The Power of Fulbright: Symposium 2013

From August 21-22, the Fulbright Commission held a Symposium entitled Soft Power, Smart Power: the Multiplier Effect of Educational and Cultural Exchange. The event was held in Canberra to coincide with celebrations for the Centenary of Canberra.

The Symposium focused on the link between education, the exchange of ideas, and the creation of a world community. Key speakers explored themes of leadership and diplomacy, culture, educational partnerships, public policy, arts and culture, science and innovation.

The Symposium attracted 150 attendees and resulted in stimulating dialogue, exchange of ideas and information on knowledge translation. It was an opportunity to bring together current Fulbright Scholars and Alumni and showcase their amazing projects.

Public Affairs Counselor from the U.S. Embassy, Mr Paul Houge officially opened the Symposium where 25 of our Alumni demonstrated the work they are doing and what they have achieved during and after the Fulbright Scholarship.

The opening plenary address was given by the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board Chair, Mr Tom Healy. During his address, he implored us to ask questions of each other, to gain power from learning from one another and, to re-evaluate our own understanding of what power means to us.

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In 2013, our opportunities to work with a range of partners are stronger than ever before. The last quarter began with stimulating discussion of the power of exchange between Australia and the U.S during the 2013 Fulbright Symposium. We welcomed back Mr Tom Healy, FFSB Chair and the eminent Alumnus, Dr Frank Moorhouse to deliver opening and closing remarks, and honoured the (former) U.S. Ambassador Jeffery Bleich and Mrs Rebecca Bleich for their tremendous support of the Australian-American Fulbright Commission at the Gala Dinner.

Between August and October this year, our highly qualified selection committee members from academia, industry and government took part in the selection of the 2014 Fulbright Australian Scholars. Lead by Dr Ruth Lee Martin, Manager for Scholarships, the task was a complete success and we are grateful for our selection committee’s remarkable support. In 2013, The Commission continued to build a vibrant and committed Alumni community which actively engages with the wider Fulbright Program. With support by Dr Pablo Jimenez, Partnerships Coordinator, we carefully selected candidates for the 2014 Fulbright Alumni Initiative Grant and the 2014 Fulbright Senior Specialists Program and entered into a number of new strategic initiatives. All selections across program and partnerships will be announced at the end of the first week of December 2013.

I am also delighted to announce that the Commission will manage East Asia Pacific Regional Travel Grant on behalf of the U.S. State Department. This Grant will support U.S. Senior Scholars in the East Asia Pacific to visit another country in the region, share their expertise and enhance academic and professional links.

The 2014 Fulbright Presentation Dinner will be held on 6 March 2014 at City Hall in Brisbane. More information about partnership opportunities for this event are included in this newsletter. We look forward to seeing many of you at the event as we showcase our scholars, partners and exciting initiatives.

Happy holidays!

Dr Tangerine Holt,
Executive Director
Australian-American Fulbright Commission

As we reflect on the year that has been, it is timely to recognise the ongoing development of the Commission’s operations.

2014 FULBRIGHT PRESENTATION DINNER
MARCH 6 BRISBANE
$120 NON MEMBERS, $100 MEMBERS

Prince Alfred College recognises Fulbright Scholars

Adelaide’s Prince Alfred College has honoured alumni recipients of Fulbright Scholarships with the placement of an honour roll in the College’s ANZAC Hall.

Established as a Methodist school for boys in 1869 and named after the second son of Queen Victoria following his visit to Adelaide two years earlier, the College is proud of the achievements of its seven Fulbright recipients. The College’s Old Old Boys Assembly on 26 July 2013 was attended by three past recipients and former Headmaster, Fulbright Scholar (1966) and past chair of the SA Branch of the Fulbright Association, Dr Brian Webber.

Pictured with the Fulbright honour roll are (L–R) Dr Brett Gooden (1972), Dr Richard Kimber AM (1965), Professor Robert Crompton AM (1968) and Dr Brian Webber AM.
The Fulbright Program, bringing people together: US visit wrap up

Dr Tangerine Holt

In late October, I began my journey to the U.S.; visiting Texas, Kansas, New York, Washington DC, and California over a ten day period. My focus was on building institutional partnerships and connecting with Fulbright Scholars and Alumni.

At the University of Texas, Austin, I was hosted by Dr Rhonda Evans Case, Interim Director of the Clark Center which focuses on Australian New Zealand studies. The interest and support from all stakeholders at the UT-Austin was very positive and we explored opportunities to build new partnerships for the benefit of our U.S. and Australian Fulbright Scholars.

