



Starting with the 2015 applications the Grant amount for the Turkish Student Core Program will be increased to \$50,000 per academic year



JOHN BASS

U.S. Ambassador to Turkey
Honorary Chairman of the Turkish
Fulbright Commission Board



MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO TURKEY

In 1945, the United States Congress proposed funding the “promotion of international good will through the exchange of students.” Today, the Fulbright Program has become the United States’ finest exchange program, operating in 155 countries worldwide. It offers unparalleled opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide. In 2014 the Fulbright Program was honored by King Felipe VI of Spain with the Prince of Asturias Award for International Cooperation, conferred for scientific, technical, cultural, social, and humanitarian work that “constitutes an outstanding contribution at the international level.” We delight in the continued growth of “international good will” and look forward to increasing understanding between America and its friends around the globe.

The number of American students applying for Fulbright grants to come to Turkey continues to increase, as does the number of Turkish students applying for programs in the U.S. The Turkish Fulbright Commission plays an invaluable role in forging friendships, creating ties, and promoting mutual understanding between our two great countries. Students who complete these programs return home not only with insights into a new culture, but as life-long good will ambassadors of the countries they visited. Turks who visit America gain a unique understanding of the country that cannot be learned solely from popular media. Americans who travel to Turkey invariably fall in love with its rich cultural heritage, delicious food, and gracious hospitality. While on their programs, moreover, American and Turkish Fulbrighters introduce their respective countries to all of those with whom they study, work, and live.

During my career, I have been deeply impressed by the work of the Fulbright Commission. It’s already clear to me the Commission here in Turkey embodies the program’s long tradition of excellence. I commend the Commission for its continued work to strengthen relations between Turkey and the United States and to increase our collective knowledge. As Abraham Lincoln once said: “Upon the subject of education ... I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in.” I wholly agree, and applaud the Commission on its successful engagement on such a critical issue.

From the Executive Director

Welcome to the 7th issue of our biannual newsletter. As 2014 comes to an end, interest in all our programs remains at record levels. Not only our commission but the Fulbright program worldwide had a great year, highlighted by the winning of the Prince of Asturias prize, which was awarded by the Spanish King at a ceremony in October. Also this fall we saw the first event of our on-going 65th anniversary celebrations, an international academic conference held in Ankara. There will be more events through next spring, including the soon-to-be-released documentary we’ve prepared about our commission and its alumni. Be sure to keep an eye open for notices about this and other events. Special thanks to our honorary Board Chairman, Ambassador Bass, for sharing his thoughts about Fulbright and the Turkish Commission in this newsletter. For now, I would like to wish a happy and healthy new year to the commission staff, to all our friends, alumni, and partners in the U.S. State Department and broader Fulbright family.

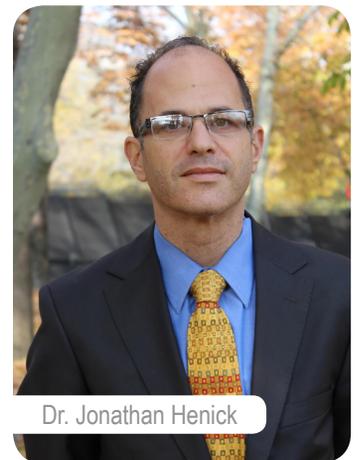
Dr. Ersel Aydınlı

New Members of Our Commission Board

Our Commission has a Board of Directors which oversees the daily operations and sets policies for the activities of the Commission. The new members of our Board are Dr. Jonathan Henick, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy in Ankara and Dr. Semih Aktekin, Director General for Higher Education and International Education Directorate, Ministry of National Education. We are happy to have them on our Board of Directors and look forward to working with them.



Dr. Semih Aktekin



Dr. Jonathan Henick

Launching our 65th Anniversary Celebrations

International Conference on Educational Exchange, Peace and Development



Deputy Prime Minister, Ali Babacan, Fulbright Alumnus '92, addressing the conference



Conference Presenters

List of Conference Presenters

- Dr. Carol Atkinson (University of Southern California)
- Dr. Iain Wilson (University of Edinburgh)
- Dr. Rasmus Bertelsen (Aalborg University)
- Dr. Hamilton Bean (University of Colorado)
- Dr. Darla Deardorff (Duke University)
- Dr. Craig Hayden (American University)
- Dr. Emily Metzgar (University of Indiana)
- Dr. Will Baker (University of Southampton)
- Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt (Bosphorus University)
- Dr. Yasemin Kırkgöz (Çukurova University)
- Dr. Derin Atay (Marmara University)
- Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı (Bilkent University)

As part of the Turkish Fulbright Commission's 65th anniversary celebrations, an international academic conference was held in Ankara on September 26-27, 2014.

The conference, on the topic of "International Educational Exchange and the Promotion of Peace, Development, and Intercultural Understanding," was organized together with the İhsan Doğramacı Center for Foreign Policy and Peace Research and the Hollings Center

for International Dialogue. The aim was to bring together practitioners and scholars in a dialogue exploring in general the socio-political impacts of educational exchange and the various ways in which language and language

education may be used to achieve these goals; and examining in particular the Turkish experience with both in-coming and out-going educational exchanges.



The conference opened with welcoming remarks by Commission Director, **Ersel Aydınllı**; Director of the Hollings Center, **Michael Carroll**; Bilkent President **Ali Doğramacı**; and US Charge d'Affaires, **Ross Wilson**, and featured a keynote

speech by **Ali Babacan**, Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey and a Fulbright alumnus. In his talk, Mr. Babacan highlighted the many accomplishments of the Fulbright program and the high esteem in which it is held around the world and in Turkey, and noted the tremendous growth in the Turkish Fulbright program since the time of Mr. Babacan's own grant in 1990-91. He praised efforts made in recent years to extend Fulbright opportunities to a wider spectrum of Turkish and American students and scholars, and spoke of additional initiatives being made to provide educational exchange opportunities for greater numbers of Turkish students seeking foreign education experience.

