

THE LOIS ROTH ENDOWMENT

Fostering International Dialogue



2020 ANNUAL REVIEW

Program Year
July 2019 – June 2020

*For more on programs and awardees,
please see www.rothendowment.org*

Project Support Awards

Project Support Awards supplement existing grant funding to help selected individuals enrich and expand their work in countries to which Lois Roth was particularly attached. Only those projects already awarded in fall 2019 were implemented last year, due to the coronavirus crisis.

Australia. Administered with the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, this award was suspended for 2020 due to travel restrictions.

Denmark. The presentation of this award, offered in collaboration with the American Scandinavian Foundation, was postponed until January 2021.

Finland. In cooperation with the Fulbright Center in Helsinki, Roth-Thomson Awards were bestowed on **Anna Bogdan** (Princeton Univ.) and **Kayleigh Anderson** (Univ. of Kansas). While pursuing a master's degree in Global Politics and Communication at the University of Helsinki, Bogdan used her award to support research on the spread of misinformation in online political discussions in Finland. As part of her graduate program in Gender Studies at the University of Turku, Anderson researched the experiences of indigenous Sámi women as well as cultural appropriation and colonization with regard to the Sámi people.

New Zealand. The 2020 Winks Award, granted to a New Zealander pursuing graduate study in the U.S., was postponed until spring 2021 due to travel restrictions.

Norway. **Keegan Glennon** (Univ. of Rhode Island), is working on a master's degree in Philosophy at the University of Oslo, focusing on development, sustainability and cultural change.

She used her award to travel to investigate a Norwegian government decision to allow mining waste to be dumped in the protected Repparfjord area.

Sweden. Two Roth-Thomson Awards administered with Fulbright Sweden went to **Ben Orozco** (Univ. of Wisconsin–Madison) and **MaryClaire Pappas** (Indiana Univ. Bloomington). An artist specializing in neon and glasswork, Orozco studied at The Glass Factory in Boda Glasbruk and used his award to fund a solo exhibition culminating his Fulbright research project on Swedish neon and glass work. For her dissertation on the Swedish avant-garde art movement, Pappas used her award to expand her research into female avant-garde artists, who have been largely overlooked. She plans to write a book on the contributions of Scandinavian artists to European modern art.

Awards for Literary Translation

MLA-Roth Award. In partnership with the Modern Language Association, this year's award went to **Damion Searls** for his translation from the German of Uwe Johnson's novel *Anniversaries: From a Year in the Life of Gesine Cresspahl*. Two Honorable Mentions went to **Asselin Charles** for his translation from the French of Frankétienne's *Dézafi*, and to **Donald Rayfield** for his translation from the Russian of Varlam Shalamov's *Kolyma Stories*.

Arabic Literature Tour. The US tour of an Arabic-language author and their translator offers students and faculty a chance to experience contemporary Arabic literature in person. In fall 2019, **Shahad Al-Rawi**, author of *The Baghdad Clock* (2016), and her

translator Luke Leafgren presented their work on 8 US university campuses, offering a privileged glimpse into the process of authors and their translators.

Dyankov Prize. Named for Krustan Dyankov, pioneer translator of English-language literature into Bulgarian, this year's prize went to **Zornitsa Hristova** for her translation of *The Bonfire of the Vanities* by Tom Wolfe. You can read an interview with Hristova on the Elizabeth Kostova Foundation website.

Co-Sponsored Programs

Fulbright Legacy Lectures. To honor the life of J. William Fulbright, prominent figures in international relations give a set of three lectures—at Pembroke College, Oxford (where Fulbright studied, 1924-28), Kings College London and the University of Edinburgh. In its 10th year, the usual lectures were replaced by a virtual panel discussion in the midst of the coronavirus crisis and Black Lives Matter Movement.

Honoree **Janet Napolitano**, President of the University of California, was joined by UK university leaders to discuss the timely topic of "Higher Education and the Public Good." The wide-ranging discussion responded to a dedicated IPSOS Mori global survey on public attitudes towards higher education, and covered topics from inequality and student debt, to international collaboration and alternative models of university education.

