Dear Talented and Engaged Alumni,

First of all, congratulations to all the new 2015 alumni of the Federal and Global Semester Programs! I hope that each of you found your cohort programs to be fulfilling, challenging, and unforgettable.

My time with the Federal Semester Program in Homeland Security Policy was nothing short of an incredible learning experience. It was filled with countless lessons on the art of networking, the importance of both academic and workplace professionalism, and some extraordinary introductions to government service, where I’ve happily dedicated my first years in the workforce. I can assure you that you have just graduated from a life-changing program—one with a unique and meaningful impact that you will be hard-pressed to leave behind.

As the President of the Federal and Global Semester Alumni Board, it is my hope that each of you found substance and value in your respective Federal or Global Semester programs and might be willing to share some of your new-found wisdom with your fellow alumni, as well as the next class of incoming students this Fall. The Alumni Board would love to hear your feedback on ways that we can expand and truly make the most of our Alumni Network, while also giving back to the program by mentoring and guiding its new students.

For starters, we would love to see all of you this summer for an Alumni get-together to catch up, strategize, and kick off a wonderful summer season together! Please join us at Cities Restaurant and Lounge in Washington DC on July 23rd (see details on page 6).

Thank you all so very much for your dedication to the Federal and Global Semester Program, and as always, please do not hesitate to contact me or our Board members and staff with anything that’s on your mind. Hope to see you all soon!

Lauren Greeley
President, Federal and Global Semester Alumni Board
Young Alumna Spotlight
Aisha Hassan, Policy Analyst, HHS

How have you been able to obtain employment?
My first job out of college was a “Program Analyst” position at HHS in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health. I landed an interview because of my internship position at HHS at the time. Talking with people in various government offices helped me figure out what offices I wanted to work in, and helped me narrow my job search when I was looking for new opportunities.

How did your Federal Semester experience prepare you to take on post-graduate life?
The Federal Semester’s training has been invaluable. We learn important tangible skills (e.g. how to write a resume) and intangible skills (e.g. talking with people, navigating a few simultaneous internship opportunities ethically). I still implement many of the skills I learned during the program in my current work situations. Overall, the program helped me learn how to think strategically about what internships and job positions I wanted to pursue, and why I wanted to pursue them.

What advice would you give to young professionals?
Don’t be afraid to take risks. I’ve learned that we need to give ourselves more credit — if there is an opportunity to lead a project, make a presentation, brief a senior leader, etc., rise to that challenge, accept it, and then run with it. You’ll figure out how to use your subject matter expertise and apply it to that particular challenge. And, you’ll be surprised at the turn out you have. Take initiative, and work hard and smart. If you see something that can be done differently, take the initiative to draft up a briefing, flow chart, action plan, etc. on how to tackle that problem differently.

From your perspective, what does it take to be a young leader?
Have confidence in yourself and your capabilities. Often, I talk with individuals who are smart, work hard, and analytical in their approach to problem solving and decision-making. However, they lack the confidence to propose new projects or volunteer to lead initiatives for their offices. It is important to have faith in your abilities. Knowing when to ask for help is also imperative in being a leader. Early on in any organization, you should identify the skills and expertise of those on your team and elsewhere in the organization. Request help from those individuals who have skills and expertise that will bolster the success for your project.

What’s something you wish you had known five years ago?
I wish I had known the importance of building a personal brand beyond the day-to-day work environment. This includes publishing journal articles, blog posts, etc. that bolster content building and helping to establish credentials as a subject matter expert in particular areas. I’m now beginning to explore opportunities for publishing various literature pieces.

ABOUT AISHA
GRADUATION YEAR: 2011
MAJOR: Community Health
FEDERAL SEMESTER CONCENTRATION: Health Policy
INTERNSHIP SITE: National Institute of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
CURRENT OCCUPATION: Policy Analyst at HHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Division of Health System
MBA Student, UMD

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PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS

A quantitative breakdown of the Federal Semester and Global Semester programs, 2006-present

Popular Student Majors

- Government & Politics: 30.2%
- Arts & Humanities: 12.5%
- Criminology & Criminal Justice: 7.7%
- Economics: 5.7%
- Other: 10.3%

Top Agency Placements

- Department of Homeland Security: 75 students
- Congress: 67 students
- Department of Health and Human Services: 51 students
- State Department (12 students in 2014-15): 33 students
- Environmental Protection Agency: 31 students
- Department of Energy: 17 students

FEDERAL & GLOBAL SEMESTER NETWORK

590+
Program Alumni and Current Students

150+
Different Internship Locations

4
Program Staff & Assistants
What is your office’s mission?

I am working in the East Asian and Pacific Languages Office. This office works to make sure that Foreign Service Officers (though there are others, such as spouses) obtain the language skills needed to effectively do their jobs overseas. I specifically work with the Lao and Thai section.