My visit to Kansas State University was kindly hosted by Alumnus Professor John Leslie and Mrs Ingelin Leslie. My meetings with the President, Provost, deans and faculty members confirmed the University’s deep commitment to the Fulbright partnership not only in agriculture and life sciences but across all disciplines.

In Washington, DC I met with board member, Professor Don DeBats and colleagues from the Department of State, CIES, FFSB and the Australian Embassy, including the Australian Ambassador Kim Beazely. In New York I met with Mr Tom Healy Chairman of the FFSB, colleagues from the Institute for International Education, the acting Australian Consulate-General Mr Richard Lather, and faculty members from SUNY and NYU.

During my visit to each state I met with Fulbright Alumni and Scholars. Prominent academic Fulbright leaders warmly welcomed me into their home towns and provided invaluable personal introductions and insight into the value of cultural exchange within distinct academic environments. The experience was equally enriching and informative.

I was hosted by Professor John Leslie, Kansas State University, Professor Burdett Loomis University of Kansas, Professor Geralyn Schulz, George Washington University, Dr Adam Brown, NYU School of Medicine, Dr Shahrad Lotfipour, UCLA, and the Fulbright Association, Greater Los Angeles Chapter and Loyola Marymount University representatives.

It was truly a moving experience to see such far reaching collaboration and openness during my trip to the U.S. It was a journey marked by interesting people, new ideas and no shortage of opportunities for future engagement between Australia and the U.S.
my internship at a native title legal centre in Western Australia, to my experiences tutoring refugee high school students.

During my undergraduate degree, I discovered constitutional law – a field that interwove my passion for rights-protection with my emerging interest in the structure of governmental institutions.

The Fulbright website’s profiles of previous scholars spoke volumes about the values and mission of the Fulbright program. The doctors, scientists, lawyers, musicians, teachers and researchers I read about were high achievers in their field, but were committed to learning all they could from a country that has shaped our own history; they were gifted communicators in their academic disciplines, but also people with wide interests who sought to forge links with others in the community.

Through these stories, I learned about Fulbright’s goals of increasing understanding between our two nations, and this seemed like an ideal fit with my study objectives in the US. I knew that the subjects I wanted to learn about in America – constitutional law and the protection of civil liberties – were inextricably interwoven with the history and culture of its people. I wanted my academic and personal experiences of the US to complement and reinforce each other; I knew that the former would not be nearly as meaningful without the latter. I took my chances with the application process, and was fortunate enough to be selected for a Fulbright Postgraduate Scholarship.

Throughout my year in the US, my Fulbright scholarship motivated me, gave me confidence and opened doors to exceptional people and places. Knowing that the Fulbright Commission had invested in me to learn as much as I could and apply it back home. I tried to meet with inspiring American legal practitioners in order to supplement my academic studies with their stories and practical advice.

Academically, I benefited enormously from studying US law and politics whilst immersed in US culture myself. To apply values and doctrines from another legal system in the Australian context, it is crucial to understand how and why they have developed in their own setting. In this regard, the insights I gained from discussions with my American law professors and classmates were priceless.

In particular, studying the US constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the laws gave me deep insights into the broad spectrum of activity that can constitute discrimination against a particular class – from blatantly unequal treatment, such as the targeted imposition of literacy tests on African-Americans registering to vote during the Jim Crow era, to more subtle discrimination, such as employment policies that reflect a fixed view about gender roles.

I believe this has helped me become more attuned in my own legal practice to the hidden or institutionalized forms of inequality that can exist in Australia today. Further, learning about the successes of groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union in combating

Celia Winnett, 2012 Fulbright Postgraduate Scholar: in her own words

Ms Celia Winnett, a lawyer and former Associate to the Hon Justice Susan Crennan AC, High Court of Australia, won a 2012 Fulbright Postgraduate Scholarship to the U.S. Celia examined the protection of civil liberties under the American Constitution and the scope that exists for drawing on these protections in the Australian context. Her reflections on the experience demonstrate the rich benefit of cultural exchange and learning.

“A number of different influences on my life triggered my interest in using the law to combat the disadvantage faced by minorities in our community – from my grandfather fleeing Romania in November 1940 to escape persecution, to

Nathan Pensler, 2013 Fulbright Scholar: on Philosophy

Early in his academic career, Mr Nathan Pensler labelled himself a non-maths/ science person. His recent work at the intersection of formal epistemology and the philosophy of science has—perhaps unexpectedly—forced him to reconsider that assumption.

