

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 & open markets.



My Boston Experience

◆ **Kuralay Baisalbayeva**

represented Kazakhstan at the 2nd international "Young Tax Professional of the Year" contest in Boston on October 1-4, 2012
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◆ **Tangulu Diushakhmatova**

the first President of the U.S.-CAEF Association
Read about Tangulu & her impressive team
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◆ **U.S.-CAEF Fellow Becomes Novelist**

Asylgul Kenzhebayeva shares her insights into the creation of her first novel
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Fresh Impressions of a Freshman

—Makhabat Tashbaltaeva, a freshman from AUCA's Business Administration Department

"I like this department because Spirit of Entrepreneurship motivates me to be a winner."



Makhabat Tashbaltaeva, one of our new CAEF fellows, has shared her first impressions about AUCA.

Everything started with orientation week. This period of time was both tiring and exciting but absolutely not boring. For the first time in my life I had a professor who is a native speaker of English. My new university life started with studying Socrates's and Darwin's works. "The Allegory of The Cave" was the topic on which I wrote my first assignment in English.

Sophomore students made a big contribution to help us to feel the spirit of AUCA. This community of volunteers was all around during these two weeks of orientation. I will never forget their encouraging T-shirts with the slogan, "You are not alone!" Orientation week ended, and after going home I realized that AUCA is the best place on this Earth where everyone can find what he is looking for, a place where everyone can develop his best sides and find himself. I loved everything about AUCA: German bakery, the smell of kitchenette, our small café "Bravo," decorations in American-style halls, class rooms, my lovely professors, clubs for developing yourself, courses of sports and arts. Surrounded by these outstanding opportunities, I see how lucky I am to be there and to be one of the U.S.-CAEF fellows. I promised myself to do my best to be called a U.S.-CAEF fellow.

◆ **First Steps into a Career:**

Learn about regional internship experiences of our Fellows
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◆ **Alumni & Current Fellows' Stories & More.....**

FIRST STEPS INTO A CAREER

Regional Internship: Interview with Malika Pulotova

By Kristina Fateyeva, KIMEP



Malika Pulotova (center) with her colleagues from Channel 7

Kristina: Please give a short introduction about yourself; where you are from, what program you are studying, what year, what is your major and where and when and for how long did you have your internship?

Malika: Hello, Kristina. My name is Malika Pulotova and I am from Kazakhstan, Aksai. It is my third year as a KIMEP University student and I am very proud to be a U.S.-CAEF Fellow at the same time. Currently, I am majoring in Marketing. After the completion of my second year of study at KIMEP University, I applied for the US-CAEF Regional Internship Program. I was provided with a unique chance to work as an intern at Channel 7 Television Company's representative office in Almaty. The duration of the internship was one and a half months from June 2012 - July 2012.

Kristina: What were you responsible for as an intern?

Malika: I was responsible for managing the marketing BTL promotion campaign "Tune into channel 7." The main aim of the campaign was to promote the Channel 7 program content and to tune the channel on the television sets of the households in Almaty. I directly worked with partners of our project – two advertising agencies - participated in the realization of the campaign and worked with presentations, reports and other campaign-related documents.

Kristina: Did you apply the skills and knowledge that you've got at KIMEP there?

Malika: Particularly, I applied my leadership skills to the work because I served as a manager of the campaign while my marketing manager was absent. Presentation skills and knowledge of basic principles of marketing helped me a lot to succeed. Before starting the internship, I took the course, "Principles of Marketing" at KIMEP, where I learnt about the Below-the-Line Marketing Campaign. I was very happy that I could apply my theoretical knowledge practically by directly managing this kind of promotional campaign.

Kristina: What U.S.-CAEF special guest lecturers and trainings were useful for you during your internship?

Malika: In the spring, I participated in the marketing seminar organized by the U.S.-CAEF program. The guest speaker was Alia Nazarkasimova, who is currently the Commercial Director of Channel 7 with huge working experience in the field of marketing. After this seminar, I decided to connect my future career with marketing.

Kristina: Did this experience support you in deciding to major in marketing?

Malika: Yes, my motivation to continue my future career working in the sphere of marketing increased after the completion of the internship. At a glance, working in the marketing sphere seems to be not difficult. However, after the internship I realized that it is one of the most difficult and challenging fields because a good marketing person should have a good knowledge of accounting, finance, management, economics, etc.

