From Wednesday, 20 April 2011, to Friday, 22 April 2011, the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center will host the 9th Annual Central and Southwest Asia Conference at The University of Montana. As in past years, a roster of internationally distinguished scholars and analysts will gather in Missoula to engage the campus community, general public, and one another in dialogue about major issues and problems confronting the countries of Central Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. Among the topics to be addressed will be the growing crisis in the Arab world, Afghanistan, Iran, Russia, and the former republics of Soviet Union. Also, included in the conference will be a panel focusing on the role and status of women in Afghanistan. This year’s conference will also include several presentations on the internal situation in Russia and the impact of Russian foreign policy on Central Asia and the Middle East. This year’s conference is sponsored by International Programs, World Affairs Council of Montana, and the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center at The University of Montana. All sessions will be open to the public and free of charge.

The Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center created a Student Advisory Board (SAB) during fall semester 2010. Students on the SAB come from a wide variety of academic disciplines across campus and have an interest in the region as well as the development of the center. These students include: Ashleen Williams, Brittany Lyles, David Williams, Brian Wemple, Nicole Allen, Samantha Stephens, and Elizabeth Higgins. Since its creation, the SAB has been involved with campus events like the Day of Dialogue and featured speakers. The Student Advisory Board will also assist in the planning of the 2011 Central Asia Conference.
9th Annual Central & Southwest Asia Conference
April 20-22, 2011

Wednesday, April 20

7:00-9:00 PM — KEYNOTE PANEL: LAW, ORDER, AND JUDICIAL REFORM IN RUSSIA AND FORMER REPUBLICS OF SOVIET UNION, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Presenter: Karen Aguilar, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer

Thursday, April 21

11:00 AM-12:30 PM — THE CRISIS OF POST-SOVIET SPACE, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair and Presenter: William Stearns, Independent Scholar
Presenters: Oleg Bursuc, Program Director, Citizen Participation Program (USAID/IREX/CPP), Republic of Moldova/Transnistria and Dmitry Vyshemirsky, Photographic Artist, Kaliningrad, Russian Federation
Discussant: John Fox, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer

12:40-2:00 PM — THE CENTRALITY OF CENTRAL ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST: WHY DO I MAJOR IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHWEST ASIAN STUDIES?, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair and Discussant: Ardi Kia, Associate Director, Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center, The University of Montana
Presenters: David Williams, MacKay Pierce-Eiselein, Elizabeth Higgins, Caitlin Ajax, Delyla Wilson, and Chris Hanson, The University of Montana

3:30-5:00 PM — ARABIC LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: A K-16 COLLABORATIVE EFFORT, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair: Alex Apostle, Missoula County Public Schools Superintendent
Presenters: Michael Malouf, Program Manager, Arabic (FLAP Grant), Missoula County Public Schools; Samir Bitar, Lecturer, Arabic Language and Literature, Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center and Department of Anthropology; Fahdi Elhin, Instructor of Arabic (FLAP Grant), Missoula County Public Schools; and Khaled Huthaily, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center and Department of Anthropology, The University of Montana

7:00-9:00 PM — KEYNOTE PANEL: IRAN AND RUSSIA: IMPLICATIONS OF THE ALLIANCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair: Robert Seidenschwarz, Montana World Affairs Council
Presenter: John Fox, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer

Friday, April 22

10:00 AM-NOON — WOMEN AND ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN AFGHANISTAN, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair: Dan Loranger, Major General (USAF Ret.), Director, Critical Language and Culture Program, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, The University of Montana
Presenters: Shaima Khinijani, Student, The University of Montana and Shakib Rajaieean, Student, The University of Montana
Discussants: Mehrdad Kia, Associate Provost for International Programs and Director, Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center, The University of Montana and Karen Aguilar, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer

NOON-1:00 PM — THE EGYPTIAN UPRISING AND THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF CAIRO: A HISTORY IN THE MAKING, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Presenter: Anneka Preston, Admissions Counselor, The American University of Cairo

1:00-3:00 PM — CORRUPTION IN RUSSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: PAST ORIGINS AND PRESENT REMEDIES, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Presenter: Robert Givens, Professor of History, Cornell College
Discussant: Karen Aguilar, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer

