



Humanitarian Assistance Program

Josef Korbel School of International Studies

Quarterly Newsletter - Winter 2012

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings from the Humanitarian Assistance Program!

Humanitarian assistance is a fast changing and increasingly complex field that requires skilled professionals. From its inception, the Humanitarian Assistance Program has grown to fill a much needed niche at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies. We hope to continue that growth by further developing the program to reflect ongoing developments in the humanitarian field and to respond to the needs of students.

Since joining the program as its director in September I have been impressed by our students. Every issue of our quarterly newsletter will highlight some of our outstanding current students and their work while at Korbel. We also include alumni profiles and information about program events and developments. I invite you to read the newsletter, visit our Facebook page and get in touch with us.

- Chen Reis

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The goal of the Humanitarian Assistance Program is to prepare 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.

PROGRAM UPDATES

New HA Program Logo



Over the last five months, you may have noticed a change in the Humanitarian Assistance Program's logo as it appears on all of our communications materials. The basis for the new logo, designed in conjunction with the new logo for Global

HealthAffairs, was to create an identity system that not only linked the two programs together, but also represented the University of Denver and the Josef Korbel School as well. Our goal with both programs, was to represent key elements of each field in a much less literal sense. With the HA logo, the fragmented and slanted circular image represents the imbalance that occurs during times of conflict or disaster throughout the world and the humanitarian community's response to re-establish a sense of balance and slowly put the pieces back together. The logos for both the Humanitarian Assistance and Global Health Affairs programs were designed by program assistant Tim Schommer.

Facebook www.facebook.com/DU.haprog

If you haven't done so already, be sure to check out and "like" the Humanitarian Assistance Program's facebook page. Stay up to date with HA news, both here at Korbel and around the world, through links to relevant articles, trainings and videos.

Portfolio - <https://portfolio.du.edu/pc/port?portfolio=haprog>

The HA portfolio page is also a great source for information regarding the HA program. You'll find the latest forms for the HA certificate and concentration, as well as a monthly calendar of upcoming events here at Korbel. In addition, click the Listserv link under the "Stay in Touch!" section of the portfolio page to join our Listserv and receive our bi-weekly informational emails!

Email - haprog@du.edu

Be sure to email HA with any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding this newsletter or other HA activities!



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EVENT REVIEW

Dr. Eric Noji

On Thursday January 26th, the Humanitarian Assistance Program, Global Health Affairs and the Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy welcomed Dr. Eric Noji to the Josef Korbel School. Dr. Noji shared his extensive experience from his 25 year career in public health at the Centers for Disease Control. During his presentation, Dr. Noji touched on lessons learned from past humanitarian responses to natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, as well as other crisis interventions including bioterrorism, epidemics, civil conflict and other humanitarian efforts. Dr. Noji also predicted more complex humanitarian challenges caused by climate change, unconventional warfare and the emergence of new diseases as we move into the future.



Mr. Yonahton Bock

The Humanitarian Assistance Program and the Future International Administration Professionals welcomed Yoni Bock on Thursday, February 9th. As the Senior Humanitarian Assistance Advisor from USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to U.S. Central Command (OFDA), Bock discussed the organization's role in disaster response and risk reduction. He reviewed OFDA's special authorities, including the ability to work in restricted countries, and detailed their response options. Bock provided an overview of the different roles fulfilled by OFDA personnel, highlighting the importance of interagency support and military cooperation. Noting the bipartisan support afforded to humanitarian assistance missions and the steps involved in declaring disasters on an international level, Bock explored the differences in accepting or requesting assistance as it pertains to different complex humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters. Emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity and sovereignty rights in these matters, Bock concluded with a Q&A session that further explored the facets of humanitarian assistance.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Be sure to check out the following upcoming events! You'll find these and many more included in the calendar on the HA portfolio page!

- Safety and Security for Women in Humanitarian Assistance Panel Discussion
- Korbel Alumna Katie Murphy presents Elephant Energy (See Organization Spotlight, p7)



STUDENT PROFILES

An inside look at the background, experience and motivations of students in the Humanitarian Assistance certificate program. Find out why students chose Korbel and the Humanitarian Assistance Program, what courses they found most valuable and where they hope their academic work will take them.

Do you know a student that you think would be a good candidate for the student profile or internship highlight sections in our next addition of the HA quarterly newsletter? Do you know an alum working in the field or an organization making an impact in HA that you would like to see highlighted? If so, we would love to hear from you!

Please e-mail us with your suggestions at haprog@du.edu

Kate Earle

What is your background?

I have worked in a Liberian refugee camp in West Africa, for the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), and served in the U.S. Peace Corps in the Republic of Kiribati from 2005-2007. After life on a small coral atoll, I worked as a Refugee Resettlement Caseworker and Coordinator in Seattle and also began training others in wilderness and remote medicine. As a Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician, U.S. Coast Guard Medical Person in Charge and EMT- B, I have deployed to Port-Au-Prince, Haiti four times. Other work has included guiding along the Silk Road in China, conducting humanitarian work in Nepal, and recently training eighty-seven EMTs in the Philippines.



Why did you choose Korbel?

I chose Korbel because it seemed to focus on the balance between theory and practice, as evidenced by the existence of the Peace Corps Fellows Program and the Humanitarian Certificate Program.

Why did you choose the HA Certificate Program?

Humanitarian Assistance is my passion, but it is also a field riddled with controversy and tough ethical and practical decisions. As Humanitarian Aid continues to professionalize, the expectation will be that people entering the field are armed with more than "good intentions." I wanted to make sure I could demonstrate that, alongside my technical skills, I had an understanding of critical elements such as International Humanitarian Law, project management, complex humanitarian emergencies, global health issues, and the changing humanitarian landscape.

What courses (within the certificate program) stood out most to you?

Health and Humanitarian Aid and Major Diseases in Global Health were particularly pertinent due to my interest in medicine. I also thought Claude D'Estree's International Humanitarian Law class was excellent foundational knowledge for work in conflict zones. Cross-Cultural Communications with Professor Moorer is also a critical course for anyone who will engage with diverse cultures.

What do you hope to do with your degree and certificate?

I would like to continue and eventually fully manage the operations of emergency response medical teams which deploy almost immediately to humanitarian crises. I also plan to continue building emergency medical services capacity by training local community members in wilderness and remote medicine and basic search and rescue.

How do you perceive the certificate will aid you in your professional endeavors?

The certificate serves as both a symbolic and also practical step towards the professionalization of humanitarian work and aid workers. I hope it will propel me forward as a more well-rounded professional who deeply understands and fully engages in the complexities and controversies that are embedded in the work. I look forward to seeing how the certificate programs evolve and mature since this is a real niche that Korbel can fill.

More Student Profiles on p4...



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STUDENT PROFILES

Maureen Mersmann

What is your background?

Since 2005, I've been working with the Red Cross domestically on a variety of initiatives, including emergency response, training volunteers for mass sheltering and feeding, and local capacity-building and interorganization cooperation initiatives. I graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in Human Services in 2007.



Why did you choose Korbel?

I chose Korbel because I saw the combination of my Master's in International Administration and certificate in Humanitarian Assistance as a stepping stone to expanding on my current experience in a direction toward international response operations.

Why did you choose the HA Certificate Program?

I chose the HA program to become better acquainted with the theoretical, normative, and legal structures of the humanitarian system.

What courses (within the certificate program) stood out most to you?

International Humanitarian Law of Armed Conflict was great. I also very much enjoyed International Project Analysis and Health and Humanitarian Aid. All of these courses were very challenging and required quite a lot of effort, but resulted in intellectual and personal growth.

What do you hope to do with your degree and certificate?

I have done work in the area of civil-military coordination in humanitarian affairs and have worked on projects in various stages of the disaster cycle. I would like to leverage my degree and certificate into a substantive field experience in one of these areas and eventually work in the policy arena.

How do you perceive the certificate will aid you in your professional endeavors?

Some of the core courses (IHL and Health and Humanitarian Aid, specifically) did a wonderful job of acquainting me with the theory, practice, and norms of international humanitarian action. The Program Director, Chen Reis, has been a valuable asset in terms of building connections that will enable me to get my foot in the door at an agency that matches my interests.

Phil Price

Why did you choose Korbel?

Before attending Korbel I worked at a human rights organization implementing civic and human rights education programs in post-conflict and divided societies. This took me all over the globe and set me on a lifelong course of action. I chose Korbel because of all the other schools I researched it was the only one where I could design a program that fit exactly what I wanted to study. During my time at Korbel, I have combined theory, practice and internships to gain the knowledge that will help me succeed once I'm done.



Why did you choose the HA Certificate Program?

The HA certificate program has allowed me to further tailor my studies at Korbel. The courses offered are a great combination of theory and practice and the dedication of the faculty involved makes this program an asset to Korbel students who want to work in humanitarian assistance.

What courses (within the certificate program) stood out most to you?

So far Humanitarian Aid in Complex Emergencies has stood out the most. The course provides a great overview to the subject and I have been able to apply both the content and assignments into my work in DC.

What do you hope to do with your degree and certificate?

I am hoping to get back out in the field working on education in emergencies and post-conflict settings as soon as possible.

How do you perceive the certificate will aid you in your professional endeavors?

I believe the HA certificate will allow me to bring additional knowledge, context, and practical skills to my work. Those who are dedicated to helping others through relief assistance and development should be as prepared as possible before entering the field, and I think the HA program at Korbel is a great way to prepare for field work while in an academic setting.



STUDENT INTERNSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Searching for an internship? Find out where Humanitarian Assistance students have completed internships, what they did, for which organizations and how they managed to land their assignment.

Henock Kewendbeley - Ethiopia & Tanzania

Where did you intern?

I interned in Ethiopia and Tanzania from June through the end of August with Innovation for Poverty Action, an NGO based in New Haven, Connecticut.

Why did you choose this site?

I was interested in working in East Africa. It's vulnerability to recurrent livelihood shocks and drought offered valuable experience and understanding related to livelihood recovery programs.

How did you get the internship?

I used the resources in Korbel's Office of Career and Professional Development in combination with personal independent online searching.



What did you do?

I conducted informal qualitative interviews with people participating in a variety of financial programs, including microfinance institutions. The output of the field research is to identify potential financial service practices in rural and urban settings and provide policy recommendation for future poverty alleviation project designing. Some of the areas selected for the research are districts under direct food aid and beneficiaries of recovery programs implemented by different NGO's.

How do you think it contributed to your humanitarian assistance education?

I was able to work with community groups and individuals who are direct humanitarian aid beneficiaries. Recovery project components such as microfinance services play a significant role in helping to mitigate depletion of social assets in the community and propel post-disaster recovery. Observing this at the field level helped me further comprehend the principles discussed in my courses and vice-versa.

Cheri Baker - Ethiopia

Where did you intern?

I interned in Ethiopia with the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL).

Why did you choose this site?

I really appreciated their core mission: to make leadership accessible, affordable, and scalable for people everywhere.

How did you get the internship?

While I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ghana, I applied for a Fulbright scholarship to research leadership in the Horn of Africa. Despite not receiving the scholarship, I stayed in contact with CCL, who I'd asked to be my affiliate. I emailed the organization last Winter and basically said, "Do you need an intern for the summer? Here's why I would be perfect for you." It took some persuading, but I eventually sold them on the idea.



What did you do?

As CCL's first Summer Fellow, my main job was to lead focus group discussions on Ethiopian learning styles and contextualized experiential learning techniques. With this research, I created the first ever "Team-In-A-Box" Toolkit that included a manual on how to facilitate these activities for the entire healthcare workforce in Western Ethiopia. I also helped create CCL's first Youth Development Program; managed national staff; and facilitated workshops for numerous organizations such as GTZ, UNDP, and Peace Corps - Ethiopia.

How do you think it contributed to your humanitarian assistance education?

