

VISITING COLUMNIST: U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

THE

# News

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FULBRIGHT FINLAND

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Climate-Driven  
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Expertise as Allies

## A Responsibility to Tell the Truth

Foreign Correspondent Iida Tikka

BIANNUAL MAGAZINE PUBLISHED BY THE FULBRIGHT FINLAND FOUNDATION

# Strength Through Cooperation



The Fulbright Finland Foundation is genuinely a joint effort. All awards, programs, services, and initiatives are developed, funded, and implemented in collaboration with the Foundation’s extensive partnership and alumni network.

In her column, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State **Lee Satterfield** describes the Foundation as “the primary interface for our two governments’ bilateral work in education, science, and culture” (p. 3). Indeed. The Foundation serves as the platform for a wide range of transatlantic collaborations and dialogues between scientists, educators, research institutions, NGOs, and companies. It is the interface of joint action to create long-term collaboration and impact.

In view of the magnitude of the current global challenges, international collaboration must significantly be increased. In this issue of the magazine,

our current grantees and alumni share their insights in this effort. They discuss their work in international security (p. 19), the role of journalism in upholding truth and democracy (p. 14), climate-driven refugees (p. 12) and refugee education (p. 13), collaboration in health sciences (p. 16), workforce development (p. 10), and diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education (p. 13), just to name a few examples.

With strength through cooperation, we invite our partners — current and new — on both sides of the Atlantic — to work together with us to deepen the existing opportunities and create new and novel solutions to increase the exchange of knowledge and professional talent between Finland and the U.S.

**Terhi Mölsä**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Fulbright Finland Foundation

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Cover photo: Jouni Soikkeli

# U.S.-Finnish Fulbright Partnership Grows Stronger



The dynamic Fulbright Finland Foundation is the primary interface for our two governments' bilateral work in education, science and culture.

As Finland joins the NATO Alliance and further deepens its close and longstanding relationship with the United States, I want to recognize the essential role that educational cooperation and people-to-people exchange play in our bilateral partnership and in finding global solutions to improve lives worldwide.

The dynamic Fulbright Finland Foundation is the primary interface for our two governments' bilateral work in education, science, and culture.

The Fulbright Finland Foundation's strategic focus is on collaborating to seek solutions for global challenges. Their particular strengths include areas of technology where Finland is a world leader; climate change, especially in the Arctic; and science diplomacy programs to advance the shared priorities of our two countries.

**THE FOUNDATION'S PROGRAMS TO INCREASE MEDIA LITERACY** and foster STEM research and innovation will help to sustain and strengthen democracy, economic opportunity, and prosperity in both our countries.

The U.S. government is proud to fund the Fulbright Program – through the Bureau that I lead and with support from the U.S. Congress – in partnership with the Finnish government, for exchange programs that bring our students, scholars, and universities – and our peoples – closer together. These educational and research opportunities have led to innovative partnerships in many fields of academic and professional endeavor.

As many readers will be aware, Fulbright is the U.S. government's flagship international educational and cultural exchange program. Fulbright builds lasting connections between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, strengthening mutual understanding between nations and advancing knowledge across communities. Upon their return to their home countries, Fulbrighters join thousands of alumni serving as leaders across the globe and in every field. Fulbright alumni include 62 Nobel Prize recipients, 89 Pulitzer Prize winners, and 41 who have served as a head of

state or government. Together they are part of a network committed to working together on global solutions to improve lives around the world.

With a renowned educational system, Finland is also one of the top destinations for U.S. educators to learn about primary, secondary, and vocational education. Finnish teachers can also learn much from the breadth and diversity of our U.S. system of education. Fulbright teacher exchange programs have built a powerful network of alumni who serve as thought-leaders and agents of change in the education sector in both our countries.

**PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGES** are about coming together, learning from one another, and building lasting relationships. The Foundation's over 6 000 Finnish and American alumni are inspiring action and cooperation all across our societies; as individuals, they are personally committed to strengthening relations between our two nations.

The Fulbright Finland Foundation has an innovative model for partnering with Finnish higher education institutions and private foundations and to develop and co-fund Fulbright awards for both Finns and Americans. We encourage other Fulbright Programs in Europe and worldwide to consider this as a model.

The Foundation has also been a leader in multi-lateral engagement through Fulbright. As a regional leader, the Foundation has convened many gatherings in the Nordic and Baltic region to engage Fulbright participants and alumni on issues that include media literacy, disinformation, and the Arctic.

I would like to thank all our Finnish partners for your diligent efforts to make the Fulbright Program in Finland so innovative and inspiring. Our continued cooperation will strengthen the relationship between our countries and peoples even more.

## Lee Satterfield

Assistant Secretary of State  
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
U.S. Department of State



# 2023-24 Awards to the United States Announced

Text MAIJA KETTUNEN  
Photos STUDIO TERHO PHOTOGRAPHY

International security, microeconomics for environmental policy, entrepreneurship, innovation, and institutional partnership building. These are just some of the disciplines and research topics of the recently selected 2023-24 Fulbright Finland Foundation grantees to the U.S.

**Heikki Hietala's** project focuses on developing a digital foreign policy for Finland. He is currently working as Senior Specialist on Cyber Issues and Hybrid Threats at the Permanent Representation of Finland to the European Union in Belgium. As the recipient of the Foundation's 2023 Seeking Solutions for Global Challenges Award, he will spend the academic year 2023-24 at Stanford University analyzing the underlying global trends, gather input from different stakeholders in academia, the private sector, civil society, and diplomacy, and provide concrete policy proposals. "I hope it will help inform decisionmaking in Finland as well as

deepen Finnish-U.S. exchanges on issues of mutual interest," he says. "Seeking solutions for global challenges in the field of technology requires that the policy prescriptions are as inclusive in their development as they need to be in their implementation. This program helps to do just that," Heikki concludes.

Altogether 26 students, scholars, and professionals from Finland received their grant certificates in the annual Award Ceremony at the Helsinki City Hall in May. The event was hosted jointly by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the City of Helsinki. So far, over 50 Finnish and U.S. grantees have been selected to participate in the Foundation's programs for the academic year 2023-24, with additional selections being made later this year, bringing the annual total up to approximately one hundred. Since 1949, over 6 100 students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals have participated in the

## Fulbright Finland Foundation Grantees 2023-24

See more information and the grantees' CVs  
[www.fulbright.fi/grantees](http://www.fulbright.fi/grantees)



Fulbright Finland alum **Devina Boughton** and **JP Jyväsjärvi** form a folk music duo *Kietoutumo*. They performed two of their original pieces during the event.

Foundation's exchange programs – over 4 000 from Finland and over 2 100 from the U.S., representing all fields in the arts, sciences, and the society at large. Awards are made possible by support from the Finland–America Educational Trust Fund, Finnish and U.S. governments, the Foundation's partners from the higher education and private sectors, as well as individual donors.

At the award ceremony, **Anita Wagner**, Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School and 2022–23 Fulbright–Tampere University Scholar, delivered words of thanks on behalf of the current grantees. In her remarks, Anita reflected on her personal experiences from the past year in Finland: “What could be more rewarding and empowering than being part of a community that intentionally creates human connections — across all kinds of boundaries.”



The program included remarks on behalf of the Finnish and U.S. governments and the City of Helsinki. From left to right: **Atte Jääskeläinen**, Director General, Higher Education and Research Policy, Ministry of Education and Culture; **Mikko Koivumaa**, Director General of Communications, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Chair of the Finland–America Educational Trust Fund; **Nasima Razmyar**, Deputy Mayor for Education, City of Helsinki; **Douglas T. Hickey**, Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Finland and the Honorary Chair of the Fulbright Finland Foundation; and the Foundation's CEO **Terhi Mölsä**.



