

East-West Center Alumni news



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LETTER FROM EWCA PRESIDENT AMANDA ELLIS



Aloha Fellow Alumni,

Lots of great alumni action to report!

[Asia Pacific Leadership Program 2019](#) has begun. As foreshadowed, Chennai Chapter is graciously hosting the [2019 East-West Center Chennai Leadership Symposium](#) August 23-5 – MAHALO Chennai! (You can follow APLP learning adventures on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) – click through.)

In early August we welcomed Bangkok Chapter leader, Dr. Naris Chaiyasoot, and leaders from Thammasat University for a [sustainability symposium](#). During my visit to the vibrant Bangkok Chapter in April, Dr. Naris came up with the wonderful idea of a win/win initiative to support our 60th anniversary next year.



The P4Y (Partnership for Youth) sustainability young leaders program, led by Namji Steinemann and supported by Ivan Lui-Kwan and the Hukupili Foundation, welcomed participants from Thailand,

August 2019

In this Issue:

- Letter from EWCA President
- EWC Alumnus Confirmed as Top U.S. Diplomat for Asia Pacific
- East-West Center Is on Instagram!
- East-West Center Media Programs
- Alumni News & Achievements
- In Memoriam
- Chapter News

Korea, Japan, Hawai'i, New York, and Aotearoa New Zealand (Te Atiawa Tribal Council, which graciously hosted P4Y advisor Maya Soetoro-Ng, Namji Steinemann, and me in Wellington, NZ in February).



To celebrate the 5th anniversary of [#galswithLEI](#) (Leadership Entrepreneurship Inspiration), I was delighted to moderate an inspirational [Changing Faces](#) alumna panel who shared insights on their business growth.



L-R: Amanda Ellis, LeeAnne Wong (Hawaii), Bernice Parsons (Philippines/Hawaii), Zhafira Liebis (Indonesia), Saliza Abdullah (Malaysia)

Your response to our [request for alumni profiles](#) has been very positive, and we are delighted with your stories of meaningful EWC connections – yes, including romances! Our transformative EWC experiences often created life-long friendships as well as great work connections. As well as meeting my wonderful husband, Keric Chin, his fellow Air Force Academy classmate Dave Stilwell and wife Jan Watanabe (yes, they met at the Center, too!) became great friends we have stayed in touch with. Special congratulations to [Dave](#) as new U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

It was such a pleasure to spend time with members of the alumni chapter in Tokyo while presenting at the Women Political Leaders

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- [U.S.-Japan-Southeast Asia Partnership in a Dynamic Asia Fellowship \(Year 2\)](#)

– deadline:
September 20, 2019

- [2020 Asia Pacific Leadership Program Fellowship](#) -

deadline: November 15, 2019

- [CSC-EWC Visiting Scholars Program](#) -

deadline: November 15, 2019

- [EWC Graduate Degree Fellowship](#) -

deadline: December 1, 2019

- [EWC Graduate Degree Fellowship for Taiwan](#) -

deadline: December 1, 2019

- [Obuchi Student Scholarship](#) -

deadline: December 1, 2019

Forum in the margins of the G20. Thank you for being wonderful hosts and providing more great ideas for the 60th. [View photos](#)

Warmest Aloha,
Amanda

EWC ALUMNUS CONFIRMED AS TOP U.S. DIPLOMAT FOR ASIA PACIFIC



Congratulations to **David Stilwell** (Culture & Communication, MA 1987-1988) who was recently confirmed as the new [U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs](#). He retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2015 with rank of brigadier general after 35 years of service. Since his retirement, he has served as director of the China Strategic Focus Group at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Headquarters in Hawai'i and as an adjunct senior fellow at the East-West Center.

EAST-WEST CENTER IS ON INSTAGRAM!

Share your update with us through tagging us on Instagram @east.west.center

The East-West Center is on [Instagram](#) highlighting individual stories of current East-West Center programs, research, and alumni. Share stories about your unforgettable time at the East-West Center and what you are up to now. Celebrate the work impacting the region others are doing in collaboration with EWC – tag an individual or organization.

And remember, you can follow EWC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#), and sign up for [email updates](#) and [RSS feeds](#).