3:30-5:00 PM — RELIGION, STATE, AND POPULAR CULTURE IN RUSSIA, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair: Ona Renner-Fahey, Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, The University of Montana
Presenters: Stephen Norris, Associate Professor of History, Miami University (Ohio), and Robert Greene, Department of History, The University of Montana

7:00-9:00 PM — KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: IMPACT OF RECENT UPRISINGS IN ARAB WORLD ON RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA, UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER
Chair and Discussant: Mehrdad Kia, Associate Provost for International Programs and Director, Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center, The University of Montana
Presenters: Karen Aguilar, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer; John Fox, Professor of International Relations, U.S. Army War College and U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer; Robert Givens, Professor of History, Cornell College; and Stephen Norris, Associate Professor of History, Miami University

Sponsored by: International Programs, World Affairs Council of Montana, and the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center at The University of Montana
All sessions will be open to the public and free of charge
My parents came to Kabul as newlyweds from northern Afghanistan with only one carpet and few kitchen items. They ended up with 10 children: five girls and five boys. As one of ten children, my parents did not consider providing an education for me. It took many tears and much begging for them to allow me to go to school. I was a dreamer and all I wanted was to learn and become somebody.

When the Taliban regime took power in Afghanistan, however, women were denied their rights, including the right to education. We were forced to stay home. That was the time when we, the Afghan women, hated to be women because the only right we were given was to stay inside the house and serve the male members of our family.

During this time, I broke the law by opening a secret school for women and girls in my basement. This was very dangerous and a shock to my family. My father and brothers voiced their strong opposition. Even after I finally gained the support of my other family members, my brothers remained opposed, and I had to appease them by washing their clothes, feeding them promptly, and polishing their shoes so that they would allow me to continue teaching the women who relied on me for their education. Then my father and brothers lost their jobs and I became the only breadwinner in the family. This continued for five years while I was studying English with a friend in secret. I was so depressed from all the family restrictions that I lost hope. In my despair, I concluded that I would never be able to continue my studies. After the change of regime and my father’s death, however, I began working for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and I became the first girl in my entire family to work outside of the house.

I worked for four different ministers, first as an executive secretary and then as a translator. I accompanied them to their official events and served as a liaison between the international community and the central government. I became intimately familiar with the Afghan government and international donors in the post-conflict environment. I attended and participated in many official inter-governmental meetings and negotiations which were held to determine support for the Afghan government on gender equality. During the First Ministerial Conference on Women’s Role in the Development held in Istanbul, Turkey, collaborative links were established between international agencies and Afghan women. During the International Policy Workshop on Strengthening Human Rights and Women’s Rights As a Key to Realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Berlin, Germany, strategic changes for our ministry were developed.

Besides work, my life included work at home and complete dedication to my family. The responsibilities were endless. My road to success was enriched by so many people who recognized my talents and motivated me to move forward with my aspirations. If I had not met the Life Coach, Shqipe Malushi, I would not have been able to work on my self realization and my dreams of further education. She opened the door to the Empowerment Training Program at the Empowerment Institute, Rhinebeck NY, where thanks to Gail Straub and David Gershon, I became one of few Afghans to hold a professional training certificate in gender empowerment. This enabled me to lead one-on-one coaching for civil servants to further strengthen their individual development. Since then, I have attended various trainings mostly related to gender or personal development, such as the Heinrich Boll (Green Party) Foundation’s International Training & Conference on “Regional Perspectives of Democratization Process” in Islamabad, Pakistan; the Planning Organization and Implementation of Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Women in Mannheim, Germany; the International Training Program on Management and Micro Enterprises for Rural Women, in Hyderabad, India; the Promotion Seminar on Gender Equality, Institute for International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Tokyo, Japan; and a study tour to Iran, where I co-facilitated a group of civil servants active in gender work to review Iranian best practices in poverty reduction.

In the meantime, thanks to Susie Racouch, I received a scholarship from Ramapo College in New Jersey where, because of the step-by-step guidance of Dr. Peterson, I graduated early. I am grateful to Ramapo College for the opportunity to learn, grow, and make my dream come true. Through the support of the faculty and college staff and student body, I gained enough strength and knowledge to participate in the Afghanistan’s 2009 elections. As an Afghan woman I consider myself lucky to be in the U.S. continuing my studies and keeping hope for all other Afghan women.