## Partnering with U.S. Universities to Jointly Fund Finnish Language and Culture Teaching Assistants

The Fulbright Finland Foundation is happy to announce the University of Washington's (UW) partnership and co-funding commitment to the Foundation's Fulbright Finnish Language and Culture Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program. The UW offers a tuition waiver as well as financial support towards the travel and living costs of Finnish FLTA grantees at the UW. The FLTA grantees assist in the teaching of Finnish language and culture while studying on a graduate level at a U.S. university campus.

All traditional Fulbright awards for U.S. scholars and students to Finland are currently funded by Finnish institutions and private foundations through partnership agreements with the Fulbright Finland Foundation. Respectively, the Foundation is now seeking to secure similar types of partnerships on the U.S. side for supporting Finnish candidates. With its collaboration commitment for the Fulbright Finland Foundation, the University of Washington serves as a model.

The UW is a public research university located in Seattle. Its Department of Scandinavian Studies offers both an undergraduate major and a minor in Finnish, as well as opportunities for students to continue their study of Finnish language, literature, culture, and society at the graduate level while working toward the M.A. and the Ph.D. in Scandinavian Studies.

The department is chaired by Professor **Andrew Nestingen**, the Foundation's Fulbright U.S. student

alum from 1996-97. The department is also soon welcoming the Foundation's long-term partner, **Tapio Hokkanen** from the University of Eastern Finland, as its Finnish language lecturer.

To date, UW has hosted nine Finnish FLTA grantees and provided them with remarkable professional and life experiences. "It was a privilege to study and teach at a university like UW," says **Eveliina Suuniitty** who was an FLTA grantee at the University of Washington during the academic year 2021-22. "This experience gave me a lot of confidence in my future research and career. Fulbright year gives you confidence and encourages you to achieve your goals."

The Foundation is looking forward to working and partnering with U.S. universities on offering joint grant opportunities to Finnish students, scholars, and professionals in the U.S.

*Text: Karoliina Kokko*

University of Washington campus.

**Encourage your university to sponsor a grant**  
[www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us](http://www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us)

### FULBRIGHT FINNISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TEACHING ASSISTANT PROGRAM

In the Fulbright Finnish Language and Culture Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program, grantees assist in the teaching of Finnish language and culture at U.S. universities while also taking master's or doctoral-level courses or conducting research over one academic year.

[www.fulbright.fi/flta](http://www.fulbright.fi/flta)

# Roth-Thomson Awards to Sowa and Wang

Fulbright-Tampere University Graduate Awardee **Timothy Sowa** and Fulbright U.S. Student Program Awardee **Irina Wang** received the 2022 Roth-Thomson Awards.

The Roth-Thomson Award supports Timothy's project on Sustainable Digital Education and helps him to reach schools beyond his host city region, important for his Fulbright project. "Receiving the Roth-Thomson Award has allowed me to expand and deepen my engagement with technologists, educators, and organizational leaders concerned with addressing sustainable development. I am grateful not only for the additional opportunities this has afforded me at present, but also for the Foundation's recognition of the importance of this work today and in the future. Strengthening the relationship between social science and tech development is a necessity for delivering truly innovative and equitable solutions, and meaningful collaboration will remain essential for generations to come," Timothy says.

Timothy is a current Social Science master's student in the Sustainable Digital Life program at Tampere University. In the future, he is looking to work as an education technology consultant, helping schools build and use digital platforms with an ethical and sustainable perspective.

Irina Wang uses her Roth-Thomson Award to design and produce materials that facilitate

important conversations with and among herders about the reindeer husbandry operational environment. "I'm incredibly grateful that this award has helped advance the Arctic research of my CHARTER project collaborators. Most recently, we've prototyped a deck of cards used to facilitate workshops with herders and youth. Each design iteration helps gather insight about the state of reindeer husbandry, including herders' hopes for the future of that system," Irina says.

Irina Wang is a visiting research student at Aalto University and Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland where she works on her project to co-create design objects or "speculative artefacts" in close collaboration with Sámi reindeer herders about their perspectives on climate change and Arctic governance. Irina's future plans include using her design skills in the conception and implementation of climate policy—especially with regards to power disparities between federal/state authorities and the indigenous populations across the U.S.

The annual Roth-Thomson Award provides U.S. Fulbrighters in Finland the opportunity to enhance or expand their original Fulbright project. The Fulbright Finland Foundation has worked with the Lois Roth Foundation since 1991.

*Text: Karoliina Kokko*



**Timothy Sowa**



**Irina Wang**

[www.fulbright.fi/scholarships-to-study-finland/lois-roth-foundation-awards-us-student-fulbrighters](http://www.fulbright.fi/scholarships-to-study-finland/lois-roth-foundation-awards-us-student-fulbrighters)

## European Fulbright Leaders Discuss Cross-Border Collaboration



CEO **Terhi Mölsä** (left) chairing the Prague conference opening plenary on "Strength Through Cooperation: Meeting Today's Challenges."

Fulbright leaders from all across Europe and the United States convened in Prague for the first week of May 2023 to discuss current themes in higher education and international exchanges, and to develop further collaboration. The Fulbright Finland Foundation was represented

by its CEO **Terhi Mölsä** and Board Member **Susan Bridenstine**. Pan-European Fulbright conferences are rare opportunities, as the previous joint conference was held seven years ago. The 2016 conference was organized by the Fulbright Finland Foundation in Helsinki.



## Inclusive Science Diplomacy Discussed at the NAFSA 75th Conference in Washington

Text TERHI MÖLSÄ Photo MAIJA KETTUNEN

Science is a powerful force in solving global challenges, transcending the barriers between nations. Given the magnitude of the challenges of our time, however, a much broader engagement in science diplomacy is necessary than is currently the case. The input and participation of established scholars, early career scientists, and students alike, across all disciplines, is critical to help improve the outcomes.

The important and expanding role of science diplomacy was discussed at the 75th anniversary conference of NAFSA: Association of International Educators in Washington D.C. in June 2023 in a session titled Tackling Global Challenges: Science Diplomacy in Fulbright Exchanges, organized and chaired by the Fulbright Finland Foundation CEO **Terhi Mölsä**. Panelists included **Sarah Staton**, Deputy Director of the Office of Science and Technology Cooperation of the U.S. Department of State, **Mary Kirk**, Director of the Office of Academic Exchange Programs of the U.S. Department of State, and **Luiz Loureiro**, Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in Brazil.

The presenters highlighted current examples and case studies from the global Fulbright program that focus on science diplomacy, and discussed how institutions and international educators can more actively contribute to science diplomacy and use the existing as well as new opportunities to build

inclusion and tackle global challenges. The audience brainstormed additional ideas and suggestions for the global Fulbright program going forward. The panelists hope that the conference session serves as the beginning of a broader conversation about science diplomacy in Fulbright exchanges and helps to reach a significantly broader participation in the joint efforts in the future.

[www.fulbright.fi/tackling-global-challenges-science-diplomacy-fulbright-exchanges](http://www.fulbright.fi/tackling-global-challenges-science-diplomacy-fulbright-exchanges)

[www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org)



### FULBRIGHT ARCTIC INITIATIVE: CALL FOR LEAD SCHOLARS

The Fulbright Arctic Initiative (FAI) brings together a cohort of scholars, professionals, and applied researchers from all eight Arctic Council member states to tackle global challenges using a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach.

The third round of the FAI concluded in April 2023. During the NAFSA conference session on science diplomacy, the fourth round of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative (2024–25) was announced. The search for the lead scholar(s) for the new cohort is now open, and the request for proposals will close on July 10.