Kristina: Now you are taking marketing classes. Are you learning anything new that you did not learn or experience during your internship?

Malika: Of course, there are always a lot of new things to learn, and starting this semester I just have started taking my major marketing classes, which I enjoy a lot. At the beginning of my internship, I didn't have much knowledge of marketing in reality, and now I learn a lot from the classes I take.

Kristina: What would you suggest for future U.S.-CAEF interns?

Malika: U.S.-CAEF Regional Internship is a unique chance for a student after his/ her 2nd year of study to get a real hands-on experience in a company, and I am very grateful to U.S.- CAEF for providing such an amazing opportunity. So I advise not missing this chance to get knowledge from professionals and improve your leadership, team-working, and communication skills. Never be afraid to take responsibility, ask questions and make mistakes! While you are a student you have a chance to learn from your failures, get as much experience as you can and use every opportunity as a chance to improve and develop yourself!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



KRISTINA FATEYEVA

I am a senior student at KIMEP University. I am majoring in marketing and management. I am a Turkmenistan citizen.

Before I applied to CAEF I was graduating from school back at home after coming from the FLEX program and working at IREX. CAEF gave me a lot of opportunities and still does. I had a chance to be a VP of Internal Relations for the CAEF Student Association at KIMEP the first year my co-scholars established it and later became President of it.

CAEF is not only a Foundation for students from all over Central Asia to get bachelor's degrees. CAEF is an opportunity to make students' dreams come true. The trainings and speakers CAEF provides for its students and the excellent opportunity to become an intern in great companies and organizations are life-changing.

Regional Internship: Stories by Aliya Sultanova & Sapar Ibraev, AUCA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



ALIYA SULTANOVA

U.S.-CAEF values practical professional experience as a complement to academic studies. Different seminars and trainings are organized to develop and improve fellows' skills and expand their professional knowledge.

Sophomores have an interesting opportunity to have an internship before the 3rd year of university at local organizations and companies in the Kyrgyz Republic. For example, Nazokat Omuralieva had an internship at "Talas Copper Gold ". Here are some stories from other juniors, who completed their internships in summer 2012.

Host company: Kyrgyz Concept provides travel services, through supporting visa acquisition, organizing study tours and planning conferences among other activities.

"I am happy I was given a chance to be part of a leading company & somehow contribute to it."

"It was June 4, 2012 when I received a word from Kyrgyz Concept that I would be invited to take part in their summer internship program. With more than 150 employees and several hundred thousand dollars in revenue, Kyrgyz Concept is one of Kyrgyzstan's largest tourist companies. To start with, the first internship experience was challenging. I felt that gaining an internship at "Study Abroad" department was a good experience for me. Achieving not only an internship position, but the one at such a prominent company, was extremely exciting.

I think my first day was the most challenging for me, because I was not familiar with my duties and the team. Therefore, it took some efforts to get rid of little anxiety and uncertainty. I met my supervisor who seemed fantastic. She had created a motivating list of tasks and assignments that I would complete during the internship. These included: a reception position, a creative advertisement on a social network, direct mails for VIPs (special direct mails for executive and general directors of prominent companies in Bishkek), investigating and generating special brochures with the aim to help students with brief information about universities and language schools abroad. There were other projects as well, including what was described as occasional tasks such as organizing a conference and delivering mail, etc.

This job required me to be punctual and my tasks to be carried out on time as well. The most challenging was to work under strict deadlines and permanent control of the supervisor. Certainly, this first internship was a great experience and chance to try myself in the serious sphere. My internship at Kyrgyz Concept provided me with tools and experience necessary to achieve my goals."

-By Aliya Sultanova

I grew up in Bishkek, in the city, which is famous with its parks and boulevards. My parents, as well as most of my relatives, are teachers, which makes my foray into the economics something of a novelty for them.

After graduating Turkish high school, I enrolled at the American University of Central Asia in 2010 for my undergraduate in economics. I'm interested in economic debates, as I have attended some. I'm interested in banking and international projects, and hopefully, I will engage in these spheres in the future.

I spent a couple years in the dance section of the "Jashtyk", learning the sorrows of chorographical dance. As an undergrad, I worked as an intern for the Kyrgyz Concept. In addition, I worked at McDonald's in the U.S. during part of the summer.