Research papers from the conference are being compiled and will be published next year in an edited volume.

NEWS FROM THE COMMISSION

THE 2014 PRINCE OF ASTURIAS AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION GOES TO THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM



The Fulbright Program received the 2014 Prince of Asturias Award in Oviedo, Spain in October. The award was presented by King Felipe VI to the Fulbright Program for International Cooperation and it pays tribute to the many Fulbrighters around the globe for building friendships across borders through education which lays the foundations of cooperation and peace among nations. Our Executive Director was also present at the ceremony together with the Executive Directors of Fulbright Commissions in different countries of the world.

Fulbright EDs with Assistant Secretary of State Evan Ryan, FFSB (Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board) Members, Mrs. Harriet Fulbright, and Staff of the U.S. Embassy in Madrid

MR. RICHARD MEI VISITED OUR HEAD OFFICE IN ANKARA

Mr. Richard Mei, who is the European Programs Branch Chief at the Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, visited our Ankara office in September. He also attended the International Conference on Educational Exchange, Peace and Development, which was held as part of our Commission's 65th anniversary celebrations.



Meeting with the Department of State and IIE Officials in Washington D.C.

Our Executive Director, Dr. Ersel Aydınli went to Washington D.C. in June to meet with the officials at the U.S. Department of State and Institute of International Education (IIE) for consultations. Our Turkish Programs Assistant Ms. Pınar Kılıçhan Şener was also present at the meetings.



In the photo from left to right, Mr. Arthur Austin, Assistant Director of Foreign Fulbright Programs at IIE; Ms. Damaris Kirchhofer; Ms. Mary Kirk, Director of Academic Exchange Programs at the U.S. Department of State; Mr. Ersel Aydınli, Executive Director at the Turkish Fulbright Commission; Ms. Kristina Hestvik, Program Officer II for Europe and Eurasia at IIE and Mr. Joseph McCormick, Academic Exchange Specialist at the U.S. Department of State.

Our Executive Director's Visits to Adana and Gaziantep

Our Executive Director visited our English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) in Adana and Gaziantep in mid-October. During his visit, he met with the Rectors of Adana Science and Technology University and Gaziantep University. He also visited the ETAs in their classrooms and talked to their students.



Our Executive Director with Prof. Adem Ersoy, Rector of Adana Science and Technology University and Assistant Professor Efe Efeoğlu, Director of the School of Foreign Languages



Our Executive Director with Prof. Mehmet Yavuz Coşkun Rector of Gaziantep University, and Mr. Levent Yıkıcı, Vice Manager of the School of Foreign Languages

Welcome Party for Our American Grantees



We organized a 'Welcome Party' for the 2014-2015 Academic Year U.S. Program Grantees at the Istanbul Branch Office on October 22. The Commission Board Chairman John Thomas McCarthy, Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Consulate General in İstanbul Dr. Craig Dicker, and some of the Fulbright Alumni were present at the party.

Thanksgiving Dinners in Ankara and İstanbul



Thanksgiving Day is an opportunity to come together with friends and family, and to give thanks to the things we have in our lives. We organized Thanksgiving dinners in Ankara and İstanbul to bring our American grantees and their families together. The dinners helped us get together with our grantees in an informal setting and share the things that we are thankful for.

THE NEW DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION AT THE U.S. EMBASSY VISITED OUR ANKARA HEAD OFFICE



Deputy Chief of Mission Mr. Mandel and Cultural Affairs Officer Ms. Van de Vate with our Executive Director and staff in Ankara

The new Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Mr. Lawrence C. Mandel, visited our Office in November. He had a meeting with our Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director to learn more about the programs and activities of our Commission and met with the Commission staff at the Ankara office.

FAREWELL TO OUR COLLEAGUE



We extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes to our Turkish Programs Officer, Ms. Günsu İnan, who recently got married. Sadly for us, she will be moving to Germany to join her husband. We wish Günsu and Ali all the very best in this next chapter of their lives.

NEW MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF

New members will be joining our staff in January. Ms. Güliz Özmen will be our new Finance Officer, Ms. Özlem Savaş will be our new Program Assistant for the American Programs and the Educational Advising Unit, and Ms. Tuğçe Kayı will be the Assistant to the Executive Director and will also work as a Program Assistant. We look forward to working with our new colleagues.

65TH ANNIVERSARY DOCUMENTARY IS ALMOST READY!

65th

The Turkish Fulbright Commission is happy to announce that the documentary which will be dedicated to the 65th Anniversary of the Commission is in the editing process and will be released this Spring.

An Inspiring Story



Canan Dağdeviren received the Fulbright Doctorate Grant in 2009 and received her Ph.D. degree in Material Science and Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently a Post-Doctoral Associate under the supervision of Prof. Robert Langer at MIT. Her passion is to make valuable contributions to neuroscience and to advance engineering devices. Canan says she would like to bridge the gap between cutting-edge neuroscience research and active advance electronic devices by developing a multi-functional, minimally invasive probe capable of addressing the spatial and temporal aspects of treating neural disorders such as Parkinson's disease, anxiety, and mood disorders. She has published 18 research papers, is the inventor of one patent application, and holds over 30 prestigious awards. She has recently been selected as a Junior Fellow of Harvard by the Society of Fellows (SoF) at Harvard University, and is the first scientist from Turkey to be named as a Junior Fellow. In addition to this, she is on the "Forbes 30 under 30 in Science" list.

Her PZT MEH invention has enabled her to introduce a novel approach to energy harvesting from an intrinsic, continuous source of biological (cardiac) motion, with important clinical relevance to implantable cardiovascular devices. She has filed patents on this invention, and hopes to help commercialize this technology in the near future through entrepreneurial collaboration between the University of Illinois and University of Arizona. QUALIFIED Suppliers to the Medical Device Industry (Qmed) ranked her technology as number one out of the top five MedTech breakthroughs of this year, compared with Google's glucose-reading contact lens which ranked second. Moreover, her work has received wide press coverage by prestigious information outlets such as the Smithsonian, Popular Mechanics, CBS News, LA Times, BBC News, New Scientist, and Medical Daily.

