Seal pups and their mothers warm themselves on the rocks along the shore of a Patagonian beach.

Front, inside front and back cover photos by Saul Sosnowski
features

Fulbright Program Holds Opportunity for Academic Growth & Personal Connections
Visiting scholars, UM faculty, staff and students participating in this prestigious program gain access to resources while reaping rewards.

Helping to Develop Strategies to Survive the 21st Century
A new conversation series from the Office of International Programs features speakers with wide range of views and experiences, offers insights into global challenges for the future.

Study Abroad Office (SAO) Continues to Develop Partnerships that Benefit UM Students
SAO works with University Career Center to create new web-based resources; shares with Office of Multicultural Student Education 2008 Academy of Academic Excellence Award, in recognition of Contributions to academic excellence in multi-ethnic students.

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The Fulbright Program is widely recognized as one of the country’s premier fellowship programs. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, it has promoted the exchange of international scholars with US institutions for over 60 years. The Office of International Programs (OIP) has a long history of working with visiting Fulbright scholars. Since 1996, it has housed the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Enrichment Program, which serves visiting Fulbrighters in College Park as well as all other host institutions in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C. The program provides them with a variety of activities so they can experience the unique character of the Washington region and encourage the formation of a vibrant Fulbright community. Recent events have included an evening at the Peruvian Ambassador’s residence and a day on the Chesapeake Bay with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

This year, the University of Maryland is hosting numerous Fulbright Students, 11 Humphrey Fellows in Journalism (a Fulbright Program) and three Visiting Fulbright Scholars. The three visiting Fulbright scholars currently on campus are representative of the 70 internationally-recognized Fulbright experts who have come to the University from 35 countries since 2000. Their grants may last only a matter of months, but what they learn here can profoundly impact their work at home and allow their hosts and colleagues to better understand the world beyond US borders.

Coming to America: Renewing Relations
Since August 2007, Dr. Xiaoyi Fang has been at the University of Maryland working with his longtime colleague Dr. Norman Epstein in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program in the College of Health and Human Performance. His research focuses on health behaviors such as smoking, drinking,
sexual practices and addictions that challenge both Chinese and US families. In China, where rapid industrialization is having wide-ranging effects on traditional society, Chinese families are among the first to feel these changes in their daily lives. The field of family therapy was introduced in China only in the last 10-15 years, but the demand for and importance of this work has grown quickly along with the economy. A pioneer in Chinese family therapy, Dr. Fang is a developmental psychologist who established the first family therapy clinic in China a decade ago. There he sees patients in his Beijing clinic, supervises young psychologists, and teaches at Beijing Normal University.

Dr. Konstantin Podlesskiy of Russia, came to the University of Maryland in January of 2008 to work with Dr. Michael Brown of the Department of Geology. Colleagues since the 1980s when they were both officers in a UNESCO project on Metamorphism and Geodynamics, Dr. Podlesskiy’s current Fulbright fellowship represents the most recent phase of their collaboration. Fulbright fellowships in the Natural Sciences just became available last year in Russia, and as a measure of his professional stature, he was among the first Russian scientists to receive one of these grants.

He finds his work and personal life at the University of Maryland satisfying, citing the high level of research, ready availability of information, and the diverse and friendly community.

Dr. Kamolwan Leupresert hails from King Mongkut Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand. As Associate Dean of the Department of Civil Engineering, she taught construction management. At the University of Maryland, she is working with Dr. Miroslaw Skibniewski whom she has known since her time at Purdue University in 1996. She finds the work environment at the University of Maryland very accessible, with abundant and up-to-date publications and other resources. She enjoys the close proximity to Washington, D.C. where she is able to study large-scale construction projects performed by major contractors.

Dr. Leupresert has adapted quickly to life in the United States. She has learned to be more assertive in dealing with Americans than she would be in Thailand – where assertiveness might be perceived as disrespectful -- and gets around the area in a Zipcar when needed. She is in demand as a speaker and will lecture in Puerto Rico before returning to Thailand.

This year, and in years past, Fulbright Scholars from around the world have embraced their experiences at the University of Maryland and established professional and personal relationships that cross national and cultural boundaries. These bonds benefit the Visiting Scholars, their American hosts, and potentially, the countries they represent. Senator J. William Fulbright often said that the Fulbright Program aims to “increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship.” This may, in fact, be one of the most important functions that the University of Maryland, or any institution, can perform.

