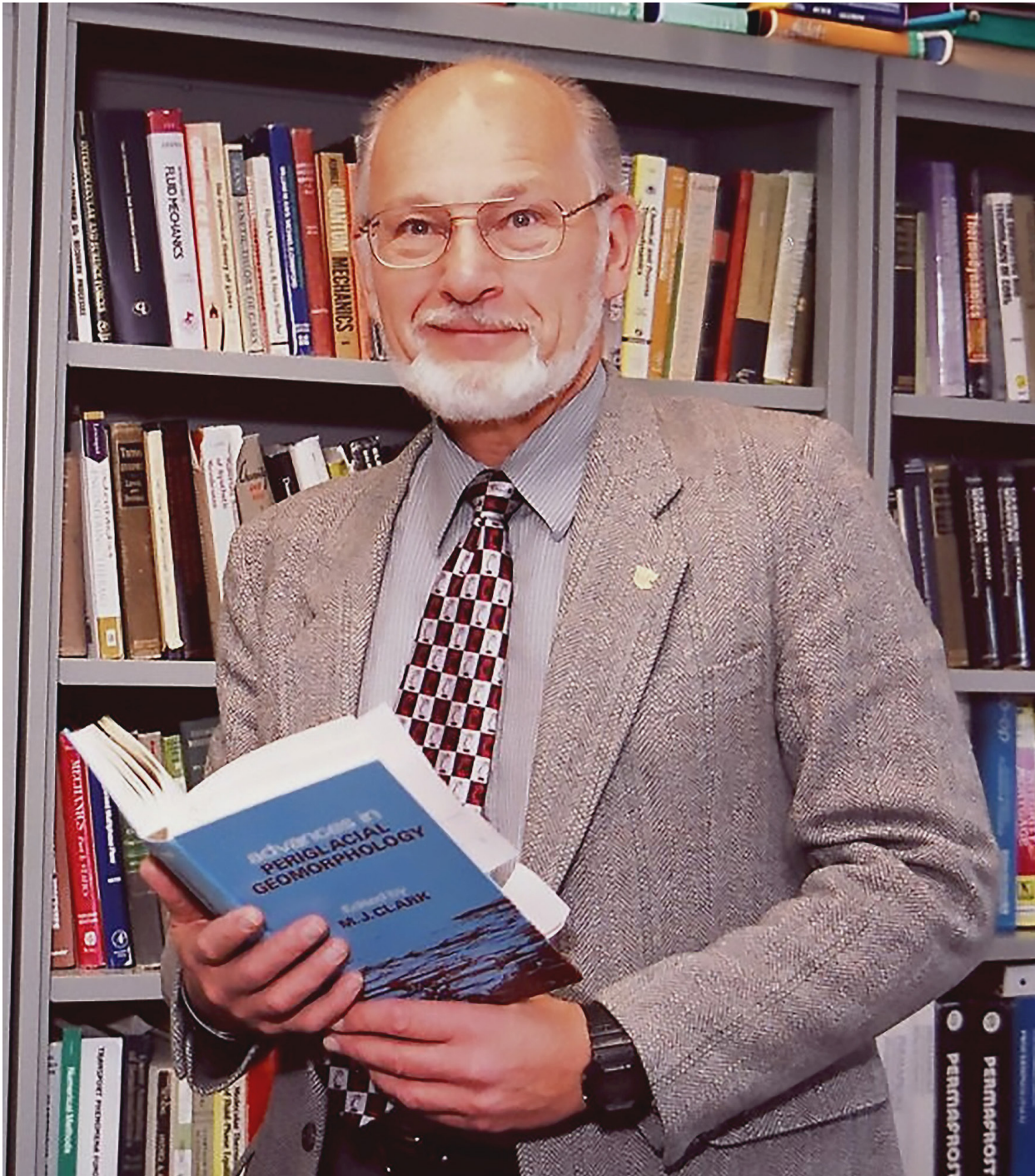


Inspiring Story:
Prof. William Krantz

Chemical Engineer, U.S. Fulbright
Alumnus, 1974-1975

In This Issue: News from the Commission
Alumni Corner • American Programs • Turkish Programs
Advising Activities



From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As we near the end of another year, I'm happy to be sharing with you the latest issue of our biannual newsletter. It has been a busy year for the Turkish Fulbright Commission, one in which we faced unprecedented tragedy in the form of the devastating February earthquake, but also one of tremendous pride and joy, as we came together to mark both the centennial of the Turkish Republic and the 75th anniversary of the Turkish Fulbright Commission. With the 75th anniversary, our Commission marks its place as one of the oldest worldwide, and one of the longest forms of uninterrupted international cooperation between the United States and Türkiye. As part of our anniversary events, we organized a very successful international conference on US-Turkish relations, which you can read about in more detail on p. 6. In honor of the Turkish Republic's 100th anniversary, several of our Turkish grantees in the US held their own celebrations, some of which are highlighted in this newsletter.

Speaking of celebrations, we were able recently to bring together our U.S. grantees in Türkiye for a Thanksgiving dinner in Istanbul. It was a lovely evening shared with our current grantees, Commission staff members, and friends from the U.S. Consulate. The event provided an opportunity for us to give thanks for what we truly value.

All of the above serve as a reminder of how the tremendous energy and positive spirit of our grantees and everyone involved with Fulbright Türkiye keep us hopeful and moving forward. This energy and excitement is clearly evident in our Commission's staff. In recognition of their never-ending efforts to uphold the Commission's primary duties of managing fair selection processes and responding to all grantees' needs, we held our annual overnight retreat in October, this year traveling all together to Cappadocia.

A final note from our Fulbright team includes the welcoming of a new Istanbul Office Director, Ms. Seval Sir. We are delighted to welcome her on board, and at the same time, we wish a very fond farewell to Dr. Betti Delevi, who, as departing Istanbul Office Director, has been a tremendous member of our team for the past seven years. We wish Betti all the very best.

To all of you, I hope you enjoy this latest Newsletter and the many interesting stories within, and I wish you a very happy and healthy holiday season.



Prof. Ersel Aydınli

An Inspiring Story

Coming from a blue-collar family, Professor Dr. William B. Krantz has dedicated his life to education and mentoring young students into careers they love. Encouraged by his high school English teacher, he opted to attend university. Since then, he has been a devoted academician contributing to the science of Chemical Engineering, and touching the lives of many students worldwide.

He has been awarded three Fulbright fellowships, the first of which was at Istanbul Technical University in Türkiye in 1974. His Fulbright experience in Türkiye was a transformative journey for him. Since then, he has recommended scholars to go out of their comfort zone and choose the path that will be equally transformative for them. After he returned to the United States, he convinced the University of Colorado to accept one Turkish student for graduate studies. That became the first of 11 PhD students Prof. Krantz recruited from Türkiye. He has continued to support Türkiye by collaborating with Turkish academics.

Although he no longer gives classroom lectures, he continues to inspire young academics in workshops and through his books. Since he retired in 2008, he has obtained 20 more patents, which he proudly explains in the interview. He says "Fulbright changed my life, so I served for the Fulbright Commission". Today he is a member of the Fulbright 1946 Society.

To read about how his life turned around from a student in a working-class family to an inspiring academician and mentor, please turn to pages **13-18** for his Inspiring Story.



News from the Commission

Visits from the U.S. Embassy and Consulate Officials

On October 4, 2023, Mr. Marvin Alfaro, Cultural Attaché, and Mr. Barış Mendoza, Education Coordinator at the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul visited the Istanbul Office. Being a former Fulbrighter, Mr. Alfaro was very much interested in the Fulbright grant programs offered to Turkish

citizens and also promised his support to US grantees based in and around Istanbul.

Mr. Marvin Alfaro, Ms. Gabrielle Price, Cultural Affairs Attaché, and Ms. Deniz Can, Education Coordinator at the U.S. Embassy Ankara visited the Ankara Office on October 13.

Our Education Adviser Ecem Mutlu attended the Welcome Reception of the new PAO and CAO at the Consul General's residence on September 25 and met our American grantees there.



Pictured above (L-R): Ecem Mutlu (Istanbul Education Adviser), Adela Min Foo (2023-2024 Student Researcher, Özyeğin University), David Meza (2023-2024 Student Researcher, ARIT), and Jane Bragdon (2022-2023 and 2023-2024 renewal Master's Grantee, Koç University)

*Pictured left: Mr. Marvin Alfaro with Betti Delevi
Pictured right: Marvin Alfaro with Barış Mendoza*



Pictured (L-R): Mr. Rob Tate, Ms. Gabrielle M. Price and Prof. Ersel Aydınli

Mr. Rob Tate, Eastern Europe Unit Chief and Türkiye Desk Officer, Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy, visited the Head Office on December 06, 2023.

Good Practices Exchange Seminar in Warsaw

On July 9-13, the Polish Fulbright Commission hosted a best practices exchange seminar in Warsaw. Staff members from Poland, Türkiye, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Czechia met in Warsaw to discuss challenges and best practices in the administration of incoming and outgoing participants and alumni affairs. Our commission was represented by the Turkish Programs Officer Duygu

Kimençe and the Alumni and Archives Specialist Neslihan Tekman. The warm and collaborative atmosphere created by our Polish hosts led to fruitful discussions while

creating a bond between the commissions' staff members. The group also took a tour of Warsaw while experiencing Polish hospitality, rich history, and delicious food.



Annual Retreat



The Fulbright Commission Staff came together for our annual retreat, in Cappadocia, the land of beautiful horses. Delicious dinners of meat and traditional Turkish cuisine, a full day excursion to the historic and scenic sites, and breathtaking views laid the setting for bonding, and renewal of energy. Until next time!



Board Transitions

Ms. Tuba Korkmaz, replaced Mr. Hasan Ünsal as General Director of European Union and Foreign Relations Directorate, Ministry of National Education, Ankara, and thus became our new Board member.

Staff Transitions

Ms. Asiye Büşra Düzgün, Administrative and Program Assistant, left the Commission at the end of May, to take a job as a Finance Assistant at IOM – UN. Ms. Tuğçe Özçelik

took up her position in June. Dr. Betti Delevi, the Education Coordinator at the Istanbul Office left the Commission at the end of October; and Ms. Seval Sır, joined the

Commission to take on the Istanbul Office Director position. Ms. Semanur Işıksoy joined our Commission in October as the Turkish Programs Assistant.



Pictured: Welcoming Tuğçe and saying farewell to Asiye



Pictured right: Farewell to Betti Delevi



Ms. Seval Sır has made Istanbul her home since 2010, although her origins lie in Melbourne, Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Teaching and a Bachelor of Arts from Deakin University. With 11 years of teaching experience, Seval brings a wealth of knowledge, enriching her professional journey and fueling her passion for education. Previously, she served as the Country Manager for Türkiye and Kazakhstan at IDP Education. Seval is a devoted mother to a 16-year-old daughter, and their shared love for travel and cultural exploration is a defining aspect of their lives.



Ms. Semanur Işıksoy has a B.A. in International Relations (IR) from Hacettepe University and also minored in Psychology during her undergraduate studies where she graduated as a Valedictorian in 2023. During and after her undergraduate studies, she worked as an intern in various non-profit think tanks and research centres. She has also written articles on various websites, mostly about IR. She is interested in the fields of Political Psychology, IR Theories, European Union (EU), International Security Studies (ISS) and International Law (IL).



Ms. Tuğçe Özçelik obtained her bachelor's degree in Tourism and Hotel Management from Bilkent University. Prior to joining Fulbright Türkiye, she worked for nearly 20 years in the sales and marketing departments of various international hotels based both in Türkiye and the US. Outside of work, she enjoys photography, writing short movie scripts and her latest passion of watercolor painting. Tuğçe is a devoted mother to a 12-year-old daughter and 2 precious cats.



Academic Conference, Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Turkish Fulbright Commission



In celebration of the 75th anniversary of Fulbright Türkiye, the Turkish Fulbright Commission, in collaboration with the Hollings Center and the İhsan Doğramacı Peace Foundation Center for Foreign Policy and Peace Research, organized a conference on November 11-12 in Ankara engaging Turkish and American academics in discussing and fostering mutual understanding in Turkish-American relations.

the relationship between these two countries was reviewed. The Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs General Director for Americas Ambassador Yaprak Balkan and the United States Ambassador to Türkiye Mr. Jeffry L. Flake sent video messages to our conference, in which they offered their perspectives on the valuable relationship between the two countries, and the importance of dialogue.

Continuities and changes in Türkiye-U.S. relations were discussed considering historical relations and interactions in political and economic as well as social and cultural areas. Contemporary issues and security matters were also addressed. Lastly, how to redefine

We believe the productive discussions and brainstorming during these two days will contribute to ongoing productive relations between Türkiye and the United States.



Alumni Associations Events

Bright Talk and Networking Event by Fulbright Alumni Association Türkiye:

At our Interview & Networking Event on Friday, June 16th, we had a pleasant conversation on Turkish-American Relations with retired Turkish diplomat, Mr. Namık Tan, who served as the Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the USA between 2010 and 2014. After the interview, we continued with a networking cocktail where we had the opportunity to get to know each other better. We would like to thank Mr. Namık Tan for his speech and his presence at our invitation. We would like to thank lawyer and Fulbright alumnus Mr. Umit Hergüner, who hosted the event, and the staff of Hergüner Law Firm for their hospitality. We would like to thank all our guests who joined our event for their participation. This annual event is a reminder of the Fulbright Program's valuable contributions to building cultural exchanges between the citizens of the United States and Türkiye.



Panel: Fulbrighter Olmak (To be a Fulbrighter): On behalf of the Fulbright Alumni Association Türkiye, Aygün Çatak and Dr. Hande Gündüz participated in an illuminating and enriching session that delved into the transformative journey of studying abroad. The event held at Rumeli University on 1st December, 2023 and hosted by Dr. Arman Atasoy, the Vice Dean of Faculty of Engineering and Natural Science, brought together a diverse panel of alumni who had embarked on life-changing exchange programs during their academic pursuits.

cultural immersion, academic challenges, personal growth, and the enduring impact of the exchange experience in which each speaker recounted their unique journey, illustrating the profound impact of studying abroad on their

personal and professional lives. These stories underscored the importance of stepping out of comfort zones and embracing diversity to truly appreciate the richness of global perspectives.

