CENTER FOR PUBLIC LEADERSHIP
FELLOWS
Profile Book 2017-2018

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Letter from the CPL Leadership Team

At its core, the *raison d’être* of the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) is to provide the tools necessary for the next generation of ardent public servants to assume the mantle of responsible leadership. Fellows of CPL, past and present, have distinguished themselves as being among the most promising of their generation—having the capacity to assume this mantle—and are to be commended. Our mission during their time at CPL is to transform latent capacity into future action by providing the knowledge, experiences, and hands-on leadership learning enabling them to operate and contribute on stages both national and international.

As a class you will collectively weave a broad tapestry of backgrounds—cultural, educational, economic, religious, and geopolitical. Each of you will be greatly enriched by these experiences and the opportunity to learn from one another—and CPL will learn and grow with you. We are grateful to the nine donors highlighted herein who recognize this tapestry and provide robust fellowships through our Center at the Kennedy School, allowing each fellow to go forward in making the world a better place.

This fall, through the generosity of our donors, we will welcome 107 fellows across nine distinct fellowship programs. Our CPL community includes more than 600 alumni working across all sectors of public service. We welcome to our Center this year:

- **Bacon Fellows**—Louis Bacon has created environmental fellowships that will bring together Harvard Kennedy School students from the government, business, and NGO communities with a focus on leadership in environmental public policy and practice. This is the third year of the program.
- **Dubin Fellows**—In 2010, Glenn Dubin launched these fellowships to serve HKS students who have demonstrated the ability to thrive in the face of adversity and who are committed to forging transformative change in their communities.
- **Emirates Fellows**—With the generosity of the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), this program, created in 2014, brings emerging leaders from the UAE and across the Arab world to study at HKS. The program also supports substantial research and engagement between HKS and the region.
- **George Fellows**—Developed by Bill and Penny George in 2007, these fellowships emphasize character development and provide a third year capstone experience for students pursuing joint degrees at HKS and Harvard Business School.
- **Gleitsman Fellows**—These fellowships, which grew out of a $25 million bequest from Alan Gleitsman and began in 2008, support HKS students who are social activists and seek to catalyze social change.
- **Johnson Fellows**—Sheila C. Johnson launched this fellowship in 2014 for students with demonstrated leadership promise and commitment to serving African-American communities.
- **Rubenstein Fellows**—David M. Rubenstein established a fellowship in 2008 for first year joint degree students at HKS and Harvard Business School. For the third year, CPL will provide co-curricular programming to Rubenstein Fellows.
- **Wexner Fellows**—These pioneering fellowships were established by the Wexner Foundation twenty-nine years ago. Each year, they bring outstanding mid-career leaders from Israel to study at HKS.
- **Zuckerman Fellows**—Created by Mort Zuckerman in 2005, these fellowships provide funding to business, law, and medical students who wish to pursue public service degrees from HKS, Harvard Graduate School of Education, or Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health.

Each year, the leadership, faculty, and staff look forward to welcoming fellows to the Center. We are proud they have joined our community, and are thrilled with the opportunity to work with them—sharpening their core skills and preparing them to enter the wider world for lives of purpose, impact, and public service leadership. It is our pleasure and privilege to introduce this year’s fellows’ class—please take some time to meet them.

With warmest wishes… and admiration for what the fellows of CPL have and hope to achieve.

Dana H. Born, Brig Gen USAF Ret.  
**Faculty Co-Director**

David Gergen  
**Faculty Director**

Barbara Best  
**Executive Director**
The Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Program brings together emerging leaders from the government, business, and NGO communities dedicated to preserving and enhancing our shared environment. Fellowships are awarded to students who have a primary focus on developing leadership abilities to impact environmental public policy and practice. Bacon Fellows receive full tuition, health insurance, and a living stipend, and are eligible for summer internship funding. The Bacon Fellowship also includes a potential slot for an academic fellow or practitioner to support and enhance the fellowship experience.

Bacon Fellows participate in a yearlong co-curricular program designed by the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) which includes weekly leadership skill-building workshops and seminars, an annual retreat, a field experience trip focused on the environment, and opportunities to connect with fellows in their own cohort and across the other fellowship programs at CPL.

The Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Program connects fellows with highly accomplished national and international leaders, providing them with the skills to: foster sustainable environmental impact; build cross-sector partnerships to accomplish key goals; and inspire new ideas and innovative change in the policies and programs that safeguard natural resources and promote a healthy global ecosystem.

Bacon Fellows also have access to an unparalleled array of resources and scholars focused on the environment, including the Environment and Natural Resources Program at HKS, led by former director of the Massachusetts State Energy Office Henry Lee, and the Harvard University Center for the Environment, led by Professor Dan Schrag, a former member of President Obama’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.
ABOUT LOUIS BACON

Louis Bacon is a conservation philanthropist who has spent more than two decades supporting efforts to protect natural resources in the United States and abroad. Mr. Bacon is the Chairman of The Moore Charitable Foundation, Inc. (Moore Charitable), which he founded in 1992.

Moore Charitable supports conservation nonprofits that protect and preserve threatened landscapes, habitats, and water bodies. Mr. Bacon has protected more than 210,000 acres of land in perpetuity across the United States.

Mr. Bacon has received several honors including the 2010 Colorado Association of Conservation Districts’ Ranch Conservationist of the Year award, the esteemed Audubon Medal in 2013, and the Chairman’s Leadership Award from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. In addition, Mr. Bacon received the prestigious Land Trust Alliance President’s Award, the Foreign Policy Association Medal, and the 2016 Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award.

Mr. Bacon is the Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Moore Capital Management, LP, a private investment management firm.

A native of North Carolina, Mr. Bacon earned an MBA in finance from Columbia Business School and holds a BA in American Literature from Middlebury College. He is a Founding Donor of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture. He serves on the Board of Overseers at Columbia Business School and the Leadership Council of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard Kennedy School. Mr. Bacon is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Foreign Policy Association, a member of the No Labels Founders Council, and the Board of Trustees of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Team Foundation.
NARRATIVE

I did not leave college in 2010 expecting a career in environmental issues. Though long a committed environmentalist, I finished my junior year of college focused on peacebuilding and human rights, and set off to conduct field research on conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Middle East. However, a series of intense but frustrating experiences left me wondering whether I might have a greater likelihood of making a meaningful impact in other areas.

Consequently, I sought mission-driven work elsewhere. Over five years at Redstone Strategy Group, I worked with philanthropies, political organizations, and nonprofits to address environmental challenges. Of particular significance personally have been several efforts to help structure public-private partnerships for long-term conservation and development, such as a multi-party agreement in Brazil to permanently fund the world’s largest network of protected areas.

These initiatives demonstrated that major advances in environmental policy are possible, but depend on a compelling case for how the region’s residents will benefit. The difference between the more and less successful projects on which I have worked often rests on how well environmental and socio-economic concerns have been addressed simultaneously. Going forward, I aim to apply this lesson at the nexus of my interest areas by building large-scale, multi-sector partnerships that simultaneously advance solutions to challenges involving natural resources and socio-economic concerns.

The needs are global. Environmental degradation and human rights abuses often are inextricably linked, such as with palm oil cultivation in Indonesia and deforestation in the Amazon. In the Middle East, “water diplomacy” through joint conservation has been called a possible bridge to peace. From Colombia to the Congo Basin, conservation priorities overlap with conflict hotspots. Here in the U.S., marginalized communities routinely experience the greatest environmental risks, and often are the most supportive of climate action. And the list goes on.

Protecting the planet’s natural and human resources is both a moral imperative and an existential necessity. Experience has taught me the importance of tackling these challenges together. With the support of the Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Fellowship, I will leave the Harvard Kennedy School with the skills and relationships needed to hit the ground running.
My introduction to government was as an organizer. I led the coalition that advocated for smoke-free legislation in Philadelphia, among the first wave of cities to address the issue. My job was to activate the voice of the majority, especially those who most needed protection from secondhand smoke. It took three years, but we ultimately passed a strong bill. After the law took effect, none of the adverse scenarios came to pass, and smoke-free workplaces quickly became the accepted norm.

That early experience taught me how important public engagement is in policymaking, and the dynamic ways in which community and political will push and pull each other. Now I apply those lessons often as I develop City Scale, a new initiative to accelerate climate action in U.S. cities and metro regions. On climate, as with tobacco control, change is being demonstrated through community-scale work. It is why I continue to find local government such a fulfilling and important place to work.

I believe that climate change is the greatest challenge of our time. Avoiding its worst impacts requires decarbonizing virtually all systems and infrastructure by midcentury while transitioning the grid to clean energy. Doing so will demand fundamental shifts and gigantic leaps in just thirty years—the time horizon of my career, which I intend to commit to climate change solutions.

I went from working on the outside of city government to the inside, most recently serving as the Director of Sustainability for the City of Philadelphia, and am now on the outside again. I would like to continue to move back and forth, cultivating a cross-sector perspective that will be essential given the intricate, interdisciplinary nature of climate mitigation and adaptation.

The path forward will require new models—and for me, new perspective, knowledge, and skills. As a Bacon Fellow, I aim to further ground my point of view in applied theory and research, grow and diversify my network, and think big about what is possible. Afterwards, I plan to jump back in to provide more informed strategic thinking and effective leadership.
JAMES IRWIN

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE

Growing up in a logging community in British Columbia (BC), I observed conflict between those seeking to preserve our natural world for future generations, and the powerful entities seeking to exploit it for financial gain. My early career inspiration stems from watching and learning how a group of First Nations and other activists won an improbable victory to protect the old-growth forest of Clayoquot Sound from clearcutting, using peaceful tactics from road blockades to a global boycott of BC timber to oppose multinational corporations.

My work has similarly focused on creating ways in which people with limited access to resources or power can win conservation, legislative, and electoral victories, creating political and policy solutions to environmental problems. Working for the Sierra Club in Seattle, my first campaign was to defeat a massive highway expansion bill with a cynical sliver of funding for public transit attached; we demanded better, and though outspent fifty to one, defeated it. The following year we worked with partners to pass an $18 billion transit-only expansion. Those campaigns led to successfully running an outsider Sierra Club leader for mayor of Seattle.

In my role as Associate Director of the Mayors Innovation Project, I work to make communities more sustainable, helping mayors across the country develop and implement policies and programs to reduce emissions and make our cities more resilient. I love working with local governments—they are where it is easiest to level the playing field. Corporate money has less influence. Leaders are more accessible and accountable. And changes that occur at the local level can spread—from city to city, and upwards from there. That initial inspiration—how can we change things when we do not have power, or money, or access—continues to drive me, and is why I will continue working with local communities.

I seek to increase my ability to fight for our common environment through better tools, tactics, and alliances; and to be strategic, disciplined, and opportunistic in my work. The Bacon Fellowship will help me develop more nuanced approaches to tackling the complex social, political, and economic questions that govern our approaches to environmental and human crises.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Brown University, BA in International Relations and Political Economy of Development, 2004
Institut d’études politiques (SciencesPo), Paris, Diplôme du Programme International, 2003
Theresa L. Sidiropoulos Award, 2004
Swearer Center Community Service Award, 2004
Luce Undergraduate Environmental Fellowship, 2002

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Mayors Innovation Project at University of Wisconsin-Madison: Associate Director
Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) at University of Wisconsin-Madison: Senior Associate
McGinn for Mayor of Seattle: Senior Advisor
Sierra Club Washington State: Conservation Program Manager
Rural AIDS Action Network: Volunteer Coordinator
UW-Madison Taekwondo Team: Coach and Head Instructor
King County Search and Rescue: Ground SAR Volunteer

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Brown University, BA in International Relations and Political Economy of Development, 2004
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Theresa L. Sidiropoulos Award, 2004
Swearer Center Community Service Award, 2004
Luce Undergraduate Environmental Fellowship, 2002
NARRATIVE

Nature first sparked my enthusiasm when I joined the Girl Guides as a kid. My childhood was filled with weekends spent camping in the tropical rainforest and volunteering to protect and rehabilitate springs and urban parks, experiences which helped me develop a true passion for conservation from early on. For me, it was only logical to translate this personal interest into my profession, building a career in environmental policymaking.

The world is facing ever increasing environmental challenges, in particular related to climate change and biodiversity loss. Apart from disastrous consequences to nature itself, the current scenario can lead to a sharp decline in human well-being, with less natural resources and more natural disasters, leading to heightened social problems and political instabilities. Action must be stepped up if such effects are to be avoided, and I am determined to be part of this transformation.

After finishing my legal degree in Brazil in 2013, I had the unique opportunity of contributing at the United Nations in New York to the negotiations of one of the landmark agreements in this field: the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Currently, the struggle lies in translating all the international goodwill into action at the national and local level. I have personally engaged in this challenge by working as Cabinet Advisor to the São Paulo State Environmental Secretary, where I coordinated international cooperation efforts, structured projects, and assisted in the planning of conservation strategies.

By now pursuing a Master in Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School, I hope to compliments my legal background with specific economic, political, managerial, and analysis-related competencies to better plan and carry out environmental public policies. The Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Fellowship at CPL will be a crucial component in this path, connecting me with emerging leaders who are also dedicated to preserving the environment and helping me to strengthen essential leadership skills for my public service career.
When I graduated from college and moved to California to work on energy and environmental policy, I felt like I had stepped ten years into the future. All-electric Teslas cruised silently over the hills of San Francisco, and in Berkeley there seemed to be a solar array on every block. Soon, however, I came to see that even this apparent techno-utopia was subject to the same inequalities that drew me to environmental work in the first place. Designing policies that boost clean energy in affluent urban areas is fairly easy, but bringing clean technology to the farther flung, lower income areas that need it most is a bigger challenge.

At Next Generation, I led research and advocated for policies aimed to reduce this disparity in California’s transportation sector. Through policy papers and advocacy in Sacramento, my team and I made a case for reforming the state’s program to retire and replace the oldest and most highly-polluting cars on the road, many of which belong to rural and low-income households, with newer and cleaner technologies. Our efforts paid off when several of our policy recommendations became part of state regulations and legislation.

My most recent role as an energy policy researcher at the Council on Foreign Relations showed me that public policy is only as good as our ability to understand its impacts. Through research on topics ranging from the cost curves of clean energy technology to the climate impacts of shifting oil prices, I learned that effective energy policy requires an intimate understanding of extremely complex technological and economic systems.

I plan to spend my career using public policy to accelerate energy innovation and to ensure that its benefits reach all segments of society as quickly as possible. Technology provides plenty of reason for optimism, but only with sound public policy can we realize its true potential. As a Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School, I hope to gain a deep understanding of the political and economic levers available to enact change and to hone my leadership skills for the project of building a better energy future.
I grew up along Florida's panhandle, where the Gulf of Mexico is simultaneously our greatest resource and greatest threat of devastation. My hometown's economy depends in large part on pristine beaches and clear waters. Yet, these same waters generate the hurricanes that leave many without electricity, temporarily displaced, and burdened with repair costs. As I learned about the relationship between climate change, extreme weather, and other environmental risks, I became convinced that something must be done to protect and keep our environment from worsening.

For the past few years, I served New York State as Governor Cuomo’s lead on federal environmental and agricultural issues. I gained a broad view of the politics and policy behind the state of our environmental regulatory system, and I directed political strategy on federal issues regarding air emissions, water quality and infrastructure, Hurricane Sandy recovery, clean energy, and more. The experience of working on a range of policy problems with Congressional members, federal agencies, and advocacy groups taught me to balance diverse and competing interests. Moreover, I was continually fascinated by how climate and the environment are interconnected with other issues, including agriculture, transportation, health, economic development, and social justice. For example, I often noticed that opponents to climate policies expressed concern regarding potential negative impacts on low-income populations without acknowledging that many already suffer under the status quo. Lower-income communities—from my Florida hometown to New York and elsewhere—are disproportionately vulnerable to climate-related increasing temperatures, worsening air quality, sea level rise, and extreme weather events.

I am pursuing an MPP at Harvard Kennedy School in order to gain more skills to help me advance policies that will protect the environment and transition our world to a clean energy economy that benefits everyone. I am excited and honored to join the Center for Public Leadership as a Louis Bacon Environmental Leadership Fellow, and I look forward to learning from the other CPL fellows and developing myself as a leader.
“Being part of the Bacon cohort has broadened my understanding of what it means to fight for the environment, and has helped me to see the interconnectedness of the various environmental missions that drive each of my colleagues. Above all, I’ve been grateful for the support and advice of my Bacon colleagues in shaping my time at HKS—especially in deciding how to spend my summer. I am confident that our cohort will remain a source of friendship and professional support for me throughout my environmental career.”

Cole Wheeler
Harvard Kennedy School
Bacon Fellow
MPP Candidate
ABOUT THE DUBIN PROGRAM FOR EMERGING LEADERS

The Dubin Program for Emerging Leaders provides generous opportunities for Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) students with a demonstrated commitment to transformative leadership for the public good.

Dubin Fellows are master’s degree students at Harvard Kennedy School who have demonstrated strong character, academic excellence, the ability to thrive and lead in the face of adversity, and a commitment to making a transformative impact on the communities they serve. They are awarded a scholarship up to full tuition and health fees, and participate in an enriching co-curricular experience designed to enhance and engage their development as the next generation of public leaders.

In order to facilitate an outstanding fellowship experience and create the broadest possible impact of the program on the entire Harvard Kennedy School, the Dubin Program for Emerging Leaders also supports the following:

- **Summer Internships** — for both fellows and non-fellows, the program offers Summer Fellowship Grants for HKS students engaging in unpaid summer internships or research projects that relate to leadership and public service.

- **Dubin Emerging Leaders Speaker Series** — designed to engage both the Dubin Fellows and the broader HKS community in discussions on leadership from academics and practitioners in many disciplines, we invite speakers from around the globe to impart their leadership lessons.

- **Field Experience** — Dubin Leadership Service Seminars offer HKS students the opportunity to lead a policy-focused field experience trip to examine innovation policy solutions to deep-rooted societal challenges.
ABOUT GLENN DUBIN

Glenn Dubin is the founder and principal of Dubin & Co., a private investment company based in New York. Mr. Dubin co-founded Highbridge Capital Management LLC, an alternative asset management company in 1992. During his tenure as CEO, Highbridge evolved from a multi-strategy hedge fund into a diversified alternative asset management institution with over $35 billion of capital under management. In 2009, Highbridge was acquired by JP Morgan Asset Management, and Mr. Dubin remained at the helm to oversee the transition—a transition considered by many to be an example of a model succession. In 2013, Mr. Dubin resigned as Chairman and CEO of Highbridge to focus on Dubin & Co. and the founding of Engineers Gate LP, a proprietary quantitative trading company. Engineers Gate, comprised of seventy-seven employees including twenty-six PhDs, has committed itself to building a next generation operating and technology platform for systematic trading strategies across global liquid markets.

In 2012, Mr. Dubin, along with a prominent group of investors, acquired Castleton Commodities International LLC (formerly Louis Dreyfus Highbridge Energy), a global merchant energy company active in the physical and financial commodity markets and infrastructure investing. In 2015, CCI acquired Morgan Stanley’s Global Oil Merchanting business, and the combined company now ranks as one of the world’s leading independent energy merchants. Mr. Dubin is the lead shareholder and Non-Executive Chairman of the company.

Mr. Dubin is a founder, Board member and former Board chair of the Robin Hood Foundation, a philanthropic organization in New York that applies investment principles to charitable giving. Since its founding in 1988, Robin Hood has raised and invested over $2.5 billion in the most effective poverty-fighting programs in New York City. Mr. Dubin is also a Board member of Mount Sinai Medical Center and the Museum of Modern Art and is a member of the Dean’s Executive Committee of the Harvard Kennedy School. Mr. Dubin graduated from the State University of New York at Stony Brook with a BA in Economics.
When citizens possess basic rights and freedoms, they can step up, make their voices heard, and change the futures of their families and communities. In my brief, yet rich professional experience, I have stood with peaceful and engaged citizen groups at home and abroad—bearing witness to their collective strength and transformative impact. In my home state of North Carolina, I supported voting rights advocates pushing for fair and common sense reforms. At a startup nonprofit, I helped Liberian refugees stretch limited resources to navigate the complexities of repatriation from Ghana. At the National Democratic Institute (NDI), I aided citizen election monitors around the world who worked tirelessly to protect their elections.

In my four years at NDI, I had the privilege of supporting election observation projects in countries such as Burundi, Nigeria, and Tanzania. Throughout my work, I witnessed an unshakeable commitment by civil society to principles of nonviolence and democracy. On a daily basis, these activists’ resolve gives me focus and motivation to address challenges that threaten the integrity of democracy in the U.S. and around the world.

At HKS, I hope to build my policy analysis, quantitative analysis, negotiation, and grassroots organizing skills. The Dubin Fellowship’s unique focus on leadership will be pivotal as I build a career supporting democratic advocates in challenging circumstances at home and globally. Connecting with and learning from my peers within the Center for Public Leadership’s social activist network will provide me with an invaluable community of mentors both during and after graduate school. I am grateful for the opportunity to join the HKS and Dubin families and look forward to the challenge ahead!
A few years ago, the world was faced with its greatest period of economic instability since the Great Depression. The effects of this global financial crisis are still being felt today, with high levels of job insecurity leading to a growing political backlash from the working class in many countries around the world.

This trend is a deeply personal one for me. I grew up in a working class household, and both my parents have faced long periods of unemployment. As a single parent, my mother worked several casual jobs at a time to pay the bills, and that feeling of being only a few missteps away from disaster is one that I carry with me from childhood. I was fortunate enough to receive a great education, and this allowed me to create a pathway out of poverty.

My background has given me an intensely personal understanding of the struggles faced by so many other low-income working families, and it was the major impetus for my decision to join the struggle for workers’ rights after graduating from university. My involvement in the Australian Labor Party and the trade union movement dramatically opened my eyes to the problematic working conditions faced by millions of low paid workers on a daily basis. Australia has the second-highest rate of insecure work in the OECD, but I am acutely aware that work exploitation is a global phenomenon, and more must be done to protect low paid workers around the world.

My vision is for a world where the fruits of people’s labor are fairly distributed, and where people have access to decent working conditions. The Harvard Kennedy School Master in Public Administration degree can help me achieve this vision by providing me with a bigger conceptual tool kit to address these problems. I am particularly excited to be involved in the Center for Public Leadership as a Dubin Fellow, and feel I can learn a lot from the excellent faculty and from fellow students. Upon graduating, I plan to join the global movement to improve conditions for low paid workers affected by globalization and technological change.
My passion to combat human trafficking began during my Fulbright year abroad. As I was traveling throughout Cambodia, Vietnam, and Myanmar, I witnessed the horrors of trafficking firsthand when I saw young girls selling themselves on the streets. Although I had committed to working at IBM prior to my Fulbright, witnessing the slavery in Asia irrevocably changed the lens with which I viewed everything around me.

Since returning to the U.S., I have been deeply involved in the fight against human trafficking. At a Chicago anti-trafficking nonprofit, I worked in victim outreach, where I spoke to Chinese trafficking victims to help them understand their circumstances and explain their options for rehabilitation. One of the issues that I noticed during my outreach in Chicago was that many NGOs lacked volunteers who were fluent in foreign languages, thus limiting their ability to serve victims—many of whom are from foreign countries. In response, I proposed a program called “No Borders” to the Institute of International Education. Through “No Borders,” alumni of IIE scholarship programs, including the Fulbright Program, would use their language skills to provide outreach services for victims. If the proposal is accepted, “No Borders” is expected to reach 30,000 victims of sex trafficking across major U.S. cities by its first year. In addition to initiating this program, I was part of the team that developed The Skyway Railroad, an effort in response to the lack of connectivity among numerous trafficking rescue and rehabilitation programs throughout the United States. The Skyway Railroad aims to connect law enforcement, nonprofits, and corporations in order to improve victim outreach, rescue, and shelter initiatives. Since January 2014, Skyway Railroad has helped over 20,000 sex trafficking victims.

Though my background has enabled me to make great strides in my trafficking work, to truly rehabilitate victims, I need to think about how to assemble and manage teams locally, nationally, and globally—as well as across governments, NGOs, and corporations. Through mentoring, roundtable discussions, and leadership workshops with other emerging leaders, I believe the Dubin Fellowship will equip me well in the fight against trafficking.
From ages three to eighteen, I commuted from my black Atlanta neighborhood to a predominately white, wealthy, conservative school. My nagging, daily sense of otherness was offset by the school’s diversity club, where I built community with the school’s handful of black, Muslim, working class, and LGBT students and developed a sense of deep solidarity with those who experienced any form of marginalization. I came to see my world through the lens of identity-based oppression and developed a commitment to understanding and disrupting such injustices.

During college, I was exposed to international contexts around how one’s class, race, citizenship, gender, sexuality, and religion overwhelmingly determine life opportunity from birth. These issues went from being theoretical to tangible for me while working at the Ford Foundation. For the first time, I engaged with human rights activists on the frontlines of the issues I care about—from Kenyan HIV/AIDS rights activists at the UN to Dalit feminist leaders combating heightened violence against India’s lower-caste women. Their stories solidified my determination to advance international human rights throughout my career.

In particular, I am focused on social justice in the Middle East and North Africa. In Jordan, I worked with the Gaza Refugee Camp’s Community Development Office. On the verge of shutting down, it had been crippled by a combination of Jordan’s exclusionary citizenship laws and poor UNRWA management. I learned how rights-based challenges on the ground are often caused by policy decisions made by national and international agencies that have little to no substantive interaction with the communities impacted by their decisions. My goal is to strengthen human rights and development in the MENA region by making U.S. foreign policy a facilitator of—rather than a barrier to—locally led movements for justice in the Arab world.

