

UNAOC Fellowship Alumni



Reem ABDEL-HADI is a youth activist, member of several youth societies and a founding member of Junior Chamber International Jordan, a branch of an international organization that focuses on individual development, community service and international understanding. In this organization, she served as the first elected local president, national president and currently serve as elected councilor for Arab States. She was also a board member of the student union of the University of Jordan, a founding member of Third Eye Team, a regional network for Arab youth. She has a degree in Industrial Engineering and work at the American Embassy's cultural section, where she handles cultural programming. Previously, she did a yearlong voluntary service with AVRIL organization in France, and she still joins AVRIL's annual environmental camp in France as trainer on intercultural understanding. Recently, she received a EU grant and successfully implemented a similar youth exchange in Jordan.



Rwaida AL-KHULAIIDI is a Project Manager at the British Council in Yemen. In addition to this, she manages a women self-development program entitled 'Springboard', designed for women in jail and women with disabilities to help them integrate in society, build their confidence and positive image about themselves. During her five years as an arts manager, she worked with many artists and organized many events, exhibitions, discussions, film screenings and workshops in Yemen, other countries in the region and the UK, in order to initiate a dialogue and bridge the gap between the two cultures. Amongst the projects she developed and led on a project entitled 'Zoom', aiming at showing Yemen beyond the image it is portrayed in international media and at the same time developed to build an interaction between Yemeni and British filmmakers. Films were shown on BBC Arabic and various venues in the UK.



Jeremy BLANEY is an Institute for Business in the Global Context Scholar at The Fletcher School at Tufts University where he is pursuing a master's degree in international business, specializing in global human resources. As a self-described global citizen, Jeremy is deeply passionate about bringing people of different cultures together. Drawing on personal and professional experiences as well as academic research, he recently presented on culture shock as it pertains to cross-cultural misunderstanding at TEDxTufts 2015 and collaborative approaches to public diplomacy at

TEDxMacatawa 2015. Before attending Fletcher, Jeremy served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force. He completed three deployments in support of Operations ENDURING and IRAQI FREEDOM, earning three Air Medals. He also completed a remote tour at the NATO Allied Air Command Headquarters in Izmir, Turkey. He continues to serve as a Captain in the Massachusetts Air National Guard. During his military career, he conducted research on and experienced firsthand several public diplomacy initiatives sponsored by the Department of Defense.



Saida IBRAHIMAVA has more than ten years of successful experience in the nonprofit sector and more than five years working experience for governmental institutions. She has implemented a number of projects in the sphere of social inclusion, youth development, education, sport and volunteer movements. She has earned a Bachelor's of Arts in International Relations from Belarusian State University and Masters of Arts in International Economy and Politics from Charles University in Prague. She is the one of the co-founders of "Youth to

Youth Initiative" an umbrella non-for-profit organization that aims to construct effective frames for youth participation in the decision making process and solving global challenges locally. Currently, she serves as a Director of Projects Development under Y2Y Action Hub (an interactive online incubator for socially beneficial ideas, concepts, startups, projects and initiatives created by youth and for youth). She enjoys focusing on the topics of youth leadership, human rights and dignity, peacebuilding, cross-cultural dialogue, social entrepreneurship, and has a strong passion for sustainability education, design, creative photography and art. At the moment she works on an ambitious project called "The Green School" - a start-up project in sustainability education and social entrepreneurship.



Lorenzo Kihlgren Grandi is an officer of the Expo Milan 2015 task force of the City of Milan, in charge of relations with MENA countries and foreign media. Lorenzo is also involved in a dual doctorate at EHESS in Paris and LUISS in Rome, where he worked as teaching assistant in Techniques of International Negotiation and in Mediterranean Studies. Lorenzo's thesis, "Scope and challenges of the youth activism conveyed by art and culture", benefits from his experience as founder and chairman of Il Tamarindo, an Italian NGO devoted to intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity, creative economy and youth empowerment. Lorenzo has been the head of several projects implemented by Il Tamarindo, such as its multilingual cultural magazine, international seminars, concerts and exhibitions, artistic and entrepreneurial competitions. Lorenzo studied International Relations at the University of Bologna, Sciences Po Paris, Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale in Milan, LUISS and London School of Economics. He gained his first professional experiences at the European Commission in Brussels, the UNESCO Culture Sector in Paris, the Italian Embassy in Tehran and Istituto Affari Internazionali in Rome.