The evening commenced with a warm welcome and introduction to the esteemed panelists, each representing distinct cultural backgrounds and academic disciplines. The panel discussion went on with the themes of

PANEL: Fulbrighter Olmak
Fulbright Bursu ile Amerika'da Eğitim

Dr. ARMAN ATASOY
Öğretim Üyesi
İRÜ Mühendislik ve Doğa Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekan Yardımcısı

AYGÜN ÇATAK
Eğitimci
Fulbright Mezunları Derneği Başkanı

Dr. HANDE GÜNDÜZ KOÇAN
Kimyager
Fulbright Mezunları Derneği YK Üyesi

Tarih: 1 Aralık Cuma
Saat: 15.00

Yer: İstanbul Rumeli Üniversitesi, Halic Uygulama ve Araştırma Yerleşkesi, Cep Sineması, Beyoğlu

www.rumeli.edu.tr | www.fulbrightalumni.org.tr

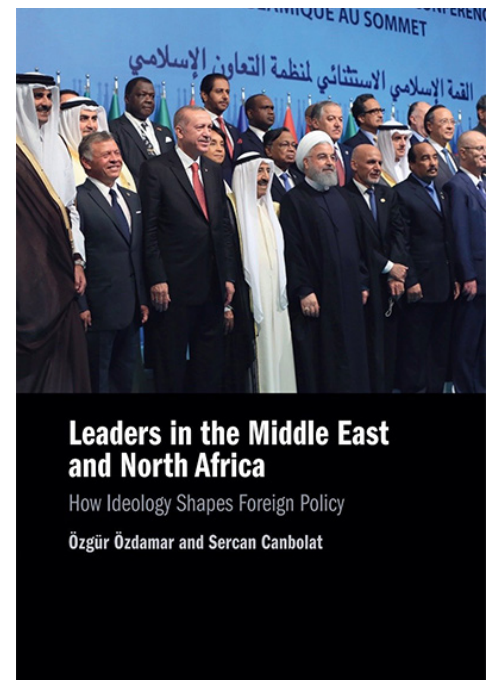


A new book by our two alumni, Assoc. Prof. Özgür Özdamar and Dr. Sercan Canbolat

In this book, Özgür Özdamar (Bilkent University, 2018-2019 Senior Scholar, below left) and Sercan Canbolat (University of Connecticut, 2014-2015 Ph.D. Student, below right) adopt a social science-based methodology to reconsider the dynamics of power and leadership in Africa and the Middle East. By analysing the psychological profiles of fourteen leaders across eight countries and three non-state

organizations, they develop a nuanced portrait of modern leadership. Through this approach, the authors are able to draw connections between apparently disparate political ideologies, from Sunni Islamism to Shia revolutionism, from secular nationalism and armed non-state groups. Demonstrating the previously unacknowledged commonalities and divergences in these leaders' approaches,

Özdamar and Canbolat illuminate their tactics and strategies and offer novel insights into how best to negotiate with them. The book also recently received 2023 Best Book Award by the International Studies Association.



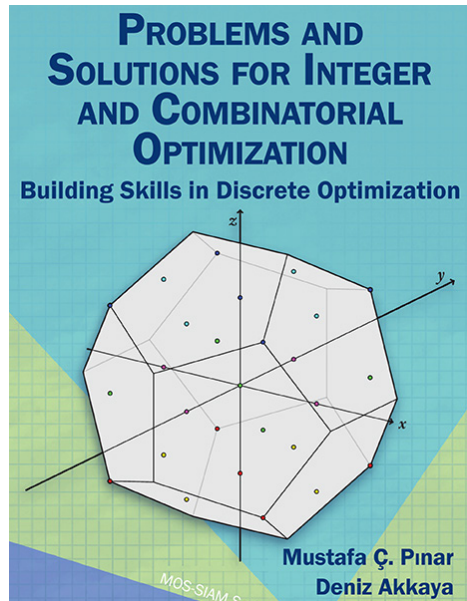
A New film by Sara Zandieh: The Other Zoey

Our 2009-2010 Student Researcher alumna and award-winning film director Sara Zandieh's new film, *The Other Zoey*, starring Andie MacDowell, Heather Graham, Josephine Langford, and Drew Starkey has recently been released. The romantic comedy is about Zoey Miller a high-achieving computer nerd who has her future all mapped out. She believes that romantic love is a commercial construct and relationships built on compatibility have a better chance of surviving. Her life turns upside down when she causes soccer star Zach (Drew Starkey) to have a concussion and amnesia and mistakes Zoey for his girlfriend.



Prof. Mustafa Çelebi Pinar co-authored a new book

Our 2007-2008 Researcher alumnus Prof. Mustafa Ç. Pinar has co-authored the new book, "Problems and Solutions for Integer and Combinatorial Optimization: Building Skills in Discrete Optimization" in the SIAM/MOS series of the Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) and the Mathematical Optimization Society (MOS). The book, which contains 102 classroom tested problems of varying scope and difficulty, is prepared for undergraduate and graduate students in mathematics, computer science and engineering to use for self-study. It is also intended for instructors to use in conjunction with other course material and when teaching courses in discrete optimization. Prof. Pinar is currently associate provost and faculty member in the Department of Industrial Engineering at Bilkent University.



Dr. Buse Gönül receives grant from the Society for Research in Child Development

A project by our 2022-2023 Postdoctoral Research grant fellow at the University of Maryland, Dr. Buse Gönül, titled "Adolescents' Reasoning about Social Inequalities and Exclusion in Türkiye:

The Role of Intergroup Contact" received the 2023 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars from the Society for Research in Child Development, one of the most respected research institutions in the field of child development. The project, one of seven accepted research proposals out of 157 applications worldwide, will examine children's approaches to social and economic inequalities during adolescence and the effect of peer relationships on egalitarian attitudes. Buse Gönül continues her research at the University of Maryland.



Prof. Eşref Demir, one of the World's Top 2% Scientists

Prof. Eşref Demir, our 2022-2023 Senior Scholar alumnus who carried out his research in Biology at Harvard Medical School, was ranked among the "World's Top 2% Scientists" in the 2023 World's

Most Influential Scientists list prepared by Stanford University using the scientific impact index. Prof. Demir also co-authored the article titled "Drosophila as a Robust Model System for Assessing Autophagy: A Review", which was published in Toxics, an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal. The article can be reached at <https://www.mdpi.com/2305-6304/11/8/682>. Prof. Demir has recently become the Associate Editor of the Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health, Part B: Critical Reviews.



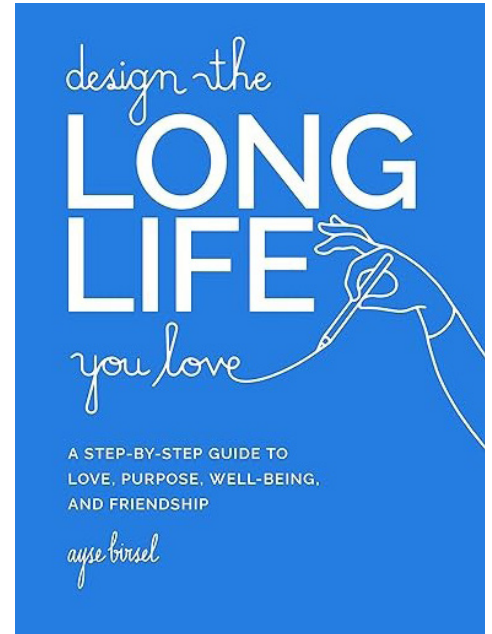
Our 1986-1987 Student alumna and Award-winning product designer Ayşe Bırsel's book got published: *Design the Long Life You Love: A Step-by-Step Guide to Love, Purpose, Well-Being, and Friendship*

In her book, Ayşe Bırsel, focuses on the key principles of design to craft the life you want—like optimism, empathy, collaboration, open-mindedness, and holistic thinking—as well as the experiences of older people on the pioneering frontiers of long life. Fifty years ago, living into one's seventies was considered the mark of a long life. Today, seventy feels young, eighty feels normal, and ninety is within reach. Bırsel believes this new horizon of life is as important and exciting as the invention of moving pictures. Or that of automobiles, or even space travel. Her point is, when a big change happens, innovation follows.

This book is for people who are interested in defining their long life using design thinking tools. It's an interactive book with exercises that will help readers think creatively by asking them to visualize their life. It is full of insights learned from wise people who have lived the longest. The book is structured around four central themes: Love, Purpose, Well-Being, and Friendship, and contains insights that will help readers to love better, find purpose,

practice well-being, and make friends. Drawing on Bırsel's year-long codesign research with older people, *Design the Long Life You Love* offers readers of all ages—from those in their 20s and 30s just starting out, to those in mid-life looking for a change, to those in later life who are the experts for us all. Focused on the key

areas of Love, Purpose, Well-Being, and Friendship, her book pairs life lessons from people who've lived the longest with design tools to help readers plan their long life, whether they are looking ahead to retirement, a home post-children, or initiating a new project that brings vitality and fulfillment.



Assoc Prof. Tolga Bölükbaşı's project receives grant from TÜBİTAK-DAAD

Our 2015-2016 Senior Scholar alumnus Assoc. Prof. Tolga Bölükbaşı has received funding for his project 'BBRLab4WP: Bilkent-Bremen Research Lab for Welfare' from TÜBİTAK-German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Bilateral Cooperation Program. The project aims to advance the state-of-the-art in comparative welfare state research, co-train graduate students, and co-disseminate the results.



Assoc Prof. Canan Dağdeviren, one of the 100 inspiring and influential women by BBC

Our 2009-2010 PhD. Grant alumna Assoc. Prof. Canan Dağdeviren was selected for the BBC's 11th edition of '100 Women List of 2023' for her inventions of wearable diagnostic devices for women healthcare, specifically the ultrasound bra. BBC's 100 Women team, which is part of the BBC World Service, each year names 100 inspiring and influential women from all over the world, focusing on the challenges that women around the world face, as well as the inspiring ways in which they strive to overcome them. Canan Dağdeviren continues her research in Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



A new book by our two alumnae Dr. Özlem Erden Başaran and Merih Uğurel Kanişlı

The book Intercultural Communication in Education is designed to raise awareness about cultural diversity and communication and to support educators who want to enrich their education and training activities in this direction. Around the world, cultural diversity is increasing for various reasons, thus raising the need for more effective intercultural communication. Increasing cultural diversity, especially in schools and classrooms, is being observed more closely, and sustainable peace-supporting educational

approaches such as intercultural communication approach are needed to carry out educational activities in an inclusive manner. The book aims to correct common misconceptions about intercultural communication by presenting the basic concepts on the issue, the obstacles to intercultural communication, successful and unsuccessful practices applied in classrooms and schools, widely used educational approaches in intercultural communication, and application examples based on these approaches.

Pictured: Dr. Özlem Erden Başaran (right) and Merih Uğurel Kanişlı (left)



In Memoriam

Harriet Mayor FULBRIGHT



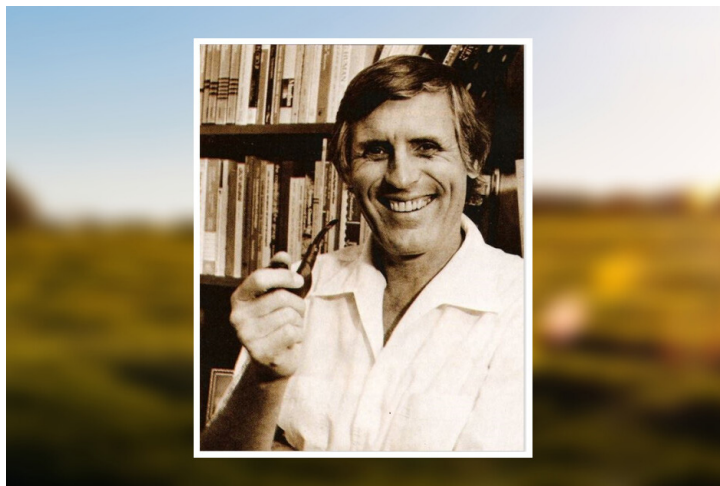
The wife of Senator. W. J. Fulbright, Ms. Fulbright was an accomplished teacher, administrator, NGO leader, and public servant. She reflected the same values of promoting international understanding and cooperation that Senator Fulbright embraced. She was also the first Executive Director of the Fulbright Association. She passed away in September 2023.

Prof. Ahmet BEŞE



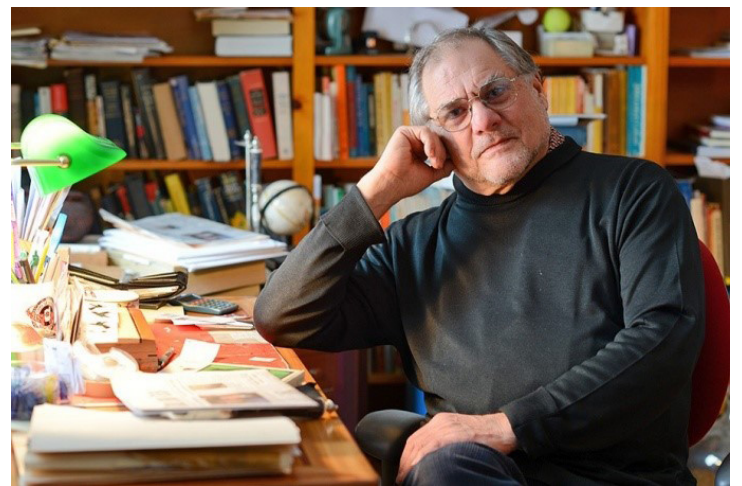
Prof. Beşe was the faculty member at Atatürk University, Faculty of Literature, Department of American Culture and Literature. In 2006-2007 he was a senior Fulbright scholar at New York University, where he conducted research on American Studies. He passed away on January 31, 2023.

Prof. Jeffries MCWHIRTER



As a two-time Fulbright grant recipient (1977-1978, 2006-2007), Prof. McWhirter visited Hacettepe University twice as a lecturer of Education. He was an Emeritus Professor in the counseling and counseling psychology programs in the College of Letters and Sciences at Arizona State University. He was also a founding faculty member of the Emeritus College of ASU. He passed away on January 20, 2023.