In collaborating with so many partner organizations during my first time working in the Horn of Africa, I learned a lot about food security, governance, human rights, and post-disaster recovery. Observing these issues in the field helped me better understand and put into practice many of the concepts I learned about in classes such as Humanitarian Aid in Complex Emergencies, Field Protocol and Survival, and Conflict Resolution.



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ALUMNI PROFILE

See what Korbel 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.

Jerry Montgomery

Brief Background.

Jerry is originally from San Jose, CA and after finishing up the Peace Corps as a Teacher Trainer in Uganda, came to Korbel in 2004. While there he studied International Development with a concentration on Human Rights. After finishing in early 2005, he worked with Crisis Corps with UNICEF in Namibia, UMCOR on post-disaster relief support after Katrina, continuing on with UMCOR as their Head of Office in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. After that, Jerry moved to South Sudan with Save the Children first managing health care programs and then moving on to their Director of Operations position.

After two years in South Sudan, Jerry moved back to the US with Save the Children as their Senior Logistics Specialist within the Department of Humanitarian Response. Some of the main roles that he plays include: Operations and logistics response to emergencies, provides support and training to country offices, coordination of logistics systems including procurement, warehousing, and fleet management globally with other Save the Children members. Jerry also supports the integration of operation systems from Save the Children members to Save the Children International through the global merger that is currently taking place.



How did your time at Korbel contribute to your career development?

Korbel focused my studies on specific areas in which I could further explore while seeking employment. The courses that I found most applicable towards what I am currently doing include Risk Management, Project Management, and others that highlight the actual operational cross cutting issues that any one looking towards program management, country or regional director roles 10 years from now will need to have.

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

I would suggest getting involved in courses, internships, and extracurricular studies that allow students to gain an understanding of the core functions, tools, management processes and systems that are globally used and recognized throughout INGO assistance. While it might change over time with experience, focusing on a specific sector of interest (health, education, logistics, etc..) definitely is an asset while first starting the job hunt. Along with this, it is highly recommended to reach out to NGOs that are doing humanitarian work and identify internships with them. This also means that while applying for employment while at Korbel is great, you really have to move to DC or New York for serious consideration. Start making your networks and continue to follow up with them.





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ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

Humanitarian Assistance and development organizations operate all over the world. In this edition of the quarterly newsletter, we highlight a local Denver organization and an initiative it undertook in flood affected areas of Namibia, southern Africa.

Elephant Energy



Elephant Energy, a Denver based international non-profit, works to distribute clean energy technologies, like solar-powered lights and clean-burning cookstoves, via sustainable, market-based systems to communities in Namibia that lack access to electricity. By working with established Namibian partners, Elephant Energy

provides access to energy in the most remote and underserved areas while increasing incomes for local business-people.

2011 Floods in Northern Namibia

The Namibian Government declared the 2010-2011 floods a national emergency on March 29, 2011. The heavy flooding displaced over 37,457 people and destroyed houses and crops. No lighting or cell phone charging services were available in the numerous flood camps in Northern Namibia. In some areas, four to five families lived in one

4x10 meter tent without lighting. While communal latrines were dug in some camps, visiting these latrines at night without a light was often dangerous, particularly for women and children. Thousands of children also struggled to study, as their schools were closed and lighting was not available at night. Finally, families were unable to maintain contact with their loved ones and relief-effort coordination was difficult because of a lack of energy sources to charge cell phones.



In June of 2011, Elephant Energy was awarded a grant by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance to work with the Red Cross and other disaster relief agencies in Namibia to address the energy needs of flood victims. To accomplish this, Elephant Energy began the process of procuring and distributing solar-powered lights and cell phone chargers to flood victims in the six flooded Regions and assessing the benefits of these technologies in disaster situations.

Elephant Energy and Korbel

The Humanitarian Assistance program will be welcoming Elephant Energy's Africa Program Director and Korbel Alumna, Katie Murphy for a presentation, during the spring quarter, on EE's efforts in Namibia. The date is still yet to be determined, so be sure to check the event calendar on the HA portfolio page for details coming soon. Elephant Energy also offers internship opportunities to graduate students in a variety of areas relating to sustainable energy and development.

Visit www.elephantenergy.org for more details.