Through the HKS-HLS joint degree program, I am learning legal and policy strategies for addressing international human rights violations. Furthermore, the Dubin Fellowship gives me a nurturing and inspiring community of change-makers, through which we challenge each other to think boldly and hold each other accountable over time to our original values and missions.
My faith and family values have taught me about the importance of opportunity, freedom, and community in America. I believe that in order to transfer, build upon, and sustain these values from one generation to the next, we need to make sure that children have everything they need to succeed. These important principles have led me to work towards a day when every child in America is able to reach their fullest potential.

As a first generation Arizonan, I have been able to contribute to this goal by working in my home state as an early childhood development agency administrator, children’s health policy expert, and fearless child advocate for Arizona children. For the past few years, I have held myself accountable to the result that all Arizona children have health coverage. This year, we will have achieved the highest percentage of children’s health coverage in the state’s history. I am committed to maintaining these gains and continuously improving the system of care for children and families.

Significant achievements are rarely accomplished alone. The Dubin Fellowship will allow me to learn, connect, and collaborate with a cadre of leaders working on incredible challenges facing our local and global communities. Furthermore, I know that this community will hold me accountable to the important work ahead and push me to become a better leader and colleague.

I am able to pursue my goals in large part due to the generous support of many who believed in my potential. I am grateful to Mr. Glenn Dubin and the Center for Public Leadership for the opportunity to continue my journey as a lifelong student and leader.
My parents raised me in the Christian faith, emphasizing service to others. I knew from a young age that I must serve a cause greater than myself. After witnessing the plight of the impoverished through extensive mission work and serving as a Kentucky Senate Page, I developed an intense desire to serve my state and country.

I determined I could best serve my country as a U.S. Army officer and began my career at West Point in 2001. After the attacks on September 11th, I wanted to serve at the tip of the spear and chose to join the Infantry. I served in a variety of leadership and staff positions culminating as a Company Commander for over 160 soldiers. Leading soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq taught me the importance of servant-leadership and leading by personal example, and I want to use these skills for the greater good. After the U.S. ceased combat operations in Iraq and began withdrawing from Afghanistan, I saw myself best serving others by transitioning to the Reserves and focusing on domestic concerns.

To make the biggest impact, I need to equip myself with the tools to interpret, analyze, and apply the law from a legal and public policy perspective. These past three years at Harvard have been instrumental toward achieving that goal and the Dubin Fellowship has been the highlight of my experience. While I still have a long way to go, the fellowship has helped me refine my leadership style to become the tri-sector leader I want to be.
Every summer of my childhood, I would excitedly await the arrival of my late grandfather who would visit from Taiwan full of affection and gentle encouragement. To this day, I draw inspiration from the stories of his humble childhood growing up orphaned in rural China. The kindness of his teacher who ensured he received a quality education enabled him to become a civil engineer. He paid it forward for the rest of his life, supporting my parents when they immigrated to the U.S. and providing scholarships to disadvantaged youth. A product of my grandfather's love, I want to dedicate my life to ensuring that the world's most vulnerable children and youth receive equitable opportunities to thrive.

Since college, I have worked internationally, from the townships of South Africa to the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, to address systemic challenges and opportunity gaps facing marginalized youth. At the Royal Academy, I traveled to remote regions of Bhutan to conduct research and make policy recommendations on expanding selection criteria in His Majesty the King's welfare initiatives, ultimately increasing educational access for low-income students in His Majesty's school and scholarships program. Meanwhile, managing grants and training programs at the Bhutan Youth Development Fund with partners like UNICEF allowed me to experience first-hand the multitude of challenges in advancing child protection, youth empowerment, and sustainable development at the grassroots level.

My aspiration is to unleash the promise of children and youth for a more just and sustainable world. I aim to mobilize international nonprofits, donors, and governments to design targeted programs and make informed investments in emerging youth issues, from mental health to employment challenges accelerated by rural-urban migration. The Dubin Fellowship's diverse community of passionate peer leaders, faculty, and practitioners enables me to leverage collective wisdom for social change. With the tools that I gain from HKS and CPL, I strive to pay it forward in my late grandfather's spirit of kindness, empowering disadvantaged youth to shape the trajectory of their own future.
As passionate social activists, my parents embedded social justice as the most crucial value in their children’s lives. My passion for social justice combined with a curiosity about developing countries made international development and humanitarian assistance a logical career for me. Many internships and volunteering experiences throughout college addressing different social problems confirmed my passion and led me to pursue a full-time career fighting global injustice for the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), where I worked directly on hunger challenges in both development and humanitarian settings, and in post-conflict, conflict, and war situations.

However, one question that I have grappled with throughout my career is how to find the most effective and efficient organizational models to solve global challenges based on a thorough understanding of the roles of different sectors. One lesson I have learned is that development and humanitarian challenges are interdisciplinary and multifaceted. I believe that they call for cross-sector solutions which can capitalize on the strengths of both the public and private sphere, and I aspire to act as a bridge between the two.

My goal of bridging the public and private sectors is motivated by my strong personal belief in connectedness; the power of moving beyond boundaries that may seem impossible to cross. As a person who was born and raised in developed countries yet who has become intimately familiar with the developing world, I know what connectedness means at the personal level. Working in Korea, Mexico, South Africa, India, Rwanda, conflict-affected Sudan, and war-torn Yemen, I have become close friends with those I worked for: displaced persons, asylum-seekers, refugees, migrant workers, and indigenous families. I have learned that these different worlds are not impossible to connect; they just need a bridge to enable them to communicate, to influence, and to change one another.

My two years at HKS will be not only about strengthening my understanding of cross-sector solutions to global challenges, but also about leveraging my professional experiences to grow into a better global leader. In moving toward this goal, I look forward to both learning from peer fellows and taking an active role in the leadership training offered at the Center for Public Leadership.
SHAMMI QUDDUS

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE

My undergraduate years were spent pursuing one question: What works for the bottom billion? The search led me to start a youth leadership nonprofit in Bangladesh and work in low-cost agricultural technology in Ghana. But it was a book by Jacqueline Novogratz—*The Blue Sweater*—that strengthened my resolve to use business as a tool to deliver sustainable, scalable, and technologically disruptive solutions for underserved communities.

For the past three years I have worked at the intersection of business, design, and international development. As General Manager of WaterHealth Bangladesh, a clean drinking water company, I was responsible for the launch and marketing of commercial water centers in rural areas. In my two years with the company, I was instrumental in setting up six community water systems. As Head of Business Development for Jeeon, I led the product development and deployment of a mobile healthcare delivery platform that connects rural patients to doctors in the cities. As a Design Thinking consultant for a women’s economic empowerment program for the United Nations Development Program in Bangladesh, I saw the importance of good design in creating solutions that really address local needs. These roles gave me the opportunity to see how private sector efficiencies such as professional investors, quarterly revenue targets, and performance driven incentive structures result in the delivery of technologically sophisticated and market-viable solutions to a user demographic once considered too poor to be paying customers.

My professional experiences in Bangladesh exposed me to the inadequacies of existing regulation to accommodate mission-driven companies. Existing tax structures and compliance expectations fail to account for the social impact of such organizations and the high opportunity cost of doing business in areas with poor infrastructure. With the MPA/ID degree from HKS, I hope to learn the skills needed to design enabling policies for businesses at the bottom of the pyramid. In addition, the Dubin Fellowship will give me access to a distinguished and inspiring community of faculty and peers in public service who can help me develop the unique leadership skills needed to create bridges between the nonprofit and for-profit sectors.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Stanford Graduate School of Business, MBA Candidate, 2018

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, BS in Environmental Engineering, 2010

Chi Epsilon Civil Engineering Honor Society

Zonta International Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

United Nations Development Program: Design Thinking Consultant

Jeeon: Head of Business Development

WaterHealth Bangladesh: General Manager

Building Bridges Through Leadership Training (Bangladesh): Co-Founder

Kathryn Wasserman Projects for Peace

MIT Public Service Center Fellowship

DUBIN FELLOWS
NARRATIVE

Rights of individuals and groups are often violated based on one or more aspect of their identity—such as race, gender, sexuality, class, and religion. Growing up in India, I felt anger at the normalization of identity-based discrimination, in particular the social acceptance of widespread gender-based violence. My goal is to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and my belief that the knowledge of law is empowering and a powerful instrument to effect this change motivated me to go to law school. When I began practicing as a human rights lawyer, I realized good legislation alone does not guarantee justice. It needs to be supported by a number of fundamental enabling conditions including rights awareness and access to legal counsel.

To create these conditions, I built partnerships between state and non-state actors to create rights awareness and provide free legal services for indigent women. Despite receiving free legal assistance, women expressed reluctance to approach the legal system as they felt further victimized by law enforcement authorities. I conducted sensitization programs for these authorities and observed that they were unable to shift deeply entrenched attitudes towards women and gender roles. This prompted me to start Schools of Equality, a nonprofit that runs programs that reach young people to shift attitudes that perpetuate gender-based violence and other forms of identity-based discrimination. The program encourages students to reflect and examine their own attitudes and unconscious biases, question notions of power and privilege related to gender and its intersections, and foster diversity and inclusion by respecting each other’s rights.

Although my work has been informed by my legal training, I recognize the multilayered nature of identity-based discrimination and its economic, socio-cultural, and political causes. The interdisciplinary approach of the MPP program will allow me to develop a more nuanced understanding of this issue, and will equip me with quantitative tools to measure the impact of my work in a more rigorous manner. The Dubin Fellowship will allow me to learn from like-minded individuals who have faced different sets of challenges, and will provide an inspiring space that is crucial while trying to effect change.
JENNIFER RIVERA  
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL  MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
University of Southern California, MA in Communication Management; Award Received for Thesis, Post-Modern Feminism: Understanding the Double Bind and Breaking the Glass Ceiling, 2014
University of Kent Canterbury, MA in International Relations, 2006
Loyola Marymount University, BA in Spanish, 2005
Loyola Marymount University, BA in Political Science, 2004

NARRATIVE
As a woman working in a male-dominated environment, I can testify to how far we have come as leaders, but I can also give evidence on how far we are from breaking the glass ceiling. I have had to step outside of my comfort zones, accept failure, and redefine my own identity in order to be heard and taken seriously. I was lucky to have had good mentors who motivated me and encouraged me to stay engaged rather than become angry and disillusioned. The U.S., in a way, is going through the same challenges I have experienced throughout my career.

The 2016 U.S. Presidential Election will forever be remembered as a pivotal event in U.S. history and a turning point for Democracy. Donald Trump's victory was not about partisan politics, but a referendum on our democratic system coupled with a high-level strategy focused on the electoral college. People on both sides of the aisle felt cheated, contributing to the already existing feeling of being disenfranchised and ignored. Similar social distress and disengagement is occurring in other parts of the world.

At Harvard Kennedy School, I hope to gain the necessary skills to train other female leaders on how best to lead in a male-dominated environment that inherently alienates women. Moreover, I believe these are the same skillsets needed to empower and motivate others who continue to feel disenfranchised in today's society. The challenge for state and local governments will be finding the space for leaders to become change agents in the face of such adversity. In a time where resources are low, demands are high, and public skepticism continues to grow, the public sector will need to be innovative, forward thinking, and embrace new leadership styles to rehabilitate public trust in government.

As a Dubin Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership, I hope to develop the friendships and knowledge necessary to craft solutions for the challenges governments face today. The goal is to create an environment where new leaders can be successful and break the glass ceiling, not only for women but for all those who continue to struggle to be heard.

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Los Angeles City Controller
Ron Galperin: Chief of Staff
Los Angeles City Councilman Gilbert A. Cedillo: Deputy Chief of Staff
Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn: Legislative Director
Shallman Communications: Political Consultant
When I was five years old, my parents brought me to the United States seeking a better life for my siblings and me. We arrived to California in 1993, just as a wave of anti-immigrant fervor was sweeping the state. Though I was young, I quickly developed a clear understanding of the consequences of public discourse and the effects that public policy can have on the lives of real people.

My engagement with this topic stems from my own story as a migrant and my firsthand experience with the U.S. immigration system. But most importantly, I am determined to work in public service in order to help the millions of people who, like my parents, strive to better their lives and that of their children, as documented and undocumented immigrants in this country.

My aim is to become a leader, an advocate and a public servant. I want to engage with policy within the United States government by influencing, creating, and/or implementing humane and fact-based policies that benefit both immigrants and the country as a whole.

Today, just like in California two decades ago, immigrants are subject to the abuses of an arbitrary, inhumane, and illogical process, and a toxic discourse that is driven by nativist ideologies and disinformation. While there may be valid arguments concerning security, to criminalize and vilify immigrants as a whole is to ignore the historical fact that migration is a defining feature of America and a fundamental human drive.

I believe my life’s work is to speak out and work against immigration policies that do not take into account basic empathy. My aspirations are driven by a core principle: that the impulse to migrate in search of a better life does not make people criminals—it makes us human. However, I know my convictions alone will not suffice to influence and create sound public policy on their own. Together, the MPP program and Dublin Fellowship will provide me with the tools necessary to effectively advocate on behalf of immigrant communities so they may in turn make the United States a better place.
JENNY WEISSBOURD
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL  MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
MIT Sloan School of Management, MBA Candidate, 2018
Brown University, BA in History with Honors, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa; CV Starr Social Innovation Fellow; Karen T. Romer UTRA Fellow, 2008
New England American Studies Association Prize for the Best Undergraduate Paper in American Studies, Gaspee D.A.R. Prize for the Best American History Paper by a Female Student

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Office of Governor Gina Raimondo, Providence, RI: Dukakis Fellow
The Food Trust: Development Manager
Fairmount Ventures, Inc.: Associate
Prometheus Radio Project: Board Member, Development Committee Chair
Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy Philadelphia: Steering Committee Member, Giving Circle Chair

NARRATIVE
As an eight-year-old—known for my signature backwards baseball cap—I talked my way into an all-boys basketball league, and told my second grade teacher that I would be the first woman in the NBA. The language of gender and LGBTQ equity had yet to enter my vocabulary, but I was already beginning to grapple with the questions of access and opportunity that would shape my path and learning to build relationships across difference to change minds.

In college, my commitment to addressing structural inequality drove my study of nineteenth century social movements, and the leaders who achieved policy change. I spent two years uncovering the story of the Providence Physiological Society, a radical group of women health reformers barred from medical schools and voting booths, who forged alternative teaching models and advocacy platforms. Outside the classroom, I became General Manager of Brown’s nonprofit radio station, and discovered my passion for leading social change organizations.

In the six years after college, I called on this passion as a consultant, nonprofit manager, and activist. At The Food Trust, I launched cross-sector partnerships, engaging mission-aligned corporations and public agencies to increase healthy food access. We celebrated an unprecedented decline in Philadelphia’s childhood obesity rate, and the launch of a federal Healthy Food Financing Initiative that opened supermarkets in underserved communities nationwide. As a board member at Prometheus Radio Project, I supported staff to develop strategies and funding models to achieve media policy victories, opening the airwaves to community groups from Florida’s tomato farms to California’s Big Pine Reservation. As Founding Chair of a Philadelphia Giving Circle, I collaborated with philanthropists and social entrepreneurs to test novel grant-making strategies that propelled grassroots advocacy.

To learn to lead across sectors, I am pursuing my MPA at Harvard and my MBA at MIT. As I enter my final year, my experience as a Dubin Fellow stands out as one of the most meaningful parts of graduate school. At the Center for Public Leadership, I have made lifelong friends who challenge me to dream big, and humble me with their talents and compassion. I am grateful to Glenn Dubin for this opportunity.
“Significant achievements are rarely accomplished alone. The Dubin Fellowship will allow me to learn, connect, and collaborate with a cadre of leaders working on incredible challenges facing our local and global communities. Furthermore, I know that this community will hold me accountable to the important work ahead and push me to become a better leader and colleague.”

Joe Fu
Harvard Kennedy School
Dubin Fellow
MPA Candidate
At a time when the world is more connected than ever and cultural engagement is increasingly crucial, the Emirates Leadership Initiative (ELI) Graduate Fellowship equips our next generation of leaders to tackle the most pressing public policy issues in the United Arab Emirates and countries throughout the Arab world.

The ELI Fellowship embodies core elements of CPL’s programming — experiential learning and cocurricular participation — to not only provide progressive training for students from Arab countries, but to deepen understanding of the Middle East among peers in the U.S. and other parts of the world.

ELI Fellows are admitted degree program students hailing from the United Arab Emirates and Arab countries; in addition to demonstrated interest in developing their leadership and public management skills, selected fellows embody a deep commitment to public service and advancing policy decisions in the Middle East.

The ELI Fellowship is a program of the Emirates Leadership Initiative, a research and curricular collaboration between the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) and the Middle East Initiative (MEI) at HKS and the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
AMBASSADOR
YOUSEF AL OTAIBA

His Excellency Yousef Al Otaiba, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the United States of America, took up his Washington-based post in July 2008.

Previously, Ambassador Al Otaiba served for seven years as the Director of International Affairs for the Court of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. During that time, he was a senior counselor to HH General Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces.

In these roles, Ambassador Al Otaiba has helped strengthen the UAE’s security and economic relations throughout the region, with the United States, and with other nations. His responsibilities saw him serve as the UAE’s principal security, anti-terrorism, and defense liaison to other governments and he was heavily involved in diplomatic efforts to improve regional security and defense cooperation. These efforts have included working to enhance UAE enforcement of export control laws and policy, and coordinating counter proliferation activities with allies.

Most recently, Ambassador Al Otaiba has helped guide Abu Dhabi’s leadership in multinational discussions on best practices for sovereign wealth funds. This activity was an extension of Ambassador Al Otaiba’s efforts to promote and deepen trade relationships between the UAE and other government, commercial, and private sector entities. For several years, Ambassador Al Otaiba has facilitated meetings between the UAE and other foreign economic interests, which have resulted in numerous mutually beneficial cooperative and partnership agreements.

Ambassador Al Otaiba obtained a degree in international relations from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., after graduating from the Cairo American College. He also attended the Industrial College of the U.S. Armed Forces at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. as an International Fellow.
Haytham Abushaban

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

Academic Highlights

Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham, MBA in International Business, 2008

Islamic University of Gaza, BS in Accounting, 2002

Professional Highlights

National Office for Gaza Reconstruction, UNDP: Economic Adviser

Palestine ICT Incubator: Business Development Adviser/Mentor

Fulbright: Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow in Economic Development, 2017

Leadership Institute, Leadership Academy Graduate Student Life and Wellness, Michigan State University, 2017

U.S. State Department Entrepreneurship and Business Management International Visitor Leadership Program, 2013

Palestine Trade Center: Marketing Specialist

#Gaza Digital, Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund, U.S. State Department: Winning Team

Narrative

I come from the Gaza Strip in Palestine. I completed my undergraduate degree there and then completed my MBA at the University of Birmingham in the UK (2007–2008). I was committed to returning to Gaza and working for both non-governmental organizations and the private sector to enhance development in Gaza. Subsequently, I have had a wide range of practical and business management experience in supporting existing small and medium enterprises, as well as young entrepreneurs and start-ups through my work with renowned Palestinian non-governmental organizations in Gaza.

This experience made it possible for me to join the National Office for Gaza Reconstruction in collaboration with the United Nations in 2015. I was contracted by the United Nations Development Programme to help supervise the economic revitalization projects in post-incursions Gaza; this included working on private sector development and conducting economic sector research, especially as it pertains to businesses most undermined by the conflict. Such endeavors equipped me with the needed skills and experience to navigate more complex professional environments. This also enabled me to help formalize deals with multi-lateral organizations and government-funded programs. I was inspired by this work and appreciated the importance of advancing leadership in both the private and public sectors in order to promote economic development, especially in combating youth unemployment.

My future goals are to help lead economic development and post-war reconstruction efforts in Gaza, as well as support such initiatives in the broader Middle East and North Africa region. HKS and the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship provide a great opportunity to network with diverse accomplished professionals within the Center for Public Leadership and from across the Arab World. This will be my chance to share my experience coming from a country affected by conflict. I look forward to further cultivating my interpersonal skills, as well as my knowledge and experience in the public policy and economic development spheres.
ABDULLA AL HAJERI
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
As an Emirati and native of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, I am motivated and feel responsible to give back to the community that has developed and shaped me into the person I am. Since the UAE has contributed largely to my growth as an individual, both personally and professionally, naturally I would like to show my appreciation and gratitude by dedicating my skills and services to my country, while leading with a global perspective.

In my current role, I have worked on evaluating selected government funds and trusts in order to make sound financial decisions on behalf of the concerned committee with suggestions on restructuring and reducing costs. While at Mubadala Investment Company, I was mandated to work with our investment and asset management teams to develop robust budgets and business plans for our portfolio companies within the industry unit. Additionally, I monitored performance on an ongoing basis through monthly scorecard reviews, while continuously assessing opportunities for value creation.

Beyond my contribution within the financial sector, education is a passion of mine. From my perspective, education should be a basic need rather than a right. I am a firm supporter and advocate for equal opportunity and the ability to pursue basic and even higher education. Being part of the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship while at HKS will enhance my knowledge of key areas of public service. Through seminars and workshops, I will draw on lessons to tackle key government and global issues, such as conflict resolution and sustainability of natural resources. Hence, pursuing my Mid-Career Master in Public Administration at Harvard Kennedy School will broaden my horizon to evolve as a responsible global citizen who is mandated to take part in my country's journey to enrich our innovative and knowledge-based economy.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Zayed University, Executive MBA with Distinction, 2012
Stanford University, Executive Program in Strategy & Organization Program, 2011
Portland State University, BA in International Relations, 2002

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
General Secretariat of Executive Council of Abu Dhabi: Project Manager, Financial Policy & Efficiency, Economic Development Sector
Mubadala Investment Company: Assistant Manager, Financial Planning & Analysis, Finance Unit
Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Diplomatic Attaché
Science and technology were always my core passions, and so it was “predictable” for me to pursue degrees in Mechanical Engineering at McGill and MIT, ultimately landing a job at NASA—a long-held dream of mine. My journey to Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) was less straightforward. I had just concluded my internship at NASA when the Arab Spring had begun, and I had a strong desire to be part of the positive change sweeping the Arab world. Though in Silicon Valley, I was determined to enable other young Jordanian engineers to experience NASA and work on mission design—my own small contribution to reversing the brain drain and creating opportunities for Jordanian youth.

Fast forward to today, Jordan is currently the only country in the Middle East signatory to an agreement allowing its citizens internships at NASA. The success of that program led to my current role as a Technology Ventures Advisor at the Office of the Crown Prince of Jordan, and to some of the most fulfilling work in my professional career. I founded and lead the development of Jordan’s first satellite program, oversaw internship exchange agreements between Jordan and various US institutions, and coordinated a technical study between Jordan and MIT in the areas of renewable energy and water desalination.

Through my work with youth on STEM initiatives in Jordan, it became clear to me that battling unemployment and empowering youth will not be a purely technical endeavor, but one that requires a great deal of policy change, reforming regulatory framework, and developing innovative business models and public private partnerships, which is why I am so eager and grateful to be continuing my MPA at HKS this fall.

In addition to HKS, I am the Chief Technology Officer of Analytical Space, Inc., a space startup currently incubated at the Harvard Innovation Lab. Founded by Harvard students with deep experience in technology and space policy, Analytical Space is developing the first network of small satellites that use laser communication to provide global data relay services.
NARRATIVE

I am fortunate enough to have lived in several countries throughout my life, and as a result, I have gained a deeply enriching international perspective that has shaped me into the person I am today. I have, nevertheless, maintained an attachment and love for the country of my birth, where I spent most of my formative years: Iraq. This bond and my desire to play an active role in the future of the country have guided many of my academic and professional choices. Despite suffering from the ravages of war, internal conflict, and despotism over the last few decades, the resilience demonstrated by the Iraqi people has been a constant source of inspiration. Those hardships have necessitated the emergence of effective leadership, and this has instilled in me a sense of duty to contribute towards the alleviation of the many challenges confronting the nation.

My studies and professional career in law have always been focused on the legal systems of the Middle East, and I remain convinced of the importance of the rule of law and an independent and functional judiciary in creating the right environment for citizens to exercise their rights, participate in public life, and flourish economically. For that reason, I have coupled my private sector career in law covering Middle Eastern jurisdictions with my public sector roles advising on constitutional, legal, and legislative affairs in Iraq. I believe that the skills I have gained in both spheres have been complimentary and transferable, and it is my hope that I will be able to play a more effective role in addressing those issues following my graduation from the Harvard Kennedy School.

During my time at Harvard, I will seek to enhance my knowledge of economics, bolster my understanding of international and constitutional law, and gain the skills necessary to play an effective role in both the public and private sector. I am also looking forward to being an Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership where I hope to focus on leadership, negotiations, effective management, and other issues relevant to the Middle East.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
American University of Sharjah, Iraq, Public Policy and Leadership Program, 2013
SOAS University of London, LLB Law, 2006

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Dual Qualified Attorney in the Republic of Iraq and the State of New York
 Ranked as a Leader in the Field of Iraqi Law by Chambers & Partners
 Baker Botts: Associate Corporate Attorney, UAE
 Fulbright & Jaworski LLP (Norton Rose Fulbright): Associate Attorney, UAE
 Advisor to the Vice President of Iraq on Legal and Legislative Matters
 Parliamentary Elections Campaign Advisor in Iraq, 2010 and 2014
 Iraqi Youth Foundation: Co-Founder and Former Chairman
TALA AL-JABRI
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2019

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
University of Pennsylvania Wharton School, MBA Candidate, 2018
McGill University, BS in Commerce, Finance, and Women's Studies, 2011

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Oliver Wyman: Junior Manager
Dow Chemical: Head of Government Strategy & Markets
Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency: Senior Program Associate
Monitor Group: Strategy Consultant

Ghobash Family Fellow: The Wharton School
Global Women's Leadership Fellow: University of Pennsylvania Law School
Cherie Blair Foundation for Women: Strategy Group Mentor
World Economic Forum: Global Shaper

NARRATIVE
When people think of Saudi Arabia, they fixate on its vast petroleum resources. Having worked in the industry, I know that our resources have enriched the Kingdom. I also know that its most precious resource is its people. While Saudi leaders often focus on the need to diversify the economy, which is certainly needed, there is a more entrenched and widespread problem requiring the country's attention. I am speaking of the need to include women in the economy, politics, and social life. My mother, a role model to myself and many others, helped break the glass ceiling by founding and managing a professional services firm in the 1990s.