Shawn Renee Lent is a social practice dance artist and manager, blogger and presenter/facilitator, who is currently completing her work in Cairo, Egypt and returning to the United States. Shawn has designed and led dance experiences with children in divided communities of Belfast and Northwest Bosnia; as part of the cultural diplomacy efforts of the U.S. Embassy Cairo; with childhood cancer patients in Egypt and the US; Muslims, Orthodox Jews, Mormons, and Sikhs; students in Palestine, Uganda, Detroit and Chicago; preschoolers and senior citizens; high school physics students, la Quinceaneras; Bat/Bar Mitzvahs; juvenile offenders/young people in East London; homeless lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender teenagers in Chicago; among others. Shawn recently left her post as the EducationUSA Advising Coordinator at AMIDEAST Cairo (through the U.S. Department of State), and instructor for the full-time professional program at Cairo Contemporary Dance Center. Shawn is a U.S. Fulbright Scholar, American Express Leadership Fellow, and UN Alliance of Civilizations International Fellow. In 2014, Shawn was the Commencement Speaker for Millikin University. Shawn holds a Masters degree in Arts Management with a focus in Arts in Youth and Community Development from Columbia College Chicago, as well as her BFA degree in theatre and dance from Millikin University and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice with a focus in Youth Arts Development from Goldsmith's College, University of London.



Paolo PETROCELLI is an international relations and cultural affairs expert, senior arts administrator, lecturer, musicologist, violinist, UNESCO Expert in Music, TEDx Speaker. As a music diplomacy ambassador, he serves in institutional roles to forge bonds through music in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and the US. Paolo founded EMMA for Peace (Euro-Mediterranean Music Academy for Peace) to drive positive change in the Mediterranean region. EMMA brings together major institutions and world renowned artists under the shared passion for music

and the promotion of peace. His most high-profile appointment thus far is as one of the youngest members ever elected to the Board of Directors of Fondazione Teatro dell'Opera di Roma (Rome Opera House). Top-level roles in the private sector have rounded out his cultural relations and senior arts administrator expertise, allowing collaboration with global leaders in performing arts management. He is Assistant to the Superintendent of the Rome Opera House for International Development and External Relations, Director of International Relations of Kyoto Opera Festival and Sawakami Opera Foundation in Japan. In order to serve as an active citizen and support non-profit activity, he has become a leading member of some of the most prestigious international and cultural organizations.



Christina SCIABARRA is a Political Science PhD candidate in the School of Government and Public Policy. Her research interests include post-conflict reconstruction, conflict resolution, and peace-building strategies. Her case study work includes assessments of post-conflict peace-building strategies in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, and Lebanon. She has a B.S. in History from the United States Naval Academy, B.A. in Russian from the University of Arizona, and an M.A. in Diplomacy from Norwich University. Christina is a program director

with Civil Vision International, a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting, informing, and inspiring individuals to achieve peace and cultural understanding through collaboration and dialogue. She has facilitated a number of video dialogues between students in the U.S. and Afghanistan as well as hosted a number of educational and artistic events.



Mark V. VLASIC is an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University, a senior fellow at its Institute for Law, Science & Global Security, and a principal at Madison Law & Strategy Group. Formerly the head of operations of the World Bank's Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, he served as a White House Fellow/special assistant to the Secretary of Defense and was awarded the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service by Secretary Robert Gates. He practiced law at Gibson Dunn, and served on the Slobodan Milosevic and Srebrenica prosecution teams at the UN war crimes tribunal. Mark has taught the Iraqi judges that tried Saddam Hussein, served on the U.S. Delegation to the Pan Am 103 "Lockerbie" terrorist bombing trial in the Netherlands. He provided commentary for multiple global news media, and contributed to several books. He has a BS and JD, cum laude, from Georgetown and was a Fulbright Scholar to Leiden. Mark is Counselor to the Antiquities Coalition, a Fellow of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, and is World Economic Forum Young Global Leader. As a U.S. Army officer, he has been attached to Capitol Hill and the Defense Attaché Office at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal.