

Message from the Executive Director.



"We would like to highlight with our second newsletter for AMINEF, Fulbright, EducationUSA, and related programs, several important things that we will be involved in during 2012.

As AMINEF progresses through the 2012 year, we would like to bring attention to the fact that 2012 marks an historic 60 years for Fulbright in Indonesia and 20 years since the bi-national agreement between the United States and the Republic of Indonesia formalized AMINEF as the Ful-

bright Commission in Indonesia, including EducationUSA and educational advising services.

We anticipate and are planning, several anniversary events throughout this year, beginning with a distinguished alumni reception, a science and technology symposium, an anniversary book with the history and many insights of Fulbright grantees (both Indonesians and Americans) who have participated in exchanges between our two countries, and finally a higher education symposium and AMINEF Board reception at the end of 2012.

We hope that many of you will be involved in our events and will enjoy reading the anniversary book when it is published.

For now, we hope that you enjoy reading the great submissions for this second newsletter from our grantees."

*Michael E. McCoy
Executive Director
American Indonesian Exchange Foundation
Fulbright Indonesia/EducationUSA*

2012 is an historic year!

This year is the 60th Anniversary of the Fulbright Program in Indonesia and 20th Anniversary of the American-Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF)

In honor of the 60/20 Anniversary of the Fulbright program in Indonesia and the establishment of AMINEF, the following activities have been in the works for 2012:

1. 60/20 Fulbright Alumni Gala Dinner in Jakarta hosted by U.S. Ambassador Marciel (date in May TBD)

2. Anniversary Booklet: "60th Anniversary of Scholarship and Mutual Understanding" and "20th Anniversary of the American-Indonesian Exchange Foundation." The contents would be a short history of the Fulbright program and AMINEF; and interviews with prominent Indonesian and American Fulbright program alumni. Congratulatory remarks are expected to included by

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President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
and President Barack Obama. (publish-
ing date TBD in early 2012)

3. International Fulbright Symposium on “The Role of Science and Technology in Climate Change and Natural Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation” held in cooperation with the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT) in Jakarta on September 4-6, 2012 (see Call for Papers announcement below).
4. Fulbright Visiting Specialists Awards: as a follow up to the Symposium, distinguished speakers from Indonesia

(one to the U.S.) and the U.S. (one to Indonesia) will be invited to travel around to speak about the topic of the International Fulbright Symposium (above) at several different campuses and institutions for a 3-6 weeks period each. It is a named award whose recipients are selected by the AMINEF Board. The selected names will be announced during the 60/20 Anniversary symposium.

5. In December 2012, the AMINEF Board will host a one day symposium on Higher Education and a gala reception for participants and friends of AMINEF. (exact date TBD)

Call for Papers: International Fulbright Symposium on “The Role of Science and Technology in Climate Change and Natural Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation”

To celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Fulbright program in Indonesia and 20th Anniversary of the American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF), in Partnership with Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT), AMINEF will be conducting the International Fulbright Symposium on Science and technology entitled “The Role of Science and Technology in Climate Change and Natural Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation” in Jakarta on September 4-6, 2012. This conference is open to academics, researchers, policy makers, government officials, media, concerned citizens and civil society activists.

The purpose of this international Fulbright Symposium is to initiate discussions on science and technology from various perspectives in relation to global warming and natural disasters and the mitigation of those topics. The aim is to build a strong movement and dialogue, a network of scientists, technologists, economists, policymakers, elected representatives, and concerned citizens who believe in the development of sound science and technology policy options. The primary goal is to identify the role of science and technology for climate change and natural disaster mitigation and adaptation which are international and domestic concerns.

For this symposium, we would like to invite you to kindly contribute a paper and/or a poster on any of the following topics:

“The Economic of Climate Change and Social Participation”

- The Spatial and Economic Modeling for the Mitigation and Adaptation of Technology
- The Economic of Climate Change
- The Society Participation for the Mitigation and Adaptation of Technology
- The Social Participation for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- The Mitigation of Climate Change: a Global Perspective

“Mitigation and Adaptation of Climate Change and Sustainable Development”

- Mitigation of Climate Change
- Climate Change and Food Security
- Identifying the Low Carbon Technology for Sustainable Development
- Climate Change and Potential Disaster
- National Effort and Commitment to Cope with The Climate Change

“Disaster Mitigation and Risk Reduction”

- Earthquake Prediction .
- Technology Disaster Risk Reduction Social
- Participation for Disaster Management
- The Minimizing Impacts of Disaster: a Global Perspective

"Adaptation in Disaster Management and National Strategy"

- Early Warning System
- Ocean Atmosphere Interaction.
- Mitigation and Adaptation of Disaster

- The Global Strategy of the Disaster Management

The selected papers will be presented at this symposium and will be published in the official journal after the event. The posters will be presented in the poster presentation session and reviewed outside the venue.

The abstract will be accepted until May 7, 2012 and the final paper by August 10, 2012 by e-mail to (please also include your CV):

rbishry@yahoo.com or piet@aminef.or.id

Symposium Background Information

Scientific discussions on the nature and causes underlying climate change and natural disasters have intensified recently.

The United Nation's Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] was formed to provide an assessment of global climate change. The IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report released in 2007, linked the warming over the past 30 years, approximately 0.7 C to anthropogenic green house gases, particularly CO₂. At the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), countries have been debating possible carbon emission targets to minimize the future adverse impact of changing climate on human societies. Beyond all these efforts, the role of science and technology for climate change mitigation and adaptation is an important topic for the scientists, the technologists, and other experts especially for those who are focused on this global issue.

At the same time, natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and extreme weather seem to be occurring more frequently; and con-

tinue to claim significant numbers of losses and fatalities. [Geneve, 2011] There is a need for the support of science and technology for disaster risk reduction. Disaster risk reduction is the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and reduce the causal factors of disasters. The need is for the support of science and technology for reducing exposure to hazards, lessening vulnerability of people and property, management of land and the environment, and for improving preparedness for adverse events.

The purpose of this international Fulbright Symposium is to initiate discussions on science and technology from various perspectives in relation to global warming and natural disasters. The aim is to build a movement, a network of scientists, technologists, economists, policymakers, elected representatives, and concerned citizens who believe in the development of sound science and technology policy options. The goal is to identify the role of science and technology for climate change and natural disaster mitigation and adaptation.

Invitation to Scholars

This conference is open to academics, researchers, policy makers, government officials, media, concerned citizens, and civil society activists.

