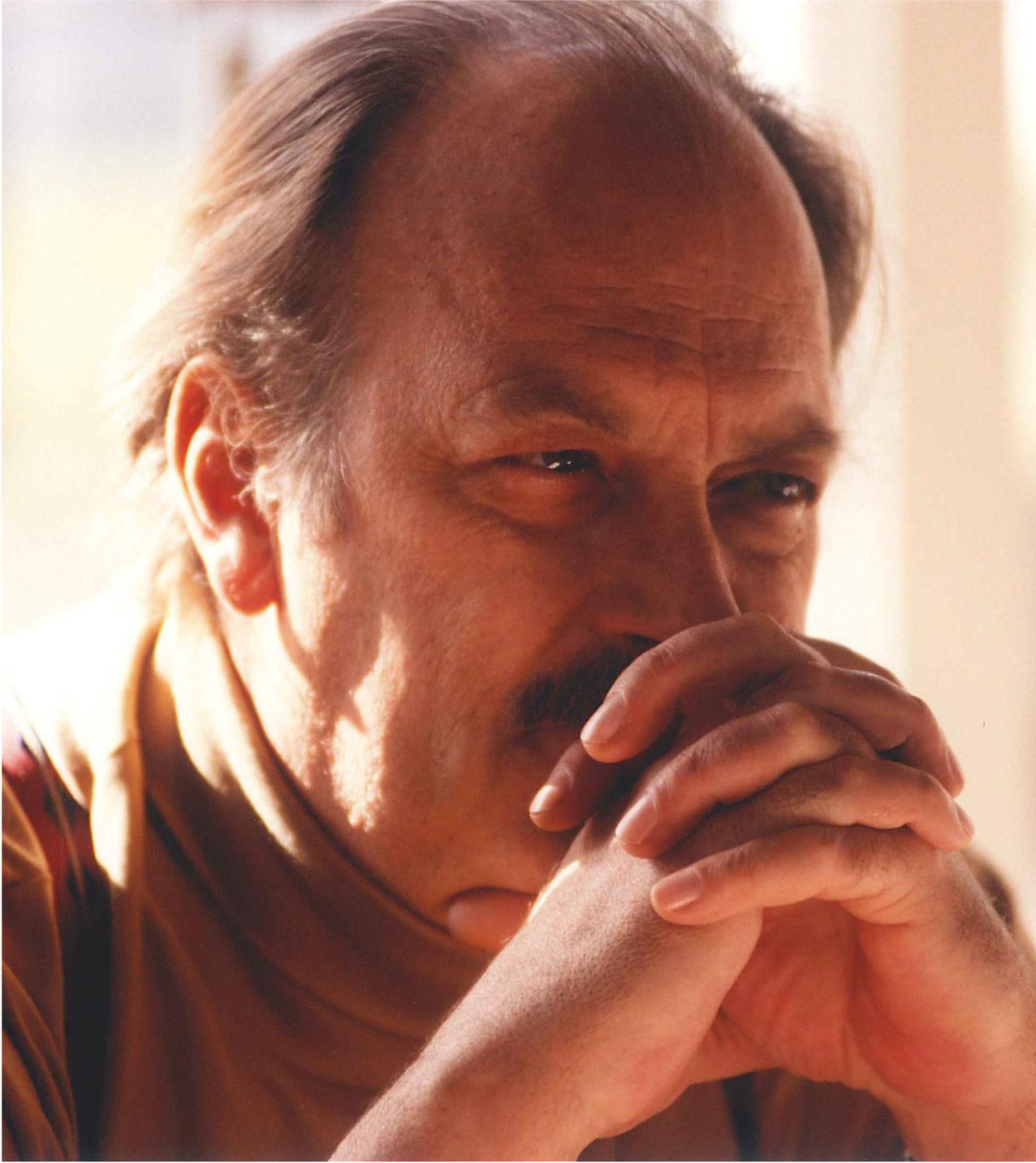


**Inspiring Story:**  
**Prof. Heath W. Lowry**  
*U.S. Fulbright Alumnus*  
2000-2001

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



# Newsletter

January Vol. 9  
– June Issue 1  
2020



— Pictured left:  
**In Memoriam:**  
**Prof. Semahat Geldiay**  
*Preeminent Zoologist*  
*Fulbright Alumnus*  
*1971-1972, 1985-1986*

— Pictured right:  
**Pre-Departure**  
**Orientation and Reception**  
*for Student Core Program*  
*and VSR Grantees*

## From the Executive Director

Dear Fulbright friends,

I hope this latest issue of our biannual newsletter finds you all well. As 2019 draws to a close, we're taking the opportunity once again to share with you the highlights of the last six months at the Commission. I am sure you'll enjoy reading some of our regular newsletter features; for example, this issue's 'Inspiring Story' is an interview with Fulbright alumnus Prof. Heath W. Lowry of Princeton University. Professor Lowry's history with Turkey is a fascinating 'ongoing affair' of over 50 years—as you will read more about on pages 12-17. Our 'In Memoriam' section (page 11) features Professor Semahat Geldiay, a two-time Fulbright grantee and one of Turkey's preeminent zoologists of the 20th century. Prof. Geldiay's research focused on insect endocrinology, but as you will see, the implications of her work extend to hormone-related functions in humans as well. Among the many other interesting stories, you will read about the exciting accomplishments of three recent Fulbright alumni, Ms. Elif Gökşen, Mr. Polat Göktaş, and Mr. Serhan Erkol. Ms. Gökşen was awarded the International Bar Association's Outstanding Young Lawyer Award for 2019, Mr. Göktaş received the 2019 Leopold B. Felsen Excellence in Electrodynamics Award, and Mr. Erkol has just released his latest album. I would like to extend my warm congratulations to all three of them for their tremendous achievements, and to remind all of you that we're always happy to report on news from our alumni, so please be sure to keep us informed.

In addition to all of the above, the following pages give you an idea about what our current Fulbright grantees—both Americans presently in Turkey and Turks researching, studying, and teaching in the United States—have been doing these past few months, as well as about what we have been working on at the Commission's offices in Ankara and Istanbul.

I hope you will enjoy all of the stories and news on the pages that follow, and on behalf of the entire team here at the Turkish Fulbright Commission, I would like to wish you a happy and healthy holiday season.



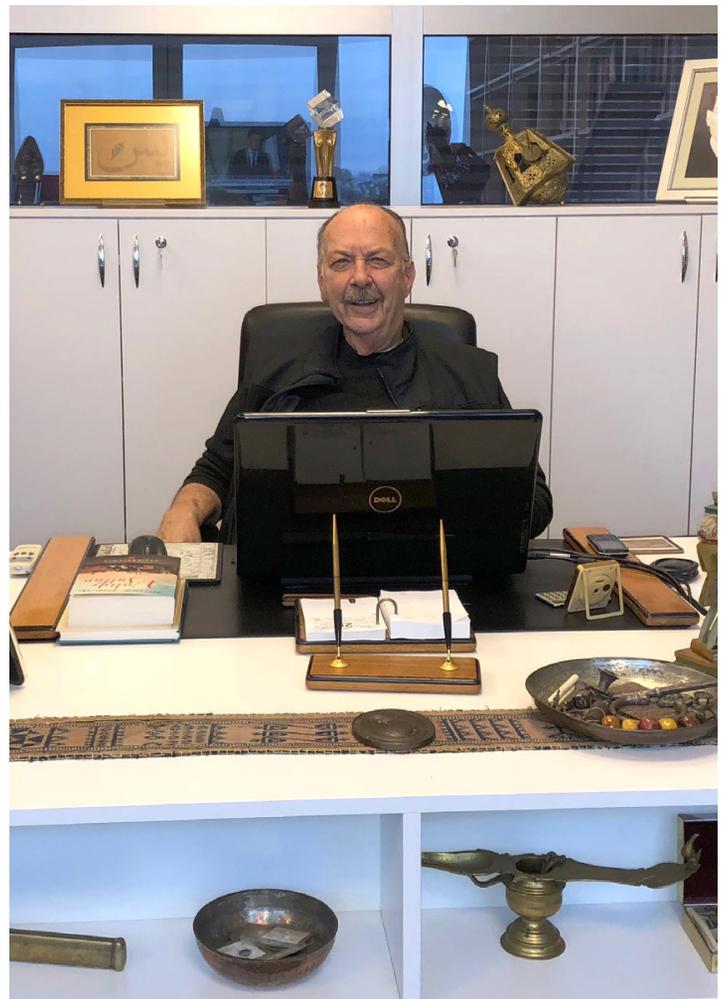
*Prof. Ersel Aydınli*

## An Inspiring Story

In 1966, Prof. Heath W. Lowry joined the Peace Corps and traveled to Bereketli, a small village near Balıkesir, Turkey. Since then, he has had "An Ongoing Affair" with Turkey. He has studied Ottoman History, taught at Boğaziçi, George Washington, Georgetown, Princeton, and Bahçeşehir universities, and written scores of books on the early Ottoman Period. He has become one of the foremost academicians specializing in this field.

He received a Fulbright Research grant from the Turkish Fulbright Commission for the 2000-2001 academic year, which he spent at İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University—lecturing, giving seminars, and carrying out his research. He also served on the Turkish Fulbright Commission Board from 1977 to 1980. He believes Fulbright is one of the most important foreign policy actions the U.S. has ever taken.

*(Full interview on pages 12-17)*



# News from the Commission

## U.S. Ambassador's Visit to the Ankara Head Office

*Pictured below: Mr. David M. Satterfield with the Fulbright Ankara Head Office Staff*

The newly assigned U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, David M. Satterfield, visited the Turkish Fulbright Commission Head Office in Ankara on September 19, 2019. The Ambassador met with the Executive Director, Prof. Ersel Aydınli, and the rest of the staff, and learned about the ongoing Fulbright Grant Programs for both Turkish

and American citizens. Ambassador Satterfield specifically stated his interest in the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Award Program and expressed his dedication to restoring the program to its previous capacity. His support and encouragement were much appreciated.



## Consul General's Visit to the İstanbul Branch Office



On September 16, 2019, the Consul General, Ms. Daria Darnell, visited the Fulbright İstanbul Branch Office, accompanied by Ms. Stephanie Kuck, the Public Affairs Officer, and Ms. Dilek Bıçakçı, Cultural Specialist.

Fulbright İstanbul Branch Office staff members Ms. Betti Delevi and Ms. Serin Alpokay Taş gave a presentation on the activities of the Office, which involve both the Fulbright Program and EducationUSA. The visitors showed great interest in the programs and activities of the Commission, and made useful suggestions for ways to increase cooperation and support between the two institutions.

*Pictured left: Ms. Dilek Bıçakçı  
Ms. Stephanie Kuck  
Ms. Daria Darnell  
Ms. Serin Alpokay Taş*



## Mr. Vincent Pickett's Visit to the İstanbul Branch Office

Mr. Vincent Pickett, Branch Chief of the Fulbright Multi-Regional Programs/Outreach from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at

U.S. Department of State, visited the İstanbul Branch Office on October 10, 2019. The purpose of his visit was to meet with American Fulbright grantees and Turkish Fulbright alumni –especially FLTAs, the program he administered for many years –and to learn about the activities of the Commission. Mr. Pickett held a video conference with the Ankara Head Office staff and learned about the other Fulbright programs. He also visited the Fulbright booth at an education fair on the 13th, meeting with students interested in Fulbright grants.