As an undergraduate at McGill University, I minored in Women's Studies and travelled to Nablus, West Bank, to volunteer as an English Teacher to women and children. After graduation, I worked as a management consultant with Monitor Group, focusing primarily on nation-building and economic development strategy in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE, Kuwait, and Bahrain. In this capacity I realized there is much value to be reaped from bringing a “female lens,” as the needs of women are overlooked when there are no women at the policymaking table. Later, my independent consultancy experience in Ethiopia allowed me to learn a valuable lesson: the private sector has a key role to play in encouraging increased agency for disadvantaged communities in developing countries. This realization influenced me to join Dow Chemical, a multinational petrochemicals company, in Saudi Arabia. I worked to promote partnerships between Dow and the Government of Saudi Arabia.

I learned that, to truly bring about impact, we must work to unlock the potential, growth, and innovation of the private sector, which I view as the backbone of a sustainable economy. I believe that private equity is a strong mechanism to realize this impact. Thus, I wish to found a gender-lens impact fund that targets businesses that share my mission. The ELI Fellowship will strengthen my interpersonal and leadership skills, while presenting me with an ecosystem of changemakers, business people, and academics to test the concept of my fund. Their advice will prove invaluable in engaging stakeholders on female empowerment topics in the Arab World.
Part of what fed into my desire and cemented my choice for a career in public service is the result of coming from a family committed to this field. I see the value that my father adds as a diplomat, through the continuous challenges and opportunities to serve while maintaining the essence of the Emirati identity. I took part in some of these opportunities as an entrepreneur, participating in discussions and panels designed for youth and women to help push within our society.

On a professional level and prior to working in central government, I worked for a government-owned development company, which gave me first hand insight into the rationale for public-private partnerships for social and infrastructure development projects. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi recently launched its 2030 plan which includes economic, social, infrastructural, and environmental sector strategies. For the next few years, there will be a demand for people with the proper skills to help facilitate the expected policy proposals and implementation plans.

I have been in a fortunate position—being from a developing country that has achieved unprecedented success in terms of economic and standard of living improvement. As a woman being given the opportunity to lead based on skill and education, I witnessed during my limited time in the public domain that it often takes decades for progress to materialize. Applying for the Mid-Career MPA program and through the channels provided by the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship, it is my intent to consciously work towards playing a role in improving the effectiveness of future developments through public financial policies.
My life experiences in the West Bank—living under outdated Ottoman/Jordanian laws, Israeli military occupation, Palestinian official corruption, and sometimes cumbersome culture—have motivated me to pursue public service and a career in international development in order to contribute to the advancement of my community. Moreover, I want to understand successful development models in other countries and how they can be best applied to the Palestinian economy.

Post-graduation, I started my UN assignment with OCHA, Opt. I worked with marginalized communities living in east Jerusalem and Area C, an area controlled by the Israeli Civil Administration in the West Bank, where we documented the impact of unfair policies, such as demolitions and building restrictions, that led to gradual economic impoverishment for the Palestinian communities living in that area. Later on, I transitioned to work on economic projects funded by the Japanese government. My favorite project was the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park. This particular project gives me so much hope when I see Palestinian entrepreneurs and investors talk about their products and how they wish to see the “Made in Palestine” label exported globally.

My transition from the humanitarian world to the development sector gave me the opportunity to learn about development challenges, specifically in the Palestinian context. My ultimate goal is to work for economic growth and job creation in the region. Therefore, I want to equip myself with the analytical and technical skills needed, as well as a valuable network through the MPA-ID program and the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship to help me solve these problems.

I was thrilled when I first heard about the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship at HKS. As an aspiring decision maker and public service leader in Palestine, I want to ensure that I receive the right training and education to prepare me for such a role. I am motivated to contribute to the development of my community because I know there is so much untapped potential in the Arab world, and I truly want to dedicate my life to this goal.
NARRATIVE

I grew up between two countries undergoing massive change and struggling to rebuild their identity and economy—Lebanon after a fifteen year civil war and Bulgaria after decades of socialist rule. At a young age, I became interested in the impact of the political environment on the economy and the need to empower local communities by exploring innovative approaches.

At MIT, I was eager to explore how new products can create more equitable and inclusive economic growth. Ever since, through professional and volunteer experiences, I have directly experienced the impact of innovative solutions. With a firm belief that access to finance creates a more level playing field, I have been involved in developing and deploying new finance products—from expanding access to microfinance in rural Lebanon to introducing a new product in the cross-border student lending space. Recently, I discovered the power of distributed ledgers—or blockchain—in creating decentralized systems that can better serve people at the bottom of the pyramid. I am currently working with a start-up (uPort at ConsenSys) to build “self-sovereign identities” on these ledgers. This will not only provide people with autonomy and security over their identities, but also the opportunity to create credit histories and prove asset ownership—a product especially relevant for refugees and displaced communities.

While technology can remove existing market frictions, incentives need to be put in place to ensure that it contributes to the public interest and does not only serve the few. I decided to pursue public policy at HKS to better explore that nexus of policy and technology. In addition to learning how to design more effective policies, I have had the opportunity to start reflecting on what principles I believe we should uphold as societies. This year, I am looking forward to exploring how these principles can impact the technologies being created and the policies being enforced. The Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship continues to be an instrumental part of this journey, allowing me to join a community equally passionate about social change. I am honored by this opportunity and look forward to further developing my leadership.
HODAN OSMAN

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE

I come from a long line of nomads. When I was eighteen years old, I returned to Somalia for the first time since my family fled the war-torn country and arrived in Canada as refugees in 1989. In a land I no longer recognized, I immersed myself in the daily life of a nomad. I was drawn to my cousin Fatima, comforted by our similarities. We were of the same height, build, and brown skin. We found humor in everyday obstacles sharing a makeshift tent. Yet our futures were worlds apart. Fatima dutifully married at the age of nineteen, had six children, never spent a day in a classroom, and lives below poverty level in a city broken apart by civil war. Her fate could have been mine. My fate could have been hers. I carry this understanding with me daily; it has instilled in me a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the development of my country and to excel professionally.

After a career in commercial banking undertaking enterprise-wide change initiatives and at the UN focusing on capacity building, I found my purpose when I went to Mogadishu in 2013 to work in the public sector. Somalia has an important opportunity, and I want to be part of this historic change. For the past four years, I have worked in Mogadishu—for the central bank, finance minister, and supporting other executive offices, including the office of the president. I led planning efforts for the immediate restoration of central banking functions and facilitated the strategy development process. As head of strategy at the Ministry of Finance, I lead activities focused on rebuilding financial systems and adopting policy measures to strengthen financial governance and transparency. I have led the national debt relief agenda and coordination of the IMF Staff Monitoring Program—a critical first step towards achieving Somalia's development goals.

I believe in strong governance being central to development, and I yearn to explore how to strengthen governance and improve the delivery and implementation of structural reforms in fragile environments. With the Emirates Leadership Initiative and HKS I can explore these development challenges and understand best-practice strategies for building effective government.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

University of Glasgow, MSc in Human Rights and International Politics, 2011

York University, Bachelor of Commerce, 2004

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Somalia Ministry of Finance: Senior Policy Advisor and Head of Strategy

Central Bank of Somalia: Senior Policy Advisor

United Nations Office for Project Services: Programme Specialist

Bank of Montreal, Enterprise Risk Renewal: Project Manager

g7+ – Fragile States Group: Country Focal Point
NARRATIVE

I was born in Beirut to a Syrian father and a Lebanese mother. Because Lebanese citizenship passes down through the male line, I grew up carrying only a Syrian passport—one of the world's least welcome travel documents. Little did I know then that, as a young adult, I would have the privilege of visiting more than fifty countries: eight that I lived and worked in and many others I visited as an anti-corruption attorney at Davis Polk. But an emigrant is a complicated thing to be these days, and crossing borders—the very act that made me who I am—is under attack.

Running in the New York City Marathon on November 6 of last year, I saw in the thousands of faces lining the streets the multitude of colors and backgrounds that make the United States the place it is. I felt I had found a place where I could be all the things I am—Syrian, Lebanese, Arab, naturalized Canadian, Muslim, gay, immigrant—without any hint of contradiction. But just two days later, the results of the election woke me up to the reality that many are still viscerally opposed to those, like me, who cross borders. From a plan to literally construct a border wall, to a blanket ban on citizens of seven Muslim countries, I felt that all that had transpired to make me who I am was under attack. These threats to open movement have only strengthened my belief in the importance of border crossings, and my resolve to protect them.

With governments turning against immigration and globalization under attack, many corporations have stepped up, becoming powerful advocates for keeping borders open in the interest of trade and commerce. At the Kennedy School, I intend to focus on the intersection of the legal, public, and private sectors to explore how best to harness this alignment between the interests of the business community and the rights of migrant populations. In conducting this exploration, the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship will be instrumental in allowing me to focus on this tripartite partnership, while being a part of a community of likeminded peers determined to bring about social change in the Middle East and beyond.
NARRATIVE

I have been working in the space of sustainable development in the Middle East and Africa for twenty years now. My experience has given me insight into a multitude of challenges faced, more specifically in the Arab region. Perhaps, what intrigues me most in a region that has the youngest population in the world, with the highest youth unemployment rate in the world, is our inability to invest in the power of human potential to drive our growth both sustainably and inclusively. Those who remain alienated from society; namely, youth, women, and refugees, are seen as problems as opposed to assets. I believe that this is at the core of what holds us back as a region.

The practice of inclusive leadership that allows for bottom-up approaches to be heard and integrated into public policy and social change is what I am most passionate about today. The majority of the Arab region continues to use a top-down approach to leading, which leaves many feeling voiceless and powerless. As a leader, I believe that in order to be both empowering and inclusive, we need to practice connectivity, and we need to leverage partnerships. I am looking forward to seeing my experience at HKS as well as with the Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellowship better equip me to be the kind of leader that the Arab region needs moving forward, both through the knowledge I will acquire and the regional and global networks that will be availed to me.
Throughout my career studying and living in the Middle East, I have witnessed first-hand the crisis of citizenship that has kept my generation from realizing its full potential. In my time at a think tank and as an activist with the region's first LGBT+ organization, I had the opportunity to study the region from multiple angles, and have consistently reached the same conclusion. Pluralism is the true key to an Arab awakening. Not only pluralistic societies, but pluralistic movements are needed in order to instill lasting change. Protests and popular revolutions will fail if they are not supported by strong, diverse civil societies and organizations; and since I am a believer in the power of institutions, I want to help lay the foundations for long-term, sustainable policy change for those of us who live and love differently.

I joined the ranks of LGBT rights activist because I believe that discrimination lies as much in the violation of human rights as it does in the obstruction of progress. Simply put, we will never be able to build healthy democratic societies when vulnerable populations are marginalized and deprived from their right to citizenship. Since its inception, my organization has worked on releasing incarcerated LGBT men and women from Lebanese prisons, lobbied to remove homosexuality from the list of recognized diseases, and combatted sexual and gender discrimination which has erased the complex diversity of the Arab world and severed our link to our cultural identity.

My ambition is to find a way to resurrect the tolerance and celebration of diversity in the Middle East and codify it through law and public policy, the same vehicles that have oppressed it for so long. At HKS, I focused on analyzing global LGBT and civil rights movements, especially those emerging in the global South, in order to draw lessons on how these movements evolve and succeed in post-colonial and post-conflict settings. Over the summer, I spent time studying and juxtaposing equality movement in Burma, Uganda, and Lebanon in the hopes of expanding their collective tactical repertoire. I am excited to return to CPL and engage with a new cohort on how we can collectively safeguard equality, personal freedom, and human rights, and build alliances of resistance against the contemporary world order.
“Being an ELI fellow is the height of the Kennedy School experience for an Arab student: from the generous scholarship, to the co-curricular programming, to the alumni network. Beyond what ELI gives to its fellows, I was struck by ELI’s support in giving back to the Arab community. Through funding from CPL and ELI, my cohort started a program to pair Arab-speaking Harvard students with Arab refugees newly resettled in Boston. By year’s end, we had more than 50 pairings, all made possible by ELI and CPL.”

Ziad Reslan
Harvard Kennedy School
Emirates Leadership Initiative Fellow
MPP Candidate
ABOUT THE GEORGE LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIP

“Our communities are faced with more and greater challenges than ever before. We envision this program as one that will help future leaders learn the skills that will enable them to confront these challenges in innovative ways.”

Bill George
Senior Fellow, Harvard Business School
Co-Founder, George Family Foundation

Made possible through a generous gift from the George Family Foundation, the George Leadership Fellowship supports selected students in the joint degree program offered through Harvard Business School (HBS) and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) with a $10,000 stipend. The fellowship reflects the foundation’s commitment to enhancing public service by investing in character formation and leadership development.

Fellows are selected based on their demonstrated interest in community and organizational transformation through public service, activism, and social entrepreneurship, as well as a commitment to working in two of three designated areas—the public sector, private sector, and nonprofit sector—over the course of their careers. Special emphasis in the program is placed upon character development and ethical leadership.
ABOUT BILL AND PENNY GEORGE

Bill George is a Senior Fellow at Harvard Business School, and is the former Chair and Chief Executive Officer of Medtronic. He is the author of: Discover Your True North and The Discover Your True North Fieldbook, Authentic Leadership, True North, Finding Your True North, 7 Lessons for Leading in Crisis, and True North Groups. Bill currently serves as a director of Goldman Sachs and The Mayo Clinic. Bill has previously served on the boards of ExxonMobil, Target, Novartis and The World Economic Forum U.S.A. In 2014 the Franklin Institute presented Bill with the Bower Award for Business Leadership. He was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2012 and was named one of “Top 25 Business Leaders of the Past 25 Years” by PBS. Mr. George received his BSIE with high honors from Georgia Tech, his MBA with high distinction from Harvard University, where he was a Baker Scholar. He has received honorary PhDs from Georgia Tech, Mayo Medical School, University of St. Thomas, Augsburg College, and Bryant University.

Penny Pilgram George is board chair of the George Family Foundation in Minneapolis. Established in 1994 by Penny and Bill George, the foundation fosters wholeness in mind, body, spirit, and community by furthering the work of authentic leaders and transformative programs serving the common good. Dr. George is a pioneer and leader in the integrative health and medicine movement, working to transform society's consciousness around health and wellbeing on both the institutional and community level. She is co-founder of the Bravewell Collaborative, a national collaboration of philanthropists dedicated to advancing the principles and practices of integrative medicine. She is co-founder of the Penny George Institute for Health and Healing at Allina Health, which is the clinical service line responsible for prevention, wellness and integrative medicine across the entire system. Dr. George currently sits the board of the Penny George Institute Foundation. As a consulting psychologist, she specialized for more than twenty years helping diverse organizations select and develop senior executives and build high-performing teams—expertise she draws upon in her philanthropic work and leadership roles. She holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University, a master's degree from the University of Minnesota and a doctorate in psychology from the University of St. Thomas.
Ours is an urban future. By 2050, 70% of the world’s population is expected to live in cities. Despite an abundance of space and wealth, however, society has failed to invest in durable and sustainable habitats. Each day brings another story of streets flooding, subway lines breaking down, or contamination in our water or air supply. Too often, the burden of our infrastructure development mistakes falls upon the neediest members of our society and limits access to job and educational prospects. I approach my career with a firm commitment to changing this reality.

Growing up in D.C., I watched several episodes of gentrification unfold. Deliberate decisions about zoning, transit-oriented density, and developer tax credits recast the map of “livable places.” With it came hype from millennials, alongside a quieter elimination of affordable housing and community institutions in majority-minority neighborhoods. The question of why cities can serve some constituents so well, and others so poorly has consumed my work and research while at Harvard. It has sent me to nearby Allston and to Detroit to understand how to promote economic development inclusive of longtime residents amidst a backdrop of private sector reinvestment. It has motivated me to explore the complex regulatory regimes and funding dynamics that dictate innovation in the transportation industry itself—which routes, modes, and places receive priority and why. It has inspired me to seek a leadership role in convening the diverse voices necessary to design and manage a transportation network that serves its community with equity as its central objective.

As a starting point, I believe mobility technology can engage our citizens and improve our cities. For example, in a world of autonomous vehicles, what happens to parking garages and gas stations? Can we re-imagine their uses and design in ways that fend against sea level rise, reduce the cost of urban real estate, and create new skill-building pathways? Such interventions can connect people to jobs and education, promote healthy environments, and make urban life more vital and affordable. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue this learning through the George Leadership Fellowship this year.
NARRATIVE

Where I was raised in upstate New York is notorious for its economic stagnation. I want to fix that.

Once a thriving economy anchored by General Electric, Bath Ironworks, and the American Locomotive Company, the region today is a shell of its former self, largely maintained by its proximity to the purse strings of the state capital. As far back as I can remember, business and civic leaders talked on television about their dream of remaking the Hudson River Valley into a “Tech Valley” on par with Silicon Valley or Boston. Each time I come home, however, I see how much work is left to be done.

I plan to spend my career making that vision of a prosperous “Tech Valley” a reality—first by building local businesses that will provide good-paying jobs and recruit top employee talent, then through nonprofit work aimed at strengthening the community and raising its quality of life, and finally through government by improving local education and investing in the technologies that will drive the region’s next era of economic prosperity.

My inspiration comes from my service in the United States Navy, where I had the pleasure of leading America’s fighting men and women in some of the most difficult geopolitical challenges of our time. Whether it was deploying with Navy doctors to deliver life-saving medical treatment in remote areas of Central America, developing another sailor’s idea into a new suite of intelligence technologies, or standing up for my troops when their careers were on the line, my leadership position always gave me the power to make positive change, and often the responsibility too.

As I chart my course back to upstate New York, I see the George Leadership Fellowship as the perfect capstone for me to take inventory of the skills I learned at Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School, and find ways I can use them in furthering my cause going forward.
CHRIS CHENG
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
My name is Chris Cheng, and I hail from lovely La Vergne, Tennessee, where the okra is fried and smiles are wide. I grew up in a mixed household, and I loved it! My father was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to the United States after high school. He worked the night shift at UPS to pay for his daytime college classes. He fell in love with my mom, a Nashville native with a sweet southern accent. I am deeply grateful for my parents’ opportunity to raise our family in the U.S. My family taught me curiosity and creativity, service and sacrifice. Their pursuit of the American dream inspired me to serve our country in the armed forces, where I learned invaluable lessons on life and leadership. My ambition has been to refine those insights during my academic effort at Harvard and reapply them to future endeavors in business and public service. The first two years of the joint MPP/MBA program were an absolute blast. I am always learning from my classmates. Most notably, I have discovered even more about how much I don’t know! I was already aware that I knew quite little about most things, but now I have an even deeper respect and stronger grasp of my knowledge gaps. This experience continues to teach me the importance of asking questions and learning a little something every day, as well as finding the right resources and asking for help. I am very thankful for the George Leadership Fellowship, and I am beyond excited to continue learning with energetic and welcoming folks from all around the world.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2018
David M. Rubenstein Fellowship, 2015–16
University of Southern California, BA in International Relations and Global Business, 2011

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
United States Army: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Officer
United States Army: 75th Ranger Regiment
United States Army: 4th Infantry Division

CHRIS CHENG
NARRATIVE
Someone once told me that to be truly fluent in a foreign language is to not only communicate in it, but also dream in it. It is the moment when the language influences the way you form ideas both intentionally and subconsciously.

By pursuing the MPA/ID and MBA joint degree program as a George Fellow at Harvard, I aim to become fluent in two languages: international development and business.

While working at the Gates Foundation, I often watched messages get lost in translation between a PhD and a former investment banker. A consultant oversimplified the requirements of a new healthcare program while an economist became absorbed by the sample selection process for evaluation. A room of diverse backgrounds and perspectives is essential for problem solving in the field of international development, but it often lacks an interpreter. Too frequently our leaders and problem solvers are fluent in one language or the other. As an applied math major who researched economic development in India, a former consultant at The Boston Consulting Group, a former strategy consultant at The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and a former Program Coordinator for a social enterprise in the Philippines, I have contributed to conversations in both languages.

As a George Fellow, I will have the opportunity to sharpen my vocabulary. The joint degree and George Fellowship experience will not only strengthen my communication in international development and business, but will also redefine my vision for the future. By becoming fluent in international development and business, I aim to lead innovation at the intersection of these two fields. I am particularly interested in exploring business and policy solutions that will help us manage the growing gap between the skill set of our current workforce and the demands of our future economy.

Last year's U.S. election highlighted the dissatisfaction of people who are left behind during technological advancement. Business and government will need to collaborate globally to ensure that our workforce can keep up with the rapid pace of technology. The intersection of these languages will redefine my expectations for the future and the realm of possibility for effectively addressing this development issue.
I was diagnosed with Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma at age twenty-two, only eight months after graduating from college. I had just begun my career as a Financial Analyst at my dream company, Google, and I feared that cancer would rob me of my future. It was the single most anxiety-provoking experience of my life. Fortunately, my amazing team of doctors and nurses caught the disease at an early stage and began an appropriate treatment course. With the help of an incredible support network of family and friends, I was able to achieve complete remission with six rounds of chemotherapy.

While the healthcare system saved my life, my experience with it was not always positive. Nothing had prepared me to navigate the complex web of doctors, hospital administrators, and insurance providers who served as the gatekeepers to my health. I eventually learned to be the project manager of my own care, which was often more taxing than the disease itself. I pored over documents and spent hours on the phone, disputing erroneous charges on my medical bills and coordinating between multiple hospital systems, all while continuing to work full-time. But as difficult as I found the experience, I realized that my college education and employer-provided medical insurance were true privileges that aided me in my journey to health. Many of my fellow patients in the treatment room did not have access to those resources.

After completing my treatment course, I wanted to explore avenues to leverage my experience in multiple business functions at Google to help improve U.S. healthcare systems and hospital operations. More broadly, I wanted to pivot to a career where I could help save lives. Through Harvard’s MBA/MPP joint degree program and the George Fellowship, I hope to develop leadership skills that will allow me to work across the public and private sectors to drive better patient experiences and reduce healthcare costs.
My professional ambition is to elevate the work of the social sector to improve the lives of the poor and vulnerable, and I believe the most powerful approaches to this work lie at the intersection of sectors and call for application of sophisticated business and policy tools.

Before graduate school, I spent four years working at The Bridgespan Group, a consulting firm that explores big questions about how to create transformative social change, including by interfacing with public systems and bridging business thinking into the nonprofit world. Working with many of the biggest players in the nonprofit sector solidified my belief that interconnected social problems must be addressed in nuanced ways that cut across sector lines. My work at Bridgespan reinforced my conviction about the important overlaps between nonprofit and business work, and it demonstrated clear intersections between nonprofit work and policy solutions. I believe that to be the most effective leader in supporting social change efforts, I need versatility across nonprofit, business, and policy domains.

To that end, I spent last summer working in the public sector at the City of Boston and this summer working in impact investing at Accion Venture Lab, and I have gotten involved in cross-cutting student activities including the Social Enterprise Conference and conversations about the role of business in society.

Two years into my joint degree program, I’m excited to continue to pursue the joint MPP/MBA program’s interdisciplinary training and to rejoin the CPL community in order to better play a role in the evolving intersections between the nonprofit, public, and business sectors.
ADITI KUMAR
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL  MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
One of my most rewarding undergraduate experiences was a series of challenge sessions with my thesis advisor. What began as an historical review of Indian transportation policy evolved into an analysis of its economic impacts today and then became a comparative economic outlook for India and China based on investments in transportation infrastructure. It was a circuitous, illuminating path, with some of its twists and turns created by my evolving interests and others by the expertise and curiosity of my advisor.

My career has developed in a similarly organic way. Halfway into undergraduate coursework focused on international development, a few professors captivated my attention with their analysis of the unfolding financial crisis at home. The near collapse of certain financial institutions and products interested me in a way that a seemingly healthy financial system had never done. I scrambled to get an internship at the Federal Reserve to see the policymakers' crisis response up close. Afterwards, I spent five years as a management consultant specializing in financial policy, providing support to U.S. financial institutions implementing new regulations and to policymakers in developing them. I also managed a project at the World Economic Forum developing proposals for enhanced macroprudential financial policies.

Eight years after the financial crisis and major political upheavals at home and abroad, I foresee many of these regulatory safeguards being unraveled. My interests have therefore turned much more toward politics—both at home, to elect leaders that will demand responsible conduct from financial institutions and their managers, and abroad, to coordinate the management of multinational institutions and ensure the stability of the global financial system.

In my last year at Harvard, I want to continue exploring projects and career paths that combine my interests in finance and politics. If history is any guide, my aspirations will evolve, shaped by the expertise and guidance of the HKS and HBS communities. My goals are simply to seek out diverse perspectives, further test and develop my own political ideologies, and explore avenues to affect macro issues like financial regulation through the public and private sectors.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2018
Course Assistant to Ambassador Swanee Hunt, 2017
Course Assistant to Ambassador Nicholas Burns, 2016-2017
University of Pennsylvania Wharton School, BS in Economics, Concentrations in Business & Public Policy and Finance, 2010
University of Pennsylvania, Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business, 2010
University of Pennsylvania College of Arts & Sciences, BA in International Studies, 2010

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
U.S. Department of the Treasury, International Affairs: Summer Analyst
Oliver Wyman: Engagement Manager, Public Policy and Corporate & Institutional Banking
World Economic Forum: Project Manager, Financial Services
NARRATIVE

I am in the business of rewriting narratives. Of upending expected outcomes of minority youth who grew up in disadvantaged communities similar to mine in Ohio who are fighting for first and second chances at fulfilling their dreams. I believe stories are rewritten when economic and educational opportunities are provided at scale. I believe scale is best achieved when patient capital is spent on social enterprises that generate innovation or spur mainstream adoption of promising ideas that reverse the odds. These beliefs drive my professional interests, which intersect finance, operational management, and social enterprise.