How did you decide on your field of specialization? Is there a particular person or event that motivated you to choose your field?

I have long been interested in science. I remember trying to find the atom by cutting a stone into pieces at a very young age. My father, who was very supportive of me, introduced me to an electron microscope that made me realize that it was an impossible task, but confirmed my passion for the field. This pursuit took a personal tone when I learned that my granddad passed away because of heart failure. Thus, I promised myself that I would do something for heart patients in the future, and I set 28 as the age to achieve this, which was the age of my granddad when he passed away. In February 2014 the device that I dedicated for heart patients was completed and the work was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) magazine, which detailed how I had developed a new class of biocompatible devices to harvest and store piezoelectric energy directly from the motion of the heart, lung and diaphragm. This breakthrough technology promises to replace the pacemaker as the regulating source of an irregular heartbeat and is used to store energy to keep vital organs functioning in the event of their failure. My contribution, which was recognized on April 29, 2014 with the \$20,000 Illinois Innovation Prize, came when I was at the age of 28!

Can you tell us about your higher education experience in Turkey?

Through the influence of the famous theoretical physicist and politician Prof. Erdal İnönü, I decided to study physics and received my Bachelor of Science degree in Physics Engineering from Hacettepe University. Throughout my undergraduate years at Hacettepe University, I gained a solid background in physics and material

science and excellent laboratory skills. My strong belief in the essence of life as to learn, grow and contribute to this field guided me to pursue a Master of Science degree in the Material Science and Engineering Program at Sabancı University with a full-scholarship.

How did you hear about the Fulbright Program and what, in particular helped you to submit an application?

I heard about the prestigious Fulbright Program through its website when I was pursuing my Bachelor's degree at Hacettepe University. At that time I was thinking of applying for the master's studies grant, but I realized that I had missed the deadline. Then I decided to try my chance for the following year when I was a Master's student at Sabancı University. I was lucky because when I applied for the fellowship in 2009, the doctoral studies grant had started to be given for the first time in Turkey.

I knew that I would like to have my own financial support before going to the U.S. to have the freedom to work on my dream project, so Fulbright was a great opportunity for me both financially and academically.

How did you start working with the Professor whom you have always dreamed of working with?

When I was an undergraduate student, I read an article by Professor John Rogers from University of Illinois, and I realized he was doing great things in this very field. Then I set a goal for myself to work under his supervision as a PhD student. Before coming to the U.S. as a Fulbright grantee, I came to the U.S. to give a presentation at a Materials Research Society Meeting in Boston in 2008 where Prof. Rogers was



Canan Dağdeviren with Undergrad Team

in the audience. The following year, I achieved my goal of enrolling at University of Illinois and started working under the supervision of Prof. Rogers. By working with him, I have developed novel micro-fabrication techniques that allow me to make devices that have the shape and mechanical properties matching those of human tissues, such as the heart, skin and so on.

How did you feel when you first arrived in the U.S.? How do you feel about living in the U.S. right now?

It was a victory for me as I was about to start my PhD journey on the topic that I had dreamed about for 18 years. However, although I had lived away from my family for educational purposes, being away from them was a bit hard for me in the first days. I must say that the Fulbright pre-academic orientation program that I attended for three weeks at Kansas University before starting my PhD at UIUC made a huge difference in my life. I literally was trained to adjust myself to live in the U.S. I remember that my first night in the U.S. was a little tough—I could not sleep. The next morning, I talked to myself in front of the mirror in the restroom and said to myself “Canan, you will spend your most energetic, young, and dynamic years here; take it as a priceless experience. Even if you cannot succeed, give yourself time and try to do your best. This is not only a personal journey, but this is a chance for you to touch many people’s lives and represent your beautiful country.”

Now, I feel like I have wings; I can both fly to my beloved ones in Turkey by plane and also fly and touch the hearts, skins of the people whom I do not know by my academic wings. I do believe that people resemble their home countries a bit. I am from İstanbul, the only city that connects two continents, Asia and Europe, via a bridge. Like İstanbul, I am a bridge; I bridge the gap between bulky, hard electronics and curvilinear, soft biology.

You have recently received the TASSA Young Scholar Awards 2014 and you also were among the winners of MIT Technology Review’s “Innovators under 35, Turkey.” We would like to congratulate you on these achievements. What would you like to tell us about these awards? Were you expecting to receive these at such an early age?

Thank you. It was an honor to receive these awards. I also have been named as the Innovator of the Year among the First Generation of MIT TR35 Turkey. In addition to these awards, I received several other awards, including the Illinois Innovation Prize, which is presented to the most innovative student, passionate innovator, and those working on world changing technologies, MRS (Material Research Society) 2014 Spring Meeting Grad Student Award, Racheff-Intel Award for Outstanding Materials Research, Representative of UIUC at 2014 Global Young Scientists Summit (GYSS@one-north) of Singapore, and Outstanding Laboratory Citizen of Materials Research Laboratory. Additionally, I have been named as a ‘Rising Star’ in EECS among 40 globally selected women scientists. I was the youngest speaker invited to the “American Heart Association Innovation Forum,” which was held in late November in Chicago. I emphasized the importance of advanced materials science and engineering, and its impact on modern medicine

by presenting my PhD research at the Forum. Moreover, I was invited to deliver a TED talk (TEDxReset) in İstanbul on April 19, 2014 to inspire young scientists from around the world.

I will be honest; yes, I was expecting these awards at my early age because I’m trying to run fast to do things in my limited lifetime.