*Pictured (L-R): Mr. Elijah Alperin, American Student Researcher Grantee; Mr. Uğur Doğu, CCIP alumnus; Mr. Vincent Pickett; Mr. Enes Umur Gökçek, SCP alumnus; Ms. Selin Alkan, FLTA alumna*

## Staff Transitions

### Board Transitions

Two new members joined our Board: Mr. Emir Salim Yüksel, Deputy Director General for Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, replaced Ms. Ayşegül Gökçen Karaarslan, who was appointed Consul General in Dusseldorf; Ms. Daria Darnell, U.S. Consul General in İstanbul, replaced Ms. Stephanie Kuck, Public Affairs Officer. We bid our former Board Members our sincerest farewells and thank them for their contributions to the Commission and their time with us. We also offer our new Board members a warm welcome and hope for a long and fruitful working relationship with them.



Ms. Didem Çınar, our Part-Time Administrative Consultant, and Ms. Simgе Zilif, Graphic Designer and Social Media Specialist, left the Commission.



Mr. Tarık Tansu Yiğit filled the newly created role of Educational and Placement Adviser. Mr. Mert Batırbaygil has joined us as Part-Time Graphic Design and Social Media Assistant, while Ms. Anna Rachael Miller became the ETA Program Consultant and American Programs Assistant.



Ms. Mevlüde Bakır, who served as the American Programs Officer for many years, has taken over the position of Advising Coordinator. Ms. Nazlı Bulgurluoğlu, the former Advising Coordinator, has assumed the role of Interim American Programs Officer.

We bid a fond goodbye to our former colleagues offer a warm welcome to all new staff members, and hope to work with them for many years to come.

*Pictured, top row: Mr. Tarık Tansu Yiğit  
Middle row: Mr. Mert Batırbaygil  
Bottom row: Ms. Anna Rachael Miller*

## Fulbright Office Retreat in Sinop

*Pictured (L-R):  
Inceburun,  
Hamsilos Nature Park*



In October, the Commission staff and family members spent a weekend in Sinop. It was a great opportunity for staff to get to meet and connect

with new members on the team. The occasion also allowed for a refocusing of priorities and vision. Unlike previous office retreats, each staff member acted as a guide for a specific regional topic or site visited. The famous Sinop Prison, Sinop Castle, history of the city, local cuisine, Hamsilos Nature Park, and Inceburun, which is the northernmost point in Turkey, were some of the topics and landmarks that were covered by members of our staff.

## Ankara Head Office Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner



On November 26, 2019, we hosted our annual Thanksgiving Potluck dinner in Ankara. The dinner was held at our Ankara Head Office, and was attended by current and former ETAs and U.S. Student Research grantees living in and around Ankara, as well as Commission staff. Each attendee brought a dish to share at the potluck –we had stuffing, pies, mashed potatoes, brussels sprouts, and of course, turkey! The dinner was a great success, with grantees and staff sharing food, stories, and words of gratitude.



## Thanksgiving Dinner in Istanbul

American Grantees in and around Istanbul came together for the annual Thanksgiving Dinner on November 29. Our Executive Director, Prof. Ersel Aydınli, Ms. Stephanie Kuck, Public Affairs Officer from the U.S. Consulate, as well as staff members from the Ankara and Istanbul Branch Offices, assembled to share a festive dinner and offer gratitude for the good things in their lives.



# “Workshop on Developing Capacity for Internationalization in Turkish Universities: Perspectives from Students, Academics and Administrators”



*Pictured above: Prof. Ersel Aydınli, Pictured below, top (L-R): Assoc. Prof. Margaret J.M. Sönmez, Ms. Shelby C. Smithson, Mr. Azwar Tahir, Ms. Sonya Merwin Bailey Pictured below, bottom (L-R): Mr. Erkin Tarhan, Mr. Mert Şanivar, Dr. İbrahim Yorgun, Ms. Melike Kahraman Üstün*

Brought to life with the support of U.S. Department of State USA Study Abroad and in coordination with the Middle East Technical University (METU), our "Workshop on Developing Capacity for Internationalization in Turkish Universities: Perspectives from Students, Academics and Administrators" was held on December 16-17, 2019 at the METU Culture and Convention Center with 81 participants –including Rectors, Vice Rectors, and International Offices Staff–from 47 universities and institutions across Turkey.

The workshop commenced Monday afternoon, with opening remarks from our Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli and the METU Vice Rector Prof. Ahmet Yozgatligil.

Our Advising Coordinator, Ms. Mevlüde Bakır, gave a brief introduction to the workshop as well as a presentation on the scholarship programs provided by our Commission. This was followed by a presentation from Mr. Mustafa Efe, the Director of the Department of International Relations at the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), titled, "Internationalization of Turkish Higher Education: Strategies and Opportunities." Mr. Efe discussed the Council's efforts to centralize the International Cooperation Offices and the Exchange Offices in Turkish universities, and to increase international interest in higher education in Turkey.

Our panels kicked off with the panel "Turkish Universities through the Eyes of International Academics and Students." The four panelists included Assoc. Prof. Margaret J.M. Sönmez of METU's Department of Foreign Language Education; former Fulbright ETA Ms. Shelby C. Smithson, currently an instructor at the Hacettepe University School of Foreign Languages; Mr. Azwar Tahir, an MA student in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Social Sciences University of Ankara; and Ms. Sonia Merwin Bailey, an MA student from Ihsan

Doğramacı Bilkent University's Media and Visual Studies Program. The panelists shared their distinct points of view on the subject and discussed the reasons why foreign faculty and students come to Turkey, as well as the problems they encounter. All four panelists had experienced some of the same obstacles, including –onboarding issues, acclimation problems, lack of information about the systems in place, lack of helpful personal contacts, alienation, language barrier issues, etc.



*Pictured above: Prof. Ahmet Yozgatligil Pictured below: Mr. Mustafa Efe*



The first day of the workshop closed with a presentation titled "Working with USA Study Abroad on Internationalization and Student Mobility" from Ms. Amelia VanderLaan, a USA Study Abroad Outreach Officer from the U.S. Department of State, who joined us via video conference call. Ms. VanderLaan introduced the various programs and services that USA Study Abroad provides with the goal of increasing internationalization in the U.S.





Day two of the workshop began with the panel “Academic Leadership and Internationalization in Turkish Universities” moderated by Prof. Ersel Aydınllı, who was joined by the panelists Prof. Refik Polat, the Rector of Karabük University; Prof. Ali Güneş, the Vice Rector of the Social Sciences University of Ankara; Prof. Sezai Ercişli, the Vice Rector of Atatürk University; and Assoc. Prof. Bilge Kağan Özdemir of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Anadolu University. It was an enlightening panel that demonstrated how different university administrations approach the subject of internationalization –for example, some universities' adherence to the CoHE guidelines, or Karabük University's distinct approach to increasing their global ranking. The panel led to significant discussion with the participants in the audience.

The panel titled “Internationalization Practices in Turkish Universities: Challenges and Opportunities” was moderated by Dr. İbrahim Yorgun, the Director of the International Cooperations Office at METU. Panelists included Mr. Erkin Tarhan, the İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University Office of Exchange Programs Coordinator; Mr. Mert Şanivar, the International Education and Exchange Programs Team Leader from the Koç University International Programs Office; and Ms. Melike Kahraman Üstün, International Recruitment and Marketing Manager for the Sabancı University International Marketing and Recruitment Office. The panelists shared their perspectives on the recent trends and developments in universities' International Offices, commented on the challenges they

face in their day-to-day work, and offered their ideas for solutions to these challenges.

The final panel of the workshop was “Academic Learnings and Tendencies in Internationalization” which took place with contributions from the following panel members: Assoc. Prof. Armağan Erdoğan, a Higher Education Studies Expert and a Guest Researcher from the University College Roosevelt in the Netherlands, who also moderated; Assoc. Prof. F. Nevra Seggie of the Boğaziçi University's Faculty of Education; Assoc. Prof. Sedat Gümüş of the Educational Sociology Department in Aarhus University in Denmark, who joined via video call, Dr. Betül Bulut Şahin, the European Exchange Programs Coordinator at the METU International Cooperations Office; and Dr. Hakan Ergin from the İstanbul University's School of Foreign Languages. The panelists offered academic discussion on subjects such as green internationalization, internationalization at home, glocalization, and other new trends in the field; they also shared the effects these new subjects have had on their work, and their thoughts on necessary practices in Turkish higher education.

The workshop came to a close with Prof. Ersel Aydınllı's closing remarks, in which he thanked the participants



*Top photo: Photograph of several of our workshop participants before closing remarks  
Middle photo (L-R): Prof. Sezai Ercişli, Prof. Refik Polat, Prof. Ersel Aydınllı, Prof. Ali Güneş, Assoc. Prof. Bilge Kağan Özdemir  
Bottom photo (counter-clockwise): Assoc. Prof. Sedat Gümüş, Dr. Betül Bulut Şahin, Dr. Hakan Ergin, Assoc. Prof. Armağan Erdoğan, Assoc. Prof. F. Nevra Seggie*

for their time and contributions. The workshop was well received by the participants, who commented that it was an illuminating, comprehensive program that contributed significantly to the discourse on internationalization in Turkish universities.



## 2019 European LL.M. Fair in İstanbul



*Pictured above (L-R): Prof. Bertil Emrah Oder, Prof. Ersel Aydınli, Ms. Aslı Başgöz, Ms. Cemre Dursun*



The annual European LL.M. (Masters in Law) Fair added İstanbul among its destinations in 2019. Representatives from twenty-one American universities signed up to travel to İstanbul for the fair and its events.

The visitors mingled and discussed their future plans with each other as well. Three stands were covered by alumni, which allowed visitors to learn about the schools and programs from those with first-hand knowledge.



On November 15, the Commission's İstanbul Branch Office welcomed the representatives with a briefing and a panel headed by our Executive Director Prof. Ersel Aydınli. During the panel, Koç University Dean of Law Faculty Prof. Bertil Emrah Oder outlined law education in Turkey, Ms. Aslı Başgöz, partner at White & Case and Commission Board Member, discussed the international law sector in İstanbul, and Ms. Cemre Dursun shared her experiences as a Fulbright LL.M. alumna. The assembled group of around forty guests included senior representatives from law companies, Fulbright LL.M. alumni, law faculty academicians, and officials from the U.S. Embassy and Consulate, in addition to the school representatives.

Several school representatives expressed their satisfaction with the turnout—most attendees came from reputable law faculties and showed great potential.



On November 16, law students and young lawyers attended the fair, visiting the stands, gathering information and brochures.

## Alumni Meeting in Ankara



*Pictured above: Fulbright Alumni and Commission staff with Mr. Faruk Aktay (4th from the left) and Mr. Uğur Doğu (6th from the right)*

On Monday, September 16, 2019, the Fulbright Alumni Association met with alumni living in Ankara for a dinner. Mr. Faruk Aktay, the president of the association, and Mr. Uğur Doğu, the vice president, organized and attended the meeting.