My beliefs are rooted in the experience of seeing my hometown peers lose their way because of a lack of support and opportunity. College dropout and youth unemployment statistics became real, recognizable faces—my neighbors, close friends, and loved ones. As their narratives changed, so did mine. While I enjoyed learning about different financing structures businesses use to grow at Barclays, I sought out a role where I could learn firsthand how to address educational attainment and career advancement.

At the Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ), I implemented new cross-site program initiatives across the nonprofit’s comprehensive pipeline of wrap-around supports that served over 13,000 youth. In the process, I learned the nuanced challenges of dream fulfillment both at scale and over time while understanding its intersection with public school systems, poverty, family, residential segregation, health, and the employment sector. It also helped me understand the meaningful impact the for-profit sector had in influencing the direction of nonprofit organizations and the broader social agenda.

I will continue to straddle the nonprofit and for-profit world, cultivating skills and knowledge that will ultimately help bridge gaps in understanding what it takes to successfully implement social programs at scale and explore new approaches to maximizing donor capital. I am excited to be a part of the CPL community with exceptional learning opportunities and peers—some of whom will provide critical feedback as I concretize my theory of social change while others will validate my aspiration through their own personal stories and diverse career experiences.
The first chapter of my life can be defined as a search for opportunities to make an impact. Growing up a short distance from New York City, the search for immediate and meaningful impact after 9/11 led me to the Naval Academy, a commission as a Marine officer, and to the front lines of the war in Afghanistan. As an infantry commander, I spent every day communicating with, operating next to, and working to inspire people from all walks of life. The experience of living and fighting side by side with nineteen-year-old kids from Texas and sixty-year-old Afghan tribal leaders taught me important lessons about leadership and about life. The young Marine and the wise tribal elder may not have agreed on much, but each believed in a world governed by justice and fairness, trusted an individual's capacity to change their own situation and that of others, through hard work and creative thinking, and believed that personal gain was subordinate to the needs of one's family, friends and community.

Watching many of the same people who inspired me with their courage and leadership in combat fight to find fulfillment once they left the military led me to Michelle Obama's small team designing innovative and meaningful solutions for veterans and military families. Too many veterans struggle to find meaningful employment or complete their education. I believe it is not enough just to welcome veterans back into the community; we must do it in a way that prepares them to be as successful out of uniform as they have been in the military. The power of the White House, working in concert with the private sector, to create meaningful impact with one phone call inspired in me a renewed belief in the capacity of both business and government to make a positive difference.

I am committed to leveraging what I have learned professionally—in uniform and out of uniform—and everything I have learned in this remarkable Harvard joint degree program, to make an impact for those most in need.
NARRATIVE

Through my work across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, I realized that people are an organization’s biggest asset. However, many organizations and communities struggle to provide the right resources and structure for individuals to reach their potential. I work with organizations and communities to bridge this gap through leadership development, change management, and organizational culture. By facilitating the personal and professional growth of others, I hope to drive meaningful change within organizations and communities.

During my first year in the MPP program, I developed a passion for public entrepreneurship and civic innovation. The summer after my first year, I continued to explore this interest as a Summer Innovation Fellow at the California Department of Justice, where I helped launch the Department’s Office of Performance Improvement and Innovation. I became particularly drawn to the talent management aspect of government innovation. I started asking questions such as: how can government better attract, retain, and develop talent? This experience solidified my commitment to helping individuals reach their potential through building environments where people can thrive.

After graduating, I want to continue weaving in and out of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Although the mandates are different, many organizations across these three sectors struggle with bureaucracy that stifles innovation and creativity. This, in turn, inhibits employees—and by extension, their organizations—from reaching their potential. By leveraging my experiences across all three sectors, I aim to break down bureaucratic barriers to growth and enable organizations to leverage their biggest asset: people.

In the long-term, I hope to orchestrate organizational change efforts in the public sector. My dream is that one day innovation units, much like the one I co-founded at the California Department of Justice, are interwoven into the fabric of government. These offices are glances into what government can be—and the impact government can have—when individuals are empowered to be creative, share ideas, and collaborate with one another. I am very thankful to CPL and Bill and Penny George for affording me the opportunity to continue building my leadership skills so I can be a more thoughtful, authentic, and inspirational multi-sector leader.
NOAH STERN

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2018
University of California, Berkeley, BA in Political Economy with Distinction, Certificate in Engineering Leadership, 2012
Cal Alumni Association Leadership Award

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Mayor's Operations Innovation Team, City of Los Angeles: Summer Innovation Fellow
Bain & Company, San Francisco: Senior Associate Consultant
Office of the Quartet Representative, Jerusalem: Economic Development Associate to Former Prime Minister Tony Blair
Associated Students of the University of California: President
University of California Haiti Initiative: Co-Founder

NARRATIVE
The highlight of my undergraduate experience at UC Berkeley was my term serving as student body president. My presidency fell during a trying time. California was in the midst of the recession, and public education funding was on the decline. I spent every day improving the lives of 35,000 students by lobbying against budget cuts, planning new course offerings with faculty, and supporting the design of a new $224 million student union. At times I even acted as the intermediary between police and student protestors.

My term as president also coincided with the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti that took over 250,000 lives. I joined a relief mission to Port-Au-Prince, alongside students and professors, to find a way for our university community to contribute to the reconstruction efforts. We created the University of California Haiti Initiative (UCHI), which promotes development in Haiti through higher education partnerships.

Following university, I chose to spend several years with Bain & Company to build my business acumen. As my skills developed I came to ask myself how the business practices I applied with corporate clients might create impact in the social sector. I sought a position with the Office of the Quartet Representative in Jerusalem to understand first-hand how these business principles would apply to development. In this role, I was fortunate to collaborate with development professionals who used the promise of economic growth as a tool to improve Israeli and Palestinian relations. More recently, I served as a Summer Innovation Fellow for the Mayor’s Operations Innovation Team with the City of Los Angeles.
NARRATIVE

I was inspired to serve from an early age. My parents instilled in me a strong sense of duty and responsibility to give back. Public servants and military members were a significant part of my community growing up in Annapolis, Maryland and that influence further convinced me of the importance of serving my country. Even as my career evolves from the military to a professional life bridging the public and private sectors, I want to continue with a spirit of service.

Prior to starting the MPP-MBA program, I served for five years as a U.S. Naval officer at Naval Reactors Headquarters. During this time, I worked as a nuclear engineer on submarine and aircraft carrier design, construction, and maintenance and later as Director of Public Affairs for the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. I learned that even in a technical organization like Naval Reactors, overcoming challenges requires not only engineering skills, but a capacity for leadership and an understanding of policy and management, from internal budgets to shifting national defense priorities. To be an effective leader, I realized I needed an array of skills rooted in several disciplines, including policy, organizational management, and finance.

Fascinated by the intersection of technology, business, and policy, I want to advance performance and innovation in the public sector in energy and national security. In my time in the military and government I have seen the great work that government institutions can do and met some of the smartest, most capable people I have known. However, I also have seen how government needs to adapt and improve. I want to be a leader that drives positive change in government and helps it to meet its full potential. I am particularly inspired by the Department of Defense’s “Defense Innovation Unit-Experimental” that draws from expertise in technological innovation hubs like Silicon Valley and Boston to find creative solutions to defense challenges.

As a George Fellow, I am thankful to be supported and inspired by a community of professors and peers that will make me a better leader and help me build the tools to contribute to my country’s future.
BENJAMIN (BEN) WEISMAN
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
The question of the United States’ role in the world—and, in particular, our obligations to people in other countries—has long motivated my academic and professional work. At Princeton, I studied public and international affairs, focusing on issues of poverty and conflict in certain countries of sub-Saharan Africa. My thesis explored the impacts of various international factors on the long-term outcomes of civil wars. My main conclusion confirmed the overarching lesson I reached in my study of international affairs: unintended consequences of policy are often the most meaningful in the long term.

After graduating, I began a career in international policy, focusing on different issues. As part of the New York Fed’s International Affairs & Strategy function, my attention shifted to the various realms of economic policy in which the Fed is involved, including monetary and regulatory policies and the provision of financial services to foreign institutions. During my four years, I became very interested in the workings of the global financial and economic system, and the competing objectives faced by both policymakers and market participants. This has only further complicated my understanding of the policy challenges that motivate and interest me the most.

My ultimate goal is to pursue a career at the intersection of foreign and economic policy, ideally one where I can help promote better outcomes for vulnerable populations around the world. I hope to formulate strategies that are based on long-term thinking and that take into account the complex interactions of U.S. policy actions in the real world. Developing such an approach requires rethinking governance structures, one of my main motivations for pursuing both management and policy degrees. In the short term, I hope to better understand the constraints and motivations faced by the private sector, specifically private companies based and operating in developing countries. Having seen how different forms of financial regulation alter financial institutions’ incentives, I hope to find ways in which broader government action—whether American or foreign—can promote sustainable and inclusive growth. I plan to use my time at HKS and HBS to develop a stronger analytical, technical, and managerial foundation for these pursuits.
As a Japanese national, my interest in public service stems largely from core Japanese values that my parents raised me with: gratitude, duty, reciprocity, and humility. Having grown up in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, it was only when I began living and working in Swaziland and Malawi that I realized how grateful I was to be born into such a privileged environment, how it was my duty to give to those less fortunate than myself, and how I could reciprocate to those who have been instrumental in my growth by paying it forward and empowering those most in need.

It was out of sheer luck and serendipitous circumstance that I ended up with the Clinton Health Access Initiative. What had initially been envisioned as a short break between consulting and graduate school turned out to be life changing: when I first arrived in Swaziland, little did I know what meaningful experiences would await me, and how engaged and passionate I would feel about my work and its impact. Supporting Ministries of Health in Sub-Saharan Africa has concretized my lifelong interest in the continent, and through my summer experiences working in government in Rwanda and in the private sector in Ethiopia, I have grown further passionate about working at the public-private intersection.

I am pursuing a joint MPA/ID-MBA to develop the skills and credibility to work on public-private partnerships in Africa. My HKS training will enable me to support governments, conduct diagnostics to understand the binding constraints to growth, develop policies that create attractive business environments, and prioritize projects in fiscally constrained conditions. On the other hand, my HBS education will allow me to raise funds, assess risk, model financials, and enforce contract terms. Together, the joint degree will enhance and enrich my understanding of “development,” challenging me to think more critically about the role of the private sector, nonprofits, and foreign governments on the continent. I am excited to be part of the Center for Public Leadership and to be inspired and motivated by a network passionate about making the world a better place.
“My dream is that one day innovation units, much like the one I co-founded at the California Department of Justice, are interwoven into the fabric of government. These offices are glances into what government can be—and the impact government can have—when individuals are empowered to be creative, share ideas, and collaborate with one another. I am very thankful to the Center for Public Leadership and Bill and Penny George for affording me the opportunity to continue building my leadership skills so I can be a more thoughtful, authentic, and inspirational multi-sector leader.”

Rebecca Scharfstein
Harvard Kennedy School
George Leadership Fellow
MPP/MBA Candidate
ABOUT THE GLEITSMAN PROGRAM IN LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

With the income generated by a $23 million endowed gift from the estate of Alan L. Gleitsman, CPL launched the Gleitsman Program in Leadership for Social Change (GPLSC) in 2007. It was Mr. Gleitsman’s hope that if the world knew of the accomplishments of social activists, others would be inspired by their stories and would fight to correct some of the other problems facing us, thereby improving the quality of life for all of us.

The GPLSC’s three principal components are:

• **The Gleitsman Leadership Fellowship Program**, which provides significant financial support and a robust co-curricular experience to promising students interested in social change;

• **The Gleitsman Citizen Activist and International Activist Awards**, each of which carries a $125,000 cash prize and enables students and the greater Harvard community to learn from the presence of an extraordinary change agent when she or he visits campus; and

• **The Alan L. Gleitsman Professorship of Social Innovation**, an endowed professorship that will link pivotal social innovation programs at Harvard Kennedy School, including the longstanding Gleitsman Program in Leadership for Social Change and the New World Social Enterprise Fellows Program, which launched in the fall of 2015. Both programs are housed at Harvard Kennedy School’s Center for Public Leadership.

This year, the endowment will support four new activists with full tuition fellowships and welcome back three returning fellows to carry on Alan’s vision as often expressed through his favorite Robert F. Kennedy quote: “Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.”
ABOUT ALAN GLEITSMAN

Alan L. Gleitsman, was a successful entrepreneur in the television industry for more than three decades and the founder of The Gleitsman Foundation, which he established in 1989 to honor individuals who have initiated social change. Mr. Gleitsman “wanted to recognize people who make a difference, tell their story, and make other people aware of what one person can do.”

In addition to the foundation, Mr. Gleitsman initiated a scholarship program at UCLA designed to help attract outstanding medical students to the field of geriatrics; was honored by the University of Southern California for his contributions to cancer research; participated in the International Peace Walk in the Soviet Union; and established a scholarship program at the high school he attended in Great Neck, New York that is awarded annually to the school’s most outstanding graduate.

Mr. Gleitsman began his business career in sales for Sterling Television, a television program distribution company that later became The Walter Reade Organization. In 1970, he started Alan Enterprises, Inc. in Los Angeles, specializing in the syndication of television programs in the United States. By the time he sold the company in 1986, he had acquired the rights to a substantial library of motion pictures, cartoons, and series, and was actively involved in distribution to television and video throughout the world.
NARRATIVE

In the summer of 2005 I traveled to northern Zambia to volunteer on a literacy project in a Congolese refugee camp. Of all the injustices in the camp, the denial of anti-retroviral treatment to people living with HIV was among the starkest. The anger I felt that summer watching people die of AIDS, when treatment was available at a nearby Zambian hospital, has grown into a commitment to spending my career preventing these kinds of unnecessary deaths. I took a leave of absence from my undergraduate studies at Stanford and spent the year in Zambia building a structured savings and support program for people living with HIV. In 2007–08, on a second leave of absence, I helped to set up a similar program in Rwanda in collaboration with Partners In Health.

Inspired by the passion and power of the young people I worked with in the U.S., Zambia, and Rwanda, I joined Global Health Corps (GHC), an organization dedicated to building a new generation of leaders in global health, as the founding Program Director. My time working with the GHC fellows, who are emerging leaders from diverse disciplines and geographies, deepened my belief that collaborative communities of young people built around shared values can be great engines for social change. In leaving GHC, one of my priorities was to seek out and continue to help build communities like this throughout the rest of my career. The Gleitsman Fellows program provides a unique opportunity to be a part of such a community at Harvard.

Before coming to the Kennedy School, I pursued an MPH at Johns Hopkins. While there I learned about biostatistics and epidemiology, but Baltimore's health and social justice activists were equally important teachers. Organizing and advocacy work in Baltimore, on issues from marriage equality to HIV criminalization, deepened my understanding of the needs of marginalized and underserved communities here at home, and reinforced my belief in the power of grassroots activism. After finishing the MPP program at the Kennedy School, I hope to continue to work as an advocate for the uptake of effective social justice-oriented health policy at home and abroad.
I am passionate about protecting low-income people from being marginalized or discriminated against, especially when they do not fit the “model poor” narrative. Growing up, I saw how people were often willing to help when my family needed it. Always the appreciative and industrious immigrants, we were seen as the deserving poor. I was delivered into this world on the kitchen floor after my mom, heavily pregnant, had spent the previous day picking blueberries as a farm laborer. A case worker assigned to my family helped ensure my mom and I had regular doctor appointments after my birth and that my family received WIC and food stamp benefits.

But the narrative of the “deserving poor” requires the “undeserving poor” as its foil, and my family has lived that side, too. In 2007, my older brother was arrested and sentenced to a detention center because of a political decision to more rigorously enforce a retroactive 1996 federal immigration law. This law warranted my brother’s deportation because of a felony he had committed more than a decade ago as a teenager. A rise in anti-immigrant sentiment, especially against those who had criminal records, meant that there was no legal aid for my brother, and the legal options to overturn his notice of deportation were limited.

Living both sides of this narrative about the poor showed me how public rhetoric can have arbitrary and harmful effects on policy, including access to public assistance programs and law enforcement priorities. Today, even pro-immigration reform voices, such as President Obama, routinely highlight their support for deporting “criminal” immigrants, using people like my brother to establish themselves as reasonable voices on immigration. My family's experiences have compelled me to advocate for public policies and laws that benefit all low-income people. In particular, I see health as the nexus of many low-income issues, and for that reason I am passionate about creating a more equitable and just healthcare system. Through my work and time in the Gleitsman Fellowship, I want to continue pursuing my commitment to seeking justice and dignity for all low-income people, regardless of what their story may be.
TOBIAS GARNETT
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2019

NARRATIVE
For the last year, I have been advocating for journalists imprisoned without trial in Turkey, a country in which judicial independence has been dramatically eroded. I have also been drafting appeals to the European Court of Human Rights and I have been encouraging and coordinating interventions from press freedom NGOs, governments, and supranational institutions like the Council of Europe and the UN.

I moved to Turkey after four years working as a litigator in a large international law firm in London and Tokyo because, horrified by the unfolding refugee crisis, I wanted to help those whose lives had been upended by the Syrian war. Specifically, I designed and helped implement a UNICEF-funded program that encouraged refugee families to take their children out of work and send them to school. The program was rolled out across eleven cities in Turkey, which currently hosts the world’s largest refugee population.

I am looking forward to the opportunities that Harvard Kennedy School will provide to think through policy approaches to these issues, not only because of their drastic effect on the futures of child refugees or imprisoned journalists, but also because of the central role that migration and institutional degradation are playing in populist politics around the world.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
City University, Graduate Diploma in Law, 2011
Cambridge University, Trinity College, MA in English and Modern Languages, 2009

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Platform for Independent Journalism: Human Rights Lawyer
Shortlisted for Human Rights Lawyer of the Year in the Law Society of England & Wales 2017 Awards
Support to Life: Consultant
Herbert Smith Freehills LLP: Solicitor
International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia: Intern
AMEYA KILARA

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE

I have spent a large part of my life chasing the answer to one question—what would it take to move our societies and governments from violent conflict to lasting peace? I first explored this question as a teenager when I founded Nirbhay, a youth movement for peace in Kashmir. Although living in my hometown of Bangalore at the time, a city in the south of India that is 1500 miles from Kashmir, this movement brought me in touch with people on all sides of the conflict who had been directly impacted by the violence. I was deeply moved by their stories.

This early experience led me to study and practice law, which helped me develop professional skills but also demonstrated the limitations of purely legal solutions to complex real world issues. Four years ago I left the world of corporate law and joined Conciliation Resources, a London-based international peacebuilding organization. As part of a team that runs a unique peace initiative across the Indian and Pakistani sides of a highly militarized “Line of Control” in Kashmir, I engaged extensively with communities impacted by conflict as well as policymakers at the helm of decision making. While I have emerged with a stronger belief in the possibility of change, I am also more acutely aware of the numerous systemic obstacles that we will need to creatively overcome along the way.

Building on six years of experience in law and peacebuilding, my goal is to expand the scope and impact of my work, and to lead institutions dedicated to building peace in South Asia. This is a region where the human and developmental consequences of violent conflict are immense, yet innovative and culturally sensitive approaches to building peace remain under explored.

My time at HKS and the Gleitsman Fellowship are an opportunity for me to critically reflect on my leadership challenges, particularly as a young woman seeking to lead change processes in highly patriarchal societies. Through engagement with inspiring leaders in diverse sectors, eminent practitioners, and experts, I hope to build models and gain insights that apply global best practice in leadership and peacebuilding to the South Asian context.
NARRATIVE

I am a designer at heart, and my creative passion lies in making technology and public services more intuitive, more reliable, and less expensive. My experiences are broad, spanning from smart cities to healthcare delivery to immigration services.

The thread that unites all my work is the desire to deliver products that maximize resources and serve our most vulnerable populations. I have worked on projects for the White House demystifying student loan repayment, streamlining the immigrant visa process, and lessening the paperwork burden for clinicians caring for Medicare patients. Before the White House, I co-founded a startup that developed a more intuitive navigation app for walking in cities, based on images of landmarks. Through my work with the D.C. tech community, I co-led and created a women-in-tech coalition, focused on lowering barriers to entry for minorities and women in the field.

When I look forward to spending two years studying public policy, I know it will be important to find a group of peers who are as hungry as I am to influence their respective fields. The Gleitsman Fellows and my colleagues at the Center for Public Leadership will be that group.

I know who I am: a first generation Vietnamese American entrepreneur and the daughter of two refugees. It is etched on my soul to eat every last grain of rice and squeeze every resource available to me. If I stay true to my principles and learn from the breadth of human experience, I can lead American policy, design, and technology to a future that is just and inclusive.
My MSc in Gender and Development transformed me into a different person. The theories I learned about gender, rights-based approaches, politics, and human rights gave me a foundation. Since then, my work with the Gender Equality Network has enabled me to put theory into practice, and to understand the realities of working towards gender equality in a country that has denied any issues at all with women's rights.

Equality is not only an issue between genders, but also across ethnic groups and religions. I believe in the need for justice in order to guarantee lasting peace; we have to work for social justice, otherwise, inequality between women and men, between majorities and minorities will continue to cause division, violence, and conflict.

The Gleitsman Fellowship seeks to support leaders in social change. I am a leader in the movement towards social change in Myanmar. I strongly believe in social justice. There is a deep connection between gender inequality and the pursuit of sustainable peace. My work has taught me the necessity of genuine inclusion of gender in national level policy. Unless gender equality is at the forefront of public policy, national reconciliation, peace, and stability cannot be ensured at its heart. There is a dire need for more people who have strong political will and commitment at key decision-making levels. I seek to gain a better understanding of public administration in my studies so that I can learn how to approach this kind of genuine transformative change at home.

Myanmar is in transition with a newly elected democratic government, and with the opening up of the country and influx of foreign investment. I believe that learning how to approach gender equality and peace through economic and quantitative frameworks will be essential. The Gleitsman Fellowship experience will shape and inform my leadership goals on how to continue to serve the women of Myanmar, and the conflict affected people in my country for years to come.
NARRATIVE

My life’s purpose is to create positive change for indigenous communities across North America. As an indigenous woman who was born in Northern Canada and raised in a single parent household, I was born into the lowest socioeconomic status in my country. There are many statistics that say I am not supposed to be where I am today. I was fortunate enough to have strong mentors and community leaders who helped me become a first generation university graduate, co-found a national nonprofit, and become an advocate for aboriginal groups across Canada. It is through them that I learned the transformative power of public leadership and the impact it can have on families and communities.

Shortly after moving to Toronto six years ago, I realized there was a lack of support for aboriginal professionals, which sparked the idea to launch a national aboriginal professional network. Since then my nonprofit has grown from a small idea to serving over 800 indigenous professionals across Canada. Through leading a team of over twenty volunteers and staff, we have hosted quarterly events, run monthly programs, and pioneered innovative research in the area of indigenous leadership. This work has shown me how a small group of people can shape national discourse, and it is the reason I get out of bed every morning.

As an indigenous Elder once told me “each day you are carving a path, creating footprints for people to follow. As you walk, make sure you walk in a good way.” Even though I had to overcome many challenges to get here, I do not want another generation of indigenous people to have to endure them. I view each day, each interaction, and each decision as an opportunity to create meaningful change for my country and community. As a Gleitsman Fellow, I am excited to spend each week surrounded by social justice leaders and activists—people who have decided to create footprints for those who follow closely behind.
“As an indigenous Elder once told me ‘each day you are carving a path, creating footprints for people to follow. As you walk, make sure you walk in a good way.’ As a Gleitsman Fellow, I am excited to spend each week surrounded by social justice leaders and activists—people who have decided to create footprints for those who follow closely behind.”

Gabrielle Scrimshaw
Harvard Kennedy School
Gleitsman Fellow
MPA/MBA Candidate
ABOUT THE SHEILA C. JOHNSON LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

“An ability to work across sectors—public, private, nonprofit—and to inspire innovative policies will help bring the sustainable improvement that these underserved communities desperately need.”

Sheila C. Johnson, Founder and CEO of Salamander Hotels & Resorts

The Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship supports up to ten students each year. This fellowship—created through the vision and generosity of Sheila C. Johnson—brings to campus emerging leaders who are dedicated to addressing disparities in African-American and other underserved communities in the United States through health care, education, economic development, criminal justice reform, and a range of other efforts in public policy and social entrepreneurship.

Sheila C. Johnson Fellows receive full tuition, health coverage, and a generous stipend toward any HKS graduate degree, including one obtained through HKS’s joint or concurrent degree programs with other schools. In addition to their courses, the Sheila C. Johnson Fellows participate in a comprehensive, yearlong co-curricular program that will both augment their leadership development and forge bonds within this exceptional group. Fellows participate in an annual retreat, weekly dinner seminars, and leadership development workshops. The program connects fellows with accomplished local, national, and international leaders who share their insights on how best to develop and inspire new ideas; support and foster sustainable change; and build cross-sector partnerships to serve historically underserved communities.
ABOUT SHEILA C. JOHNSON

Sheila C. Johnson is an entrepreneur and philanthropist whose accomplishments span the arenas of hospitality, sports, TV/film, the arts, education, women’s empowerment, and community development.

As Founder and CEO of Salamander Hotels & Resorts, Ms. Johnson oversees a growing portfolio of luxury properties in Virginia, Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana.