Prof. Howard WOLF



Prof. Wolf was a Senior Lecturer of American Literature from State University of New York, Buffalo to Ankara University. He was the Emeritus Professor of Literature at SUNY, Buffalo. He wrote a tribute to his Fulbright year in Türkiye as part of the celebration marking the 75th anniversary of the Fulbright Program. He passed away on October 7, 2023.

Prof. William B. Krantz

Prof. Krantz, could you talk about your childhood? What kind of family culture were you brought up in?

As we say here in the United States, I came from a blue-collar family, which means my dad worked in a factory. He was a very bright man. He was a self-trained electronics electrician and he worked for General Motors. But neither my mother nor my father had any education beyond grade school.

My mother introduced me to music, which turned out to be very fortunate. She introduced me to the piano, but I learned to play many other instruments. That made a big difference in my life. I went to a Catholic grade school and an all-men's Catholic military high school. This high school had tracking, meaning you took an IQ test, and based on your IQ, they placed you in A, B, C, D, E, F, or G track. Fortunately, or unfortunately, I got into A-track, but I did not believe in studying. My mother once mentioned that the son of one of her lady friends ranked first in the entire class. I said to my mother, in all seriousness, "Mom, he studies" as if studying was cheating!

I never studied, but because I played the piano, I was the fastest typist in my class. Because of that, I was offered a job for \$475 a month in a clerical position for the Burlington Railroad. Now this is back in 1956 - \$475 a month looked to me like an insanely high salary because I was working after school for \$0.25 an hour, washing windows and floors, cleaning toilets, and doing other custodial work.

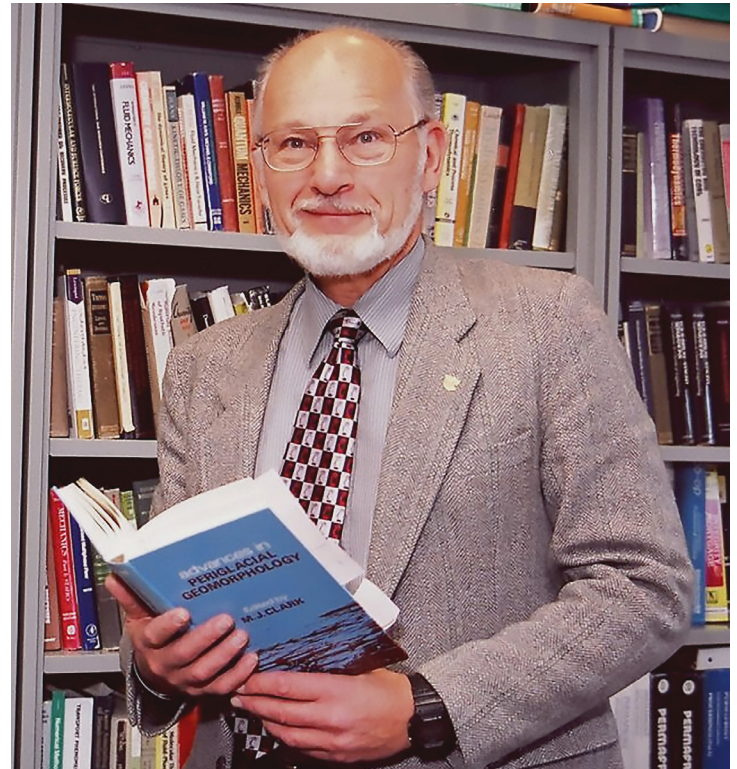
At the same time, I was dating a girl who was, in the vernacular, knock-out beautiful. She went on to compete in the State of Illinois Miss America beauty pageant. She was one year behind me, but she wanted to get married within a year or so after she graduated.

My dad was so proud that I was graduating from high school. He said, "Because mother and I are so proud of you. I'm going to buy you a new Chevrolet."

You got this job for \$475 a month. You got this beautiful girlfriend who wants to get married in a year or two, and your dad is going to buy you a new Chevrolet. This sounds like a dream come true for many young people at your age back then. What made you change your mind about the path you had decided to take so you ended up continuing your studies?

What happened is that one of my teachers in high school got into my life. We had to present a talk in English class. I talked about music, but I made it very funny. I had the whole class laughing. Afterward, the teacher said to me, "Krantz, after class, I want to see you in my office." I thought I was in trouble again. But, when I went into his office, he said to me, "You know, you have speaking talent. Have you thought of going to college?" I responded no, but this teacher got me to start thinking about it.

He was the first of a few people who really made a difference in my life. I broke up with my girlfriend, turned down the job with the Burlington Railroad, and asked my dad if I could use the money that he was going to spend on that car to pay for my first year of college. So, I went to a small, all men's, Catholic, Liberal Arts College, in the middle of a cornfield in Indiana. But I only had money for one year, because it was a rather expensive private school. Even back then, tuition alone was around \$1,000 a year. As soon as I got to this college, I thought that I must figure out some way to get money for the rest of my college studies. Since I was a pretty good musician, I went to the Director of the concert band and asked him, "Do you need any musicians because I would like to apply for a scholarship?". He responded, "No, we have all the people we need except for an oboe player. Do you play the oboe?" I said no, but if you loan me an oboe, within one month I will



audition for a music scholarship. You can decide then if you want me." I did not even know how to play the scale on the oboe, but I played clarinet and saxophone and several other instruments. So, I learned to play the oboe and was awarded a music scholarship that paid for my full tuition.

To pay for my room and board, I worked several jobs. I worked as a custodian, played piano for the singers in the Glee Club, played in a dance band, and served as a prefect to maintain discipline in one of the dormitories while majoring in chemistry and carrying minors in music, mathematics, and philosophy in preparation for pursuing a second degree in chemical engineering. I aspired to become an engineer due to the stability it offered as a profession and because it was at the forefront of technological advancements owing to Sputnik being launched in the fifties. However, I did not want to become a technocrat. So, I decided to do a 3-2 program whereby you go for three years to a small college to obtain a liberal arts degree after which, if your grades were good, you transfer a major university for an engineering degree

When I entered the Liberal Arts College, I realized that I needed to study and subsequently did very well. I had a teacher at the Liberal Arts college who had a huge influence on me. He encouraged me to join

"...I picked chemical engineering because it was a very broad field, and I've never regretted that because technology is changing at an ever-faster pace, but chemical engineering has allowed me to work in many different fields."



and serve as an officer in student organizations, enter oratory contests, and compete in collegiate chess tournaments. Towards the end of my three years at this Liberal Arts college, I received scholarship offers to continue my engineering studies from several major universities including the University of Illinois and the University of Notre Dame that at the time was an all-men's Catholic university. Since by that time I had 15 years of Catholic school education, it was a dream come true that I could go to Notre Dame. However, my adviser at this Liberal Arts College was a Catholic priest. I was shocked when he said to me, "Bill, go to Illinois." I thought, my lord, there is going to be a lightning bolt coming out of the skies to strike him down. Here is this Catholic priest telling me to go to a secular university. Well, what I did not know, but what he knew, was that Illinois ranked fifth in the world in chemical engineering. So, I turned down the other schools and went to the University of Illinois.



Pictured: 1974-75 Fulbright Group with then Fulbright Director Husnu Ersoy and Prof. Krantz's wife (second from left)

How did you decide to study Chemical Engineering? And, how did your career develop after that?

I always wanted to get as broad an educational basis as I could, not only technically, but also in the humanities. I took 196 semester credit hours in five years that is nearly an average of 20 hours a semester. I pursued higher education to lay down the pediments of the education that life gives you for the rest of your life. So, I picked chemical engineering because it was a very broad field, and I have never regretted that because technology is changing at an ever-faster pace, but chemical engineering has allowed me to keep pace and work in many different fields.

Near the end of my studies at the University of Illinois, I received a job offer from Standard Oil of Indiana, which is now part of BP Amoco, that I was thinking of accepting. Then another teacher got into my life, the department chairman, with whom I never had a class, but he knew me because I was a good student. He was in the Army during the Second World War. He was a little guy, but tough as nails. He had a way of dealing with you that you did not equivocate in any way. He called me into his office and said, "Krantz, where are you going to graduate school?" I replied in my most respectful voice, "Professor, I'm not going to graduate school. I'm going to take a job." He said, "No, you're not. Apply to these four schools." I said okay. At the time I made another critical decision in my life. I was a very good student at the top of my class. I was able to get full support for my Ph.D. studies at Berkeley, Princeton, Carnegie Mellon, and Wisconsin. Coming from a lower middle-class family, I was inclined to accept the offer from Princeton because it is among the most prestigious universities in the world. But I thought, why am I picking Princeton? Because of the prestige of going to an Ivy League school. I decided I wanted to go to Berkeley because the Carter Report came out that year and ranked Berkeley as the best university in the world. At the same time, Berkeley was a hub of student activism, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the civil rights movement, and the free speech movement. I thought Berkeley is where the action is. So, I decided to go to Berkeley, and never regretted that decision.

Were there any people or events that influenced you while you were at Berkeley as well?

While I was at Berkeley, another professor got into my life. I was called into the office by a Jewish professor who was my academic adviser. He had my folder on his desk, and he said, "I see you're Catholic - we don't get very many Catholic students at Berkeley." I asked, "Why?" He responded, "When you go to a religious school such as a Catholic school, you take courses like metaphysics, cosmology, and theology that are based on faith. Faith is beautiful because you accept what is being told to you without rationalization. But then you take courses in science and engineering that are based on fact. You don't believe anything if it can't be proven." And then he said to me, "How can you go from a course where you accept everything on faith to a course where you have to have everything proven?" I was offended. I do not think I showed it, but I walked out of his office and realized he was right.

I can get good grades. Tell me something and I can reproduce it on an exam. However, I was not a questioning student, so I decided right then and there that I was going to change something in my life to become more questioning and inquisitive. Nothing changed at that point, but everything changed because once you decide to change, then you just must think about how to implement it. I decided every class I took and every seminar I attended, I would ask at least one question. Well, that was easy to do in my classes, but at that time Berkeley had several Nobel Prize winners on the faculty who would give seminars at which I had to practice what I said I was going to do. Hundreds of individuals would attend the seminars given by these Nobel laureates. I wanted to avoid appearing ignorant by not asking any sophomoric questions. This got me to pay acute attention during all the lectures and seminars I attended, and to think about what is the best question I could ask. At the same time, in trying to come up with the best question, I started gradually digging more into what people were saying and began asking myself "Why did you do it that way? Or why couldn't you do it this way?" Thereby, becoming more critical. To this day I do not go to a seminar or a lecture without asking at least one question.

Another thing that had a significant influence on my career was when my advisor ran out of money for my research that required me to serve as a teaching assistant for undergraduate courses. The teaching by many of the professors at Berkeley was somewhat lacking. Berkeley got its stellar reputation because the professors were so prolific in publishing and in doing first-rate research. As result many of them did not have time to prepare well for their courses. I was supposed to just grade the homework for the undergraduate courses for which I served as a teaching assistant. However, I was overwhelmed by the students coming into my office and asking questions about the professor's lectures. Finally, I talked to a couple of the undergraduate students and I said, "Look, I need to get my research done, but I want to help you. What if I were to teach a shadow course in the evening that you can attend if you so choose?" I started to do this and very soon I basically had the whole class coming to my shadow course. But then a transformative thing happened after the midterm exam. The professor that taught this course called me into his office and said, "Bill, I don't understand this. Hardly any of the students are coming to class anymore. He said, "I just graded the midterm exam and it's the best performance I've ever had." So, I realized then that I really had the ability to teach, and the thought came to be that I should become an educator.

But I decided I needed to get industry experience first because I wanted to teach engineering. So, I interviewed twenty-two companies and they all flew me out to their sites for an interview, and I received

"...once you decide to change, then you just have to think of how to implement it."



Pictured: Prof. Krantz's classroom lecturing during 2009 visit to Istanbul Technical University

twenty-one job offers. I took my dad with me on some of these trips because my dad had never been in an airplane.

My dad asked me in a very simplistic way, he said, "You interviewed many companies. Where are you going to take a job?"

I responded, "If I had a die with twenty-one faces on it, and I put a company on each of the faces and I flipped it up in the air, and whatever one was on top, I would take that one".

And he said to me, "It sounds to me like you really don't have the fire to take any of these job offers".

I said, "No, I don't".

And he said, "Well, I thought you wanted to become an academic."

I responded, "Well, I do. But I have to get industry experience first".

Then my dad followed with, "It seems to me like if you want to become an academic and you're not sure that any of these companies are right, you should interview one or two universities." I thought, well, the old man is right.

So, I thought of where to apply. It turned out that the professor at Illinois who told me to apply to graduate school went on to become the Dean of Engineering at the University of Colorado. So, I decided, okay, I'm going to listen to my dad, but I am going to interview only one school, the University of Colorado. They were advertising for a bioengineer. To this day, even though I have a few publications in biology, I have never even had high school biology, and I am interviewing for this position in biotechnology. So, I went to the University of Colorado for an interview and gave them a seminar. The department chairman and one of the full professors were sitting in the front row and I put both of them to sleep during my seminar. Not a good way to start. I thought I need to figure out some way to bail this thing out.

So that night, the department chairman had a party at his house. When I came into his house, I saw a grand piano and a six-string folk guitar leaning against the wall. And he had a 16-year-old daughter. When I had a chance, I went over to her and I said, "Would you like to do a gig tonight?" She asked, "Do you play?" And I replied, "I play guitar and piano." She said, "Yeah, I'd love to." So, after dinner, she and I started to play piano and guitar and the faculty, started to sing along. We partied until one in the morning, and I thought this faculty really knows how to party. I found out later that was the only time that ever happened. But I knew that I got the job and it was because of my music, not because of my background. So, that is why I said when my

"I think the best thing I've had is having a very positive influence on the students whom I had the privilege to mentor."

mother introduced me to music, it was fortunate because it laid the foundation for my scholarship at Saint Joseph's College and for my job at the University of Colorado.

Shortly after I took the job and came to the University of Colorado, the department chairman told me to come to his office. He said, "Bill, I first want you to become a good teacher. Then worry about your research program." I loved that advice. I wanted to become a good teacher first, so I did. Within my first four years, I won the All-University Teaching Award for untenured faculty. Then I went on to win many University, regional, and national teaching awards, many of them instigated by the students. I was a good teacher and I have a lifetime appointment as a President's Teaching Scholar, an appointment I treasure to this day.