The Chance to Get the Big Picture
One year ago Corey Laplante knew that he wanted to study and do research abroad, but he didn’t exactly know where to go and what project to undertake. Last month Laplante, a UM senior double major in Spanish and Philosophy, was given the good news that he had been selected for the Student Fulbright Program. This highly-competitive national fellowship will provide support for Corey to spend a year in Lima studying environmental law and working as a research intern for attorneys litigating on behalf of miners’ rights in the town of La Oroya, Peru.

How did Laplante become a winner? In the six months between first
learning about the Fulbright Student Program and submitting his application last September, Laplante took several important steps. He worked to improve his Spanish, zeroed in on Peru as the most promising country to pursue his interests in international law, educated himself about the delicate balance between economic growth and a sustainable environment facing Peruvian workers seeking to rise above poverty, drafted two short essays about his proposed study and his intellectual/personal interests, and wrote numerous emails to attorneys and law professors in Peru until he received a letter of support from a well-known Peruvian law firm indicating its interest in his project.

UM campus Fulbright adviser for students Professor Jonathan Auerbach helped him with the application process every step of the way. This kind of determined effort has recently paid off for a number of UM students, seniors, alumni, and graduate students, who are Fulbright finalists this year.

They aim to study subjects as diverse as public health, urban planning, and constitutional politics in countries such as Columbia, Lithuania, and Spain. Caitlin Hopping, for example, having lived extensively in China, will be spending a year staying with a Korean family and teaching English to secondary school students, part of her career plans to work as a professor or government official in East Asian studies.

The Fulbright Student Program currently offers more than 1400 fellowships in over 130 countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe, in a wide variety of fields in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

For more information see the National Scholarships Office website at www.scholarships.umd.edu.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS OFFICE’S DR. SCOTT A. WOLPERT

Q: What experiences prepare an undergraduate for a successful Fulbright application?
A: The Fulbright program is very flexible and there is no unique path to a competitive application. Nevertheless, common experiences found in successful applications include study abroad (even return visits to a region), expertise in a foreign language, research and/or community project experiences and solid academic records.

Q: How do you advise undergraduates towards a successful application?
A: An important consideration for the Fulbright program is to have our best graduates be “ambassadors” of the United States. Students begin by preparing themselves for successful experiences after graduation. We advise all students to develop faculty mentors, to stay abreast of world news and to take advantage of the opportunities available to undergraduates. Perhaps our most important message is take advantage of multiple opportunities through study abroad. As students are planning study abroad, foreign language study and research projects we present the challenge of planning synergistic opportunities... a student fluent in Spanish and interested in community health care might consider opportunities in Central or South America.

Could a Fulbright Be In Your Future?

The path to a Fulbright award is challenging, both because of the high level of the competition, and also the rather solitary nature of the quest. While other prestigious research and teaching grants frequently involve teams of investigators, Fulbright awards focus more on individual applicants. In some cases—such as the Fulbright International Education Administrators Program (IEA)—individual applicants are pooled into a group, which is then run through a rigorous, defined program of training/study. More often, however, Fulbright applicants are “on their own,” and must put in a great deal of individual preparatory effort, simply to be competitive. Identifying a research/teaching topic is only the first step; close on its heels comes finding a country to which to apply.

To the surprise of many senior scholars and staff, not all countries around the world have Fulbright programs. Not only must the host country have diplomatic relations with the US (since all the various programs—whether for students, scholars, or professionals—are, ultimately, dependencies of the US Department of State), that country’s government must also have established and funded an independent Fulbright office there, to handle the various needs of visiting American awardees. Furthermore, in many cases an applicant must identify a colleague in the country, and solicit from that colleague an offer to act as “host” to the applicant. And all of the above is merely sine quibus non; taking these steps is no guarantee of success.

The good news, however, is that the staffs of the organizations that oversee the various Fulbright programs for USDOS (the Institute of International Education [IIE], and its adjunct for faculty/professional Fulbrights, the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars [CIES]) are dedicated to helping applicants produce the best proposal possible. Not only do IIE/CIES identify and train Fulbright representatives on individual campuses (at UM, for students: Prof. Jonathan Auerbach [ENGL]; for faculty/professionals: Dr. Joseph Scholten [OIP]), but also offer on-campus workshops for prospective applicants, and work with individual candidates.

