

Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellows 2005 Summer Biographical Sketches



Albert Einstein Memorial Statue © 1978 by Robert Berks



Amanda L. Babson (Summer 2005, DELS/OSB) was a Mirzayan Fellow in the summer of 2005 with the Ocean Studies Board. She worked with two committees: *Mitigating Shore Erosion Along Sheltered Coasts* and *Evaluation of the Sea Grant Program Review Process*. She was a 2007-2009 AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow in the Global Change Research Program at the Environmental Protection Agency. She currently works for the National Park Service as the Coastal Climate Adaptation Coordinator for the Northeast region. She was awarded her PhD in oceanography from the School of Oceanography at the University of Washington in 2006. Her research focus was on circulation variability in Puget Sound, Washington, using idealized numerical modeling techniques. Amanda received her BA in physics from Carleton College in 1998. (Updated 2/2012)



Sharlene Bagga-Taves (Summer 2005, IOM/BGH) studied economics and Spanish at the University of Michigan, and completed her masters in health policy and management at the Harvard School of Public Health. She is currently a Foreign Service Officer in global health at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Prior to joining USAID, Sharlene was health policy advisor to former House Ways and Means Chairman Sander Levin (D-MI), where she advised him on Medicare, health care reform, global health, Social Security, unemployment insurance and immigration issues. Previously, she worked as a bilingual (English/Spanish) health educator at Planned Parenthood Marmonte in Salinas, Calif., and completed a fellowship in hospital administration at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Mass. Sharlene has worked on public health projects in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, Ghana, and, lastly, El Salvador where she recently completed a two-year tour with USAID. She now sits on the management team of a large knowledge management project in the HIV/AIDS Office at USAID/Washington. (Updated 10/2011)

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Bruk T. Berhane (Summer 2005, NAE/CDEW) completed a master's degree in engineering management at George Washington University in the spring of 2007. Bruk received his bachelor's in electrical engineering from the University of Maryland in May 2003, after which he was hired by The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory where much of his research focused on nanotechnology. In the summer of 2005 he left the Applied Physics Laboratory for what would prove to be a career-altering Mirzayan Fellowship with the National Academies in their Committee on Diversity in the Engineering Workforce. It was at the National Academies that Bruk's focus shifted towards engineering outreach and education specifically focused on underrepresented populations. After a brief stint teaching mathematics at the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute following his departure from the National Academies, he landed his "dream job" in the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering at the University of Maryland. As program coordinator for the Center, Bruk develops and oversees programs designed to recruit more African-American, Latino, and Native American students for pre-college mathematics, science, and engineering programs. He is now pursuing a PhD in the Minority and Urban Education Unit of the College of Education at the University of Maryland. (Updated 3/2010)



Robert J. Berlin (Summer 2005, PGA/CSTL) is an attorney in FDA's Office of Chief Counsel working on tobacco and drug issues. Prior to starting his work at FDA, Mr. Berlin was an associate in the Medical Devices group with the law firm Hogan & Hartson. He earned a joint degree of JD/MPH in law and epidemiology from University of Minnesota's Law School and School of Public Health in May 2007. He received his BA in anthropology from the University of Oregon. He has authored an article on product liability which received the ABA Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section first place prize, and has authored and co-authored several articles on FDA law. Prior to attending the law and public health schools, while working at Antigenics, Inc., Robert was the team leader working on a Small Business Innovation Research Grant (SBIR). This grant, which he successfully authored, was funded by NIH for preliminary development of tuberculosis vaccine. He has also worked on numerous research questions regarding diseases and therapeutics available on the market or pending approval. (Updated 10/2011)



Kristen Bethke Wendell (Summer 2005, NAE/CASEE) is an assistant professor of mechanical engineering and adjunct assistant professor of education at Tufts University, where she leads a research group at the Center for Engineering Education and Outreach. A recipient of the National Science Foundation CAREER award for early career faculty, her research focuses on integrating engineering into the early school years and on supporting discourse and design practices during K-12 and college engineering learning experiences. Kristen received a Ph.D. in science education from Tufts, an M.S. in aeronautics and astronautics from MIT, and her undergraduate degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton University. She is married with two children. (Updated 2/2016)