[www.iie.org/get-involved/procurement-subaward-and-consultant-opportunities/solicitations-for-goods-and-services](http://www.iie.org/get-involved/procurement-subaward-and-consultant-opportunities/solicitations-for-goods-and-services)

[www.fulbrightscholars.org/arctic](http://www.fulbrightscholars.org/arctic)

## Science Diplomacy and ‘Together Shaping the Future’ – A Personal Reflection



**Anita Wagner**  
2022–23 U.S. Fulbright –  
Tampere University Scholar  
Associate Professor of  
Population Medicine  
Harvard Medical School

This is an excerpt of a longer reflection. For the entire article, please see [www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/science-diplomacy-together-shaping-future](http://www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/science-diplomacy-together-shaping-future)

When I explored options for my Fulbright experience, the Fulbright Finland Foundation’s maxim ‘Together shaping the future’ and its 2021 News article referencing a national commitment to science diplomacy introduced Finland to me. Finland was the right place for me! Since I arrived, I have been reflecting on how the Foundation’s maxim and science diplomacy are connected, what they mean in action, and how they may apply to the work my colleagues and I do.

The terms ‘science diplomacy’ and ‘knowledge diplomacy’ were new to me. The more I learned, the more I was intrigued. Disconcerting questions arose though: If science diplomacy worked, shouldn’t we long have been able to stop the biggest threat to humanity, climate change; shouldn’t we have been able to avoid the “massive global failure” of the COVID-19 pandemic response? How could knowledge diplomacy facilitate the potential of medicines for the wellbeing of everyone?

Answers may lie in levels of interaction. Interactions start with individuals. When we engage with each other in small, trustworthy groups, we can courageously admit that we don’t know the answers to difficult questions and genuinely embark on learning together. In his conversation with members of the Fulbright Finland community, Finland’s Foreign Minister **Pekka Haavisto** described science diplomacy as “learning together”. It seems that answering vexing global questions – how to care for humanity in a pandemic, while we change the planet’s climate, at a time of mis- and disinformation in a polarized world – requires starting at the individual and small group levels. There we are more likely to be unencumbered by the economic and political interests that create competition at organizational and government levels.

The Fulbright Finland Foundation fosters exactly that, individual engagement to learn together, across boundaries of different disciplines, organizations, and communities. That’s what’s happening among the group of scholars that has formed in the

context of my Fulbright collaboration at Tampere University. Together we have designed and implemented the first course in Finland on pharmaceutical policy in which medical, global and public health, political economy, and other students participated and guests from Finnish government institutions, pharmaceutical industry and patient associations, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Harvard Medical School shared their perspectives. The nascent Pharmaceutical Policy Group at Tampere University is now developing proposals for collaborative research asking questions to which none of us knows the answers, seeking to inform pharmaceutical policy decisions in Finland and beyond.

Importantly, the Fulbright Finland Foundation also touches the next generation. A teacher at a local high school had reached out to the Foundation to invite Tampere-based Fulbright students and scholars to share their thoughts with her students. My task was to talk about a career in science. The teacher kindly met with me before the event to help me understand the students’ needs. Many of the young people were anxious about making “the right career choice” now, and if they did not make whatever that choice was supposed to be, their lives would be in jeopardy. We talked about contributing to making the world a better place from different starting points, that the past 3 years have dramatically shown us how quickly the world changes, that lives don’t usually follow a straight line, and that engaging across boundaries is key. “Have you made a difference?” a student asked. I said I have tried and will continue to do so, in my small sphere of influence.

I continue to wonder about the impacts of science diplomacy on mitigating the global crises we face. It is clear though that intentional human connections and transnational research must be a starting point. The Fulbright Finland community creates those connections across all kinds of boundaries and in this way facilitates “together shaping the future.” I am enormously grateful to be a part of it.

## Workforce Development in Finland and in the U.S.

In studying Finnish primary and lower-secondary schooling for a book I was writing on comparative education policy early in my academic career, I took a detour in 2010 to visit an upper-secondary vocational school in Lohja called Luksia. The late **Matti Saarinen**, a Social Democratic MP from Lohja I had come to know, told me that to understand Finnish education, I had to spend time at a school like Luksia, which he knew well as a former administrator there.

**Esa Karvinen**, the head of Luksia, hosted me for breakfast at the start of the day and then showed me one sparkling program after another, from cosmetology and culinary arts to auto maintenance, before returning to the cafeteria for lunch prepared by students in the culinary arts program. Karvinen afterward gave me a tour of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program and then drove me around Lohja to visit businesses where students were doing apprenticeships.

The final stop was a serpentine drive from the center of town. Karvinen didn't tell me where we were heading. He merely said that he was now going to show me something truly special. He pulled the car over at the edge of a flooded former stone quarry. For a minute, I thought this was the end. I had entered a chapter in an unwritten **Stieg Larsson** novel.

Karvinen beamed, "This is our diving program!" Karvinen explained that students dive in this former quarry 365 days a year and learn how to do underwater ship and pipeline repair and much more. The visibility is unparalleled, he added.

With that introduction to Finnish vocational education, I knew Saarinen was right. In particular, it was clear that all the attention to Finland's impressive results on the OECD's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) had obscured an equally if not more important story. The world has as much to learn from Finland's robust voca-



tional system as it does from the country's progressive pedagogical philosophy and rigorous approach to teacher preparation. I resolved after that visit to someday write a comparative analysis of vocational education. To that end, I applied in 2022 for a Fulbright to study the evolution of vocational education in Finland.

With the University of Turku as my base, I have been shadowing teachers at the Turku Vocational Institute as well as visiting similar programs in Raisio and Jyväskylä and interviewing apprenticeship counselors.

### Differences Between Systems

U.S. vocational education does not compare to the Finnish version. While 40 to 45 percent of students at the upper-secondary level in Finland attend vocational schools, only 5 percent do so in the U.S. While Finland spends 1 percent of GDP on job training, the U.S. spends only 0.1 percent.

The consequences of these distinctions for the U.S. are grim. So many students at the upper-secondary level in the U.S. miss out on working with their hands as well as their minds. In addition, while passage of a trillion-dollar infrastructure bill in 2021 marked an important victory for

### Samuel E. Abrams

2022–23 Fulbright–University of Turku Scholar  
Director, National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

[www.fulbright.fi/utu-scholar](http://www.fulbright.fi/utu-scholar)

In the photo: Samuel Abrams visiting Raseko, the vocational school in Raisio.

**Samuli Pykälämaa**, a student in mechanical engineering; **Maria Taipale**, Director, Raseko; **Samuel Abrams**; and **Terhi Alatalo**, Director of Education, Raseko

President **Joe Biden**, we don't have the skilled labor to meet the bill's goals to build solar and wind farms, expand broadband, and upgrade mass transit. More fundamentally, without a strong vocational school system, we don't have the foundation for a healthy middle class.

Replicating the Finnish model, however, represents a daunting task because the success of the system has as much to do with the country's social contract as it does with teaching methods and facilities. The wage and benefit penalties for someone in the U.S. with a diploma in auto maintenance or culinary arts, for example, can be severe. Not so in Finland. Because of income compression, the salary of a garage mechanic or baker will not, as in the U.S., be dwarfed by that of a doctor, lawyer, or engineer. Because of everyday equity, the garage mechanic or baker will not, as in the U.S., have to worry about maternity/paternity leave, solid health-care

coverage, affordable daycare, paid vacation, and decent retirement funding.

The challenge to improving vocational education in the U.S. is accordingly steep. Conceding that is the necessary first step to making progress.

The world has as much to learn from Finland's robust vocational system as it does from the country's progressive pedagogical philosophy and rigorous approach to teacher preparation.

## Reimagining Democracy and Expertise as Allies

**A** tension between popular will and expert knowledge has always colored decision-making in modern democracies. The growing urgency of the planetary ecological crisis and the lessons from the pandemic years highlight the need for new, conciliatory thinking about the relationship between democratic principles and expertise. During my grant period at Cornell University's Department of Government in the fall 2022, I dove into these questions.

