



# The Asian Connection

## Fall 2011

### 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GASTON SIGUR MEMORIAL LECTURE WITH MANI SHANKAR AIYAR

Former Sigur Center Director Shawn McHale, Associate Director Deepa Ollapally, India's Ambassador to the U.S. Meera Shankar, and Member of Indian Parliament in the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) Mani Shankar Aiyar.

## Message from the Director

by Edward A. McCord



New Sigur Center Director Ed McCord moderating the May 9 "Taiwan and Evolving Cross Strait Relations" Conference in The Elliott School's City View Room.

I take great pleasure as the new Director of the Sigur Center to welcome in not only a new academic year but also a year in which the Sigur Center will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. In my own seventeen years at GW, I have witnessed the Sigur Center's remarkable growth in terms of course offerings in Asian Studies, student quality, affiliated faculty (now up to 95), public events (with over 60 events last year attended by over 3,000 people), and research productivity. The overall result has been the rising reputation of the Sigur Center not only as a regional but also as a national center for

research and education on Asia. None of this would have happened without the efforts of a series of outstanding Directors (Young C. Kim, David Shambaugh, Bruce Dickson, Kirk Larsen, and Shawn McHale), Associate Director Deepa Ollapally, and a long list of hardworking staff. It is this foundation of success that helps me to face the challenges of taking over the directorship with confidence and excitement. I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Emmanuel Teitelbaum as the Director of our academic program in Asian Studies. Professor Teitelbaum is an expert in the comparative politics of South Asia, with research focusing on areas such as the political economy of development and state-labor relations.

I am looking forward to a stimulating year of activities, and I hope to see many of you at our upcoming events.

Edward A. McCord

Director



### Farewell to Sigur Center Director Shawn McHale

This summer The Sigur Center bid farewell to five-year director, Dr. Shawn McHale. The Center collected appreciative notes and letters from GW faculty and staff and aggregated data on Shawn's accomplishments to present at an intimate going away dinner in July. Metrics under Dr. McHale include the following:

- 45 BA Asian Studies graduates
- 53 MA Asian Studies graduates
- 171 BA International Affairs (Asia concentration) graduates
- 35 MA International Affairs (Asia concentration) graduates
- 100 Student Asian Language, Research, and Internship Fellowships
- 59 Faculty Research Fellowships
- \$1,170,833 awarded for Student Fellowships
- \$237,421 awarded for Faculty Fellowships
- \$4.4 Million Raised from External and Internal Sources.

# Major Events

## Faculty Lecture Series

Last semester, the Sigur Center shifted focus to highlight some of our own faculty expertise. We hosted six faculty speakers focusing largely on China and Southeast Asia:



*Bob Shepherd answers a question for an audience member after his February 7 event*

February 7, 2011: *Tourism, Heritage, and Sacred Space in China* with **Bob Shepherd**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Honors, and International Affairs, GWU

February 15, 2011: *Justice and Journalism: Islam and Journalistic Values in Indonesia and Malaysia*, with **Janet Steele**, Associate Professor of Journalism at the School of Media and Public Affairs, GWU

February 18, 2011: *Popular Uprisings in Southeast Asia: Is there an Egypt or Tunisia in the Region?* with **Catharin Dalpino**, the Joan M. Warburg Professor of International Relations at Simmons College and Adjunct Professor, GWU



*Bruce Dickson – February 23, 2011*

February 23, 2011: *Updating the China Model: New Challenges for a New Decade* with **Bruce Dickson**: Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, GWU

March 9, 2011: *Remembering Indonesia's War of Independence: Identity, Politics, and Military History* with **Ronald Spector**: Professor of History and International Affairs, GWU



*Guests check in at the April 25 "Worldviews of Rising Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates" symposium.*



*Andrea Bertone – April 19, 2011*

April 19, 2011: *Transnational Advocacy Networks and Combating Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia* with **Andrea Bertone**, Professional Lecturer, GWU

## Taiwan Lecture and Conference Series

In Spring 2011, The Sigur Center continued its long-standing focus on Taiwan, hosting both a roundtable and a major conference on contemporary issues in cross-strait relations.