Charlene Cho (Summer 2005, PGA/GUIRR) earned her JD from Vanderbilt University Law School, her PhD in Neurobiology, Pharmacology, and Physiology from the University of Chicago and her AB in Psychology from Smith College. As a post-doctoral fellow, she studied how patenting in biomedical research affects the willingness of scientists to share data and materials. After completing Science & Technology Policy Fellowships at the National Academies of Science and at the National Institutes of Health, she began studying law at Vanderbilt University. During her law school career, she was selected as a Presidential Management Fellow. She is married and has two children. (Updated 2/2011)

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Jayatri Das (Summer 2005, NAS/Koshland) is a senior exhibit and program developer at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. She earned her PhD in ecology & evolutionary biology from Princeton University in 2004, where she was a Howard Hughes Predoctoral Fellow in Biological Sciences. Following her fellowship at the Koshland Science Museum, Jayatri was a postdoctoral research fellow in biology at the University of Pennsylvania. She received BS degrees in biology/genetics and biochemistry & molecular biology from Penn State in May 1999. Jayatri is currently developing exhibits and public programs on topics ranging from nanotechnology to neuroscience. She also enjoys hiking, reading, and coxing for a community crew team. (Updated

3/2010)



Lila K. Elliott (Summer 2005, NAS/Koshland) is currently working with Higher Logic in Washington, D.C. She is also doing work for the National Building Museum. She was formerly the program manager for membership with the Association of Children's Museums. There, she developed new member services, provided technical publications and served as a project manager for vendors and consultants. Ms. Elliott was also responsible for managing ACM's strategic Diversity in Action Initiative, including an annual scholarship program, showcase/poster session, and coordination and communication with the Diversity in Action Committees. In conjunction with her AmeriCorps service, she has worked with various children's organizations

developing science programs using inquiry-based education including the Lorain County Boys & Girls Club of Oberlin, Ohio. She has worked as a museum educator at The Science Factory in Eugene, Ore.; The Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, Ohio; and The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C. Ms. Elliott is currently a volunteer docent at the new Ocean Hall, at The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. Ms. Elliott served as a Mirzayan Fellow at the Marian Koshland Science Museum and the National Science Resources Center, both located in Washington, D.C. Ms. Elliott holds a master's in museum studies with a concentration in non-profit management from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in biology from Oberlin College and completed summer coursework at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology. She has been a research assistant on projects on marsupial reproduction with Dr. Yolanda Cruz at Oberlin College and larval biology with Dr. Richard Emlet, Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, University of Oregon. (Updated 9/2009)



Sarah Elson (Summer 2005, PGA/STEP) is a biomedical sciences PhD candidate at the University of California, San Francisco. She studies cell biology and pathogenesis of the opportunistic fungus *Candida albicans*. Sarah has a longstanding interest in the intersection of science and society at large. As an undergraduate at Harvard, she received a joint degree in history of science and biology. Her senior thesis compared the ways two activist physician groups integrated their professional roles into their political agendas. Before starting graduate school, Sarah worked for several years at the biotechnology company Exelixis, Inc., first in research and

later in intellectual property as a science writer and patent agent. Experiences in patent law sparked her interest in science policy. She learned about ways that biotechnology patents can both hinder and promote innovative research. She also became interested in questions related to science funding and to the structure of productive collaborations between academia and industry. Ultimately Sarah plans to pursue a career in science policy or management and to bolster efforts to improve lives through biomedical advances. In her spare time, Sarah prefers to be out-of-doors. She is an avid runner and cyclist, and she tries to ski, hike, and climb as much as possible. (Updated 4/2009)