Events of the recent years have provided ample evidence of the ways in which expertise and democracy can come into conflict. Many worry that the authority of scientists and experts is ignored in public debate, while others are concerned about the technocratic overreach of expertise. Both dangers are real. The question then becomes, how do we preserve a space for political debate and disagreement under an urgent need to "base policies on science"? Questions like this cannot be answered by means of empirical knowledge alone. Part of the problem is that expertise plays hardly any role in the conceptual frameworks through which we perceive democracy.

Thus, during my grant period, my research sought to articulate a properly democratic notion of expertise in politics. I was fortunate to tackle these problems in dialogue with amazing scholars of democracy. Cornell, located in the small city of Ithaca in central New York, hosts a vivid, inclusive,

and multidisciplinary academic community that is ideal for developing new ideas. I also had the opportunity to present my work-in-progress to audiences in Chicago, Stony Brook in Long Island, and Helena, Montana. Not only professional input, but also the cultural insights gained in such events, were invaluable for taking a fresh look at these problems.

For a democratic politics addressing global challenges, expert knowledge can be seen as an infrastructure – an "enabling constraint" that facilitates and stimulates multisided debate. The precise form taken by such infrastructures must be adapted to local political cultures. The same shoe does not fit Finland and the U.S. Across different contexts, however, it is helpful to acknowledge that facts do not speak for themselves, and solutions to global challenges are hardly ever neutral. Democratic debate is not an optional nicety, but the very compass that helps us take our bearings in complex global and planetary realities. At the same time, the questions debated by the public are always mediated by expertise.

Of course, being a Fulbrighter is an experience that extends beyond the narrow domain of one's disciplinary community. From diplomatic events at the Finnish consulate in New York to Fulbright get-togethers in Ithaca and New York, Fulbright opens a door to a broad network of scholars, students, and alumni. As a result, I came home much richer in thoughts and experiences, a cherished resource for years to come.



**Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen**  
2022-23 ASLA-Fulbright  
Senior Scholar  
Cornell University

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senior-scholar](http://www.fulbright.fi/senior-scholar)



## Managing Long-Term and Equitable Reassignment of Climate-Driven Refugees

According to the United Nations, 89.3 million people were displaced in 2021 due to conflicts and fleeing persecution, often over short distances. However, a much larger crisis is looming due to the effects of climate change. As many as 1 billion climate refugees will be on the move by 2050 according to the UN. Successful scenarios of global warming appear to be unlikely based on current trends, therefore planning for more dire scenarios is vital.

The Fulbright Finland Foundation's Seeking Solutions for Global Challenges award allows studying the intersection of migration and climate change, and this award has enabled my team from the University of Oklahoma to join forces with Aalto University in taking a systems engineering approach to think about this problem of global importance.

In particular, we are studying how to plan for such a climate-driven displacement, which has some interesting characteristics from a modeling perspective.

These characteristics include decades-long planning horizons, dynamics and uncertainty in estimates of climate refugee demand and host location capacity, multiple decision-makers with varying resource levels, and considerations for well-being and dignity for those in transit, among others.

### Beginning of a Long-Term Collaboration

During my time at Aalto University working with an internationally recognized researcher in risk and decision analysis, Professor **Ahti Salo**, we have

developed an initial model to optimize how to plan for resettling individuals from heterogeneous populations while capturing some of these unique characteristics. This project is driven by doctoral candidate **Buket Cilali** with the support of Professor **Andrés González**, both of whom, along with me, are in the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Oklahoma.

My five-month stay in Finland, however fruitful on its own, is just the beginning of a long-term collaboration and reciprocal visits between Norman, Oklahoma and Espoo, Finland. We have plans for future work for decision-making for climate-driven resettlement, including new methods to model long-term and exogenous uncertainty and more effectively addressing the dynamics of such a decision problem. And we intend to explore other important impact applications in modeling the adverse effects of disinformation on decision problems and other issues dealing with critical infrastructure protection.

I don't have enough superlatives to describe my experience in Finland. From my collaboration with Prof. Salo and others at Aalto University, to my engagement with Fulbright Finland staff and other Fulbrighters, to my interactions with the people, nature, institutions, and traditions of Finland, my time in Helsinki, Espoo, and greater Finland has been incredible. I recommend applying to the Seeking Solutions to Global Challenges Program and Fulbright Finland only to those interested in a life-changing (and hopefully life-long) experience.

### Kash Barker

2022-23 Seeking Solutions for Global Challenges Award  
Aalto University

[www.fulbright.fi/seeking-solutions-global-challenges-award](http://www.fulbright.fi/seeking-solutions-global-challenges-award)

# Learning about Refugee Education and Welcoming Communities

Refugee education is a small but growing research field in Finland. Finnish schools have a strong and well-meaning inclusive ethos, and some argue that students should not be singled out because of their background, for example, because they are refugees. Refugee issues are rather new to many Finnish schools, but the situation is changing. The prolonged conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran continue to force people to migrate, and some flee to Finland. Moreover, the war in Ukraine brought almost 50 000 new forced migrants to Finland just last year. So, we need to know more about the lives of refugees, education being a crucial part of this.

My Fulbright year at Harvard University gave me an opportunity to immerse myself in this topic. I was invited to join my host Professor **Sarah Dryden-Peterson's** research group REACH (Research, Education, and Action for Refugees Around the World) in which all researchers focus on refugee education. Via Sarah and others in this group, I got to visit schools, co-analyze existing data, co-teach, and join writing projects with my new American colleagues.

Fulbright's Outreach program gave me an opportunity to see a completely different part of the country as Virginia Tech University and the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership invited me for a week-long visit to meet students, researchers, and



practitioners in Virginia. My host Dr. **Iuliia Hoban** ensured the trip was engaging and fruitful, and that I had time to also explore the Appalachian Mountains.

## Learning a Little Bit of Everything

Former Harvard President **Abbott Lawrence Lowell** said that “A well-educated man (sic) must know a little bit of everything and one thing well.” I agree, and being at Harvard, I have decided to follow this advice. I am just returning from a public lecture about the ecological problems of the Mexican beer industry. I have heard **Martin Luther King III's** speech about racism and human rights in the contemporary USA, and the President of the European Parliament **Roberta Metsola** on the role of the EU and the USA in bringing peace to the world.

My advice for future Fulbrighters is not to limit yourself only to what you planned to achieve during your fellowship. Have an open mind and learn about things that have nothing to do with your research or study! This is in line with Fulbright's aim of promoting a wider exchange of knowledge and will make your time in the U.S. memorable.

**Mervi Kaukko** (right) with her host Professor **Sarah Dryden-Peterson**.

**Mervi Kaukko**  
2022-23 ASLA-Fulbright  
Senior Scholar  
Harvard University

[www.fulbright.fi/senior-scholar](http://www.fulbright.fi/senior-scholar)

## Fulbright with a family?

Read Mervi's experiences from having her husband and four children with her in the U.S.

[www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/learning-about-refugee-education-and-welcoming-communities](http://www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/learning-about-refugee-education-and-welcoming-communities)

# Building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education

I have been fortunate to be a Fulbright Scholar to Finland at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences on several occasions.

This experience as a Fulbrighter has allowed me to help fulfill the long-term goals of a Fulbright award, especially in creating mutual understanding and cooperation among nations. In spring 2022, I was able to initiate the first study-abroad program between the University of Indiana at Indianapolis (IUI) and Finland. At the same time, I received a U.S. Embassy Small Grant to organize a two-day seminar between my university and Haaga-Helia. The seminar was based on the theme of “Building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education.”

It was intended for students, staff, and faculty of all institutions of higher education and was held in May 2023 on the Haaga-Helia campus.

