GSPIA Recognizes Alumni

Dr. Effendi Honored at Alumni Reception in Jakarta

On Fri., Dec. 4, Dr. Sofian Effendi (MPIA ’75 and PhD ’78) received GSPIA’s Distinguished Alumnus Award at a reception in Jakarta, Indonesia hosted by Dean John Keeler and Associate Dean Bill Dunn. Effendi was the founding Director of the Gadjah Madah University (UGM) Graduate School of Public Policy and Administration and later served as President of UGM. He has also held a variety of high-level government positions including Assistant Minister of State for Science and Technology, Executive Secretary of the National Research Council, Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Coordination and Evaluation and Chairman of the National Civil Service Commission of Indonesia (NCSC). During his tenure at the NCSC (1999-2000), Effendi spearheaded a national reform agenda and introduced legislation to enhance the welfare of the country’s four million civil servants. Currently he also serves as a member of GSPIA’s Board of Visitors.
GSPIA BOARD of VISITORS MEMBER RECOGNIZED by PITT

Karen Feinstein, President of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation of Pittsburgh and GSPIA Board of Visitors member, received the Coleman Award from Chancellor Nordenburg during the 2009 Elected Officials Retreat in September.

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CALL FOR NOMINEES for the IRIS MARION YOUNG AWARD

The University of Pittsburgh Women's Studies Program, in collaboration with GSPIA, is accepting nominations for the 2010 Iris Marion Young Award for Political Engagement. Nominations must be received by Jan. 8, 2010.

The Young Award recognizes Pitt community staff, graduate students and faculty who work to promote social justice and democracy. Because the award's namesake held a vision that gender equity is an integral component of social justice, the selection panel especially welcomes nominations of individuals whose work explicitly engages issues of gender and sexual orientation.

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GRADUATION DETAILS ANNOUNCED

GSPIA recently announced the details for 2010 graduation.

GSPIA honored one of its most prominent alums with the first in a series of lectures on Tues., Dec. 8. The Roscoe Robinson Jr. Memorial Lecture Series on Diversity and Public Service featured GSPIA Alumnus Eugene Harris (MPA '69), diversity coordinator for the Allegheny Bar Association, who provided the keynote address.

Harris, a professional human resource specialist, addressed some of the challenges and opportunities...
organizations face when implementing diversify programs into their organizations.

As a human resource director for U.S. Steel and later the Allegheny Bar Association, Harris has served in various roles that have shaped successful diversity programs in businesses and organizations in Pittsburgh. He is currently providing organizational guidance in how to handle conflicts resulting from diversity management issues. "Diversity is like any other organizational strategy," he noted. He further elaborated that future leaders must find creative ways to implement diversification programs that strengthen institutional goals and strategies.

(General Robinson (MPIA '64), is the first African American four-star general in the U.S. Army, Robinson served in many key positions including as U.S. representative to NATO.)

Student Cabinet Strengthens GSPIA Experience

You've seen them all over the school during this past semester - they helped to welcome new students at orientation, organized a Fall Blood Drive, sold GSPIA T-Shirts, put together clothing, book, and food drives for charity, hosted student happy hours and voiced student concerns to University staff. Student Cabinet, the driving force behind these initiatives, plays an active role in promoting the greater good of GSPIA.

"It's important to keep GSPIA students united," said Wallied Shirzoi, president of Student Cabinet. "To make the students united, it takes a lot of responsibility, time and effort to promote activities to help students understand the greater good of GSPIA." As one of the longest serving student organizations at GSPIA, the Student Cabinet is responsible for maintaining the link between students, faculty and school administrators. The Cabinet's overall goal is to help GSPIA achieve and maintain the highest level of scholarship, academic integrity and education within the school.

Through their service to the school, members of Student Cabinet also learn valuable skills for life after GSPIA. Michelle Morales, social coordinator for Student Cabinet, said that one of the biggest challenges that she faced was the planning of events and community outreach initiatives under time and budget constraints.

"It was extremely rewarding to see all of the hard work pay off in the end," Morales said. "I have learned that being a part of student cabinet is much like working in the real world. There are many different opinions and ideas about everything, but somehow we all had to get together and work through our differences in order to make decisions, which reflected the interests and concerns of the entire student body."

GSPIA's 2010-2011 Student Cabinet election was held on Dec. 11. Congratulations to those elected to the new Student Cabinet!
A run-off election for the positions of president and PhD representative will be held on Jan. 13. The new Cabinet members will meet shortly after in January to establish goals and strategies for the upcoming academic year.

Sustainable Pittsburgh Discusses Key Issues with GSPIA

Once a year, GSPIA students and faculty work with Pennsylvania leaders to address community concerns. Amidst the economic downturn and financial struggles in the Pittsburgh community, GSPIA helped foster collaborative solutions for some of the area’s most perplexing issues.

