

U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF) Enterprise Student Fellowships is an undergraduate business education scholarship program for academically gifted students sponsored by the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (The Foundation) & administered by American Councils for International Education. The Foundation, in partnership with the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek (AUCA) & the KIMEP University in Almaty, provides educational opportunities in business and other activities for students from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan to cultivate a principled entrepreneurial environment in Central Asia that fosters the growth of free enterprise and open markets.

NEWSLETTER



NEW SKILLS THROUGH SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

YULIYA DAVYDENKO

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS DISCOVERING A CAREER THAT I LOVE

BY YULIYA DAVYDENKO, TURKMENISTAN

“SK Leasing was a worthy company for my internship. It gave me good experience in leasing. After graduation, I would like to work in SK Leasing.”

SK Leasing JSC, the pioneer of leasing in Kazakhstan, immediately caught my attention because of its established name and reliability. BTA Bank and Orix Corporation are among its main shareholders. The company offers its customers equipment, custom machinery, transport, and agricultural equipment for leasing.

Before working at SK Leasing I have had some work experience with small companies, but this was my first time working in a big multinational company alongside highly skilled staff. Almost all employees are graduates of prestigious universities in Kazakhstan such as KIMEP University, University of International Business (UIB), and Suleyman Demirel University.

I interned in the office of the director of the credit and marketing department. It was very interesting to see how the director and managers conducted business conversations, communicated with clients, made important decisions, and managed the department. They gave me an important task to prepare a presen-

tation about the company that would attract more clients. While working on the presentation, I felt like a part of the company and took pride in describing its accomplishments. Later, I was transferred to another office in the same department. This time I was lucky to work with financial analysts. I worked on leasing applications and financial statements provided by potential customers. We assessed our clients' reliability and provided recommendations to the board. If the client was approved, I prepared all documents for the leasing process. While preparing the documentation for the leasing procedure, I collaborated with the department of business control. I was also engaged in the preparation of acts of acceptance, and a couple of times I was able to visit companies and observe the acts of acceptance.

My internship experience was not only useful but also very pleasant and positive because of the friendly staff. Everyone tried to help and teach me something important. SK Leasing was a worthy company for my internship. It gave me good experience in leasing. After graduation, I would like to work in SK Leasing. Furthermore, I highly recommend other fellows to intern in this company.

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U.S.-CAEF ENTERPRISE REGIONAL INTERNSHIPS

U.S. - CAEF offers select Enterprise Student Fellows the opportunity to take part in internships within Central Asia following their second year of study. Providing Fellows with an earlier workplace experience prepares them to make more informed decisions about their career paths and to pursue the most substantive and competitive placements offered through KIMEP University and AUCA mandatory internship programs.

FINANCE MAJOR CONFIRMED

BY AISULUU ABDYRAKMANOVA, KYRGYZSTAN

"...the opportunity given to me by U.S.-CAEF this summer greatly helped me realize what I want to focus on..."

As choosing your major at university and becoming a professional are the most crucial decisions in every person's life, I sometimes had doubts if I really wanted to study finance. However, the opportunity given to me by U.S.-CAEF this summer greatly helped me realize what I want to focus on and where I see myself in the future.

My internship at Eurasian Bank turned out to be unique and useful. It was great to immerse myself in a business environment where everybody is involved in big financial projects with billions of dollars for loans. The feeling that I was also contributing to something big made me more interested in this financial sphere.

As my responsibilities included helping risk managers, I had the opportunity to meet people from different departments such as: Small and Medium Business, Law, Accounting and Monitoring. Working on various contracts helped me understand the loan process, analyze and assess potential risks, and how to make payment spreadsheets. I received deeper knowledge on interest rates, project management and returns.



AISULUU ABDYRAKMANOVA

This was a great practical interpretation of what I have learned in my finance classes at KIMEP. Having experienced all this, I feel more confident about my major. Lots of things should be improved in the Central Asian financial sphere, and I believe I can bring that change. I see lots of opportunities that are going to appear and I firmly believe that this field of education and work is greatly suitable for my career development.