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EAST-WEST CENTER MEDIA PROGRAMS

Over the last 52 years, more than 4,000 journalists in the United States and Indo-Pacific have participated in [EWC Journalism Programs](#). 8-10 diverse reporting tours, fellowships, exchanges, dialogues, conferences and training workshops are offered each year, providing an opportunity for journalists to get firsthand information and perspectives in the United States and Indo Pacific to enhance their media coverage and better inform the public and policymakers. The [Jefferson Fellowships](#) is the longest continuously running program at the East-West Center. The biennial [International Media Conference](#) held every two years in an Asian capital draws 400-500 media professionals from around the world, expanding the Center's mark on global media.



EWC Journalism Programs adapt to the changing needs of journalists, news consumers and the region. After 9-11 the [Senior Journalists Seminar](#) focused on US-Muslim relations and the impact of religion on the public sphere. Last year [Chinese journalists](#) went inside the home of an Iowa soybean farmer outside Des Moines, Iowa to talk about the impact of US-China trade tariffs.



Joseph L. Murphy / Iowa Soybean Association

With disinformation on social media a potent media challenge around the world, EWC is offering more training programs on best use of

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About Us

The East-West Center promotes better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the United States, Asia, and the Pacific through cooperative study, research, and dialogue.

[Short video](#)

social media platforms in newsrooms and on fact-checking skills and networks. Last year the Center received funding for four new journalism programs focused on [Countering Disinformation in Southeast Asia and Oceania](#), including our first reporting tours devoted to journalists from Pacific Island nations.

The EWC also takes on regional challenges such as cross-border media collaboration along unfriendly borders. For the last five years the EWC has led [Improving Cross-Border Reporting: Pakistan-India Journalists Exchange and Dialogue](#). The EWC has also encouraged the next generation of journalists to engage in cross-border collaboration by leading three semesters of virtual exchanges between 80 journalism students in New Delhi and Karachi. The students' [blogsite](#) showcases their 14 cross-border media projects.

ALUMNI NEWS & ACHIEVEMENTS



Syed Abu Ahmad Akif (Education, MPA 1998-2000), vice president of the Islamabad Chapter, received the prestigious national “Sitara-e Imtiaz” (Star of Distinction) award from the president of Pakistan on Pakistan Day (23 March) for his outstanding and

meritorious services to the Government of Pakistan as a civil servant. He retired last year as Federal Cabinet Secretary and is currently a member of the Prime Minister’s Inspection Commission. Instead of a party in his honor, Akif requested that the Chapter celebrate with a community service project. The Chapter, in collaboration with Pakistan Youth Catalyst (PYC), installed a water cooler with filter at a Madressah in a village more than 200 kilometers away from Islamabad where over 300 boys and girls from age 3 to 10 years study Quran and the Imam actively promotes health related activities with local staff of the clinic managed by PYC.

Michael Anderson’s (Communication, Ph.D. 1974-1978) [letter to the editor](#) in the Washington Post draws attention to the establishment and work of the East-West Center, focusing on how I.M. Pei connected East and West. “Pei was selected to design the center’s 21-acre campus adjacent to the University of Hawaii in Honolulu’s

scenic Manoa Valley. . . .Pei deserves credit for using his talent to design practical yet memorable buildings that remain in use to this day to foster dialogue on critical regional issues and bring diverse cultures together. Anyone who has visited the center surely would not forget Pei's notable buildings, including Jefferson Hall, Kennedy Theatre and Hale Manoa residence hall."



The Society of Professional Journalists Hawaii Chapter recently honored **Chad Blair** (Jefferson Fellowships, 2018) of Honolulu Civil Beat and multimedia journalist **Heidi Chang** (Media 2003) with

Excellence in Journalism Awards. Chad Blair received second place for Column Writing or Blog/News and, with Patti Epler, received first place for their editorial opinion, "Police Corruption and Accountability". Heidi Chang received first place for Radio Feature Reporting for her National Public Radio story on Gabby Pahinui, "[Remembering A Legendary Hawaiian Musician](#)". "[Postal Service Marks Lunar New Year with Stamp by Kam Mak](#)" for Voice of America also received a first place award for Radio General News/Enterprise Reporting and "[A Hawaiian island got about 50 inches of rain in 24 hours. Scientists warn it's a sign of the future](#)" for the Los Angeles Times received a third place award for Daily Newspaper General News/Enterprise Reporting.