During the dinner, Mr. Aktay stressed the importance of such activities for strengthening ties with alumni. He also spoke of the significance of disseminating information about the association and its activities, and keeping the Fulbright spirit intact.

## Ms. Elif Gökşen, Fulbright VSR Alumna Wins Outstanding Young Lawyer Award

Turkish lawyer Ms. Elif Gökşen has been announced as the winner of the International Bar Association (IBA) Outstanding Young Lawyer Award for 2019. Through her work, Ms. Gökşen aims to improve access to justice and act as a voice for individuals who have been mistreated, marginalized or excluded.

Each year, the IBA Young Lawyers' Committee presents this award to a young lawyer who has shown excellence in their work and who has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to professional and ethical standards.

According to her nominator, Ms. Gökşen is a lawyer determined to leave a big impact on younger generations and stand for human rights and the rule of law. In 2014, Ms. Gökşen wrote a thesis on the value of digital data in criminal

procedural law, which was among the first written pieces on digital evidence in Turkish Criminal Procedure Law.

In January 2014, Ms. Gökşen was recruited by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to work as a Refugee Status Determination Assistant; in January 2015, she became an Associate.

Ms. Gökşen has been the recipient of several prestigious scholarships, including the Chevening Scholarship for the Master of Laws Programme at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom (2012), and the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Programme at Columbia University Law School in New York, U.S.A. (2018). In November 2019, she began a placement at the International Criminal Court as a Visiting Professional in the Prosecution Division.

Ms. Gökşen has a Master's degree from Galatasaray University and another from The London School of Economics. She is now doing her Ph.D. at Ankara University.



## Mr. Polat Göktaş, Fulbright VSR alumnus receives “Excellence in Electrodynamics Award”



2017-18 Fulbright Visiting Student Researcher alumna Mr. Polat Göktaş has received the 2019 Leopold B. Felsen Excellence in Electrodynamics Award. EMC Turkey and Leopold B. Felsen Fund, Boston have been jointly bestowing an award for Excellence in Electromagnetics since 2007. The purpose of the award is to promote the contributions of Turkish researchers to the field of Electrodynamics. The selection committee evaluates each applicant based on his or her research project, academic record, and potential to contribute to the Electromagnetics profession in the future. Mr. Göktaş was a visiting Ph.D. researcher at the WeLL.M.an

Center for Photomedicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School for the 2017-18 academic year. He also received another prestigious award in the area of Electromagnetics during his Fulbright program.

His work focuses on the development of experimental and theoretical methods for label-free, high throughput detection and classification of single biological cells, especially for pathological samples in his Ph.D. research. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. degree in the Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering at İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University.

## Mr. Serhan Erkol's New Album, “Melting Pot”

Mr. Serhan Erkol, who studied classical music at İstanbul University, and the jazz saxophone at İstanbul Bilgi University under Ricky Ford, Lawrence “Butch” Morris, Donovan Mixon, Aydın Esen, Can Kozlu and Ali Perret, released his latest album, “Melting Pot,” in December 2019.

Upon graduation from İstanbul Bilgi University, Mr. Erkol received a Fulbright Scholarship for the academic year 2006-2007. He was then accepted to the New England Conservatory Contemporary Improvisation Master program, where he studied with many prominent musicians. He released his first album “Motel Atm” in 2016. He performs regularly, both with his own band and other projects in Turkey, and abroad.

“Melting Pot,” as its title suggests, brings together jazz, electronic, Turkish folk and classical music to create original compositions and improvisations.

One of the notable tracks in the album, “Kuştepe Blues,” was written in 2002, when Erkol was a student at İstanbul Bilgi University’s Kuştepe Campus, a neighborhood populated mostly by the Roma. Their culture and the university’s academic culture were two distinct poles that were later brought together through several events. Erkol says he realized the similarity between the jazz music he was studying and the Roma music heard in street celebrations; he composed “Kuştepe Blues” in the Blues form, based on a Roma melody.

# *In Memoriam:* Prof. Semahat Geldiay



She was a great mentor and teacher, and a patient and understanding administrator. Her efforts bore one of the most well equipped and advanced Zoology Departments in the country.

Prof. Geldiay's special focus was in neuro-hormones and neuro-secretions, as well as the cells that secrete them. Her research and findings on the anatomy and physiology of insects through this lens established her as an expert, bringing her recognition in both national and international scientific

Twice the recipient of Fulbright awards, Prof. Semahat Geldiay was a preeminent zoologist concentrating on insect endocrinology.

Born in İzmir in 1923, she received her undergraduate degree in Natural Sciences from İstanbul University in 1946, and her Ph.D. in Zoology from Ankara University in 1954. After completing post doctorate studies at Columbia University, she returned to İzmir in 1961 and joined Ege University, where she became associate professor the same year, and professor in 1967. She was very active and took on various administrative and leadership roles. She was instrumental in founding the Faculty of Natural Sciences, establishing the library and laboratories, and developing the curriculum.

circles and making her one of the most frequently cited scientists in the field. Through her research, she proved that insects actually possess internal secretion glands similar to humans. By utilizing the functional similarities between the two species, she was able to conduct important hormone studies on insects, which produced useful implications for humans without the prohibitive cost and difficulty of working with them. Her research thus made it possible to solve many problems related to hormone functionalities in humans. She was the first scientist to prove that neurosecretions controlled animal behavior; she was able to prove that an electric shock or hyperactivity would trigger hormone secretion into the bloodstream.

Prof. Semahat Geldiay won two Fulbright grants, the first of which was in 1971-72 to complement the American Association of University Women (AAUW) research award, which allowed her to teach as a guest lecturer and conduct research with the aid of the electronic microscope at Washington University. Her influential research was published in 1973, and brought an award from The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) in 1975. In 1985-86, she won a second Fulbright grant to do research on a new type of photo neuroendocrine mechanism in crickets at the University of Miami.

During her long and fruitful career, she won many prestigious awards and grants, like the NATO grant she received from 1975-1980, with which she was also able to procure the first electron microscope for her department.



She also founded and served as member or Board member in many international scientific organizations, and conducted research in collaboration with other distinguished colleagues at numerous universities in the U.S. and Canada. By the time she retired in 1990, after a 42-year long career, Semahat Geldiay had become one of the most distinguished role models for women academics in the Turkish Republic, and a revered name in her field worldwide.



## “An Ongoing Affair, Turkey and I”

*Could you tell us about yourself and your family and culture; people and events that have influenced you; your education; how your career developed; your interests and hobbies?*

My parents were missionaries, and I spent several years—from the ages of 7 to 13—in South India, so I was raised with the experience of living and being interested in different cultures. Those were very formative years. I started studying theater at university in the U.S. in 1960, but after taking all the courses that I was really interested in, I lost interest in the compulsory ones; so, I quit school and went to Europe for a couple of years. I lived in Spain and North Africa. Back in the U.S. in 1963, I was visiting my old university when I happened upon a booth for the Peace Corps, and I got talking with the psychiatrist who was stationed there, and over lunch he informed me that I was a perfect candidate for the Peace Corps. So, I just applied. I was given choices for three regions; and the Middle East was my third option—but the first two choices were cancelled, so that’s how I ended up in Turkey. I did not know anything about the country, I was a college dropout, and I was about to come to Turkey—not to teach English like most Peace Corps volunteers did, as they were recent graduates, but to work in “rural community development” in an Anatolian village.

*I read your book “An Ongoing Affair, Turkey and I”, and loved it. It is informative, humorous, interesting and very descriptive. But I am amazed that you were able to write it with such detail after so many years. How did you do it?*

Well, a Turkish journalist friend was telling me that I had to write those stories, and he offered to write it if I decided to cooperate. Then one evening in Turkey, I sat down to write an outline of the book—just the chapter headings—and then went on to write the first chapter. From then on, every day I would do my normal work, and in the evening, I would write another chapter. In the end, I wrote the entire book: 34 chapters in one month. All the memories were fresh in my mind, and it just came through. I was helped a lot by the letter from the Muhtar (the elected representative in villages/neighborhoods in Turkey), which included the names of a lot of people and information. I visited the village, Bereketli, with my granddaughter years later, and found people who used to know me, and had a nice day. My granddaughter, normally a shy girl, was completely open with them and was very comfortable talking with them. For me, those years were the defining “moment” of my life.



*Pictured above: Heath W. Lowry in Bereketli in 1965*

*What made you decide to study Turkey? Did it begin with your year in Bereketli? Who were the people and what were the events that influenced your choice?*

When I went back to the States, I wanted to know more about Turkey. I was married then, and I had a young son. I did not have any money, and I had to find a job. So, I got a job at Portland State University, training a group of Peace Corps volunteers who were coming to Turkey. And it turned out that this particular university was the only one in U.S. that had an undergraduate program in Middle Eastern Studies that was funded by the Federal Government. So, I stayed on in that program as a foreign student counselor and finished my degree in Middle Eastern History. Then I was asked where I wanted to do my graduate work, and at that time, I really wanted to work with Halil İnalçık. At that time, he was at Ankara University. My professor wrote to Halil İnalçık, but he responded that there were no fellowships available for foreign students. So, instead I went to UCLA, which was a very good choice, because there were very good scholars who influenced me, like Stanford Shaw, Andreas Tietze, Speros Vryonis Jr., and Katharina Otto-Dorn.

I finished my studies in 1971, and I only had to write my dissertation. I was given a grant by ARIT to write it, but as part of the agreement, I had to serve as the Director of the İstanbul branch, which I did for the next nine years. I also began to work at Boğaziçi University.

Just before the second term, in the year 1972-73, Metin Kunt was invited somewhere, and there was an opening for the Humanities course there. Through my present wife, I knew Ercüment Atabay, who was a professor of Humanities and head of the English Department; he asked me to fill in for the empty position. I will never forget the first day.

There were three hundred students in the course, which had been initially designed with a huge grant from the Ford Foundation in the '60s. There were famous academicians who designed the course, and in a year, there would be twenty people teaching it. It was a very interesting course with each person teaching his or her specialty. Anyway, the year I was recruited, I walked into class the first day and there were only three of us left: Zeynep Davran, Oya Başak, and myself. Oya was in England for a semester, so it was just Zeynep Davran. On the first day of class, she was going to speak, so I thought I would go by and listen to see what the class was all about. I showed up, and she did not. So I got up in front of 300 students, completely unprepared, to give a lecture for the first time in my life.

I enjoyed my time in Boğaziçi. I taught many students who are now well known, like Cem Boyner, Güler Sabancı, Sedat Ergin, and Ayhan Aktar.

***How did you decide to specialize in history, and then Ottoman and Turkish studies? How did your career develop?***

I started working on Ottoman tax registers.

***I am sorry to interrupt, but in your publications, there are a few occasions where you use the term "Defterology." Is this word used in other places, or is it a term that you coined yourself?***

Yes, I coined that word!