Canan receiving the MIT Technology Review’s “Innovators under 35, Turkey” Award

What would you advise to those who are planning to apply for a Fulbright Program grant? Do you have any recommendations for the application process including the interviews?

First of all, I would advise them to know what they are good at, and what they want to do. This is the first step. Then they should search and find the best people in that particular research area and contact them while preparing their Fulbright application. They have to have a mutual balance between academia and social world. So they can find more innovative solutions for both their future path and real world problems. They should have recognizable academic success and a global understanding in their field. The rest is really easy. They just need to be themselves during the interview. The more transparent you are, the more trust you can build. I wish them the best of luck for their current and future endeavors. They also can contact me via Skype for additional questions. I would be happy to advise them. After my TEDx talk, I am approached by many young students who are currently in Turkey. I generally have 3-4 Skype meetings every Sunday. My Skype ID is dagdevirencanan.

You like volunteer work as well, and you help other students as well. Can you tell us about your volunteer work?

Throughout my doctoral studies, I have been an active educational volunteer. I was selected to join the UIUC Engineering Dean’s Graduate Student Advisory Committee to represent and discuss the needs and problems of graduate students from Fall 2009 until Spring 2013. Moreover, I represented the engineering graduate students in UIUC’s Engineering Steering Committee from 2010 to 2012. My role was to bridge the gap between the Engineering Departments and graduate students, and to convey academic problems faced by graduate students to the Engineering Council.

I also mentor and advise undergraduate researchers from an early stage, oftentimes until they graduate. Since 2009, I have had a hand in the shaping of nine undergraduates and one graduate visitor from Germany in the John Rogers Research Group, UIUC, which has strengthened my passion and commitment to innovation and advancement in materials science/engineering. I prepare my students to thrive in a research setting by instilling research skills, teamwork practices and training them on multiple types of equipment. Currently, five former students of mine are pursuing their PhD degrees at prestigious universities in the U.S.A. and in Germany.

Apart from mentoring students, I have been instrumental in organizing a research symposium for the undergraduate students who work in the Rogers Research



“I plan to develop a fellowship program in my late grandfather’s name, which can inspire and support Turkish young students to come to the U.S. like the Fulbright Program, which brought me to the U.S.”

Group, scheduled at the end of each term since the Spring Semester of 2011. The symposium allows students to present their work, share their experiences and communicate with peers in the research group. The symposium has given many undergraduate researchers the confidence to continue pursuing research and to even conceive their own engineering designs towards solving important challenges

What do you like doing in your free time?

One of my major hobbies is to read historical biographies of key people, which makes me see successes and failures that people can face during their life-spans, and also understand the importance of the traces that they left behind for humanity. It may be strange to say this, but my other hobby is to ask questions. Even though people around me sometimes get annoyed, I love to ask questions. Asking questions helps to expand the world when it starts to shrink; it prompts people to find the right solutions for real world problems, to implement their dreams, to find out what they are good at, to expand their networking and to save time. I also am a runner, and my crazy device designs are generally developed in my mind during my 6 AM runs.

Apart from these, I am a music composer. I like to express my feelings in a delicate way and send my songs to my friends as a gift. I feel that music allows me to express my vivacity, grace and beauty. Last year, I also was an active member in Balkanalia Music Ensemble of UIUC and performed four concerts in Iowa, Urbana and Chicago. I can sing in seven different languages, which are Turkish, Greek, Bosnian, Armenian, Urdu, Russian, and Bulgarian. Signing in these languages helps me to know much more about the different cultures and life.

What are your future career goals?

I’m on my way to creating a first of its kind brain pacemaker to treat Parkinson’s disease and mood disorders. I will capitalize on my experience in micro-fabrication and animal studies to bridge the gap between cutting-edge neuroscience

research and active advance electronic devices by developing a multi-functional, minimally invasive probe capable of addressing the spatial and temporal aspects of treating neural disorders. I plan to stay in the academic world but also conduct company works to make my inventions to be commercialized. I would like to have an international, multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary teamwork between the U.S. and Turkey. In addition to my ongoing invention and research efforts, I also am working with young generations of inventors in the Society of Women Engineers. I plan to develop a fellowship program in my late grandfather’s name, which can inspire and support Turkish young students to come to the U.S. like the Fulbright Program, which brought me to the U.S.



Canan Dağdeviren with the President of MRS

American Programs

The American Programs of the Turkish Fulbright Commission welcomed 23 U.S. scholars for the 2014-2015 academic year. Seven Senior Lecturers, six Senior Researchers and ten Student Researchers will be teaching and conducting research at 18 universities and research centers in seven Turkish cities.

Fulbright Senior Scholars' and Student Researchers' Orientation Meeting Program



Dr. Ersel Aydın and Dr. Jonathan Henick addressing the grantees



The grantees at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations

The 2014-2015 Orientation Meeting Program for Senior Scholars and Student Researchers was held on September 22-23, 2014 in Ankara. In attendance were nine Senior Scholars and eight Student Researchers who are teaching and conducting research in Adana, Ankara, Balıkesir, Bitlis, İstanbul, İzmir and Kırşehir. The Orientation Meeting Program consisted of lectures on Turkey, Turkish culture, recent challenges and developments in Turkish politics. Also included were cultural visits to significant sites in Ankara as well as a welcome dinner.

Stories from Our U.S. Fulbright Grantees

"Two Friends in Ankara"



(from left to right) Prof. Ertuğrul Bayraktarkatal, Mehmet Bey, Süleyman Bey and Dr. Hafez Modirzadeh at Shades Records in Ankara

It was during the summer of 2000, when passing through Ankara on my way to Konya, that I met up with Ertuğrul Bayraktarkatal, a man just about as famous in Turkey for his kindness and hospitality as he is for his original musical creations. Although we could not speak each other's languages, we sat in the bus station cafe carrying on a feverish dialogue in musical note writing. Knowing that this artistic cultural exchange was somehow destined to continue unfolding, some 14 years later, thanks to the Turkish Fulbright Commission, our reunion would take place at Başkent University, where Ertuğrul had now become Dean of the State Conservatory. In just two short months of research, we have already composed and premiered pieces based on Bayraktarkatal's harmonization system of Turkish makam practice, while I will be returning to San Francisco State University with an article of original modal concepts developed during my time here. Indeed, our work together has reflected and will continue to reflect the title of Ertuğrul's latest work, "Two Friends in Ankara."