To this day, you have had many achievements, but among all these, what do you think are your best works? Achievements? The ones that make you proud?

I think my best achievement is having a positive influence on the students whom I had the privilege to mentor. I had the responsibility of teaching an orientation course to well over 100 first-year students during their first weeks at the University. One of the things that I said to them was "Look, don't wait until you're a junior or senior to do undergraduate research." Later in the day, a young man walked into my office and said, "I was inspired by your lectures this morning. I'd like to do undergraduate research." I was delighted that at least one student was motivated by my lecture. So, I said, "Do you have any ideas?" He replied, "Yeah, I'm taking freshman physics now. I think you could use an electromagnetic field to influence the formation of polymeric membranes." I said that I liked his idea but did not tell him that I thought that it would not work. I used mathematical modeling to explore the same idea a few years prior to interacting with this student and found that it would not work. However, I did not want to discourage this young man. So, I gave him funding and lab space to do some experiments. After a month or so he called me in the evening and said, "Hey, Prof. K, it works!" I immediately left my house and drove into town to have him show me his results. Much to my astonishment, it worked. I then found that I had a sign error in my earlier mathematical modeling that resulted in proving that this idea would not work, when in fact it proved that it would work. I was so impressed that I nominated this young man for the United States Collegiate Inventor of the Year Award. He won! He, his mother, my wife, and I, all went to Akron, Ohio, for the investiture ceremony when he was inducted into the U.S. Inventors Hall of Fame. He went on to Stanford University where he received a medical degree and now is an academic.

Another achievement is starting a research center to provide industry experience for undergraduates. I was concerned that I was teaching engineers, 85% or 90% of whom went to industry after graduating. Yet, I had no experience in industry to better prepare them for their future jobs. The National Science Foundation (NSF) established the Industry-University Cooperative Research Program. This is a block-funded program where industry provides most of the money and suggests the research projects. My idea was to make this not only provide research money for faculty and graduate students, but also to provide an industry research experience for undergraduates. The NSF Center provided opportunities for our undergraduates well beyond my expectations. Believe it or not, the Center that we started in 1988 is still going today with block-funding from NSF. I am very proud of this achievement that I consider a significant part of my academic legacy.



An Inspiring Story

How did you decide to apply for the Fulbright Program?

When my first sabbatical came up, I looked for opportunities to have an international experience because I had never left the United States before. Istanbul Technical University (ITU) advertised for a chemical engineer to teach a graduate course in mass transfer with chemical reaction. It was a very advanced course that we were not even teaching at the University of Colorado at that time. However, I had studied the subject and was very interested in teaching a course on it.

It was a Fulbright Lectureship Award. I applied for it and was successful. Prior to going to ITU, my wife and I went to Munich, Germany, where I had to present a paper at a technical meeting. Afterwards we had to get from Munich to Istanbul but we did not have enough money to pay for the plane fare. So, we took a bus from Munich to Istanbul. Recall that at this time there were many Turkish workers in Germany, many of whom were on this bus. In fact, we were the only non-Turkish people on this bus. No one on the bus could speak any English whatsoever and we had not learned to speak any Turkish yet. Everything was fine until we got to Bulgaria, which was behind the Iron Curtain at this time. My wife and I got pulled off the bus by the Bulgarian authorities. They put us in a room with no windows. Nobody on the bus could tell us anything about what was happening. We were there for about two hours with no communication whatsoever. We were thinking, when we get out, that bus will have moved on to Istanbul and we are going to be stuck in Bulgaria for the rest of our life, probably in a jail cell. After about two hours, they opened the door and called us out. And sure enough, the bus waited for us. We were so appreciative. We got to Istanbul very late in the evening because of this delay. Nonetheless, the entire chemical engineering faculty were still waiting for us in Taksim Square!

How was your Fulbright experience in Türkiye?

When we got there, I kept asking the department chairman, in my most respectful voice, "When does my class start?" and initially he would say, "Maybe in a week or two." However, it did not start in a week or two. It was almost the end of October when my class finally could



Pictured: Prof. Krantz giving student awards at Istanbul Technical University, 2009

begin. What they never told me was that I had a class of about 30 or 35 Turkish students, and only two of them could speak any English. They had arranged for me to have an interpreter, but they never told me that. I had never had to teach with an interpreter. So, after the first lecture, the interpreter came to me and said, "Bill, I can translate for you, but you need to break your lectures into sound bites whereby you take a concept and present it rather simply" and I respected that. So, I organized my lectures much better. When I came back to the United States, it made me a better teacher because it helped me organize my lectures.



Pictured: Prof. Krantz with his 3 former Turkish students he took to the States, Birgul Tantekin-Ersolmaz (L) also a Fulbright alumna 1998-1999 alumna, and Füsün & Hasancan Okutan (R), 2009

How was Istanbul back then during your Fulbright year?

When we looked out of the window in our apartment in Beşiktaş, there were weathered wooden buildings in the heart of Istanbul. There were also many horses and carts. Yet on the road, there were very few private cars. There were many what they called "dolmuses". These were mostly old American cars that they could get a surprisingly large number of people into. They also had "dolmuş water taxis" to cross the Bosphorus Straits. It was totally different. If you looked out at night, Istanbul had this beautiful yellow glow because so many places were being lit by kerosene light. It was totally different. But one thing that probably has not changed is the traffic.

We lived in Besiktas because back then Istanbul Technical University was on the Maçka campus. I can remember walking on the wide sidewalk along Maçka Caddesi and all of a sudden hearing a horn and it was a car driving on the sidewalk and giving us the horn because the traffic was too congested on the street. This was not uncommon. If you could not move on the street, you just drove up on the sidewalk and honked your horn and the pedestrians got out of the way. It was a different world for us. My wife and I just found it fascinating. We had a great experience because culturally it was so different. We also fell in love with the food. My wife learned the recipes for some of the Turkish dishes that she cooks quite often to this day.

"Go to a place where it might really be transformative. Türkiye was that for me in so many ways and in every way it was positive. Look for something exciting, something that will take you out of your element and expose you to something entirely new and let that happen. The Fulbright program will do that... You can work with people and explore new areas. And that's what I mean by 'transformative'. Not only culturally transformative but also exposing you to new areas of technology in science."

We know you have built strong connections with Türkiye and you have supported many young people on their path to becoming an academician. How did you make it happen?

Early in my second semester in Türkiye, I picked up hepatitis-A. I was told I would get over it quickly. However, I was basically out of commission for about two months. I felt very sad about this, but there was nothing I could do about it. When my time ended at ITU, I really had a guilt complex because they counted so much on me doing things for them. I said I must do something for Türkiye and ITU. So, I discussed my concern with the faculty at ITU who said, "Yes, we'd really like to have some of our top students go to the United States for graduate studies."

When I went back to the United States, I convinced my department to accept a Turkish student with full financial support. They said, "We'll try one." I knew the young Turkish man I brought over would be successful. He could not speak English when he came, but he picked it up so quickly I could not believe it. He was outstanding. So, after my department realized how good he was, they said, "Would you recruit some more students from Türkiye?" I believe that I recruited 11 students to come to the U.S. for their PhD studies. Nine of these students came to the University of Colorado and two of them to the University of Wyoming. Two of these students pursued their PhDs working with me. Two of them returned to Türkiye after receiving their PhDs and joined the faculty at ITU. They rose through the ranks to become full professors. One became the Dean of Engineering and one became a Special Advisor to the President at ITU. I was very influential in influencing another faculty member at the University of Colorado to apply for a Fulbright Award at Bogaziçi University. A few years later he applied for a second Fulbright Award at Ege University in Izmir. He became a very enthusiastic supporter of Türkiye and Turkish students.



Pictured: Prof. Krantz and his wife in Istanbul 2009

One of my former students, the one who became a full professor and Special Adviser to the President at ITU, put me on as a collaborator on a research grant that was funded by TÜBİTAK that is administered by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye. Hence, I went to spend one month in Türkiye in 2016. My former student was working on a major problem in the Mediterranean Basin. Since Türkiye is an agricultural country, they would like to use desalinated seawater to irrigate crops. However, the problem is that the Mediterranean Basin water has an anomalously high boron concentration. So, you must reduce the boron concentration that is prohibitively expensive to do. At least it was for Türkiye at the time. She and I developed a process that was incredibly economical for achieving the desired boron reduction. We published two papers on this research and were awarded a Turkish patent. This innovative technology for reducing the boron concentration is very useful for all the Mediterranean Basin countries.

"I now realize that when you're a full-time academic, you are constrained because you have to publish or perish. You can't explore your crazy ideas. When you retire, particularly when you get to be my age, people expect you to be seen a little bit senile or maybe to have Alzheimer's. They expect you to be crazy. That's wonderful because you can come up with a crazy idea and people just say, "Well, he's crazy."

I became very committed to the Fulbright Program because it had such a positive influence on my life. Shortly after returning from Türkiye to the United States, I accepted an invitation to serve on the Middle East Advisory Committee for the US International Exchange Scholars, which administers the Fulbright Program. I served on this Committee for three years during which time I made recommendations and reviewed the bidirectional proposals for 22 countries. Recently I made a very substantive commitment to the Fulbright Program by joining the 1946 Society that honors the founding year of the Fulbright Program and provides significant financial support for its programs.

Prior to my Fulbright Award in Türkiye, I never had any international experience. However, my experience in Türkiye sensitized me to the richness of our multicultural world. My wife and I have traveled to more than 80 countries and have lived in ten of them.

What makes you happy and what inspires you in your job, in what you do?

Mentoring young people really makes me happy. Since I am retired from a full-time academic appointment, I do not have an opportunity to teach classes anymore. But I continue to enjoy interacting with the students and faculty around the world. I take advantage of opportunities to give seminars, lectures, and workshops. Since retiring, I have had visiting professor appointments at the Australian National University, the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, National Taiwan University, the University of Auckland, Siddaganga Institute of Technology, and the University of Iceland.

The other thing I enjoy is exploring new ideas in science and technology. I now realize that when you are a full-time academic at a major research university, you are constrained because you must publish or perish. You cannot explore your crazy ideas. When you retire, particularly when you get to be my age, people expect you to be a bit senile. They expect you to be crazy. This is wonderful because you can come up with a crazy idea and people just say, "Well, he's crazy." When I finished my last full-time academic appointment in Singapore in 2008, I had a total of six patents after 32 years at the University of Colorado, five years at the University of Cincinnati, and three years at the National University of Singapore. I then retired, had no more research funding, and no longer had a research group or laboratory. Since retiring, I have been awarded 20 more patents. Do you know why? Because obtaining patents requires having novel ideas. Because the university environment is so constraining with its culture of publish or perish, most academics do not try crazy ideas because if they do not pan out in a year or two, they will not get the publications. I always think that if I had to live life over again, I probably would retire earlier to give myself the personal freedom to explore new ideas. Also, when you are an educator, you want to do a good job of teaching. I did what my department chairman at the University of Colorado told me: "Bill, become a good teacher first, and then worry about your research program." But if you really are a conscientious



An Inspiring Story

teacher and mentor for your students, there is not much time left to do research to pursue crazy ideas. You are really committed. I am publishing way more now than I did when I was a full-time academic, so I am having a ball being retired.

Do you have any advice for young academics and practitioners in your field?

I am not going to give you what I say. I want to share with you the wisdom of Confucius. When I went to the National University of Singapore in 2005, the Administration told me, "You don't have to teach if you don't want to, but we want you to stimulate creativity." At that time, I did not understand what they meant. It did not take me very long to realize what they wanted. I decided to teach a graduate-level course in mathematical modeling. The Chinese students of whom we had many in Singapore were very hard-working and bright. But they were so much into performing well on exams that they never asked questions in class. I think that takes a toll on creativity. It took me a while to understand that. I realized that if you want to help young people get to where they want to go, you need to find out where they are coming from. What I did then was to read into Taoism and Confucianism. When I was teaching that class, and periodically asked "Any questions?" There were no questions. It just was not part of their culture to ask questions. So, I figured out a clever way to handle the students' reluctance to ask questions. I made the homework so difficult that the joke was that the class was not certain that I could work the problems. Moreover, I counted the homework for 25% of their course grade. Well, if you want to get Southeast Asian students to respond and I think it works for Turkish students, too, all you need to do is assign a grade. I came into the class after that first impossible homework assignment, and the students asked, "Are you going to talk about the homework?" To which I responded, "No, not in class. I will talk about the homework during office hours." When I walked into the office hours, which were in another room, almost the entire class was there because nobody could work the homework. I said, "Any questions?" No questions. So, I turned my back, bit my lips, to refrain from laughing, and walked toward the door, at which point there was absolute cacophony in the classroom. So gradually, like pulling teeth, I got the students to ask questions. The purpose was to make a cultural change. By midterm, I had that whole class responding like a class of U.S. students. The class opened up to discussion and asking questions. But to accomplish this I had to know where the students were coming from to help them get to where they wanted to go. Now let me convey the advice that Confucius said, "Find a job you love and you'll never work a day in your life." And that is my advice for young academics and practitioners. Find a job that you love!



Pictured: Prof. Krantz with his wife in Istanbul, 2010

What would be your advice to people who wish to apply to Fulbright programs?

Explore the possibilities offered by the Fulbright program and seek an opportunity that might be truly transformative in your life. When I talk to people, a lot of them just want to be comfortable. They are working in a particular research area. They want to go to prestigious universities like Oxford and Cambridge. That is great. You might make some advancements in your research, but that is not really transformative. Go to a place that might really be transformative. Türkiye was that for me in so many ways and in every way it was positive. Look for something exciting, something that will take you out of your element and expose you to something entirely new and let that happen. The Fulbright program will do that. That is what the Fulbright Specialist award that I received in 2022 offered to me. My appointment was in a private college in the State of Karnataka in South India. They were not doing anything in my field at all. They were mainly interested in agricultural technology such as concentrating sugar, canola oil, coconut water, and other liquid food products. I have never worked in that area before. But that is what they were interested in. Now I am working with them. We have a cooperative program. We are writing a review paper and trying to get funding from industry in India for this research. You can work with people and explore new areas. And that is what I mean by transformative. Not only culturally transformative but also exposing you to new areas of technology and science.