**May 9, 2011: Taiwan and Evolving Cross Strait Relations**



*Robert Sutter moderating Panel I – May 9, 2011*

**Panel I: Defense and Security Aspects** with **Robert Sutter**: Adjunct Professor of

International Affairs, GWU, **Colin Kao**: First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan, **Nancy Bernkopf Tucker**: Professor of History, Georgetown University, **Moderator: Bruce Dickson**: Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, GWU



*Shelley Rigger takes a question from the audience*

**Panel II: Domestic Determinants** with **Scott Kastner**: Associate Professor of International Relations, University of Maryland, **Shelley Rigger**: Brown Professor of Political Science, Davidson College, **Steven Phillips**: Director of Asian Studies and Professor of History, Towson University, **Moderator: Edward McCord**: Associate Professor of History and International Affairs, GWU

**July 7, 2011: Cross Strait Agreements: Legal, Political, and Strategic Implications**



*Su-po Kao – July 7, 2011*



*"Ongoing Formalization of Cross Strait Relations and Legal Implications"* by **Su-Po Kao**: Associate Professor of Shih Hsin University Department of Law, Visiting Scholar, Sigur Center for Asian Studies and The George Washington University School of Law

*"Cross Strait Agreements and Taiwan's Domestic Politics"* by **Jacques DeLisle**: Stephen A. Cozen Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania

*"US Perspectives on Evolving Cross Strait Rapprochement"* by **Patrick Cronin**: Senior Advisor and Senior Director, Asia-Pacific Security Program, Center for a New American Security

### Visiting Scholar Roundtables

The Visiting Scholar Roundtable series provides scholars housed at the Sigur Center with an opportunity to present their research and receive feedback from Asian Studies students and faculty at GW. Last semester four scholars participated in the roundtable discussions.

January 20, 2011: *The Impact of the American Welfare System on American Power and on China's Welfare Reform* with **Yabo Meng**, Research Fellow, China

February 8, 2011: *Is "Big Triangle" Still Strategic? China, the United States, and Russia's Triangle Relationship in the Post-Cold War Era* with **Gao Fei**, Fulbright Scholar and Associate Professor, China Foreign Affairs University



Yufang Fan – March 22, 2011

March 22, 2011: *The Impact of the Korean War on the PLA's Officer Education* with **Yufang Fan**, Associate Professor, National University of Defense Technology

April 5, 2011: *The Japan Peace for Vietnam Committee (Beheiren), American deserters, and the US response, 1967-1968* with **Masaki Hirata**, Fulbright Scholar and Associate Professor, Nagoya City University

### March 28, 2011: After the Earthquake & Tsunami: Japan's Nuclear, Economic, and Political Challenges

After the devastating earthquake and tsunami struck Japan this spring, The Sigur Center organized a faculty panel to discuss the multiple impacts of the disaster on Japan.



Dr. James Kilpatrick discussing nuclear threat of the Japan earthquake with Dr. Shawn McHale

*Analysis of the Nuclear Threat* by **Dr. Philippe Bardet**: Assistant Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, GWU

*Prospects for the Japanese and Regional Economies* by **Dr. James Kilpatrick**: Adjunct Professor of Economics and International Affairs, GWU

*Political Implications for the Japanese Government* by **Dr. Llewelyn Hughes**: Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, GWU

### May 13, 2011: Asian Studies Graduation Reception

After The Elliott School graduation ceremony, The Sigur Center invited graduates, friends, and families to join us for a casual reception with Asian food.



OAS Board Member Yu-chieh Chou with recent graduate Xiaoyu Zhu.



Inder Sud, Director, Master of Arts Program in International Affairs; Shawn McHale, Sigur Center Director; and Barbara Miller, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs enjoy The Sigur Center's spread of Asian food after participating in The Elliott School's graduation ceremony.



Asian Studies students relax and celebrate the recent graduation of their colleagues.



The Chung-wen Shih conference room filled with celebratory graduates, friends, family, faculty, and staff

# Affiliated Programs

## India Initiative

The Sigur Center ramped up its India Initiative this spring, bringing several prominent speakers to GW, traveling to India, and introducing a memorial lecture-concert in honor of Rabindranath Tagore.

### February 22, 2011: India in US-Asia Relations: A View from Washington

Presented by the GW Office of International Alumni Relations and the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, this alumni reception and faculty panel offered GW alumni in India a chance to re-connect with their alma mater.