Dr. Hafez Modirzadeh

2014-2015 Academic Year Senior Researcher
San Francisco State University, California/Başkent University, Ankara

"A Fulbright Grantee with Turkish Delights"



Dr. Islam is working with his colleague Dr. Mahmud in Karataş, Adana

Being a Fulbright fellow coming to Turkey and teaching at Çukurova University is a great on-going experience for me. While my Research Methodology course is designed to teach graduate students on principles and interpretation of agricultural research, the undergraduate course is developed to teach students on agricultural, ecological, environmental, and socio-economical relationships of soil for greater agroecosystems. Students from diverse backgrounds interactively participate in class and in field discussions with great enthusiasm and motivation. Other than teaching and research, I have given several presentations on "Expected Climate Change and Agroecosystem Services in Turkey" at Çukurova University, Harran University, and the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Institute. Presently, we are working on a research project on climate change and agroecosystem services involving several research institutes and universities and the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture with Ohio State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service, South Dakota State University, and Kentucky State University.

Dr. Khandakar Rafiqul Islam

2014-2015 Academic Year Senior Lecturer
The Ohio State University, Ohio/Çukurova University, Adana

The English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) Program



ETAs at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations

The English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) Program Orientation Meeting for the 2014-2015 academic year was held August 31-September 13, 2014 in Ankara. Seventy-two grantees placed at 36 universities in 32 cities throughout Turkey attended the meeting before starting their teaching responsibilities at their host universities. Six of the 72 grantees are renewal grantees who have returned to experience a second year in the program.

The Orientation Meeting Program officially started with opening remarks by Dr. Ersel Aydınli, Executive Director of the Turkish Fulbright Commission; Dr. Jonathan

Henick, Public Affairs Officer at the Embassy of the United States of America; and Prof. Mehmet Şişman, Board Member of the Council of Higher Education.

The Orientation Meeting Program included lectures introducing various topics about Turkey, Turkish culture, Turkey's education system, introductory Turkish language courses, legal issues and various other sessions to make our grantees feel as informed and comfortable as possible. The grantees also attended sessions and workshops on English language teaching methods to improve their teaching skills and familiarize them with their Turkish students' learning styles. Additionally, renewal grantees conducted two different sessions on cultural adaptation and administrative issues to share their experiences as well as their views about the ETA Program.

The ETA grantees had a full day one-on-one meeting with their university representatives to help them adjust to their new university settings for the coming year and to help them adapt to their host cities more easily.

The grantees also visited historical and cultural sites in Ankara. The Turkish Fulbright Commission then hosted a welcome dinner in honor of the grantees. Attending were Commission Board Members, ETA grantees, Council of Higher Education representatives, host university representatives and the Fulbright Commission staff.



The ETAs took Turkish classes during their orientation program in Ankara

“Crossing Bridges in Istanbul”



Although the marathon is joined annually by many ETAs in Turkey, this year was notable for many firsts. Casey H. Mangan (Malatya) and Shanna M. Kirgan (Adana) completed their first full marathons, and many other grantees finished their first 10k or 15k runs. “I ran five more kilometers than ever before,” said Lisa M. Hartwig (Balıkesir), “and it was inspiring to do it with everyone here - even some teyzes ran the race!”

This year’s ETA grantees took to the streets of İstanbul in the 36th Vodafone İstanbul Marathon. A total of 64 grantees participated in the event, crossing from Asia to Europe on foot. Kyle A. Zurcher (Trabzon) commented, “Where else would I have the chance to walk across continents?”



Stories from ETA Grantees



asked questions like, “What do Americans think about the civil unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, between the protestors and police force?” Later, the students were curious to know what Americans thought regarding Turkey’s affairs. Many times I struggled to find words that would both express my genuine opinion and be easy to translate. This brilliant group of young men challenged me to answer the question “What is the America you want to represent?” I thank them for this formative experience.

Before we all set off to our assigned host cities, a fundamental question was repeatedly asked to us during our ETA training sessions in orientation: “What is the America you want to represent?” This cultural exchange program frequently points to this question through interpersonal experiences often times with colleagues and newly developed friendships. Luckily, this question

genuinely manifested earlier than I expected. In my second week of teaching at Afyon Kocatepe University, I was invited by a fellow colleague to speak about life in the U.S. to students taking a beginner English 1 course at the Afyonkarahisar Police Academy. This colleague, who is also the chief superintendent at the Academy, assisted me in translating the students’ questions. I was nervously

Diana Marie Naoum

2014-2015 ETA Grantee
John Carroll University, Ohio / Afyon Kocatepe University, Afyonkarahisar



“Hallow-İzmir Tricks and Treats”

For almost 30 Turkey ETAs, this year’s October 31st was a spirited, crowded, and delightful seaside reunion. The group, hosted by İzmir ETAs Sonya Khattak, Ponnu Padiyara, and Emily Grenz, came together from all over the country in order to celebrate Halloween in true Fulbright style. Many attendees came in costume, from Top Gun aces to Cappy juice boxes; others came with gifts from their home cities (like Afyon lokum) to share. The group spent Friday and Saturday nights enjoying live music at local restaurants and pubs,

and split their daytime hours between Efes, Çeşme, and the historic and shopping areas of İzmir itself. As Janesh Rahlan said, “[The weekend] made İzmir feel like home for the weekend!”