There will be invited presentations by speakers from American and Indonesian Fulbright alumni who are interested in presenting a paper under any of the broad themes. The speakers at the conference hopefully will agree that it

is time to reconsider the science and technology of global warming and natural disasters. However, they may not all agree on the causes, extent, or consequences of climate change, or what should be done. This vibrancy of viewpoints will add important elements to the symposium. The scientists and technological experts are invited to share their research and engage in a reasoned and respectful debate with others.

AMINEF has undertaken an initiative in organizing the International Fulbright Symposium on Science and Technology for climate change, natural disaster, and economic policy; in partnership with the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT).

A number of Fulbright scholars from the US and Indonesia are expected to par-

ticipate in this Symposium to be held in BPPT (The Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology) Auditorium, Jakarta in September 2012. We hope to invite some of them to public forums in Indonesia, to share their thoughts on this challenging issue.

Azalia P. Muchransyah

Time of My Life: Joining Fulbright is The Best Experience Ever!



I've had the time of my life and I've never felt this way before...
I swear this is true and I owe it all to you..."

(Black Eyed Peas – Time of My Life)

A year and a half ago, I would never imagined myself teaching Indonesian to graduate students of one of the most prestigious schools in the US, let alone picturing myself meeting famous public figures that I long adore. But, now that I have experienced them myself, I believe in the famous words Muhammad Ali once said: "Impossible is nothing".

I first applied to the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program because I think it will be a great opportunity for me to learn how to teach in an American academic environment, as being a university professor and scholar has always been a dream I pursue. Surely, as the alumni of this program described, the program is not just about a teaching experience—it is way beyond that! I get to be a representative, an ambassador of my country. This turns out to be a tough job, as the graduate students in my campus are into international issues. So I need to keep myself update to the latest Indonesian political, economic, and cultural news. But the fun part is, I get to see how foreigners have passions in their eyes when talking about my country. Deep down, I feel so proud to be a citizen of such a big, rich, and beautiful country. It also brings joy and satisfaction to hear my students speak fluently in Indonesian and how they plan to visit and experience Indonesia themselves.

Besides teaching, I also get to be a visiting student and audit some classes. In my first semester here, I am auditing three classes: Comparative National Systems, English Writing Superior, and Teaching Methodologies. The first one is really challenging, especially because as the only Indonesian in class, I get to be the source of the class discussion when we talk about

democracy in Indonesia. Why is it challenging? Because most of them have Indonesian Studies as their specialization while I have to fill the gaps of their knowledge with my own experiences as the witness of the history as it was being made. In English Writing Superior, the post-proficiency students get the chance to do research once a week about certain topics and make political memoranda. The last one is a class provided by my campus to help its teachers and faculty members in enhancing their teaching skills.

Campus life is a big part of my everyday life in the US, but I have other exciting activities, such as visiting monuments, attending events, volunteering, and meeting famous people!



Volunteering in Brazil Day

As I live in the capital city of Washington, DC, there are a lot of free attractions and events to attend. What I need to do is to look at the right place. So I read my campus announcements, search in the internet, browse through the free newspapers and magazines, join mailing lists, and most importantly talk to as many people as possible. It turns out that opportunities are always around the corner. For the last 2 months since I first set my feet in the US, I have browsed through most museums in DC, got myself a free ticket to see the Spirit of America (a performance by US Army), volunteering in many events (such as USINDO Annual Gala Dinner, Crafty Bastards!, Turkish Festival, Brazil Day, The Taste of DC, Taste of Georgetown) and as a read-

ing partner for struggling young readers in DC, been interviewed by three different radio stations, and been invited to present my papers about Indonesia in two big conferences in Ithaca, New York, and Tempe, Arizona. And I still have my spare time to simply read books, watch movies, hang out with my friends, and do yoga or Pilates.

Still, the best experience ever is the part where I get to meet famous public figures! Aside from famous Indonesian public figures like Dino Patti Djalal (Indonesian



Azalia Primadita Muchransyah and Fidel Ramos

Ambassador to the US) and H.E. Agus Martowardojo (Indonesian Finance Minister), I also got the chance to meet my favorite authors: Thomas L. Friedman (author of, among others, “The World is Flat”, “The

Lexus and The Olive Tree”, and three-times Pulitzer Prize winner), Gregory Maguire (author of, among others, “Wicked” series, which is the inspiration behind the “Wicked” Broadway play), and Steven Pinker (Harvard Psychology Professor and author of, among others, “How the Mind Works” and “The Language Instinct”). I also met Michael Moore (Oscar-winner documentary filmmaker of, among others, “Fahrenheit 9/11”, “Sicko”, “Bowling for Columbine”, and “Capitalism: A Love Story”). The other famous people I met is Julianne Moore (children book author and six-times Oscar nominated actress of, among others, “The Hours” and “The End of The Affairs”). And last but not least, I also got to meet His Excellency Fidel Ramos, the 12th president of the Philippines.

So, yes, this is a time of my life. I have done so much over the last 2 months and I believe I can do even more in the upcoming 7 months of the remaining time I have for this program.

I believe that joining the Fulbright family has given me so much. I get to see the potential within myself. I get to see new places and meet new people. You can only imagine how many new friends I have met, how many invitations to stay at their houses when I get the chance to visit their countries, and how many valuable new understandings about Indonesia have been made. Most importantly, this opportunity is opening many new windows of opportunities ahead. And for that, I owe this time of my life to Fulbright!

(Azalia P. Muchransyah, 2011 Fulbright FLTA Grantee, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University)

Living and Studying in Columbus

Columbus: a multicultural city

Studying in the United States, particularly in Columbus, Ohio, is a special thing for me. Here are some of my experiences during the first year of my staying in this city, including the daily life and certainly the study experiences at the Ohio State University (OSU). Columbus is the third largest city in the Midwest plain, and the 15th biggest city in America, with a population of slightly less than 800 thousand inhabitants. Columbus is a multicultural city, the melting pot, where “representatives” of various ethnic groups in the world, including Indonesia, live there. Because of its ethnic diversity, Columbus experiences a cultural life booming. While plenty may be seen here, our pocket limits our ability to explore all of the events. Students prefer to buy discount tickets on

campus; even sometimes they offer free tickets to go to places like the Columbus Museum of Art, which is close to the main campus. Otherwise, students pay about half the price for tickets to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, COSI (Center of Science and Industry), or the Ohio State Fair. At the Ohio State Fair, I saw a number of innovative agricultural produce promoted by USDA (the United States Department of Agriculture). I was amazed when I saw very large pumpkins displayed during the exhibition, reflecting the advance use of technology and how agricultural sector has significant contributions to the state's economy.