Mr Pensler, a recent philosophy graduate and 2013 Fulbright Scholar, was sponsored by the ANU College of Business and Economics to study at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. Among a raft of subjects in his undergraduate program at Pitzer College in Claremont California, he was most excited by philosophy.

“It was like doing maths but with language, in that it strives to be very precise. There were many fun puzzles and problems to solve. It was exciting to think about issues like free will, the nature of rationality, and consciousness. They’re big picture questions that most other disciplines don’t get to ask. I liked that”.

Mr Pensler has been considering philosophical theories of rationality. Specifically, he has studied Bayesian theories of reasoning which use concepts from the study of probability, and Inference to the Best Explanation, a qualitative account.

He explains this study as searching for and examining “the rules that govern correct thinking. “Bayesian theories provide rules that govern degrees of certainty while Inference to the Best Explanation governs full belief. I’m comparing these rules and asking whether there are connections between them.

“Part of this project is trying to describe how we understand the world in both scientific and everyday contexts. As a result, it has applications to some familiar issues. For instance, it might shed some light on questions about the scientific method, a topic that is familiar from grade school.” he explains.

The ANU provided Mr Pensler with the resources to explore his passion, in what he describes as a “humbling experience” among ANU academic staff and supervisors. He has also enjoyed the differences in the Australian academic culture, particularly how professors and
students often gather at a pub after attending seminars.

“I enjoy the informality of Australian academic culture. I get a lot more time to get to know and speak with professors than I would in the United States. All the graduate coursework comes in the form of reading groups and seminars. And more broadly, I really admire how open and frank Australians are about political matters,” he said.

“Some people think of philosophers as being all alone, writing, editing, reading and thinking. It can be like that, but most of the fun is when you share ideas with other people.

As his Fulbright experience in Australia comes to an end, Mr Pensler has presented papers, made professional connections, and developed new ideas that he otherwise would not have been exposed to.

“I’ll learn a lot and I’ll become a better philosopher having been here. It’s been a formative experience”.

For the full transcript of the Celia Winnett interview, see www.fulbright.com.au.

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Dr Thomas Newsome, 2013 Fulbright Scholar: Where the wild things are

The 2013 Fulbright NSW Scholar Dr Thomas Newsome, is an Honorary Research Fellow of the Desert Ecology Research Group at the University of Sydney, and Senior Ecologist at the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation. He is sponsored by the New South Wales Government and universities to complete his scholarship in the United States in 2013.

Dr Newsome has been collaborating with researchers from both OSU and the University of Washington on research into the reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park. He has been investigating whether similar measures could be taken to reintroduce dingoes in areas where they have become locally extinct.

“Instead of looking exclusively at the domestic implications of my research, my work now looks to the insights of species study on a more global scale. The possibility to do that kind of comparative work requires exposure to experts in other countries working on other species.

“My experience so far working with US researchers and attending global conferences during my year abroad has given me that necessary, and inspiring, exposure”, he says.

Thomas’s work is designed to help solve one of the longest-running scientific and public debates in Australia: how to manage dingoes, which are a legislated pest.

The difficult part, he says, is finding an appropriate balance.

“Dingoes can benefit ecosystems when they suppress overabundant herbivores such as kangaroos, goats and rabbits as well as introduced pests such as the feral cat and red fox. There is an urgent need to find a balance that provides positive economic, social and environmental outcomes”, he says.

So far, Dr Newsome’s research has laid solid foundations and clear collaborative networks, in what he acknowledges is a long and sometimes controversial field in which to conduct research. “The reason I decided to come to America was because that controversy has fuelled world-leading research and debate. Research outputs are scrutinised closely on all sides in this dynamic environment. My own belief is that it makes for better science”.

Dr Newsome is passionate about his Fulbright experience so far; particularly in the opportunity it offers for internationally relevant research.

“Instead of duplicating resources and research, cross-cultural learning enables research outcomes to be shared, our understanding of our own problems and their potential solutions broadened, and our sense of collegiality with international researchers, cemented. By using a single person in any given field as a bridge between countries, programs like the Fulbright open up whole teams of Australian researchers to their US colleagues. The opportunity that that kind of networking offers for decades of future collaboration and the potential impacts of that collaboration on society more broadly, are immense”, he concluded.

Read the full interview at www.fulbright.com.au.

