MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings!

In this edition, we highlight some of our students’ past internships as well as our graduating students. We also provide an update on the Humanitarian Assistance Applied Research Group (HAARG).

This issue includes a review of the annual Humanitarian Crisis Simulation as well as other events Humanitarian Assistance Program hosted during the quarter.

As always, we welcome your comments and questions.

Enjoy,
Chen Reis

The Humanitarian Assistance Certificate Program prepares students to work in the humanitarian field. The program provides students with the theoretical and practical underpinnings for humanitarian work which is technically sound, engages with affected communities, responds to the diverse needs of affected populations and sets the stage for sustainable and inclusive recovery and development.

STAYING CONNECTED

Website

Check out our website at: http://www.du.edu/korbel/humanitarian-assistance
Learn more about the Humanitarian Assistance Program and our current students.

Facebook

www.facebook.com/du.haprog

Be sure to “like” HA’s Facebook page and stay up to date with news both here at the Josef Korbel School and around the world.

Instagram

Follow the Humanitarian Assistance Instagram page for pictures and updates on events and students.

Twitter

@DU_humanitarian

Follow our tweets for the latest buzz in the humanitarian world and live-tweeting during HA events.
Humanitarian Crisis Simulation

The Humanitarian Assistance Program’s 6th annual simulation took place on May 12-14th. Humanitarian Assistance students joined with students from the International Disaster Psychology Program and the graduate Social work program to participate in the Humanitarian Crisis Simulation hosted by the HA Program on May 12th-14th.

Students from all three programs formed teams and underwent a 36-hour crisis simulation during which they were challenged with stressful situations that one would experience during an actual crisis. Students received additional training in security, media, and data collection prior to the live simulation portion of the event.

The students were evaluated throughout the live portion of the simulation, allowing them to receive important feedback regarding the experience.

The simulation provided students with an opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom to a context that represents, as closely as possible, what it is like to work in the humanitarian field.

"Through the simulation I was forced to balance the challenges of an IDP camp, the media, security while still gathering enough information and form a proposal that is attractive to donor organizations. Needless to say, the simulation was an invaluable learning experience" - Aliza Vaccher

The crisis simulation allowed the students to form a better understanding of the challenges and life of an aid worker, while also creating a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses; all helpful knowledge for outlining their future career choices.
On April 4th, Victoria Rames spoke to students about her 20th year career working within development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of gender equality programming in both humanitarian crisis and development settings. She advised students to pursue anything that you want to learn or achieve professionally as almost nothing is impossible. Victoria backed up this claim, describing the research project that she both designed and self-funded on Afro-Brazilian small business owners and constraints to their economic productivity after completing her undergraduate degree.

Victoria’s advice also included the importance of knowing your limitations within the field; technically, psychologically, and spiritually. It is important to know when you are not qualified and what you cannot handle, that is not defeat; it is best to leave those areas to individuals that hold those particular strengths and skill sets. She also stressed that within the GBV field it is important to develop an expertise in a specific area, but when working in other sectors that it is important to take every opportunity to address gender knowledge attitude and practices.
Speaker Reviews

Every Quarter, the Humanitarian Assistance Program strives to bring relevant guest speakers and other humanitarian assistance related events to the Josef Korbel School. See below for a recap of events from the Spring Quarter.

Hardy Vieux Career Path Talk

On Friday, April 21st, Hardy Vieux spoke to students about his career leading to his current position as the Legal Director for Human Rights First. He discussed the three main themes that he has discovered during his career (1) Pivoting is good (2) Embrace failure and re-define success (3) Network, but sincerely.

Hardy's practical advice on networking, building on his theme, included that skype and phone is always better than emails and that it is essential to be clear of what you are asking the person you are networking with prior to contacting them.

Hardy imparted advice such as the importance of listening, of finding mentors with whom you have a genuine connection. He also spoke about the importance of having a plan, but also of understanding when it is necessary to divert from the plan, as unexpected circumstances arise and you must be able to adapt.

