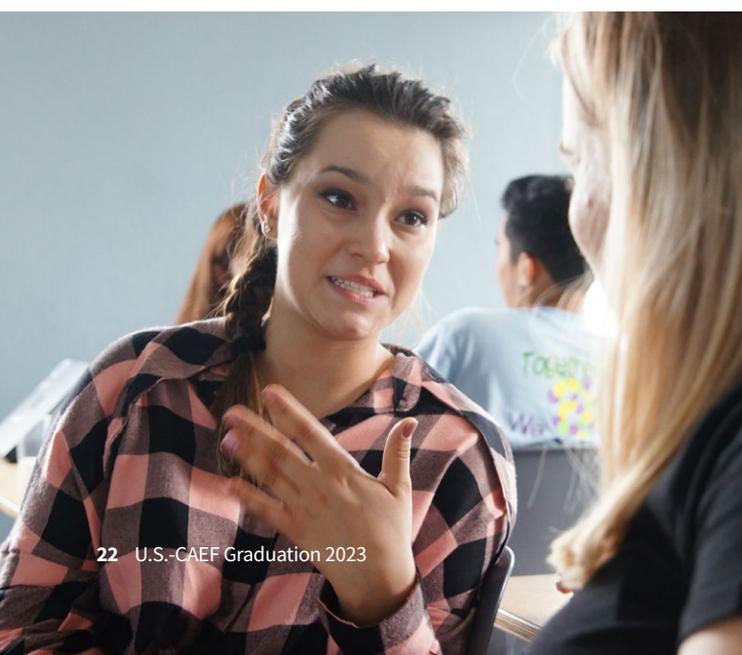


THE FOUNDATION'S INTERN FELLOWSHIPS

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. AUCA requires their students to undertake a formal internship towards the end of their third year of study. The Foundation's Summer Regional Internship Program provides participants the opportunity to become familiar with the local business environment, enhance their skills, and gain practical experience that will help them make informed choices about their concentrations and degree-required internships in the following year.

A total of six **graduating seniors** took part in the U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship Program in 2021. The U.S. Department of State and the Foundation are grateful to the companies in Central Asia that hosted the Enterprise Interns:



AISULU RYSPAeva
COCA-COLA BISHKEK BOTTLERS
KYRGYZSTAN



GULNOZ FAIZAKOVA
AGA KHAN FOUNDATION
TAJIKISTAN



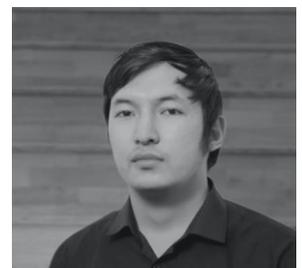
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KYRGYZSTAN



DINA MAMADJANOVA
DAVINCI MANAGEMENT CONSULTING
UZBEKISTAN



FARANGIS MIRZOBEKOVA
COCA-COLA
TAJIKISTAN



YIMAN ALTYNBEK UULU
BANK COMPANION & MAPS
KYRGYZSTAN



 **U.S.-CAEF**
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
LEADING THROUGH BUSINESS

U.S.-CAEF alumni work in large international corporations, leading domestic enterprises, and small- or medium-sized businesses throughout Central Asia. Many 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. In order to establish a permanent, ongoing source of Fellowship support for future students, a group of alumni leaders established and legally registered the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association as an independent NGO in Bishkek.

The Association's long-term goal is to continue providing Fellowship funding for future students for years to come.

This year, 11 new graduates join the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association, bringing the total number of program alumni to **344**.

The Association hopes that the graduating class of 2023 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.



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Holly Burns

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

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