As a first step to applying for a Fulbright, UM students are encouraged to contact Prof. Auerbach (auerbach@umd.edu), and visit the informational page he has created for the National Scholarships Office. Faculty/professionals interested in applying for a Fulbright may visit the new webpage now on the OIP site, under the Faculty/Staff link on the Information panel, or contact OIP Associate Director Joe Scholten.

Dr. Scholten is also compiling a list of Fulbright alumni who are now at UM, as a resource for future UM applicants. If you would like your name added to that list, please email him: scholten@umd.edu.
Not for Faculty Only!
A non-faculty Fulbright recipient shares her experience

I had always been under the impression that Fulbright awards were only for faculty! When I heard about this particular award, and the fact that they were specifically seeking applicants from my field (career services) I was surprised, excited, and a little apprehensive about the process. I had previously never traveled abroad and so, for me, this Fulbright experience became an internship. It was an opportunity to travel, to learn in a structured setting and to experience the culture of another country.

My experience included 23 educators (six from career services). We spent a week in Berlin, Germany during which time we learned from top educators and officials all about the Bologna Process being implemented throughout Germany, the political structure and the culture of the German people. We were in daily educational sessions, visited other institutions of higher education and, in the evenings, often visited cultural sites or organized networking receptions. We had one free day in Berlin, allowing small groups to visit additional sites. The group then left for three days in Prague, Czech Republic, with a side trip to Pilson. Again, we participated in an organized walking tour of the city and visited several educational institutions - Charles University, The Bohemian University. Our group then boarded a train to four separate visits. The career services group went to Munster for four days. We reconvened as a group in Halle/Wittenberg for three days and then back to Berlin for one day. An experience that will remain with me for the rest of my life, I now know first hand what it is like to travel abroad, to not speak the native language (although most Germans speak some English) and to be a minority within that culture (an African-American female). The program in which I participated was the U.S. Administrators in International Education. Their website, www.cies.org, offers an overview.

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UM-BBC World Poll: U.S. Image in the World is Getting Better

Since 2005, the BBC World Service Poll has been tracking opinions about country influence in the world. The latest polling effort was completed through a joint effort between the University of Maryland’s Program on International Policy Studies (PIPA) and the international firm GlobeScan who conducted 17,457 interviews.

Its latest results show that the opinion toward the United States that is held by citizens of other countries is starting to get better. In fact, the average percentage describing how positive the U.S. is in the eyes of the international community rose four percent, from 31 percent in 2007 to 35 percent today. The poll data represents the opinions of peoples living in countries from a wide range of geographic regions with varied cultural sensibilities which include Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Philippines, Russia, South Korea and Turkey.

GlobeScan coordinated fieldwork between October 31, 2007 and January 25, 2008. The United States shares its favorable opinion boost with Russia whose positive opinion numbers were double those of the U.S. Russia’s positive average, once at 29 percent, increased to 37 percent. Other countries upon whom the world look favorably are Germany, Japan, and the European Union. Japan is second to Germany who was listed for the first time this year.

Unfortunately, this positive upswing has a down side. The recent recovery masks a consistent downward spiral preceding it for several years.

To read more on this and other stories, visit the University of Maryland newsdesk site at www.newsdesk.umd.edu. For additional information about PIPA and its research, visit www.worldpublicopinion.org.
Helping to Develop “Strategies to Survive the 21st Century”

New Office of International Programs Conversation Series Offers Insights Into Global Challenges for the Future

Dr. Thomas Schelling came to the Maryland School of Public Affairs after twenty years at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he was the Littauer Professor of Political Economy. After elections to several prestigious academic organizations, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2005. Susan Eisenhower is President of the Eisenhower Group, Inc., which provides strategic counsel on political, business and public affairs projects.

The stage onto which University of Maryland students are entering is increasingly international, presenting new challenges and demanding new ways of thinking. In fact, students graduating in coming years will find themselves needing cultural and political nuance which their parents may never have imagined.

With this reality in mind, an informal group of UM personnel, led by OIP Director, Saúl Sosnowski, and with support from Provost Nariman Farvardin, began discussing ways to give UM students (and the larger campus community) the opportunity to consider crucial issues that all will confront in the years and decades ahead. The first result is a new conversation series, “Strategies to Survive the 21st Century”, a forum for internationally prominent members of the UM family, the DC area, and other select visitors to share their thoughts on issues that confront contemporary society, such as environmental change, energy needs, economic transformation, political systems, racial and ethnic conflict, and national and international security. All presentations in the series will be free and open to members of the campus community, and feature an interactive format.