After days of working on the many class assignments, we find time to hang out for a moment to experience various Columbus' entertainments and attrac-

Edi Cahyono

tions. The choices are movie theater near the campus, or go to a “one-dollar movie”, a very cheap movie theatre but located a bit far from the campus. This is the favorite destination for students to hang out! There are many cultural attractions that we can see, but we must frequently check them out in the internet so as not to miss the events. On weekends at the beginning of the month, there are cultural events at the downtown, where we can enjoy exhibitions like art works, music concerts, and picking up a good variety of foods and drinks. At other times, we can go at dusk to see floating bonfires illuminate the Scioto River, still in the downtown area. There are also ethnic-based special events such as the Greek Festival, Italian Festival, Asian Festival, and Festival Latino. Last time I went to a traditional market called “North Market,” dating back to the 1850s, where we found many retails and food stands with relatively reasonable prices. I have made plan to go to the German Village, a German descendents community just near downtown, with a fellow student from Germany. Occasionally, there are social organizations that offer group recreations. They may offer us to experience interesting attractions at several tourist destination areas, either in Columbus areas, the state, or even somewhere out of the state. My last trips with them were to the famous Niagara Falls (in the State of New York), which is only about six hour car drive from Columbus. Summer season is the best time to enjoy such various events, because it is a break period for most students, while the weather is quite nice for us to travel.

There are some Asian stores, where we can find various spices, including those from Indonesia. However, eating out once for a while is necessary for fun and other reasons. Various ethnic restaurants are scattered in this city, among others, Italian, Mexican, Japanese, Korean, and of course Chinese restaurants. Even, we can find Afghan, Mongolian, and Indonesian restaurants in limited numbers. Therefore, if you like culinary tours, Columbus provides many options. Unfortunately, as student, we must carefully spend our limited budget. So, apparently we could only pick up some “samples” of ethno-restaurants to visit. Other than the Chinese restaurant, I have enjoyed visiting the Mexican, Korean, Vietnam and Afghan restaurants. Last time, I have dinners at Indian and Italian restaurants to pay tribute to Fulbright scholars from India and Denmark who have just completed their studies. This is a good opportunity for me to experience various kinds of foods from around the globe, while learning cultural differences through conversations with friends from different countries.



Edi Cahyono at Scioto River Columbus

Learning experience at the Ohio State University

Ohio State University (OSU) is a big university, which is currently the third biggest university in the US seen from the student enrollment. With more than 50,000 students, the university has attracted many overseas students, mostly from China, Korea, Japan, and India to pursue their studies there. This unique university circumstance has helped me to communicate with students from many nations and understand their cultures and interests. In addition, there are many colleges and schools, in which we have a chance to take courses from any of these places. This procedure has helped me to enrich my knowledge from other related disciplines, particularly for my minor courses. I must acknowledge that the first experience at OSU was not an easy step for me. Adjustment period was a critical moment because many students feel unfamiliar with the new environment. Moreover, as a big university, OSU seems to rely much on new media technology to deal with administrative and other thing like online library though the conventional system is also still important. In the beginning, dealing with online system is a bothersome due to unfamiliarity. But once we have passed through it, we will get used with such procedures. I found, later on, that this system is much more efficient than the manual one. Online system has saved much of my time to deal with administrative and other academic matters; I can get most of the books or journals from anywhere easily and fast through online library system. For overseas student like me, first quarter was a critical time due to language barriers. However, I found that my English has improved significantly during that time: better listening, speaking abilities, and more familiar with written assignments. It was the sign that I have come to the point of being adapted with the new system, I would say. Furthermore,

quarter system at OSU requires students to manage their time properly or they will be in trouble to finish their assignments and deal with the examinations. Perseverance and time management are likely the keys to survive for every students no matter whether they are American or foreign students. However, as the quarter goes by, normally students will get used to the system.

Overall, there are several challenges that I must face during the first year of my staying in Columbus and study at Ohio State University, but sense of curiosity and the struggle to achieve good results make these burdens become valuable opportuni-

ties for me. I have learned many things in a cross-cultural nuance in this place so far, and yet there are still many things I should experience ahead. Hopefully, all of these will help me to learn more something that I may not find in Indonesia. When returning to my homeland, it is my expectation, that I will have a better chance to contribute to the learning system at my university. Even more, with higher confidence, I can serve wider community in Indonesia that amazingly also have diverse cultural scene as that in the United States.

(Edi Cahyono, 2010 Fulbright Presidential Student Grantee to the Ohio State University; faculty member at Brawijaya University, Malang)

Unofficial Cultural Ambassador to the U.S.

When I first came to the United States, all I thought of being a Fulbright scholar was being successful academically.

Throughout my stay in the United States, I became well aware that it was not all about academic success. Every time somebody found out I was a Fulbright, he or she would be so curious about my backgrounds and what I had done that made me qualified to be a Fulbright. In other words, as a Fulbright scholar, I am the ambassador of both Fulbright and my home country. This awareness gradually increases in me; it reached its peak when I was invited by my colleague and professor, who was a former Fulbright scholar, Steve Wilson, to get involved in the kid's activities of San Marcos Public Library. I was hesitant for a while because I was anxious with people's acceptance of my veiling. Mr. Wilson assured me that I would do great as long as I could engage children in a very interesting cultural activity.



Considering that Indonesia consists of a very diverse population abounded with hundreds if not thousands different cultural artifacts, I had difficulties in choosing one for the activity. Eventually, I chose "kuda lumping" or the trance horse because not only that I could engage children in dancing but in creating a fake horse to accompany the dance. It was on

February 19, 2011, that I had my first performance in the library. Even though the advertising of this activity employed both print and electronic media—in which I became famous in the local news—only a few kids came due to the unfriendly weather. Nonetheless, we had fun in the activities. The kids were busy coloring and adorning the horses they made. Afterwards, we practiced the dance a couple of times.

In the summer, I was—again—invited by San Marcos Public Library to perform for the kids. It was on June 28, 2011. Surprisingly, even though this summer activity was not as highly publicized as the first one, many kids came and participated along with their parents, erasing all the anxiety that I had. We really had a great time together. We started with getting to know my country and how diverse the population in my country is, just like the United States itself: they are both, a mosaic country. We even repeated the dance three times, and the parents/guardians joined in. I was so happy that they accepted me notwithstanding my veil and any other differences in our cultural backgrounds. When the parents/guardians thanked me and the kids gave me a hug, thanking me for having had fun time with them, I was so touched. I also realized that not only had I contributed to the society by introducing my culture to them, but the society had given me a strong assurance that they accepted me despite all the differences we had. This is by far one of the most unforgettable memories that I had as a Fulbright scholar/ambassador in the US.