As Vice Chairman of Monumental Sports & Entertainment, Ms. Johnson is the only African-American woman to have ownership in three professional sports teams: the NBA’s Washington Wizards, the NHL’s Washington Capitals, and the WNBA’s Washington Mystics, for which she serves as President and Managing Partner. She also serves on the Executive Committee of the United States Golf Association.

In 2017, Ms. Johnson was named on Forbes Magazine’s Top 50 America’s Richest Self-Made Women. And in 2016, she co-founded WE Capital, a venture capital consortium to support and empower female-led enterprises that can advance transformational social change. She also serves on the board of the Greater Washington Partnership, which seeks to strengthen the region’s global position as a center for commerce and innovation.

Ms. Johnson has long been a powerful influence in the entertainment industry, starting with her work as founding partner of Black Entertainment Television. She has served as executive producer for documentaries and a feature films. Ms. Johnson is founder and chair of the Middleburg Film Festival, an annual celebration of independent film.

A fervent supporter of education and the arts, Ms. Johnson serves on the Board of Governors of Parsons The New School for Design in New York, and is a member of the Leadership Council at Harvard Kennedy School’s Center for Public Leadership. She is also a board member of the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

A strong believer in the value of athletics as a vehicle for women’s empowerment, she also helped found Street Soccer USA’s Lady Salamanders program, which helps low-income and homeless young women find their inner strength through sport. Ms. Johnson served as global ambassador for CARE, a leading humanitarian organization that combats global poverty by empowering women. She also served as a member of Accordia Global Health Foundation’s International Council, rallying support for the foundation’s efforts to overcome the burden of infectious diseases in Africa. In recognition of her humanitarian efforts, she was honored with the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal in 2012.
ELORM AVAKAME
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
I am a son of the city of Philadelphia. I am a black man. Both of those identities are central to my being. Both of them shape my purpose. My heart beats for the children of my city and those of my community more broadly. My vision is rooted in the core belief that an investment in our children is an investment in our future.

My work in medical school has made me familiar with the scientific literature describing the health disparities that black and brown young people face. I have worked directly with many young people, from guiding a group of high school students through a public service internship in West Philadelphia to organizing a science enrichment camp for elementary school students in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston. These experiences have taught me that the unjust burden of disease and death levied upon my future patients cannot be eliminated without critical, radical engagement with the social forces that structure their lives. Racism, poverty, and social marginalization are significant threats to my future patients' health.

I applied to medical school because I believed that a career in medicine would allow me to utilize my love for science, my broader social justice interests, and my leadership skills in service of my life's primary mission: the development and empowerment of underserved communities, and particularly of inner-city communities of color. Beyond the direct care of individual patients, however, my goal is to serve my community as an educator, organizer, and activist.

Today, my dream is to build an interdisciplinary youth services network in inner-city Philadelphia geared towards reducing disparities in health outcomes for underserved children and adolescents. The Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship and the educational training from Harvard Kennedy School will help further my understanding of how policy shapes the social world and will endow me with a practical toolkit with which to effect social change.
My overarching professional mission is to expand economic opportunities for people living in urban cities. This is a passion that was first developed in Detroit, MI. To many, Detroit is the poster child of urban decay. But, I choose to see Detroit differently—I choose to see Detroit for its potential. Detroit was once a city that was the living embodiment of black economic prosperity, community, and political engagement. I choose to focus on revitalizing Detroit, and cities like it.

My personal and professional experiences, rooted in revitalizing communities like Detroit, dates back to 2008. In college, I founded TPL Global, an export company that sold recycled plastics to foreign manufacturers, with the expectation that it would help reduce Detroit’s 29% unemployment rate. After a few years, the business closed largely due to the Great Recession. Although disappointed that I was unable to continue the expansion of TPL Global, I better understood the challenges minority business owners face and how the lack of capital and mentorship can thwart the creation, development, and sustainability of businesses in urban cities.

Most recently, at the Edison Electric Institute, I worked alongside industry and government leaders in developing and analyzing clean energy policies proposed in Congress and state legislatures. I witnessed how other communities are beginning to leverage clean energy technology to combat not only global warming, but also to generate wealth and catalyze additional investments in those communities.

At Harvard Kennedy School and as a Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellow, I have access to incomparable resources, learned professionals, and leadership development opportunities that will significantly increase my understanding of local governments. I intend to help cities boost their local economies, encourage minority business ownership, and create jobs through innovative clean energy policies. Most importantly, I plan to develop a social enterprise that deploys energy resources domestically, in cities like Detroit, and eventually expand those resources to the Caribbean, West Africa, and other parts of the African Diaspora.
“Stop acting like it's about politics. It's not. It's about stakeholders.” I suppose we all need wise uncles to turn to us at the traffic light in Old Town Alexandria and force us to confront how we see the world. As a student of international politics with an eclectic set of hobbies in the arts, business, and social entrepreneurship, I frequently found myself leading collections of people grounded in a wide range of mindsets, backgrounds, and habits of practice. My uncle's timely advice during my senior year at Georgetown helped me take a fresh look at my stewardship of America's oldest college theater troupe and the rather unconventional selection of shows and partnerships that we had incorporated into that year's season.

The lesson stuck. Since then, I have worked on projects combining my passion for social impact with a desire to harness the brilliance of a variety of stakeholders. I have led a team of fellow educators, far-flung developers, and an Emmy-award winning designer to launch an app that connected teachers with students' families. I have worked across multinational corporations to understand how to shift mindsets on diversity without alienating traditional majorities. I have weathered the controversial closure of one of New Orleans' most historic schools, and worked from grassroots to grasstops to help launch the first district-charter collaboration in the state of Missouri.

I have found that leadership is about picking the right partners and minding the details. Big problems can only be solved by making unconventional friends and—together—picking each word carefully, vetting every last budget line, assembling talented teams, and meeting with the frequency that reflects the urgency of the greater cause. The Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship and the Center for Public Leadership bring together a group of diverse peers to master this difficult art. I cannot imagine a better place or context to deepen my craft as a leader, and am honored to spend my Harvard Kennedy School career alongside such a remarkable group of fellows.
While working for a government-regulated agency in my native St. Louis, I did not expect to learn benevolence. Charged with the hefty task of eliminating poverty, we ensured sustainability by supplementing food, energy, and employment assistance using resource-utilization modules. When addressing occupational health concerns of undocumented immigrant workers in Los Angeles Fashion District sweatshops, I did not expect to gain tenacity. Our interviews gave voice to countless vulnerabilities deserving attention. While mentoring and securing bursary sponsorship for sixty Kenyan scholars orphaned by HIV/AIDS, I did not expect to discern true advocacy: utilizing and influencing several community supports to provide basic needs left unfulfilled. While unforeseen during the process, benevolence, tenacity, and advocacy now serve my life’s mission: to eliminate barriers hindering the underprivileged from fulfilling their maximum potential.

I began medical school with the intention of learning how to change lives. Clinical training required expansion of my initial skill set proven no longer sufficient, demanding me to grow in ways I did not know to be possible. However, as I begin mastering pathophysiology, ailment etiologies, and compassionate support, I recognize that several aspects of patient wellbeing lay beyond the traditional medical domain. As I worked in our student-run health clinic, I realized that even clinically successful interventions can derail stability. Many are deterred from seeking healthcare services altogether by fear of jeopardized employment and disrupted finances.

I plan to dedicate my career to changing the landscape of patient experience. Specifically, shifting all aspects of patient management, both in the hospital and once reintroduced to the community, is key to my vision. Comprehensive training and cross-sector relationships from the Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship will not only strengthen my understanding of the challenges at play, but will help me leverage my professional experiences to grow into a leader able to enact effective change.
ERICK DIAZ
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Graduate School of Design, Master in Urban Planning Candidate, 2020
University of San Diego, BA International Relations, summa cum laude, 2013
Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs, Princeton University: Public Policy & International Affairs Fellow
University of Southern California: Ross Minority Program in Real Estate

NARRATIVE
I grew up in City Heights; a dynamic, vibrant, and socio-economically disadvantaged community in San Diego where the majority of residents are foreign-born and over thirty languages are spoken within a ten block radius. It is a neighborhood of new Americans. In my elementary school classroom, I sat alongside refugees and first generation students from Sudan, Cambodia, Mexico, Somalia, Guatemala, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Broken car windows, gang violence, and poverty were not uncommon in the community. My parents, immigrants from Mexico with only an elementary education, reluctantly settled in this neighborhood because it was the most affordable. The foundational experiences of my upbringing shaped me into a firm advocate for affordable housing. I know first-hand how a stable home can build a solid foundation for parents and their children to maximize their potential, and am committed to working with low-income communities to increase the stock of affordable options.

I have taken the initial step towards this goal through my work as an Assistant Project Manager for Community HousingWorks, a nonprofit affordable housing developer in San Diego. In the role, I helped drive the creation and preservation of affordable apartments in Southern California. I gained a working knowledge of how housing developments come to fruition and gained insight into the political and funding barriers that prevent more affordable housing from being developed. The MPP will give me the tools to analyze and advocate for affordable housing policies at the state and national level, while the MUP will provide the spatial analysis skills necessary to illustrate how developments will foster economic growth and increase quality of life.

I am humbled by the opportunity to participate as a Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellow, a program I am confident will provide me a set of vertically integrated skills to advocate at multiple levels of government, allowing me to execute a comprehensive housing agenda and scale my impact on low-income households across California. I am beyond excited to collaborate and learn from a strong cohort of peers to develop my leadership skills in order to strategically drive a pro-affordable housing agenda across California.
NARRATIVE
I am proud to come from a matriarchy of strong women leaders. My first exposure to public service was through my abuela, who was a dedicated volunteer at her local church and worked on political campaigns in the South Bronx, and my mother, who is an elementary school teacher and longtime advocate for children’s health and wellbeing. Growing up in the Bronx as a Puerto Rican woman shaped who I am today. I did not realize the significant gap in resources around me while growing up because I had no point of comparison until attending college. I developed a deep self-awareness as my experiences at school felt separate from my uptown community and I constantly held onto the feminist values I was raised with to always be my best self.

While at Columbia, I co-founded the WomanHOOD Project, which is a youth-led after-school mentorship program for girls of color in the Bronx. I learned how to use institutional resources to create a program that centers young women as experts of their lives and equips them with skills to combat racism, sexism, and classism. As a co-leader of the organization, I learned how to practice authentic horizontal leadership in order to not perpetuate the very hierarchies that harm young people.

After graduation, I joined the community organizing team at Planned Parenthood of NYC and applied an intersectional race equity lens to reproductive health and rights. In my capacity as Manager of Community Organizing, I co-developed advocacy campaigns, trained patient activists on lobbying and canvassing in Albany and D.C., and mobilized young people of color in their communities to advocate for reproductive freedom. Most recently, I worked with New York City Council and Girls for Gender Equity in creating a participatory governance model for young women of color to innovate policy solutions for their communities.

I am committed to serving communities of color because I believe personal experience is the most valuable experience a person can have as a policymaker. While pursuing an MPP will help me hone quantitative analysis skills, I am thrilled to practice authentic leadership and learn how to be a capacity builder through my time as a Sheila C. Johnson Fellow.
NARRATIVE

I am in the business of rewriting narratives. Of upending expected outcomes of minority youth who grew up in disadvantaged communities similar to mine in Ohio who are fighting for first and second chances at fulfilling their dreams. I believe stories are rewritten when economic and educational opportunities are provided at scale. I believe scale is best achieved when patient capital is spent on social enterprises that generate innovation or spur mainstream adoption of promising ideas that reverse the odds. These beliefs drive my professional interests, which intersect finance, operational management, and social enterprise.

My beliefs are rooted in the experience of seeing my hometown peers lose their way because of a lack of support and opportunity. College dropout and youth unemployment statistics became real, recognizable faces—my neighbors, close friends, and loved ones. As their narratives changed, so did mine. While I enjoyed learning about different financing structures businesses use to grow at Barclays, I sought out a role where I could learn firsthand how to address educational attainment and career advancement.

At the Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ), I implemented new cross-site program initiatives across the nonprofit’s comprehensive pipeline of wrap-around supports that served over 13,000 youth. In the process, I learned the nuanced challenges of dream fulfillment both at scale and over time while understanding its intersection with public school systems, poverty, family, residential segregation, health, and the employment sector. It also helped me understand the meaningful impact the for-profit sector had in influencing the direction of nonprofit organizations and the broader social agenda.

I will continue to straddle the nonprofit and for-profit world, cultivating skills and knowledge that will ultimately help bridge gaps in understanding what it takes to successfully implement social programs at scale and explore new approaches to maximizing donor capital. Being a Sheila C. Johnson Fellow provides me the opportunity to commune with and learn from peers who are equally passionate about rewriting the odds.
I have always believed that public policy is an act of national definition: with every policy, and every election, America decides what it is and what it hopes to be. I seek to advance policy that recognizes and serves America in its most inclusive form.

My perspective has been shaped by my own experiences as the daughter of an African American mother and an Italian-Armenian American father. Living at the intersection of diverse cultures, I am keenly aware that certain groups are overlooked or stigmatized in our enduring conceptualization of the public. I am aware, too, that this conceptualization matters—because the groups we exclude from public consciousness become blind spots in our public policy.

The need to address these blind spots is what motivates my participation in the policy arena. As an undergraduate at Princeton, I conducted original research to address disparities in a variety of fields, including education, health care, and voting rates. Concurrently, I worked to achieve substantive change as an active player in the political process—from the district office of Senator Cory Booker to a nonprofit health policy research center to the headquarters of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign. These experiences reflect the nature of my interest in public policy. Rather than focus on a particular issue area, I want to engage with how policy is framed, debated, and built to secure betterment for all segments of society.

With this goal in mind, I chose to attend Harvard Kennedy School immediately after my undergraduate years at Princeton. My time at Harvard Kennedy School will equip me with the necessary skills to begin addressing public policy's blind spots—wherever they exist. As a Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership, I am excited to grow alongside other fellows as we prepare to catalyze lasting, positive change.
DEANNA PING
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2019

NARRATIVE
My passion for improving the lives of workers was inspired at a young age. I spent my childhood watching my mom juggle the responsibilities of a single parent: working long, unpredictable hours while trying to raise three kids. Witnessing her struggle, coupled with the devastating layoffs experienced by other family members, led me to study Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University in an effort to identify the best vehicle for protecting workers’ rights.

After college I accepted a fellowship with the California State Senate, working on labor policy. As a policy consultant I had a front row seat to the passage of landmark progressive labor legislation including the state’s first post-recession minimum wage increase, expansions on paid family leave, and the strongest equal pay law in the nation. After three years, I wanted to better understand the implementation and enforcement side of public policy. I accepted a position with the Department of Finance, where I worked on the Labor and Workforce Development portion of the Governor’s Budget.

My experience in government showed me that a living wage and workplace protections are only part of the solution towards social mobility. For low-income workers, a decent wage barely covers necessities like housing or childcare, and rising tuition costs make higher education unfeasible. I also learned that for effective policy, government and business must work together. This inspired me to pursue an MBA/MPA, to develop public-private partnerships that tackle society’s most complex social problems, like income inequality and job displacement due to increasing automation.

I am incredibly grateful for the Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship because it, in conjunction with the Harvard Kennedy School, will equip me with the skillset I need to forge a new path for social impact: helping business and government collaboratively develop innovative solutions for today’s societal challenges. Through the program, I will expand my policy expertise, strengthen my program evaluation and leadership skills, and fully immerse myself in the globally minded and purpose-driven community.
NARRATIVE

I grew up in my Indian immigrant father and Jewish American mother’s Irish pub in Los Angeles, where I learned the value of hard work and pitching in for our family business. When you have an immigrant parent, you feel a deep sense of obligation to give back to a country that made so much possible for you. That is why I ran for and won a seat in the Vermont Legislature at the age of twenty-two and served there on behalf of the people of Burlington for eight years.

In the words of former Vermont Governor Madeleine M. Kunin, “if you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.” From a very young age, I have been propelled forward by the stories of those who struggled, fought, blazed trails, and gave their lives for me to be able to successfully run for office and press on for the next generation. I have always worked at the grassroots, going door-to-door, speaking in prisons, adult education programs, and schools about the importance of taking a leadership role.

Regardless of where life has taken me, it has always been in service to the public good—working with low-income children, empowering victims of domestic violence, creating access to and trust in municipal and state government, and most recently directing a nonprofit on an interim basis that works at the intersection of environment and social justice. What I have found in all of my roles is that transparency and innovation are directly linked to greater public participation. The more people are informed and able to engage in an exchange of ideas, the more they can help demystify governance for others and provide the diverse perspectives that lead to greater innovation.

Like Sheila C. Johnson, I believe in the fierce urgency of now. My future plans include seeking public office again and continuing to support other emerging leaders. Studying as a Sheila C. Johnson Fellow gives me the immense privilege of finding the common ground that makes progress possible in such a pivotal and polarized time in our nation and world. With new knowledge, relationships, and perspective from Harvard Kennedy School, I will stand at the ready to serve.
SILVIE SENAUKÉ

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL  MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Wesleyan University, BA in American Studies, Phi Beta Kappa, 2012

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

SCO Family of Services: Foster Care Rapid Assessment Program Case Planner

Children's Corps: Member

Lawyers For Children: Policy Associate

Big Brothers Big Sisters: Volunteer Mentor

NARRATIVE

I grew up in a family that talked a lot about social justice. My parents are Buddhists who believe that working towards worldwide social justice and peace is an essential component of their practice. This unique childhood environment steered me towards the study of inequality and the lasting effects of colonialism at Wesleyan University. By the end of my undergraduate career, though, I was itching to move from the theoretical to the practical.

I was fortunate enough to be hired as a foster care case planner as a part of the second-ever Children's Corps class—a select group of individuals committed to improving child welfare in New York City. I hoped that through this work I might help some of New York's most disadvantaged children set out on a better path. I believed that too many foster care workers were set in their ways—more committed to the routine of their work than to actually examining the situations before them and providing personalized support to the families. While I found this to be true to some extent, I also found myself confronted with a system and bureaucracy that did not seem to have any interest in improving, and that did not pay enough attention to the quality of life of the families it served.

Transitioning towards policy advocacy with Lawyers For Children, my goal was to gain a better understanding of how a system like this came to be, and how it might be changed. Taking a step back, I could also see how the families involved in the child welfare system were simultaneously reliant on and caught in other government systems. I saw very few people thinking about how to help these families holistically, addressing their needs on multiple fronts while recognizing the interdependence of their issues. With an MPP from Harvard Kennedy School, I hope to equip myself with the concrete skills I need to make such change in these systems. Through the Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellowship I hope to gain the leadership skills to bring together social work and policy leaders and pursue policy solutions guided by the wisdom of both of these fields.
NARRATIVE

In my personal, educational, and professional experiences as a Black and Japanese-American woman, I have always been drawn to the work of amplifying voices of communities of color and dismantling racism.

My own experience has served as my guiding star for how to approach this work. Because in middle school I was in an academic achievement program for students of color, when I was a Yale Admissions Officer, I emphasized visiting similar academic programs during my travel to the Midwest. Because in college I was a sociology major with a passion for photography, when I worked for a documentary film company, I made sure to pitch stories from historically silenced communities. Because I worked with community members in Medellín to envision the future of their neighborhood as it gentrified, when I came back to New York to work on housing and workers' rights legislative campaigns, I focused on how to involve communities in discussions of their own neighborhood's future. Because of my experience as an advocate in New York City, I saw how more money usually meant more access to insider knowledge and political control, and I am now working at a tech start up that focuses on democratizing knowledge and supporting grassroots organizers to be as powerful as paid lobbyists.

My experiences inform my approach to my work which is both personal and purposeful. I also know my own experiences are just my own and I acknowledge that limitation. I decided to pursue a Master in Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School because I wanted to expand my experiences and learn about others' experiences. I know that I will learn how to create policy that is data driven and informed by the experiences of the communities the policy affects. I am especially excited to build a learning and professional community with my fellow Sheila C. Johnson Fellows. With them, I will be able to learn, share, and innovate new ways to make change with peers who are passionate about the same communities and the same problems as I am.
“Being a Sheila C. Johnson Fellow has afforded me the opportunity to deeply reflect on my journey and nurture leadership insights in the presence of exceptional peers. Some challenge my theory of change and inspire me to think bigger about groundbreaking ways to achieve impact. Others validate my aspirations through their powerful, personal stories. Every experience as a part of the fellowship adds to my resolve to serve individuals in minority neighborhoods similar to mine fighting for a fair chance at the American dream.”

Adora Mora
Harvard Kennedy School
Sheila C. Johnson Fellow
MPP/MBA Candidate
David M. Rubenstein established a fellowship in 2008 for first-year joint degree students at Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School.

Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School have created a fully integrated joint degree program in business and government that represents an innovative approach to preparing leaders for a growing area of practice of critical importance to global society. Students enrolled in the joint degree program are prepared to work in positions of influence at the intersection of business, government and nonprofit organizations, dealing with challenges in such critical areas as healthcare, the environment, economic development, and government relations.

The Center for Public Leadership (CPL) provides a co-curricular program to Rubenstein Fellows focused on the leadership challenges and opportunities of a multi-sector career. Programming will include a welcome retreat on Cape Cod with all CPL fellows, a multi-day field experience to a U.S. city, and leadership seminars throughout the year focused on cross-sector leadership.
ABOUT DAVID M. RUBENSTEIN

David M. Rubenstein is a Co-Founder and Co-CEO of The Carlyle Group, one of the world's largest private equity firms. Mr. Rubenstein co-founded the firm in 1987. Since then, Carlyle has grown into a firm managing more than $200 billion from forty offices around the world.

Mr. Rubenstein, a native of Baltimore, is a 1970 magna cum laude graduate of Duke, where he was elected Phi Beta Kappa. Following Duke, Mr. Rubenstein graduated in 1973 from the University of Chicago Law School, where he was an editor of the Law Review.

From 1973–75, Mr. Rubenstein practiced law in New York with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. From 1975–76 he served as Chief Counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments.

From 1977–81, during the Carter Administration, Mr. Rubenstein was Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. After his White House service and before cofounding Carlyle, Mr. Rubenstein practiced law in Washington with Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge (now Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman).

Mr. Rubenstein is Chairman of the Boards of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Smithsonian Institution, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Madison Council of the Library of Congress; Chairman Emeritus of Duke University (Chair 2013–17); Vice-Chairman of the Brookings Institution; President of the Economic Club of Washington; and Trustee of the National Gallery of Art.

Mr. Rubenstein is also on the Board of Directors or Trustees of the University of Chicago, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Johns Hopkins Medicine, the Institute for Advanced Study, the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution.

At Harvard, Mr. Rubenstein is a Fellow of the Harvard Corporation; Chairman of the Harvard Global Advisory Council; Co-Chairman of the Harvard Campaign; and Chair of the Harvard Kennedy School Campaign; a member of the Harvard Kennedy School Visiting Committee and the Harvard Business School Board of Dean's Advisors.

Mr. Rubenstein is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Business Council, and the Advisory Board of the School of Economics and Management at Tsinghua University.
IAN ABBOTT

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE
As a product of “Bad Newz” Virginia, also known as Newport News, I’m aware of the inequalities that disproportionately affect communities plagued by poverty. Working in wealth management after growing up in a troubled neighborhood—while ironic—was deliberate. I recognize that for many in this country, wealth creates power, and I wanted to explore the ways in which wealth is built and passed on. I wanted to learn about investing to use the knowledge I would acquire to teach my friends and family about investing and financial literacy, creating a trickle-down effect to transform my community. In retrospect, some of my initial goals were noble but naïve—I cannot expect poor people to become wealthy by teaching them to invest money that they don't have. I plan to pursue a career that will position people to create financial security over time, using my skills and talents to create a world where your origin does not determine your trajectory.

I realize that solving larger societal problems will require knowledge and experience from both the private and public sectors, and I believe that having perspective about the interdependencies and partnerships across sectors will prove extremely valuable over the course of my career. I look forward to expanding my skill set as I explore tangible solutions to societal issues, like wealth inequality and education through the joint degree program.

My life has been full of complex juxtapositions. My perspective is shaped by the dichotomy between two seemingly different worlds where I belong. Attending Harvard will change the trajectory of my life and I plan to use this experience to change the lives of others who have lived through similar experiences as me. My goal is to bridge business, technology, and education to empower people to make informed financial decisions. I’m committed to making the world a place where the people that I grew up with have a fair shot at becoming wealth management clients one day. When I re-enter the classroom, I know that my unique perspective combined with my passion for improving my community will fuel my success, academically and professionally.
RIJU AGRAWAL
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2020

NARRATIVE
During my regular summer trips to India, I became intimately familiar with the everyday challenges arising from the unavailability and unaffordability of power. For nearly 400 million Indians, the unavailability of power for cooking, lighting, and heating is a yoke preventing their escape from poverty. The price of electricity is high enough to make utility bills unaffordable even for the emerging urban middle class. Blackouts are commonplace across the country, bringing entire cities to a standstill and eroding India's hopes of restarting the economic engine that will propel the country into prosperity.

My uncle, who works for the state electricity corporation, often invited me on trips to villages that were being connected to the electricity grid for the first time. At each village, I watched with awe as men, women, and children alike celebrated the installation of power lines that were integral to their escape from poverty, and I began to ask myself what I could do to contribute to this progress. Because of these firsthand experiences with energy scarcity, my trips to India became an unexpected source of inspiration for my career, sparking my desire to develop solutions to the India's energy crisis.

My academic and professional experiences have helped me develop skills at the intersection of engineering, public policy, and business that can be integral to solving the global energy crisis. Studying engineering enabled me to understand the technical challenges faced by the energy industry, which I saw firsthand at Aker Solutions while designing equipment to resolve the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. My summer internship at the White House helped me gain insights into the important role that policymakers and the private sector play in advancing America's clean energy and climate change policies.