Nicole M. Ganzekaufer (Summer 2005, DBASSE/CPOP) has been currently pursuing a MS in nonprofit management in from the Robert J. Milano Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy at New School University; she expected to graduate in May 2006. She received her BA in sociology and anthropology at New College of Florida in 2000. Prior to her graduate studies Nicole spent over two years working as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Former Soviet Republic of Georgia. There, she co-facilitated English courses with a Georgian counterpart for the purpose of skills transfer and curriculum enhancement. During her time there, she also co-founded and secured funding for the first computer resource center and English language resource library in the



CHRISTINE MIRZAYAN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
POLICY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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Georgian public school where she was assigned. Her experiences in the Peace Corps fostered an interest in a career in international development, while her undergraduate work in sociology and anthropology taught her the importance of education and analysis in determining solutions for social problems. She had hoped to work in the nonprofit sector as a program manager in international development. Beyond her professional and academic interests Nicole enjoys traveling, hiking, mountain climbing, SCUBA diving, cooking, and learning new languages.

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Dalia



Ghebreyal (Summer 2005, PGA/COSEPUP) has been working on a master's degree in the Educational Communication and Technology Program at the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University, where she is an International Ford Foundation Fellow. Her lifelong interest in education has led her towards research into innovative new technologies for better education and learning. She received both her BA in elementary education and a special diploma in education and psychology from the Tanta University in Egypt. She was a teacher-trainer in

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Tanta, Egypt where she taught classes in Arabic and English as a Second Language. As an international student and through her internships and volunteer experience in Egypt and at the United Nations, she has come to realize just how interconnected the global community is, and how important that realization is to her field of education. After receiving her PhD, she sees herself as a research professor who will conduct research to explore innovations and new technology that will advance education curricula. She plans to work toward better learning through applying the advanced technology in education and to play a key role in making future decisions for learning and education. She strongly believes that public understanding of technology and digital literacy is the first step toward better education for new generations.



Claudia Grossmann (Summer 2005, IOM/BGH) is a program officer with the Roundtable of Value & Science-Driven Health Care (formerly the Roundtable on Evidence-Based Medicine) at The National Academies. She received a BA in biology with concentrations in molecular biology and microbiology from Washington University in St. Louis in 2000, and a PhD in biomedical sciences from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) in 2007. At UCSF, her dissertation focused on the exploitation of the innate immune system by the Kaposi's Sarcoma Associated Herpesvirus, a human virus which causes Kaposi's sarcoma as well as other rare neoplastic, inflammatory diseases. During her graduate studies, Dr. Grossmann spent the summer of 2005 as Mirzayan Fellow at the National Academies, where she worked on the first congressionally-mandated evaluation of the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Before coming to the Roundtable of Value & Science-Driven Health Care, she served as program evaluator, directing evaluation and strategic planning efforts at the California Breast Cancer Research Program, the largest state-funded research effort in the nation. She remains committed to working towards the improvement of human health through the real world application of research. (Updated 10/2011)



Jennifer A. Hobin (Summer 2005, PGA/COSEPUP) is the Director of Science Policy at the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), the world's first and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research and its mission to prevent and cure cancer. Prior to joining the AACR, she served as the Director of Science Policy at the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), an association representing 26 biomedical research societies and over 100,000 scientists and engineers. Trained in psychology and neuroscience, Dr. Hobin transitioned from laboratory research into science policy via the Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship program at the National Academies. She earned her PhD in biopsychology from the University of Michigan by describing the neural circuits mediating the context-specific expression of Pavlovian fear memory. She has a BA in psychology, summa cum laude, from Stony Brook University. Dr. Hobin previously served on the National Postdoctoral Association's Advocacy Committee and is Past President of the Association for Women in Science, Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Chapter. (Updated 1/30/2013)