The inaugural event in the series typifies the caliber of its speakers and importance of its issues. On March 25th, Susan Eisenhower, the granddaughter of President Dwight Eisenhower and president of the Eisenhower Group, Inc., offered reflections on the changing global/political landscape through a presentation entitled, “The Gathering Storm: Strategy and Politics in an Uncertain Age.”

During her remarks, Ms. Eisenhower drew distinctions between the era of her own political awakening and the present time during which students are, themselves, coming of age and learning more about world events. She made note of how much less stable the world seems to be today, even though her own era was arguably more dangerous because of the pervasive nuclear threat. She illustrated the present circumstances by comparing them to the phrase from a poster that she once saw as a young employee, “Just when I figured out the answers to the questions in life, they went and changed the questions.”

A fundamental shift in the nature of questions the new generation is being presented signals the differences between it and the generation that immediately preceded it, she stated. Students graduating today will have to confront a new, less focused, and more rapidly changing environment with questions that are vastly
different from those that faced many of the older members of the University community. “So many things on the international scene are changing rapidly that I think we have to take a look at ourselves and begin to try and calculate where America is in this changing environment,” she stated. “Our failure to understand our changing position in the global community stunts our ability to compete and advance in that environment.”

The second speaker in the series was Nobel Laureate and UM professor, Thomas Schelling.

Dr. Schelling came to the Maryland School of Public Affairs after twenty years at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he was the Lucius N. Littauer Professor of Political Economy. He has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1991 he was President of the American Economic Association, of which he is a Distinguished Fellow. He was the recipient of the Frank E. Seidman Distinguished Award in Political Economy and served in the Economic Cooperation Administration in Europe. He has held positions in the White House and Executive Office of the President, Yale University, the RAND Corporation and the Department of Economics and Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. Dr. Schelling’s presentation was entitled, “Sixty-Two Years Without Nuclear War”, which expounded upon issues surrounding nuclear arms proliferation and the circumstances that have prevented global thermonuclear in the past six decades.

Considering the importance of providing campus-wide exposure to speaker such as these, Sosnowski concurred with Ms. Eisenhower’s view, noting the need to equip University of Maryland students, faculty and staff with this perspective. “It is of vital importance that we provide our community with an understanding of the challenges we face; that we contribute to the critical thinking required to address the threats of survival as a community of nations. That is the driving force behind this new series.”

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Taiwan’s 2008 Presidential Election: Prospects for Cross-Strait Relations

The Office of International Programs (OIP) hosted a forum on the Taiwan presidential elections which featured Dr. Alexander Chieh-cheng Huang of Taiwan’s Tamkang University. Huang specializes in Asian and Chinese security and defense studies and is concurrently affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C., and the Foundation on International and Cross-Strait Studies in Taipei. He taught Chinese Foreign Policy and U.S. Security Policy at the UM from 1998–2000.

Huang detailed the recent election results in which Ma Ying-jeou, leader of the Kuomintang Party (KMT) in Taiwan, and former Mayor of Taipei, was elected president of Taiwan over the candidate of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Frank Hsieh. He offered thoughts on the implications for cross-strait relations, saying that a majority of voters chose the promise of economic growth through closer ties with China over fears that relations with the mainland could lead to a loss of independence. Voters also nixed two referendums supporting Taiwan’s application to join the United Nations.

Ma promised to be a “president for the people,” adding that he would unite the nation, establish a clean government, and maintain the status quo through flexibility. Huang remarked that Ma’s warmth and enthusiasm was evidenced in his “going down” into the villages to talk with common folk, making the “new” KMT the people’s KMT, focusing on consensus and compromise, and providing an important fresh opportunity to reduce tensions and increase cooperation with Beijing.

Huang shared his optimism over the potential for positive relations between Taipei and Beijing. The problems that exist cannot be resolved over the short-term, but this election, Huang said, was truly a victory for the entire Taiwanese people.
Study Abroad Office Continues to Develop Partnerships that Benefit UM Students

SAO Works with University Career Center to create new Web-based Resources

Students come to the University of Maryland because of its diverse culture and its diverse academic offerings. Many extend this experience by traveling to foreign countries. Traditionally, UM undergrads have studied their areas of interest in a non-US setting in order to better appreciate their place as citizens in a global society. More recently, however, an increasing number of would-be study abroad students are also driven by a desire to prepare for their professional futures in a global economy.