To ensure that I am not just an engineer lost in the technicalities of AutoCAD drawings, or a financial analyst adept with Excel models, I hope to further develop my understanding of public policy as a Rubenstein Fellow pursuing the MPP/MBA joint degree. By studying at HKS and deploying my multifaceted skillset towards driving change, I aspire to move us one step closer to solving the energy crisis in India and other emerging economies.
MELINA ANLIN

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2020
Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley, BS in Business Administration, magna cum laude, Beta Gamma Sigma, 2014
University of California, Berkeley, BA in South and Southeast Asian Studies with High Distinction, magna cum laude, 2014

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Bain & Company: Consultant
Office of the Governor of Jakarta: Governor's Staff Intern
Singapore Economic Development Board: Project Officer
Berkeley Indonesian Student Association: President
MajuIndonesia.com: Co-Founder
Once Upon A Blue Sky: Author

NARRATIVE

My family and I fled to Singapore during the May 1998 Jakarta Riots. I was seven years old. Everything that happened back then is still vivid in my mind—bomb explosions, burnt buildings, and houses raided. It was a nightmare for a child like me as I did not know why the riots had happened. My parents later explained that on top of other complex political reasons, the fundamental cause of the riots was inequality: people living without jobs, a lack of high quality education, and the inability to afford even basic necessities sparked deep seated frustrations and dissatisfactions. The tragedy remained with me over the years and has made me realize that I must play a role in my home country to prevent it from happening again. I have made a commitment that I will return to Indonesia to improve job opportunities and education.

My time spent at Bain & Company in Jakarta has given me the opportunity to take a front seat to the dramatic impact that businesses can have on the development trajectory of Indonesia. The projects that I participated in showed me that the private sector is critical for generating and fast tracking the country's economic and social development. Working in the Jakarta Governor's Office taught me about public policymaking and exposed me to Indonesian bureaucracies. I learned about decision making and saw first-hand the degree of impact that I can have on my fellow Indonesians through the decisions and actions that I took at the government level.

My ultimate goal is to influence public policies that will impact education and better employment opportunities in Indonesia. Due to fleeing to Singapore, I was blessed to have lived in a developed country where basic needs like education were provided at high quality and made accessible to everyone. My dream is that one day the same will exist for the 250 million Indonesians. I am grateful and excited to be part of the joint MPP/MBA program and the Rubenstein Fellowship to better understand the intersections between business and government, and how to be an effective leader.
NARRATIVE

I spent my childhood in three very diverse continents—Africa, Europe, and North America—and grew up observing the impact of surroundings. These experiences helped me gain an early awareness of just how much influence a neighborhood, house, or city can have on both the daily actions and life trajectories of its inhabitants. Over time, that awareness grew into a fascination and then a professional interest in urban development.

I was able to explore this interest further when I embarked on a volunteer trip to Phnom Penh, Cambodia and a semester abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark. There, I studied how two very distinct capitals reacted to the demands of the same issue—rapid urbanization. I was driven by what I had seen happen when governments are able or unable to prioritize affordable housing, safe public spaces, and ample economic opportunity in the face of booming populations.

I began analyzing the root causes of those issues while at the International Monetary Fund where my work involved advising federal governments on how to more efficiently invest in high-quality infrastructure projects. I also consulted on ways to reduce fossil fuel subsidies and finance renewable energy use. Recognizing that innovative problem-solving was the common thread for these policy solutions, several colleagues and I teamed to found the IMF’s own Innovation Lab. Our desire, and its purpose, is to provide a space where the most value-adding solutions to policy problems can be devised.

My long-term aim is to build an impactful career at the intersection of urban development and innovative policy. Specifically, I am interested in finding ways to leverage affordable technology to address issues of energy access and low-income housing. With this growing interest in multidisciplinary work, I recently launched a startup to help others with cross-cutting aspirations discover careers that combine their diverse passions. I personally look forward to combining my own interest in innovation with the lessons of the Rubenstein Fellowship to become a more impactful and forward-thinking leader in the field of urban development.
NIKOLAUS AXMANN

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CANDIDATE, 2020

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2020

Duke University, BS in Economics with High Distinction, 2014

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

IDinsight: Associate

Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD), Duke University: Research Fellow, Associate in Research

RTI International: International Education Consultant

NARRATIVE

I grew up surrounded by international development. With two parents working in development, dinner conversations floated from “multilateral banking” to “rural electrification.” I was not always sure I would follow in their path, but experiences in developing countries as a college student cemented my passion to address urgent global development issues. I have worked with farmers in Mozambique stuck in a cycle of poverty and women in Chile lacking the same economic opportunities as men. I also taught English to young men in Honduras who joined gangs for lack of jobs. These experiences continue to fuel my passion for addressing issues of poverty and inequality.

Over the past three years, I have worked as a research fellow with Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD) and IDinsight to support evidence based decision-making in international development. My projects included evaluating financial inclusion programs in India, designing agricultural innovations in Uganda and Mozambique, and helping connect people living in semi-formal settlements in Zambia to the water and sanitation network. In each of these experiences, I have witnessed the potential for transformational development solutions when private sector incentives are harnessed towards social objectives. I have also seen the missed opportunities and failures—development is complex, and requires leaders who can utilize a breadth of knowledge and approaches, and leverage all players involved.

At Harvard, I look forward to grappling with this complexity. In doing so, I hope to deepen my understanding of how public-private collaboration can tackle structures that perpetuate poverty and inequality. My goal is to ultimately lead a nonprofit organization that addresses development problems at the intersection of the public and private sectors. I am confident that the joint degree program and the support of the Rubenstein Fellowship will allow me to develop the leadership and analytical skills to make this goal a reality.
I grew up in rural Ireland where I benefited from a public education system that supported me from primary school right through to university. While at university, I had the opportunity to spend my summer working as a teacher in Kolkata, India which exposed me to various challenges in the field of education. Heat, lack of infrastructure, and malnutrition created barriers for my students before they faced their out-of-date school curriculum. Watching my students’ resilience in dealing with their situation and their progress in class taught me that education can be an effective catalyst for change. I felt compelled to develop a career where I would apply my skills to solve challenges such as those I faced in Kolkata.

By supporting the growth of business, innovative solutions can be found for development challenges. After working at Goldman Sachs, I wanted to leverage my investment experience to support sustainable private sector growth in developing countries. At International Finance Corporation (IFC), I focused on the telecom and technology sector with conviction for the far-reaching ability of technology to support solutions in development. In Myanmar, one of the world’s most underdeveloped telecom markets, I learned how a structured government framework that regulates market competition could begin a path to telecom reform. In parallel, I was eager to pursue my passion for education that I developed in Kolkata. To promote knowledge sharing, I became the manager of the World Bank Group Youth Summit on education. I was inspired and motivated by young people from across the world who are making improvements in learning in their own communities and beyond.

The intersection of education and technology fills me with hope about the potential to improve the education system. Education technology has the potential to provide scalable resources and consistent, high-quality teaching content, especially for those who need it most. The policy grounding at HKS, the case skills developed at HBS, and the leadership support of the Rubenstein Fellowship will help me to drive advancement in critical development sectors such as education. I am grateful to join the strong community of CPL Fellows and excited to begin the program.
YOUSSOUF CAMARA

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE

My decision to pursue a degree in public service was couched in an early desire to effect change in Francophone Africa. When I was young, my family fled the Congo-Brazzaville civil war as refugees to eventually move to the U.S. In the following decades, Congo was embroiled in new conflicts, making it difficult for us to return. As a kid, I often wondered why the conflict and hardship that drove us out seemed so common for the region and what could be done to address it.

In policy debate, undergraduate studies, and volunteer work with humanitarian organizations, I consistently saw the untapped potential in Sub-Saharan Africa that led many to describe it as “the market of the future.” At the same time, I also saw the limitations. In some cases, weak local institutions did not bring about the reforms needed for growth. Other times, foreign companies and governments were unwilling to understand and take the risk to invest in the region. I pointed to everything from poor policy to bad economics as issues, but struggled to identify solutions.

To gain firsthand perspective, I left a career in management consulting to work in Mali with a firm that partners with public organizations to direct private capital into frontier markets. Through that work, I discovered tools for effecting growth that gave me confidence that I could play a role in development in Francophone Africa.

Going forward, I aim to invest in the region while supporting governments to develop policy and shape agencies to enable the private sector. I have decided to pursue my joint degrees in order to become the type of leader who can effectively operate in both the public and private sectors. As I endeavor to work in one of the most challenging markets in the world, leadership training through the Rubenstein Fellowship is a fundamental element of what I hope to get out of my graduate studies. I hope to bring unique perspectives and talents to the community of CPL Fellows in the years to come.
NARRATIVE

My academic and professional career has been crafted with a formative desire to play a catalytic role in the economic development of the African continent. Born in Kenya and raised traveling across Africa, the continent and its story have been integral parts of my upbringing. The desire to participate in that story has always been the driving force behind my professional and academic decisions.

My upbringing led me to pursue a career centered on participation in the African growth story. Africa's economies, as they exist today, present more opportunities for growth than ever before. They remain encumbered, however, by a few key gaps, most notably in the infrastructure sector. Closing these gaps and thereby empowering stronger organic development on the continent is the positive change that I seek to bring about.

Public policy will play a critical role in this effort, not only in the domestic but also in the regional front. Any effective implementation of new major infrastructure will require a regional focus, and therefore, cohesive policies on a regional level. I have seen firsthand the importance of public policy in enabling governments to attract the appropriate type of private sector investment needed for infrastructure development of this level.

With a degree from HKS, I plan to design cohesive policy structures with governments and international bodies that enable infrastructure investments on a regional scale. I am looking forward to both learning from courses focused on formal policy constructs in different sectors and—more importantly—from my classmates about their experiences around the world watching their respective sectors and focus areas grow and develop.
I became interested in international development while growing up in Macau and Bangkok. As a child, I remember being in awe of how skyscrapers appeared almost overnight across the border in China and the ability of governments to bring about such change. As a young adult living in Bangkok, I was swept up by the wave of protests against the Thai government's corruption by its constituents, even cheering when a coup d'état brought in the potential for a cleaner government and more sustainable policies. The unending cycle of political unrest in Thailand, however, shifted my interest from top-down macroeconomic development to bottom-up socioeconomic development.

My internship with Shokay, a social enterprise empowering rural Chinese yak herders, led me to believe in using the for-profit model for developing sustainable, bottom-up development. I sought to gain more private sector experience at Charles River Associates (CRA) and worked with pharmaceutical companies to increase patient access to medicines. After four years with CRA, I was ready to apply my private sector experiences to international development through the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) in Cambodia.

At CHAI, I sought to make the Cambodian government's malaria elimination program more sustainable. I helped the Ministry of Health design and roll out an incentive-based program for private healthcare providers to treat malaria patients and eliminate the disease. The majority of the Cambodian government's malaria interventions, however, still heavily relied on donor funding, which posed detrimental effects on malaria patients when funding was delayed. This experience convinced me even more strongly that countries need to rely less on goodwill funding and more on the private sector to cover gaps in public services.

I aim to make development in Southeast Asia more sustainable by investing in businesses that address public problems. Through the MPA/ID, I will refine my analytical skillsets to better assess and maximize the impact of my investments. The Rubenstein Fellowship will allow me to connect with peers similarly passionate about the intersection of business and government, and will enable me to lead the private sector towards sustainable development in Southeast Asia.
A narrative approach

I grew up in a single parent immigrant household. My mother was my role model and source of strength from a young age. Her encouragement and support led me to discover my passion for empowering others in high school, especially when I joined Amnesty International to aid refugees impacted by the Darfur crisis.

I came to focus on health when I realized that investing in healthcare can only be an effective and critical tool for empowering others if seen through both a public health and an economic lens. My experiences in investigating healthcare access for the rural Chinese, conducting fieldwork in Uganda on primary healthcare clinics, and shadowing physicians in Parisian hospitals provided first-hand insights into the huge variations in healthcare delivery in the world and helped me to recognize the critical components of effective healthcare service.

I joined the Analysis Group and took on healthcare consulting projects with biotech and pharmaceutical companies on their market access and payer reimbursement strategies, gaining a deeper understanding of the role of the private sector in healthcare access. I also realized that social acceptance and belonging contribute to an individual’s mental and social health so I developed a real-time solution by launching the nonprofit Konexio which offered technical skills, courses, and connection to a network of supportive mentors in the French tech industry.

My experiences advocating for health and equal opportunity as human rights have transported me across academic disciplines, sectors, and continents. They have revealed to me the huge potential for leveraging the common interests of the public and private sectors towards solving similar health challenges across different countries. I am very excited about the opportunity through HKS and the Rubenstein Fellowship to continue working on my mission to create positive change through tackling disparities in access to basic services and opportunity for migrant and refugee populations.
NARRATIVE

I grew up in suburban Ohio where I had access to an excellent public education, a strong support system of family and friends, and many opportunities to succeed. While I am grateful for these opportunities, the obvious economic disparities existing only five miles away troubled me.

My role models made sure I understood that while gratitude is important, what is even more crucial is that I take action to solve the disparities that continue to exist in my community. Whether it was my dad's work with the Cleveland School District, my mom's volunteerism in our local community, or my grandmother's work with victims of domestic abuse, I was able to see countless different ways in which one could devote their time in helping others.

This desire to advance societal equity has caused me to look for different ways businesses, institutions, and individuals can work together to create an environment where every individual has a chance to succeed regardless of where they started out. At McKinsey, I worked across the U.S. education landscape with foundations, technology companies, and districts to improve academic outcomes and experiences for those attending inner city public schools. At the Mayor's Office in Chicago, I have been able to broaden my impact by helping shape policies that bring resources to disadvantaged neighborhoods to ensure they have access to the same services and support structures as wealthier areas that naturally attract private investment.

I believe that the Rubenstein Fellowship will help me develop skills and connections that will allow me to better act as a social change agent. By engaging with the diverse group of Rubenstein Fellows, and exploring the topic of societal fairness from the perspective of the private, social, and public sectors, I will be able to deepen my understanding of different perspectives and hone my ability to build bridges that guide people with divergent objectives on a common path.
When I was in high school, I spent a summer living just outside Beijing and teaching English at a school for the children of migrant workers. I was amazed by the drive of my middle school students to learn as much as possible during this summer program. Under Chinese migrant worker laws, they were not guaranteed public education, and instead relied on limited privately-funded programs. These students, who had the determination to learn against all odds, became a constant source of inspiration and motivation. This experience sparked my interest in human rights and rule of law, especially with respect to universal access to education.

In college, I focused my independent research on Chinese constitutionalism and migrant worker rights. I learned how to translate academic interest into policy action through an experience at the State Department presenting a policy proposal to officials in the Bureau of East Asian & Pacific Affairs. I then joined Bain & Company to get exposure to the private sector and to develop strong analytical and communication skills. This skill set proved invaluable to my more recent work with nonprofit organizations focused on improving education access for underserved youth. I led a pro bono consulting project to bolster the fundraising efforts of mentorship program City Year, enabling them to expand their reach in Washington, D.C. public schools. I left Bain to work at the education nonprofit Citizen Schools, helping develop more cost-effective programming that continues to provide academic support to public middle school students across the country while grappling with federal budget cuts.

These experiences in and out of the classroom have fueled my passion for improving access to education, both domestically and abroad. I am excited to use my time at Harvard as a Rubenstein Fellow to deepen my understanding of effective human rights policy, and learn new approaches to leadership and collaboration.
MARIANO PARRO
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE
My first day at Harvard marks the start of my ninth year away from home. Born and raised in Lima, Peru, I left my home country to pursue an undergraduate degree in the U.S. and was able to stay abroad and explore a range of possibilities that I could have never imagined. After graduating from college, I had the opportunity of working across seven countries in four continents around the world, in both for-profit and nonprofit sectors. Looking back, none of these experiences would have been possible if I had not been given access to an education far beyond my financial means. This is why I care deeply about creating opportunities for young people to develop their potential and helping organizations with limited resources to create positive change.

Starting my career at the Boston Consulting Group provided an incredible platform to work towards these goals. As I transitioned across industries and cultures, I started learning how simplifying problems and complex organizations could be applied across sectors. After volunteering with small youth focused charities, I decided to test my learned skills at a large non-governmental organization. At Save the Children, I worked towards making this global organization more connected and efficient to reach a greater number of children in better ways. This experience taught me why it is so important to collaborate across sectors, to share lessons and innovative solutions, and improve how organizations use resources to benefit society.

I believe the joint degree program will prepare me to face the challenges of a cross-sector career. I aim to take full advantage of the dual curriculum to learn about innovative and practical ways to affect large scale change in for and nonprofit organizations and their impact in communities. In time, I want to create better youth development programs in Latin America to make a sustainable difference in disadvantaged communities. As I start this journey, I am honored to be part of the Rubenstein Fellowship and to join a community of passionate and driven individuals looking to make a difference in the world.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2020

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Save the Children: Global Priority Strategy Manager, London; Project Leader, Guatemala City
The Boston Consulting Group: Associate and Consultant, New York & Melbourne
Institute of Peru: Research Intern, Lima
Working to protect the environment has been my passion since childhood. My father, an officer in the Indian Forest Service, was my earliest inspiration. My childhood was spent accompanying him on his travels through countless forests and national parks, and seeing him balance policy mandates and practical environmental considerations. Climate change became a reality we lived with every day, experienced in wildly fluctuating rains that flooded my house, turbulent storms that eroded roads in the neighborhood, and increases in sea levels that caused thousands of Maldivians to migrate to my city. From that early age, I developed a keen interest in environmental conservation and ultimately graduated from Cornell University with a focus on Environmental and Resource Economics.

My experiences at Cornell, ranging from running an energy conservation organization to leading a global youth delegation to the UNFCCC climate change negotiations, convinced me of the importance of incorporating both public and private sector interests in policy framework. After graduation, I worked at Bain and Company learning how to successfully design, strategize, and solve implementation problems across a variety of industries ranging from tech to palm oil. My role as a working member of Bain’s partnership with The Nature Conservancy, from fundraising to providing consulting expertise, showed me time and again how successful policy design requires keen attention to setting appropriate incentive structures.

I aim to use my focus in the area of sustainable development and experience in consulting to design and successfully implement conservation programs on the ground. I firmly believe that the strong quantitative foundation provided by the MPA/ID will augment my ability to work across experts and officials, in a field where scientific considerations need to be matched with compelling economic cases to bring about change. It also addresses the dichotomy of my intended field—where climate investment is no longer an arena for governments alone and where impact involves navigating offset regulations with as much finesse as knowing how to conduct an energy audit. I am excited to be part of a peer group which varies in their subject field and specific career path, yet shares a joint ambition to make the world a better place for all.
David Reiff
Harvard Kennedy School Master in Public Policy Candidate, 2020

Academic Highlights
Harvard Business School, MBA Candidate, 2020
Tufts University, BA in Economics with Highest Thesis Honors, 2013

Professional Highlights
Entrepreneurial Finance Lab: Research and Development Lead
Tufts Labor Lab, ILO/IFC Better Work: Program Researcher
UpSpring: Social Enterprise Intern
Tufts in Rwanda: Program Leader

Narrative
Over the past several years, I have worked to promote the role of mobile technology in expanding financial access in emerging markets as a product manager of the Entrepreneurial Finance Lab’s alternative credit scoring platform. This experience has shown me first-hand how impactful access to basic financial services can be for disadvantaged communities. Over two billion people in emerging markets still lack a bank account. Technology is, thankfully, poised to transform the industry in the next decade with the potential to spur increased household investments in areas such as health and education at scale. Simply put, I believe that financial inclusion is one of the great solvable global challenges, and addressing it can transform entire economies and societies for the better.

Today, financial inclusion faces two critical challenges. First, there exists a web of possibly competing solutions—from various models of microcredit and insurance, to new payments systems, to financial literacy interventions—without a conclusive body of evidence about their true impact. Second, despite the rise of organizations and startups with inclusion in their DNA, scaling financial inclusion in emerging markets will require that large incumbent financial institutions and regulators more fully embrace change. My goals for the next three years at Harvard are thus two-fold: (1) to further develop a data-driven framework to more deeply understand real social impact and identify which solutions I want to advance and (2) to cultivate the leadership abilities that can effectively drive innovation within a financial services sector still dominated by traditional business models, outdated technology, and rigid regulatory approaches. Having cultivated both the necessary knowledge and courage to act, I hope to leave Harvard ready to accelerate the lives of people in emerging markets.

I am humbled to be a part of the Center for Public Leadership and excited to grow as a leader through the Rubenstein Fellowship. I look forward to building lifelong relationships with such an inspiring group of fellows as we prepare for careers devoted to public service.
My life changed the day President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act—insurance companies could no longer charge me unaffordable rates or deny me coverage because of my chronic, pre-existing autoimmune condition. As opponents of the law called for its repeal, I felt compelled to share my experiences as a young, chronically-ill person to demonstrate how it improved my life. Whether talking to reporters, testifying before the United States Senate, or working with President Obama's re-election campaign, I tried to put a human face on a complex and controversial policy. Soon I knew that I needed to do more than speak about healthcare.

Since 2012, I have had the privilege to serve the American people as a civil servant, congressional committee staffer, and political appointee at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services working to improve our health system. In these roles, I helped guide senior government officials through the Senate confirmation process, managed Secretary Burwell's preparation for congressional hearings and meetings, and helped prepare Senators for meetings, hearings, and floor debate on critical healthcare issues. Immediately before coming to Harvard, I worked for Senator Murray towards preventing the repeal of the Affordable Care Act on the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

Long term, I aim to work across business and government to help solve one of America’s greatest policy challenges: controlling healthcare costs while continuing to deliver high quality care to all Americans. Successfully reforming our healthcare system will require great vision, careful attention to detail, and knowledge of complex business and policy issues. It will also require building consensus and forging paths where none appear.

I am confident that Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School, combined with the Rubenstein Fellowship, will provide me the academic and leadership experiences I will need to rise to this challenge—and hopefully ensure that every person in our country can get the care they need when they need it.
YINGQI (STACY) TAN
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE
It has been five years since Build Your Dream, a philanthropic foundation I initiated while in college, built the first school for children in Butuo County, in southern China where 352 children have since received educational grants. At the same time, the government has made free vaccines, cheaper medicine, subsidized agricultural insurance, and affordable education available to most households in the region. This is the mighty power of economic development, made possible by financial and social stability over the past thirty years. While these changes seem substantial, more forces continue to alter the course of people’s lives, in much larger scale, in this county that was once the poorest in China.

My aspiration is to calibrate the financial system in China to be a fairer arena for resource allocation and a continuous impetus for economic development, with a conducive regulatory environment that lays an inclusive foundation for all households and businesses. My professional experience has provided me with a solid foundation for the journey I plan to embark on. I gained first-hand know-how in financial regulation when I interned at China Securities Regulatory Commission. My understanding of the financial industry, its regulatory structure, and market dynamic was further deepened during the execution of multiple landmark transactions at investment banks. I have also dived deep into specific situations when assisting CEOs of state-owned enterprises prepare policy recommendations to the State Council.

The road ahead will not be easy—but China would not be what it is today if our pioneers had not summoned the courage to switch gears and move toward uncharted territories of the market economy, and if the leaders of previous generations had not pushed through reforms that shattered the walls put up by vested interest.

The deep entanglement between government and the private sector calls for adequate preparation in both sectors. I hope the joint degree program and Rubenstein Fellowship will enable me to analyze issues from different perspectives, allow me to use the crisis management and negotiation skills I learn at HKS when dealing with corporate matters, and to apply a sense of entrepreneurship and managerial effectiveness gained from HBS when serving in public office.
A vibrant public and private sector working together as allies can create magic. This is my firm belief and it has only been strengthened by my experiences. I grew up in Nepal at a time when the decade-long civil war took the lives of over 15,000 people and internally displaced another 150,000. The collapse of the state structure and rule of law led to an unending cycle of political instability. Despite the failure of the government, the private sector continued to push through and create economic opportunities to provide a means of livelihood in a country with one of the highest rates of poverty in the world.

The seed of my fondness for public service and entrepreneurship was sown at an early age. My past experiences working in numerous countries have motivated me to bring about economic and social transformation in my own country. Following the devastating earthquake in Nepal in 2015, my cousin and I raised $150,000 to support local organizations providing education, sanitation, and healthcare services during a time of national crisis. In South Africa, I worked at a business school geared towards providing entrepreneurial skills to students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, many of whom were able to make a substantial impact on their communities upon return. Recently, I was part of a twenty-member expedition to use solar power and DC electricity to light an 800-year old monastery in one of the remotest regions in the Himalayas, which in turn has created new opportunities for monks in the region and allowed them to connect to the outside world.

Through these experiences, I have understood the important role individuals play to effect change, and I have also realized the importance of government and effective policies in generating large scale transformation. The Rubenstein Fellowship prides itself on preparing leaders to solve challenges that are of “critical importance to global society.” Through the powerful cohort experience, I hope to build lasting connections and share knowledge with peers who are driven by similar goals of generating transformative change in their communities.
EMILIO WILLS
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE

As a Colombian, I am proud to have witnessed a historic event with the recent signing of a Peace Agreement between the government and the oldest armed group in the American continent, ending a fifty-year-long conflict. For the past two and a half years, I have been working with the Peace Commissioner Office through the Ministry of Finance to analyze the costs and the fiscal viability of implementing this complex agreement. I saw that Colombia had a difficult path ahead, and great leaders and policy crafters must work hands-on to solve my country’s most demanding problems through poverty alleviation and rural development.

In college, I had the opportunity to be a member of the Board of Trustees of my University where I helped address the University’s concerns related to need-based scholarships. Through this work, we were able to increase need-based scholarships by nearly 10%, which in turn allowed fifty talented youth to access an education that would have otherwise been unobtainable. This experience made me realize that with discipline and processes, even unrealistic expectations can come true, and great impact may be attained.