Two alumnae, **Olie Body** (2019) and **Brianne West** (2016), of the East-West Center's Changing Faces Women's Leadership Seminar have been named finalists for this year's [EY Entrepreneur of the Year](#) award. In

addition, the business partner and sister of 2018 alumna, Florence Van Dyke, has also been named a finalist. The Center offers these New Zealand-based alum congratulations and best wishes on their continued business expansion and success.



EWCA president **Amanda Ellis** (Open Grants, Ph.D. 1986-1989) led the session on the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the Women Political Leaders Forum in Japan in the margins

of the G20 meeting in June. Hosted by the Speaker of the House at the Diet, Japan's Parliament Buildings, the Forum brought together close to 400 women political leaders from 87 countries. A [call to action](#) was accepted by G20 leaders.



Layla Kilolu's (Education, MURP 2017-2019) project, "Climate Justice: How Are Cities Preparing their Most Vulnerable?" has been selected as a [2019 recipient of the Robert J. Myers Fellows Fund](#) grant. The Robert J. Myers Fellows Fund supports and promotes activities of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs network that embody Mr. Myers' vision of effective ethical inquiry rooted in local experiences and communities.

Jean Lee (International Media Conference, 2012) and **Jessica C. Lee** (Senior Policy Seminar, 2008) are among 40 Asian-American and Pacific Islander rising-star professionals in U.S. national security and foreign policy honored by The Diversity in National Security network and New America. Selection is based on career excellence and leadership, current work in national security or foreign policy, contributions to their issues of expertise through thought leadership, and demonstrated service to their communities.



The RAND Corporation has announced that **Ji-Young Lee** (Research, POSCO 2009) will be the inaugural holder of the recently created [Korea Policy Chair](#) at the RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy beginning on September 3. She will be joining RAND from American University, where she has served on the faculty since 2011. Lee's research focuses on East Asian international relations, security, and diplomatic history. As

a senior political scientist at RAND, she will also build partnerships with research institutes in Korea to organize symposiums, scholar exchange programs, and joint research projects. The Korea Policy Chair was created with gifts from the Korea Foundation in 2017 to support a senior scholar who will manage a research agenda on Korea's international security relations and mentor Korea studies scholars.



Former member of the board of the East-West Center Foundation Robert M. (Skipp) Orr (Resource Systems 1988-1990; Economic Dev & Policy 1991, 1992) was recently honored with the Order of the Rising Sun, granted by the Imperial Palace of Japan to those who have made distinguished achievements in international relations involving Japan. The award was presented by Shinsuke Sugiyama, the

Japanese ambassador to the United States, in a ceremony at his residence in Washington, D.C.



St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawai'i has named **Ivan Lui-Kwan** (International Conference Seoul, 2018) the recipient of its third annual St. Francis of Assisi Spirit Award. Ivan Lui-Kwan

and his family have been instrumental, through both monetary donations and leadership, to the opening of the St. Francis Kupuna Village by the end of this year. Lui-Kwan is co-chairman of the village's capital campaign and has also served as board director for St. Francis Residential Care Community and St. Francis Development Corporation. The award recognizes an individual, a family, or an organization that exhibits the Franciscan values – gifts that you pass on to somebody else; focusing on servant leadership and putting somebody else before yourself.

As a result of his decades-long relationship as both U.S. ambassador and personal friend with King Tuheitia of New Zealand, Ivan Lui-Kwan and other Native Hawaiian leaders run a youth leadership initiative, Hawaiki Atua, in partnership with the East-West Center and the Maori tribes of New Zealand to provide programming to uplift and

train young native people. Students and teachers from Nānākuli and Waiʻanae High Schools, St. Joseph School of Hilo, St. Andrew's Schools and Kupu recently went to New Zealand for a 10-day leadership retreat.