In the rare hours when I'm not at BLB, I enjoy running, swimming, live music, reading, and baking.



Sapar (right) with his colleagues at Talas Copper Gold LLC

"Sapar has all qualities to become a successful manager in many fields, including public relations. He has all the necessary qualities for this - a responsible attitude to work, organizational skills, erudition, excellent interpersonal and networking skills."

A. Kanatbekova, mass media officer, Talas Copper Gold LLC

Host company:

Talas Copper Gold LLC is a mining exploration joint venture between Gold Fields and Orsu Metals Corporation in Kyrgyzstan

"My internship with Talas Copper Gold was one of the most exciting highlights during these two years that I have been a US-CAEF fellow. It was my chance to make a decision about my future career. I saw how a real business start-up works, what tasks each department executes, what challenges they face, how differences in culture can affect collaboration of the company with the local community.

I was in the Public Affairs Department, and it was very interesting. This department was the busiest one, as TCG had some conflicts with the villagers who live not far from the site, where the explorations are made. I translated letters of the Head of the Board of Directors to the villagers, so I improved my writing and language skills. I translated documents such as contracts and official letters into different languages-- English, Russian and Kyrgyz. While translating contracts I learned how they must be composed, point by point, with explanations of rights and obligations of each party and so on.

When I was leaving the company, my supervisor, David Grant, said that my CV will be kept in consideration for two years, so they hope that I return there for building my career. Even now I stay in touch with them, e-mailing my supervisor and other colleagues. So maybe I will really go back there in the future."

-By Sapar Ibraev, AUCA



SAPAR IBRAEV

-Born in Bishkek

-Co-founder of Kyrgyz cultural club, "Kelechek" at AUCA

-Participant of the Teenagers in Free Enterprise (TIFE) project in 2010. The goal of the project is to create an entrepreneurial culture & capacity development of the younger generation in the Kyrgyz Republic.

-Plays football & basketball

CHANGE THE WORLD. BE A LEADER.

By Monandniso Tursunova, KIMEP

On September 15th, Leadership Day was held at KIMEP with the slogan, "Change the World. Be a Leader." The program included lectures and presentations by speakers from such companies as NOKIA, RBK Bank, CNP Processing, and GmbH, BeSmart, Success Motivation, SEF Aspandau, Tele 2 and HSBC Bank Kazakhstan. During the lectures, guest-speakers shared their experiences and gave valuable advice to students on how to become a leader. This event was organized by the student organization called the KIMEP International Deputy Committee (IDC) in cooperation with the Leadership Development Program and support of the Embassy of the United States of America in Almaty and the KIMEP Executive Center. The project consisted of two parts. The first part was about lectures and sharing experiences of outstanding guest-speakers and the second one was a lottery game among participants. The lottery game was sponsored by the BeSmart Company that offered a lot of free services and products for the students as a prize. The project "Change the world. Be a leader." was organized on such a high level that everyone was impressed by the experience acquired from the valuable lectures and activities. Among the organizers, volunteers and participants there were several U.S.-CAEF fellows as Rustamjon Vakhobov, Umedjon Kurbonali, Ayna Annaorazova, Jemal Agayeva, Amina Iqbolzoda, Firuza Hasanova, Surur Ulugbek and others.



Rustam Vakhobov (first right) with other volunteers

Interviews with Rustamjon Vakhobov & Umedjon Qurbonali



Jemal with Mr. Tristram Perry, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy

How did you assist in this project and what were your expectations?

Rustam Vahobov: First of all, I want to thank the organizers of this event, the International Deputy Committee (IDC), which is one of the best student organizations among other organizations of KIMEP. Honestly, I was not intending to take part in this event not telling about volunteering. But then I saw these guys working hard, and I became interested in joining and helping.

What is your impression about this project?

Umedjon Qurbonali: I am a first-year student at KIMEP. As this is my first year, I am very impressed with everything happening around. And this project is one of the things that gave me a lot of knowledge and information about leadership and how to become a leader. Thus, I am really grateful that I am studying at KIMEP thanks to the scholarship, which I got from U.S.-CAEF.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MONANDNISO
TURSUNOVA

I am Monandniso, a U.S.-CAEF Fellow from Tajikistan. After successfully finishing secondary school, I applied for a U.S.-CAEF scholarship in order to study in one of the best universities in Central Asia, KIMEP. I am honored to be a fellow of the U.S.-CAEF scholarship.