The various topics included how to involve students in designing a gender equity plan, creating a safe learning environment, DEI in language, among other things. The grant also brought to Finland six additional IUI faculty and students who took part in the seminar, and I also involved my study-abroad students who were in Finland at that time. I consider all this collaborative activity as a continuum of my time spent in Finland as a Fulbrighter!



**William Helling**  
2013, 2020, 2022 Fulbright-Haaga-Helia Scholar

[www.fulbright.fi/haaga-helia-scholar](http://www.fulbright.fi/haaga-helia-scholar)

YLE's Chief U.S. Correspondent Iida Tikka talks about her Fulbright journey from Moscow to Georgetown, Washington D.C., her belief in journalism's role in upholding truth and democracy, and her own personal perspective on the U.S. through both Fulbright and family.



# A Responsibility to Tell the Truth

Text LOUISA GAIRN Photo JOUNI SOIKKELI

## Iida Tikka

2018–19 ASLA-Fulbright Graduate Grant  
2019–20 Fulbright Finland Renewal Grant  
Georgetown University

[www.fulbright.fi/fin-graduate](http://www.fulbright.fi/fin-graduate)

[www.fulbright.fi/grant-programs-to-us/fulbright-finland-renewal-grant](http://www.fulbright.fi/grant-programs-to-us/fulbright-finland-renewal-grant)

Iida Tikka was clear about her professional vocation at a very young age – “I decided when I was 12 that I wanted to be a journalist,” she says, but she couldn’t imagine then where that path would eventually lead her. From journalism student in Tampere to Russian correspondent in Moscow, and from Fulbright scholar at Georgetown to YLE’s Chief U.S. Correspondent based in Washington, Iida remains motivated above all by the responsibility of journalists to tell the truth and help to make a better world.

“I feel that my purpose is to show that different human experiences are linked together in this inseparable way. One person’s fate somewhere, even on the other side of the world, is connected to our fate. That seems very obvious right now when you think about the big topics of our time, like climate

change. The work is never finished, it’s not done by one person, but by hundreds and thousands of journalists around the world all the time. And I see myself as one part of this giant machine that is trying to remind people about those connections.”

## From Finland to Russia, and from Moscow to Georgetown

Iida made the unusual choice to learn Russian at school even before she started studying English, and first visited Moscow when she was in high school. “I knew I wanted to live there, because Moscow is such a fascinating city.”

During her undergraduate journalism degree, she attended Moscow’s Mgimo University as an exchange student. On completing her studies, she stayed on in the Russian capital as Russian correspondent for

Finnish commercial broadcaster MTV and the Finnish News Agency STT. Her experiences, witnessing at first hand Russia's moves towards war and invasion of Crimea in 2014, motivated her to deepen her knowledge through a security studies master's degree.

"While I was in eastern Ukraine, I realized that the one thing I need to understand if I'm going to cover Russia is war, because it was so clear that it was going to go on for a long time, and was something that was so clearly going to shape the relationship between Russia and Europe in the future."

"At that time, I was still hoping to work as a Moscow correspondent for most of my career or at least as a Russia-specialized journalist. I knew that I wanted to study security, and if there's one place you want to study international security, it's the U.S. It dominates the global security system and is such a deciding actor in most of the world's conflicts and security issues."

For Iida, the choice was clear: Georgetown in Washington D.C., which teaches one of the world's best international security master's programs. Iida secured a Fulbright scholarship which enabled her to join the prestigious program in 2018, specializing in energy security.

### **A Fulbright Journey with a 50-year History**

"My first connection with the U.S. goes way beyond even my lifetime," Iida says. Iida's grandparents were in touch with an American family who had Finnish roots, and the two families enabled their children to visit each other's countries, and develop life-long friendships in the process.

"We consider one another family. Ken is my American grandfather, and his kids who visited Finland as teenagers are now my American aunts and uncles." Iida and her siblings spent summers in the U.S., while their American "cousins" came to spend summers in Finland. Iida celebrates Thanksgiving and the 4th of July with her loved ones in Minnesota. "We all get along and love each other. It's been almost 50 years that our families have been connected."

Some of those American aunts and uncles had directly benefited from Fulbright themselves, coming to Finland to study with Fulbright scholarships a generation previously.

"Fulbright was what I thought of first," Iida says. In addition to financial support, the Fulbright Finland Foundation helped her navigate the U.S. university system and application procedures. "For a Finnish person, the U.S. system is very new. You need to learn how to write your application letter in a way that you don't humble yourself too much. You need to show off a little so that you can actually get into the university!"

After finishing her studies in 2020, right in the middle of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Iida began work as U.S. correspondent for the Finnish public broadcaster YLE that August, just before the 2020 election.

### **Bringing Knowledge Back Home Through Journalism**

"My Fulbright journey has been very connected to this war that is still ongoing and is now defining so much of my work here."

After studying at Georgetown, and for the first time in her life, Iida wondered for a moment whether she could pursue an alternative career to journalism. "I could see all the different possibilities opened by my degree. Some of my classmates are now diplomats, some of them work at the Pentagon. One of my really close friends is an expert in right wing radicalism in the U.S. They went to all these different fields, and I could have also gone into something else as well."

**My purpose is to show that different human experiences are linked together in this inseparable way. One person's fate somewhere, even on the other side of the world, is connected to our fate.**

However, Iida saw her path clearly. "I did the master's so that I could be a better journalist. So here I am, and I'm sure I will continue in journalism."

"I like to think that I embody exactly what the Fulbright is meant for. My job is literally to inform the public, trying to create deeper knowledge of issues that are of importance for Finnish voters, especially in security issues. I've been here as a reporter while Finland had this quick turn towards NATO and so on. That was something I specialized in my studies in international security - and then here I am reporting on it."

Iida explains that much of her journalistic work focuses on the U.S.'s role in international security, regarding the war in Ukraine and also what that means for the NATO security structure. "I report on what it would mean for Finland. So all of my knowledge that I gained in Georgetown and all of my understanding of how the American security apparatus thinks and acts has been directly put in use for the Finnish public."

"So, even though I haven't returned to Finland, I feel that I have brought my knowledge back to Finland in the way that Fulbright wishes returning students do."

### **A Responsibility to Tell the Truth**

"I'm a very value-driven person as a whole. I believe in justice. I believe in freedom of speech. I believe that individual rights need to be continuously protected. I feel that right now it needs to be said that democracy is under attack around the world, that freedom of speech is under attack. We live in a time of continuous change in the communications sphere," Iida says.

In a time of "fake news," manipulation, and misinformation, how does Iida see her role as a journalist?

“We have a responsibility to tell the truth as journalists, even when it feels almost uncomfortable to say it out loud. And one of those things that seems uncomfortable to say out loud is that the U.S. actually went through a coup attempt in 2021, that there was a president who tried to stay in power even after losing an election. That, to me, has been a defining event of my time as a U.S. correspondent, which began with an election that still, according to one ex-president, isn’t resolved.”

Currently, Iida is reporting on political maneuvers in Washington that could alter the federal election system. “It doesn’t seem likely, but if the Supreme Court rules one way, then different States would have quite free hands to decide how to run federal elections, which would mean there wouldn’t be similar voting rights for different Americans around the country, which is a huge deal.”

However, it’s a challenge to cover such “bureaucratic” stories in a way that will keep people engaged, Iida says. “It’s a really tough job right now, to cover something so complex and so alarming at the same time, in a way that people will pay attention to in the middle of a war in Europe and the climate crisis that’s getting more and more urgent. Food prices

are soaring everywhere, and people have other things to think about than the attack against democracy in the U.S.”

The public on both sides of the Atlantic can experience news fatigue, Iida says. “But it’s my responsibility to report what is happening in those attacks against the very basic institutions that made democracy successful so far.”