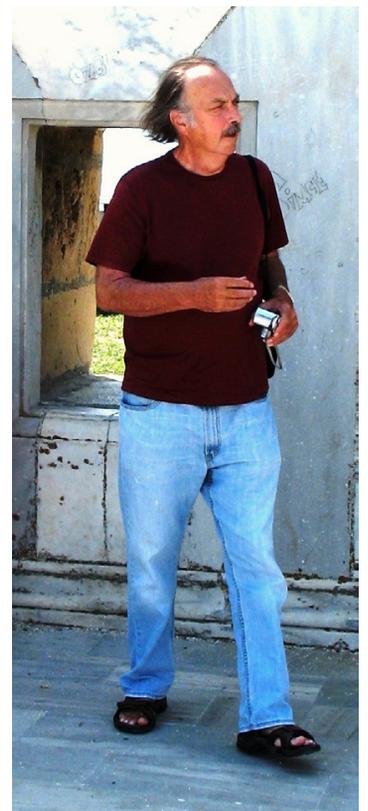
So, I started with "defterology." I chose to work on Trabzon, so I wrote my dissertation on the history of Trabzon in the 15th and 16th centuries.



*Pictured above: Prof. Lowry with former President Turgut Özal*

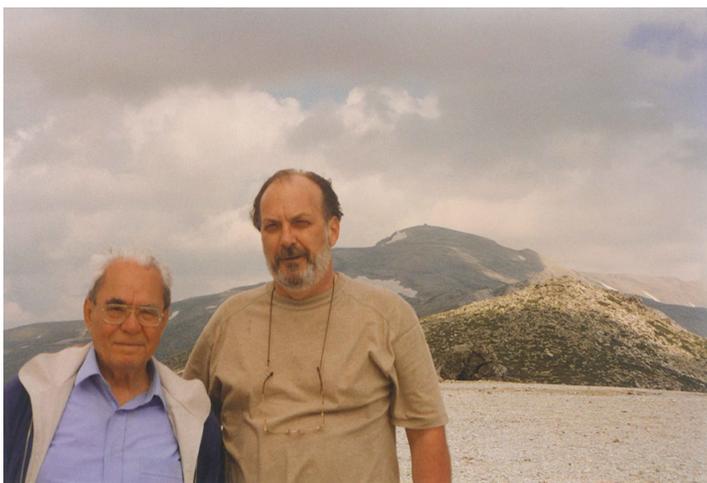
Trabzon was an interesting place—it had a very mixed population, with Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Italian merchants. And out of that work, I got involved in a big project with Dumbarton Oaks, a research center in Washington D.C. run by Harvard University. It specializes in Byzantine Studies, but also pre-Colombian Art and English Gardens and Landscaping. I started working with them in 1979 on a project to look at areas of continuity and areas of change between the Late Byzantine period and the Early Ottoman period. So that was when I got more focused on the early Ottoman period. We did a very large symposium, which I published, called "Continuity and Change in the Late Byzantium and Early Ottoman Period". And through that, my interest more or less began to focus on the early Ottoman years. But in the last fifteen years or so I began to focus more on the Balkans, because I came to realize that the Ottoman Empire, up until the conquest of the Arab world, was primarily a Balkan state. They had this constant move westward, with many of their institutions formed in the Balkans; they were formed in a milieu where the Moslems—the Turks—were a distinct minority.

So, I began to work on that more and more. But the problem with working on the 14th and 15th century is that we have very few written sources. So, I began travelling extensively, particularly in Northern Greece, looking for what the Ottomans had left behind, and using these architectural monuments as historical sources. For example, we think of the 14th and 15th century as a time when the Ottomans were moving through the land rapidly, sword in hand, forcibly converting anybody they came across—but that never made any sense to me. If they had wanted to convert Christians, there wouldn't be any Christians left in the Balkans today. There was nobody to say "no." Right from the beginning, they were only interested in establishing a state with a sound fiscal policy—so taxation was important. If you paid your taxes,



*Pictured above: Prof. Lowry in Gelibolu in 2012*





*Pictured above: Prof. Lowry with Prof. Halil İnalçık in Uludağ in 2006*

***“I have always thought that Fulbright was one of the most important foreign policy actions the U.S. has ever taken... It gave, gives, and will give young scholars the chance to be exposed to another culture in a generally positive way.”***

they did not care about your religion or language. So, I had more and more signs that at the very time that they were entering the Balkans in the 14th and 15th centuries, they were also putting in place a very long-term infrastructural strategy. At the same time that they were conquering, they were also building roads, caravansaries, imarets, soup kitchens, and hammams: they were there to stay. And so by using these kinds of remains, I have been focusing largely on that aspect of the Ottomans growing to become a world power.

***How did you decide to apply for the Fulbright Program? Why did you choose Bilkent?***

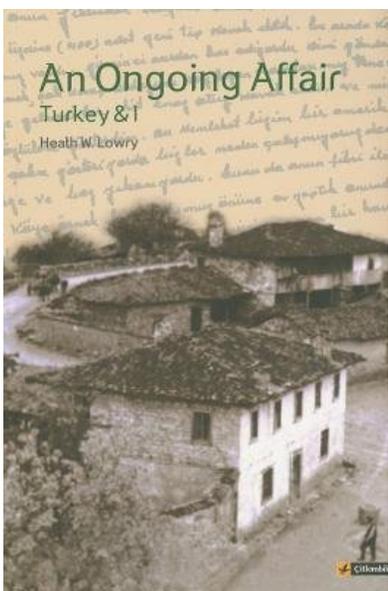
My first contact with Fulbright was actually much earlier. When I was a graduate student, I never applied to Fulbright. One of the first Turks I met in America was a student from USC, Ersin Onulduran, who later became the Director of Fulbright from 1986 to 2010. I kept in touch with him, and I think it was actually Ersin who suggested that I apply for a senior scholar grant, and I did. I was at Princeton at that time, but I was on sabbatical for a year. I really wanted to be working on a book, and did not want any outside responsibilities. But when I got here, I found out that you had to have some attachment to a university. The logical choice for me would have been Boğaziçi because I was living in İstanbul, but on the other hand, I wanted to spend some time with Halil İnalçık, so I said Bilkent.

***Could you talk about your grant year at Bilkent? What did you do academically; what did you work on? Did you meet people who became important for you? Did the Fulbright Program affect your life and contribute to your career in any way?***

That year I lived like a travelling merchant. I would drive up to Ankara on Sunday afternoons, I had an apartment on the campus, so I would stay there until Wednesday, and usually drive back to İstanbul on Wednesday night, or sometimes Thursday morning. I did that for that whole year. It was okay for most of the year, except in winter. At that time there was no tunnel at Bolu. At Bilkent, I gave lectures on Ottoman history. At one point, Halil İnalçık’s secretary called me to his office and said “you know Halil Hoca has left for a six-week check-up to Chicago”—he would have heart surgery—and she said “you will be giving his seminar now.” So, I did teach for six weeks. There was a very active group of Trabzonlular in Ankara, and I was invited by them a couple of times to give lectures. I also gave a couple of lectures at ARIT. But essentially, I was doing my own work and mostly working on a book, which came out later in 2003, titled “The Nature of the Early Ottoman State.” I was also working on Bursa—from the eyes of travelers. It was a good time for me. I enjoyed my year at Bilkent.

***You were very familiar with the academic environment in İstanbul, having taught at Boğaziçi University; what was different in Ankara? What were the experiences that most impressed or surprised you?***

I was used to the culture at Boğaziçi, and Bilkent was different. First of all, almost everybody lived on campus. They had housing for all the faculty. There was not the community spirit that was there at Boğaziçi in the ‘70s; but probably they do not have it anymore at Boğaziçi either. It was a new university, but they had some very good people. There were even a number of people who I knew from Boğaziçi, like Metin Heper, and my former professor from UCLA, Stanford Shaw. As a Fulbrighter, I remember the end of year meeting, where all grantees came together in Antalya for several days.



*Pictured left: The cover of Prof. Lowry’s book, “An Ongoing Affair - Turkey & I”*

***You also served on the Fulbright Commission Board; what was the experience like?***

At some time in the mid '70s, the Fulbright Commission in Ankara was made up of three Americans, who were normally businessmen, and three Turkish men, including someone from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and someone from the Ministry of National Education. At that time, the PAO was not a member, but the İstanbul Consul General was. So, that was when I was invited to serve on the Board for three years, from 1977 to 1980.

I have always thought that Fulbright was one of the most important foreign policy actions the U.S. has ever taken. The Peace Corps also opened the eyes of young Americans to the world, but Fulbright has done it consistently. If you want to look at the number of "area specialists" in American universities, an overwhelming majority of them would have been Fulbright scholars at some point in their lives. It gave, gives, and will give young scholars the chance to be exposed to another culture in a generally positive way.

***Are you happy with choosing the path you took—studying Turkey and its history—rather than specializing in another area?***

Yes, very much so, partly because I did choose it. Something which has always bothered me greatly about education in Turkey is that often kids are forced into choosing something, very often via parental pressure. Maybe they do not want to be doctors, but that's what your parents tell you you should be. And suddenly you find yourself a doctor, but you're not happy about it. I can not make that kind of a complaint, because everything I did, I chose. I may have made bad choices, but that's my problem, nobody pushed me into choosing them.

It's easier now in Turkey; you're seeing many more people who are changing course, moving from the cities to the countryside. fifty years ago, it was not possible in Turkey—people would have thought you were insane. But now you have different options for life. There's a lot more internal movement within Turkey, from cities to other cities. It would be very interesting to find out, for example, how many of the first graduates of Boğaziçi, from '71 to '80, are now in the tourism sector, owning hotels. I know several, for example, and that's nice.

However, it is also a waste if you spend twenty years becoming a good chemist and then you become a bartender. In the '70s, there were some professions that were considered fashionable, like chemists and architects. There were then many unemployed architects around!

***Of all your accomplishments, which make you especially proud?***

I cannot say I am proud of anything I wrote, but I can say I like some of my books more than others. There are none that I do not like! But I can say I am proud of the work I have done at Bahçeşehir. I first began to come to Bahçeşehir in 2008. It was really an accident. Around 2000, Enver Yücel had come to Washington D.C. He came with a large group of people, several of whom I knew, like İlber Ortaylı. We met at a dinner in Washington D.C. Almost the first question he asked was, "When you come to Turkey, what are you going to teach for us?" I said well, when I come to Turkey, usually I am working, and I do not teach then because I am on a sabbatical. Then in 2008, we were here on a sabbatical, and we were going out for dinner with our friends. But at 5 o'clock that evening, our friend, who was dean of a faculty at Bahçeşehir at that time, phoned very apologetically

*Pictured below: Prof. Lowry in his office*



and said she was in a meeting with Enver Yücel and that Enver Bey had invited them for dinner that evening. She had said she was going out with us, and Enver Bey said “I want to see them as well, invite them as well.” So, at dinner he said, “If you’re here for the year, teach a seminar for us.” I said, “I am honored, but I am here to get an expensive book to get published. I need to find a publisher, and financing.” And he said, “That’s okay, we’ll publish anything that you write.”