Currently, I am a second-year student in the BSC program. As part of KIMEP's student life, I joined many student organizations at KIMEP. IDC is one of them, in which I take the Event-Manager position.

The project "Change the World. Be a leader" has really changed my point of view in the spheres of leadership and communication. As I was one of the organizers of this event, I was responsible for finding and involving sponsors from outstanding companies of Kazakhstan.

Honestly saying it was my first step toward business world and business people. Taking in consideration all these events that are happening in life of many CAEF students in KIMEP, I want to express my huge gratitude to U.S.-CAEF which gives us an opportunity to be a part of amazing student life and experiences at KIMEP.

AUCA Students Recognized for Academic Excellence

By Nasiba Nurmatova, AUCA



Bermet Nurbekova receiving an award from Andrew Wachtel, AUCA President

Since the U.S.-CAEF fellows are one big family, it is important to share our successes with each other. This helps us to know one another, to be proud of each other and of course to realize that we belong to a group of students who are at the top of their class at university.

Every year at the American University of Central Asia, the administration organizes the Knowledge Day. During this event, the president of the university congratulates students and gives awards to the most outstanding students. This year, among the eight AUCA students placed on President's List was our fellow **Bermet Nurbekova**, cohort 2009.

Nine U.S.-CAEF Fellows were placed on Dean's List for outstanding academic achievements

- Malika Ibragimova, Cohort 2011
- Valentina Khomenko, Cohort 2011
- Karina Kusainova, Cohort 2009
- Kalys Zhumakadyr uulu, Cohort 2010
- Nasiba Nurmatova, Cohort 2011
- Ulukbek Abdubaliev, Cohort 2011
- Asylgul Kenzhebaeva, Cohort 2011
- Nazokat Omuralieva, Cohort 2010
- Yelena Vorobey, Cohort 2010

Congratulations, dear U.S.-CAEF students!

Next year we hope even more U.S.-CAEF Fellows will be included on the Dean's List.

Good luck, Fellows!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



NASIBA NURMATOVA

I am from Osh. My passion to newsletters goes back to high school when I ran the school newspaper "AKS press" founded by me.

In 2010 I became a finalist of the FLEX program. Being a FLEX exchange student was the first step to the adult life. It opened doors to the future, which I have dreamed to have. One of the doors gave me an opportunity to study at the best university in Kyrgyzstan as a U.S.-CAEF fellow.

Now I am a sophomore at the Business Administration department. In my opinion, it is important to combine hard work with fun work. My hobby is still writing newspaper articles. While in the USA I had discovered ceramics. I enjoy creating different art pieces. I also love exploring new cultures. Right now I am learning Chinese language.

I believe that life is uninteresting if there is no goal. I have many plans and goals for future. All I want to say about them is just that my country will be proud of me someday.

U.S.-CAEF Fellow Becomes Novelist

Soon the world will hear about the famous Kyrgyz writer, **Asylgul Kenzhebaeva**



For now, she is a U.S.-CAEF fellow who has recently published her first book. Asylgul is one of the fellows included on the Dean's List. Also, she is a FLEX alumna and a member of the AIESEC student organization.

Here is an excerpt from the interview with Asylgul Kenzhebaeva :

"I wrote this novel on my last grade at high school. Actually, I like writing poems and short stories; most of them are fiction, which are not related to my life at all.

So, I started writing this novel, called 'Life's games,' like a short story, then later I decided to make it longer. The most common questions I got after publishing my book were 'How did you write it?

How did the idea of writing it come to your mind?' Honestly, I don't know how these ideas come to my mind. They are just coming.

Moreover, when I was writing this novel I wasn't thinking how I should develop my novel further and finish it, but I was thinking about my future readers; if they will be interested in reading further. The novel is called 'Life's games.' It is the story about Bakir, an excellent student at university and later successful worker at Australia Research Institute, finding out what his life is about and searching for a happy end. It is a story about his confusion in choosing religion and realizing that there are more important things than career."

If anybody is interested in reading Asylgul's novel, contact her by e-mail at kenzhebaeva_a@mail.auca.kg or find her on Facebook.