Karintha Holifield (Summer 2005, IOM/IOMEQ) is an internal medicine resident at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital. She received her MD from the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami. She received her BA in sociology from Yale University in 2004. Her interest in combining sociology with medicine culminated in a thesis entitled *Investigating the Trends: African-American Endeavors into the Medical Profession*. The thesis, published in the Fall 2004 issue of the *Yale Journal of Sociology*, accounts for various trends (applications to U.S. medical schools, acceptances, enrollment, graduation, and physician specialties cross-categorized by gender) for African-Americans as they attempted to become practicing physicians. It was during the research for her thesis that she became aware of the IOM's publications. This led her to further examine the organization and this fellowship opportunity. As a future ophthalmologist dedicated to the maintenance of a healthy population, she finds her ideals are similar to those of the Institute of Medicine to create a better healthcare system through research of current practices and trends in health-related fields, to improve the healthcare status of our society, and to ensure that safe and appropriate healthcare is delivered. Karintha is interested in

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combining the practice of medicine with healthcare policy research. She has actively been involved in research and recently published an article on Spontaneous Stenotrophomonas Maltophilia Keratitis in a diabetic patient. She believes this Fellowship has been important in determining how she constructs her professional career as a medical doctor. (Updated 10/2011)



John D. Horigan (Summer 2005, DELS/ILAR) is employed by The EMMES Corporation in Rockville, Md., where he is currently the Administrator for the National Cancer Institute's Central Institutional Review Boards (CIRBs). John oversees the daily operations of two specialty institutional review boards working to ensure a high level of protection for participants in clinical trials sponsored by the National Cancer Institute's Cooperative Group program. John is also adjunct instructor of philosophy at Northern Virginia Community College, where his teaching responsibilities are primarily in the area of biomedical ethics. He received his master's in philosophy and social policy from American University in 2006. In May 2004, he received his bachelor's in biology from James Madison University. John lives in Alexandria, Va., with his partner of 6 years and their dog. (Updated 3/2010)



Kelly Horton (Summer 2005, IOM/FNB) is nationally recognized as an expert in nutrition and food policy, environmental nutrition, and evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs. As the North America Policy Director for Mars, Inc., she is responsible for leading Mars' North America Food Policy Group, engaging key public policymakers, collaborating with key NGOs, and working with trade organizations. Prior to working at Mars, Inc., Kelly was an agriculture and nutrition senior policy advisor for Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-03) where she was responsible for USDA and FDA appropriations. Her portfolio included food and nutrition policy, food safety, food labeling, drug and device approval, environment, energy, and interior policy. Other experience included being policy director for the National Council on Aging's Center for Healthy Aging and serving as a Health & Aging Policy Fellow/American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow. Prior to this, Kelly founded a consulting organization specializing in nutrition policy and advocacy. Kelly holds an M.S. in food policy and applied nutrition from Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, a B.S. in business management, and is a registered dietitian with board certification as a specialist in gerontological nutrition. (Updated 2/2016)



Jason S. Leith (Summer 2005, DELS/BCST) is in his fifth year of a PhD in biophysics at Harvard University, where he is conducting research in protein-DNA recognition. He received his BA in Chemistry and was elected into Phi Beta Kappa at Williams College, and then received an MPhil in the history and philosophy of science at Cambridge University. Jason greatly enjoys teaching and research, and was once certain he wanted to pursue an academic career, but his time as a Mirzayan Fellow has made him question that certainty. In addition to science and science-policy, Jason draws pleasure and satisfaction from swimming, long walks in the woods, singing, writing songs, and buying, preparing, and eating food. (Updated 3/2010)



Kirk A. Martin (Summer 2005, DEPS/BEES) has a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology, with a specialty in energy systems. After his 2006 graduation, he went to work for Global Energy Concepts (GEC), the most established wind energy consulting company in the United States. During his time at GEC (which was later acquired by DNV, a large, multi-national company based out of Norway) Kirk held many positions in the test engineering department, eventually becoming the quality manager for the division. After his time at GEC/DNV, he went to work for the Civil Engineering Department at Texas A&M University where he is presently employed. At Texas A&M, Kirk works on research projects in a variety of areas including wind energy, offshore technology systems, coastal engineering studies, and other fields. He currently is the manager of the Bill & Reta Haynes Coastal Engineering Laboratory, a facility containing one of the largest and most sophisticated wave basins in the United States used for scale model testing. He is married to Dr. Huilin Gao and has