Emily Rose Grenz

2014-2015 ETA Grantee

North Dakota State University, North Dakota / İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University, İzmir

“Food, Music, and Friends; The Fuel of Life”

For some, Thanksgiving is a major holiday. For others, like myself, Thanksgiving isn’t really celebrated, while gathering with loved ones to cook, dance, and share each other’s company is something that happens weekly. As exciting and adventurous as the past three months have been, there is something special that was missing, disrupting the process of fully settling in. Therefore, we wanted to open our doors to bring our new community together. To create a Thanksgiving potluck in Afyonkarahisar meant letting in good people and good food, and having a great time! After having a house full of life, with people coming together from different backgrounds, each bringing a special dish, beverage, or anecdote to the table, Turkey is now starting to feel more like home.



Katherine Kumiko Michalak

2014-2015 ETA Grantee

The Evergreen State University, Washington / Afyon Kocatepe University, Afyonkarahisar

Turkish Programs

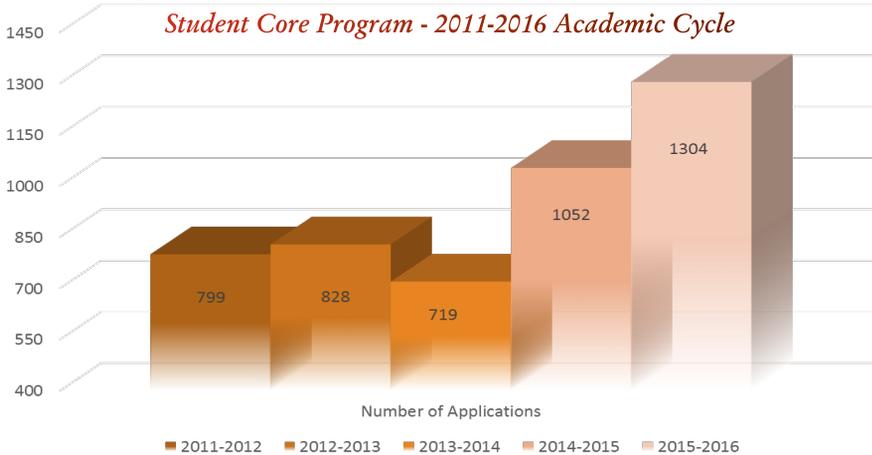
THE TURKISH STUDENT CORE PROGRAM

With the establishment of the Turkish Fulbright Commission in 1949, the Commission began operating exchange programs to enable both Turkish and American scholars and students to study and conduct research in each other's countries. Since the first student group went to the USA in 1951, Turkish Fulbrighters have been earning degrees in the USA and returning home to assume many important roles in Turkey's development and advancement, both as academicians and in the business, art, and public service sectors.

The USA is undoubtedly a world leader in higher education, offering first-class academic programs in every area of graduate study imaginable, and with a huge range of top-ranked universities and colleges and attractive locations to choose from. It is no surprise that it attracts each year thousands of students from all over the world. Going to prestigious schools in the USA is also a dream for many Turkish students. According to the recent Open Doors Report prepared by the International Institute of Education, 10,821 Turkish students went to the USA for higher education studies in the 2013-2014 academic year. With this number, Turkey became the top 11th country worldwide sending students to the USA for their education, and ranked 1st among European countries.

The applications to the Student Core Program have nearly doubled in the last two years

The Fulbright Student Program is the core of our various Turkish grant programs. It consists of three sub-categories in which students can apply: Masters level programs; PhD education; or conducting set research activities as a part of PhD studies. The Student Program is the most popular of our programs due to the tremendous interest levels it attracts. In recent years interest in the program has been increasing regularly, and the Commission is proud to announce a significant rise in application numbers again this year, with 1,304 applications for the 2015-2016 academic period—a 24% increase over those for the 2014-2015 cycle.



Increased Grant Amount up to \$50,000

Due to recent increases in tuition costs for universities and colleges in the USA, financial concerns were becoming an issue for grantees. In some cases students had begun seeking additional funding to add to their Fulbright grants in order to be able to attend the most highly ranked schools for which they were academically fit. This issue was a serious concern for the Commission, since it is of great importance not only to provide funds for our grantees but also to ensure the best placement opportunities for them. The Commission has therefore proposed a significant increase in our grant package of up to \$50,000 for each grantee per academic year, starting with our 2016-2017 academic period applications. We expect this generous grant package will provide flexibility to students to apply for more prestigious schools.



FULBRIGHT TÜRKİYE
AMERİKA BİRLEŞİK DEVLETLERİ'NDE

YÜKSEK LİSANS
DOKTORA
DOKTORA TEZİ ARAŞTIRMA

BURLARI

SON BAŞVURU TARİHİ: 20 MART 2015*

*Burslar 2015-2016 akademik yıl için değerlendirilecektir.

Ayrıntılı Bilgi ve Başvuru Formu: www.fulbright.org.tr
Ankara Merkez Ofis: (312) 427 13 60
İstanbul İrtibat Ofisi: (212) 244 11 05
Sorularınız için: advising@fulbright.org.tr veya fulb-ist@fulbright.org.tr

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#)

For these high-achieving students, applying through the Turkish Student Program to attend a prestigious university in the USA with a Fulbright grant is of extreme importance not only for the financial support it brings, but also for the privilege of becoming a Fulbrighter.

With interest in the Program growing every year, the Commission has been seeking ways to introduce new improvements to respond to this interest. We are happy to now give you news on some significant changes to our Student program which will be initiated this year.

Grant Administration

The Commission has also taken another initiative within the auspices of our Student Program. For years, the administration of our student grants has been carried out by the International Institute of Education (IIE) on behalf of the Commission. As of this year, the entire process of grant administration will now be carried out by the Commission, allowing for greater local control, flexibility, and guidance in the grant process.