Sharing Wisdom with the World's Seven-Billionth Child

By Ulukbek Abdubaliev, AUCA

Ulukbek Abdubaliev won an essay contest at Bard College & attended the International Conference in St. Petersburg



He shared his impressions about the conference with the newsletter team:

"In November 2011, Bard College for Civic Engagement announced an essay contest - 'What would you tell the world's seven billionth person so that s/he can be a responsible global citizen?' I found it very interesting and sent my essay with some pieces of advice to the child. In April, Bard College announced the overall winners and the runners-up of the contest, including me. In April 2012, the Vice President of Bard College for Civic Engagement, Jonathan Becker, invited the winners to a conference at Smolny College in St. Petersburg.

There were two students from Bard College, Rezarta Seferi and Ann Hayfield, and two from Smolny College, Olga Sholderer and Tatiana Tananykina, at the conference. We got to know each other and offered some insights into what we had written and what we would like the audience to learn. The conference was really interesting and thoughtful. The goal was to learn and have fun, and we really enjoyed the panel, sharing our thoughts and perspectives on the challenges faced by global citizens. Presenting our essays, we got our certificates and prizes. After the conference we were shown around the city and really enjoyed our trip.

This conference really enhanced my vision of life and showed my level of skills. Listening to the speeches of second and third year participants, I understood that I had a lot to learn.

However, being a first year student, I presented a thoughtful way of solving global challenges. It was great to share thoughts with other students from different countries and I appreciate this experience very much."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



ULUKBEK ABDUBALIEV

I am from Bishkek. I graduated from secondary school # 19 with Honors. I appreciate my years in this school as it gave me a lot of knowledge and skills to become a student of AUCA and a fellow of U.S.-CAEF.

Now I am a sophomore of Business Administration department at AUCA. Last year I participated in the international student conference in Smolny University in St. Petersburg. It was a great experience for me, as I could share my thoughts about global problems with students from different countries.

This year I became a member of AIESEC international student organization. For me AIESEC is a great opportunity to enhance leadership, communication and presentation skills. Besides studies and university activities, I like playing football, chess and solving Rubik's Cube.

I am really proud to be called a fellow of U.S.-CAEF. It changed my vision of life and gave me a lot of opportunities. I am glad to be a student of AUCA and I will do my best to become a great representative of our country.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Greetings from the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Council!

The U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation Alumni Association was formed to serve as a communication & cooperation platform for the Alumni of the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation.

"The Association" was created in September 2012. Seven U.S.-CAEF graduate fellows were elected to represent the Alumni Association. The representatives are responsible for holding regular meetings, planning year-round activities and facilitating effective communication among fellows.

Please meet our U.S.-CAEF Council



PRESIDENT

Tangulu Diushakhmatova

I graduated from American University of Central Asia in 2011 as one of the U.S.-CAEF pioneers. In the same year, I was chosen for the U.S.-CAEF Capstone International Internship program in Washington D.C. Since the very beginning of my studies, I felt proud to be among the U.S.-CAEF fellows and now I am honored to lead the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association. As the President of the Association I am responsible for:

- > presiding at all meetings of the association
- > taking the lead in planning and organizing activities by the association
- > representing the association in its dealings with other organizations or people outside the association
- > serving as the association's liaison with the U.S.-CAEF Board and American Councils

I genuinely believe that U.S. – CAEF fellows are going to be among the leaders who will shape and change the future of Central Asia and only our joint effort will lead us to these high achievements. Therefore, I am wishing the best of luck and every possible success to each of us.



TREASURER

Arystan Moldabekov

I graduated from KIMEP in 2011, and I am proud to be one of the first U.S.-CAEF graduate Fellows. Now it has been slightly more than a year that I've been employed by the Ernst & Young office in Almaty. Due to knowledge gained during the years at university, which is, in turn, thanks to the opportunities provided by CAEF Program, I really enjoy my work in assurance services for financial institutions in Kazakhstan.

The work that is to be done by me as a Treasurer of U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association is just a small part of gratitude I can express in exchange for those unforgettable four years of professional studies and personal growth. I would also like to use this opportunity to wish new CAEF Fellows good luck in their studies and success in the careers of new CAEF graduates!