INTERNSHIP AT THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BISHKEK

BY ANISA ATALOVA, KYRGYZSTAN



ANISA ATALOVA (2ND LEFT) WITH US AMBASSADOR PAMELA SPRATLEN & OTHER INTERNS

Nowadays, when almost all employers require work experience even for entry level positions, it is important to test your knowledge through practical experience and participate in internships.

So I was glad when I was selected to participate in the U.S.-CAEF regional internship program. During this summer I interned in the HR Department of the U.S. Embassy, Bishkek. It was a great opportunity for me to use the knowledge I acquired at the university and understand what classes I need to take in my future college years. I was really lucky to become part of an amazing HR team and experience a unique Kyrgyz-American working culture at the embassy. Fortunately, my supervisors trusted me and gave me an opportunity to experience all processes in the department. I mainly dealt with the local recruitment program and a little with other pro-

cedures. I supported the recruitment program by downloading applications, preparing applications for screening, and scheduling interviews. In addition, I redeveloped the Human Resources Intranet website, which is available for around 60,000 embassy employees all over the world. Also, I updated the personnel database.

The internship was a great professional and personal experience for me, and the U.S.-Embassy offered me a part-time position after the internship. It is a great place to grow professionally during my college years and afterwards. The Embassy announces their annual internship program in April-March and one can apply through filling out the application and sending necessary documents. To find more about the internship in the U.S. Embassy please visit http://bishkek.usembassy.gov/student_internship2.html

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

OUR EXPERIENCE AS UNI LIBRARIANS

BY BUNYOD ABDUKARIMOV, KYRGYZSTAN & ALI HAMRAYEV, TURKMENISTAN

"The most unusual aspect is that people do not need to bring anything: no library cards, no identification documents are required. Just come and read!" -- Bunyod Abdukarimov



BUNYOD ABDUKARIMOV (RIGHT)



ALI HAMRAYEV

Quite an extraordinary library has been functioning in Almaty - the Uni, a portable reading room in public places. The Uni Project originally started in New York City as a nonprofit committed to increasing access to books and learning opportunities through pop-up, open-air reading rooms. It arrived to the southern Kazakhstani capital in 2012. It is an absolutely unique development: easily mobile, it can be installed in any available public spot. The Uni Project promotes the culture of learning through reading; it emphasizes the importance of constant education; it serves as a wonderful tool to gain new knowledge beyond the walls of schools and libraries.

The Uni is staffed by librarians who are alumni of Future Leaders Exchange Program. This summer, our fellows-- Bunyod Abdukarimov, Ali Hamrayev, and Zarrinakhon Mulloboyeva-- also joined the team. This is what Ali wrote about his Uni experience: "I have had many experiences in conducting and participating in different kinds of projects during my post-FLEX life, but Uni is the project that gave me one of the most unforgettable and valuable experiences. Working with kids, especially with the youngest ones is a great challenge for everyone. But thanks to Uni, I can definitely say that I have learned and definitely enjoyed working with little kids and youngsters.

Making more friends and getting to know more members of the giant FLEX family is another great benefit I've acquired through my Uni experience. Team-building activities arranged by the organizers took place almost every Saturday night and were the best reward to us after a productive week.



While working at the Uni, our fellows conducted a hip-hop dance workshop, a celebration of the 238th U.S. Independence Day, and led interactive English classes for children.

"Being involved in the Uni library is a special and useful experience, indeed. During library times, I met many kids and adults who are interested in such a wonderful new activity. For me it is also something entirely new. Communicating and assisting young people, reading books, and answering questions helped me improve my interpersonal skills. And I am sure that Uni helped visitors develop an interest to reading and expanding their outlooks," Bunyod said, "the most unusual aspect is that people do not need to bring anything: no library cards, no identification documents are required. Just come and read! There are no restrictions, no interference. It is all about the freedom to read and enjoy the outstanding environment. If I were one of the readers, I would be really grateful for this opportunity to come and enjoy books."