### A Unique Perspective on the U.S. and Washington

In her job, Iida covers all kinds of U.S. news, from economy and politics to society and culture. “I work in multiple mediums. I can be on air commenting on the news, but I also do video stories, radio stories, podcasts, web stories, you name it. We try to cover stories that are also wanted by Finnish audiences – for example, today I’m doing a story about tipping. And then tomorrow I might be reporting on the debt ceiling crisis. It changes every day, which is great. It keeps the job very interesting and I travel a lot.”

Iida estimates she has visited at least half of the states in the U.S. “I’ve been to places where I don’t think most Americans go as tourists. I feel that I do have this sense of the country that you can develop as an outsider with the privilege of

having reasons to travel to the most random places.”

“Covering the U.S. is so interesting because it is such a diverse country with so many different opinions, and with still this feeling of individual actions mattering. When I was working as a Moscow correspondent, it got hard at one point to do the stories when so many Russians were losing hope of their actions mattering because the system is so crushing and so repressive. There was this cynicism about how much can change, especially among regular Russians.”

“While there is some cynicism in the U.S. too, it’s to a much lesser extent. People here know their agency and they want to change things. They are active in their communities or in politics. I feel there’s a certain core element to American thinking, that my actions also matter.”

“What I love about living in D.C. is that it’s a concentration of people who are extremely conscious of their agency in the world, they take it seriously and they work towards whatever their aim is. That’s what makes this city so amazing intellectually. I would say it feeds my brain so much, and that’s why I love being here. And I’m really lucky that Fulbright brought me here.”

## Fulbright Specialist Visit Sparks Transatlantic Collaboration in Health Sciences



Fulbright Specialist **Joni Tornwall** from The Ohio State University spent three weeks at The Health Sciences Unit of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Tampere University. Reflecting on her experience, Tornwall stated that the Fulbright Specialist Program has been one of the best things she has ever done in her professional career.

Inspired by her colleagues in nursing science at Tampere University, Tornwall gained fresh perspectives on the scholarship of teaching and learning, and found new ways of viewing academic peer review and feedback on scholarly writing through an ethical lens.

During her visit, Joni Tornwall gave lectures and interactive workshops in effective dissemination efforts including publication, presentations, and media outreach in order to expand the expertise of faculty and students. She also provided consultation on leadership skill development to augment the administrator team’s skill set. Her host, professor **Marja Kaunonen**, shared that the visit enhanced teaching collaboration, and improved the visibility of the research program.

Collaborations between the two universities are scheduled to continue with research visits.

*Text: Heidi Tiainen*

**Joni Tornwall** (front row on the right) together with a group of doctoral level nursing science students she worked with for an interactive session.

**The Fulbright Specialist program** enables Finnish host institutions to invite U.S. experts to Finland to begin or continue building on existing collaborations.

[www.fulbright.fi/specialist](http://www.fulbright.fi/specialist)



# The Power of Simple Connections

## Visiting Schools in Lapland with the Fulbright Speaker Program

*Through the Fulbright Speaker Program, this year's U.S. Fulbright grantees have reached nearly 1 000 students, teachers, and other professionals from Helsinki all the way to Äkäslompola in Lapland. While the program supports internationalization at Finnish institutions, it also gives the grantees an opportunity to visit cities all over Finland and network more broadly, making the grant experience even richer.*

**D**uring my grant period to Finland, I would never again be as far north as Kolari, Lapland. I had been invited for a home stay and a series of school visits by Fulbright alum and fellow teacher, **Anu Aarnio**. Anu reminded me of Senator Fulbright's assertion that "educational exchange turns nations into people" so I was excited to visit two local primary schools: Ylläsjärven koulu and Äkäslompolon koulu, each one containing 70–100 students, aged 6 to 12 years old.

The students here are seen and known in a way many students in the U.S. are not. The small class sizes and "looping" (meaning one teacher stays with a single group of students through multiple grades) means the care and depth of compassion these teachers express for their students was visible even through the language barrier. At Ylläsjärvi I watched a 2nd grade boy take a math test. He was the last one remaining in class, and his scrunched face showed the hard work he was spending on those questions. His teacher walked over and crouched beside him, whispered words of encouragement, and asked if he wanted to take a short break. He nodded, left the

room, and was back less than a minute later ready to jump back in to work through each remaining problem.

Many of the students at both schools had never met anyone from the U.S. before, and I was constantly reminded that to be a Fulbrighter means you live as an ambassador and a conduit, ready to share your story and to listen, receive, and hold close the stories of others.

During my two-day visit, I shared a presentation on "Life in the U.S." with four different groups. These Finnish primary students listened to me speak for a few minutes, took out their cell phones, and typed feverishly into Google Translate. Their hands shot up seconds later with questions like "What is your favorite color?" and "Do you have a favorite animal?"

Of all the memories I will carry with me, the strongest ones point to the resonance and power of the simple connections that, indeed, turn nations into people.

**Mikayla Patella-Buckley**  
2022-23 Fulbright  
Distinguished Award in  
Teaching Research  
University of Jyväskylä

[www.fulbright.fi/us-teacher](http://www.fulbright.fi/us-teacher)

### THE FULBRIGHT SPEAKER PROGRAM

The Fulbright Speaker program enables Finnish schools and other institutions to invite current U.S. students, scholars, and teachers for short visits to talk about their projects or, for example, U.S. school life or cultural aspects.

Learn more about the Fulbright Speaker Program and invite a grantee to your institution [www.fulbright.fi/speaker-program](http://www.fulbright.fi/speaker-program).

# U.S. Outreach Ambassadors in Action

Text KAROLIINA KOKKO



In his role as a Fulbright bridge builder and Outreach Ambassador, 2022-23 Fulbright-LUT University Graduate Awardee **Joe Zinno** connected his alma mater, Villanova University, the Fulbright Finland Foundation, and his current institution LUT University. This led to a two-day program for connection building, Finnish university training, and partnership opportunity exploration.

The program began with visits to LUT Lappeenranta and Lahti campuses. During the Lappeenranta campus tour led by a current Fulbright-LUT University Graduate Awardee **Peter Amicucci**, the Villanova University representatives, Director **Catherine Stecyk** and Assistant Director **Kelsey Fenner**, met with the university faculty, current Fulbright U.S. students at LUT as well as Head of International Student Recruitment **Otto Moilanen**, and Professor and the Foundation's Board member **Kirsimarja Blomqvist**.

The Lahti Campus tour introduced the guests to the remarkable study facilities and programs

provided at the joint campus of LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

## Discussing Trends in U.S. Higher Education

Additionally, together with Villanova University, the Foundation organized a hybrid training event "Understanding the U.S. Higher Education System and Its Current Trends".

The participants learned about the U.S. post-secondary education system in its diversity and gained an understanding of the university accreditation practices as well as how U.S. institutions compare to one another. Joe Zinno shared his perspective as a student in a U.S. university for the Finnish audience.

The participants and speakers found many similarities between the current topics discussed at Finnish and U.S. institutions, such as AI use by students and applicants as well as multimodality and the post-COVID demand for hybrid teaching challenging the everyday work of faculty and staff.

Director **Catherine Stecyk** and Assistant Director **Kelsey Fenner** from Villanova University's Research and Fellowships Unit visited Finland in early May 2023 hosted by the Foundation. Fulbright grantees **Peter Amicucci** (second from right) and **Joe Zinno** gave a tour of the LUT Lappeenranta campus.

[www.fulbright.fi/about-us/events/understanding-us-higher-education-system-and-its-current-trends](http://www.fulbright.fi/about-us/events/understanding-us-higher-education-system-and-its-current-trends)



# Go Where You Can Make a Difference

Text LOUISA GAIN

Professor **Jim Fairweather** has dedicated his professional life to improving higher education. He has worked for many years researching and teaching higher education administration at Michigan State University.