And so I have published twelve books in the last ten years, and a couple of more are coming out this year. That has been a great opportunity. I never liked dealing with publishers, so everything we do, we do here in my library. We have a book designer who works with me, so we design the books together, we do them the way I want them done, and they get out in a timely fashion. The only condition that Enver Bey put is one that I like, and that is that we publish everything simultaneously in Turkish and English. Well, that’s good for me, because most Ottoman historians in Turkish universities do not know English well enough to work on English material, and they should not need to—so that has been a great opportunity. As you can see, I am surrounded by my library, so I do not need to go far—everything I need is right here. Bahçeşehir has become a comfortable place to be in. I only teach one three-hour seminar a week. We have a master’s program in early Ottoman history, so the rest of the time, I am sitting in my office and working.

***Having had a long, fruitful career, and witnessing the development of scholarship in your fields, can you see notable changes, new directions that were not there at the beginning?***

Yes, there have been lots of changes. The one that I am most happy about is this: for a long time after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, former Ottoman territories generally did not want to do anything with their Ottoman past; this has really changed in the last generation. In Greece, there is a group of twenty young scholars who are very well trained and fluent in Ottoman Turkish; they know the sources and

***Particularly in the last twenty years there’s also been a massive restoration of Ottoman architectural works, some of them very well done, some of them not very well done—but at least they have done it. They are preserved, and that’s a healthy sign.***

they write well. The same is true in Bulgaria, and less so in Serbia maybe. In the Arab world, the same is true. You do not have to be too smart to realize that if you were part of the empire for four hundred years, there’s four hundred years of your own history to write about. That’s a pleasant change. When I was teaching at Boğaziçi at the early ‘70s, and I would meet someone, and they would ask, “What are you doing?”, and I would say, “I am doing Ottoman history,” and they would look at me like “This poor idiot, could not he find anything else to do with his life?” That attitude has certainly changed. There has been an awakening of interest in the Ottoman past. For that, we owe a lot to İlber Ortaylı and Murat Bardakçı. Through Bardakçı’s programs alone, millions of people were exposed to things they had never thought about before. I appeared three times on his programs, and when I was in Bodrum during the last Bayram, eating at a restaurant, the owner of the next restaurant, an elderly woman came over, and asked me to sign a book of mine. I said, how do you know about this, and she said “you were on this program, and you said this and you said that”—so that is a very healthy sign.

Particularly in the last twenty years there’s also been a massive restoration of Ottoman architectural works, some of them very well done, some of them not very well done—but at least they have done it. They are preserved, and that’s a healthy sign. In the early years of the Republic, there was a desire to cut oneself off from the Ottoman past. That was not very healthy either. Now the pendulum has swung to the opposite side. In time, it will find the middle ground. In general, I think these are all positive steps.

I am not so sure about the explosion of universities. There are more than two hundred universities now, and almost all of them are teaching Ottoman history. Still in Turkey, history is most often defined as Ottoman history. I know very few universities that have programs in European history, and even less in American history. So, history is seen as the history of Turkey and the regions it once ruled, which is understandable, but not very useful.

As I get older, I sometimes wish there were fewer books being written; it’s getting very difficult keeping track of all this. A lot of interesting things are being published. I must admit, when I was building this library, I generally read what I bought, but in the last few years it has become impossible. I am an honorary member of Türk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish Historical Society), so I get all of their publications for free, and that means a couple hundred books a year. I would be lying if I said I am reading all of them.

In general, I am very happy with the things that have developed. When I started in this business, I would have never imagined things would have developed the way they have, both for myself, and for the subject area.

***Do you have any suggestions and advice for young people wishing to study in, pursue, and work in this field?***

I do. The one thing that bothers me a bit is that Ottoman history as a field of study is not developed to the point that one can really write the kind of history that is being produced in the West, whether it's European history or American history. The problem is that young students that are starting out—in American universities in particular—learn history the way it's written in the West. And they want to do something spectacular, to write something encompassing all there is.

Unfortunately, in our field, we're still at the very early stage of development. We have got over a hundred million documents in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul. Only 20% of those are properly catalogued.



Of those 20%, maybe a million have been studied. So, to hint that anything definitive can be written about Ottoman history is impossible, but young scholars are forced into trying to write Ottoman history, the way people are writing French history, or colonial British history, or American history. That is dangerous.

It is understandable, since after finishing their degrees, if they are going to apply for jobs at American universities,

they are going to be judged by what they have written. At this stage, I think it is a bit premature to write big, thematic works on Ottoman history. That may be a reflection of my own interest, because I do not write big books; I write monographs about particular topics that interest me. The only time I went over and beyond that is the book I published in 2003, *Nature of the Early Ottoman State*. Generally, I am much more comfortable taking a specific topic and working on it in depth. Because of the break with the Ottoman past, whole generations grew up knowing nothing about the Ottoman past, except what was written in standard history books.

I remember, years ago in the '70s, I was teaching the Humanity course at Boğaziçi, and there was this student who liked to put me on the spot with his questions. I was talking about Timurlenk, and he said "I do not understand this. Last year, I was in high school and in history I read that Timurlenk was an infidel and a barbarian, an enemy of Islam; and this is the book my brother is reading this year, in his high school history class. This one says Timurlenk is a great Turkish ruler who was a devout Muslim ruler—so which of these is right?"

Well, you cannot do that with history. And rightfully so, most people of previous generations grew up with a strong dislike of history. History was something you had to study and memorize a lot of things and you were never asked to think about them or discuss them. You were just fed it, and that resulted in a strong dislike of history. I think these popular TV programs, and series have changed the perception, even in other countries. In Greece for example, the TV series "Muhteşem Yüzyıl" (Magnificent Century) became popular and changed the way people perceived the Ottoman past. It's good, because this helps two people see each other—how much they share and have things in common when they come together.

We were visiting Thessaloniki, and my wife and I stopped at a restaurant serving home food, and when I saw a tray of "biber dolması" (stuffed peppers) I remarked about it to my wife in Turkish, so the owner asked "are you Turkish?" And I said "yes." My wife said she was from Thessaloniki and the man said "I am from Adana!" They acknowledged that both this man's family and my wife's family had to migrate to each other's countries. And then we were served huge plates full of delicious food. So, as we were leaving, I asked for the bill, and the man said, "You are my guests."

One of my books just came out in Greek as well.



The American Programs Unit of our Commission welcomed its grantees for the 2019-2020 academic year from different grant categories. One Senior Scholar, seven Student Researchers and fourteen English Teaching Assistants have started teaching and conducting research at universities and research centers in Ankara, Bilecik, Bursa, Edirne, İstanbul, Çanakkale, Uşak, and Bartın. One of our grantees received the Fulbright Greece-Turkey Joint Research Award and started the first part of her grant period in Greece in September; she will be arriving in Turkey in January 2020 to complete the second half of her grant. We wish our grantees a productive and successful academic year in Turkey.

Turkish universities are welcome to host U.S. scholars and students on their campuses in different grant categories offered by the American Programs. The application deadline and requirements for each program differ. Universities interested in hosting a scholar or a student can always contact the American Programs at [amprog@fulbright.org.tr](mailto:amprog@fulbright.org.tr) for more information.

## Senior Scholars' and Student Researchers' Orientation Meeting Program

The Orientation Meeting Program for the 2019-2020 academic year grantees was held on September 23-25, 2019 in Ankara. One Senior Scholar and seven

Student Researchers from Bilecik, Bursa, Edirne and İstanbul attended the meeting. The meeting offered them various sessions conducted by program staff, colleagues from the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, and scholars in different academic fields. The meeting also included cultural visits to some significant sites located in Ankara, including Anıtkabir (which is the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic) the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, and the Citadel area.



*Pictured: Our 2019-2020 U.S. Student Researchers & Senior Scholar on their visit to Anıtkabir*

## The English Teaching Assistant Award (ETA) Program Orientation Meeting Program

*Pictured: Our 2019-2020 ETA grantees with Prof. Ersel Aydınli and Mr. Scott Weinholt, during the Orientation Meeting in Ankara.*



The ETA Program in Turkey has nearly doubled in size from the previous year, as we welcome fourteen grantees to Turkey this year. ETA grantees are placed at public universities in Ankara, Bartın, Çanakkale, and Uşak. An Orientation Meeting Program was held in Ankara on September 16-20, 2019 in preparation for their grant periods. Prof. Ersel Aydınli, Executive Director of our Commission and Mr. Scott Weinholt, Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, welcomed the grantees and officially commenced the meeting.

The meeting provided the grantees the opportunity to hear presentations and lessons on Turkish language, culture, history, politics, and education. Additionally, grantees received training from several English teaching specialists in Ankara, who provided the grantees with methods and tools for making the most out of their teaching experience. The grantees were also able to meet with their university representatives in person to learn more about their institutions and teaching responsibilities. The former ETA grantees who are currently studying or teaching in Ankara held a panel to discuss their individual experiences of the program. The Commission hosted a welcome dinner for the grantees with the attendance of the university representatives and the Commission staff. The grantees also visited the cultural and historical sites in Ankara.

# American Programs

## Reception at U.S. Ambassador Mr. David Satterfield's Residence

Grantees also attended the reception hosted by U.S. Ambassador David M. Satterfield at his residence in Ankara on September 24, 2019. Attendees at the reception included the Commission Board Members, Senior Scholars and Student Researchers, ETA Grantees, key host institution partners, alumni and the Commission staff. A welcome dinner was also hosted by the Commission in honor of the grantees.

*Pictured: Prof. Ersel Aydınli, Executive Director of our Commission, speaking at the reception at U.S. Ambassador Mr. David Satterfield's residence in Ankara.*



## Stories from U.S. Grantees

### Ashley E. Cercone

2019-2020

U.S. Student Researcher

University of Buffalo, New York /  
Bilecik University, Bilecik & Middle  
East Technical University, Ankara

My first few weeks here were spent under the weather—ironically plagued by the ‘Sultan’s Revenge.’ After much joking around with my colleagues about the Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever this past summer, I was shocked to find out that I was instead inflicted with another common sickness with a less comical name. I have thankfully righted the ship. In the past few weeks, I have signed up for Turkish classes (at TÖMER) at my host university and avidly taken six hours of language courses a day. I have also started to visit important Bronze Age sites in Anatolia, like Hattuşa and Alacahöyük in the province of Çorum. While Troy is perhaps the most iconic site in

***"I am planning an experimental archaeology workshop entitled 'Reconstructing Bronze Age Technology.'"***

modern-day Turkey, the city of Hattuşa would have played a more critical role in Anatolia during the Bronze Age. Hattuşa served as the capital of the Hittite Empire, which was one of the most influential groups in the Eastern Mediterranean alongside the Egyptians. Even though my fellowship started off slowly, I have a lot of plans in the near future. With my host university, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali Üniversitesi, which is a relatively new university, I am planning an experimental archaeology workshop entitled ‘Reconstructing Bronze Age Technology.’ This daylong workshop will focus on ceramic forming techniques, such as the potter’s wheel, coil method, and pottery molds, which were all used during this time period in Anatolia. By reconstructing how ceramics were made, archaeologists can better identify them in the archaeological record.



