Fletcher Ph.D. Success: Class of 2011 Already Well Positioned in the World with the Class of 2012 Poised to Follow

The Fletcher Ph.D. Program’s sixteen 2011 graduates are already well ensconced all over the world, in true Fletcher fashion! Among the eleven U.S. and five international grads there is a tremendous variety in their post-doctoral pursuits.

Four graduates are recipients of post-doctoral fellowships in locations ranging from Boston’s J.F. K. Library (Lauren Brodsky) to Princeton University (Dipali Mukhopadhyay), the Urban Education Foundation in D.C. (Xantho Scharff Ackerman), and the Japanese Institute of International Affairs in Tokyo (Spencer Abbot). Five others have entered the world of academia and are conducting research and/or teaching at universities including the National Defense University in D.C. (Geoffrey Gresh), Tel Aviv University (Benedetta Berti Alberti), the Army Command General Staff School at Ft. Levenworth, Kansas (Jeffrey Kubiak), the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (Brigid Pavilonis), and Fletcher (Rusty Tunnard).

Two of our international 2011 grads are working in the private sector. Roberto Porzecanski is employed at McKinsey’s Atlanta office as an associate in international development and has, at the same time, managed to publish two books based on his dissertation research concerning trade liberalization in Latin America. Guadalupe Phillips is the Director of Finance and Risk Management in Mexico City’s Grupo Televisa, the largest entertainment and media company in the Spanish-speaking world. Two other grads work in program administration -- Emma Belcher is a program officer at the MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, while Allison Hodgkins is the program administrator at the Council for International Educational Exchange Program in Amman, Jordan.

2011 grad Ben Mazzotta is working as an economic analyst in the Boston area while Andrea Strimling is a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard’s Belfer Center as well as continuing work on a “Linking Output to Outcomes” project with the U.S. Army. And last, but certainly not least, Obaida El-Dendarawy, a diplomat in the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is now heavily involved in several of the national committees which are drafting proposals for the new Egyptian constitution. He is also involved in efforts to address security concerns there as well as in discussions that focus on the direction of future Egyptian foreign policy in view of the events of the Arab Spring.

This wide variety of jobs and the fact that all 2011 Ph.D. graduates are gainfully employed is proof that the Fletcher Ph.D. with its interdisciplinary focus gives our graduates a comparative advantage in the post-Fletcher world. The combination of a program with both academic rigor as well as professional preparation contributes to this success.
The upcoming class of 2012 is showing the same kind of promise that marked that of our 2011 grads. Several of this group have received prestigious fellowships and other awards to assist them in completing their dissertations. Ethan Corbin, Courtney Richardson, and Jim Platte have all been selected as fellows at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard’s Kennedy School for 2011-12 – Courtney and Ethan in the International Security Program and Jim in the Managing the Atom Program. Additionally, Courtney has been selected as a non-residential pre-doctoral fellow at NYU’s Global Peace Operations Program, while Ethan has also been awarded an Eisenhower-Roberts Dissertation Fellowship for this next academic year.

Other class of 2012 awardees include Rachel Schiller, who has received both a Program on Negotiation (Harvard Law School) Fellowship as well as the Morris Abrams Award; Leigh Nolan (August 2011 graduate), who received a Brookings Institution Doha Center Fellowship for the spring and who is presently a Brookings (D.C.)Non-Resident Fellow; and Georgia Kayser (August 2011 graduate) who was awarded a post-doc at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Over the years the Fletcher Ph.D. Program has produced some incredibly talented graduates who have taken their places in top positions in international organizations, government, NGOs, and the private sector all over the world. The class of 2011 grads are continuing this very successful tradition.