*GW alumni socialize at the reception in New Delhi*

Dean Michael E. Brown and Dr. Deepa Ollapally, Associate Director of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies led a panel discussion at the picturesque Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi, India followed by a dinner reception.

### March 31, 2011: Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Lecture-Concert



*Debu Nayak and Sudeshna Basu performing a traditional Indian song*

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was an Indian poet, philosopher, academician, composer, visionary and much more. He wrote 12 novels, 3000 poems, 2025 songs, and innumerable short stories, essays, letters and plays. He was the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize in 1913.

The Sigur Center hosted a memorial concert featuring traditional Indian music in honor of the 150 years since Rabindranath Tagore's

birth. Featuring: Sudeshna Basu (Vocal and Harmonium), Debu Nayak (Tabla), Jeff Bauer (Piano), and Nistha Raj (Violin).

### 15th Annual Gaston Sigur Memorial Lecture with Mani Shankar Aiyar



*Mani Shankar Aiyar – April 27, 2011*

**Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar** is a current Member of the Indian Parliament in the Rajya Sabha (Council of States). He was thrice elected to the Lok Sabha (1991-96; 1999-2004; 2004-2009) and served as Minister of Panchayat Raj (2004-09), Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas (2004-06), Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports (2006-08), and Minister for Development of North-Eastern Region (2006-09). In 2006, he was conferred the "Outstanding Parliamentarian Award" by the President of India. He began his career as a diplomat in the Indian Foreign Service from 1963-89.

He is a widely published columnist with several newspapers and magazines in India and abroad and has authored numerous books including *Remembering Rajiv*; *In Rajiv's Footsteps: One Year in Parliament*; *Mani Shankar Aiyar's Pakistan Papers*; *Knickerwallahs, Silly-Billies and Other Curious Creatures*; *Rajiv Gandhi's India* (in 4 volumes) (ed.); *Confessions of a Secular Fundamentalist*; and *A Time of Transition: Rajiv Gandhi to the 21st Century*. He is a frequent commentator on poverty alleviation, foreign policy, and nuclear disarmament in India and abroad.

## Partnerships for International Strategies in Asia (PISA)

Following February's highly successful Regional Leadership Institute on Climate Change (RLICC) for representatives from six ASEAN-member countries convened in Bangkok, the PISA team returned to the US to begin preparations on 3 new projects.

In collaboration with Planet Forward.org, a program of the School of Media and Public Affairs, PISA is producing a video to expose a

wide audience to the ways in which Vietnamese women in Giao Luc Commune, Nam Dinh Province, are adapting to climate change. Look for a Sigur Center screening of *Adapting Our Lives, Changing Our Legacies* later this fall.

The Stimson Center, a Washington think tank specializing in international security, invited PISA, through its Southeast Asia Program, under the direction of Dr. Richard Cronin, to design an interactive



*Shared River, Shared Future Workshop, Bangkok, Thailand*

program for policymakers, civil society leaders, and researchers from countries of the lower Mekong sub-region and China. Held in Bangkok July 18-19, the program included the introduction of a causal modeling tool to assist participants with complex policy analysis and a better assessment of the specific outcomes to be expected if the proposed Xayabury hydro dam is built on the Mekong mainstream in Laos. You can learn more about The Shared River, Shared Futures initiative at [www.stimson.org/research-pages/shared-river-for-a-shared-future](http://www.stimson.org/research-pages/shared-river-for-a-shared-future).



*Linda Yarr, PISA Director, lecturing at the Mekong School, Chiang Mai, Thailand – S. Kelly-Lyall*

Subsequently, the PISA/Stimson team conducted a similar two-day, intensive workshop at the Mekong School in Chiang Mai, Thailand. It was especially gratifying to work with young activists and civil society leaders from Myanmar, China, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. PISA received accolades from the students who will now have the opportunity to share their knowledge with their respective in-



country organizations such as Save the Children (China), the Japan Volunteer Center (JVC), and Vietnam Rivers Network among others. PISA was able to offer a summer internship to Elliott School student Karen Mo (M.A. candidate) who served as the program rapporteur.

This fall, PISA welcomes participants in *The Global City in World Affairs* course, the second year of PISA's collaboration with the Hong Kong Civil Service Bureau. Seven Administrative Officers will participate in courses at the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, site visits, and meetings with counterparts in Washington, as well as a weekly seminar taught by PISA's director, Linda Yarr.