Three of the Commission staff (Deputy Executive Director & Turkish Programs Officer Ms. Seher Turkyilmaz Sinclair and Program Assistants Ms. Pinar Kilichan Sener and Ms. Begum Nebol) visited IIE headquarters in New York City for a 3-day training program in October. Following the training provided by IIE, the team has started developing Grant Administration Process tools, which will be specifically designed and used for the Turkish Fulbright Commission student program administration.

Stories from Our Turkish Fulbright Grantees



Nisan Görgülü

Duke University – Department of Economics M.A. (2014-2016)

When I was a small child, my mother told me stories of Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel who all lived in castles or houses in the forest with cute animal friends. I was born and grew up in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, where I did not have many opportunities to spend time close to nature. Maybe that is why I always dreamed about a house in the forest as in the story of Snow White. However, I never could have imagined that my dreams would actually come true by being a graduate student at Duke. I am not living in the forest, of course, but every day it is really nice to see squirrels on the way to class, and when I am having a lucky day, I even see deer while waiting for the bus. Sometimes, I spend time in the Duke Gardens, which is just behind the Social Sciences building, after my morning classes.

I would like to share a few words about how I spend time in a typical week as an economics master student at Duke. Like other graduate students, I am busy with midterm examinations, projects and assignments. I also started to work for one of my professors as a research assistant. One of my professors always says “life is not linear,” that is, there is always more things to do. As I am interested in a career in academia, I know that I will always be busy with such activities for the rest of my life. Therefore, I also recognize the fact that it is also very important to take time off for extracurricular activities.

I think the International House at Duke plays a key role in helping students

“...I also recognize the fact that it is also very important to take time off for extracurricular activities.”

have a social life as they organize different weekly events. The Chinese Conversation Club is one of these activities. I joined this club not only to develop my Chinese, as I have been learning Chinese for two years, but also to have a chance to meet Chinese students and learn about the Chinese culture. Also, inspired by the Duke Language Partners Program, I started to teach Turkish to one of my friends from Guatemala and he started to teach me Spanish.

I would make the following suggestion to incoming international students. Enroll in an academic writing and presentation course even if you believe you may not need it.

Many universities offer such classes for international students as electives in addition to the required courses. You get to know students in your own department in courses in your field of study that you take with them. By taking an academic writing or presentation class, however, you have an opportunity to meet students from different departments.



Ece with her Program Coordinator Mr. Nate Crayton

"I learned to push myself beyond my limits..."

Ece Konaçer

Miami Dade College, Community College Initiative Program (2014-2015)

There are a lot of events and celebrations that occur in colleges but often people are not looking at what is going on, even if they are sitting right next to the doors of the venue.

One day I received an e-mail from my program coordinator stating that there was an internship opportunity for 1 month. When reading the e-mail, I had no knowledge of what would be expected of me. However, I took the chance.

During the internship, I learned something so valuable that will be of benefit to me for the rest of my life: time management.

Helping to plan Miami Dade College's First Annual Study Abroad Fair was a great learning experience; yet, it was a challenge. I was taking three credit and two non-credit classes, as well as working in the office every day. I had three different club meetings and volunteer obligations. Some days I missed my lunch and ate only two meals per day and slept only four hours each night. Every

evening, I came home at 9:00 PM, tried to cook, and then studied until 2:00 AM. At that point, I did not know this would be the best internship of all other opportunities. Now, I have connections all over the world. I have received job offers from some of our international partner institutions. I served as the lead student for the student volunteers as well as the manager for logistics for the international guests. In this capacity, I was able to connect with the international partners before they even arrived. On the attendees' list there were representatives of the U.S. Department of State and Spanish Embassy as well as deans of the most prestigious colleges and universities from Europe and South America. Who knows where I will be 10 years from now, all thanks to my program coordinator and the Office of International Education at Miami Dade College.

In the past, I found that I gave up quickly. However, after applying for the CCIP scholarship, I learned to *push myself beyond my limits...*



Nihan (in the middle) with other FLTAs in "Pumpkin Village" in Dallas, Texas

Nihan Yilmaz

University of Texas at Austin, Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program (2014-2015)

On the plane to San Francisco, where my summer orientation was going to be held, I was crying so hard that I thought I would not be able to finish the FLTA program. But now, I have switched from that mood to the mood "I never want this program to end, time goes so fast!" But how did I totally get over homesickness? I humbly want to share my tips with future FLTAs.

Be too busy! Be too busy to think about your own country, your relatives, your friends. Fill up your schedule with many activities. American universities offer so many activities that you will

definitely find activities that you would like to do. No excuses! You can consider volunteering. For example, I volunteered for a project that aimed to beautify a school for economically disadvantaged students. I painted the walls at the school. In this way, I both contributed to the community and made some friends! In December 2014, before the holidays, I will volunteer in another project, wrapping gifts, again for economically disadvantaged children. You can help, you can learn, you can get social, and you can feel good when you are involved in such activities. So mark your calendars with activities – do not sit around doing nothing!

Engage in cultural activities: Do not forget: FLTAs are supposed to exchange cultures; in

other words, they should teach their cultures to foreigners while they learn other cultures from foreigners! Take this opportunity to engage in cultural exchange activities! You can find many student clubs that focus on cultural exchanges where you can share your culture with other people and learn theirs. Do not restrict yourself to one or two cultures – since the U.S. is a mosaic of many different cultures, it teaches you how to be "global."

Keep in touch with other FLTAs: A great way to overcome your homesickness is to keep in touch with other FLTAs. They must be more or less in the same situation as you are in terms of homesickness. So share your emotions with each other and sharing will help you overcome your homesickness. Other FLTAs at my host institution and I arranged a trip to Dallas, TX for the Texas State Fair and we had a blast! Friendships established in the hardest times are the strongest ones, so get ready to have life-long friendships!

These tips have worked out for me pretty well and I am over my homesickness now. One more thing: Do not forget that there are millions of people who want to be in your shoes now, so remember that you are fortunate to have this fellowship and try to make the most of it!