"Fulbright changed my life. So I returned to the U.S. and served for three years on the US Council for the International Exchange of Scholars that administers the Fulbright Program. It was great. I think I was a good spokesperson for Türkiye, but also for many other countries. I became ever more committed to the Fulbright program, and now I am a member of the Fulbright 1946 Society that honors the founding year of the Fulbright Program whose members are the Fulbright Association's most loyal and generous donors."



Pictured: Prof. Krantz at Emirgan Park with his wife and his former Ph.D. student Birgul Tantekin-Ersolmaz, 2010

American Programs

American Programs welcomed the 2023-2024 grantees in September! We held our Initial Orientation Meeting with one Senior Lecturer, one Postdoctoral Awardee, four Student Researchers, two Master's Program grantees and 14 English Teaching Assistants (ETA), one of which is a renewal grantee. A Distinguished Scholar, another Senior Lecturer, three Senior Researchers and our Greece – Türkiye Joint Research Award grantee will arrive later in the academic year. Our three Master's Program grantees from 2022-2023 continue their grants for a third semester. This year we have ETAs placed in universities in Artvin, Erzurum, Isparta, Izmir, Kayseri, Trabzon, Sivas and Zonguldak. We wish all our grantees a productive and successful year filled with pleasant experiences and ample opportunity for cultural exchange!

Turkish Universities are always encouraged to host U.S. Scholars and Students in different grant categories offered by the Turkish Fulbright Commission. Institutions interested in hosting a grantee are always welcome to contact American Programs at amprog@fulbright.org.tr for details.

Final Meeting with the 2022-2023 U.S. Scholars and Students in Istanbul

The Final Meeting with our Scholar and Student group grantees was held in Istanbul on June 5, 2023. During the day-long event grantees shared their research findings and experiences in Türkiye. The event was also an occasion to reflect on the invaluable opportunity provided by the Fulbright grant. Fulbright Türkiye Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli and Ms. Viraj LeBailly Public Affairs

Officer from the U.S. Embassy both addressed and congratulated the group for the successful completion of their grant period. Ms. LeBailly underlined that the 2022-2023 U.S. Scholars and Students are now part of the Fulbright legacy and therefore the strength of the bilateral U.S. – Türkiye relations. Ms. LeBailly suggested that this should be the beginning and not the end, urging everyone to carry forward

all the linkages that they have helped create. In his closing remarks Prof. Aydınli noted that the meeting had been an intellectual feast, emphasized the unique features of Fulbright which distinguishes this grant from all other scholarships in the world and reiterated that Fulbright is indeed about fellows. The meeting ended with a cozy group dinner at a restaurant near our Istanbul Office in Beşiktaş.



Online Final Evaluation Meeting with the 2022-2023 ETA Grantees

Pictured right: 2022-2023 ETA grantees experiencing Türkiye throughout the academic year!

The final evaluation meeting with our ETAs was held online. On June 9, 2023, ETA grantees who were posted in state universities throughout Türkiye shared with us their experiences in their host institutions, host cities and Türkiye in general. Following a successful meeting, we bade farewell to our 2022-2023 ETA grantees, who are now our alumni!



Webinar Series with the 2023-2024 Grantees and Online Turkish Language Courses for ETAs

A series of webinars were organized for the 2023-2024 cohort introducing them to their grant and Türkiye starting in May 2023. Special emphasis was laid on explaining the visa and permit procedures in detail to ensure a smooth arrival and transition to Türkiye. Online Turkish language classes were offered for our ETAs in two different levels. The three-week intense courses gave beginners a chance to acquire survival Turkish and those who had preliminary Turkish knowledge had the opportunity to practice and improve their language skills.



Initial Orientation Program with Grantees in September

The Initial Orientation Program for the 2023-2024 academic year grantees was held in Ankara starting on September 18, 2023. All grantees from five grant categories joined the event. The meeting took off with the opening address of Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli, who emphasized that Fulbright is about people and about exchange and that the human to human touch is in fact the bedrock of Türkiye - U.S. relations. Mr. John Silver the Regional English Language Officer (RELO), who recently joined the Embassy in Ankara, addressed the grantees on behalf of the U.S. Embassy and pointed out that Fulbright grantees are the ambassadors of the U.S., who are actually in the field interacting with Turkish people. This, according to Mr. Silver, is a magic opportunity!

After two days of presentations on administrative and financial issues, Embassy briefings, introduction to Turkish culture, history and politics and resolving of practical issues like bank accounts, the third day was devoted to

cultural trips to Anıtkabir, the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations and Ankara Castle. Lunch was a special treat at Çukurhan, a restored caravanserai at the heart of historic Ankara, dating all the way back to late 16th or early 17th century. The guided tour was a fun event which everyone seemed to enjoy.

Pictured below and right: 2023-2024 U.S. Grantees paying a visit to Anıtkabir and exploring Ankara



ELT Sessions with ETAs

Pictured below (L-R): 2023-2024 ETA grantees during interactive ELT Sessions

2023-2024 ETA grantees received trainings during the Initial Orientation Meeting on September 21, 2023. The ELT sessions started with a Commission presentation reminding the ETAs of the rules and

requirements of the Program and continued with U.S. Embassy Regional English Language Officer Mr. John Silver's presentation on available resources for English teachers. A series of presentations on English Language teaching in Türkiye and student motivation, designing a speaking lesson from scratch, adapting coursebook activities to enhance interaction in speaking classes and how to promote active learning by adjusting and scaffolding instruction provided a chance for grantees to make the most out

of their teaching experience. The sessions were carried out by Dr. Nuray Luk Grove a former English Language Fellow and former Director of the English Language School at TED University in Ankara, Dr. Esen Metin, EFL Instructor and Teacher Trainer at Çankaya University in Ankara and last but not least Ms. Müslüme Demir, a former Fulbright Teaching Assistant and EFL Instructor at Yıldırım Beyazıt University in Ankara. Grantees enjoyed the interactive nature of the sessions and had some fun moments "swatting flies"!



Welcome Reception at the U.S. Embassy Residence

A big crowd of grantees, alumni and Fulbright stakeholders came together in the beautiful garden of the U.S. Embassy Residence, which was the highlight of

the Initial Orientation Program. The welcome reception organized by the Fulbright Commission and hosted by Ambassador Jeffrey Flake on 21

September 2023, was a memorable event allowing professional networking and interaction between Fulbrighters, past and present.



Pictured: Ambassador Flake and Mrs. Flake welcoming the 2023-2024 cohort of Fulbrighters



Pictured: Ambassador Flake and Mrs. Flake with Fulbright Alumni at their Residence

Fulbright ETA Seminar on Media Literacy: Empowering Educators for the Digital Age

The Romanian-U.S. Fulbright Commission in partnership with the Babeş-Bolyai University organized a Media Literacy Seminar. The event which took place from October 25 to October 28, brought together 55 U.S. Fulbright English Teaching Assistants – ETAs from 14 European and Eurasian countries. The seminar took place in Cluj-Napoca,

Romania, during the Global Media and Information Literacy Week, as part of the International Conference and Training on Digital and Media Education. Three of our ETA grantees had the opportunity to participate in this exciting event. Byann, Marion and Nicolas reported that the Seminar was an enriching and worthwhile experience.

Beyond the intense sessions and workshops, the seminar provided an excellent opportunity for Fulbright ETAs to connect with their peers from other countries and learn from each other.

Special thanks to the Romanian Fulbright Commission for organizing this memorable event!



Pictured: 2023-2024 ETAs from 14 countries attended the Media Literacy Seminar in Romania



Pictured (L-R): 2023-2024 ETAs Byann, Nicolas and Marion during a cultural trip



American Programs

Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli's Site Visit to Urla – İzmir

Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli visited our 2023-2024 ETAs placed around the İzmir area on October 27, 2023. The site visit took place in the form of a casual get together at a lovely cafe by the seaside in Urla. Amna who is placed in Izmir Technology Institute in Urla also had the opportunity to touch base with Ollie and Elisa in Izmir Katip Çelebi University, which is in Çiğli, nearly 100 km away from Urla. Conversation over coffee extended into the evening and everyone seemed to enjoy Urla and the excellent weather, reminiscent of summer!



Pictured above (L-R): Amna, Prof. Aydınli, Ollie and Elisa



Pictured right: Prof. Aydınli with 2023-2024 ETAs Amna, Ollie and Elisa

Thanksgiving Dinner for U.S. Grantees



We hosted our U.S. Grantees for the annual Thanksgiving Dinner on November 24, 2023 in Istanbul. Joined by the U.S. Consul General in Istanbul, Julie Eadeh and her husband, we enjoyed the traditional fare and warm conversations. The "gratitude game" where everyone got to share what they are grateful for in their lives was topped off with a delicious pumpkin pie and çay! As an opportunity to get together with our grantees placed in various locations in Türkiye, the Thanksgiving Dinner 2023 was a memorable event!



Coffee Hour with 2023-2024 U.S. Grantees in Istanbul

2023-2024 U.S. grantees from various grant categories placed in Istanbul met at the Fulbright Istanbul Office over a cup of coffee (or tea!) on October 27, 2023. Grantees and Istanbul Office staff got a chance to bond in the cozy atmosphere of our office in Beşiktaş. The coffee hour provided an opportunity to celebrate birthdays and accomplishments!



Pictured: 2023-2024 U.S. Grantees based in Istanbul enjoying tea and coffee at the Fulbright Istanbul Office



Pictured: Happy Birthday Laurel (right) and congratulations Jane for the successful completion of intermediary level Turkish language courses. Tebrikler!

Specialist Dr. Elena Smyrniotis from the University of Iowa visits Konya Selçuk University with a project to incorporate environmental issues to art education

The first part of the Project, which started on October 01, 2023 and will run through to November 07, 2023, is the Monotype Workshop, teaching monotype methods and demonstrating sustainable methods of printmaking. The workshop was attended by a large group of students and faculty from both Selçuk University and Karatay University.

During the second part of the Project, Elena will collaborate with students and faculty of the Art Department to create a three dimensional map of Konya reflecting on the long history and exuberant culture of one of the most important urban centers in the World and celebrating the traditional arts of the Konya region. The third and final part of Elena's Fulbright mission is a sculpture inspired by the cultural, historical and archeological sites she visited since she arrived in Konya. The sculpture will be made from reclaimed materials and displayed at the lobby of the Art Department.

An important part of Elena's program in Selcuk University consists of participating in local cultural activities. Elena took part at the felt carpet workshop at the Department of Traditional Art, led by Prof. Meral Akan and Prof. Zuhâl Türkteş. Elena also visited historical and archeological sites, including Mevlana Museum and site, Karatay Medrese, Panorama Konya Museum, The Aladdin Mosque and took a road trip to Cappadocia.



Pictured: The announcement for the Monotype Workshop and a moment from the well-attended workshop held on October 20, 2023



Pictured: Elena, in the middle with Prof. Akan, second from left and students during a felt making activity



Pictured: Elena with Prof. Zuhâl Türkteş, primary contact of the Project during a carpet shop visit



"American cataloging Americans (among others) in the İstanbul Archives"

Jane Bragdon

*2022-2023 Turkish Universities
Master's Program Renewal
Grantee*

My name is Jane Bragdon and I am a U.S. Master's Fulbright Student getting my MA in Art History at Koç University in İstanbul. I am working as an intern for the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT), working primarily on the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery archives. I am helping centrally catalog the archive's information of deceased, rights holders, and locations of graves into an online database. Since the site is both a historical one and an active cemetery, my work has been at the intersection of the historical and the practical, literally where international diplomacy meets local administration. The archives, which are co-managed by the Hungarian, British, Swiss, Swedish, German, Dutch, and American governments, appear in all languages and feature people from all over the world. It's a puzzle rather than rote data entry; it takes looking at burial

permissions, grave receipts, death records, cemetery logbooks, gravestone data, and more to figure out the exact information to catalog. I even got to write in the ledger myself, adding my handwriting to the historical record!

The project has been very intellectually engaging, particularly because of its connection to Amherst College, my alma mater, which began as a seminary college and had an outside role in missionary work in the Middle East, evidenced by the Amherst alumni in the Feriköy Cemetery archives. The connections I have made, personal and professional, throughout this internship have created a new international community for me in İstanbul. To put it another way, while I imagine most of my peers are networking with Amherst alumni in big cities like New York and D.C., I happen to be networking with 19th century Amherst graduates in the archives in İstanbul. It has made me realize that rather than simply being an outsider and guest of Türkiye, I also have a personal stake in the history and the city of İstanbul. I have gained a newfound passion for American heritage abroad, historical

stewardship, and the connections between private and public organizations to preserve our shared history that I hope to keep with me my entire life.



*Pictured: Jane Bragdon in İstanbul
Photo credit: 2022-2023 Student Researcher
Maegan Murphey*

Updates from Nadia Dervish, Gazi University in Ankara

2023-2024 Student Researcher Grantee Nadia Dervish, who is affiliated with Gazi University in Ankara, ran the first-ever international half marathon of Ankara. The 21.1 km long run was organized by RUNKARA on 08 October, 2023. The half marathon started off in Anıt Park, adjacent to Anıtkabir, Atatürk's Mausoleum and ended at the ATO Congressium. Congratulations Nadia!

Also, in conjunction with TÖMER, the Turkish Learning Center and the General Directorate of Highways of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Nadia Dervish recorded new traffic announcements for the tunnel on the TEM Highway that connects Ankara and İstanbul. Thank you Nadia for the native language input!



Pictured: Nadia Dervish at the finish line



*Pictured: Nadia Dervish at the recording studio
at Ankara University*

"The Barber of Ankara"

Assoc. Prof. Christopher Walsh

2023-2024 Senior Lecturer
Grantee

Boston University, Massachusetts /
Başkent University, Ankara



Different Fulbrighters do different things. Some teach classes and others take them, some write books, others collaborate on projects and experiments, or organize conferences. The list goes on. I want to add to it something that almost all of us do, and without realizing that it, too, fulfills our mission. I speak of getting a haircut.

It's funny that I, a man with very little (and graying) hair stationed in a country known for (among many other things) hair transplants, should be writing about this subject, but there I was in my third week in Ankara, feeling a little shaggy and thinking of something a character in a Saul Bellow novel said about going to the barber: "I was here not because I needed a haircut but, as so often, only because I longed for a human touch."