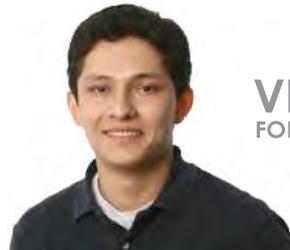


VICE-PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Oksana Kovalenko

I graduated from AUCA in 2011 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and continued my education in Nottingham University Business School as a graduate student. During my undergraduate years I used to concentrate on finance and banking, but now my spheres of interest include corporate and marketing strategies, as I am on the MSc Management programme. During four years at AUCA, I was proud to be one of the U.S.-CAEF Fellows, and currently I am proud to explore a new role of being Vice- President for Communications. I will be happy to make my contribution, and together with our team organize meetings and projects throughout the year.

I wish each and every U.S.-CAEF fellow good luck and strength to finish the academic year successfully.



VICE-PRESIDENT FOR MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH KIMEP

Aziz Yuldashev

I graduated from KIMEP in 2011, Bachelor of Arts in Economics (BAE) with a major in Business Economics. During my studies I was able to study in SungKyunKwan University in Seoul, South Korea as an exchange student and also got an internship in the British American Tobacco Uzbekistan (UzBAT) marketing department in summer 2010. Currently, I am employed in a joint project of Tashkent city municipality and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) "Tashkent Sewage Project" as an administrator-translator.

The U.S.-CAEF scholarship gave me a wonderful opportunity to study at one of the best universities in Central Asia and get a very solid educational background that helps me in my current professional activities. I graduated from KIMEP in 2011 with a major in Business Economics and right now am employed by Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in joint infrastructural project with Tashkent city municipality in the position of administrator and translator.

To be elected as a Vice-President for Membership and Outreach in the newly created U.S.- CAEF Alumni Association is a big honor for me. I strongly believe that the Association will help graduates an



VICE-PRESIDENT FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AUCA

Aisalkyn Musabaeva

I studied Economics at AUCA, and U.S.-CAEF is an integral part of my life that enabled me and many others to achieve our dreams. After the completion of my bachelor's degree in 2011, I pursued a master's degree in Public Policy and Management in Seoul, South Korea.

Now, I feel honored to be the Vice-President for Social Activities of the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association. My main responsibility is to organize all events and activities that we are going to have during these coming two years. I will do my best to make these events memorable and put a smile on your face.



VICE-PRESIDENT FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES KIMEP

Moldir Kussainova

I have graduated this summer with a major in finance and a minor in marketing. As of June 2012, I have been employed by Henkel Central Asia & Caucasus in the position of Trade Marketing Manager. Within the scheme of my duties are trade marketing activities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia & Mongolia. I find it more than exciting to work in a really diverse environment with professionals from different cultural backgrounds. During my daily work, I face challenges, and I am sure that the knowledge and professional skills that I've gained during my studies at KIMEP are helping me to overcome them.

Currently, I am the Vice President for Social Activities in U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association and I am proud to be part of the young, enthusiastic team working toward the welfare and interesting social life of U.S.-CAEF Alumni.



VICE-PRESIDENT FOR MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH AUCA

Alena Li

I am an alumna of American University of Central Asia, cohort 2007. I graduated from the Business Administration Department with a specialization in Management and Human Resources. For all four years of my studying, I was a Fellow of the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation.

In May 2011, I started my professional career as a Human Resources Specialist in Demir Kyrgyz International Bank, currently I am a Project Manager at a local consulting company, "Promotank." Here I feel I can gain a lot of practical experience in different areas of business. Each project I coordinate brings me something new.

In August 2012, I was elected to the position of Vice-President for Membership and Outreach of the U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association, which is a big honor to me. I will be glad to make my small contribution to the foundation that provided me support throughout all my studies at AUCA.

As a new academic year has started, I would like to address some words to the new U.S.-CAEF fellows. Guys, you are so lucky :) And you are special, honestly, each of you. So enjoy your student life! Study hard, party hard and get the most out of life! And remember, this period will never come again. So feel each moment of your life, be active and buoyant, curious and inspired. And we are waiting for you to join the Alumni Association.