*Pictured: Ms. Cercone in Boğazköy, Hattuşa*



## Thomas La Pham "Finding Home in Uşak"

2019-2020

ETA Program Grantee

University of Washington,  
Washington / Uşak University, Uşak



*Pictured: Mr. Pham with his colleagues in Uşak*

*"Uşak has exceeded my every expectation of being a Fulbright ETA. I have been fortunate enough to have been adopted into a vibrant city with historic roots that once was the heart of the Lydian Kingdom."*

Having lived in Turkey for a total of eleven months through the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Study (YES) Abroad program ('13-'14) and the Critical Language Scholarship in Bursa ('15), my second month living in Uşak has truly been an accumulation of both the study of Turkish culture and language. Uşak has exceeded my every expectation of being a Fulbright ETA. I have been fortunate enough to have been adopted into a vibrant city with historic roots that once

was the heart of the Lydian Kingdom. Over the past two months, I have spent countless hours engaging with students in English conversation, both inside the classroom and in the various cafes around the city. I have learned to play Okey and have taught a number of students how to play backgammon.



*Pictured: Mr. Pham with his students*

I have been asked a number of times: "Why Turkey?" and especially "Why Uşak?" The response often leads to longer conversations about the beautiful places in Turkey, the rich history, and the relationships I have been able to form. Turkey has always held—and will always hold—a dear place in my heart. I have found myself encouraging friends to come and experience Uşak for themselves. I am grateful for this opportunity and am looking forward to the next seven months where I can call Uşak home.

## Johnny Zapata "A Day in Bartın"

2019-2020

ETA Program Grantee

University of Houston, Texas /  
Bartın University, Bartın



*Pictured: ETA grantees Johnny and Sophia with their colleagues*

*"Today has shown me that though I am thousands of miles away from home, I am currently at the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing."*

Today was a perfect day! After waking up early to do some laundry and hanging it on the clothes lines of my fourth-floor balcony I took a fifteen-minute stroll to my favorite coffee shop. There I met Sophia, a fellow grantee, and our coworkers Neslihan and Nurcan. As per tradition, each Wednesday we meet for Turkish tea and the world's best croissants. As we drink cup after cup of tea, Neslihan shares about a conference in Spain, Nurcan talks about the delights of pregnancy, and I share about my recent trip to Izmir. This is how we build a community here in our little corner of Turkey.

My students greet me, "Hello teacher!" as I begin my class. Today's lesson on work includes a dialog with two oil workers; as a Texan I cannot help but to feel homesick as they go on about life on the oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. I forget about Texas as soon as I look out my classroom window and see the

lush, picture-perfect hills that make me sing "The Hills are Alive" from the film The Sound of Music, every time I see them.

As my classes end, Wednesday speaking club is next on my list. Today we have a full house—35 students. With the holiday craze about to begin I introduce them to the madness that is the period between Halloween and the New Year. They laugh as we speak about Friendsgiving and ugly sweater parties as well as their own peculiar holiday traditions.

It's 7 p.m., speaking club is over. As I leave the university I am approached by a student. She asks, "Teacher, are you tired?" I respond, "Yes, but when you do what you love you never truly get tired." I walk back to the same coffee shop to meet Sophia and our friend Hüma for a chat and to lesson plan for the rest of the week. Today has shown me that though I am thousands of miles away from home, I am currently at the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.

# Turkish Programs

## Pre-Departure Orientations for the 2019-2020 Academic Year Grantees



*Pictured above: 2019-2020 Student Core Program Grantees at the Pre-Departure Orientation*

Pre-Departure Orientations and Webinars, which are designed by the Commission for each grant category, were organized throughout June and July 2019. They are great tools to prepare grantees for successful participation in their exchange programs to the United States, which culminate in the End-of-Year Reception that is held in Ankara every year. This year's reception, which was attended by the Counselor of Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy, Scott Weinhold, and our program partners, marked the start of year-long celebratory events to be organized for the commemoration of the Commission's 70th anniversary.

The reception offered grantees and alumni a chance to meet, discuss, and learn from each other in a more informal setting. There was also a piano recital performance from master's grantee Ms. Bahar Soyöz. Bahar is specializing in collaborative piano at Bard College's Longy School of Music and is already making waves in the United States with her talent; she performed at Harvard University's Paine Hall for an audience of over 300 people.

We wish our Turkish grantees luck and success as they complete their programs at 81 different community colleges, universities, and institutes throughout the United States; from Portland to Boston, and Michigan to Miami!



*Pictured above: 2019-2020 Master's Grantee Ms. Bahar Soyöz with Prof. Ersel Aydınli after her piano recital at the End-of-Year Reception*

*Pictured right: 2019-2020 CCIP Grantees at the Commission's Head Office in Ankara*



## 2020-2021 Academic Year Turkish Student Core Program Nominees



*Pictured above: Student Core Program Nominees and the Commission Staff at the Initial Orientation Meeting held in Ankara*

Almost as soon as we bid our outgoing grantees farewell, we were welcoming our newly-selected candidates for the 2020-2021 academic year. The Initial Orientation for the Master's and Ph.D. nominees was held in Ankara on September 16, 2019.

During the day-long event where they had the opportunity to mingle and

get to know one another, nominees also learned more about the road ahead as Fulbright candidates, with presentations from the Acting Turkish Programs Officer Duygu Kimençe, and the Educational and Placement Adviser Tarık Tansu Yiğit. We hope to see them all again next June when they are enrolled at their universities in the United States.

**FULBRIGHT Türkiye** **YÜKSEK LİSANS & DOKTORA BURSU**

Burs tutarı bir akademik yıl için 50.000 Amerikan Doları'dır.

**SON BAŞVURU 8 Nisan 2020**

Burs, 2021-2022 akademik yılı için geçerlidir.

**FULBRIGHT Türkiye** Seçilen aday, doktora eğitimini Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar danışmanlığında North Carolina Üniversitesi'nde tamamlayacaktır.

**PROF. DR. AZİZ SANÇAR DOKTORA BURSU**

**SON BAŞVURU 8 Nisan 2020**

Burs tutarı bir akademik yıl için 20.000 Amerikan Doları'dır.

Burs, 2021-2022 akademik yılı için geçerlidir.

## Application Period for the 2021-2022 Student Core Program Grants

Please be on the lookout for the application announcements published on our website for the 2021-2022 academic year grants!

*The deadline for applications for the 2021-2022 Student Core Program is April 8, 2020.*

*For more information: [www.fulbright.org.tr](http://www.fulbright.org.tr)*

## Yusuf Orkun Tibet

2019-2020 Master's  
Program Grantee

Boğaziçi University, İstanbul /  
Columbia University



Pictured above: Orkun in front of Columbia Business School on his first day at university

I have just finished my second month at Columbia Business School and so far, it has been a wonderful journey! The year started extremely fast with a two week-long orientation program, where I met wonderful people from around the world and started building very valuable friendships. I can feel that these two years will be an unforgettable period of my life.

**"You will never have the time to do everything at the same time, so you need to prioritize and learn to say 'no'. Never feel the fear of missing out—you will have the time."**

My first observation of the life of business school is its extreme pace. Classes, recruiting and socializing kick-in simultaneously and sometimes it feels overwhelming. Nevertheless, everyone feels the same and no one fails in this process, so it is important to keep calm. My solution to this fast pace is to prioritize, and this is also my

primary advice to future Fulbrighters. During your studies in the United States, you will have challenging courses with a significant workload, you will find numerous social events that you want to attend, and you will have daily responsibilities to maintain: your life and your time will be very limited. You will never have the time to do everything at the same time, so you need to prioritize and learn to say "no." Never feel the fear of missing out—you will have the time. You just do not have to do everything at once. My second important observation is that people are from very diverse backgrounds and cultures, which sometimes does not reflect what we are used to. If you ever feel that people are aloof or cold, do not take it personally. If you feel that something is wrong, do not hesitate to bring it up. Try not to assume, but do ask. Most of the time, people are very open to communication and will appreciate your effort. My last observation is that time flies, so enjoy it as much as you can!

## Gizem Gökçe

2019-2020 Ph.D.  
Program Grantee

TOBB University of Economics and  
Technology, Ankara / University of  
Washington



Pictured above: Gizem (4th from the left) and her friends from the Molecular Engineering & Sciences 2019 cohort after one of their classes at the University of Washington

## "A Dream Come True"

I always wanted to be in academia because I have always been eager to learn new things when it comes to science. Fulbright gave me the opportunity to pursue my doctoral education in the United States. I have chosen the University of Washington – Molecular Engineering & Sciences for my Ph.D., where I am working with Prof. David Baker. I chose this lab because I was impressed with the studies his research team was doing, and now I am in this lab as a research assistant. I am working on a project about designing serotonin binder proteins using both computational and experimental approaches. These designed proteins can lead us to interesting application areas related to the prevention or treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

Studying at one of the best universities in the world with such a successful

research group has also given me a different perspective in both educational and cultural terms.

Friendships that I have gained in my graduate preparation program and in the laboratory environment have enabled me to make friends, communicate with students with different ethnic backgrounds, and carry out social activities, which gave me the opportunity to embrace cultural diversities. It is also possible to make a lot of Turkish friends in your university or city especially during cultural festivals that celebrate Turkish culture and heritage. Moreover, during this process I learned that scientific studies can be carried out efficiently with social activities at the same time if you can use your time effectively. I could not be happier than I am now. I am forever grateful to the Turkish Fulbright Commission for giving me the opportunity to do my Ph.D. at my dream school and supporting me in this effort. I am very excited about sharing all my experiences even during my visits to Turkey while doing my doctorate.



## Seçil Özcan

2018-2019 Visiting Student  
Researcher (VSR) Program  
Grantee

Middle East Technical University,  
Ankara / Cornell University



Pictured above: Seçil at the entrance to  
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

The 2018-2019 academic year has not only offered me the opportunity to be a part of a very rich academic environment that I have never before been a part of but also provided me with substantial life opportunities by experiencing American culture for 10 months. I have continued my Ph.D. dissertation research at Cornell University's History of Architecture and Urban Planning Program, under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Esra Akcan, whose publications have influenced me in a significant way. Starting from the first Enrichment seminar that I attended in Richmond, Virginia in August 2018, I have become a part of a large Fulbright family in the United States that has enriched every step of my life here exponentially.

**"I am grateful to Fulbright for giving me the opportunity to engage with such wonderful experiences and awareness, and for introducing me to new people, new ideas, and a new culture. I will always be proud to be a part of a larger Fulbright family."**

Ithaca, a small city in Upstate New York, has offered me a quiet and modest study and work environment, surrounded by waterfalls and vivid trees with generous,

idyllic images. The city is physical evidence of how a well-planned campus can organize a life for itself inside a city, and become an inseparable part of it.

Along with social and cultural activities, the conferences and seminars that I have attended, the resources and archives that I accessed, and Prof. Akcan's critical advising, have allowed me to make important progress in my dissertation research.