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Dr Thomas Newsome

Wolves and Wild Lands in the 21st Century
Rod Kennett is studying conservation and land management, particularly how native Alaskans manage their lands and the ways they are creating livelihoods for remote isolated communities.

“I’ve been pursuing this work for several decades in north Australia and it’s been fascinating to get under the skin of Alaska and learn about these issues here. I’ve also been sharing what we have been doing in Australia and ultimately establishing connections and joint projects. Almost without exception, Alaskans love the idea of visiting Australia so the most desirable destination factor is working in my favour.

In pursuit of these goals I’ve been busy giving talks, attending meetings with range of university, native Alaskan and environmental organisations. I’ve done some 18 lectures and presentations including to the Rasmuson Foundation [the largest philanthropic organisation in Alaska], the Board of The Nature Conservancy [Alaska Chapter], and the CEO and executive teams of the Chugach Alaska Corporation and the Doyon Corporation [a native Alaskan corporation with the largest private landholdings in the USA at 12.5 million acres]. Both these large corporations are interested in developing strong relationships with Indigenous Australian groups and exploring ways that the Australian experience in sea management can inform their work.

I’ve also given several talks to school students. One of my favourites was talking to grades 5 and 6 at the Rogers Park Elementary School, where, among a range of weighty topics, we discussed the important question of who would win in a fight between a bear and a crocodile! Given the national representative status of crocodiles and bears, I’d like to report we reached a consensus view that bears and crocodiles would in fact be friends but the allegorical nature of the conversation was lost on some of the more robust of the 11 year-old boys.

In addition to formal presentations, I’ve also had discussions with over 50 individuals including native Alaskan leaders, local politicians, writers, scientists, artists, community leaders, government bureaucrats, philanthropic organisations, fishermen and hunters and many others. I attended the annual convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives – the largest gathering of Alaskan natives with some 5,000 delegates.

At AFN I was deeply moved by stories from Alaskan native youth about the destructive effect of drugs, alcohol and community dysfunction on community health and well-being. I was also buoyed by positive stories of Alaskan native people leading efforts for better management of wildlife including greater engagement in important research and monitoring activities in remote Alaskan ecosystems.

At the invitation of my fellow Australian Fulbright Scholar, Michelle Evans, I enjoyed breakfast with Willie Hensley – a revered native Alaskan leader who was a key figure in securing native title rights to land as well as the multi-million dollar settlement that established the Alaskan Native Corporations. Willie is a charming, charismatic leader and a great writer. I recommend his autobiography Fifty Miles from Tomorrow as a great story of an Alaskan hero and essential reading if you want to understand Alaskan natives and their struggle for recognition of their prior ownership and stewardship of Alaska.

I’ve also had the opportunity for some media work and before I left Australia I gave three radio interviews and in Alaska was a guest on the Alaska Political Insiders television program. The wonderful thing about a Fulbright is that it gives you time and the imprimatur to talk and listen to people from all walks of life. Having an Australian accent helps too.

In addition to all the talking, I’ve also worked with my hosts The Nature Conservancy on a number of research proposals, a conference symposia, and an Indigenous engagement strategy informed by learnings from Alaska, Canada and Australia. I’ve also continued to work with colleagues at NAILSMA on final grant reporting and our much anticipated I-Tracker Book (www.nailsma.org.au/hub/programs/i-tracker). I-Tracker is a career highlight for me and excitingly, several Alaskan people and organisations are interested in establishing a similar program. In my remaining time I’ll continue to explore how I can facilitate this as well as other potential joint projects.

I’ve also had the chance to get out on country with some great field trips. In August, I spent two weeks in Barrow, Alaska, inside the arctic circle working with Professor Craig Tweedie’s team [University of Texas, El Paso] measuring the impacts of climate change in coastal erosion (nearly two metres of tundra coastline is lost annually) and the impacts of the thawing of the permafrost. While there I gave lectures at the Ilisvik College Summer school science program and took part in the Barrow Area Research Consortium community science seminar series. I also met with staff from the North Slope Borough Wildlife Management Department, an Inupiat-led organisation that is internationally famous for its science including studies of bowhead whales that demonstrated that previous research had grossly underestimated whale numbers. The department’s work led the International Whaling Commission to end the ban on whaling by Inupiat and set a quota to ensure a sustainable take. More recently I spent a day with staff from the Chickaloon Tribal Village Corporation digging nests to deposit artificially incubated salmon eggs into amongst the gravel beds of icy cold mountain streams.

In November, I met with other Fulbright Scholars from around the world at a Fulbright Seminar in New Orleans. The seminars focus on the Rule of Law including how it broke down in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, learnings relevant to north Australia where climate change is predicted to lead to even greater frequency and intensity of destructive cyclones.
In the interests of international goodwill and understanding, I’m also here as a Sister Cities ambassador. Incongruous as it may seem given the differences in climate and landscape, Darwin and Anchorage formally recognise their relationship under the international Sister Cities program. Darwin and Anchorage share much in common – remote frontier cities in large natural landscapes, extremes of climate and tides, large military presence, large man-eating wildlife and a strong Indigenous culture and prior history of land use and management. In Darwin we refer to “down South” - in Alaska it’s “Outside”.

But it’s not all work and no play. As winter takes hold and the snow and ice arrive, I will do some things I can’t do back home. I’ll fulfil a childhood desire and attempt ice skating and, while I’m there, fit in some ice fishing - yes people really do fish through holes drilled through ice when it is so cold that the fish snap freezes as you pull it out of the water. I’m also hoping to do so dogsledding trip over the New Year so I may be returning home with a husky puppy and some cool frostbite scars”.


### JIM KUHN, FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR, 1951: HOLLYWOOD START FOR FULBRIGHT IN AUSTRALIA

Fulbright Scholar Jim Kuhn’s story is straight from the Hollywood golden age; with high adventure, international travel and no shortage of romance. His journey began, like all good films, with love in the most unexpected of places.

On a simple walk with his roommate from Yale University, he met a young lady called Lila. By dinner that evening, Jim had decided that Lila was the one. He proposed a year later.

Jim had already developed an interest in ‘Down Under’, having spent time in Australia and New Guinea during the war. He applied for a Fulbright Scholarship to study Labour Relations, after which he planned to take his new bride honeymooning around the world.

Of course, the plot thickened. When Jim was awarded the Fulbright Scholarship just after Easter in 1951, he discovered that though he and Lila could marry in Australia, his bride would not arrive in Sydney until one week before the wedding. Jim, though skilled in many ways, was completely inexperienced at wedding planning - but his hosts readily jumped to his aid. The consulate staff offered to plan a “well-publicised grand” wedding, it would be a romantic affair, but also an opportune occasion to introduce Australians to the new Fulbright program.

Jim divided his time between meetings with the American Labor Counselor, Herb Weiner, various labor leaders, firms, intellectuals and unions and planning officials; and discussing the intricacies of his upcoming nuptials with women from the Consul-General’s Office.

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The wedding would take place at St James Church in Sydney, and the music, flowers, invitations and reception would be managed by the Consul-General’s wife. When the day arrived, it was far more than the two students could have hoped for.

The day itself was a Fulbright affair. The bride was given away by the Consul-General; a fellow Fulbright scholar from Oklahoma was chosen as the bridesmaid.

As the newly married couple exited the church to step into the waiting limousine, a passer-by hollered ‘bloody American millionaires’. Appearances can be deceiving.

The couple didn’t go on their ‘round the world trip straight away; first stopping in Cronulla, and then Surfer’s Paradise which Jim describes as “a few low built beach houses scattered among sand dunes and wild bushes”.

After Jim completed his research, the couple boarded the ship Oronsay, stopping at Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth before continuing across the Indian Ocean to Ceylon, Aden, then up the Red Sea to Suez; on to Naples, Marseille, Paris; then finally ferrying to Dover then London.

After what Jim describes as ‘one Great Fulbright year’, Jim and Lila returned home aboard the Queen Mary to Yale. Jim received his doctorate, and started his teaching career - first at Pomona, then University of Oregon. He taught for 40 years at Columbia University, where he also served as Vice Dean for two years, and served as a Senior Staff Economist on the Council of Economic Advisors in 1972 for Presidents Johnson and Nixon.

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To read Jim Kuhn’s personal account of his Fulbright adventure, go to www.fulbright.com.au.

Whales are an important part of peoples diet in Arctic Alaska and the community cooperation required to catch and share a 27+ ton whale reinforces cultural responsibilities and builds enormous social capital.

To read Jim Kuhn’s personal account of his Fulbright adventure, go to www.fulbright.com.au.
The Fulbrighter is the newsletter of the Australian-American Fulbright Commission. We welcome your stories, photographs and comments. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact:

e-mail: Communications.manager@fulbright.com.au

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