Jeff Franklin Career Path Talk

Jeff Franklin, a Korbel Alumni, adjunct professor, and the Country Director for the National Red Cross in the Philippines spoke to students on May 6th. The tips that he stressed during his talk included in the importance of networking, and to meet people that are even slightly outside of your main interest area.

Other career advice included that students should not restrict themselves early on in their career, such as by declaring that they are a GBV specialist, as it may be limiting; stating that "career paths can be winding roads, and you can eventually get there."

Regarding working within emergency situations, Jeff stressed the importance of being comfortable with constant change and that everything is often out of your control. One of the most important qualities to succeed working in an emergency setting is to know how to prioritize and remain focused during the emergency.
Speaker Review

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Anne Richard Events

On May 25th and 26th, Anne Richard, former Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration from 2012-2017, and a former vice president at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) visited the University of Denver. Anne Richard was hosted by both the Humanitarian Assistance Program and Dean Christopher Hill’s office.

While working as a senior U.S. State Department official, Richard worked closely with the Obama administration to formulate and implement refugee policy, overseeing both overseas refugee assistance as well as the domestic resettlement program.

The main event was a discussion between Anne Richard and Dean Hill, sponsored by Humanitarian Assistance Program and Center for Middle East Studies, the No Lost Generation-DU student organization, and the University’s Middle East Discussion Group, Political Science Department, and Division of Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence. The Hospitality School’s ready for American Hospitality Program served food prepared by refugee women receiving training at the Comal food incubator.

During her visit to DU, Richard also took time to offer career advice to students, guest lectured at a graduate seminar on refugees, met with a freshman writing class focused on refugee resettlement, spoke to leaders and participants of the RAH program, held a lunch with the No Lost Generation group and presided over a meeting for state, local, and non-profit leaders focused on refugee resettlement.

The discussion between Richard and Dean Hill focused on the rhetoric of the Trump administration regarding the U.S. Refugee policy, and stressed that refugees are already subject to the most rigorous screening process of any individual attempting to enter the United States. Richard told those interested in contributing locally to do so by donating to resettlement organizations, teaching English to newcomers, joining student groups that raise awareness of refugee issues or supporting advocacy initiatives in the community.
Chris Thurman

Chris Thurman is a second year student at Josef Korbel. He is a M.A. Candidate in International Development with a certificate in Humanitarian Assistance.

What is your background?
Edcuationally, I am an International Development student. The undergraduate degrees I achieved are in English and Political Science, with a minor in Women and Gender Studies. My professional background is in gender violence prevention education, and I am employed by a non-profit in Denver in that capacity.

Where did you intern?
I interned at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. I worked with the Sexual & Gender-Based Violence Unit.

Why did you choose this site/organization?
I chose Geneva because I wanted to see how SGBV operations in refugee responses were handled from an administrative level. It was also much easier for me to travel for R&R than some of the other areas I received offers from.

How did you get the internship?
I cold emailed one of the women who ended up being one of my supervisors. She and I corresponded briefly then I received an offer a couple of months later.

What were your responsibilities?
My team was very supportive of me, and I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work on several different projects. These included donor justification reports, mapping of data from the field, event planning, general research, social media research, and a variety of other tasks.

How do you think it contributed to your humanitarian assistance and/or Korbel education?
There is definitely a deeper understanding of what goes into SGBV prevention and responses, and how the UN functions (or doesn’t function) in times of crisis. Being able to interact with the actual people carrying out this work and taking opportunities to interview field staff on what it means to be a humanitarian were huge benefits of having this internship.

Rougui Toure

What did you do?
I initially started working with the Protection Cluster with UNHCR Mauritania as a Program and Reporting Assistant for the Malian Crisis and Ebola Crisis. I was in charge of periodically updating the Situation Report which is an important aspect of M&E. I also helped with the creation of the 2015 Country Operation Plan and updated periodically UNHCR Mauritania’s internal online tools (Focus, Intranet and Operation Sahel).

Where did you intern?
I interned at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Mauritania as a Program and Reporting Assistant.

Why did you choose this site/organization?
I chose Mauritania because I wanted to see how SGBV operations in refugee responses were handled from an administrative level. It was also much easier for me to travel for R&R than some of the other areas I received offers from.

How did you get the internship?
I cold emailed one of the women who ended up being one of my supervisors. She and I corresponded briefly then I received an offer a couple of months later.

What were your responsibilities?
My team was very supportive of me, and I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work on several different projects. These included donor justification reports, mapping of data from the field, event planning, general research, social media research, and a variety of other tasks.

How do you think it contributed to your humanitarian assistance and/or Korbel education?
I sometimes represented UNHCR in coordination meetings with other stakeholders (UNDAF). My second internship with UNHCR was with the division of international protection with the community based protection team. The unit oversees the protection of Cultural and Religious Minority rights, LGBTQI Rights, Elder Persons rights. I did the minutes during coordination meetings with Inter-Governmental Organizations and NGOS at HQ at Palais des Nations and various locations. I contributed in the organization of various events like the International Disability Day. I created eLearning questions for Unit’s MENA LGBTQI Training, worked on reports for 2016 Youth NGO Consultation in Geneva. I also helped with the review of the French translation of UNHCR’s age gender diversity policy.

Why did you choose this site/organization?
I applied to UNHCR because I was interested in the organization but also that one of the few UN organizations that our degree director would accept. If I had a choice I would have done the internship in Ethiopia with the African Union and OHCHR.

How did you get the internship?
I searched for email addresses on Google and sent the individuals my CV and cover letter.

How do you think it contributed to your humanitarian assistance and/or Korbel education?
Since most of my tasks were administrative, I do not think I learned as much as I could have. One should not apply to organization just because of the name it holds. Please check which tasks you are administered to handle.
News and Events from the Humanitarian Assistance Applied Research Group (HAARG)

By Courtney Welton-Mitchell, HAARG Director and Steven Reed, HAARG administrative assistant

HAARG has grown significantly since it began in early 2014. To date, 62 researchers have participated in 70 projects through HAARG - working with U.N. agencies, INGOs, humanitarian researchers/consultants, and local community-based organizations. These organizations include UNHCR, IMC, IRC and many more. Here we highlight a few recent HAARG activities.

HAARG: Surveys, Indicators and Data – oh my!

On April 7th and 21st thirteen research assistants and associates (RAs) with the Humanitarian Assistance Applied Research Group (HAARG) presented their work with various UN agencies, INGOs, CBOs and more. Eight additional RAs will present May 19th. A few projects are highlighted here.

Seasoned research assistant Sarah Allison worked on several HAARG projects over this academic year. As an RA with Rise Against Hunger she supported development of both a quantitative, and separate qualitative, School Feeding Survey for 5 countries. As a result of this work, she was offered a paid consultancy building a new survey tool to assess women’s empowerment, in collaboration with Children of Vietnam. In addition, Sarah is currently working on projects with UNHCR, and Uduk Hope. In the past she has worked with International Rescue Committee (IRC) through HAARG.

Research associate and DU graduate Christi Yoder was also busy with several HAARG projects this year. She made significant contributions to World Concern, by supporting the process of reviewing and standardizing the organization’s M & E indicators across several sectors, to conform to existing humanitarian frameworks. She also supported quantitative data cleaning, qualitative data coding, survey set up, and GPS mapping for DFID and Wellcome Trust-funded disaster preparedness research and U.S. State Department (Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration) -funded gender-based violence research in Haiti, Nepal, Lebanon and Malaysia, in partnership with local organizations SLM, TPO-Nepal, ABAAD, and Tenaganita.