One of the most valuable moments that I have experienced was related to the library. There was a big notice hanging on the wall that asked people: "What do you want on this floor?" and waited for answers from the people using that space. The main aim was to renovate the floor according to the users' needs and redesign the space in a much more communal way. It was more like an informal questionnaire but also a reminder of being part of an environment where people's ideas are cared for and have an impact on shaping their lives. From this point of view, I am grateful to Fulbright for giving me the opportunity to engage with such wonderful experiences and awareness, and for introducing me to new people, new ideas, and a new culture. I will always be proud to be a part of a larger Fulbright family.

## Assoc. Prof. Şeref Bozoklu

2019-2020 Visiting Scholar  
Program Grantee

Istanbul University, İstanbul / North  
Carolina State University



Pictured above: Assoc. Prof. Şeref Bozoklu  
with the wolf statues at NCSU's Wolf  
Plaza. The plaza takes its name from  
the university's athletics teams, who are  
known as the "Wolfpack"

## "Think and Do!"

One of the characteristics of American universities is their historical mottos, which have aroused great interest in me. I think that learning how the motto of a university was determined provides many details about its institutional culture and history. I now have to admit what I thought when I heard I have been awarded the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Fellowship: I could be a part of the motto. I will be able to work on dynamic macroeconomics and monetary DSGE models, and meet leading academic economists in the United States who have significantly contributed to the economic literature.

Raleigh is the capital of the state of North Carolina and the largest city in the southeast. It may fascinate you with its forests, hiking trails, lakes and calmness. You are easily able to find the inner calm for your project: you can walk for hours on the greenways, sit by a lake next to the library and listen to nature. North Carolina State University is a public research university in Raleigh and is also one of the partners of the 'Research Triangle,' together with Duke University in Durham and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Each university in the Research Triangle has a Turkish Student Association—they have close relationships with each other and with the other student associations.

**"I am very grateful to the Fulbright Commission for providing me this research opportunity. I would like to address those who read these short notes with the motto of NCSU: think and do."**

The Turkish-American Organization is a non-profit dedicated to promoting awareness of Turkish culture and sharing Turkish heritage, both within the Triangle community and throughout the state of North Carolina. The Turkish House, founded by Nobel Prize-winning scientist Prof. Aziz Sancar, will provide important opportunities for future academic visitors.

I am very grateful to the Fulbright Commission for providing me this research opportunity. I would like to address those who read these short notes with the motto of NCSU: think and do.

## Nil Kula "Cool, Gray, City of Love: San Francisco"

2019-2020 Visiting Scholar Program Grantee

Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir / University of San Francisco



*Pictured above: Assoc. Prof. Nil Kula and her sons, Demir and Dünya, at Fisherman's Wharf with the Alcatraz Island visible in the background*

It will be hard for me to express my exact feelings when I first heard that I was selected as a Fulbright Visiting Scholar. There was a mixture of feelings: happiness, excitement, honor, and –I have to admit –anxiety. I would be traveling to the United States with my two little sons and we would be facing a very different continent, culture, education, and lifestyle that we would have to adapt to in order to survive there.

As I took the first step to find an apartment, I faced the first truth about San Francisco: it really is an expensive city, maybe the most expensive city in the States. Another truth about the city is the kindness and good manners of people living there. The faculty staff and our neighbors warmly welcomed us. As the city is famous for its respect for diversity, you do not feel yourself different from other citizens or residents, and thus, you get used to the lifestyle of San Francisco immediately.

**"As the city is famous for its respect for diversity, you do not feel yourself different from other citizens or residents..."**

People say that the coldest winter they have ever seen is the summertime in San Francisco. I want to add another fact to that reality: the climate changes in San Francisco just in one day, and even from one street to the next. Since the weather is usually sunny and cool, it can be annoying when the city fills with the famous fog coming from the Pacific.

There are many places to see in San Francisco, such as Ocean Beach, Fisherman's Wharf, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Bay Bridge, museums, gardens, and parks; there are also many activities, such as hiking in Muir Woods, riding over the bridges, and walking through Golden Gate Park. Therefore, you never get bored in this great city full of adventure. To end, I would like to refer to Herb Caen's words, "One day if I go to Heaven, I will look around and say it ain't bad, but it ain't San Francisco."

## Dr. Aksu Akçaoğlu

2019-2020 Fulbright Post-Doctoral Program Grantee

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale / University of California, Berkeley



*Pictured above: Dr. Aksu Akçaoğlu with the statue of Mark Twain at UC Berkeley's Doe Library*

Can a person feel himself at home while he is thousands of miles away from his home? That is how I felt when I arrived in Berkeley on September 1st, 2019 as a Fulbright postdoctoral grantee. I know that 'feeling at home' is a strong sentiment and I have reasons to feel like that. First of all, this is not my first visit to Berkeley. I visited Berkeley in 2014 as a researcher while I was a Ph.D. student. At that time, I promised myself I would come back again. It may sound weird to revisit a city, rather than choosing new adventures in a new city and university. However, those who have visited Berkeley before will grant me the right to say that Berkeley is missed a lot.

What I missed most were the inspiring courses, colloquiums, and discussions

**"UC Berkeley is a university in which the universal principles of freedom of speech, equality, and tolerance are not abstract values but rather concrete principles in action."**

in the Sociology Department of UC Berkeley, which have always stimulated me to push my limits. I learned a lot from the productive atmosphere of UC Berkeley. I also loved to work in the peaceful atmosphere of Doe Library and grab a cup of coffee in the breaks under the shade of giant redwoods.

Last but not least, UC Berkeley is a university in which the universal principles of freedom of speech, equality, and tolerance are not abstract values but rather concrete principles in action.

There are many other reasons to visit Berkeley, such as planning road trips to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south or to Portland and Seattle in the north, or discovering the beauties of the nature in the national parks all along the West Coast. It has been just three weeks since my second Berkeley visit started, but I sense that there will be a third visit—to see the friendly people, peaceful culture and beautiful nature of this city again.



## Dr. Çiğdem Şahin

2019-2020 Fulbright  
Post-Doctoral Program Grantee

Ministry of National Education -  
Adana Sciences and  
Arts Center, Adana /  
Johns Hopkins University



Pictured above: Dr. Çiğdem Şahin (first from the right) with other Fulbrighters at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland

Initially, when I read the email announcing the results of the Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship application, I must say that I had intense and complex feelings of happiness and pride. I was going to represent my postdoctoral researcher and teacher identity together.

After coming to the United States, settling, and going through faculty registration, the first things I did were register for conferences and visit libraries with unlimited access. I was finally able to meet face-to-face with the lecturers who were the milestones of the field, who I had read for years and who contributed greatly to my studies and professional life. Afterwards, I contacted the staff of the teacher education unit to identify themes related to international projects, and to discuss financial resources. I started studies

**"My advice to my friends who come to the United States for research is that they should establish strong communication methods, and return with themes for potential cooperation."**

for both the Turkish Ministry of National Education and universities. I have participated in many workshops conducted by the faculty of education and research centers. We often meet with postdoctoral researchers and plan social events. We create opportunities to hear about the studies of different branches and education systems, and to share information about our studies. I occasionally plan trips to visit other states and cities. There are incredibly beautiful places, especially for nature trips. Some faculty members want to take me to Turkish restaurants and plan meetings, which is a source of morale for me. My advice to my friends who come to the United States for research is that they should establish strong communication methods, and return with themes for potential cooperation.

## Merve Öksüz Zerey

2019-2020 Foreign Language  
Teaching Assistant (FLTA)  
Program Grantee

Gazi University, Ankara /  
Syracuse University



Pictured above: Merve (third from the left, front row) at "The Turkish Conversation and Culture Table" organized at Syracuse University, with participants from different countries

## "The Turkish Conversation and Culture Table"

In this life, we all write our own stories. I have been working on one of my best chapters as a Turkish FLTA at Syracuse University for the past three months. Exhilarated by novel experiences and surrounded by great people, I have been growing, learning, achieving, and living truly. In this country, I do not have one, but multiple identities, all of which I embrace wholeheartedly. I am a lifelong learner, teacher, and cultural ambassador.

On October 15, we held the first Turkish Conversation and Culture Table with the participation of both native and non-native speakers of Turkish. Learning a language also entails learning about the country where that language is spoken: its culture, traditions, and cuisine. With this in mind, I intended to create an environment in which cultural exchange and enrichment can be provided. First of all, I made some Turkish pastries and cookies. Seeing people enjoy them was

definitely worth everything. After that, we played an engaging game by using technology to learn more about Turkey. The questions consisted of facts about Turkey and I believe that this helped our guests become more knowledgeable about our country. Besides, we prepared posters of three influential and inspiring Turkish people, namely Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Aziz Sançar, and Orhan Pamuk. Working in groups and walking around the hall, our guests became familiar with the founder of the Turkish Republic and two Nobel Prize winners. Sparking their interest in the history of Turkey, literature, and science was one of the proudest moments for me. Lastly, the closure of this special event occurred by serving Turkish coffee, further extending our hospitality and friendship.

We were a group of people from Turkey, Korea, China, Yemen, Nigeria, Iraq, the USA, and Azerbaijan, who mingled and felt more connected to each other in the end. This was an empowering experience that fostered cultural exchange and deepened the understanding of Turkey, and the Turkish language and culture. I am thankful for all of it and I am looking forward to our upcoming events.

## Umut Geyik "Person Between Cultures"

2019-2020 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program Grantee

Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Sivrihisar Vocational School, Eskişehir / Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale Campus



Pictured above: Umut (third from the left, back row) visiting the office of U.S. Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia with his community college cohort in Washington D.C.

I have been in the United States for approximately ten weeks, and I have spent most of my time learning about myself and my surroundings, because when you go abroad by yourself, you learn the limits of what you can and cannot do. When you are with people from many different cultures, you rewrite all your ideas and thoughts. You meet people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, religions, races, characters, and experiences.

Most people in the United States are friendly and helpful. They want to know other people and keep in touch with them. As a result, you can not help but become a social person. People here create new events everyday: playing games, meetings, social eating, helping, debating, etc.

**"People are very understanding of your status when you say "I am an exchange student" and they want to help you, almost acting like a family member."**

Americans love talking and chatting. While shopping in a market, someone pops up and asks you "Hi, how are you doing? Outside is so hot, isn't it?" As a person who has just travelled to the States and is very new here, you do not know anyone, but this person is asking how you are. In my opinion, that is very kind behavior. Also, people are very understanding of your status when you say "I am an exchange student" and they want to help you, almost acting like a family member.

I thank everyone who has helped me become a CCI participant and live all of these beautiful moments. It is a big opportunity and a very big deal as a life changer. People who you surround yourself with will affect your life. Payload of your assignments, projects, homework will be different than you expected. Just immerse yourself in your adventure.

## Burçin Ustabaş

2019-2020 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program Grantee

Marmara University, Social Sciences Vocational School, İstanbul / Scottsdale Community College



Pictured above: Burçin with the other Turkish CCI Program grantee at Scottsdale, Ferhat Yalçın, at their community college's Cultural Presentation Day

The CCI Program has had a huge impact on my life. It has been three months since I came to Arizona. When I first landed after a 23-hour journey from Turkey to America, I could not believe that finally, I was in the United States. But the most memorable moment for me was when I got out of the airport! The date was July 13th, it was 110 °F. Arizona has a different dimension of heat! However, with its nature, landscape, weather, and culture, Arizona is a unique place itself!