In 2003, a Fulbright scholarship took him to the University of Tampere's Department of Administrative Science, where he worked alongside Finnish colleagues to develop new graduate programs in higher education administration. Jim's contribution was key to establishing a new unit within the university, the Higher Education Group, in addition to expanding new doctoral and master's programs for higher education professionals.

Since then, Jim has returned to Tampere almost every year to keep the collaboration going, while enabling additional exchanges between researchers

and students of the two institutions along the way. Today, he continues his work as Professor Emeritus of Higher and Adult Education, remaining active in research and particularly in teaching, splitting his time between Michigan State and Finland, where he continues to collaborate with Tampere and Fulbright Finland Foundation on graduate teaching.

The key to a successful Fulbright experience is to go where you are needed, Jim advises.

"This was something where I could really make a contribution. It was something they needed – and it was something I enjoyed and it helped me to grow as well. I've had sabbaticals in the past where people made room for me, and we were friends, but they didn't really need me there. I think there was a need in Finland – and that's something that's lasted."



**Jim Fairweather**  
2003-04 Core Fulbright  
U.S. Scholar  
Tampere University

This is an excerpt of a larger article. Read the entire interview at [www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/go-where-you-can-make-difference](http://www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/go-where-you-can-make-difference)



## Engaging Alumni on Strategic Themes

Text MIRKA MCINTIRE Photos MAIJA KETTUNEN

**T** rue to its strategic priorities, during the past year the Foundation has engaged alumni around Finland through events focusing on topics of current and global importance, such as transatlantic security and U.S.-Finnish relations, entrepreneurship, education, and climate change. Organized in collaboration with the Foundation's partners, these events have offered the alumni an opportunity to convene around timely themes while broadening their professional networks.

With Russia's war on Ukraine and Finland's preparations for the NATO membership going on, there was an increased interest in the topic of Finnish-U.S. Bilateral Relations and Transatlantic Security. An expert briefing in Espoo (photo on top) featured U.S. Ambassador **Douglas Hickey**, **Jari Sinkari**, Ambassador and Director General of the Department for the Americas and Asia, from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, and **Joel Linnainmäki**, Special Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The briefing and the insightful dialogue that followed brought together alumni from 12 different U.S.-Finnish exchange programs, many of whom with expertise in international security.

Another panel discussion, hosted at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, focused on entrepreneurship, and featured alumni, who either were entrepreneurs themselves, researching entrepreneurship, or had participated in a student leaders' program in the U.S. with a focus on Entrepreneurship and Economic Development. The event sparked a lively discussion among alumni representing different fields and professions.

Sustainability is explicitly a part of the Foundation's strategic focus and hence also represented in its grant program themes. A site visit and a *Transat-*



*lantic Workshop on Combating Climate Change* hosted by Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra engaged U.S. and Finnish alumni to rethink their daily work through the lens of environmental and societal sustainability and prompted future collaboration on this important topic.

The International Education Week was kicked off by bringing together current and future U.S. and Finnish alumni in Joensuu at the Internationalization Days of Finnish Schools Seminar to facilitate transatlantic classroom to classroom collaboration and to exchange good practices in education and teacher training.

In addition to the larger events, the Foundation has convened smaller, ad hoc alumni get-togethers for networking purposes. All events have created opportunities for multidisciplinary U.S.-Finnish alumni engagement and sharing of expertise, innovations, and good practices related to timely themes.

This past year's events were co-funded by a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Finland.

### Are you an alum of the Foundation?

Make sure the Foundation has your updated contact information and information about your current interests so that you will not miss out on these opportunities!

## Professional Confidence and Inspiration from the Alumni Mentorship Program

The ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association's newest initiative, the mentorship program pilot, brought together mentoring couples from the fields of Engineering to Social Sciences in 2022-23.

Mentee **Laura Andersson**, 2020-22 Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders from Europe on Civic Engagement Program alumna, found the mentorship program rewarding: "As someone who is transitioning from studies to working life, I feel I have gained a lot from this rewarding, interdisciplinary program," Laura says. "During the year, I was able to share ideas and experiences, get tools for personal reflection and practical tips for working life, as well as insights that I will certainly work on and use for a long time to come. I now go forward with more confidence in my own skills and a more inspired spirit," she continues.

Professor **Emil Kurvinen** from the University of Oulu, who was a Fulbright-Technology Industries of Finland grantee in 2014-15, joined the program as a mentor. He had been a mentee earlier in his life

and wanted to give back. "I have clearly benefited from mentoring in my own career path, which has been very successful. As a mentor in the ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association's mentoring program, I was able to share and inspire ideas based on my own experiences. I felt that with the help of mentoring, I was able to bring to the mentee objectivity and encourage wider thinking, helping them to take a broader spectrum of matters into account when making decisions on their own future," Emil says.

In addition to mentoring pairs' one-on-one meetings, the program included facilitated discussions, such as the kick-off event, mid-year meeting, and end-of-program meeting. The mentorship program was provided for the members of the ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association as a membership benefit and the pilot was successfully concluded in May 2023. The Association Board is very happy about the new initiative and now has all the necessary tools designed and available for a possible next round of the mentorship program.

*Text: Karoliina Kokko*

**Are you interested in gaining experience in association leadership and governance?**

Take an active role. Start by becoming a member of the ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association.

[www.fulbright.fi/asla-fulbright-alumni-association/join-association](http://www.fulbright.fi/asla-fulbright-alumni-association/join-association)

The Association has recently selected their new Board of Directors

[www.fulbright.fi/asla-fulbright-alumni-association-board](http://www.fulbright.fi/asla-fulbright-alumni-association-board)



## ALUMNI GET-TOGETHER IN D.C.

The Foundation organizes alumni events or get-togethers every time a team member visits the U.S.

In May 2023, Friends of Fulbright Finland were hosted by Science and Education Counselor **Petri Koikkalainen** and Cultural Counselor and Head of Cultural Affairs **Suvi Järvelä-Hagström** for a conversation over coffee at the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C.

The event brought together alumni from multiple grant years and programs, and provided an opportunity to deliberate on best practices and how to iterate improvements as well as to talk about new collaboration opportunities.



The alumni get-together included a tour of the Embassy premises, including the famous diplomatic sauna.

[www.fulbright.fi/friends-fulbright-finland/friends-fulbright-finland-events](http://www.fulbright.fi/friends-fulbright-finland/friends-fulbright-finland-events)

Text and photos: Maija Kettunen



## Alumni Grants Enable Return Visits

Text EMILIA HOLOPAINEN

**B**enjamin Lear, Thomas Hatch, and Anne Yoncha each received a Friends of Fulbright Finland Alumni Enrichment Award to return to Finland to continue their collaborations with local colleagues.

Benjamin Lear returned for two months in the Spring 2023 to continue the research he conducted with Professor **Terttu Hukka** at Tampere University during his initial Fulbright visit in 2019–20. “I will be using computers to simulate the behavior of nanoparticles in water,” he explains.

“Nanoparticles are chemical constructs that are many times smaller than individual cells and are present everywhere in our environment. Though they are small, they can have significant impacts on the climate and our health. The particular focus of my work is on understanding how nanoparticles affect the freezing of small water droplets; a crucial step in cloud formation. Improved understanding of cloud formation will improve our predictions of the emerging climate change,” Benjamin says.

Anne Yoncha builds on her original Fulbright project started in Finland in the fall 2019. While in Finland in 2019–20, she worked with scientists at the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) to take hyperspectral images of two soil core samples. “The hyperspectral data ‘cube’ gives us information on water content and cell structure based on wavelengths we are unable to see with the naked eye or a regular photograph. I translated these wavelengths into a graphic score in the tradition of composers **John Cage** and **Cathy Berberian**,” Anne explains.