"I never want this program to end, time goes so fast!"

Advising Program



EducationUSA Forum

The 5th annual EducationUSA Forum was held between June 23 and June 25, 2014 in Washington DC. This is EducationUSA's signature event, which is designed to bring together the international admission and enrollment management professionals at U.S. colleges and universities and EducationUSA experts from around the world. At this year's Forum, there were 52 advisers from 48 countries as well as all 14 REACs. Represented were 550 U.S. higher education institutions as well as 355 institutions and 34 associations/consortia from 45 states. The event involved a lot of interaction between the U.S. higher education institution representatives and the EducationUSA Program Officers, REACs and the EducationUSA Advisers.

Our Advising Coordinator, Bahar Deniz Türkaslan, represented Turkey at the Forum and she was one

of the presenters at the Europe and Eurasia Overview session, which attracted a lot of interest from the participants. At the end of this session, many questions were directed to Ms. Türkaslan since many U.S. universities want to have Turkish students on their campuses. On the second day of the Forum, the Global Showcase took place. During the Global Showcase each country has its own table and the Advisers provide information on their countries' education system and the best ways for U.S. universities to recruit students from their countries. Mr. Üzeyir Başer, who is the Acting Education Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Washington D.C., also came to the Global Showcase and talked to some of the higher education institution representatives. Turkey's table was again one of the most popular tables at this event and many U.S. higher education institution representatives waited in the line to talk to our Advising Coordinator.

All in all, it was an informative event with a lot of interaction that stressed the importance of international education.



Regional Educational Advising Coordinator (REAC) Visit to Our Office

Our REAC Christopher Medalis was in Ankara between September 3 and 5 for an official visit during which he worked closely with our Advising Coordinator, Bahar Deniz Türkaslan. He had meetings at the Ministry of National Education and Council of Higher Education to discuss the Turkish student mobility to the

U.S. In addition to these meetings, he paid a visit to the Rector of Hacettepe University with whom he discussed the possible partnerships with U.S. universities. On his final day in Ankara, he was in our office sharing his valuable knowledge and ideas for the EducationUSA advising activities in Turkey.

Workshops for Turkish University Representatives in Ankara and Istanbul



The workshop in Ankara

direct their students for studying in the U.S. Ms. Katherine Van de Vate, Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara and Mr. Craig Dicker, Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Consulate in İstanbul also participated in the workshops and shared their knowledge and experience on the U.S. higher education system and advised the university representatives to form partnerships with U.S. universities. The workshops were concluded with brainstorming about the innovative ways to develop the cooperation between our Commission and the universities, and now we are implementing some of those strategies into our outreach plans to better inform students and faculty members.

The universities in Turkey are our important partners and we value our cooperation with them. That is why, in September, our advising team organized two workshops, one in Ankara and the other in İstanbul, for the international office staff of some of the universities. The main objective of these workshops is to find ways to form a more effective and result-oriented relationship with the universities in Turkey so that more students and faculty members learn about the Fulbright scholarships and the options for study in the U.S. During the workshops, the representatives of the universities were informed about the higher education system in the U.S. as well as the Fulbright grant programs, and how to



The workshop in İstanbul

EducationUSA Europe And Eurasia Regional Forum



Our İstanbul Branch Office Educational Adviser Mrs. Merih Uğurel Kamaşlı was selected for the EducationUSA Europe and Eurasia Regional Forum held in Tbilisi, Georgia on September 21-24. There were approximately 80 advisers from Europe and Eurasia EducationUSA Centers, 60 U.S. Higher Education Institution representatives, some U.S. Department of State Educational and Cultural Affairs representatives, Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) and EducationUSA Staff in Europe and Eurasia

with other partner organizations and some guest presenters. During the Forum, while advisers shared their experiences and advising practices with each other, they also had a chance to build a network with U.S. higher education institution representatives and with the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs administrative staff. At the EducationUSA Country Fair, advisers had tables to represent their countries and

inform U.S. higher education institution representatives about the recent trends, changes and improvements in their countries' education systems. Mrs. Kamişlı presented two sessions at the Forum. One of the sessions was designed to inform the EducationUSA advisers about the online advising system that is currently used by the Turkish Fulbright Commission to provide information and answer questions of the students who are interested in studying in the U.S. The other session provided higher education institution representatives from the U.S. with an overview of recruitment opportunities and challenges in Turkey.

The Student Ambassador Program



We have started a brand new program called the “Student Ambassador Program” with the aim of having permanent representatives in some of Turkey’s cities. The program was started as a pilot project, and at the moment we have six Student Ambassadors in Adana, Antalya, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Konya and Mersin. Our six ambassadors were invited to Ankara for a 3-day training program in September where they got to know each other and learn the details of this program. After the training session, they started serving as links between their universities and us, organizing seminars

in order to inform students interested in studying in the U.S. They also help our advisers plan their outreach programs to the universities they are based in. Recently, our Advising Coordinator was in Erzurum and Eskişehir, and thanks to the hard work and dedication of our Student Ambassadors in those cities, she had productive presentations. We are planning to continue this program by adding new cities. With the increase in the number of our Student Ambassadors we believe that more students will be informed about the study options awaiting them in the U.S.

FULBRIGHT



TURKEY

The Turkish Fulbright NEWSLETTER is published by the
Commission for Educational Exchange between the United
States and Turkey.

Please send contributions and comments to:

Türkiye Fulbright Eğitim Komisyonu
Eskişehir Yolu 9. Km.
Tepe Prime İş Merkezi B Blok No: 124 06800
Çankaya - Ankara - Turkey
Ph: (0312) 427 13 60 / 428 48 24 • Fax: (0312) 468 15 60
e-mail: newsletter@fulbright.org.tr

All submissions are subject to editing.



FulbrightTurkiye



FulbrightTurkey



FulbrightTurkey