ALUMNI STORIES

Interview with a U.S.-CAEF Alumna, Aidana Abdrakhmanova

By Dinara Atantayeva, KIMEP

Dinara: Hi, Aidana! Today you have an incredible opportunity to participate in the U.S.-CAEF newsletter as an alumna. There must be too little chances for you to participate in U.S.-CAEF Association's life since you have graduated from KIMEP and started work. I guess you miss it a lot. You, as one with working experience in one of the most successful companies in Kazakhstan, for sure, have a lot to share with our current KIMEP students. Thus, I have several questions for you.



Aidana Abdrakhmanova

Dinara: First of all, how has your life changed? I mean, how do you feel yourself in a new role of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Accounting?

Aidana: My life has changed a lot. I feel the whole responsibility of being an "adult." You know, being a student is still a childhood. Despite of all university deadlines and commitments, you feel support from your friends and relatives. I still have my dreams and inspirations. However, they became more realistic and pragmatic in some sense. I set the goals and try to reach them step by step. I know that my confidence comes from the fact that I have graduated from KIMEP. Being a KIMEP alumna is a huge privilege. It gives a lot of opportunities for self-realization in the business world. I am so grateful to U.S.-CAEF for letting me be who I have become. This professional and personal growth would be impossible without scholarship for studies in KIMEP.

Dinara: Where are you working now and what is your current field of occupation?

Aidana: I am working for Procter & Gamble Kazakhstan as a financial analyst. This is a really exciting job with lots of challenges and findings. I am responsible for multimillion-dollar businesses and work with professionals from different functions. A unique corporate culture and willingness of the whole team to share their knowledge helps me develop skills in various areas. I am happy to be part of this multinational company. Education at KIMEP laid the foundation of my career. I have learnt so many things that I can apply in my current job.

Dinara: What particular KIMEP courses help you cope with work challenges?

Aidana: The majority of KIMEP courses are really useful and helpful in my everyday work. Principles of Management helped me lead the projects and manage my time effectively. Marketing made a huge contribution to understanding of FMCG market which is an essential part of P&G business. Auditing and Fraud Examination courses have built my understanding of the stewardship area and the importance of internal control. I can continue endlessly because KIMEP courses are a really strong background for a career in any business field.

Dinara: Sometimes, alumni have a chance to collaborate with university's instructors and seek their advice. Have you ever asked a KIMEP instructor for help since you have graduated? How easy is it to reach a professor and do they have a friendly attitude to it?

Aidana: I have talked to university instructors about my future work and asked for advice in my internships. They are really open to any questions from the students who are really interested in their area

of expertise. KIMEP professors have huge business experience and are ready to share it with those students who are serious about their studies and future career. I did not contact my professors after my graduation since I have coaches and a mentor at my current job. They are ready to help in case of my questions or concerns.

Dinara: Many people complain about the fact that work takes all their free time. Have you faced this problem yet? If yes, how do you maintain the balance between work and personal life? Provide us with some tips.

Aidana: I do have overtimes from time to time but it does not mean that the job takes all my free time. I believe that during the first year of career, young professionals try to learn as much as possible from their experienced colleagues. Of course, it takes time to understand all the specifics and details of the business which directly affects the workload. As soon as we learn to manage our time efficiently, the problem of overtime disappears. Work and life balance depends on us. As long as we choose to devote all of our free time to job, it continues to be so. Setting the right priorities is my solution for this issue.

Dinara: Do you have any regrets about anything you did or did not do at KIMEP?

Aidana: I do not have any regrets. I learnt interesting things from the best professors and had amazing student life. I had a chance to go for exchange semester to Sweden and travelled a lot in Europe. I met so many wonderful people and built strong and trustful relationships with my friends. Is there anything I could dream of more? I doubt it. I believe that the people should appreciate everything that happens to them. I want to express my gratitude to U.S.-CAEF board for making all these things happen during my education at KIMEP. This would hardly have happened without US-CAEF scholarship.

Dinara: If you have any advice or wish, you are more than welcome to share it with the fellows.

Aidana: Thank you for the interview! I hope it would be helpful for our fellows! A piece of advice for those who are still studying: participate in different projects and events – it will be really useful and helpful in your future work. In addition, it will position you as an active person who takes initiative – the feature every employer seeks in their employees. Enjoy your student life! You will always remember this time as the happiest in your lives! Good luck!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



DINARA ATANTAYEVA

I am a U.S.- CAEF FELLOW and I am extremely happy and proud of this significant fact in my bio! I am a senior student at KIMEP. My majors are Accounting and Finance.