Later this fall, PISA will launch a collaborative research project on climate change and security with participation from Elliott School faculty members: Llewelyn Hughes, Joanna Spear, Lisa Benton-Short, and Paul D. Williams as well as PISA's leadership team, Linda Yarr and Suzanne Kelly-Lyall. The project represents a new initiative between George Washington University and Singapore Management University that will bring together scholars and practitioners from both institutions and produce a series of policy dialogues, publications, and outreach efforts to civil society.

## U.S.-Japan-South Korea Legislative Exchange Program (LEP/TLEP)

The U.S.-Japan Legislative Exchange Program completed its 44th session in Tokyo, Japan in February 2011 and its 45th session in Washington, DC in May 2011. Elliott School Professor Henry R. Nau, who participated at



45th LEP welcome dinner from left to right:  
Hon. Shuhei Kishimoto (J), Rep. Jim  
Sensenbrenner (US), Hon. Yukari Sato (J),  
and Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (US)

high levels of government under Presidents Ford and Reagan, helps Congress run the program, a bilateral exchange (LEP) with the Japanese Diet and a trilateral exchange (TLEP)

adding the South Korean National Assembly. Principal topics for discussion at this year's meetings included regional security issues with North Korea and China, domestic politics, and economic issues. The next round of TLEP meetings is scheduled to be held in Tokyo in December 2011.

The program connects legislative leaders from the United States and the two most important democratic countries in Asia to foster better understanding of politics. A core group of members meets regularly twice a year to informally debate the broad range of issues affecting domestic and foreign relations. Since 1993, the LEP/TLEP has been co-chaired by Republican and Democratic Members of Congress. Current co-chairs are James McDermott (D-WA) and Tom Petri (R-WI). Participation since 1989 has been equally divided among the major parties. Altogether 85 Democrats and 85 Republicans, along with one Independent, have taken part.



U.S. and Japanese Members in Tokyo at  
residence of Japanese House of Representatives  
Speaker Takahiro Yokomichi during the 44th  
LEP in February 2011

Professors Mike Mochizuki, a Japan expert and holder of the Sigur Chair in the Elliott School; Ed McCord, current director of the Sigur Center; and Shawn McHale, former director of the Sigur Center, also participate regularly to facilitate interactions between the members. The Program competes each year for funding from the Japan-United States Friendship Commission. Funding was awarded in March 2011 for the 23rd consecutive year and has averaged more than \$100,000 per year since 1989.

## Organization of Asian Studies

The Organization of Asian Studies (OAS) student group completed a busy spring semester, hosting a total of twenty-three events for GW students interested in Asia and Asian affairs.

Their Conversations with Scholars series provided students with the opportunity to engage with GW professors on contemporary Asia-related topics. These special luncheons were exclusive to GW students and attendance was capped to allow for more personal interaction. Topics included "Thoughts on US-

China Relations" with Dr. Bruce Reynolds, "Thoughts on the Uyghur Homeland" with GW professor Sean Roberts and Uyghur activists Alim Seytoff and Nury Turkel, and "The Rise of China and India" with Dr. Deepa Ollapally.



OAS Happy Hour event at Nooshi  
Noodles and Sushi

In addition, OAS hosted an extensive film series at the Sigur Center, screening feature films and documentaries from nine different Asian countries. Some of their most popular films were *Founding of a Republic* (China), co-hosted with the Global China Connection, and *Mountain Patrol* (Tibet), co-hosted with Machik and featuring an introduction by NGO director Losang Ragbey. Their final screening of the semester was of the documentary *Live From Tokyo*, which depicts independent and underground music culture in Japan's capital. Director Lewis Rapkin followed with a live Q&A session.



Tsinghua University reception at Lindner Commons,  
co-hosted with Global China Connection

OAS also worked with GW student groups and outside organizations to host a variety of events. In January, they organized a speech by Donald Tong, the Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs, USA, who spoke about his work and experience. In February, OAS co-hosted a delegation of Qinghua University students from Beijing for a special reception at the Elliott School, which attracted over 80 people. Two of the visiting delegates stayed with OAS members for weekend homestays.