(Nita Novianti, 2011 Fulbright student grantee, M.A. in English literature, Texas State University; faculty member, Indonesia Education University (UPI))

Nita Novianti



Syahrir Idris

My Journey to America

In this article I would like to tell a re-count of my Journey to America, a Journey of a teacher from a village that was once isolated in Lombok to a major city in the superpower country.

This trip for me was not only like a dream that came true, but also a tireless struggle with a lot of sacrifice that prompted to pride, prestige, and enjoyment. This trip had been my dream since the days of school at teacher training high school (SPG Negeri Bima) over twenty years ago, drawing on my growing interest in learning English to become a teacher. Such a dream prompted me to choose a program of English education at the University of Mataram. After graduating with a bachelor degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd), I taught at some colleges in Mataram before being appointed as a teacher at the junior high school in Sekotong, once a remote village in West Lombok that has now sprung into a new attractive place for visitors. It was from the junior high school in this village has my goal to study abroad really blossomed.

With strong motivation to upgrade the level of my English proficiency as a way to uplift the prestige as an English teacher I was constantly looking for opportunities to study overseas until I found a posting on a local newspaper that AMINEF offered Fulbright scholarship to study in the U.S. With hard work and tireless struggle, I prepared paperwork and other requirements as demanded for my application. I was pleased that I was invited for an interview, and later I received notification that I was selected as a candidate with two other friends out of nine interviewees. I was then accepted at three universities, and finally decided to accept the admission offer from the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA).

I attended the summer pre-academic orientation program at Stanford University. I moved to San Antonio in August 2000 to begin the fall semester. In sharp contrast with the Palo Alto and San Francisco, San Antonio was so hot during the summer until early autumn that we were advised to reduce activity in the hot sun unless absolutely necessary. For me to stay indoor while studying and doing homework was no problem and it was even better so I could focus on the assignments. I just left the house when I went to classes, attended group studies on campus, went to the mosque, or went to the groceries, watched basketball games, or went on a picnic to the River Walk on weekends.

During the course of my study in the States I liked observing the behaviors of

people inside and outside the campus and trying to compare them with my own and that of my community. At schools I often observed the behavior of students, faculty, and staff there. Students and lecturers were usually already in the classroom for about 5-10 minutes before classes began. While waiting for the the class time to come, students and professors chatted in casual ways, but when the time came the professors then would take over the conversation to start the lecturings. Similarly, when the time was up, the professors would be prompt to stop the lecturings. When professors were absent for some reasons, usually for attending seminars, symposia, or conferences, they would write it in the class schedule, or told the students in advance, and relief teachers would come in to substitute him. These experiences provided me with a lesson about how discipline was highly valued in the academic environment and school culture so that everyone felt a certainty in the work process and its output.

With strong discipline and clear division of labor, individuals worked in accordance with their roles and duties without worrying about being intervened by others. They also could not be reluctant to work because every job was monitored and accounted for without being able to let go of their responsibilities to others. Within this frame of mind, I watched janitors at the college would keep cleaning the toilets on a regular basis with or without the presence of their supervisors, and their working hours would not be interrupted by anyone else. Similarly, students could not say that they failed to submit their tasks on time just because they had to complete other tasks. So, individuals are responsible for the implementation of their respective duties without any reasons to blame to others if they failed to do so.

Another lesson I learned from studying in America was that it was necessary for students to maintain the trust and rapport with the teachers and friends even though they have finished their college. Several times my professor invited me to attend social gatherings with them and I usually made strong efforts to attend. With such invitations I sometimes felt privileged because not everybody in my cohort would get invited or engaged in such activities. Even after returning to Indonesia I still occasionally sent e-mails to my professors as well as friends, very often just to say hello or sent them greeting notes on special events. Keeping good rapport with professors and friends has turned out to be beneficial for me as evidence in recent admission of my application to pursue a doctoral degree at UTSA my alma mater in which

recommendations from my professors at UTSA played crucial roles.

During my stay in America, I also joined activities of intra and extra-campus organizations. As a Muslim student I actively attended the meetings and activities of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) on campus. I also joined the Indonesian Muslim Student Association of North America (IMSA) in which I participated in their discussions on the mailing list, joined their telepengajian, attended their conference. In a conference I attended in Pittsburgh, I met many students some of whom have been the icons either in America or in Indonesia. For practicing hobby and utilizing leisure time I joined the UTSA Chess Club that regularly conduct trainings and tournaments. I once got the chance to represent my alma mater at a chess tournament as a part of regional sports meeting between Midwest college students at the University of North Texas in Denton. I finished fourth in that tournament; thus, did not deserve a medal for the medals.

As for social contribution to people in my home town, I mediated them with a generous Indonesian Muslim in San Antonio, who used to send his charity or infaq fund abroad. Once I told him that there were those economically in need back in my home town, he unreluctantly sent some of his infaq to Indonesia through my bank account and one of my family members distributed the fund to the needy. This fund raising last during the course of my study in San Antonio plus several months upon my return to Indonesia. Regardless of the amount this gentleman had donated, the less fortunate people who were the benefactors of his generosity felt very much helped and thankful to him and me too. Every time I transferred the money I checked with the distributor about how they were when they received the infaq, she could see the visible joy and gratitude in their faces and in which time, as I was sure of, they would also pray for my goodness in addition to the goodness of who the money came from.

Doing master's and, later on, doctoral studies in America has become a source of great pride and pleasure for me and my family, and even for the communities where I was born and raised. We perceived this a fantastic achievement considering the socio-economic background of my family. I was born in Tambe, a village 41 kms west of the town of Bima, NTB, from parents who were partially peasants in plant-growing seasons and vendors on the rest of the years. My beloved father died when I was eight years old and then I along with my siblings, namely four brothers and a sister, were raised by our mother who was willing to stay to be a single parent

for the sake of her children. Throughout the course of our lives, our mother keep telling us to endure the hardship and encouraging us to continue school, advising, "It is enough for us now to live hard life, to make a living on the muddy ground under the sting of the blazing sun. Keep going on with your education up the highest level you can reach for better life in the future." Her advice, encouragement, and prayers have come to fruition, the four of us have managed to become scholars and teachers, even up to take master's and doctoral education in America. In return we have sent her to do hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca, and built for her a more convenient house in order that she could enjoy her old age with her beloved children and grandchildren. She has now successfully reached the two highest ideals of her life as a parent, that is to provide her children with adequate education and do hajj for herself.