Earlier this academic year, the Study Abroad Office and the University Career Center combined forces to help address this new agenda for overseas experience among UM students. Together, these two units co-sponsored a new staff position whose duty is to identify and coordinate resources for students interested in enhancing their learning experiences through companion experiences in foreign workplaces. Working from the University Career Center, this coordinator spent the Fall semester compiling a repository of information—the new “Globally Engaged” website—to which students can refer when seeking to connect with international organizations offering experiences other than traditional study abroad.

This new partnership is intended to serve UM students on many levels. It will “create a unified approach to assist UM students in finding international opportunities”, says Mark Kenyon, Associate Director of the University Career Center. It seeks to “bring to bear all of our knowledge and resources to provide an avenue for UM students to incorporate an international opportunity during their College Park experience, as well as prepare for global possibilities after graduation.” The venture will also enhance the academic component of the experience. Dr. Michael Ulrich, Associate Director for International Education Services, notes that, “an academic internship in conjunction with classroom study can expose students to a broader appreciation for another culture and help them gain cross-cultural skills. [The] Globally Engaged (GE) website helps students who are seeking to connect internationally to do just that.”

Located within the Office of International Programs family of websites, the GE site guides students through their international possibilities. There, students can explore various formats that international work experiences can take, such as internships, volunteering, teaching or formal employment. Students are also given advice on how to set realistic/manageable goals for their international work experience; research the possible experiences through conventional means or networking; establish a timeline for transitioning to that experience; and follow through
Study Abroad Office Continues to Develop Partnerships that Benefit UM Students

Photo: Students participate in community projects during summer 2007 service learning trip to Cameroon

on whatever plans they make, in order to meet important deadlines and demonstrate commitment.

Coordinating these tasks required support from outside the two partnering units. Indeed, University Career Center Executive Director, Dr. Javanne Adams-Gaston, remarked that one impetus behind the effort was university president Dan Mote. She noted that his leadership and vision for the university’s relationships with academic and private sector organizations overseas served as a guide for this project. The new partnership is also important within the university, bringing together as it does units in two of UM’s top level administrative divisions—Academic Affairs and Student Affairs—in a new, complimentary initiative.

Lauren Ruszczyk, at that time a member of the Study Abroad Office staff, stepped into the position of coordinator. Ruszczyk believes that students are already seeing tangible results from the partnership. For example, a new internship option within the Maryland-in-London program allows students to have an immersive experiential learning opportunity while receiving UM credit. “Inevitably, I think this partnership will most benefit students by allowing them to clearly define the connection between their international experiences and their post graduate plans, on their own, by taking advantage of campus resources,” Ruszczyk said. “Having been a student, I know how frustrating it can be to feel that on-campus offices are disjointed and constantly reinventing the wheel.”

To this, Kenyon adds that, “UM students will benefit from this collaboration through these intentional programs and resources by integrating their international experiences abroad into their academic and career goals.”

Collaboration has been the lynchpin to the successful launch of this program. Thanks to the determined cooperation of those involved, the world may, literally, now be at the fingertips of every UM student.

2008 ACADEMY OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD RECOGNIZES CONTINUING EFFORTS BY STUDY ABROAD OFFICE TO CONNECT WITH MINORITY STUDENTS

In another recent collaboration, the Study Abroad Office teamed up with the Office of Multicultural Student Education (OMSE) to combat the underrepresentation of minority students in overseas study.

Even though a full third of the UM undergraduate population is made up of non-White students, the number of minority students that participate in study abroad experiences is well below that of their non-minority counterparts. Students of color have cited many factors that affect their choice whether or not to explore opportunities overseas. One requirement of the process—advanced planning—often plagues these students.

In his brief tenure at UM, OMSE director, Dr. Christopher Lester, has already identified strong planning skills as a necessary complement to the intellectual
capabilities that students bring with them to College Park. “What I have come to know is that, oftentimes, students are not successful relative to academic outcomes or professional outcomes [not] because they don’t have the wherewithal or the brilliance. It’s often because of poor planning,” he states. Planning is, therefore, where the collaboration between the Study Abroad Office and the Office of Multicultural Student Education (OMSE) has focused its effort.