OAS will continue its faculty luncheon series and Asian film series this fall, in addition to collaborating with other student groups, bringing in outside speakers, and hosting social events for GW students interested in Asia. You can contact OAS at [oas1@gwu.edu](mailto:oas1@gwu.edu).

## FEEDBACK ON RPI SYMPOSIUM

## FROM THOSE WHO MAKE POLICY



"This is the sort of conversation and discussion that we do not have the opportunity to engage in as often as we ought to in the policy community."

MICHAEL SCHIFFER ON APRIL 25 SYMPOSIUM

Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia, Department of Defense

## FROM THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Internationally recognized author and foreign policy commentator Walter Russell Mead delivered the keynote address at the April 25 Worldviews of Rising Powers symposium. "One of the things I like about this project is the way that it focuses our attention on what this discipline [political science] is supposed to do- that is to help policymakers and wider publics who shape the debate over foreign policy and affect the kinds of choices we make to make those constituencies smarter about the world and able to make better judgments."

## FROM THE AUDIENCE

91%

Would recommend this symposium to others.

4.5/5

Average Score: How satisfied were you with the symposium's program content?



RPI participants Gregg Brazinsky, Deepa Ollapally, Mike Mochizuki, and Isao Miyaoka (left to right) at the February 21-22 conference in India



**"It's a treat to get out of the bureaucratic trenches of the State Department and come and listen to the real experts on a lot of these issues."**

Robert Blake, Jr. - Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia (far left), Department of State at the Worldviews of Rising Powers conference in April

## Rising Powers Initiative

The Rising Powers Initiative (RPI) made a big splash here and in Asia this spring, hosting numerous high-profile events and publishing multiple [reports and policy alerts](#).

The Initiative kicked off the year with a conference on "Identity and Asian Powers: What Does it Mean for Regional Cooperation?" in India, followed by two Policy Briefings in Washington. The first briefing, held March 2, brought together RPI participants Andrew Kuchins (CSIS), Deepa Ollapally (GWU), and David Shambaugh (GWU) to discuss "Foreign Policy Debates within Rising Powers: Current Implications for the U.S." The second Briefing, "Identity and Rising Asian Powers: Implications for Regional Cooperation," was held April 14 and featured RPI participants Allen Carlson (Cornell University), Mike Mochizuki (GWU), and Deepa Ollapally (GWU).

Two RPI authors were invited to speak at a symposium hosted by the Elliott School for the International Council on April 7. Professors David Shambaugh and Deepa Ollapally presented work on the key challenges for U.S. foreign policy in China and India, respectively. Dr. Ollapally published an article with RPI co-author Rajesh Rajagopalan in the Washington Quarterly in March entitled, [The Pragmatic Challenge to Indian Foreign Policy](#). Dr. Shambaugh also published an article in the Washington Quarterly discussing the challenges of [Coping with a Conflicted China](#), which was subsequently quoted in an Economist article entitled, ["Universalists v Exceptionalists: A Mighty Contest Whose Outcome Will Determine China's Future."](#)

RPI participant Daqing Yang (GWU) also traveled to Beijing in June to participate in the MacArthur Asia Security Initiative's 2011 Annual Meeting. Prof. Yang participated in a panel session entitled, "Rising Powers, Power Shift and Regional Security Impacts."

### International Conference Identity and Asian Powers: What Does it Mean for Regional Cooperation?

On February 21 and 22, the RPI organized two [events](#) held in New Delhi, India. They were organized in a partnership with, and hosted by, two of the most prominent think-tanks in India: the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) and the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).

The conference addressed pressing [identity issues in Asia](#) and their impact on the future of the region and on United States foreign policymaking. The presenters focused on the key identity issues in China, India, Japan, and South Korea, such as the consequences of a divided Korea and the implications of Japan's identity as a peace state. Leading experts from the United States, India, and elsewhere in Asia presented their research.

Prominent analysts from India attended the events, participated as discussants, and provided important insights into the links between identity and international relations in Asia. These experts were drawn from high levels of the Indian academia, civil service, military, and the press. It is particularly notable that the Dean of the Elliott School at GW, Michael Brown, attended and contributed to these events.