My barber that day was standing at the door of his shop on a busy side-street in Kızılay, the humming hub of Ankara. He sat me down after taking a last drag of his cigarette. In my broken Turkish I asked him to do his best to make me look better, and we settled on a price. He worked quickly, the scissors swooping and snipping so fast that I could feel a breeze swirl around my scalp and ears. As he finished, he pointed to a tub of facemask cream. This was not something I had ever gone in for, but the price was right and the cream felt good on my skin. As the mask was drying, Reşat (by now I had learned his name) asked his

son Ahmed to bring over a tin of brownish goop. "This will make your hair look good," he said, I think. I'm still not sure what it was. (That night my daughter said my hair looked darker and wrote home that her father had gotten a dye job.) After he finished combing whatever it was into my hair, Reşat gently pushed my head forward and cradled it over the sink as he gave me a quick shampoo.

As we said goodbye I found myself thinking again of that line from Bellow (whom I worked for back in the 1990's, an experience I'm writing about during my stay in Türkiye, when I'm not teaching American literature at Başkent University). Yes, the human touch. But I think there is even more to going to the barber or salon than that. Every time you do it, you make yourself vulnerable, putting not only your looks but in a way your very life in the hands of a stranger who applies potions and wields sharp-edged tools around your head and neck. It is just as well we do this without thinking too much about it, but getting a haircut in another country reminded me that the exchange—to use a Fulbright word—both requires and cultivates trust. I decided that Reşat and I had done our part in "increasing mutual understanding and peaceful relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries," and, I walked out into the bustling Kızılay afternoon.

Following the Footsteps of 2023-2024 ETA Elisar El-Gaouny, Erciyes University in Kayseri

Pictured left: Elisar exploring Ephesus

Pictured right: Elisar joined by ETAs Amna Haider
and Nicolas Fay – Ephesus





Pictured: Shadows of ETAs in Çeşme – Izmir



Pictured: Elisar with ETA Emerson Monks in Istanbul

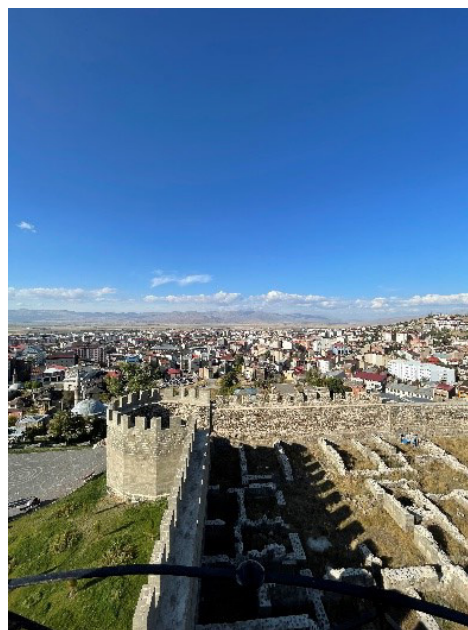
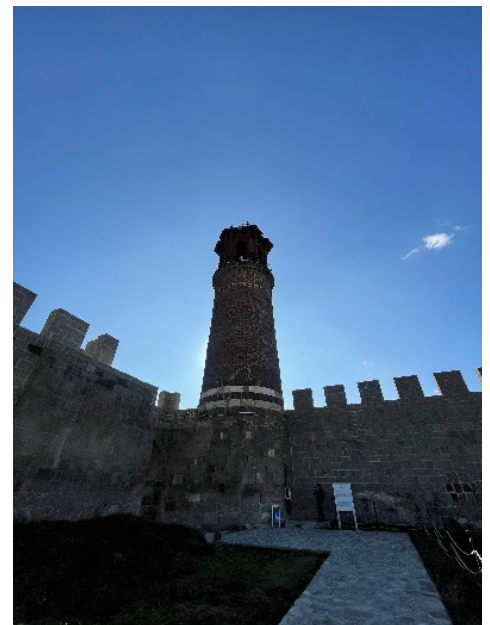


Pictured: Shadows of ETAs in Çeşme – Izmir

Snapshots from 2023-2024 ETA Tan Abascal at Erzurum Technical University

Pictured right and below right: 2023-2024 ETA Grantees Emerson Monks and Tan Abascal conquering the bastions of Erzurum

Pictured below: 2022-2023 ETA Group and 2023-2024 Master's Grantee Rebecca Eneyini (first from the right) enjoying kebabs in Ankara



Turkish Programs

Pre-Departure Orientations for the 2023-2024 Academic Year Grants

We said our goodbyes to the outgoing grantees who started their programs in the United States with the start of the Fall 2023 semester.

In a busy event calendar, almost all of our orientations were held in an in-person format with the exception of the webinar for the Commission's Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Program grantees.



Pictured: 2023-2024 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program grantees at the Pre-Departure Orientation held at the Commission's Head Office in Ankara



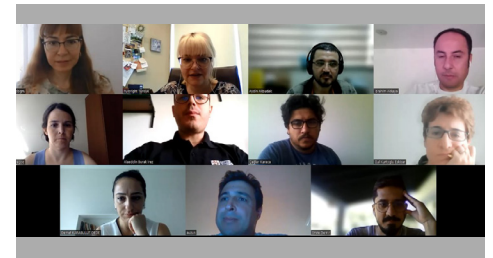
Pictured: 2023-2024 Student Core Program and VSR Program grantees at the Pre-Departure Orientation held at Divan Hotel in Ankara



Pictured: 2023-2024 Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program grantees at the Pre-Departure Orientation held at the Commission's Head Office in Ankara



Pictured: 2022-2023 Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) Program - Fall 2023 cohort participants at the Pre-Departure Orientation held at the Commission's Head Office in Ankara



Pictured: 2023-2024 Postdoctoral Program and Visiting Scholar Program grantees at the virtual Pre-Departure Orientation

Initial Orientation for the 2024-2025 Academic Year Student Core Program

The initial orientation for the newly-selected 2024-2025 academic year Master's and PhD grant candidates was held on September 08, 2023 in Ankara.

Pictured: 2024-2025 Student Core Program candidates at the Initial Orientation held at Grand Mercure Hotel in Ankara



Application Period for the 2024 - 2025 Grants

The application deadline for the 2025-2026 Student Core Program is March 18, 2024

The application deadline for the Fulbright-Kennedy Center Fellowship for Performing Arts and Science is March 15, 2024

Please visit the Commission's official website for more information:
www.fulbright.org.tr



Stories from Our Turkish Fulbright Grantees

"A Day in Starkville, Mississippi"

Minel Güler

2022-2023 Ph.D. Program Grantee

Koç University, Istanbul / Mississippi State University

I have lived in Starkville, Mississippi, for over a year as a Ph.D. student. Starkville is described as a college town with its approximately 25 thousand population and the enormous campus of Mississippi State. I, "a city girl," as they call me, had never lived in a small town like Starkville before coming here. Therefore, I had some concerns and prejudices regarding the life and social activities in Starkville; some turned out to be false, and some turned out to be accurate, but overall, everything has been better than I had imagined. If you ever feel a similar hesitation to live in a "small" college town for research purposes, here is a snapshot of a day full of activities from my perspective:

I wake up to an ordinary Saturday morning with hot and humid weather. I go to the Starkville community market, where locals

sell fruits, vegetables, cookies, pastries they make, or flowers they grow. As a side note, my favorite is muscadine; it has a sour taste, but if you come across muscadine, try to make its juice (I recently learned how to make it, and it was a great challenge). Although the market is open between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. (a small period compared to the hours of markets in Türkiye), most come around 8 a.m. After two failed attempts to find fruits and vegetables around 9 and 10 a.m., I learned to go at 8 a.m. (an excellent opportunity to start the weekend early). In addition to native goods from Mississippi, the market provides opportunities to contact local people and sometimes listen to a concert (yes, you read it right, a concert in the morning).

On the same day, the Cotton District Art Festival took place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In my second year, I am still amazed at how many artists and singers live around Starkville and the number of people who come to enjoy the art festival. There were two platforms at two ends of the main street, where musicians performed throughout the day. The artists sold their drawings, jewelry, and food they produced along both sides of the street. This year, I had an opportunity to help the council for 3 hours. In this way, I could meet new people with whom I could never meet in any other way and learn a lot from them about life in Mississippi. Overall, I discovered that living

in a small town differs across countries, and "even" a small town provides many leisure activities. I would, however, like to warn you that being informed about these activities might take time, and it is important to remain open-minded and ready to explore during this time.



Pictured: Minel at the Cotton District Art Festival (Starkville, Mississippi), Photo by Patricia Cordero-Irizarry

"Solidarity through Expertise: Supporting Türkiye Earthquake Survivors through Trauma-Informed Education"

Merve Özçelik

2022-2023 Ph.D. Program Grantee

Boğaziçi University, Istanbul / The Pennsylvania State University

As the spring semester of 2023 began, Türkiye was struck by two devastating earthquakes, resulting in significant loss of life and widespread suffering. Despite being a world away as a PhD student, I couldn't ignore the urge to help. To combat my feelings of helplessness, I initially made monetary donations to various charitable organizations. However, I soon realized that a more profound form of assistance was needed. Concurrently, I was diligently pursuing my studies, including a course named "Theory & Research in Language Teacher Education." During this academic journey, a fundamental question began to

occupy my thoughts: how could educators and students in Türkiye continue their pursuit of knowledge in the wake of such a cataclysmic disaster? It was a question that transcended the confines of theory and ventured into the realm of practicality.

This pivotal moment prompted me to harness my academic expertise as a means of offering professional aid to teachers working in earthquake-affected areas. Supported by the encouragement and backing of my esteemed professor and fellow students, I embarked on a mission to assemble a voluntary committee comprising educators and psychologists already engaged in the affected region. Over the course of two months, we convened virtually, collaborating tirelessly to craft a workshop tailored to the unique needs of teachers in this challenging environment. Our workshop aimed to provide a platform for teachers to share their experiences, articulate their challenges, and express

their educational aspirations. In addition to addressing emotional and professional concerns, our workshop delved into trauma awareness and its manifestations, acquainting educators with trauma-informed teaching practices and effective classroom management techniques. We aimed not only to provide practical guidance but also to facilitate healing. Furthermore,



Pictured: Merve at her presentation about the effects of trauma on brain and learning

we encouraged teachers to explore self-care practices, understanding that the well-being of educators directly impacts the learning environment and the students they serve.

The culmination of our collective efforts took place on June 10, 2023, in Adiyaman.

"A Typical College Game-Day Experience"

Baran Şen

2023-2024 Master's Program Grantee

Boğaziçi University, İstanbul / Duke University

One of the most interesting things that surprised me in the United States was the prevalence and significance of college sports. Colleges in the United States have sports facilities and stadiums that rival those of professional teams and manage to draw in vast crowds in game days. It is not uncommon to see crowds of more than 30,000 people in attendance.

Prior to my experience here at Duke, I'd always thought that only students of the

Teachers from diverse subject areas converged to participate in our workshop. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with participants attesting to its relevance and the benefit they derived. This experience reinforced a crucial lesson: the synergy between theory and practice

university attended college sports games. Attending the first American football game of the season, I was astonished when I saw the crowd of fans I was among: students, parents, grandparents, children... People from all walks of life attended the game. What was even more surprising was the fact that the away section was just as crowded as the section for home fans.

The atmosphere of the game itself is breathtaking. In some cases, the shows and displays prior to the game and during the breaks is just as entertaining as the game itself. Prior to the game, a magnificent display of fireworks gets everyone in the school spirit. In American football, games may run longer than 4 hours, but the school band keeps the cheering atmosphere going, so the time just flies by.

Attending the games is also a great way to make new friends. Typically, most fans arrive at the stadium at least two hours before the game. The area outside the

is both challenging and invaluable. It underscored how my academic pursuits, bolstered by the support of the Turkish Fulbright Commission, can have a tangible and transformative impact on the peoples of my homeland.

stadium is reserved for game day activities, concerts, food trucks etc. so there are plenty of opportunities to get to meet new people. It's especially great since it allows you to meet with a lot of people outside your program of study. In conclusion, I recommend everyone to attend college sports games if possible. Even if you don't enjoy the game itself (which is highly unlikely), the amazing atmosphere and getting into the school spirit will be an unforgettable experience.



Pictured: Wallace Wade Stadium at Duke University at Duke vs. Clemson game, showing Baran's game-day

"Culture of Our New Home"

Başak Veliöğlü Ulubaş

2023-2024 Ph.D. Program Grantee

Koç University, İstanbul / University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

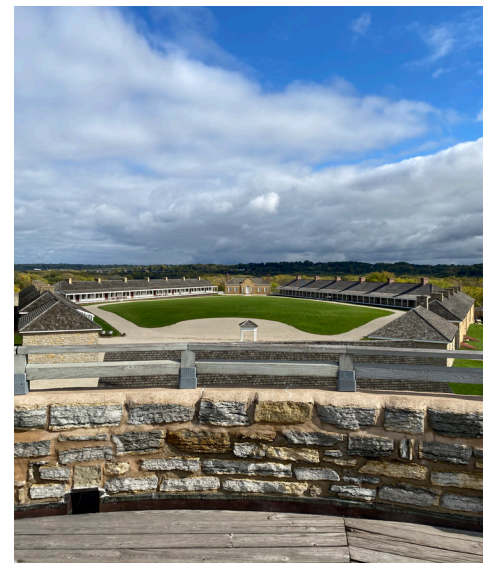
It has only been a few months since we moved here, Twin Cities, Minnesota. My spouse, our cat, and I left our home and traveled all the way from Türkiye to America. Even though the main reason we moved here is my PhD studies, this is not the only reason. We also wanted to experience the United States and American culture as a part of our journey.

Although it has not been long, we have already started to discover the American culture. It is obvious that there are huge differences between Turkish and American culture. We can

realize these differences from how people talk, behave, wear, their reactions, food preferences, music choices, and even their stress and well-being levels. That is why there are a variety of features that surprise us every day. Witnessing these lifestyles and enjoying differences have broadened our view on culture, pushed us to think more about this topic, and shaped us already.