My mother is one who believes and has proven it through her children and grandchildren that education is great investment for the future, that the more people invest in education, the greater the results they can pick up in the future. Investments that my mother planted through her children's education has now been fruitful and she deserves the right to enjoy the dividend of her shares. She spends her time now waiting for her grandchildren to come to say goodbye to school and ask for perfunctory pocket money. The days she highly anticipates are the days of graduation for she usually has expected and attended the graduation ceremony of her grand children. So, she as well as any other members of my family--my wife, children, and relatives were very pleased and grateful when they heard the news that I was admitted at the doctoral program in Culture, Literacy, and Language at UTSA, the university that gave me the academic degree of Master of Arts in Bicultural-Bilingual Studies nine years ago. Hopefully within four or five years, I am able to finish my PhD program and go back to Indonesia to dedicate my knowledge and expertise for the betterment of my people.

Finally, I thank God Almighty for all the pleasure that I received, especially through and as a result of my involvement in Fulbright program. Thanks to AMINEF and thanks to everyone who has contributed and helped me, especially my mother, wife, and children for their invaluable help and assistance.

(Syahrir Idris. 2000 Fulbright student program alumni, M.A. in bicultural-bilingual studies, the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA); currently a Ph.D. student at UTSA; school supervisor, Department of Education of West Lombok Regency and a founding principal of Al-Fajar Academy of Mataram)

Fulbright is More Than Just an Academic Pursuit

I was a Fulbright scholar in 2008 to 2010 in the Master's program for the Museum Communication program of the University of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Annissa Gultom's NYC skyline with Juliana Fulbrighter from Latvia and Carlos Fulbrighter from Colombia

It is the only program of its kind in the world and, I believe, it is also the program that might give solutions to Indonesia's museum problems. The program was perfect and so was the location, Philadelphia, the cradle of the nation. The city is packed with history, culture, arts, and of course, museums. Museum is the place to enhance mutual understanding, a concept that may not be well understood in Indonesia but is already well established in the U.S. My Fulbright years were an experience of understanding the multicultural nation and at the same time enhanced my understanding of my own culture.

The most fascinating culture exhibit may be the old dioramas of "Asian People" in Museum of Natural History in New York. It was interesting to see how older American generation's perspective on other cultures, especially on how they define "Asian". Also interesting how taxi drivers couldn't see the difference between Indonesia and Malaysia, and how Bali is the best entry point to introduce Indonesia to most Americans.

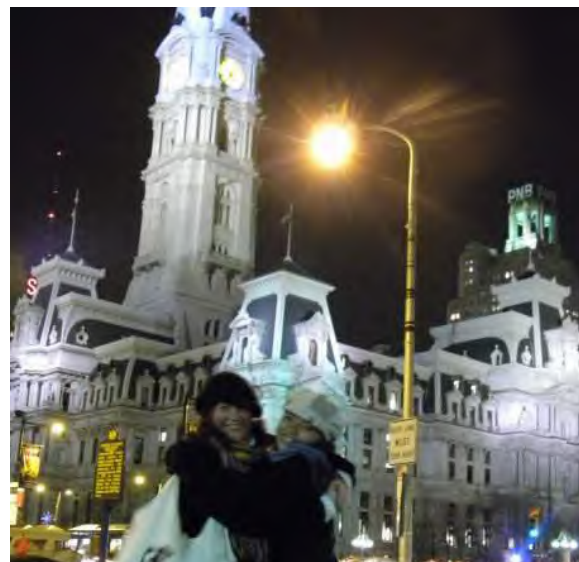


New Jersey Thanksgiving 2009

The adaption to American daily living was quite easy except the big doors that had no "pull" and "push" stickers on them. Culture knowledge exchange happened almost anytime, anywhere, with anybody I encountered. People there are as curious as we are to them. Conversations on how we perceive things differently, the same or even oddly never occurred were the pulse of our daily interactions.

One of the classes that were given in the Fulbright orientation program was about the varied English accents in the U.S., and one class only on this subject was definitely not enough. Only time with intense interactions and a lot of "say whaaa?" will really teach you.

In terms of language, I have never been afraid of sharing my language with my fellow Americans, and they will not only share you English, but also Spanish, maybe Korean, or Arabic, Afrikaans, or even Russian. In my experience, it was Javanese. On the first two weeks living in Philadelphia with the lack of knowledge on Asian communities there, a conversation in Javanese on the street corner was definitely not what I was expecting.



In front of Philadelphia City Hall with Juliana Fulbrighter from Latvia

Fulbright had given me not only a degree, but also the exciting experience in meeting so many different people and conditioned to review my own culture. The Fulbright experience has certainly become a significant part that formed me as an intellectual and definitely as a person.

(Annissa Gultom, 2008 Fulbright student grantee, University of the Arts; staff member, Oktagon Foundation, Jakarta)

Mission Impossible, But Finally Completed Within Three Years

Studying in American higher education with a three-year scholarship from Fulbright seems to be impossible.

Before leaving for my host university, Florida State University, I was told that studying at a public research university was not going to be easy. Several common challenges would be faced by international students like me, coming from a different educational system. Among the challenges are language, money, classroom behaviors, the nature of relationships with professors and advisers, teaching styles, academic workload, expectations, class dynamics, and study requirements. However, as a Fulbrighter, I felt that it was my challenge to prove that finishing a PhD within three years is also possible.

After waiting for visa for about eight months, I finally arrived at Florida State University and started my program in Spring (January) 2009. During my doctoral



program, at the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education, Florida State University, I experienced several interesting and impressing opportunities. The first week of semester, I met with my temporary academic adviser (who finally became my professor directing dissertation); I told him that my Fulbright scholarship was for three years. He understood my situation and he even told me that he was willing to find other sources of funding in case I could not finish my study within three years. We then designed my study program to finish my PhD within that time period. He was a remarkable professor. One thing that I never forgot from him is "You are a Fulbrighter, Amir and I believe you can make it." He set what I had to do every semester and I reported to him at the end of every semester as well. Anytime, I had difficulties, he and other professors

at my department were willing to help me. As a result, I finished taking all required courses within 1,5 years, I passed the diagnostic doctoral exam, preliminary doctoral exam, and doctoral dissertation proposal, and defended my dissertation in December 2011 with a GPA of 3.96.