Composers **Hannah Selin** (Temple University, Philadelphia PA) and **Risto Laitinen** (Tuira Chamber Choir director, Oulu, Finland) transposed the graphic score into traditional vocal notation. The final performance will be antiphonal – with half the vocalists performing one musical track based on restored soil data and standing on a tract of land restored with peat ash; and half the vocalists performing the other musical part based on untreated soil data, on an untreated tract of land. “The award has allowed me to expand our art-science collaboration. My in-person work in Finland was cut short by COVID-19 in the spring 2020, and returning to the project now, I have additional collaborators and ideas for how to translate our work about peatland in Finland to other peatland ecosystems in the U.S. It has also been a dream of mine to work with a large musical ensemble, so thanks to Friends of Fulbright Finland for making this possible!” Anne says.

Thomas Hatch visited Finland already in 2009 and 2014 with short-term Fulbright Finland grants. Now, with the alumni award, he came to Helsinki to document changes in educational policies and practices since the school closures of the COVID-19 pandemic in Finland and examine the relationship between these changes and the changes in practice being made in particularly innovative schools and educational programs. “The support of the Fulbright Finland Foundation and the Alumni Award has been essential in enabling me to develop and sustain relationships with my Finnish colleagues and to see how changes in the Finnish education system compare to those in other parts of the world,” Hatch says.

The Alumni Enrichment awardees stopped by the Fulbright Finland office during their return visits to Finland.

### Apply for the Friends of Fulbright Finland Alumni Enrichment Award

The call for applications for travel in 2024 opens in August with a deadline in late October.

[www.fulbright.fi/foff-award](http://www.fulbright.fi/foff-award)

### Donate to the Award Endowment

The grant is funded by the FoFF Alumni Enrichment Endowment, for which all funds have been received by personal donations from alumni and friends of the Fulbright Finland Foundation.

Each year there are more qualified applications submitted than the endowment is able to fund. Support the alumni program and help grow the endowment by donating!

[www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us/donate](http://www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us/donate)



Mary Anne Butler



John Donnellan



Julia Miller



Susanna Monseau



Leasa Weimer

## Welcome to New Alumni Council Members

The Friends of Fulbright Finland (FoFF) Alumni Council represents the Foundation alumni living in the U.S. by developing the FoFF alumni network and serving as an alumni advisory Council to the Foundation.

This year the Foundation welcomes five new Council members who started their 2-year term in May 2023: **Julia Miller**, 2018–19 U.S. Fulbright Student Program, Pennsylvania; **Leasa Weimer**, 2011–12 Fulbright–EDUFI Fellowship, Colorado; **Mary Anne Butler**, 2018–19 Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program, Connecticut; **John Donnellan**, 2017 and 2022 Fulbright Specialist Program, and 2019–20 Fulbright–Turku UAS Scholar Award, Pennsylvania; and **Susanna Monseau**, 2022–23 Fulbright–Turku UAS Scholar Award, New Jersey.

“I am honored to serve as a member of the FoFF Council and collaborate with other alumni to enhance the work of previous councils,” says Mary Anne Butler, who is currently the Superintendent of Stonington Public Schools in Stonington, Connecticut. “This is another opportunity to learn from Fulbright alumni and strengthen my own global perspective as I create a future-focused school district locally,” she concludes.

They join continuing Council members **Annette Jones**, **Bruce Blair**, and **Maedeh Pourrabi**, who serve on the Council until May 2024. Also, **Mike Loovis** continues in the FoFF Council as Special Projects Adviser.

The new council will get together in early fall to plan alumni activities and initiatives for the 2023–24 academic year.

### Friends of Fulbright Finland Alumni Council

[www.fulbright.fi/friends-fulbright-finland/friends-fulbright-finland-alumni-council](http://www.fulbright.fi/friends-fulbright-finland/friends-fulbright-finland-alumni-council)

Text: Emilia Holopainen

## FULBRIGHT FINLAND FOUNDATION / FULBRIGHT SUOMI -SÄÄTIÖ



Timo Korkeamäki

### Korkeamäki Elected Chair

Dr. **Timo Korkeamäki** and Dr. **Nelson Totah** have assumed new leadership roles within the Board of Directors of the Fulbright Finland Foundation. Korkeamäki has been elected Chair, having previously served as Vice-Chair of the Board. In this role he succeeds Dr. **Erika Holt** who continues as a member of the Board. Totah was elected Vice-Chair of the Board. The Foundation warmly welcomes the new Chair and Vice-Chair and conveys its gratitude to Dr. Erika Holt for her commitment and significant contribution during her term as the Chair.

[www.fulbright.fi/about-us/board-directors](http://www.fulbright.fi/about-us/board-directors)

### New Editorial Council

The Fulbright Finland News magazine has an Editorial Council that represents a selection of the Foundation’s key stakeholders, such as universities, universities of applied sciences, Finland’s missions in the U.S., Finnish and U.S. alumni networks, as well as private sector companies. With their experience and professional background, each of the Council members are in a unique position to advise the Foundation on how to develop the magazine to better serve its readership.

We are pleased to welcome the new Editorial Council members (see below)!

## FULBRIGHT FINLAND NEWS

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Terhi Mölsä **EDITORS** Maija Kettunen (Managing Editor), Bill Eaton **DESIGN AND LAYOUT** Tanja Mitchell, Grafee **EDITING OFFICE** Fulbright Finland Foundation, Hakaniemenranta 6, FI-00530 Helsinki, FINLAND **TEL.** +358 44 5535 286 **E-MAIL** [office@fulbright.fi](mailto:office@fulbright.fi) **ISSN** 2489-2149 (print) **ISSN** 2489-2157 (online) **PAPER** Scandia White 150 g/m<sup>2</sup> and 115 g/m<sup>2</sup> **PRINT CIRCULATION** 500 **PRINTED BY** PunaMusta Oy **ONLINE** [www.fulbright.fi/fulbright-finland-news-magazine](http://www.fulbright.fi/fulbright-finland-news-magazine)

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**THE FULBRIGHT FINLAND FOUNDATION** is an independent not-for-profit organization based in Helsinki, Finland.

Its purpose is to promote a wider exchange of knowledge and professional talents through educational contacts between Finland and the United States.

The Foundation collaborates with a range of government, foundation, university, and corporate partners on both sides of the Atlantic to design and manage study and research scholarships, leadership development programs, and internationalization services.

## Finland-America Educational Trust Fund

The Fulbright Finland Foundation is financially supported by the Finland-America Educational Trust Fund.

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**is to empower the minds that will find global solutions to tomorrow's challenges by fostering academic and professional expertise and excellence in leadership.**

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Currently on leave:  
Saara Martikainen

# Calendar



## September

15.9.

2024–25 Application Deadline:  
Fulbright U.S. Scholar Awards for  
Finland

25.9.

Fulbright Finland Foundation  
Board Meeting

## October

3.10.

2024–25 Application Deadline:  
Visiting Scholar and Mid-Career  
Professional Development  
Programs

6.–7.10.

American Voices Seminar,  
University of Turku

23.10.

2024–25 Application Deadline:  
Fulbright Finnish Language and  
Culture Teaching Assistant

31.10.

2024–25 Application Deadline:  
Friends of Fulbright Finland  
Alumni Enrichment Award

## November

23.–24.11.

Thanksgiving and Enrichment  
Program for U.S. Grantees,  
Helsinki

## June

21.6.

Fulbright Finland Foundation  
Board Meeting

## July

10.–28.7.

Fulbright Finland Office closed

## August

21.–24.8.

Arrival Orientation for U.S.  
Fulbright Grantees

23.8.

ASLA-Fulbright Alumni  
Association Welcome Event