One exciting thing about Minnesota is that American culture is not the only one we experienced here. In addition to many international people around us, there has been a long-standing culture of Dakota people who were in Minnesota well before Europeans arrived. I was interested in learning about indigenous people in this area, so I joined a trip organized by Fulbright Association's Minnesota chapter last week. We went to the sacred lands of the Dakota people and the Historic Fort Snelling. I think the most satisfying part of the trip was listening to similar stories from different perspectives: from a native professor and two tour guides because different viewpoints gave a more comprehensive idea about the culture of the Dakota people.

To sum up, learning the culture of the people living in the area where we are going to live for years and call "a new home" is worthwhile because it makes experiences richer and more enjoyable.



Pictured: Historic Fort Snelling – Minneapolis



"Navigating New Horizons: Trials and Joys of our Journey to a Global Community"

Asiye Doğan Uçar
2023-2024 Visiting Student
Researcher (VSR) Program
Grantee

*Erciyes University, Kayseri / University of
Texas at San Antonio*

Two months have swiftly passed since the beginning of our Fulbright adventure, a journey that has brought both trials and joys as my family - my husband, our daughter, and I - ventured to a new country. We found ourselves navigating unfamiliar territories, feeling far removed from our comfort zone. This transition involved a host of tasks, from finding the right school for our daughter to securing suitable accommodation, even down to the everyday challenge of grocery

shopping. However, the most heartwarming part of this experience has been the people who have surrounded us. We've been embraced by a warm and supportive community, composed of faculty, staff, and friends, all of whom have extended a helping hand whenever needed. Their kindness has been a source of optimism in this foreign environment.

Remarkably, some of our newfound international friends have connections to Türkiye, which has added an extra layer of connection and charm to our interactions. Their genuine interest in our language and culture has been a source of joy. My daughter, who now attends 8th grade here, has also found herself in the company of welcoming friends and she shares similar experiences. It's heartwarming to see this cultural exchange occurring not only for me at a university, but also among teenagers in a middle school. Our encounters with these kind individuals have introduced us to new cultures, traditions, and cuisines, expanding our horizons and enriching our lives. This exchange has been a reminder of the beauty of cross-cultural connections and the ability of human connection to transcend geographical and linguistic boundaries.

We now feel we have settled down, and we are looking forward to spending our remaining months learning and discovering more to make the most of this great opportunity. When I eventually leave, I intend to take with me a wealth of knowledge and experiences. I hope to carry these insights back to my country, sharing them with my community and contributing to a deeper appreciation for global diversity and cultural enrichment.

Pictured: Asiye (second at the right row) at the back-to-school potluck



"Friendship in the heart of East Lansing"

Büşra Elmaderesi
2023-2024 Foreign Language
Teaching Assistant (FLTA)
Program Grantee

*TED University, Ankara / Michigan
State University*

Pictured: Büşra (third from the left, front row) at the Back to School Picnic with other Fulbrighters in the English Language Center & Applied Linguistics (SLS & TESOL Programs)



In the heart of East Lansing, Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants from Russia, Taiwan, Korea, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, China, Ecuador, Nigeria, Philippines, Tunisia, Thailand, and Türkiye come together to forge bonds that will last a lifetime. One remarkable event that exemplifies this unity is the annual Back to School picnic. At this gathering, where diversity is celebrated as a strength, Fulbright visiting scholars from around the world unite to share their unique backgrounds, stories, and experiences. The campus green becomes a mosaic of languages, colors, and flavors, as friends from different corners of the world showcase their culinary traditions, offering dishes from borscht to bulgogi, dumplings to tacos. Friendships formed at Michigan State University are a testament to the university's commitment to inclusivity and global citizenship. Russian scholar shares her passion for literature with Taiwanese counterpart, Korean scholar teaches Ukrainian friend K-Pop dance moves, and Kazakhstan scholar introduces Chinese friend to the beauty of Central Asian nomadic culture.

However, it's not just about cultural exchange; it's about the unique connections that transcend language barriers. Nigerian scholar finds solace in the company of friend from the Philippines, sharing stories of homesickness and resilience. Ecuadorian scholar bonds with Tunisian peer over their love for soccer and spirited debates about the beautiful game. Scholars from Thailand and Türkiye join together for a traditional dance, showcasing their rich heritages. The sense of belonging and acceptance is palpable, reminding everyone that friendship knows no boundaries. These international friendships go beyond the picturesque moments of picnics and cultural exchanges; they become a support system in a foreign land, a network that spans the globe, and a lifelong connection. Together, scholars from Russia, Taiwan, Korea, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, China, Ecuador, Nigeria, Philippines, Tunisia, Thailand, and Türkiye demonstrate that the true beauty of friendship is in embracing differences, celebrating diversity, and building a global community right in the heart of Michigan State University.

"Fulbright – Your Privilege Card in the Life"

Alaeddin Burak İrez

2023-2024 Fulbright
Postdoctoral Program Grantee
Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul /
Carnegie Mellon University

The Fulbright Fellowship was a very important catalyst that facilitated my integration into social and academic life in the United States. The name "Fulbright" played the role of an airline privilege card for me, from the moment I received the fellowship until I moved to the United States and all the time after. Being a Fulbright Scholar made it easy for me to rent a house, and my colleagues in the department approached me with an attitude of esteem when they heard the name Fulbright.

To facilitate your integration, Fulbright organizes activities all the time, allowing you not only to learn more about American culture, but also to discover other cultures through scholars from other countries. During the second month of our arrival, we participated in a fishing activity, met Fulbrighters from different countries, shared our first experiences in the city, and discussed our research and first impressions of life in the U.S.; we also had the opportunity to meet experienced Fulbright alumni and listen to their life advice.

Throughout my career, I have lived and worked in Europe and Asia (France, Germany, Singapore), but what I have observed in the United States is that people listen to you, understand you, and strive to provide the best service they can in any setting, such as public service, health care, university, and so on. This, I believe, is what we all deserve and must have for a better life. Besides what I have noticed in a short period of time, American society has succeeded in transforming diversity into richness and making respect for others a norm of life. This

explains the success of American institutions and gives a take-home message to lucky Fulbrighters like us. In short, Fulbright gives you the opportunity to benefit from this atmosphere, and I think the key to success in life is to have a good network. Fulbright is one of the best networks, and I'm proud to be part of it.

Pictured: Dr. İrez (second from the left) at the Fulbright Pittsburgh Area Fishing Activity with his friends from Argentina, Spain, and the US



"Highlights from Claudine Gay's Historic Inauguration as Harvard President"

Özlem Özmen Akdoğan

2023-2024 Fulbright
Postdoctoral Program Grantee
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Muğla/
Harvard University

I would like to share my reflections on an extraordinary day I experienced at Harvard University: the presidential inauguration of Claudine Gay, who now holds the distinction of being Harvard's second woman and first Black president. As a Fulbright scholar from Türkiye, this event held personal and historical significance for me.

The scale of the event was evident in the meticulous preparation of the Harvard Yard which lasted for days. The ceremony featured an orchestra, dancers, singers, and university staff in their robes. Claudine Gay, accompanied by her fellows, made her way to the grand platform from Harvard's main library, Widener, which was decorated with three huge Harvard shields, each saying 'VE-RI-

TAS' meaning 'TRUTH.' It was clearly a moment of great importance, not only for the university but also for the United States. Distinguished representatives of the state and members from other educational institutions were in attendance, alongside a large gathering of staff, students, and visiting scholars like me, undeterred by the persistent rain.

Despite adverse weather, I stayed until the end of the inauguration to hear President Gay's speech. She focused on themes such as diversity, inclusivity, the value of hard work in achieving success, and the imperative of providing equal opportunities for all. She also mentioned her family's immigrant roots from Haiti as a source of pride, and she repeatedly emphasized the value of acknowledging the importance of and right to education as the primary pathway to success.

What also struck me about the president was her subtle sense of humor, evident in her words in the brochures shared with the audience. Unlike the serious tone often associated with figures of authority, her words were imbued with humor. For example, her message started with "Welcome, losers". She even joked about her surname: "Who would've thought a down-to-earth gal with a gay last name could be the leader of the free world?". With her attitude, I believe she demonstrated her sincerity, and in a way, she implied she is just one of us who worked hard and made her way to leadership with determination and perseverance.

To me, the whole event was not only highly noteworthy but also profoundly motivating. President Claudine Gay's words serve as an encouragement for success even when it may seem distant. She concluded her message by saying her presidency would be guided by one central question, "Who am I?" and I believe this simply reminds us of the importance of our inner selves towards our goals in life.

Pictured: Dr. Özmen Akdoğan attending the inauguration of President Claudine Gay at Harvard Yard on September 29, 2023, despite heavy rain, with her husband



Our Grantees in the U.S. Celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Turkish Republic



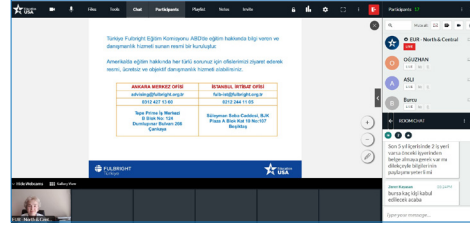
Advising Program

Outreach Activities for Fulbright Grants

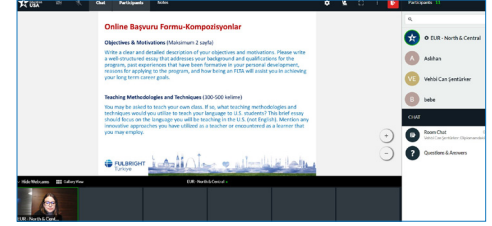
In mid-April, the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program opened for applications and four webinars were organized for interested young and mid-career professionals.

The Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program was announced on August 11, and four webinars were organized for interested students and teachers.

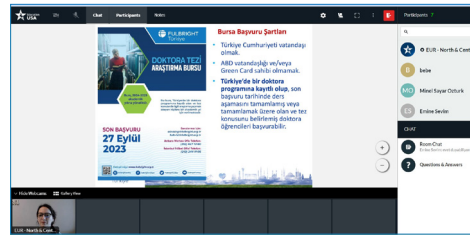
In August, the three research grants: the Ph.D. Dissertation Grant, the Post-Doctoral Grant, and the Senior Scholar Grant opened for applications one after the other. Four informational webinars were given for the Dissertation Grant.



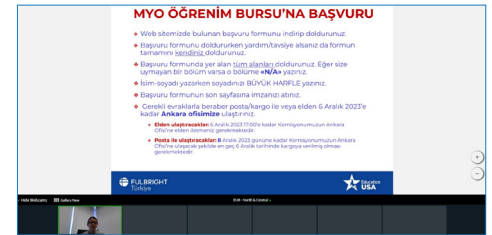
Pictured: Betti Delevi giving the Hubert H. Humphrey webinar



Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit giving the FLTA webinar



Pictured: Ecem Mutlu giving the Ph.D. Dissertation webinar



Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit giving the CCIP webinar

The announcement of the Community College Initiative (CCI) Program was made in late October, and numerous virtual events were arranged leading up to its deadline on December 6, 2023. Advisors presented a series of four webinars to the general public. Additionally, our education advisors delivered presentations to Community Colleges in Türkiye, targeting students who express interest in the grant.

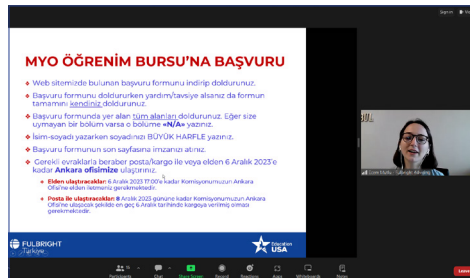


Pictured above left: Seval Sır at Istanbul Aydın University, with Community College students

Pictured above right: Ecem Mutlu at Uludağ University, with Community College students

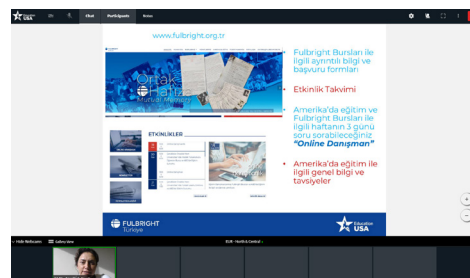
Pictured right: Ecem Mutlu's CCIP webinar for Çanakkale 18 Mart University

Pictured left: Ecem Mutlu's CCIP webinar for Izmir Ekonomi University



Pictured left: Seval Sır's CCIP webinar for Istanbul University Cerrahpaşa Community College

Pictured right: İrem Arıcan Yiğit's CCIP webinar for Ankara University Beypaşa Community College



Our Education Adviser, Ms. İrem Arıcan Yiğit, recently delivered a presentation to TED University students, organized by the TED University Career Center. The focus of the presentation revolved around the Master's and Ph.D. Grants along with the Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program. The students showed interest in both the grants and the opportunity to study in the U.S.



Pictured L and R: İrem Arıcan Yiğit at TED University with students

Instagram Live Interviews

Six live interviews were arranged with alumni of the grant programs conducted in the past six months. Hubert H. Humphrey alumnus Mr. Önder Yalçın, Foreign Language Teaching Assistant alumna Ms. Pinar Su, Ph.D. Dissertation Grant alumna Dr. Ceren Yılmaz, Post-Doctoral Grant alumnus Assoc. Prof.

Caner Değer, Senior Scholar Grant alumna Prof. Nil Kula Değirmenci, as well as Community College Initiative Program alumna Ms. Burçin Ustabas were hosted in Live sessions where they talked about their experiences and answered questions posted by attendees. A total of 8180 participants attended these sessions.