The message behind my story is that we can make something impossible become possible by sharing with other people our situation. Also during my Fulbright time, I did not only study, but I also actively participated in several activities. I received a lot of golden opportunities: I was appointed as a research assistant in Spring 2010 and from Fall 2010 to Fall 2011, as well as member of the Departmental Advisory Committee at Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education. The committee consists of department chair, coordinator programs (professors), office manager, and one student representative (me). Involving in this committee allows me not only to participate in monthly meetings with other members, but also allows me to connect with all members of the department. As a result, I was chosen as coordinator for the Fall 2011 orientation for new graduate students at the department. I was also chosen as a co-leader for Fall 2011 orientation at Graduate school at the university level. In addition, I was invited by the Florida Department of Education to share my experience with other students in Florida. The dissertation was also financially supported by the American-Indonesian Cultural & Educational Foundation, Inc. (AICEF).



In conclusion, mission impossible, but finally completed the Ph.D. program at a top public research university within three years. Thanks, Fulbright, without generous support from you, I may not have had enough courage to continue my study in the U.S.

(Amirul Mukminin, 2008 Fulbright Ph.D. student program alumni, Florida State University; faculty member, University of Jambi)

Indonesian Educators Participate in Mid-Term Conference at Highline Community College

For three days in October 2011, Highline Community College (HCC) in Des Moines, Washington had the privilege of hosting a conference for the Community College Faculty and Administrator Program for Indonesia (CCFAPI).

The program is funded by the U.S. State Department Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and managed by Community Colleges for International Development. Highline, in partnership with Kapi'olani Community College (Honolulu, Hawaii), serves as the programmatic lead. Dr. John Sedins, Chief for Humphrey Fellowships and Institutional Linkages represented the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and welcomed the Indonesian delegation to the conference.



CCFAP conference - DACUM training with Nancy Warren

The conference marked the halfway point in the four month CCFAPI Program for the 18 representatives of nine Indonesian institutions of higher learning who are in the US to gain an understanding of U.S. community colleges and culture while also enhancing Highline and Kapi'olani perspectives on Indonesia. Each of the nine participating Indonesian colleges sent one administrator and one faculty member in order to bring back to Indonesia multiple perspectives on U.S. higher education, teaching and learning methods, leadership development, and the broader cultural context within which community colleges exist.

The administrators are hosted by Kapi'olani Community College where they are working alongside their U.S. counterparts to observe and participate in college leadership and administration. The faculty are hosted by Highline. The visiting faculty represent a range of disciplines including business, accounting, bookkeeping, English, and tourism management and

they are paired with Highline mentor faculty whose expertise matches their own. The Indonesians attend classes, occasionally guest-teaching or co-teaching when appropriate. In addition, the Indonesian faculty and administrators participate in professional development opportunities, advisory board committees, and other activities alongside their American colleagues.

The conference gave the educators a chance to check in with their colleagues, review their progress towards the program's educational and professional goals, and participate in workshops and panels led by HCC staff. During the conference, the visiting administrators shared highlights of their Hawaiian experience thus far, which included preparations for the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Meeting in November, and work with the East West Center. The Indonesian faculty presented on their time at HCC, including reflections on the relationships between industry and higher education, implementation of Universal Design for Learning classroom methodologies, and the range of support services U.S. community colleges provide to encourage students success. The workshops focused on eLearning and technology in the classroom, student leadership, workforce education, business development centers, curriculum development, and the role of advisory committees.



CCFAP Indonesian Group in front of HCC's refurbished totem pole

By the conclusion of the conference, it was clear that the Indonesian educators have been fully engaged in their experience in the U.S., employing their creativity, curiosity, dedication, and intelligence to this pan-Pacific exchange.

(Chris Foertsch, Program Coordinator, Indonesia Faculty and Administrator Program, Highline Community College)

Learning and Sharing at the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Regional Conference in Makassar

The Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) program in Indonesia began in 2004 with five ETAs.

They were placed in Bandung, Medan, Parung, Surabaya and Yogyakarta. The program has risen from those humble beginnings to meet booming demand for native English speaking language instructors in Indonesian high schools all over the country. This year 40 ETAs were placed in schools from Aceh to Maluku. They began their grants in August, 2011 and will continue until the middle of May, 2012. In late November and early December, AMINEF held two regional conferences to provide a forum for the ETAs to gather and share the experiences they'd had during the first months at their school sites. Since most of the grantees have no prior teaching experience and no prior experience in Indonesia, their learning curves are steep and this was an important opportunity for them to share lessons and cooperatively prepare to be more effective English Teaching Assistants upon returning to their sites. The following words are from Mary Kulhowick, an ETA at Senior High School (SMA) Wachid Hasyim 2 in Sidoarjo:

“ We took the time to share some of our best and worst moments...”

The Makassar conference was an opportunity for the twenty of us residing in the eastern part of Indonesia to get together and discuss issues in terms of security, living situations, communicating with cooperating teachers, classroom management and lesson planning. We took the time to share some of our best and worst moments and to brainstorm as a group possible strategies or solutions to the problems we were having. Seeing as though this was the first time many of us had seen each other since orientation in Bandung in September, this was an important time for us to catch up and check-in with each other as well as to compare our first semester experiences. We also took the time to look ahead to the coming months of our grant and to plan events such as the WORDS Competition which will



Mary Kulhowick with students

be held in Jakarta in mid-February, as well as the local mini-conferences we will be organizing later this spring at our sites.

I personally found the conference to be very effective and enjoyable as it gave me much-needed time to share and learn from the other ETAs. In particular, the group sessions where we exchanged lesson plans and teaching strategies were very useful for me, as I ran into some difficulty during the fall creating lessons to keep my large classes (40-50 students) engaged for a full hour and a half. I also learned some classroom management strategies to encourage participation and discourage off-task behavior amongst my students, which I am looking forward to implementing starting in January. Most importantly, I think the conference served as a ‘check-up’ period for all of us to evaluate our current status as ETAs and to think how we can improve during the second half of our grant both in our personal lives (i.e. ways to stay happy and avoid being consumed by frustration or homesickness) as well as professionally (how we can become better teachers at our sites). Leaving the conference I felt re-fueled and ready to tackle whatever obstacles may arise second semester with the help of the creative lessons, strategies, and support gained from my time with the other ETAs.

(Mary Kulhowick, 2011 Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, SMA Wachid Hasyim 2, Sidoarjo)

Banda Aceh “Communicative Activities” Teacher Training Seminar

On December 3, 2011, over 100 English language teachers gathered at Senior High School (SMAN) Labschool, Banda Aceh, for a training seminar on “communicative activities” sponsored by AMINEF and presented by four AMINEF representatives.