To address this obstacle, the Study Abroad Office worked with Dr. Lester to include a study abroad component within the OMSE four-year plan. Dubbed the “Roadmap to Success”, this program charts a path for entering students that is designed to help them develop goals and diagram strategies for accomplishing them. Catherine Donohoe, of the Study Abroad Office, worked to incorporate points from a similar plan that her office uses when it counsels students. The result was a more comprehensive plan under which the two offices can cooperate to help minority students. Greater cooperation between the two has led OMSE to expand its outreach about studying abroad, generating, in turn, more interest from students.

“I would like to work more with our [Study Abroad] advising staff to make sure that we are addressing the real and perceived barriers that these students are facing,” says Catherine Donohoe. She and her colleagues are working to increase diversity in its peer advising staff; facilitate panel discussions featuring minority students speaking about their experiences outside the U.S.; and participate in OMSE-sponsored programs that target parents of minority students.

PARTNERING FOR OTHER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENT POPULATIONS

In addition to OMSE, the Study Abroad Office also partners with several other offices on campus. It works with the Counseling Center on a measurement of personal growth and professional potential, to better assess the value and meaning of the study abroad experience. With the Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy (MICA) office, SAO works to increase its diversity efforts, targeting underrepresented ethnic groups and disabled students.

The Study Abroad Office also addresses populations that one might not normally consider “underrepresented.” Students majoring in highly-structured professional programs, such as Business and Engineering, are of concern to SAO because the strict regimen of these majors can be a barrier to international academic experience.

The SAO four-year roadmap thus helps a variety of students anticipate potential obstacles, and presents options that allow students steer around these roadblocks.

As the immediate beneficiaries of this new resource, students recognize an effort such as this one; but, so does the larger academic community.

This spring, the Study Abroad Office, along with the Office of Multicultural Student Education, was honored with the 2008 Academy of Academic Excellence Award for their work in promoting student success and participation in international experiences.

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The Government of Pakistan has directed the Northwest Frontier Province University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Peshawar to build its new campus over the next few years and provided sufficient funds, not only for the construction work but also for faculty development. To this end, the University is sending 200 future faculty members abroad for graduate school. The agreement signed by UET and UMD provides for a significant number of these scholars to do their graduate study in the A. James Clark School of Engineering.
Ambassadorial Lectures Emphasize Cooperation, Education

For Spring term, 2008, the ongoing Ambassadorial Lecture Series sponsored by the Office of International Programs welcomed two senior members of the Washington, D.C. diplomatic community to campus to share their countries’ views on important international issues.

On Tuesday, March 11, the Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of India, Ambassador Raminder Singh Jassal, offered insights on the history of US-India relations, and the need for further collaborations to tackle global issues. A distinguished member of the Indian diplomatic corps, whose long career in the Indian Foreign Service has included postings as official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (India’s equivalent to the US State Department), and as India’s ambassador to Israel (hence his title), Ambassador Jassal first took his audience on a brief tour of India’s long relationship with the US, as each moved from British dependency to independent, democratic state. While sprinkling his remarks with little known trivia—such as the fact that the British ship on which Francis Scott Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner had in fact been built in India—Jassal placed particular emphasis on the importance of US support at two key passages to India’s more recent history. In the 1940s, as India’s independence struggles with the British reached their zenith, Presidents Roosevelt and Truman took steps to push the process, including the early opening of a US embassy in Delhi. Four decades later, in the waning days of a Cold War that had seen vacillations in US-India relations, Indian President Indira Gandhi, reacting to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, convinced the Reagan administration to relax controls on the export of US high tech products to India. The resulting arrival of US supercomputers was a crucial step in the subsequent development of India’s high tech sector that has seen Indian cities such as Bangalore emerge as partners to Silicon Valley and the DC tech corridor. The high tech boom, in turn, has been a key spur to the general opening and transformation of India’s economy and society that has occurred along with it. Ambassador Jassal noted that India’s development, starting from service sectors, and then proceeding to light and then heavy manufacturing, challenges conventional wisdom on the order in which these sectors could and should emerge (witness the Chinese emphasis on heavy industry first). He also pointed out one direct payback to the US for its earlier decision: a steady increase in Indian investment here, which last year amounted to $13 Billion. Given that both countries have deeply rooted democratic institutions, India and the US should be able to find many more such areas for partnerships, working together to deal with a long list of shared global challenges. Ambassador Jassal remarked upon the convergence of this view with the theme of last Fall’s conference at UM “India and the US: Common Challenges and Opportunities,” for which his wife, Dr. Smita Tewari Jassal (a former member of the UM teaching faculty), was one of the invited participants.