Jenna Ross, a research assistant new to HAARG this academic year, has been working with GenderConsulting and UNIDO on a project promoting “Women in Green Industries.” Jenna assisted with various research related tasks throughout the duration of the project. However, as the project progressed, she was given increasing responsibility and decision-making authority. She was pleased that she could assist in selection of the final countries for the 5-year initiative.

Kendall Sauer is a DU graduate and research associate with HAARG. In addition to mentoring several HAARG RAs in data analysis techniques, she has been working on a project with International Medical Corps (IMC) through HAARG since August 2016. The project entails developing of a MHPSS toolkit for use in humanitarian settings. Her responsibilities have included: reviewing existing tools, creating a map of programs, qualitative coding and descriptive data analyses.

HAARG has continued to grow during the 2016-2017 academic year, and has expanded the breadth and quantity of projects that have been taken on by RAs. We are excited to continue work into the summer, fall quarter, and beyond. To learn more about HAARG, contact Courtney Welton-Mitchell, HAARG Director and Steven Reed, HAARG Admin through haarg.du@gmail.com

haprog@du.edu
Congratulations so all of the Humanitarian Assistance Program's graduating students!
As we wish them luck in the humanitarian world, read here about some of their future plans.

GRADUATING STUDENT PROFILES

RaeAnn Deitlin

Graduation - August 2017

What are your big picture plans?
Interning with Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) for 3 months in Washington D.C., assisting CIVIC on various projects working with armed actors to enforce protection of civilians, including specific projects on humanitarian access and peace keeper-humanitarian relations as they relate to protection of civilians.

How will you be incorporating your HA certificate?
Since I’m mainly focused on humanitarian assistance-related jobs (excluding some civilian protection jobs that might be further afield), the HA certificate and the knowledge I gained from it will definitely be relevant to the majority of jobs I’m aiming for.

What will you remember about Korbel?
Overall, an engaging, demanding program populated by crazy, intelligent, committed fellow students who all punched above their weight, challenging and motivating me to do the same. The more practical exercises, like the various diplomacy and HA simulations and the Crisistan project [in the Humanitarian Field Operations course], are also especially memorable.

Any advice for fellow Korbel students?
1. Take advantage of every non-coursework-related opportunity you can without breaking the bank, whether it be a simulation, a guest speaker on a Friday night, an extra unpaid research project, etc.
2. Take an elective outside your field--not a skills course but a topical course--or find some other way to get out of your department bubble: all of the work we’ll be doing overlaps with the systems and mentality and efforts of the other majors being represented at Korbel.
3. Don’t believe anyone when they say that networking “isn’t as bad or scary as you think it is” (they are extroverts and they are lying to you); do believe everyone when they say that networking is crucial. And don’t let contacts languish or lapse after you’ve made them!

4. HA students specifically: a) See number two above--I know we’re all cooler than everyone else but please, take a class with some security students if you have the chance, especially if you plan to work in complex emergencies, b) Internship advice: network like hell and rely on that more than cold applications, be open to HA internships that aren’t in your ideal sector or location or time-frame, don’t give up--your first summer might not work out, but keep trying; your second summer may or may not work out, but it’s worth trying regardless of what happens.

Emma Dunn

Graduation - Spring 2017

What are your immediate plans after graduation?
I will be staying in Denver until August and enjoying a Colorado summer for the first time. I also just booked a flight to Cuba so I’m looking forward to exploring a fascinating new place.

What are your big picture plans?
I plan to get a job in a humanitarian organization working in either the protection sector as a program manager or in operations. I hope to stay in the field for as long as possible and would like to eventually contribute to the overall betterment of the humanitarian system.

How will you be incorporating your HA certificate?
The core HA classes have shaped how I understand the humanitarian system and will hopefully make the transition from academic life to professional life as seamless as possible.

What will you remember about Korbel?
Well hopefully I’ll remember all of it, but the parts that will stand out most are the career path talks, the HA simulation, and the people I met, both in the HA program and in other programs at Korbel.