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two children, Mindi and Xindi. He considers his experience at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to be among the most valuable of his life. (Updated 4/2016)



Ashrujit Mohanty (Summer 2005, NAE/CASEE) has a master's degree in computer engineering from George Washington University. He worked as a systems engineer at Tata Consultancy Services in Mumbai, India before coming to the U.S. for his graduate studies. During his master's degree program, he was part of the High Performance Computing Lab at George Washington University. In HPCL, he worked on Unified Parallel C, a PGAS extension to the C language. As a Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellow with the National Academy of Engineering, Ashrujit worked in the Center for the Advancement of Scholarship on Engineering Education (CASEE) on several projects involving promotion of minority scholarship in science and engineering. Since his graduation from GWU, Ashrujit has been working as a database administrator and currently lives near Charlotte, N.C. He loves music, books, traveling, and riding motorcycles. Ashrujit continues to be involved in local South Asian community events. (Updated 3/2010)



Vivek Mohta (Summer 2005, PGA/CISAC) is a vice president at an exciting early-stage not-for-profit in the Bay Area. Until March 2011, he was the Director for Energy Markets at the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) where he led the investment of \$70 million in Federal stimulus funds for clean energy, resulting in over 300 projects across the state. He also managed the implementation of several energy market reforms and led the analytics for the state's energy strategy. Before joining DOER in 2008, Vivek was a project leader at the Science and Technology Policy Institute, a D.C.-based research center created by Congress to provide the White House with objective analysis on science, technology, and innovation policy. Previously, Vivek served as a Science and Technology Policy Fellow in the Congressional office of Rep. Adam Schiff and as a Mirzayan Fellow at the National Academies. Vivek is a graduate of Harvard University, where he earned a PhD in mathematics and of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he earned a BS in mathematics and a BS in physics. (Updated 10/2011)



Benjamin A. Novak (Summer 2005, COSEPUP/PGA) is currently the Director for Budget Formulation and Performance at the Center for Tobacco Products (CTP), the newest center of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In this role, he serves as the Center lead for all budget formulation and performance measurement activities, and is leading the development of the CTP strategic plan. Previously he was a Senior Program Analyst with the Department of Health and Human Services, working on budget and performance issues for the various science agencies within HHS, focusing on bioterrorism and emergency preparedness. In June 2008 he completed the Presidential Management Fellowship within the Federal Government. In May 2006 he graduated with distinction from Carnegie Mellon University with a MS in public policy and management, where he worked with as a research assistant with NAE member Dr. Alfred Blumstein. Also during graduate school, he completed the Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship, working with the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy (COSEPUP) on the report *Rising Above The Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future*. He received his BA in political science and his BS in biomedical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh where he was a member of the University Honors College. As an undergraduate, Benjamin has had the unique experience of completing internships in both technical and policy areas working in a variety of places including the United States Congress, House Science Committee, the Vascular Research Center of Dr. David Vorp, and the Artificial Liver Lab of Dr. Jack Patzer. Through these experiences he learned that the interaction of public policy and science is very important, but often overlooked. (Updated 10/2011)