BE AMAZING, BE GREEN!

BY ZARRINAKHON MULLOBOEVA, TAJIKISTAN



ZARRINAKHON MULLOBOEVA (2ND LEFT)

I am a freshman from Tajikistan and a FLEX alumna. During my first year at KIMEP University I participated in the Kazakh Foundation for Cultural, Social and Educational Development project “We Can Make a Difference”. The purpose of the project is to develop leadership and project management skills and to promote volunteering among female students. With two other girls I started working on an eco-project “Be Green, Be Amazing”.

Why eco-project? Almaty is the largest but also the most polluted city in Kazakhstan. Air pollution in Almaty mostly comes from industries and vehicle emissions. However, many people are not aware of another growing tendency-- the harmful effects of plastic products that take centuries to decompose. Every day millions of plastic bags and bottles are taken out of the city. The chemical toxins they contain have a disastrous effect on the environment.

Through this project we tried to raise eco-awareness among young people and develop specific knowledge on current environmental issues as well as learning on how to transfer this knowledge to their communities. We posted project updates and useful

tips on recycling on Facebook, Vkontakte, and Instagram and held various training activities as well as presented our self-designed eco-bags to the participants. Using these bags instead of plastic ones is the first step to changing people’s habits that can help save the environment.

The success of the program wouldn’t have been possible without the support of Nadezhda Vashenko from Posadi Derevo, Nekafe, the Kazakhstan Foundation for Cultural, the Social and Educational Development team, funding from FLEX Alumni Community, designer Nicolas Journoud, ecobagz.kz, and others. Participation in this project contributed hugely to my personal development. It was my first big project and required a lot of responsibility for myself and my team. It was quite challenging to manage my time-- I had to balance my project duties, studies, and other extracurricular activities.

This is not the end-- the project has only started. In the fall, we are going to have a fresh start with new funding from a FLEX grant. I hope that this project will be a good addition to the Green Movement around the world, and together we can make a difference!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT REUNION IN ALMATY

BY ARYSTAN MOLDAKBEKOV | TREASURER, U.S.-CAEF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, KAZAKHSTAN

This is the second year in a row for the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association to organize a joint event for both KIMEP and AUCA alumni. It is becoming a tradition to organize reunions on graduation day. They help strengthen cooperation and communication between KIMEP and AUCA alumni and current Fellows.

For the first time a similar event was organized in Bishkek in 2013 when several U.S.- CAEF Alumni from KIMEP travelled to Kyrgyzstan and met their peers in AUCA. This time it was the KIMEP alumni’s turn to host. Fifteen AUCA alumni, mostly graduating fellows, participated in the event in Almaty. “It was great to see this many visitors from AUCA in Al-

maty, as it meant a lot for the Association. The main idea behind such events is to get together, to get to know each other, to exchange ideas and feel that even after graduation you are part of this big family. This creates a friendly atmosphere in our U.S.-CAEF community. I hope from year to year the number of participants will only increase,” **Moldir Kussainova**, the Association’s Vice-President for Social Activities, said about the event.

The day began with a training session for personal and professional development. Long before the event, the association officers conducted a survey of the alumni to find out what interests the alumni

the most. We found out that the majority of alumni preferred to learn about effective negotiations, strategic management, and stress management. One of the leading coaching schools in Almaty, the Coaching Center of Inna Kravchenko, was invited to develop training materials which were combined into a single topic of "Personal Effectiveness". The program was well received by the participants. The alumni engaged in various exercises and actively contributed to group discussions. "I really enjoyed the course, and I firmly believe I learned a lot of useful tips that would be of huge help in my career," **Tangulu Diushakhmatova**, the Association's President, shared.