Rappler CEO **Maria Ressa** (International Media Conference, 2012, 2014, 2018) received the [2019 Columbia University Journalism Award](#) on May 22. She was recognized by the Journalism School's faculty "for the depth and quality of her work, as well as her courage and persistence in the field." Ressa, a journalist in Asia for more than 30 years, is executive editor of *Rappler*, which she co-founded in 2012. The award, established in 1958, is given annually by the faculty of the Columbia

University School of Journalism in recognition of a journalist's outstanding accomplishments and singular journalistic performance in the public interest.

Stanford University has announced that it will bestow the [2019 Shorenstein Journalism Award](#) on Maria Ressa in a ceremony in the fall. This recognition is given to journalists who have "contributed significantly to a greater understanding of Asia through outstanding reporting on critical issues affecting the region."



The Vietnam Urban Planning and Development Association awarded its [2019 Bronze Medal for Regional Plans](#) to a project led by **James H. Spencer** (Research, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014; E-W Seminars 2012), associate dean of research and graduate studies in the College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities at Clemson University. Spencer and an international team worked in partnership with the Vietnam Institute for Urban and

Rural Planning to study the potential for tourism and economic development in a UNESCO Global Geopark – the Dong Van Karst Plateau Geopark – and to design a development strategy and urban plan.



Siva Gopal Thaiyalan (APLP 2015-2016) has completed his Ph.D. program in Wellington, New Zealand and will start a new position at the Singapore University of Social Science. Siva loves doing community service work and the EWCA Singapore Chapter looks forward to supporting his activities.

IN MEMORIAM



Man-Kam Leung (Inst. for for Student Interchange, MA 1963-1965) passed away peacefully on June 27, 2019. He was predeceased by his wife of 39 years, Joan Ngai Leung (Inst. for Student Interchange, MA 1967-1969). Professor Leung joined the newly founded Department of Far Eastern Studies at the University of Saskatchewan in 1965. Upon the dissolution of the department in 1984, he transferred to the History Department, where he taught until his retirement in June 2005. Upon his retirement, he donated his entire book collection of 60,000 volumes, including rare reference books on China and Japan, to the University of Saskatchewan library and donated his time to the library to help catalog the collection so the library would not need to hire a translator. The collection is housed together virtually as the Leung Far Eastern Studies Collection, honoring Dr. Leung and the origins of Asians studies scholarship at the University of Saskatchewan within his original academic department – the Department of Far Eastern Studies.



Joan Natalie (Inst. for Student Interchange, MA 1965-1967) passed away on May 8, 2019 at the age of 78. She taught art in the public schools of Nassau County, New York for many years.



Former EWC vice president **Wesley Park** passed away on July 14, 2019. A well-known Honolulu business leader and supporter of the arts, he served as the Center's vice president of administration between 1982 and 1989. Park was known as an organizational turnaround specialist who led administrative transformations at a variety of major Hawai'i institutions, including St. Francis Healthcare System, Lili'uokalani Trust, and Hawaii Dental

Service. He also served as dean of UH's College of Continuing Education and on the board of the Honolulu Museum of Art.



John Talu Tekwie (PIDP, 1984-1985) passed away on July 29, 2019. He entered politics in 1992, serving as the regional member for Sandaun Province in the Papua New Guinea parliament for two terms and served as the Minister for Commerce Trade and Industry. He championed free trade zones and economic independence and was the founder, visionary, and chief architect of the Vanimo Free Trade Zone concept. He formed the Indigenous People's Party which

later became the Melanesian People's Party.



Walter Myron Yeager passed away on February 18, 2019 in Edmonds, Washington, at the age of 89. He began teaching in Spokane in 1952, then moved to the Edmonds School District in 1955, where he enjoyed a long but interrupted career. His atypical career was made possible by a series of scholarships and grants for study in graduate-level university programs, including East-West Center grants to attend the Summer Institute of Asian Studies in 1963 and Teacher Interchange Program in

1964-1965. In 1967, he became a member of Columbia University Teachers College Faculty of Education Team at Kabul University in Afghanistan, where he helped develop its History/Social Science Department. Upon his return to Edmonds, he became a Resource Liaison Officer at the University of Washington's South Asia Center, where he worked with area teachers in both Delhi and Islamabad

Universities. He rejoined the Edmonds School District in 1974 until his retirement in the late 1990s.