What’s something most people don’t know about interning at the Foreign Services Institute?

As an intern, you have a lot of access to the same resources staff does. I was able to get a free subscription to Mango Languages through State. Also, there is a library that you have access to—the computers there have access to paid subscriptions such as Foreign Policy Magazine.

What has been the most rewarding part of your internship?

The most rewarding part of my internship has been the sense that I am actually helping the office’s mission. I’ve also been able to practice Chinese with the language instructors in the office.

How, in your opinion, does the Federal/Global Semester program prepare students for a career in public service?

In many ways. The internship is a great way to explore public service; I hope that my class and other seminars gave students a broad perspective on opportunities for public service, inside government and outside; and the program’s focus on networking is a great asset.

What is your current job, and how did you arrive there?

I’m a U.S. Foreign Service Officer. Right now, I’m studying Burmese in advance of an assignment as a political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon. To say how I arrived here might be a bit like peeling an onion, but perhaps the shortest answer is that after I finished graduate school I looked for a job that combined serving my country with the opportunity to live in and learn about other cultures, and I chose the Foreign Service.

What was your first professional job?

I worked as a consultant for two small environmental consulting companies shortly after finishing my undergraduate degree in biology. We helped our clients find ways to better manage their environmental impacts. Some of my work was in Mexico and Peru, and that experience led me to study international economics in graduate school.

What advice do you have for young professionals today?

Try things out, learn from your experiences, always do the best you can, but don’t feel like you need to find exactly the right job or sector right away.

What has been the most helpful aspect of the Global Semester program for you?

The Global Semester program has really great staff that is really willing to help you. One thing I found particularly helpful was the Partnership for Public Service’s information session on USAJOBS. I can honestly say I’ve really mastered the site now.

What do you think makes the Global Semester program unique?

What makes the Global Semester program unique is that it brings together a lot of like-minded people who have similar goals. I really think it is especially unique in that it helps people who have maybe never gotten federal/NGO/think tank experience, and promotes their self-development in a way that allows them to get that experience.
FEATURED SCHOLARS

Sampling of Awards Recently Received by Students and Alumni

Laura Garvie
Critical Language Scholarship
Malang, Indonesia

Sarah Brown
David L. Boren Scholarship
Meknes, Morocco

Emily Snider
Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship

Cam Torreon
Rangel International Affairs Fellowship

Aaron Bhatt
Rangel Summer Enrichment Program

Shane Falcinelli
Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

Erin Hylton
Marshall Scholarship

Sarahann Yeh
US Foreign Service Internship Program

Nathan Hurwitz
Presidential Management Fellow

Mohammad Zia
Truman Scholarship
FEDERAL & GLOBAL SEMESTER ALUMNI HAPPY HOUR

Join us for a summer gathering to network, catch up with friends, meet new alumni, and engage with program staff!

When: Thursday, July 23, 6-8 p.m.
Where: Cities Restaurant 919 19th Street, Washington DC 20006

Light buffet and appetizers will be provided!

Please RSVP as soon as possible and contact Tommy Minter at tminter@terpmail.umd.edu with any questions.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

- Join the Alumni Board! Contact fedsem.global.alum@gmail.com for more information.
- Nominate your seminar instructor for a newsletter profile! Email tminter@terpmail.umd.edu
- Send news, ideas, suggestions, and opportunities for our next issue to fedsem.global.alum@gmail.com

The Federal Semester alumni board aims to foster the connections we built in Federal and Global Semester. We have three main goals: to connect alumni, to participate in networking and social events, and to provide opportunities to mentor current students. We all took a great deal from this program and look forward to making it and this network all that they can be!

Newsletter Editor: Brendan Butler