As most of U.S.-CAEF Alumni plan on continuing their education, the association officers decided to organize a conference call with students currently studying in top business schools abroad. The speakers-- Seyitbek Usmanov from Darden Business School, University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA, USA) and Markel Toromyrza uulu from IE Business School (Madrid, Spain)-- kindly agreed to talk about university life, about master's degree programs, and various available study opportunities. The alumni actively participated in this conference via Skype and asked numerous questions about application, admissions procedures, and the overall benefits of the programs.

Afterwards, the alumni took part in the U.S.-CAEF reception for the graduating class in the Dostyk Hotel. The Alumni Association officers congratulated the graduates and presented symbolic pins with U.S.-CAEF logo welcoming them to the Association. During the reception, the alumni and current fellows had a chance to meet each other, ask for advice, and share their experiences. After the reception **Aisalkyn Musabayeva**, Vice-President for Social Activities, said: "It was a productive event-- we organized training, a Skype-conference with MBA students, participated in the KIMEP Graduation Ceremony, and we had a nice chance to congratulate both AUCA and KIMEP graduates. It was one of our biggest events we organized in the past two years."



ALUMNI WITH STEVEN SHEA, PRESIDENT, U.S.-CAEF BOARD



U.S.-CAEF ALUMNI DURING WEBINAR



KIMEP UNIVERSITY & AUCA ALUMNI IN ALMATY

Hopefully, the biggest events are yet to come. For now, this was a great day full of positive emotions and pleasant impressions, accompanied with meeting old friends and making new ones. As long as such days occur at least once a year, the primary objective and goal of our Alumni Association will always be reached. So, see you all next year in Bishkek!

MY EXPERIENCE AT BI NORWEGIAN BUSINESS SCHOOL

BY ARTYOM BAKULIN, TURKMENISTAN



ARTYOM BAKULIN (RIGHT)

Last year I was lucky enough to receive a Presidential scholarship to study at BI Norwegian Business School. Currently I am in my 2nd year of study and planning to obtain MSc in Financial Economics degree in the fall of 2015.

To be honest, I enjoy every given day I spend in Oslo. I am glad I decided to go for the master's degree program as I feel that it is an excellent addition to my education. In general, a master education requires high dedication and a lot of time to be invested in reading financial material. Furthermore, it frequently brings real life financial cases and its best solutions to students' attention. In addition to the

full program load, I am also working on Chartered Financial Analyst: Level II preparation as I strongly believe it provides candidates with precise knowledge in the sphere of finance as well as highly ethical standards that every finance professional should possess and utilize at work and in everyday life. I very much appreciate the fact that about 6 years

ago when I was just applying for U.S.-CAEF in Ashgabat, American Councils and the U.S.-CAEF Board believed in me, provided me with financial support, and gave me a chance to obtain my bachelor's degree at one of the best universities in Central Asia. I am more than sure I would not have succeeded in my education without their support.

ECO CARAVAN-2014

BY IGNATII KIM, KYRGYZSTAN



IGNATII KIM WITH PARTICIPANTS

"EcoCaravan - 2014" is an educational camp for children from orphanages which took place on July 22-27, 2014 in Issyk-Kul. Forty children from four orphanages from Bishkek and Karakol participated in this camp. This project was supported by the FLEX Alumni Grants Program and American Councils for International Education ACTR/ACCELS. Along with a few volunteers, I helped organize this important event.

The first part of the camp took place in Djuuku Canyon where children and volunteers lived in tents. Children were engaged in various sport and team-building activities, took a trip to a waterfall, swam in hot springs, and participated in a clean-up event. They also participated in several training events ("Personal hygiene", "Building relationships", "Leadership & Career") organized by project volunteers.

The second part of the project took place on the southern shore of Issyk-Kul Lake in the small resort of "Eldos-Ata". Volunteers organized training and presentations on educational opportunities, tolerance, and diversity. In addition, children swam in the lake and played a scavenger hunt game. Moreover, on the last day of the camp they presented team projects on which they had been working during the whole camp.



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