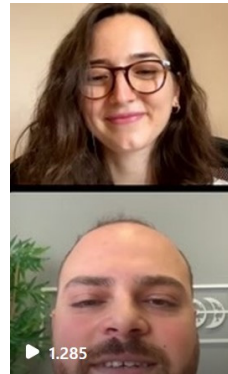
With Hubert H. Humphrey alumnus Mr. Önder Yalçın



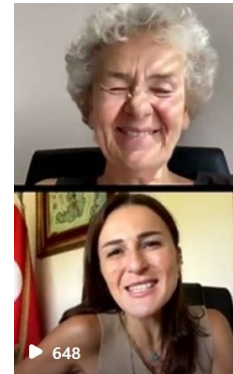
With FLTA alumna Ms. Pinar Su



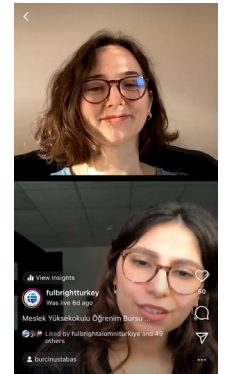
With Ph.D. Dissertation alumna Dr. Ceren Yılmaz



With Post-Doc alumnus Assoc. Prof. Caner Değer



With Senior Scholar Grant alumna Prof. Nil Kula Değirmenci

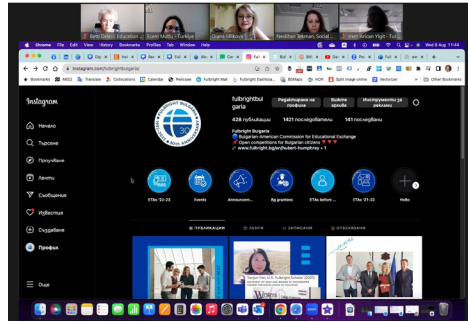


With CCIP alumna Ms. Burçin Ustabas

One Instagram Live Q&A Session was organized to answer questions from grant applicants. Online Advising Sessions are routinely carried out three times a week.

Advising Program

Online Meeting with Fulbright Bulgaria



On August 9, our team had an online meeting with Fulbright Bulgaria where different outreach approaches, efficient use of website and social media platforms to promote grants were discussed.

Pictured: Fulbright Türkiye Advising Team; Betti Delevi, Ecem Mutlu and İrem Arıcan Yiğit, and Alumni Affairs and Archives Specialist Neslihan Tekman met with Diana Milkova from Fulbright Bulgaria



EducationUSA Activities



The Education USA Europe Network regularly engaged in scheduled monthly calls, professional development webinars, Türkiye Team calls, and group events.

Pictured: EducationUSA Türkiye Team

Study Abroad Fairs



Our advising team attended Study Abroad Fairs to promote applications for Fulbright grants. They also conducted seminars and webinars at various schools and universities, aiming to engage with as many students and researchers as possible.

Pictured: Ecem Mutlu and Seval Sır at Sabancı University Study Abroad Fair

Ms. İrem Arıcan Yiğit represented the Turkish Fulbright Commission and Education USA in Ankara at the Akare Fairs in October and IEF T Fairs in November. Ms. Betti Delevi attended the Akare Fairs Istanbul in October, and Ms. Ecem Mutlu and Ms. Seval Sır attended the Istanbul IEF T Fairs in November.

There were a total of 221 attendees seeking information at the Istanbul booth, and 194 at the Ankara Fairs. Approximately 1,000 brochures, flyers, and promotional materials were distributed.



Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit at the Ankara Akare Fair



Pictured: Betti Delevi at the Istanbul Akare Fair





Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit at the Ankara IEFT Fair



Pictured above and right: Seval Sir and Ecem Mutlu at the Istanbul IEFT Fair



Outreach for High Schools

Our Education Adviser, Ms. Betti Delevi gave a presentation on studying in the U.S. to Fuat Sezgin Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi students.

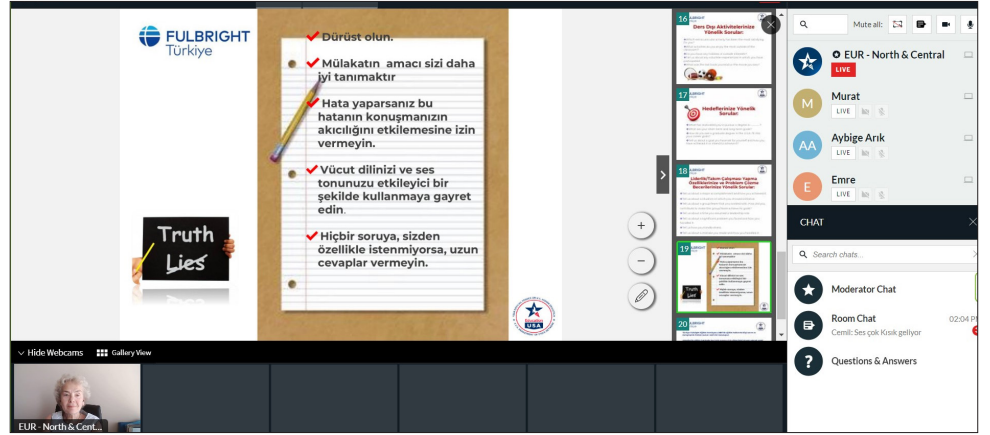
Ms. Betti Delevi and Ms. Seval Sir also visited Saint Benoit French High School to inform students about the education opportunities and steps to follow to apply for an institution in the U.S. They outlined essential details on applying to U.S. colleges and answered questions from students and parents.



Pictured: Presentation at St. Benoit

Webinars and Social Media Events

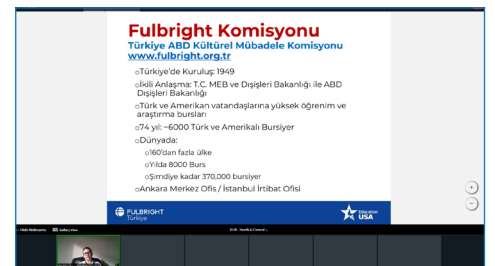
During the summer months, our Education Adviser Ms. Ecem Mutlu offered two "Pre-Departure Orientation" webinars, both for undergraduate and graduate level grantees accepted to U.S. colleges and starting in fall 2023. Advisors also conducted a session covering English and admission exams (TOEFL and SAT), along with eight webinars on interview techniques to assist students preparing for both Fulbright and other interview formats.



Pictured: Betti Delevi giving the Interview Techniques webinar

International Education Week (IEW)

Our education adviser Ms. İrem Arıcan Yiğit presented the 5 Steps to U.S. Study to those who are interested in studying in the U.S. for their undergraduate degree.



Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit presenting 5 Steps to U.S. Study for IEW

Advising Program

One-on-one advising sessions for high school students, parents, and undergraduate students continued on online platforms. A total of 15 applicants at various levels of study were advised on their choices, resources that can help them, next steps to take, and preparations required for successful applications.

The Admittance Education Fair – Anatolian Tour

Admittance Education Fair was on the Anatolian Tour this year and visited Istanbul, Bursa, Eskişehir and Ankara, and held several activities. Our Education Advisers from both Ankara and Istanbul offices attended the fairs in Istanbul, Bursa and Eskişehir, and had booths to inform students about education opportunities in the U.S. and answer their questions.



Pictured: Ecem Mutlu at the Bursa Admittance Fair "#Burs"



Pictured: İrem Arıcan Yiğit at the Eskişehir Admittance Fair

U.S. Higher Education Officials Visits

On October 2, Surin Tan, representing LIM College, a business school specializing in fashion and lifestyle, visited our Istanbul office to discuss support for international student recruitment. She told us about the undergraduate and graduate programs, and the opportunities these programs offer to international students.



Pictured: Surin Tan, International Business Development Representative from LIM College with our Istanbul Education Adviser, Ecem Mutlu

On October 13, Yam Chew Oh, an International Admission Counselor, from Maryland Institute College of Art visited our Istanbul Office. He informed us about the admission processes particularly to art schools and how students' portfolios are evaluated.



Pictured: Yam Chew Oh, International Admission Counselor, from Maryland Institute College of Art with our Istanbul Education Adviser, Ecem Mutlu

On November 13, Paul Edmunds Ph.D., Associate Director of Global Education Office at University of New Mexico visited our Istanbul office. He told us about his Fulbright journey as a Fulbright Specialist Program alumnus, and the school's language center's offerings to international students.



Pictured: Paul Edmunds Ph.D., Associate Director of Global Education Office at University of New Mexico with our Advisers, Ecem Mutlu and Seval Sir



Justin Van Dyke, Senior Outreach Officer from NYU (Abu Dhabi, UAE) and Francesca De Ros, Assistant Director of Admissions at NYU (New York, USA) visited our Istanbul Office on October 18. They informed us about the financial

assistance opportunities available for international students who are admitted to their schools. Lorenzo Wilcox, Assistant Director for International Recruitment at University of Oregon, and Louis Higuera, International Admission Counselor at

Marist College, visited our office on November 9. They provided information regarding their programs for both undergraduate and graduate students, along with the amazing options available to international students.



Pictured: Justin Van Dyke, Senior Outreach Officer from NYU, Abu Dhabi & Francesca De Ros, Assistant Director of Admissions at NYU, NYC with our Istanbul Education Adviser, Ecem Mutlu

Pictured: Lorenzo Wilcox, Assistant Director for International Recruitment at University of Oregon & Louis Higuera International Admission Counselor at Marist College with our Advisers, Seval Sir and Ecem Mutlu

Caryn Voland, Assistant Dean of Graduate Admissions at Georgetown University, Samudra Kugel, Director of LL.M. Admissions and Global Outreach at UC Davis, and Martin Slavens, Director of Graduate Admissions at Fordham University visited our Istanbul office to exchange information about LL.M. programs at their schools, scholarship opportunities offered to prospective students, and the Fulbright grants.



Pictured: Martin Slavens, Director of Graduate Admissions at Fordham University - The School of Law with our Advisers, Ecem Mutlu, İrem Arıcan Yiğit, and Seval Sir

Pictured: Caryn Voland, Assistant Dean of Graduate Admissions at Georgetown University with our Advisers, Ecem Mutlu and Seval Sir

Pictured: Samudra Kugel, Director of LL.M. Admissions and Global Outreach at UC Davis with our Advisers, Ecem Mutlu, İrem Arıcan Yiğit, and Seval Sir

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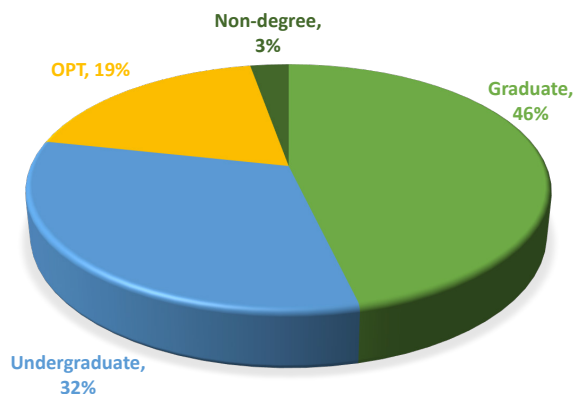
FulbrightTurkey

The Open Doors 2023 report showed that in the 2022/23 academic year, 1,057,188 international students studied at US colleges and universities – an increase of 11.5% from the previous academic year. The percentage of international students among the total of students in higher education was 5.6% in 2022 - 2023.

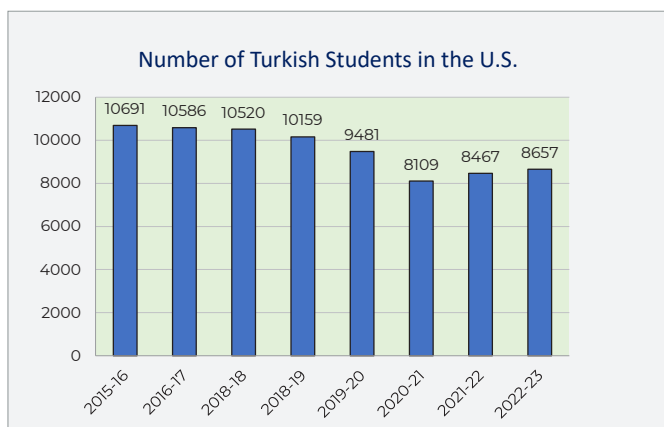
Below are some data on Turkish student mobility to the United States in the 2022 – 2023 academic year.

Turkish students in the U.S. by Academic Level

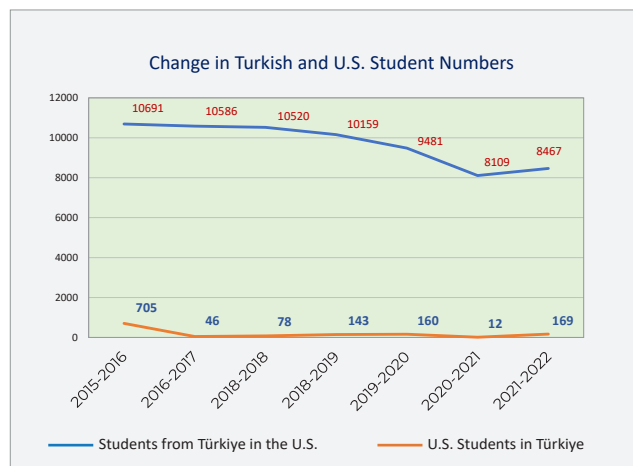
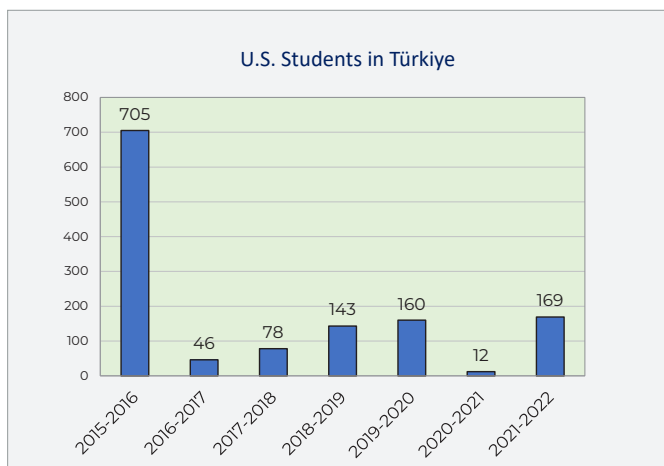
The largest percentage of Turkish students are engaged in graduate studies, with almost half of all current Turkish students in the U.S. pursuing advanced degrees.



In the current year, Türkiye ranked as the **19th** leading country worldwide in sending students to the U.S., securing the **3rd** position in Europe, following the U.K. and Germany.



U.S. students in Türkiye increased to **169** last year





FULBRIGHT Türkiye

THE TURKISH FULBRIGHT COMMISSION

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Please send contributions and comments to:

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