Any advice for fellow Korbel students?
Go to as many free events you can, especially if they serve food. Don’t be afraid to be creative and persistent when looking for jobs and internships. What you learn from career path talks is that there is rarely a straight line from university to your dream job.
Rachel Dyussengaliyev  
Graduation - Spring 2017

What are your immediate plans after graduation?  
This summer I will be completing an internship in DC where I’ll be completing research on gender-based violence and working with a humanitarian policy and practice team.

What are your big picture plans?  
I would like to work toward improving gender equality and ending gender-based violence through programming being implemented in the immediate aftermath of crisis.

How will you be incorporating your HA certificate?  
Knowing about the current humanitarian context and of the standards and agencies that work together to carry out assistance has already given me a leg up in obtaining my internship where I’ll be able to jump into projects with little supervision because of my familiarity with the sector.

What will you remember about Korbel?  
I think I’ll remember Korbel every single time I eat a slice of pizza for the rest of my life. In seriousness though, I loved being a student and I’ll most likely only think back and have wonderful memories even though some of the research papers and projects were a struggle. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to have earned my degree here.

Any advice for fellow Korbelians?  
Know what you want to do, figure out your niche and then get as much experience as possible in that area. Volunteer for a hotline, do another internship at one of the refugee resettlement agencies, anything to build your skills and experience. I also recommend participating in the HA simulation as well as CENEX which were both extremely beneficial in practicing and demonstrating the HA knowledge I gained at Korbel.

Catherine Fowler  
Graduation - Spring 2017

What are your immediate plans after graduation?  
I’m hoping to enter the field into a gender advising or research role where I can help the humanitarian world continue to move towards better equity and to become more inclusive.

What are your big picture plans?  
In the long run, I would like to work more in the field, both creating new tools that will help humanitarians assess and understand power relationships (including gender) in the field, but also helping to build local capacity and work with community stakeholders to make disaster-affected populations more resilient.

How will you be incorporating your HA certificate?  
I think my HA certificate will be a critical part of this and helping me understand the way the humanitarian sector works. I have also been lucky enough to have some awesome experiences, such as an internship with Oxfam and some of the research I have done with HAARG, that I think will be really helpful in the future.

What will you remember about Korbel?  
I think one of my best memories will be the Women’s March and events to support refugees in our community. It was pretty cool to see everyone coming together like that.

Any advice for fellow Korbelians?  
Pursue exactly what fits you and don’t worry about trying to please other people by doing everything else. You’ll be fine just working at what you are most passionate about.
GRADUATING STUDENT PROFILES, cont.

Shanae Kemen

Graduation - Spring 2017

What are your immediate plans after graduation?
My plans after graduation are to continue looking for a position with a humanitarian and/or development agency. I would like to be focused on GBV or Gender Equality programming.

What are your big picture plans?
My big picture plans are to advance within an agency and get enough experience to get a position abroad. I would like to further develop my expertise in GBV and Gender Equality programming, either through seeking out additional classes/certificates or by attending trainings and workshops. I would love to eventually become a technical adviser on GBV for a humanitarian organization.

How will you be incorporating your HA Certificate?
I will hopefully be incorporating my HA certificate in my position, no matter what agency I work with. I think the knowledge is transferable and I intend on using what I learned in the certificate program throughout my career.

What will you remember about Korbel?
I will remember the knowledge and advice that diverse speakers and professors were able to provide over my two years with Korbel. I particularly appreciated hearing from practitioners recently returned from the field.

Any advice for fellow Korbel students?
Network as much as possible with your professors and speakers.