The teachers ranged from high school instructors to university professors and had traveled from as far away as Lhoksumawe, six hours south, to attend. The seminar focused on “communicative activities”—defined as English learning games, role-play type activities, and listening exercises—at the request of Acehnese teachers. Many Acehnese teachers had seen American teachers using “communicative activities” and expressed interest in learning how to introduce “communicative activities” into their lecture heavy curriculums.



The opening presentation of the Banda Aceh Communicative Activities Teacher Training.

The conference began at 8:30 a.m. with a 60 minute opening presentation by Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Doug Clark describing the benefits of using “communicative activities” and how to use them in the classroom. Following that, the 100+ participants were divided into four “breakout session” groups and led through four different 45 minute breakout sessions in separate locations. Each breakout session was taught by an AMINEF representative. Shilpa Boppana led a session on “Role-playing Communicative Activities”, Jonthon Coulson instructed about “Ice-breaking Communicative Activities”, Richard Shafranek focused on “Listening Communicative Activities”, and Doug Clark taught about “Competitive Communicative Activities”. Handouts were distributed listing “communicative activities” and instructions so teachers could immediately introduce the activities into their lessons.

The conference closed around 2 p.m. after a synthesizing closing presentation from AMINEF to general applause.



A conference participant asks a question to the AMINEF panel during a Q. & A. session.

At 7:30 p.m. that night about half of the participants in the conference were invited to return to SMAN Labschool Aceh for a dinner meeting focusing on “Differences in Education between America and Indonesia.” Each AMINEF representative led their dinner table in a discussion of the aforementioned theme. Rewarding discussions were completed and American and Indonesian educators were also afforded the chance to socialize about less formal matters—a friendly debate broke out on the subject of the recent soccer match between the L.A. Galaxy and Indonesia’s national team.



The AMINEF representatives and school organizing committee.

Ultimately, the “Banda Aceh ‘Communicative Activities’ Teacher Training” was a great success, enabling over 100 Indonesian English language teachers and graduate students to use “communicative activities” more fluently in their classroom and fulfilling AMINEF’s goal of bringing Indonesia and America closer together through education.

(Douglas Clark, 2011 Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, SMA Labschool, Banda Aceh)

Tapping into Teachers' Enthusiasm

"Excuse me, Miss, but where are you from?"

It was the beginning of my workshop on teaching English through role-playing at the Communicative Activities Conference in Banda Aceh. As a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) placed at a high school in Medan, I had been invited to give a series of workshops at this conference organized by fellow ETA Doug Clark and his colleagues at Unsyiah's Lab School, a high school in Banda Aceh. The event was attended by approximately 75 local English teachers and 25 graduate students.



At the beginning of each workshop, I introduced myself and asked the room full of participants whether they had any questions. Both quieter and more talkative groups of participants always asked, "Where are you from?" Like many Indonesians I've met here, they'd never met a non-white American, and my American accent and Indian appearance seemed to be at odds with each other. As I explained that my parents immigrated to the U.S. from India and that there's a sizable South-Asian population in the U.S., I could see the confusion clear from their faces. As the conference went on, I realized that the event was as much about personal relationships and cultural exchange as it was about sharing strategies for teaching English. The conference participants' enthusiasm and warmth was palpable, and I enjoyed learning about their backgrounds as well as their opinions on the Indonesian and American education systems.



Weeks before, as the conference approached, I was excited but apprehensive about running workshops for English teachers and graduate students. As a recent college graduate with undergraduate degrees in Religion and Psychology, I have no official certification in pedagogy or teaching English. However, in my 4 months here in Indonesia, I have accumulated (through trial-and-error and with the help of my fellow ETAs) a variety of strategies to help my Indonesian students overcome their fear of making mistakes and practice their English. My most engaging and effective lessons have been student-centered, with students participating in activities and games that allow them to apply their knowledge of English grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. With the goal of sharing some of these activities that conference participants could adapt and modify for their students, I used my workshops to discuss how role-play activities work, and I had the participants actually engage in role-plays so that they could experience the strengths and limitations of these activities first-hand.



In addition to attending my workshops, participants attended workshops led by ETAs Doug Clark and Richard Shaf-ranek, and English Language Fellow Jonthon Coulson. After talking to teachers and administrators at the Unsyiah Lab School and learning about their mission, Richard, Jonthon, and I were impressed by the school's emphasis on fostering creativity and encouraging their students to think critically. Doug Clark and the Unsyiah School staff's hard work and dedication in making this conference successful paid off. Weeks after the conference, I am still receiving e-mails from participants who felt that the workshops were interesting and who want to talk more about strategies for engaging their students in learning English. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to be part of this event, and I hope that this conference will lay the groundwork for future collaboration between Fulbrighters and educators from schools across Indonesia.

(Shilpa Boppana, Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, SMA Sutomo I, Medan)

2012 National WORDS Competition Winners

Fitri Mardika is a high school student at Senior High School (SMA) 8 In Pekanbaru, Riau.

On January 28 she won an English speaking competition hosted by Jenna Wallace, SMA 8's Fulbright English Teaching Assistant. On February 10 Fitri boarded an airplane for the first time. Her destination was Jakarta, where the 2012 National WORDS Competition would be held the next day. Fitri was one of 40 contestants. All of them, like Fitri, were winners of local competitions hosted by the group of 40 American Fulbright English Teaching Assistants who are spending this school year in Indonesian high schools from Aceh to Maluku.

All the competitions used the same theme: "What story would you share with future generations?" The winners all created five minute presentations in English to answer the question – and they didn't stop there! Most also incorporated songs, dances, or other performances influenced by their own local cultures. Students weaved their answers to the question with spoken English and a surprising array of other elements too – from Malay storytelling to Buginese language to Malukan environmentalism to ja'i dancing from Nusa Tenggara Timur.



Fitri chose to use music to make her point. She mixed "The One that Got Away," Katy Perry's current hit song, with "Tokecang," a traditional song from West Java. The message was that a truly globalized world will include the best of modernity and the best of the world's traditions.

After presenting and listening to their peers, it was time for the winners to be announced. The students were nervous at first, but the room erupted in cheers when Wynda Verani from SMA 1 Bontang was announced as the winner in the Best Overall category. This was the beginning of the really special part of the competition: the

unique opportunity to meet and befriend other students from all over Indonesia. After the competition the students and ETAs went bowling together near Bundaran Hotel Indonesia (HI), and the next day the students boarded a bus for a city tour of Jakarta. Many of them had never been to Indonesia's capital before.