I graduated from school-gymnasium # 6 in my home town, Semei, in East Kazakhstan in 2009. I received an academic honor for excellent study at a school called Altyn Belgi (golden medal). I consider study at KIMEP to be very interesting and challenging.

Knowledge I have obtained in the spheres of accounting and corporate finance have helped me a lot to participate in the regional internship program administered by U.S.- CAEF in 2011.

ALUMNI STORIES

My Boston Experience

By Kuralay Baisalbayeva, a KIMEP alumna



This year Ernst & Young (E&Y) organized the 2nd international "Young Tax Professional of the Year" (YTPY) contest in Boston, on October 1st-4th. The goal of creation this kind of competition was to identify young talented people and to highlight the great opportunities available to them by choosing the tax profession. National winners from 19 countries of EMEIA (Europe, Middle East, India and Africa) region: Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, Ukraine and Kazakhstan met together in Boston on the international stage. Overall, participation in the contest was beneficial for me both from professional and personal growth perspectives. Furthermore, I managed to visit some of the 66th IFA (International Fiscal Association) congress sessions and discover the most famous Boston sightseeing.

First, participation in the contest gave better understanding of tax as a profession and further strengthened the role of international tax experts in today's emerging environment. During the first day we had sessions devoted to current profession trends and challenges faced by tax consultants worldwide.

Furthermore, we discussed how tax specialization is developed in education system of different countries, shared with experiences and suggestions how it could be improved in future. Overall, participation in the contest has confirmed my decision to specialize further in international taxation.

On the other hand, participation in the YTPY contest was great opportunity to strengthen presentation skills and develop important networking opportunities for future career. During the second day in Boston we had technical presentation by E&Y Senior Managers from UK office about presentation techniques necessary to communicate your message precisely, concisely and with confidence. Furthermore, they told about the E&Y's Executive Impact Model which was especially developed by the firm in cooperation with well-established social companies.

I believe that knowledge and skills gained at the contest will be useful not only in future career, but also other aspect of everyday life. Finally, participation in the contest was an amazing lifelong experience to meet with people all over the world. Within 5 days I met so many wonderful persons and inspiring tax leaders from different countries. The national winners from EMEIA region are very kind, open and brilliant young tax professionals and I was very pleased to meet with them. I hope to stay in touch with them in future as well.

I am pleased to notice that there was a huge interest among tax professionals in current trend developments in Central Asian region and in Kazakhstan particular. It was great pleasure and honor for me to tell them about the country and E&Y's leading position on the market.

As the YTPY contest was organized the same time when the 66th Congress of the IFA (International Fiscal Association) took place, I managed to visit some sessions as well. I met with Professor Tomas Balco, from KIMEP University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, who came to Boston to participate in the IFA Congress. Along with professional experience I had in Boston, I really liked the city and enjoyed the cultural program organized by the E&Y. Boston is quite different from Washington DC. It is amazing city with many historical buildings and places, spellbinding medieval churches in front of the modern shiny skyscrapers, beautiful parks with colorful trees and flowers, Newbury Street with fancy boutiques and inviting restaurants and cafes. On the third day in Boston we visited the Boston Pops Orchestra concert at the Symphony Hall which was sponsored by Ernst & Young.

To sum up, I had wonderful experience in Boston! I really enjoyed each day of the contest and will have pleasant memories about the city and the contest for the rest of my life.

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WASHINGTON D.C.

1828 L Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington D.C., USA 20036
Phone: (202) 833-7522
Fax: (202) 833-7523
general@americancouncils.org

DUSHANBE

86 Tolstoy Street
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734003
Phone: +992 37 221 1795
Fax: +992 37 221 1795
mamajanova@americancouncils-tj.org

ALMATY

20A, KAZIBEK BI STR.,
4th FLOOR
Almaty, Kazakhstan 050010
Phone: +7 727 259 8801
Fax: +7 727 259 8805
accels@americancouncils-kz.com

BISHKEK

187 Sydykov St., Office # 29,
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Phone: (996-312) 903-371
(996-312) 903-372
Fax: +996 312 66 48 38
accels@elcat.kg

www.americancouncils.org