Rougui Toure

Graduation - Spring 2017

What are your immediate plans after graduation?
Since my focus is on Gender based violence in times of conflict I applied to the peace corps. Most organizations ask for experience abroad. I am currently under consideration for a Position as a Community Health Educator for Peace Corps in Nicaragua. The focus will be on the prevention of HIV/STI as well as Teenage Pregnancy and the improvement of Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes. I will utilize the skills and lessons that I learned from the HA program coupled with my previous experience to better serve the communities that I am placed in.

What are your big picture plans?
My plan is to gain as much experience as possible because different experiences changes a person. I will see what particular opportunities will present themselves to me at that particular moment. One does not need to force the future it will reveal itself with time.

What will you remember about Korbel?
Personally I learned a lot from my groups of friends, I believed each one of them complemented my education. They were so honest with me which made me push myself. I will forever be grateful for my group of friends who made education an everyday learning experience.

Any advice for fellow Korbel students?
Make friends that you admire so they can help you forge your character. Always ask questions when in doubt. Try different classes, not everyone has the same life path so be true to yourself. Be open minded and adaptable, sometimes life jabs at you when expect it the least. Use LinkedIn wisely, email the alumni or talk to your fellow Korbel classmates for prospective jobs or internships.
Alumni Profile

See what the Josef Korbel School graduates are doing now, how they feel their education contributed to their career development and what advice they offer to upcoming grads looking to enter the humanitarian field.

Miriam Edwards

Miriam Edwards is a Josef Korbel and Humanitarian Assistance Program graduate. She is currently working in the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within USAID.

What is your career background?

I have an undergraduate degree in Public Administration, and a combination of administrative and management skills gained from working in local, state, and national municipalities and nonprofit organizations. I also served as a program development volunteer in Mauritania, West Africa in the Peace Corps. When entering graduate school, my focus was development, but after learning about the Humanitarian Assistance Certificate at Korbel, my interest shifted. Although my career has not previously focused on humanitarian assistance, I’ve found that my background, along with studies at Korbel, has made for a relatively easy transition.

Please describe your job and what you find most challenging.

I work as a Program Management Coordinator at USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), which leads and coordinates the U.S. government's disaster response efforts overseas. I’ve been with USAID/OFDA a little over a year. Specifically, I work in USAID/OFDA’s Humanitarian Policy and Global Engagement division, which includes teams focused on global programs, strategic communications, humanitarian policy, and interagency engagement and training. I provide support to the Global Programs teams, which is responsible for USAID/OFDA’s macro grants, and takes the lead on UN and implementing partner relationships, as well as other humanitarian donors, and the broader humanitarian architecture.

The most challenging part of the job is prioritizing work in a faster paced environment than I’ve experienced in previous positions. I’m continuing to learn the procedures and systems used to process grants, which has given me a better understanding of how the organization works at a micro level.

What other experiences have contributed to your career development?

While at Korbel, I had an internship at Relief International in Washington, D.C., which was helpful in developing solid skills with budgets, research and writing for a humanitarian context. I also briefly worked at FHI360 with their US education team. Although the division was not related to international humanitarian assistance, working with field teams, with the finance manager on expense reporting, assisting with closing out a government contract, and learning new software programs, added to the skills and experience that I brought to USAID/OFDA.

Do you have any words of wisdom for Korbel students who want to pursue a career in humanitarian assistance?

First, start making connections and applying for positions before you graduate. Second, the field of humanitarian assistance is more broad than I thought, so remaining open to positions that you may not be thinking of, or be aware of, right now is beneficial. Finally, enjoy your time at Korbel, and actively cultivate self-care awareness, and relationships with your fellow Korbelites. I’m always pleasantly surprised at the Korbel connections that pop up at my current job.
Congratulations to our graduating HA students!

Spring 2017 Graduates
Emma Dunn, Rachel Dyussengaliyev, Catherine Fowler, Stephanie Jones, Shanae Kemen, Adadamola Ladipo, Rougi Toure, and Chris Thurman

Summer 2017 Graduates
RaeAnne Dietlin

Be sure to stay connected to Humanitarian Assistance Program programs & events:
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