Here in Scottsdale Community College, I am majoring in Hospitality and Tourism Management. The CCI Program is a wonderful opportunity for me because **I am getting an education in a different country, living with people who are from different countries and cultures, and sharing my culture with them.** Honestly, when I came here I was thinking I knew America, but I was wrong. Especially in

Arizona, there are a lot of opportunities to get informed about Native American culture. I did not have any idea about reservation areas, their culture, historical monuments, and government. I am trying to travel as much as I can because I know this is the way to have a good worldview.

My first certificate event was with the Scottsdale Sister Cities Association. As a volunteer, I did a presentation on Turkish culture, cuisine, historical heritages, geopolitical location, and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and I wore my traditional clothes. It was a special experience for me to share my country's values with people from different countries. When people say "I will definitely visit Turkey and I will call you," I know I am doing well for myself and my country. Being a cultural ambassador, creating new ideas about my country, and gaining new perspectives about everything is priceless!



## Outreach Activities



*Pictured left:  
Presentation on  
Student Grants  
in İstanbul Şehir  
University*

*Pictured below:  
Student Grants  
Seminar at Niğde  
Ömer Halisdemir  
University*

*Pictured right:  
CCIP Grant Seminar  
at Uludağ University  
Social Sciences  
Community School*

The Advising Unit started the outreach program on October 30th with seminars on the community college and graduate grants, together with "Study in the U.S.A." presentations. Advisers have so far visited 46 vocational schools and universities in many cities, including Afyonkarahisar, Ankara, Antalya, Aydın, Bursa, Çanakkale, Düzce, Eskişehir, İstanbul, İzmir, Kocaeli, Muğla, Niğde, and Uşak. The outreach program will continue in the coming months.



Our advisers also conducted seminars for high school students and parents, informing them about the higher education options in the U.S. and the college application process,

as well as answering questions. The high schools visited so far include Sainte Pulcherie, Saint Benoit, Saint Michel French High Schools and Sankt Georg Austrian High School.



Ms. Mevlüde Bakır, our Advising Coordinator attended a panel organized by the Turkish American Association EducationUSA Center in Ankara on November 18, 2019 and talked about the Fulbright grant programs. The event was organized as part of the International Education Week activities.

## Office Seminars and Webinars

We continue to organize webinars on various topics, including "Study in the U.S.A.", where we share information about the US education system, application procedures and financial aid options, "TOEFL-SAT-ACT" and "TOEFL-GRE-GMAT," where we share general information about the tests, content and registration process, and sessions on Fulbright Grants. From July to November, we held twenty webinars and one Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) seminar and these sessions attracted more than 200 participants in total.

## ACT Visit

Ms. Zelal Özkan from the ConnecME Education İstanbul Branch Office visited us to inform our advisers about the updates to the ACT and Pre-ACT tests. Ms. Özkan informed our advisers of the new test content and the re-structuring of the test centers network in Turkey.

The Association of International Education Counselors Turkey and the Association of Study Abroad Counselors invited our advisers to their conferences, where they delivered a presentation outlining the five basic steps for studying in the U.S., followed by a presentation on visa processes by the visa section of the U.S. Consulate in İstanbul.

Our Commission has also started new advising activities through our Instagram account. The first activity, which involves collecting students' questions regarding Fulbright grant programs and higher education in the States and publishing the answers on the account, takes place every first Wednesday of each month. The second activity is called the "Social Media Live Session", and takes place every third Wednesday of each month. During this session, our advisers answer questions online about the Fulbright grant programs and higher education in the States.

## International Education Fairs

Our Advising Unit attended major international education fairs in Ankara and İstanbul; they informed participants about our Commission and our grant programs, as well as the education opportunities in the U.S.A.

The biannual international education A<sup>2</sup> Fair took place in İstanbul on October 12-13th and in Ankara on October 16th, while the biannual IEFT Fair was held in Ankara on October 21st and in İstanbul on October 26-27.

Our advisers held booths at both fairs in these cities and engaged with close to 500 students at each fair. They also gave presentations where they discussed the Fulbright grants available to Turkish students, and the necessary steps to study in the U.S. A total of 370 students attended these presentations.

*Pictured below: Fulbright Turkey and EducationUSA booth at an education fair in Ankara*



*Pictured below: Fulbright Turkey and EducationUSA booth at an education fair in İstanbul*



## Visits from US Higher Education Representatives

From July to November, the İstanbul Branch Office was visited by representatives from Rowan University, George Washington University, University of Oregon, Bryant University, Study in Maine, Delta State University, and Rochester Institute of Technology (Croatia Campus). During the visits, our advisers had the opportunity to learn about each institution's programs and scholarships offered. In return, our advisers shared information on the Turkish education system and recruitment opportunities.

*Pictured below (L-R): The representative from Bryant University, and the representative from Delta State University*



## EducationUSA Forum

EducationUSA held its annual forum in Washington, D.C. from July 30 to August 1, 2019. The Forum is the signature event of EducationUSA and gives higher education professionals an opportunity to engage with EducationUSA advisers from around the world. Attendees include approximately fifty advisers, all fourteen Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs), and U.S. Department of State and IIE EducationUSA staff, who present the latest regional and country-specific trends and tips for strategic international recruitment planning.

Our educational adviser from the İstanbul Branch Office, Ms. Serin Alpokay Taş, represented Turkey at the forum this year and held presentations at two different sessions. The first presentation covered how to engage teacher and counselor networks, as part of the Europe and Eurasia Overview session. The second presentation was on the Turkey Community College Programs, as part of the Emerging Markets for Community Colleges in Europe and Eurasia session.

On the second day of the forum, the Global Showcase took place. During this event, each country has a table where advisers provide information regarding their countries' education system. Mr. Salih Çelik, the Education Counselor, and Ms. Esra Atam, a Turkish teacher at the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Washington D.C., also attended the Showcase and provided information to the

U.S. Higher Education representatives visiting our table.

Apart from the presentations and Global Showcase, office hours and networking sessions provided many opportunities for engaging with the participants. On these occasions, information on the Turkish education system and student mobility was shared with U.S. Higher Education representatives.

*Top Photo: Global Showcase,  
Bottom Photo: EducationUSA Forum Europe and Eurasia group*



## Campus Visit

After the EducationUSA Forum, our educational adviser, Serin Alpokay Taş, visited George Mason University, Fairfax Campus, and Northern Virginia Community College with the other educational advisers, as part of the follow-up events of the Forum. It was an informative tour where the advisers had the opportunity to learn about the different programs that are offered at these institutions.

*Pictured: The campus visit*



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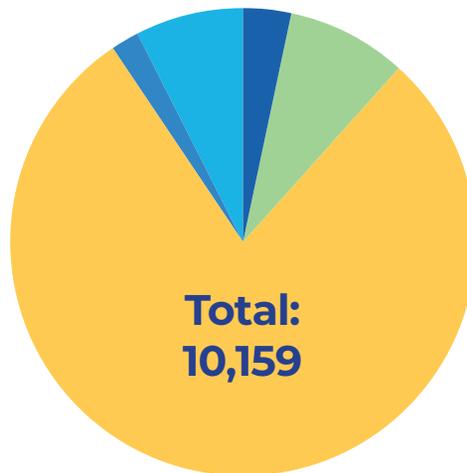
Every year, the Institute of International Education (IIE) releases a comprehensive report on international students and scholars studying or teaching at higher education institutions in the United States, and U.S. students studying abroad for academic credit at their home colleges or universities. Open Doors is supported by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

Below are some data on Turkish student mobility to the United States in the 2018-2019 academic year.

*The number of Turkish students studying in the USA in the 2018-2019 academic year was **10,159**.*

*With this number, Turkey was the **#15** sending country to the U.S. globally, and the **2nd** largest in Europe, following the UK.*

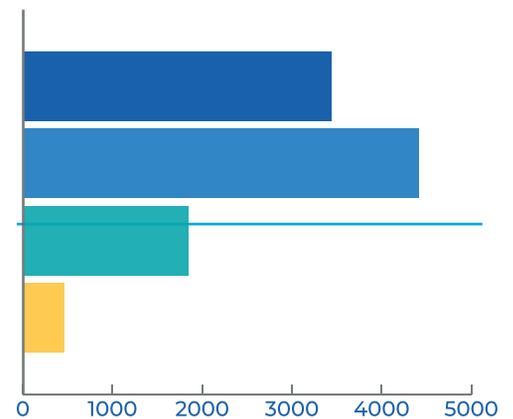
## Number of Turkish Students in the U.S. by U.S. Institution Type



- Private Institutions
- Public Institutions

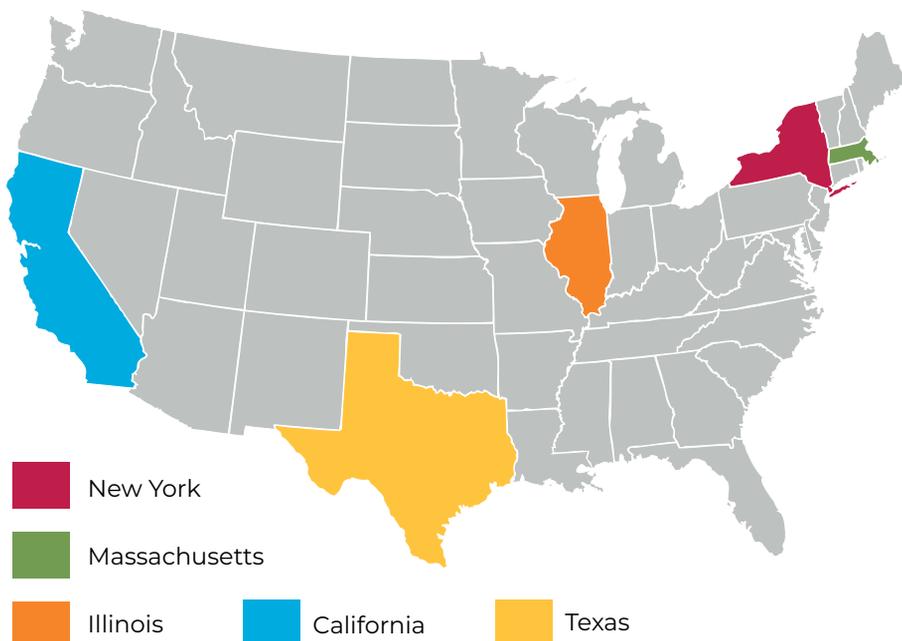
- Associate's (2-year) Colleges
- Baccalaureate (4-year) Colleges
- Doctorate-granting Universities
- Master's Colleges and Universities
- Special Focus Institutions

## Number of Turkish Students in the U.S. by Academic Level



- Graduate
- OPT (Optional Practical Training)
- Non-Degree
- Undergraduate

## Top 5 Receiving States





**FULBRIGHT**  
Turkey

THE TURKISH FULBRIGHT COMMISSION

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