## International Symposium Worldviews of Rising Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates

On April 25, the Rising Powers Initiative held an [International Symposium](#) at the Elliott School, the RPI's largest event to date. The symposium brought together prominent American officials, journalists, and scholars, as well as RPI experts from the US and from most of the countries covered by the project. The conference was the culmination of a two-year study funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Panelists and moderators of note included:

### VISIT THE RISING POWERS INITIATIVE ON THE WEB

Website: <http://www.gwu.edu/risingpowers>

Blog: <http://www.wordpress.com/risingpowers>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/RisingPowers>

[Sign up](#) to receive RPI publications and event notifications

- **Robert O. Blake Jr.**, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs
- **Thomas Graham**, Kissinger & Associates
- **Jim Hoagland**, *Washington Post*
- **Daniel Markey**, Council on Foreign Relations
- **Walter Russell Mead**, Bard College
- **Evan Medeiros**, Director for Asian Affairs, National Security Council
- **Thomas R. Pickering**, Hills and Company and Career Ambassador
- **David Sanger**, *New York Times*
- **Michael Schiffer**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia
- **Gary Sick**, Columbia University
- **Barbara Slavin**, The Atlantic Council
- **Sheila A. Smith**, Council on Foreign Relations

The symposium generated widespread interest with an overflow audience. Two

hundred and ten DC-based experts, based in academia, the media, government, and think-tanks, and students RSVP'd for the event. The day-long conference was televised on CSPAN, unprecedented for any GW event to date, and highly unusual for CSPAN.

## Forthcoming Volume Worldviews of Aspiring Powers in Asia & Eurasia: Exploring Foreign Policy Debates

Keep an eye out for the RPI's edited volume entitled, *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers in Asia & Eurasia: Exploring Foreign Policy Debates*. The book, edited by Henry R. Nau and Deepa Ollapally, is based on research conducted by the eleven contributors in the Carnegie-supported two-year study and includes chapters on China, Japan, India, Russia, and Iran. The book manuscript was completed in record time and will be available late spring 2012.

## Professor Profile

Janet Steele

**Janet Steele** (Ph.D. Johns Hopkins University) is an Associate Professor of Journalism at the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University, where she focuses on the theory and practice of journalism, and how these vary across time and space. Right now she is interested in journalism and Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Although Professor Steele received her Ph.D. in American cultural history from Johns Hopkins, she asserts that her interest in journalism in Asia is not as far removed from her graduate study as it might sound. She wrote her dissertation on a 19th century American newspaper (the *New York Sun*). When she spent a year in Jakarta on a Fulbright in 1997-1998, she was immediately struck by the similarities and differences in the practice of journalism. Janet expounds, "It was a long slog involving study of modern Indonesian politics and culture as well as the Indonesian language, but this initial fascination ultimately resulted in a book on *Tempo* magazine (*Wars Within: The Story of Tempo, an Independent Newspaper in Soeharto's Indonesia*), and an abiding love of Indonesia."

Janet has returned to Jakarta at least twice a year since 1998, and regularly teaches and lectures there. "I've found that offering to do a writing workshop or 'training' is a great way to meet journalists, and also to make arrangements to do fieldwork."

After finishing her book on *Tempo*, Janet branched out to studying journalism in East Timor during the Indonesian occupation, and then to studying Malaysiakini, an exemplary online news site in Malaysia. "I am proud of the fact that whenever I am in Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur, I am welcome at those two remarkable news organizations."

Professor Steele is currently working on a book entitled *Journalism and Islam in the Malay Archipelago*. She describes her work on the project, "[I] am really grateful to the Sigur Center for summer research grants that paid for my travel back and forth, and subsidized my living expenses as well. During this past summer I divided my time between Indonesia and Malaysia, interviewing journalists and talking with them about their views on religion. It is quite



fascinating to see that although the goal of independent media is a universal one among journalists, the means of getting there can be quite different. I've learned that Muslim journalists in Indonesia and Malaysia often use the language of religion when they are explaining the meaning of their work to themselves, and to me this is an incredible insight."

# Featured Alumnus

Scott Kennedy



that doing so helped me better understand China."

Scott strives to use this same guided approach at Indiana University, where he is a professor in both the Departments of Political Science and East Asian Languages & Cultures, and on his current project, the Research Center for Chinese Politics & Business (RCCPB). Originally founded in February 2007, RCCPB is one of the first American university-based research organizations with a permanent office in China, which opened in Beijing in May 2011.