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Christopher J. Ordowich (Summer 2005, DEPS/BAST) leads the Risk Analytics & Strategy team within the risk management area of Munich Re America. Chris's team is responsible for measuring, reporting, and developing strategies to manage the risks faced by the company. Chris has also worked at Risk Management Solutions (RMS) on a variety of efforts focused on analyzing catastrophic risks including pandemic, terrorism, and longevity risk. Chris also worked at SRI International as a science and technology policy analyst and at the RAND Corporation as a Doctoral Fellow. Chris received a master's of philosophy and Ph.D. in policy analysis from the Pardee RAND Graduate School. As a graduate student, his research focused on Army force structure issues. Chris graduated from Emory University with bachelor's degrees in applied physics and economics. His senior honors thesis studied the process of irradiating a protein containing B-12, with the goal of characterizing its mechanism. Chris became interested in becoming a Mirzayan Fellow at The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, ever since he toured the Marian Koshland Science Museum in the summer of 2004, where he came across something familiar -- an innovative exhibit that allowed the participant to drag an LCD display across a timeline to see how global temperatures are predicted to change. This was the exact model on which he had worked the previous summer at NOAA. (Updated 4/2016)



Learn more about **Raed M. Sharif** (Summer 2005, PGA/BISO) and his research, professional work and other related stuff [by visiting his website](#). (Updated 9/2010)



John B. Slanina (Summer 2005, PGA/COSEPUP) is a senior research analyst for Revere Data. He previously served as a policy analyst for the State Science and Technology Institute (SSTI), where his duties included technology-based economic development (TBED) advocacy, in addition to the preparation of reports and articles on TBED issues. While a Mirzayan Fellow with the National Academies, he worked on staff for the acclaimed *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* report under Debbie Stine. Prior to joining SSTI, Mr. Slanina was a research assistant at the Delft Institute of Technology in The Netherlands. He attained his MS in mechanical engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology, performing research in microfabrication and biosensor design. He recently attained his master's degree in public policy from Georgia Tech, where his research included innovation bibliometrics and the incorporation of innovations in the manufacturing sector. A son of Youngstown, Ohio, Mr. Slanina maintains a blog about the intersection of urban design and technology-based economic development. (Updated 10/2011)



Devin O. Stewart (Summer 2005, NAE/CASEE) earned his MS in aerospace engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University in December 2005. He earned his BS and BA in aerospace engineering and Spanish language & literature, respectively, from the University of Maryland. His graduate research focused on experimental wind tunnel studies of rough wall turbulent boundary layers, and he was also a lab instructor for upper-level aerospace laboratory courses. During the fall of 2001, Devin worked as an English language teacher in Madrid, helping business people increase their proficiency skills. His interest in working with the Center for the Advancement of Scholarship on Engineering Education (CASEE) stemmed from the desire to use his recent experience as an engineering student to address issues related to the continuing improvement of engineering education and student retention, which he believes is vital to continued technological innovation. After completing his Mirzayan Fellowship in the summer of 2005, Devin was been a full-time employee with CASEE, working on a variety of projects aided at promoting engineering education research and disseminating of research

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findings. In June of 2006, Devin accepted a position with the U.S. Navy's Naval Surface Warfare Center doing research and development related to submarine acoustics. (Updated 3/2010)



Jia Xu (Summer 2005, DEPS/ASEB) has a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He has been completing an MSc in international relations at the London School of Economics with a dissertation focus in security. In the fall of 2005 Jia was scheduled to attend Imperial College in London and undertake a multidisciplinary MSc program in aeronautical engineering with an emphasis on fluid-structure interactions. The Imperial program was to lead into a PhD program in high-speed aerodynamics at Caltech under an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. While studying at the LSE, Jia worked as a research intern at the Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) in London, where he applied his international relations

understanding and technical background to study emerging issues related to the European Union's common defense and space policies and the ongoing NATO force transformation. In the summer of 2004, he was selected to represent the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) in the Washington Internship for Scientists and Engineers (WISE) program, where he studied the policy implications of the U.S. Navy's sea basing expeditionary strategy. In the same summer, Jia also worked as a naval architect for the Sea Connector Fleet Architecture Development Program at the Naval Surface Warfare Center to explore platform alternatives to support the Navy's sea basing strategy. Jia plans to pursue a career in public service, where he can synthesize his technology base and international relations framework to advance both national defense and international security.