In the medium term, I plan to return to Colombia and lead a national agency, hopefully the Territory Renewal Agency, where I can invest government resources and leverage private investment to develop rural areas. The joint degree program is the next step of my journey, which I believe will enable me to thoroughly understand the different industries in the private and public sector, allowing me to design and lead the implementation of public policy in the future. As a Rubenstein Fellow, I will learn to adapt the private sector’s best practices to solve the public sector’s most challenging problems and generate the best synergies between these two. Through co-curricular workshops and access to experienced leaders, I will open my mind to innovative solutions that will help me work on solving Colombia’s long standing issues.
NARRATIVE

Growing up in Massachusetts, I benefited early on from the vibrant public institutions of my home state. Massachusetts’ emphasis on education meant that my public school system provided some of the best education in the country. The town meeting governance model of my hometown gave the adults around me frequent opportunities to participate in local politics. I was encouraged to volunteer from a young age. I am thankful for these experiences; they set a high standard in my mind for what public institutions and public service can accomplish.

My early impressions of public service came into clearer focus when I started traveling around the U.S. and abroad. I have a long-standing passion for foreign languages and cultures, and sought out opportunities to travel overseas throughout college and my early career. These experiences helped me build a basic sense of the cultural, economic, and political conditions that people experience in different parts of the world. I am fascinated by the challenge of designing policy environments that promote progress, cooperation, and the public good—a challenge that communities around the world confront in very different ways. This interest is what led me to HKS.

My aspiration as a Rubenstein Fellow in the joint MPP/MBA program is to sharpen my understanding of how the public, private, and nonprofit sectors can be harnessed in different ways to confront societal challenges. I am particularly interested in how emerging technologies will reshape our public institutions. We stand at a fascinating moment in history—in the coming years, we will see significant developments in artificial intelligence, molecular medicine and bioengineering, virtual and augmented reality, and more. These developments will lead to dramatic changes in our workforce, our lifespans, and our education systems, to name just a few. At the same time, I am mindful that many millions of people still lack access to electricity and indoor plumbing. Through this joint program, my goal is to prepare myself for a role in helping public institutions adapt to emerging technologies while also distributing the benefits of those technologies as widely and fairly as possible.
“During my regular summer trips to India, I became intimately familiar with the everyday challenges arising from the unavailability and unaffordability of power. For nearly 400 million Indians, the unavailability of power for cooking, lighting, and heating is a yoke preventing their escape from poverty. My uncle, who works for the state electricity corporation, often invited me on trips to villages that were being connected to the electricity grid for the first time. At each village, I watched with awe as men, women, and children alike celebrated the installation of power lines that were integral to their escape from poverty, and I began to ask myself what I could do to contribute to this progress.”

Riju Agrawal  
Harvard Kennedy School  
Rubenstein Fellow  
MPP/MBA Candidate
The Wexner Israel Fellowship represents a unique partnership between The Wexner Foundation, the Israeli Civil Service Commission, and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS). This fellowship was created through the generosity of Les and Abigail Wexner via The Wexner Foundation and is anchored at the Center for Public Leadership, which has long benefitted from the Wexners’ generosity. The fellowship seeks to develop transformative leaders for Israel’s public sector. Each year, up to ten outstanding Israeli public service leaders are selected to pursue a Mid-Career Master in Public Administration degree at Harvard Kennedy School and to participate in a series of leadership seminars and institutes sponsored by the foundation itself.

The Wexner Foundation is focused on strengthening Jewish professional and volunteer leaders in North America and public service leaders in the State of Israel. The foundation’s leadership initiatives include an alumni network of 2,500 individuals, including 250 Israeli public officials who participated in the Wexner Israel Fellowship Program since it was established twenty-nine years ago, and eighty members of the recently established Wexner Senior Leadership Program.

Wexner Israel Fellows engage in the following programs in addition to their HKS coursework:

- A weekly Wexner seminar incorporates the HKS experience into the Israeli public sector reality, and is focused on professional and personal leadership development, cohort building, and the North American Jewish community.
- Engagement with the Center for Public Leadership (attending retreats, faculty workshops, and student-led sessions with 100 other CPL-sponsored fellows) helps synthesize classroom learning with practical professional leadership.
- Interaction with the New England Jewish community and Wexner alumni in the region deepens productive relationships between Israeli leaders and their global Jewish community counterparts.
- Out-of-town institutes provide fellows with in-depth exposure to the cultural, political, and organizational realities of North American Jewish community life, and enables them to explore public policy and public service issues that tie in to their work back in Israel.
ABOUT THE WEXNERS

Leslie H. Wexner founded L Brands in Columbus, Ohio, in 1963 with one store and first-year sales of $160,000. Today, total sales exceed $12 billion. Mr. Wexner serves as chairman and CEO of L Brands, a global leader in lingerie, fragrance, and beauty, which includes Victoria's Secret, PINK, Bath & Body Works, La Senza, and Henri Bendel. The company’s products are available in nearly 4,300 stores in more than seventy countries. Mr. Wexner is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; chairman of The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center Board; chairman of the advisory council for the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University; member of the Royal Shakespeare Company International Council; and chairman of the Columbus Partnership and is a founding member and the first chair of The Ohio State University Foundation. Mr. Wexner holds a BS degree in Business Administration from The Ohio State University and honorary degrees from Brandeis University; Hebrew Union College; Hofstra University; Marietta College; Jewish Theological Seminary of America; Hebrew University of Jerusalem; University of Tel Aviv; and Yeshiva University. Mr. Wexner was inaugurated by Harvard University into the Society of John Harvard Fellows, and serves as a visiting lecturer at Harvard Kennedy School.

Abigail S. Wexner is the chairman and CEO of Whitebarn Associates, a private investment company. She serves on the boards of L Brands, Inc., Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc., The Ohio State University, Nationwide Children’s Hospital, the Columbus Downtown Development Corporation, the Columbus Partnership, Pelotonia, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, The Wexner Foundation, The Wexner Center Foundation, The Columbus Jewish Federation, and the United States Equestrian Team Foundation. She is founder and chair of the board for The Center for Family Safety and Healing and KidsOhio.org, founding board member and vice chair of the board for KIPP Columbus, and a past chair of the Governing Committee of the Columbus Foundation. Mrs. Wexner also held a presidential appointment to The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Prior to moving to Columbus, she practiced law from 1987 to 1992 with the London and New York offices of Davis, Polk & Wardwell. She is a graduate of the Dwight School, New York City; Barnard College, magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa; and New York University School of Law.

Mr. Wexner and Mrs. Wexner are the parents of four children, ranging in age from nineteen to twenty-three years of age.
NARRATIVE

My ambition to be involved in public issues originated in my early days of adulthood. The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which occurred towards the completion of my military service, was a defining moment for me. I believe that the national trauma, as well as the deep personal grief I felt, ingrained my commitment to be active in social and public issues. It was in this period that I shaped my career vision and decided that in addition to satisfying a need for intellectual challenge and professional growth, I must add value through social involvement and public leadership.

I have evolved and specialized within the legal and economic fields. Equipped with prior public leadership experience from my years as President of the Tel Aviv University Student Union, and later working alongside a prominent legislator, it became clear to me that my long-term career goals are to serve in legal, administrative, or financial leadership positions in the Israeli public service.

The Israel Securities Authority bears the legal and public duties of overseeing, regulating, and safeguarding the Israeli financial and capital markets. For the last ten years I have been a senior attorney leading teams of state-prosecutors in securities-fraud cases and other economic crimes against prominent figures in the Israeli economy. I feel privileged to have been given the responsibility to represent the public in this manner and to fight against financial corruption in order to safeguard the public’s money and the stability of the financial markets.

At this stage of my career, I feel that the Wexner Israel Fellowship program and the Mid-Career MPA program at Harvard Kennedy School is the ideal environment in which to grow into a senior manager and a policy-directing leader. Reflecting on my current professional challenges I know that as my tenure and seniority increases, so will the complexity of the tasks, decisions, and management challenges I will encounter. I look forward to acquiring the best academic and professional tools for public management and leadership as I aim to better cope with the challenges ahead.
NARRATIVE

Public service has always been a part of my life. During high school I volunteered as a firefighter, making it my mission to raise awareness of volunteering to save lives. My inspiration came from my older brother Raviv—a reporter, social activist, and firefighter, who I lost when I was fifteen to his third bout of cancer four years after I donated bone marrow to him. I then joined a combat unit in the Israel Defense Force, attended officers' school, and trained the next generation of officers. While pursuing my studies, I mentored at-risk immigrant youth to empower them to become productive members of society.

After graduating with a BA in Economics and Business, I received an offer as a business analyst in a management-consulting firm. I was excited to participate in challenging projects, learn new fields, and work with diverse teams. Working on projects with the Israeli public sector, I realized that I wanted to channel my business and economic expertise to the benefit of Israeli society.

I decided to join the Government Companies Authority (GCA) within the Israeli Ministry of Finance because of its unique combination of public service and corporate management. I knew that I would utilize my skills to improve government companies, which have a tremendous effect on multiple areas of life in Israel—infrastructure, communication, public housing, and defense industries. The positions in the GCA have enabled me to initiate and execute significant reforms to improve government companies and benefit society. They have also given me a bird's eye view of issues and have equipped me with a deep understanding of the public sector.

In the future I aim to increase efficiency in government companies' activity, strengthening their strategic planning and business perception, and improve the service-level delivered to the public. Through my year at Harvard Kennedy School and CPL, I hope to complement my financial and leadership experience with public-policy knowledge, strengthen my leadership skillset, and enhance my international perspective—all crucial for leading reforms in government. I believe this year will enable me to formulate my vision for the coming years, so I can take the next step toward leading in the public sector.
GONI LAUFER-DUCHIN
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
My parents have always worked in the public sector. Throughout my childhood, I witnessed how they opened our home and hearts to anyone in need. I learned the importance of social consciousness, which strongly influenced my career and personal goals. I have served in the public sector for twenty years—working with and for the public brings me great self-fulfillment. Sixteen years ago I joined the Prime Minister's Office, where I have held various management positions in different departments—including strategic project management, training management, and security where I serve as Head of Department.

Apart from my main goal of contributing to the security of the State of Israel, I seek to advance women's equal opportunities in my workplace, mainly in managerial positions. I see it as my personal and professional duty to challenge paradigms which lead to an imbalance of gender ratios. I strive to surface this issue and facilitate a fundamental change.

After my first child was born, I decided to focus my volunteer activities on improving the lives of underprivileged children. I identified available resources at my workplace and initiated social projects aimed at this population. I started a project that pairs senior citizen mentors with underprivileged youth and organized food distribution for families in need. In the future I wish to scale those projects to more inclusive and comprehensive social innovations, allowing kids a better starting point in their lives.

I believe the coming year will help me strengthen my management skills and leadership development. I hope to gain inspiration from classmates and instructors and to grow my professional network. I am looking forward to the cross-cultural experience within the CPL fellowship community which will allow me to re-examine my goals through new lenses. I have learned that profound breakthroughs are achieved by finding the right partners who share similar goals.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Tel Aviv University, LLM with a specialization in Sociology, magna cum laude, 2001
Tel Aviv University, BA in Economics and LLB, 1999

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Prime Minister's Office: Head of Security Department
Prime Minister's Office: Strategic Project Manager
Prime Minister's Office: Training Manager
Israel Antitrust Authority Legal Department: Intern
Tel Aviv University Law School: Pro Bono Legal Advising Program Volunteer
Tel Aviv University Law School: Volunteer Lead on Program for Student Teaching at Challenged Schools
NARRATIVE

I am intrigued by the idea of winning combat and resolving conflict, not through classic army means, but through intellect. In everyday struggles, on the road, or in the case of professional disagreements, creative and out-of-the-box solutions are my preferred response. Bringing innovation to a large and strict organization such as the army is challenging. Starting as an inexperienced engineer more than twenty years ago, my career at the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) has combined my professional expertise with my leadership abilities.

During my early years of service, I witnessed many incidents in which, I believe, wrong decisions were made due to insufficient insight. While it motivated me to act and get involved in the decision-making within the organization, I understood that to enact change, it would be necessary to lead.

Today, as Lieutenant Colonel, I am the Director of Research, leading almost one hundred scientists and software engineers. My chosen career path allows me to bring together my professional interests with my natural tendency to lead. My positions at the Intelligence Directorate have granted me the privilege to keep working in the fields that I love and value, and at the same time to design and lead important projects the way I desire.

One major reason for selecting the Mid-Career MPA program is for me to develop a leadership approach that inspires employee commitment and motivation, yet transcends material rewards. The IDF addresses national challenges using the most talented specialists in the country. Over the last few years, many personnel have left the military intelligence organization, lured by the civil hi-tech industry. This industry attracts talent from the military using higher immediate salaries and more dynamic and flexible organizational conditions.

In the near future, I hope to join the newly formed Israeli Joint Command. Assuming a senior management position would strengthen my capacity to influence a prominent part of the Israeli public sector. I am looking forward to absorbing ideas, approaches, experience, and techniques that will move me out of my comfort zone and allow me to further develop as a leader.
Gil Proaktor
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
Since my early childhood I was intrigued and passionate about the environment. I used to spend much of my childhood outdoors and often I encountered and experienced the conflict between rapid development and environmental conservation issues. My passion and care for the environment led me to focus my academic studies on understanding environmental processes and the ways to protect them from over-development and exploitation. During my PhD research I became increasingly interested in climate change as a major threat to our global environment. After my successful experience as an energy and climate change consultant, I moved to my current role in the Israeli Ministry of Environment. In this capacity, I led the strategic development and implementation of market-wide and energy-specific targets and policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I aspire and intend to lead the Israeli government in developing a comprehensive long-term vision and strategy for transforming Israel's power market from a centralized, fossil fuel based market, to a decentralized market dominated by clean, renewable energy and smart grid technologies. Adopting this path will have unprecedented environmental, health, economic, and social benefits for Israel.

A major challenge to realizing my goal is convincing politicians, key influential government officials, other relevant stakeholders, and the wider public to back such a major long-term goal and to commit the significant resources that will be needed over the coming years. Understanding the importance of the skills I will need in the journey—such as negotiation, persuasion, and influential leadership—led me to my decision to apply to Harvard Kennedy School's Mid-Career MPA program and the Wexner Israel Fellowship. I expect that this unique program and experience will enable me to further develop and sharpen my leadership skills. I am very much looking forward to learning and developing from the experience of my MPA colleagues at the professional as well as personal level.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Imperial College London, PhD in Ecology, Grant for Interdisciplinary Research, 2007
Overseas Research Scheme Scholarship, UK Higher Education, 2004
UK Chevening Scholarship, British Council, 2003
University of East Anglia, UK, MS in Ecology and Conservation with Distinction, 2001
University of Ben-Gurion, Israel, BS in Life Sciences with First Class Honors, 2000

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection: Head of Climate Change Division
SKM-Enviros, UK: Energy and Climate Change Consultant
National Audit Office, UK: Energy and Climate Change Analyst
BP Conservation Program: Deputy Manager, International Scientific Expedition to Uganda
LEORA SIDI
HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

NARRATIVE
Even though I was born in Israel, I spent seven years of my childhood in the U.S. At the age of fifteen, I decided that I wanted to live in Israel and came back on my own. The sense of belonging that drew me back to Israel also influenced my desire to improve the well-being of Israeli society through my career.

I decided to study law to fully understand the principles and rules underlying life in Israel. I felt it essential to know the existing reality before acting for change. I did an internship at the Israeli Parliament, where law and politics intertwine. I wanted to expand my formal education in order to understand complex policy issues and completed a master's degree in Public Policy. The knowledge that I acquired, combined with my experience in the Parliament, led me to the Finance Ministry, which I understood to be one of the most influential institutions in Israel and I wanted to be part of their decision making process. There I took part in complex negotiations and worked on proposed legislative bills.

After representing the State and public employers, I sought to help workers improve their quality of life. I joined the General Federation of Labor in Israel, the largest labor union in Israel. As the Head of the Collective Agreements Department, I am responsible for overseeing all agreements signed; agreements that have improved wages and working conditions for many workers in Israel.

I aspire to continue to improve life for the working class in Israel and to reduce inequality in Israeli society. I believe that reducing inequality is not only a moral duty, but crucial to promoting solidarity and mutual responsibility. I plan to fulfill these goals by improving salaries and working conditions for workers with low incomes, reducing discrimination in the labor market against women and minorities, and promoting the employment of people with disabilities. As a Harvard Kennedy School student and as a Wexner Israel Fellow I look forward to focusing on management, decision making, and leadership skills, which will enable me to promote social justice in Israel.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Federmann School of Public Policy and Government, MA in Public Policy, magna cum laude, 2006
David Diego Ladowski Merit Scholarships, Thesis Selected for Publication in the Federmann School of Public Policy and Government
Hebrew University of Jerusalem Law School, LLB Bachelor in Law, 2002

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
The General Federation of Labor in Israel: Head of Collective Agreements Department, Legal Advisor's Office, Trade Union Division
Ministry of Finance: Lawyer, Legal Advisor's Office of the Wage and Labor Agreements Department
Awarded the Ministry of Finance General Manager's Honor Prize for Excellence in 2009
Knesset, Israeli Parliament: Intern in the Legal Department

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018
NARRATIVE

I grew up in the southern part of Israel in the desert, on the border with Gaza—a social and environmental periphery. My father was a founder of the first field center of the Society for Protection of Nature in Israel, and took us for weekend hikes through the desert’s unique trails. We learned how fragile and precious nature and the environment can be. My father also led us through the Gaza market—I remember the aromatic spices, the kind people, and drinking coffee with family friends. When the military would close the border, our family brought food and supplies to those friends. My mother was always thinking of other people and taking action—she taught me that women are strong and have the ability to lead for change. Working in the public sector is a fulfillment of values I learned from my parents.

During my PhD I was fortunate to be an ISEF Fellow. This program raised my awareness of the need for equal opportunities and civil service. I was inspired to start working at the Regional and Local Council as the Manager of the Environmental Department, rather than continuing my academic path. I established several projects, including a joint course for sixth and seventh grade Israeli and Bedouin students from neighboring communities, dealing with renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. It was touching to discover that, on their own initiative, the children continued to meet after school at each other’s houses after the program ended.

I believe that the Mid-Career MPA program at Harvard Kennedy School, as well as the Wexner Israel Fellowship program, will enable me to further build on my firm experience and promote sustainability, social justice, and female leadership in Israel. I aspire to make sweeping changes in the Israeli government by implementing a new vision: a sustainable, self-sufficient Local Authorities network, which acts as a community of communities, embraces the surrounding environment, and preserves it for future generations. Moreover, I look to learn from case studies all over the world, and to become part of a global network of public-sector professionals who face complex challenges and pursue inspiration.
The Russian-born Hebrew poet Shaul Tchernichovsky wrote “man is but the imprint of his native landscape.” I see this in my story—growing up in Israel after the Yom Kippur War and the peace agreement with Egypt, learning the importance of a safe and secure Israel, understanding that war is terrible and we must try to avoid it, and knowing that peace is a dream that can come true. Part of my family originated from Europe and I acknowledge the importance of a State for the Jewish nation. That is why I dedicated my career to the purpose of a safe and thriving Israel.

I started my military service as a cadet and later served in logistics command for over ten years. I went from overseeing sixty soldiers to leading 250 soldiers as the commander of a transportation base. But the terrible years of the second Intifada in Israel changed the course of my career. I decided to take an active part in designing policy and strategy on behalf of my beloved country and requested transfer to the Israeli Defense Forces’ Planning Directorate, where key decisions are shaped with regard to Israel’s security.

In the ten years since I have had the chance to take part in strategic planning and decision making processes with high impact on our national security. I was part of planning the US-ISR MOU dialogue, designing the IDF’s and the Homefront threat scenarios and long term strategy, engaging in strategic dialogues with military partners, and presenting my work to the chief of staff, parliament committees, and ministers.

The path I have taken in the last decade has been exciting but I know there is more I can do to lead my country to the shores of hope, national strength, and peace with our neighbors. In the next decade I plan to advance in the Planning Directorate and delve deeper into understanding core strategic matters that concern homeland security and the security policy of my country. The thought of meeting next generation leaders from around the world, and the impact that I will be able to generate after my Harvard Kennedy School experience excites me beyond words.
“Through my experiences in the Legislative and Executive Branches of Government and in a Non-Governmental Organization, I have gained tools which have been crucial to promoting social justice in Israel. These experiences have exposed me to the different interests and considerations one must take into account when striving for social change. As a Wexner Israel Fellow at CPL I intend to focus on leadership skills which will strengthen my ability to design solutions to complex problems and will enable me to promote changes in Israel on the national level.”

Leora Sidi
Harvard Kennedy School
Wexner Israel Fellow
Mid-Career MPA Candidate
ABOUT THE ZUCKERMAN FELLOWS PROGRAM

The challenges we face in our public schools and public health systems, as well as in government at all levels, are too complicated to be solved without the insight and commitment of leaders with the highest quality professional training. But for many who have a strong aptitude for public service, the opportunity costs associated with acquiring the necessary training are too high.

In response to this problem, the Zuckerman Fellows Program makes it possible for individuals from the fields of medicine, law, and business to pursue public service degrees at Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, or Harvard Kennedy School, and thus become leaders for the common good. The Zuckerman Fellowship provides recipients with full tuition and health insurance fees plus a stipend for one year.

Zuckerman Fellows are selected on the basis of commitment to public service, leadership abilities, and intellectual and academic achievement.

In addition to their formal coursework, Zuckerman Fellows participate in a yearlong co-curricular program that includes small-group discussions with members of the Harvard faculty as well as other leading academics and practitioners, personal and professional skill-building workshops, and a field experience trip. Taken together, these interdisciplinary activities help the fellows integrate classroom learning with their individual career plans and interests.
ABOUT MORTIMER ZUCKERMAN

Mortimer B. Zuckerman is the Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of U.S. News & World Report, the Chairman and Publisher of the New York Daily News, and the co-founder and Chairman Emeritus of Boston Properties Inc.

He is a trustee of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, a member of the Bank of America Global Wealth & Investment Management Committee, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Washington Institute for Near East Studies, and the Vice Chair and Treasurer of the International Peace Institute. He is a sponsor of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a former Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, a former lecturer of City and Regional Planning at Yale University, a past president of the Board of Trustees of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, and the former Chairman of the Principal's International Advisory Board of McGill University. He is a former trustee of New York University and the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. He is a former Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and served as President of the America-Israel Friendship League.

Mr. Zuckerman is a graduate of McGill University in Montreal where he received an undergraduate degree in 1957 with first class honors, a degree in law in 1961, and an honorary LLD in 2011. He received an MBA with distinction from the Wharton Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania, in 1961 and an LLM from Harvard University in 1962.

He has received honorary degrees from Colby College, Southampton College, Hebrew College, Berkeley College, the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Tel Aviv University, and Hebrew University and an honorary Doctorate of Laws from McGill University and Columbia University. Mr. Zuckerman was awarded the Commandeur De L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France, the Lifetime Achievement Award from Guild Hall, the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architecture in New York, the Sy Syms Humanitarian award from Yeshiva University, and a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal from the Canadian government.
ROHIT ABRAHAM
HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, MD Candidate, 2019
Oakland University School of Education, MA in Teaching, summa cum laude, 2014
University of Michigan, BS in Neuroscience and Applied Statistics with Honors, 2012

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Teach For America: Detroit Public School Teacher, Head Robotics Coach
AmeriCorps: Homeless Shelter Case Manager, Employment Program Development
Michigan State Medical Society: Member, Board of Directors; Healthcare Delivery & Education
All India Institute of Medical Sciences: Visiting Scholar, National EMS Development
American Medical Association Foundation: Excellence in Medicine Leadership Award
Michigan Campus Compact: Commitment to Service Award

NARRATIVE
Before I came to medical school, I was first a teacher. I taught ninth-grade biology at a low-income school in the bottom five percent of Detroit Public Schools, which is the nation's lowest-achieving district. Fueled by my personal vision for a better society, I felt charged to take on this role through Teach For America, in order to ensure every child's access to an excellent education. Nothing could have prepared me for this challenge, my amazing kids taught me as much as I hopefully taught them, as we battled against the achievement gap for an average growth of more than a full grade level and over three points on the ACT Science section within a single year.

National service afforded me time to more concretely develop my personal vision. While I enjoyed working with individuals, I knew that systemic barriers had to be disassembled on a larger scale through reform of laws and policies. The range of injustices that my students faced was vast, but health inequities stuck out to me as the most obvious culprit. It was clear that compared with where I had grown up just twenty miles away, low-income communities suffered from poorer healthcare access and faced higher rates of chronic disease—like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity—that crippled their potential. I resolved to reverse the trajectory of low-income communities' decreasing life expectancy, which contributes to the low expectations that shackles these citizens in generational poverty.

By combining public health with my previous graduate training, I aim to become a health officer for a state government. This public service role would effectively position me to fulfill my career objective of increasing America's life span, starting with its most underserved communities. However, I recognize that my training is still incomplete. To learn how to navigate a career in government that could transform population health outcomes, I am thrilled to embark on the Zuckerman Fellowship's unique multidisciplinary training. As a former educator and future physician, I believe this training will be paramount to advancing successful public policies to ensure that everyone can enjoy excellent health—regardless of zip code.
Applying to medical school invites a predictable array of unsolicited advice and warnings. Those in the profession are quick to point out that medical school is hard; that in order to be successful, one must make sacrifices. As a current fourth-year medical student at Columbia, I can confidently say that it has been hard, yet it is not the personal sacrifice which proves most difficult. It is the expectation that one must sacrifice their principles in order to succeed in medicine.

During clinical training, students bear witness to the many failings of our healthcare system. Under conditions of constant evaluation, they are not empowered to voice their concerns. Without a safe outlet for these critiques, poor clinical practice becomes internalized and reproduced, ultimately compromising the values with which students enter the profession.