Sozopol Writers Seminar. The usual seminar was replaced by a virtual "Alone Together" program from March to May 2020. (Many installments were posted to our social media.) Sozopol Seminar faculty and fellows on 5 continents were invited to look through the

window of their studies, literally and metaphorically, and share their writing from the confines of their homes during the coronavirus outbreak.

Excellence in Cultural Diplomacy

These awards were bestowed at a virtual awards ceremony held by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on December 9, 2020.

This year, we created a new Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Career Achievement Award to honor exceptional long-serving, locally engaged staff, who are the backbone of every US Embassy.

Lois Roth Award. Cultural Affairs Officer **David MacDonal**d was recognized for her “Moonshot Morocco” program at the Embassy in Rabat, Morocco. Transforming the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing into a year-long celebration, with over 50 events in 24 Moroccan cities—including a 3-day Moonshot Morocco Youth Festival—engaging 15,000 STEM enthusiasts and emerging entrepreneurs, while tens of thousands participated online through social media.

CAO **Holly Zardus** at the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo received an Honorable Mention for her multi-faceted program addressing problems facing Bosnia and Herzegovina by developing a new cadre of leaders. It offered a full range of public diplomacy programming, including existing exchanges as well as new business-focused projects and academic programs on civic and economic development.

Ichman-Richardson Award. Through tireless dedication and a creative, insightful approach, Director of Academic Exchange Programs **Mary Kirk** and her team expanded the

Fulbright Program's outreach and selection processes, while ensuring the health, safety and productivity of the exchange experience for all Fulbrighters. During her tenure, they have built alumni and partner networks and reinvigorated the Fulbright US scholar program, while expanding training and resource materials for ECA staff, posts and Fulbright commissions.

An Honorable Mention was bestowed on Senior Program Manager for Diversity and Inclusion **David Levin**, who, over 36 years, has transformed the organization's ethos, thanks to his conviction that international exchanges should be available to everyone and are more impactful when they represent the diversity of the U.S. and other societies. Examples of his contributions include expanding attention to inner-cities and rural areas in the 1980s and to people with disabilities in the 1990s.

Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Award. Through interpersonal skills and leadership, **Esti Durahsanti**, Cultural Affairs Specialist at the U.S. Consulate General in Surabaya, Indonesia, provides the foundation for public diplomacy programming and an example of excellence for all Consulate employees. Her extensive experience—with women's empowerment, disability rights, LGBTQ issues, human trafficking and STEAM (add Arts to STEM)—has driven cutting-edge programming with broad impact.

Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Career Achievement Awards. In over 35 years as a Cultural Assistant at the Consulate General in Jeddah, **Ali Al Ghadban's** stellar work in exchange and alumni programs has supported the entire

U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia. He has successfully leveraged his vast network to strengthen U.S.-Saudi ties through education and cultural exchange, while deepening relations with the next generation of Saudi leaders.

Over 40 years, **Felicity Aziz**, the Deputy Director of the American Center in Jerusalem, has served as the liaison to 35 grantee organizations, while managing operations and staff. The Mission relies on her skilled approach to public diplomacy and advice on women's empowerment and economic development, religious affairs, rule of law, innovation and entrepreneurship, climate and environment, good governance and peripheral communities.

For almost 30 years, Education and Professional Exchanges Specialist **Ivanka Ponikvar** has been the most respected exchanges interlocutor at the U.S. Embassy Slovenia. She has steadily increased the Embassy's network of policy and opinion-makers and deftly navigated the changing political and economic landscape to recruit the nation's most promising educational and professional exchange participants.

Helena Vagnerova, Senior Member of the Established Opinion Leader Team at the U.S. Embassy Prague, has mentored generations of FSOs and local staff. From drafting memos and remarks for the Ambassador, to managing logistical, budgetary and bureaucratic issues, she personifies the critical role that cultural outreach plays in strengthening international bonds.

The Roth Endowment relies entirely on individual gifts to support its work. Your generous contribution is greatly appreciated. For annual giving and bequests, please contact us at give@rothendowment.org or 202-810-3806.

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