Former EWC alumni director **Jai-Ho Yoo** (Inst. for Student Interchange, MA 1965-1967) passed away on July 14, 2019 at the age of 85. He devoted his life to promoting greater mutual respect, understanding and cooperation through cultural and educational exchange and professional collaboration. He was the deputy director of Fulbright Commission in Korea and returned to Honolulu in April 1975 to serve as alumni liaison officer at the East-West Center until March 1983. In 1980, he founded the Center for Asia-Pacific Exchange (CAPE) and, later, Asia Pacific College (APC). More than 12,000 students, teachers, and nurses from various countries in the Asia Pacific region attended CAPE and APC programs for language studies, nursing education, and cross-cultural training.

CHAPTER NEWS

EWCA Bangkok Chapter

The EWCA Bangkok Chapter, led by Dr. Naris Chaiyasoot, organized Aloha Night on July 30, 2019 – a reunion for East-West Center and University of Hawaii alumni, new EWC participants and Thammasat University Leadership Program students. EWC alumni from 1966-2019 attended. New Foundation Scholar and Royal Thai Sala Scholarship awardee Jaratnapa Surinlert was invited to attend and received a warm send off from alumni in Thailand before departing for her program in Honolulu.



EWCA Islamabad Chapter

The EWCA Islamabad Chapter, in collaboration with Pakistan Youth Catalyst (PYC), installed a water cooler with filter at a Madressah in a village more than 200 kilometers away from Islamabad where over 300 boys and girls from age 3 to 10 years study Quran and the Imam actively promotes health related activities with local staff of the clinic managed by PYC. PYC staff informed the Chapter that Leishmaniasis was spreading in their area. Chapter president, Dr. Arjumand Faisal, spoke about this issue with the Advisor on Health to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Immediate action was taken and a WHO team was invited to deal with the problem.

The Chapter also provided financial support to those in need, raising and providing cash support to a 50+ year old woman for dialysis, an ailing 80-year old man for treatment and daily expenses, a man setting up shop to start a business and to pay off a loan. Funds were raised to sponsor the education of 22 children for a year at the House of Light School that provides quality education to 325 underprivileged children.

Members met for dinner on 28 June to plan future programs.



EWCA Kansai Chapter

On June 22, the EWCA Kansai Chapter held a Board meeting, finalizing plans for two seminars and a general meeting to be held later in the afternoon at the Okayama University of Science. Takashi Mita presented a seminar on “Going along with the Globalizing World: From Experiences of Palau, a Small Country in the Pacific Ocean”. Palau, celebrating the 25th anniversary of its independence this year. Once occupied by Japan and other countries, now experiencing global warming and impacts of foreign tourism, Palau is at the forefront in the areas of preserving its environment and national resources. Shintaro Taniguchi presented a seminar on “Studying and Life in America: East-West Center and International Exchanges”, addressing scholarships provided to foreign students from Asia and Pacific regions attending the University of Hawaii and opportunities for international understanding and collaboration. Kansai members then visited the Museum of Dinosaur Research at Okayama University of Science.



EWCA Palestine Chapter

The EWCA Palestine Chapter has formed partnerships with an educational institute (Founders Institute-Palestine) and a local startup accelerator (UMAKE) to cooperate in executing future activities and projects related to EWCA and EWC. The Chapter has received \$2,500.00 to execute the first phase of a program for capacity building for young people from marginalized communities to improve their soft skills and prepare them for the job market. 15 fresh grads from the city of Nablus started training on July 5th until August 15th, 2019

The Chapter is planning to execute the project: Middle East innovation challenge program and applied for funding for an EWC Lab that highlights the technology of agriculture in the city.

EWCA Southern California Chapter

The EWCA Southern California Chapter gathered at the home of Gary and Bach-Mai Larsen in Lakewood, CA. Members and friends socialized over appetizers and a luncheon prepared by Bach-Mai; other attendees contributed drinks and special treats. EWCA APLP Chapter leader Melissa (Missy) Pawneshing shared news about the younger, virtual APLP Chapter. Gary and Bach-Mai's 13-year old granddaughter, Maile, entertained the group. Chapter treasurer Jay Brara is encouraging members to participate in the Chapter's annual contribution to student scholarships.



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