Protecting these values requires vigilance and hard work. My experience in this effort has led me to the conclusion that medical education is in need of consistent and substantial reimagining. Students must be empowered as active and welcome agents of change in their profession. This reinvigoration of personal principles will propel the medical practice toward innovative solutions to the many challenges healthcare faces—helping students to develop a strong professional identity dedicated as much to service of their communities, as to technical expertise. This will require restructuring of curricula to fit within their scope a substantial exposure to social issues, public health, public policy, and health economics.

A master's of education at Harvard with the support of the Zuckerman Fellows Program will help me further elucidate these goals, and situate me in positions of influence at the academic institutions where students are made into doctors. Coming as an interruption in my medical education, the program will be a productive source of new perspective and skills that I will carry with me as I train, practice, and teach. The Zuckerman Fellows Program provides the opportunity to learn from leaders in all areas of public service, a major advantage in the often isolated field of medicine. I look forward to collaborating with this cohort of pioneers, dedicated to service.
Jeff Goldstein

Harvard Kennedy School Master in Public Administration Candidate, 2020

Academic Highlights
Dartmouth College, Tuck School of Business, MBA Candidate, 2020
University of Michigan, BA in Public Policy with Distinction, 2013

Professional Highlights
The White House Council of Economic Advisers: Deputy Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the Chairman
Peterson Institute for International Economics: Project and Executive Assistant
Dewey Square Group: Associate
Obama for America: National Advance Staff

NARRATIVE

Working for the White House Council of Economic Advisers, Peterson Institute for International Economics, Dewey Square Group advising clients in multiple industries, and on President Obama’s Advance Team has solidified my long-standing career goal to work in organizations that connect business with public policy and consider broad social impacts. I am excited to strengthen my academic foundation and expertise at Harvard Kennedy School to complement my work experience.

In the future, I hope to help develop and implement economic policies geared towards achieving shared economic prosperity while spurring greater economic productivity. Whether it is how to structure tax incentives, ensure a strong social safety net, enact sustainable climate policies, negotiate trade agreements or outline financial regulation, I want to design and advance policies that give everyone, regardless of economic or social status or geography, a chance to succeed.

Following graduate school I plan to work in both the private and public sectors because during my government tenure I observed the value of private sector experience when formulating and implementing public policy. Since government and business are so interconnected, it is essential to know and get support from both sectors for social and economic policy initiatives to succeed. Government and the private sector can leverage each other’s advantages in a beneficial manner, which will be imperative as globalization continues and universal concerns such as climate change must be dealt with.

At a young age my parents told me “popular people are nice to each other, while leaders are considerate and caring of everyone.” I internalized that message and have tried to live by this principle. By growing with other fellows and learning firsthand from national leaders on topics of cross sector leadership, the Zuckerman Fellowship’s multi-pronged approach to leadership development is a rare and tremendous opportunity to become an even stronger leader, not just a popular person, who will create positive change through public service.
My commitment to improving health equity among adolescents took root in my work as a seventh grade science teacher in San Francisco. There, I encountered the daily toll that poverty and violence can take on academic performance. One of my students broke into tears with each test, and through conversations with his mother I learned that he had struggled academically in the wake of his father's murder. Experiences like this led me to realize that student performance in the classroom was often a manifestation of trauma's impact on their mental and physical wellbeing. In response, I restructured my curriculum to teach students about the brain's ability to respond to stress and took time to better understand the challenges my students faced. I formed stronger and more responsive relationships with my students' families, and assisted with the adoption of a restorative, asset-based discipline system at my school.

Despite this work in the classroom, I knew that my students needed more. I came to realize that these efforts to overcome health disparities would fall short without the support of a comprehensive, community-based healthcare system targeted toward adolescent wellbeing. In my first year of medical school, I engaged with systems-level change through a project at the UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic. I teamed with a small group of medical students and faculty to develop a program, the Complex Care Service (CCS), which addressed the needs of patients who were managing multiple health issues. We paired these patients with first year medical students who worked as their care coordinators. Committed to better serving patients at the Student-Run Free Clinic, CCS evolved into an elective entitled “Chronic Disease Management and Health Behavior Change,” which we developed and taught to a cohort of first year medical students.

Through the Zuckerman Fellowship and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, I will develop the skills necessary to design, implement, and assess programs like the CCS that can improve health outcomes for our highest need patients. I envision a medical career not limited by the boundaries of the exam room, but which extends into classrooms and community spaces.
BRANDON HEFFINGER

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MID-CAREER MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Wake Forest University School of Law, JD, 2014
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, BA in Political Science with Distinction, UNC Public Service Scholar, 2007

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
U.S. Marine Corps: Commissioned Officer, Deployed in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom
Wake Forest Veterans Legal Clinic: Founder and Director
Truman National Security Project: Defense Council Member
Warrior Rising: Board Member and Chair of Legal Committee
United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina: Judicial Law Clerk

NARRATIVE
Growing up in western North Carolina, I saw firsthand the many people who were, and continue to be, left out of the quest for the American dream. I had a limited awareness of the possibilities for my life, but I was lucky to have a world-class public university system in North Carolina, which opened my eyes to the world. I was determined to pursue a meaningful career, rooted in public service, and I was drawn to the legal profession. However, I spent my college years watching the news coverage of young men and women fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, and while I did not necessarily agree with every aspect of the wars, I felt compelled to do my part and serve my country.

As a young Marine Corps officer, I was taught to put myself at the point of friction, where the critical decisions upon which success or failure hinges must be made. When I took command of my first Marine platoon, I had over a year of intense training, specifically designed to prepare me for those trials. Effective leadership doesn't come naturally. It requires tireless preparation and continuous self-improvement. And now, even after years of leading Marines and deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, I am still working to be a better leader.

I continue to seek points of friction where I can insert my talents, experience, and compassion to improve the lives of others. While in law school, I founded the Wake Forest Veterans Legal Clinic to address the pronounced legal needs existing among veterans. The clinic directly represents veterans in administrative petitions to upgrade discharges and in various other legal actions, and it also advocates for pro-veteran policies. As I began to practice law, I continued this work and I am now the Director of the Clinic.

I have had tremendous opportunities in my life, and I intend to do what I can to ensure all Americans have access to the American dream. I plan to use my time at Harvard Kennedy School to improve my advocacy for veterans and to explore other arenas where I can have a meaningful impact.
NARRATIVE

I realized my desire to become a physician and public health professional in the unlikeliest of places: a village in Rajasthan, India. During the summer in college when I worked for an NGO in this small desert community, I met many wonderful people with debilitating health problems. The dearth of healthcare providers in the community was apparent, and it made me angry to think that these individuals’ life courses may have been negatively impacted because they had been deprived of access to the healthcare resources they required. During my summer in India, I resolved to enter the medical and public health fields to dedicate myself to improving healthcare systems so that more people receive better care, everywhere.

After my time in India, I sought out experiences that have confirmed my strong convictions surrounding issues of healthcare access and quality. During my remaining time in college, I became a board member of a student-run organization that coordinates the operation of mobile health clinics in the slums of Kolkata, and I spent several weeks in Kolkata learning from on-the-ground experience in clinics. I spent a year working with an interdisciplinary research team at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center trying to elucidate the link between obesity, inflammation, and cancer, and learning about leadership through the example of several inspiring doctors. During medical school, I joined Ariadne Labs’ BetterBirth team investigating the effectiveness of the World Health Organization’s Safe Childbirth Checklist in improving maternal and neonatal outcomes, which has served to deepen my interest in health systems research.

Having recently completed my clinical year of medical school, it is clearer to me than ever that the American healthcare system can be unkind to individuals of lower socioeconomic status for whom access to quality healthcare is often all but denied. I intend to work to improve outcomes for underserved patients through research, policy creation, and education. The Zuckerman Fellowship will give me the opportunity to work with and learn from similarly passionate individuals from different disciplines to understand these challenges from new perspectives and forge new paths to expanded and improved care.
NARRATIVE

Although I grew up in a community with few material resources, the women, men, and children who lived in my neighborhood were full of grit, self-sacrifice, and a desire to live healthy and purposeful lives. As I came of age, I was witness to the disastrous effect of poverty in my community and began to view the social ills commonly associated with poverty—drug use, violent crime, dysfunctional families, crumbling schools, poor health—not as problems in themselves, but as symptoms of poverty. Furthermore, I grew to understand poverty as a systemic malady perpetuated by sociopolitical forces far beyond the reach of those ensnared within it.

I chose to pursue medicine because I believe health is the cornerstone of a civil society that aims to protect the life and liberty of its citizens. My lived experience places me in a position where I can advocate effectively as a physician, and most importantly as a civically engaged member of society, for those who are disadvantaged.

I applied to Harvard Kennedy School and the Zuckerman Fellowship to further explore how public policy influences the health of our nation and gather momentum for the development of bold policy solutions that are aware of the inequity of resources, power, and privilege in the United States. The MPP curriculum will give me a broad foundation in public policy that is concerned with ensuring a basic level of opportunity for all in our society and aware of the historical inequities that threaten to disrupt our progress. I hope to design programs that draw on this knowledge to improve healthcare.

I am humbled to be a recipient of the Zuckerman Fellowship, and I am certain my experience as a Zuckerman Fellow will help me build the leadership skills to design policies that ensure everyone has access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
In June 2010, the day after commencement, I met with influential Stanford entrepreneur and philanthropist Coleman Fung. My pitch was that a critical half million philanthropic investment would empower me to decline my offer from McKinsey, dedicate myself to CollegeSpring full-time, and develop a sustainable enterprise that closes the college opportunity gap at scale. Coleman agreed on the spot. After building CollegeSpring into a national organization, I transitioned to the Board in summer 2017, making room for a new leader who will guide the organization through its next era. Our team, program, and finances have never been stronger, so my board chair and I are confident I can step away without jeopardizing the organization.

I have been committed to service as long as I can remember. My mom was the first in her family to graduate from college, and my dad was the first to earn a graduate degree. For many years, my dad worked seventy hour weeks turning around a struggling daycare center. At first, my family's house—its welcoming yellow paint, its lush yard where our golden retriever roamed—symbolized that my dad's business had finally “made it.” But then, when I was in first grade, my two-year-old brother Gaven died in an accident in that home. I still remember running into my parents' bedroom the next morning, thinking it had been a horrible dream. Living through the unthinkable taught me to cherish each day, act intentionally, and only spend time on things that mattered. The feeling that everything I pursue must be meaningful fuels me to this day.

As a social entrepreneur, I have split my time between high poverty communities and corner offices. While I now understand the magnitude of society's inequities, I have had few opportunities to address them systematically. In my next phase, I aspire to drive cross-sector performance as an elected official. The HBS-HKS joint degree program will help me translate my on-the-ground experience into scalable solutions, and the Zuckerman Fellowship community will ensure I stay grounded, consider problems from every angle, and remain ignited so I can channel my sense of urgency effectively.
NARRATIVE

One of the most transformative encounters from my clinical rotations occurred in the room of an elderly gentleman. During my first visit with him, he scolded me in frustration over his medical care, threatening to leave the hospital against medical advice. He had gone through three major surgeries in the past year without a clear conception of their respective indications and had reached a breaking point. Early the next morning, I researched his medical records then went to his room and drew rudimentary diagrams of each surgery onto a sketch pad. He appreciated it and from then on, my conversations with him ranged from fishing, to his medical care, to his best friend at work. He stayed.

Robin Williams as “Patch Adams” once said, “you treat a disease, you win you lose, you treat a person, I guarantee you win no matter what the outcome.” That encounter, and many subsequent to it, taught me that empowering patients through education increases patient-engagement and shared-decision making, often creating more “winning” opportunities in the doctor-patient relationship.

Medical education is founded on an apprenticeship model where physicians are largely responsible to train and prepare younger generations for a future brimming with unanswered questions and a lifetime of learning. Not only do patients benefit from physician educators, but the future of medicine is counting on them. My desire is to be an adept educator to better the lives of my future patients. I also plan to help fortify the infrastructure of mentorship in medicine by creating innovative curricula to develop and support physician educators.

From my childhood days in Tanzania to now, mentors have impacted my life profoundly. As technology continues playing an increasingly powerful role in society, I hope to harness this tool to support educators working tirelessly in the farthest corners of the globe to turn children's dreams into reality, as they have done for me. I am humbled to be a Zuckerman Fellow and am confident that the training and my connection to a cohort of truly inspiring individuals will prepare me to be a servant-leader in dynamic and challenging environments.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, MD Candidate, 2019
Oakwood University, BS in Biomedical Sciences, magna cum laude, 2013
Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS): Inductee/Member
ETS Presidential Scholarship for HBCU Students Award, 2012
Oakwood University Premier Scholarship, 2009–13

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Technology in Medical Education (TiME) at UNC: Student Representative
University of North Carolina School of Medicine: Curriculum Development Assistant
Student Health Action Coalition (SHAC), Beyond Clinic Walls: Team Director
National Association for the Prevention of Starvation (NAPS), Year of Dedication (YOD) and Community Outreach Programs: Co-Director & Outreach Coordinator
University of North Carolina, Neuroscience Center: Research Intern
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center: Research Intern
Oakwood Biomedical Association: President

JOSHUA ONYANGO
HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION MASTER OF EDUCATION CANDIDATE IN TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, AND EDUCATION, 2018
Inviting my mother to the United States Senate was one of the most memorable moments in my early career. Seeing her eyes light up as she witnessed first-hand the legislative process from the Senate galleries gave me a deep sense of fulfilment. My mother and father are immigrants from Colombia and Mexico, and like millions of other Americans, have not been exposed to how the legislative process works and how one can influence it.

I learned working in the United States Senate something very fundamental: all government is is a set of rules and processes to decide how society should function. I want to pursue a career in public service to make that process more diverse, inclusive, and representative of the people it serves. I want people like my parents to know that their voice can make a difference in the direction our country takes.

At Harvard and the Center for Public Leadership, I want to work on bridging the gap between the needs of communities and the policies that politicians pursue. Through the use of data, technology, design thinking, and crowd sourcing, I believe the right incentives can be created for politicians to pursue a legislative agenda that addresses the needs of their communities and fosters a more inclusive and responsive legislative environment. My dream is to inspire more Americans to believe in government as a tool to improve their lives and as an enabler for helping them reach their potential.

I believe that the fight to make governments around the world more inclusive and responsive to its citizens is one of the most pressing challenges facing our generation. It is a privilege to begin that journey as a Zuckerman Fellow, and I am humbled to serve alongside my classmates in the fight to build a more equitable and inclusive world.
ERIKA PINCUS

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY CANDIDATE, 2020

NARRATIVE

At my core, I am fueled by the art and science of problem solving, stemming from a deep curiosity instilled in me as a child. Growing up, I was never allowed to say something was “weird”—I had to say it was “different,” and was encouraged to learn about those differences. No food was too exotic; no culture was too unfamiliar. Intrigued by the unknown, I had a voracious appetite to learn how things worked and why they worked in a particular way. In college, my curiosity, coupled with immersion in the principles of social justice, led to a dedication to addressing the large-scale challenges facing society. My questions increasingly transformed into ideas as I thought through ways to craft potential solutions.

As a consultant, I had the opportunity to put some of those ideas into action leading a fellowship program that provided strategic guidance to NGOs and social enterprises internationally. By helping to launch innovation tournaments, social entrepreneurship incubators, and impact evaluation systems, I deepened my understanding of how social innovation can be used to drive economic growth and civic engagement in ways that can empower local communities. When the opportunity arose to serve in the White House, I was grateful to be able to apply the skills and experiences I had gained to further the mission of the Office of Social Innovation, working to measurably advance ladders to economic opportunity, equity, and justice. As a Policy Advisor, I contributed to a variety of data-driven and technology-enabled policy solutions, including helping to launch the Data-Driven Justice Initiative and co-leading the My Brother’s Keeper Evidence and Data Working Group.

I hope to continue to transform the public sector through innovative approaches to policy implementation. With the leadership skills gained within the Zuckerman Fellowship’s community of cross-disciplinary problem-solvers, I will be better prepared to lead efforts toward positive change so that the public sector can reach its full potential to serve the American people. I look forward to diving into new problems to solve and continuing to work to bring new ideas, technologies, and solutions into spaces where they can have the largest impact.

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Stanford Graduate School of Business, MBA Candidate, 2020
Georgetown University, BSFS in Science, Technology, & International Affairs with Honors, magna cum laude, 2013

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
The White House, Domestic Policy Council, Office of Social Innovation: Policy Advisor & Special Assistant
Deloitte Consulting: Strategy & Operations Consultant
Georgetown University Center for Social Justice: Program Coordinator
Classical Repertory Dance Ensemble: Company Director
The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Intern
In working with low-income Latino and LGBTQ communities, I have been energized by the enormous potential that bridging medical care and social services has for improving health outcomes. As a case manager doing social work, I saw improvements in access to housing, employment, mental health services, legal aid, and education produce impacts on health that no doctor's visit could. I came to see that addressing social factors is essential to ending health disparities and decreasing healthcare costs. My goal as a physician leader is to address these social determinants through research, collaboration, policy change, and care.

As a beneficiary of invaluable mentorship, I have found joy and purpose in mentoring youth of color by coaching sports teams and participating in mentoring events as a part of the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA). In creating a partnership between LMSA and Mission Girls (a local community based organization), low-income Latina girls in the Mission district of San Francisco came to have access to medical student mentors. Having made the challenging journey to medical school and then witnessing the disparities within higher academia, I am also motivated to influence my institution's strategic planning surrounding equity. As a founder and leader of the White Coats for Black Lives movement, I have sought to motivate higher education institutions to recognize and address disparities within medical care and medical education.

With an MPH with a focus on policy, I am looking forward to learning how to analyze population health as well as to design policies that better leverage healthcare resources to influence social determinants. As a Zuckerman Fellow, I hope to learn from experts across many fields about different approaches to improving the lives of underserved communities. I also hope to learn with and from passionate leaders from diverse backgrounds so that I may become a more effective collaborator in the work towards a more equitable healthcare system and a more just society.
NARRATIVE

I wanted to be a teacher like my mom. She was raised with seven siblings in a one-room apartment smaller than her future classroom. She became a teacher because, in my family, education is the great equalizer—the path of opportunity for those with less. At the age of ten I remember volunteering at the food bank in downtown Seattle, separating rotten apples, when I saw a hungry mother and her daughter collecting the apples we discarded. I thought, “If she gets sick, how will she learn?” This early experience sparked the connection I see between education, healthcare, and service.

My path focused on service as an AmeriCorps Member and by founding a Youth Development Center in Uganda. In medical school, I built a clinical foundation rooted in underserved communities. I developed a Service Learning Group for Adolescents, and created culturally competent educational interventions for patients at an inner-city clinic.

Pediatrics residency highlighted the gaps that exist in medical training surrounding advocacy and diseases that disproportionately affect underserved communities. I was privileged to take the skills and experiences I learned and teach neonatal protocols in Kenya, as well as develop a multi-disciplinary mental health curriculum for residents to help bridge these gaps. I know these challenges will continue to grow and change as the delivery of healthcare evolves.

The Harvard Graduate School of Education will further my skills as an educator, providing a foundation in curriculum design and evaluation. This augmented with the Zuckerman Fellowship, which provides the unique opportunity of collaboration across disciplines, will equip me with the framework to develop advocacy curricula geared at reducing disparities in healthcare delivery and empowering the next generation of provider advocates. I will continue to advocate, educate, and support underserved communities as both a pediatrician, and as a teacher like my mom.
NARRATIVE

Growing up, my mom would say “ponte las pilas!” to tell me to work harder. The phrase translates to “put in your batteries!” and makes me think about how hard my parents worked to become the first ones in their families to leave Colombia and create new opportunities for themselves in the United States. Yet, I know that there are many people in Colombia, the United States, and around the world who are systematically blocked from opportunity regardless of their effort. This reality is what drives me to advocate for underserved communities.

I have spent the past five years working in the tech industry, realizing the large-scale and sustainable impact that technology and data can have on empowering communities. At Google, I worked to increase access to opportunity for individuals either aspiring to work or currently working in tech. I conducted research, performed analysis, and managed projects relating to diversity and inclusion, behavioral economics, and organizational behavior. Then, I joined Uber to work on the company’s strategic partnerships to help improve the future of transportation globally. I helped manage UberMILITARY, a program designed to support military families through riding and driving with Uber, and worked on a product effort to make the Uber application more inclusive for deaf and hard-of-hearing driver partners. I also served as the Global Chair of both Google and Uber’s Latino Business and Employee Resource Groups, leading efforts to bridge the digital divide in predominantly Latino underserved communities and develop future Latino tech industry leaders.

Through these experiences, I have also learned that a gap exists between the private sector and the public and nonprofit sectors as it relates to technological innovation. My goal is to bridge this gap by redefining how the private, public, and nonprofit sectors all partner to provide underserved communities greater access to opportunity. I want to leverage emerging technologies in the private sector to help governments serve communities more effectively and to make cities more inclusive and productive. As a joint degree candidate and as a Zuckerman Fellow, I hope to build the leadership acumen to design cross-sector partnerships that allow both underprivileged communities and businesses to thrive.
GRACE TRUONG

HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH CANDIDATE, 2018

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
Harvard Law School, JD Candidate, 2019
University of Pennsylvania, BA in Biology with Distinction, summa cum laude, 2015

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS
Fulbright Fellow: 2015–16
Microsoft Imagine Cup: World Finalist, World Semifinalist Winner, 1st Place National Finalist
Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP: Summer Associate
McKinsey & Company Women's Leadership Challenge Award Recipient
Harvard Law Entrepreneurship Project: Events Director and Student Attorney
The Heart at Play Foundation: U.S. Ambassador and Summer Dance Movement Therapy Program Director
Anima Christi Center for Learning and Human Development: Special Education Teacher's Aide
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Center for Mitochondrial and Epigenomic Medicine: Undergraduate Researcher

NARRATIVE
As refugees fleeing from a war-torn Vietnam, my parents struggled to rebuild their lives in a completely foreign land. While learning an unfamiliar language and settling into a new country, they provided care for my uncle, who has autism. Witnessing the challenges my parents faced while navigating healthcare and educational resources for my uncle solidified my commitment to advocating for individuals with special needs and their families.

As a Fulbright Fellow in the Philippines, I aimed to serve and provide resources for autistic communities. Filipinos with autism are forced to confront crippling cultural stigma surrounding their disability. This environment often keeps them economically and intellectually stagnant, incapable of social mobility. In light of this, I researched barriers to early autism diagnosis and assessed the quality of services available to Filipinos with autism and their families. One of my most startling research findings was that Filipinos in rural areas often only get access to a basic healthcare provider once every four years. With this in mind, I worked with the Philippines Department of Health to assess the efficacy and sustainability of their Caretakers' Skills Training Program, which equips caretakers with basic therapy skills in regions that have no access to developmental pediatricians or therapy centers.

Since the completion of my Fulbright Fellowship, I have continued my commitment to autism advocacy stateside. As the U.S. Ambassador of The Heart at Play Foundation, I launched a Dance Movement Therapy Program for adults with special needs in New York City.

I recognize that I have the opportunity and responsibility to use the education I've been equipped with to promote equal opportunities and combat social injustices. With an education in law and public health, I plan to pursue a career in health law. I aim to build policies that advocate for individuals like my uncle, enabling them to thrive. I am incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to be a Zuckerman Fellow. The Zuckerman Fellowship program and community will equip me with the collaborative network and interdisciplinary perspective needed to be an effective public servant for the special needs community.
I became an environmentalist at the ripe age of twelve, in a small schoolhouse where my science teacher spun stories about melting ice and superstorms. While our textbook was filled with hapless amphibians and polar bears, she cared deeply and spoke often about the human impacts as well. I was struck by the risks of natural disasters and the chipping away of livelihoods made obsolete by drying lands and shrinking biodiversity. Climate change wreaks tragedies most often borne, by dint of birth or circumstance, by those least prepared to endure the effects.

I have spent the years since searching for the best approaches to respond to this planetary transformation, and evaluating how community organizations, governments, and the private sector can collaborate on sustainable urban development. There are difficult choices ahead for policy makers and industry experts, who will need to grapple with how we consume energy, share water, and protect coastlines. I joined the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to get a firsthand perspective on local climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Throughout my time at DEP, I worked on projects that showcase how environmental policies shape city planning, how cities worldwide are preparing for extreme weather, and how labor, budget, and procurement rules can impact results. I also learned to navigate myriad relationships with DEP’s stakeholders and regulators, worked with different Commissioners to reach decisions under intense public scrutiny, and navigated public health issues with the inherent complexities of decades-old data.

While my endeavors have allowed me to build experience in environmental advocacy and policy, I aspire to be a leader with a diverse toolkit, and hope to further explore how policy and market-based sustainability and energy initiatives can complement each other. As a Harvard MPP/MBA candidate, I look forward to the tutelage of faculty who have mastered both the arts of business and the business of good governance. The Zuckerman Fellowship Program provides a unique opportunity to meet leaders tackling challenges in a wide breadth of areas, and it is a privilege to pursue my sustainability interests alongside such dedicated and exceptional fellows.
“Growing up, my mom would say ‘ponte las pilas!’ to tell me to work harder. The phrase translates to ‘put in your batteries!’ and makes me think about how hard my parents worked to become the first ones in their families to leave Colombia and create new opportunities for themselves in the United States. Yet, I know that there are many people in Colombia, the United States, and around the world who are systematically blocked from opportunity regardless of their effort. As a joint degree candidate and as a Zuckerman Fellow, I hope to build the leadership acumen to design cross-sector partnerships that allow both underprivileged communities and businesses to thrive.”

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Harvard Kennedy School  
Zuckerman Fellow  
MPP/MBA Candidate
For additional information about Center for Public Leadership Fellowship programs, please visit: http://cpl.hks.harvard.edu/student-fellowships

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