The Johnson Institute for Responsible Leadership partnered with Sustainable Pittsburgh to host the 6th annual Regional Equitable Development Summit, "Going Regional on Addressing Blighted and Abandoned Properties," on Tues., Dec. 15. The Summit raised concerns associated with blight and abandonment and explored how community assets can be built from these issues. The cooperative summit brought community leaders together as a first step towards developing new structures and well-substantiated plans for raising capacity around the region to attack blight and renovate properties.

"For the past five years, the Johnson Institute has been happy to partner with Sustainable Pittsburgh as co-host of the Regional Equitable Development Summit," explained Kevin Kearns, director of the Johnson Institute. "The policy paper presented at the Summit presents practical and economic solutions to the problem of blight and decay. We look forward to working with Sustainable Pittsburgh to facilitate further dialogue and implementation of the report’s recommendations."

The Summit hosted a number of individuals who are extremely influential in addressing concerns related to blighted cities. John Kromer, Senior Consultant at the Fels Institute of Government and author of Fixing Broken Cities: The Implementation of Urban Development Strategies, presented the keynote address at the event. Kromer currently serves as a strategic consultant to the Blighted and Abandoned Properties Solutions Project.

The Johnson Institute hopes to continue their partnership with Sustainable Pittsburgh to address future issues for the Pittsburgh area. The summits help students gain experience working with issues related to community development and planning.
As first year GSPIA students prep for their summer plans, the Washington Center is poised to help them find opportunities to add to their academic experience.

GSPIA students are encouraged to apply for the Harold W. Rosenthal Fellowship in International Relations for summer 2010. The Rosenthal Fellowship offers qualified students pursuing a career in international affairs the opportunity to spend a summer in professional fellowship positions in a U.S. government agency or department. A $2,000 stipend accompanies each award to defray living expenses. Fellows are carefully chosen to ensure that students have the opportunity to perform substantive work in international relations and security policy. More information can be found at the Rosenthal Fellowship website. The deadline for application is Jan. 15, 2010.

Alumni Update - Andy Hoehn, MPIA '86

Sometimes, it's the least obvious path that leads to a dream job.

That was the case for Andy Hoehn. After earning his MPIA in 1986 from GSPIA, he hoped to work in the broader national security environment studying policy questions.
Working and living abroad are important experiences that students of international affairs can highlight on their résumés. This past summer, I was fortunate enough to complete an internship in Brussels, Belgium with the non-governmental organization Pax Christi International.

In Brussels, the offices of Pax Christi serve as the International Secretariat of the organization, with Member Organizations located in more than 50 countries around the world. Founded in 1945, the organization initially served to promote reconciliation between the French and Germans in the wake of the Second World War. Today, Pax Christi and its Member Organizations are actively involved in a range of activities -- from sponsoring interfaith dialogues in the Middle East to community building in the Great Lake Region of Africa.

I knew that interning with Pax Christi would be a rewarding experience the moment its Secretary-General proposed two projects she had in mind for me. The first concerned the impact of climate change on the developing world, with particular attention toward associated forced migrations. My eyes were opened to the threat posed by climate change and the devastating effects it's already had on the developing world. From my research, I wrote a policy paper in which policy options were laid out that the EU can use to help developing countries deal with climate change. The paper was delivered to the Commissioner for External Relations as well as the Swedish Foreign Minister as part of a larger advocacy package.

I then researched the transmission of the current global financial crisis to the developing world. My supervisor wanted to write a paper demonstrating how the financial crisis, which began in the developed world, spread to the poorest countries in the world. In the process, I researched budgetary policies employed by international NGOs, like Pax Christi, to survive the crisis. Pax Christi faces the challenges faced by other NGOs, and the Secretary-General wanted to learn from my research as she weighs her options among similar policies.

As a student of global political economy and of European Union, interning in Brussels was a goal I wanted to fulfill while at GSPIA. Brussels is one of the most international cities in the world, its international flavor accentuated by the fact that it serves as headquarters for many of the EU's principal institutions. While there, I had an opportunity to attend a conference, complementary to my research, on climate change, hosted by the European Commission.

The staff of Pax Christi reflected the city's cosmopolitan character. I was one of three American interns joined by interns from Nigeria, Colombia, India and Slovakia. The full-time staff was primarily Belgian, and the Secretary-General was the former Prime Minister of Haiti. I enjoyed working in a multicultural environment where I encountered various perspectives on international issues and became friends with the other interns.

On weekends, I saw as much of Brussels as possible. I visited art museums, enjoyed the city's many parks, attended a performance of the Belgian National Symphony Orchestra and indulged in plenty of chocolate and waffles. I made use of public transportation, traveling around Belgium and the Netherlands by train. One of the best things about living in Europe is the opportunity to travel around from country to country. Each offers its own unique cultural atmosphere, each a rewarding experience. This was not my first trip to Europe yet, in many ways, it was one of the most rewarding. Working at Pax Christi allowed me to apply the skills I've learned as a GSPIA student to real world problems and issues.