## Scott's Years at GWU

In remembering his years at GW, Scott reminisces, "I had heard that other elite programs encouraged competition among their students and that faculty lorded over or neglected students. GW was the complete opposite. **I formed deep friendships with my fellow graduate students, [and] I can't say enough about the faculty in political science and the Elliott School.** Harry Harding, Bruce Dickson, Martha Finnemore, and Alasdair Bowie, among others, were excellent teachers and always intellectually open and engaging. Lee Sigelman, the Political Science chair at the time who later passed away in 2009, provided mentoring in both the art of political science and whacking a racquetball."

Scott recalls numerous "light bulb" moments at GW, but the most memorable occasion for him occurred during his dissertation proposal defense. He explains, "My initial proposal was focused on examining how companies in different sectors of China's economy varyingly interacted with the government, the idea being that in some sectors companies might rely primarily on industry

associations but in other sectors they might mainly interact directly one-on-one with officials. I thought that was a good and sufficient research frame until one of my committee members, Susan Sell, asked the question students fear most, 'So what?' Why should we care about whether companies use industry associations? My sails were deflated, but then she made the point that variation in associational activity could matter because it might affect companies' and sectors' relative policy influence. Boom! In a heartbeat, I realized that my ultimate concern should be about lobbying influence and power, not just how companies behaved. **That insight changed my entire approach, and I can't be grateful enough for simultaneously being humbled and enlightened."**

Scott is not the only Colonial in his family. His father-in-law, Joseph Zimmer, now almost 90 and a veteran of the Battle of Bulge in World War II, attended Benjamin Franklin College in the 1950's, which was later absorbed into GW. Additionally, his wife, Mary Beth Kennedy, received her Master's in Public Health in 1997.

## Advice for Current Students

For current Colonials, Scott offers the following advice, "Asia is an exciting place to be these days. As the United States suffers an extended recession and squabbling over a diminishing pie dominates public discourse, Asia is all about the struggle to define life in the context of growth and social transformation. Everywhere you turn there are amazing stories, both positive and negative. So GW students should figure out how to live in Asia, with China, India, and Vietnam being at the top of my list. **To increase your chances of getting onto an upward career trajectory, students need to marry a competency in an East Asian language with some other skill set, such as writing, math, science, or management.** The days of a backpacker showing up in Beijing or Hanoi and claiming a prized job are long over."

# Student Spotlight

Karen Mo

Karen Mo is a second-year Master's student in The Elliott School's International Development Studies program, focusing on Economic Development and Sustainability. Born in China and raised in Japan, she is a

native speaker of Chinese and Japanese and speaks intermediate-level Spanish.

Prior to attending GW, Karen had five years of experience working for the private and

non-profit sectors. As a project coordinator and account manager for multinational corporations, she worked in Japan, China, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines. It was during that time she realized that the private sector should and can play a more active role in development. She then worked for a Japanese NGO as a research and policy advocacy assistant to gain deeper insight



into the challenges facing international development.

During her first year at GW she interned at World Environment Center, where she researched corporate social responsibility issues and assisted cleaner-production projects. Through this internship she became interested in gaining first-hand insight into the environmental footprint of business activities, as well as field experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative analysis. **"Sigur Center's Summer Field Research Grant was a golden opportunity for me to fulfill my academic curiosity and to acquire the hard skills necessary for the advancement of my career in international development."**

This summer, Karen traveled to Laos on a Sigur Center Summer Research Fellowship. Her research in Laos focused on the legal, political, social, and environmental issues associated with commercial tree plantation development in Savannakhet Province. Karen's research revealed the discrepancy

between law on paper and reality on the ground, as well as some signs of impact on villagers' livelihood. The Forestry Law of Laos prohibits the concession of forest and agricultural land for industrial tree plantations and mandates socio-economic survey and economic feasibility study, as well as environmental impact assessment, to be conducted prior to land concession.



However, this was not the case in the village Karen studied. A large area of forests and agricultural land has been lost to rubber plantations, and actual concession area in

the village was almost twice as large as that deemed appropriate by the government. Villagers have already begun to experience difficulty finding food in the forest and deterioration of living standard. There are a number of factors contributing to this unsustainable level of plantation development, including the lack of transparency and regulatory oversight in the process of land concession.