The second Ambassadorial Lecture for Spring 2008 took place on Tuesday April 1, and featured the head of the German Embassy to the US, Klaus Scharioth. UM President C. Dan Mote was on hand to welcome Ambassador Scharioth to campus, and to listen to his remarks to a standing room audience at St. Mary’s Hall/Language House. While Ambassador Scharioth, too, addressed the state of the world, his country’s place in it, and its relationship with the US, he was particularly eager to impart to his listeners the importance of including an international element in their educational experience. His enthusiasm and conviction stem in no small part from his own experiences as a student, which included extended travel and study in the US. Ambassador Scharioth noted that, absent that travel and the international perspective that it gave him, he probably would not have entered upon what has turned out to be a long and distinguished career in the German Foreign Service, culminating in his current posting. For him, every day he spent living outside Germany was a learning experience—especially when he skipped classes. To underscore his belief in the importance of foreign study, Ambassador Scharioth brought with him from the German Embassy two members of its Education section, and stacks of promotional materials for a variety of educational exchange programs sponsored by German governmental and non-governmental entities. He urged both students and faculty in the audience to take advantage of these programs, which offer a broad variety of opportunities for study, professional training, teaching and research. UM community members who were not able to attend Ambassador Scharioth’s presentation may nonetheless find information on campus about the programs of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Robert Bosch Fellowship Program, the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals, et al., by contacting the Office of International Programs, Study Abroad Office, or German Studies Department.

by Joseph Scholten, Associate Director, Office of International Programs, scholten@umd.edu

by Joseph Scholten, Associate Director, Office of International Programs, scholten@umd.edu
The University of Maryland’s Robert H. Smith School of Business is set to launch the fourth annual China Business Plan Competition in Beijing in mid May, this year themed “Go for the Gold!” as a tie-in to the upcoming summer Olympic Games. The contest invites China entrepreneurs to submit business plans for a chance to present before an international panel of venture capital experts to win cash prizes totaling US$50,000.

Smith’s Senior Associate Dean Anand Anandalingam will kick off the competition with an announcement in Beijing. The competition will offer a $25,000 grand prize and $15,000 second prize to teams of entrepreneurs with established firms. A young entrepreneur category – new and presented as the Smith School 2008 Young China Entrepreneur Awards – will offer students from Chinese universities the opportunity to win $1,000 individual cash prizes totaling up to $10,000 for their business ideas. Smith’s annual China Business Plan Competition is organized by the school’s Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship to support the growth of world-class business ideas and business leaders within China. Key sponsors include the Smith School’s partner in China the University of International Business and Economics, Peking University, NYMEX and Fidelity Asia Ventures. More information about the Smith School’s 2008 China Business Plan Competition can be found online at: www.rhsmith-umd.cn.

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UM Instructor Receives Award for Efforts to Promote Peace

Dr. Tilahun Beyene, of the University of Maryland Academic Achievement Programs, was honored by the Society of Ethiopians Established in Diaspora (SEEd) at a testimonial dinner to be held in Washington, D.C., May 25th, 2008. Dr. Beyene is a founding and executive committee member of the Peace and Development Committee for the Horn of Africa (the PDC or the Committee), a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit organization, established in December of 1990. This honor follows and highlights the PDC’s receipt of the Interfaith Peace-building Initiative’s “Peace Award of the Year” and the “Peace Medal” awarded him as one of the 22 member Committee recognized on the occasion of Ethiopia’s 2000 Millennium Celebration and the United Nations’ International Day of Peace last September in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

PRESIDENT MOTE HOSTS DELEGATION FROM THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AT RESIDENCE

Photos: (top) President Mote welcomes delegation with opening remarks; (bottom) Vice-Chair, Lu Rongxiang, shares sentiments as UM attendees look on

THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE [CAS] and Vice-Chair of the standing committee of the People’s Congress, Lu Rongxiang, led a delegation to visit the University of Maryland campus in mid-April. In honor of their visit, President C.D. Mote hosted a luncheon where they discussed ways to strengthen the existing and future collaborations between the university and CAS. Among the areas considered were critical issues of global importance such as energy and global warming. The delegation also visited several laboratories on campus where very fruitful discussions took place.