It was there that they named themselves the "AMINEF Stars." When the students returned from their sight-seeing tour, they joined the ETAs for a rooftop pizza party at Hotel Alila. Phone numbers and Facebook names were exchanged and T-shirts were signed. The next day everyone boarded buses for the airport, and many were surprised at how difficult it was to leave this group of new friends – they'd only met 48 hours earlier!



After Fitri and Jenna landed back in Pekanbaru and returned to their homes, Fitri summed up the weekend in an SMS to her ETA. "Miss, do you know maybe I have a jetlag right now, feelin' like my body in Pekanbaru but my heart still in Jakarta with all the AMINEF stars." It was a week-end of genius and friendship in Jakarta, but the friendships formed were quickly felt on islands far across the sea!

The winners of the 2012 National WORDS Competition at AMINEF are:

Best Use of English Category: Maghfi-

rah Maulany from SMA Khadijah, Surabaya

Most Creative Category: Luh Ketut Wahyuning from SMA 1 Sumbawa Besar

Best Use of Theme Category: Adriana

Salim from SMA Sutomo 1, Medan

Overall Winner: Wynda Verani from SMA 1 Bontang

(Rick Ferrera, Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship coordinator at AMINEF)

Alumni Highlights

Fulbrighter Ahmad Fuadi's Novel on the Screen Now

A film based on the first book of a trilogy entitled *The Land of Five Towers* that Ahmad Fuadi wrote has just been released to the public.



It is about the dreams to study abroad come true for at least five classmates studying at the Pondok Madani Islamic boarding school in Gontor East Java. Together with his friends, Alif, the protagonist, learned to become a tough and confident young man.

Fifteen years later, faith brought these young men to five different countries including the U.S. God hands, through their dreams, determination, hard work and prayer have guided them to reach the "tower" of their lives. Never ever underestimate the power of a dream, no matter how unreachable it looks. God does listen to your wish.

The novel is a best seller having been reprinted 12 times. Its English trans-

lation was launched during the Ubud Writer Festival on October 5, 2011. *Negeri 5 Menara* sequel which is on the book shelf already is *Ranah 3 Warna*. In Malaysia, the publishing rights has been purchased by a noted Publishing House, PTS Litera, and well sold there.

Negeri 5 Menara (The Land of Five Towers) has won several awards, including the 2010 Khatulistiwa Literary Award (Long List) and the 2010 Favorite Fiction Writer and Book from the Indonesian Readers Awards. In 2011, Fuadi was awarded the Liputan6 Award SCTV for the Education and Motivation Category.

Fuadi received his Fulbright grant in 1999 to pursue his master's degree at the School of Media and Public Affairs, George Washington University. While studying, he and his accompanying spouse were also Indonesian Tempo weekly magazine correspondents and reporters for Voice of America (VOA). They reported on historical news, such as the 9-11 tragedy, straight from the Pentagon, White House, and Capitol Hill.

Currently, Fuadi is busy writing, be-



left to right, Ahmad Fuadi, Piet Hendrardjo, Anies Baswedan and

ing a speaker and motivator locally and internationally, and building a social foundation to aid in the education of the underprivileged—Komunitas Menara (Menara Community).

Source: Gramedia Pustaka Utama website, the publisher of the novel



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AMINEF
CIMB Niaga Plaza
3rd Floor
Jl. Jend. Sudirman
Kav. 25
Jakarta 12920
Tel. 021-52961977,
5296-1966
Fax. 021-52961962
Email: infofulbright_
ind@aminef.or.id
www.aminef.or.id

Information on the scholarships, awards and fellowship are available at AMINEF website at:
www.aminef.or.id

AMINEF is inviting articles for its e-Newsletter which is published quarterly on its portal. All articles received will be reviewed for acceptance before publishing. Please also submit one photo or more with size more than 200kb for good resolution and clarity.

Fulbrighter Sidrotun Naim Won the 2011 AAFE Award

Sidrotun Naim, Fulbright Presidential student grantee, is one of the winners of the Indonesian Ambassador 2011 Award for Excellence (AAFE).

She is one of the two winners from the Ph.D. student category. The Indonesian Ambassador annually awards the AAFE to Indonesian students (elementary and high school, bachelor, master's and Ph.D.) in the U.S. who have extraordinary academic achievement.

Sidrotun Naim is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Environmental Microbiology, at the University of Arizona. Her doc-

toral dissertation would be on "Vibriosis and Streptococcus in Shrimp-Tilapia Polyculture: Minimizing shrimp diseases and managing disease transmission risk". She is indeed a high achiever having the following awards: Academic Achievement Fellowship from the Ministry of National Education (1998-2002), ADS to pursue study at the University of Queensland (2004-2005), L'Oréal UNESCO Award for Women in Science (2009-2010), Fulbright Presidential Award (2009-2012), Schlumberger Foundation Faculty for the future (2010-2012), Altech Young Scientist (2010).

Fulbrighter Tian Belawati, the first Asian woman to be President of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)



"Tian Belawati. 2001 Fulbright Senior Research program grantee to Florida Community College System (hosted by

Florida State University), who is President of Universitas Terbuka (Open University) was unanimously elected President of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) 2012-2015 in the international meeting of the organization held in Oslo, Norway in February 2012. She is the first woman from Asia elected to this prestigious position.

ICDE has representatives from 60 countries. Indonesia is one of the 10 countries which have more than 500,000 students. Currently Universitas Terbuka has 600,000 registered students, or ranked number 6 in terms of number of students in the world."

Fulbrighter Nirwan Dewanto won the 2011 Khatulistiwa Literary Award

"Nirwan Dewanto, 1998 Fulbright researcher to the University of Wisconsin, Madison, won the 2011 Khatulistiwa Literary Award (KLA) as the acclaimed Indonesian poet for his poems collection entitled Buli-Buli Lima Kaki. This is his second KLA award he received, the first one was in 2008 for his poems collection of Jantung Lebah Ratu (The Queen Bee's Heart).

Every year, the Khatulistiwa Literary Award is given to books of fiction and poetry written by Indonesian writers. It is presented to demonstrate support for the development of literature in Indonesia. It is given to the writer whose creation is selected by a jury as the best work published during the twelve month period preceding the judging period.

Members of jury are well-known figures from various backgrounds including academicians, literary critics and media personages and representatives cross-section of the Indonesian literary experts and reader's community.

The man behind the award is Richard Oh graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, with a degree in English Literature and Creative Writing who is a writer himself and bookstore owner. He and Takeshi Ichiki from Plaza Senayan founded Khatulistiwa Literary Award, a literary award for Indonesian writers, in 2001."