Upon graduation from GW, Karen would like to build on her connection with Asia and pursue a career that helps Asian countries to advance their economic development in a more sustainable manner. She reflects, **"The Sigur Center has made tremendous impact on my career development. The three months that I spent in Laos under Sigur Center's Summer Research Grant have complemented my academic education at GW with practical skills training and allowed me to build valuable networks in Southeast Asia."**

## Summer 2011 Student Fellows

*This summer the Sigur Center funded 17 students with a total of \$85,174 to travel to 9 Asian countries for the purposes of language study, research, internships, and conferences. Below is a sampling of their experiences abroad.*

### INDIA



#### Ajay Verghese

Ajay in Chowmahalla Palace in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh -- the beautiful palace of the former ruler (the Nizam).

### TAIWAN



#### Christopher Wong

Chris on the Caoling Historic Trail in Taiwan.

### SOUTH KOREA



#### Susanne Greenbaum

Susanne standing in the Bukchon Hanok Village area, famous for the traditional Korean houses still preserved there.

### TAIWAN



#### Kazu Koyama

Kazu enjoying the Raohe nightmarket with classmates.



## TAIWAN



## Shawn Lynott

Shawn standing in front of the Imperial Palace in Taipei.

## TAIWAN



## Seung Joon Paik

Seung at Taipei 101 Building, the highest building in Northeast Asia, with the building's mascot. Its eyes and nose form the number 101.

## SOUTH AFRICA



## Dawn Murphy

Dawn Murphy conducted dissertation research about China-Africa relations in the post-Cold War era at South Africa's Stellenbosch University's Centre for Chinese Studies this May.

## JAPAN



## Connor Cislo

Connor spending an evening with friends at an outdoor restaurant in Asakusa in Tokyo.

## SOUTH KOREA



## Caleb Dependahl

Caleb at the Green Tea Fields in South Korea.

## CHINA



## Kalisha Holmes

Kalisha Holmes spent six weeks in Beijing, China on an adventure that included hiking the wondrous Great Wall of China, an exhausting all-day escapade!

## THAILAND



## Matt Grieger

Matt at IMPECT, a Chiang Mai-based organization that works on human rights issues for highland peoples in Thailand.

## INDIA



## Ivan Lidarev

Elliott School's Ivan Lidarev with his internship supervisor at IDSA, V. Krishnappa, at a goodbye dinner at the end of Ivan's internship.

## LAOS



## Karen Mo

Karen with the village headman in the plantation area. The village headman explained why they agreed to land concessions.



# Faculty Research Fellows

*The Sigur Center granted 13 GW Asian Studies faculty members \$67,826 for research in 9 Asian countries.*

## CHINA



### Jonathan Chaves

Jonathan examining rare Chinese volumes in the Anhui Provincial Library, Hefei, Anhui. In this picture he is reading a hand-written manuscript of a book of travel essays about Huangshan, the Yellow Mountains, in Anhui Province, dating from the late 17th century. Professor Chaves is in the process of translating this book for the first time into any Western language, as part of a study of travel writing about the Yellow Mountains.

## CHINA



### Steven Balla

Steven at Weiming Hu, the most picturesque spot on the campus of Peking University in Beijing, where he conducted research on online political expression in China. Steven is doing this research in collaboration with the Research Center for Contemporary China in the Peking University School of Government.

## CHINA



### Robert Shepherd

Bob summiting the Central Peak (Zhong Tai), Wutai Shan, Shanxi, China.

## INDIA



### Alf Hiltbeitel

Alf on "rest and relaxation" after completion of fieldwork on the way back from its Dharmapuri (Tamilnadu) location. He is in a round boat called a "coracle" that is being guided along a stretch of accessible water at the Hogenakkal Falls on the Kaveri (Cauvery) River in Tamilnadu, India.

## INDONESIA



### Janet Steele

Janet meeting with faculty in the department of Communication Studies at the Institute for Islamic Studies in Sunan Ampel in Surabaya, Indonesia.

## INDONESIA



### Joel Kuipers

Joel observing as small children are taught Arabic at an Islamic Day Care Center in Yogyakarta Indonesia, in Central Java.

## EDITED BY:

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