Opportunities continue to unfold in my life. Thanks to Gen. Donald Loranger, I received a scholarship from The University of Montana to continue post-graduate education in political science. With the encouragement and teaching of Dr. Mehrdad Kia, I will be able to break the cross-cultural barriers and develop new skills that will enable me to further advance promotion of Afghan women’s education.

My husband has been very supportive: he agreed to support my efforts in completing my studies and later he joined me on scholarship for post-graduate studies in public health at The University of Montana as well. I am most grateful and blessed for all in my life.

My hope is to finish my graduate studies at The University of Montana and to continue to work closely with the Afghan government in support of women’s development and political participation toward change.
Guns, bullets and bombs have been the tools that nations routinely employ in pursuit of global security, and if spending level is any measure or merit, the United States sits at the top of the heap in this regard. With the exceptions of the Vietnam conflict and a few isolated examples, for the past several decades we have focused on “maneuver warfare” as a means to protect our national security. This approach is perhaps best illustrated by NATO’s Cold War focus on stopping the Soviets from pouring into Western Europe through the Fulda Gap, or more recently, the “Hail Mary” executed by U.S. Forces during the Gulf War. The Fulda Gap is still there, but the Soviets are long gone.

This concept of war provided the raison d’être used in many congressionally centered procurement battles that were to shape not only our military force structure, but the doctrine, strategy and tactics that naturally flowed from the maneuver warfare focus. Lethality was our game, and the bigger, faster, more stealthily it could be played, the better off we were.

Then it happened—gradually at first, and then with blinding quickness—our pesky world changed on us again. Fueled by the interconnectivity of global commerce, cable news, social media and a variety of other connective sinews, the natural myopia of the global population was replaced by greater self-awareness of personal circumstances compared to those living elsewhere. Though history shows that the world has long been divided by the “haves” and “have-nots”, the latter were largely unaware of their plight-- but not anymore. The results have been chaotic in particular, but generally predictable on the larger scale.

People are increasingly anxious to get their share of the action—to have a better life for themselves and their children. And yes, a quest for democracy, or at least some meaningful ability to have some influence over their futures, has more recently become an increasing focus and source of foment.

The results of this new awareness are still unfolding; sometimes in a violent way, while other times a more measured and peaceful approach prevails. Though the ramifications are wide-ranging, let’s narrow the focus and talk about a couple of ways this shift has impacted our nation’s defense strategy in general, and The University of Montana in particular. Though few would suggest that maneuver warfare is irrelevant to our future security needs, there is general recognition at our nation’s policymaking level that “winning the hearts and minds” of people has surged into the forefront of our national defense planning apparatus. Back in the Fulda Gap days, we did not really care if we could “bond” with the residents, or come to some understanding of just what made them tick. Stopping Soviet tanks would have required massive firepower and brute force--cultural understanding and linguistic fluency were virtually irrelevant.

Times have changed—and Afghanistan and Iraq are perfect examples of the notion, if not its timely application, that to win the “hearts and minds” of people you first need to understand their religion, culture and language. In short, you need to know who they are and why.

Here at The University of Montana, we have long placed significant emphasis on increasing our understanding of the cultures and languages of the diverse regions of our world. It makes us a better educational institution and it provides our foreign students the opportunity to gain skills and perspectives that they can take home to their countries when their studies are concluded.

While this campus-wide effort takes many forms, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center’s Defense Critical Language and Culture Program (DCLCP) is a case in point. The DCLCP provides “in resident” language and culture training to deploying US soldiers, airmen and marines bound for Central and Southwest Asia. These are six-month courses that include 956 contact hours of instruction with 87% of that time committed to the Pashto language and the remainder committed to cultural understanding of the region as well as other relevant national security issues. Reflective of the exploding electronic connectivity of our world, the DCLCP faculty employs a synchronous online learning system to provide Pashto language training to twelve members of the USMC Reserves who are variously located throughout the Unites States.

Further, using Mobile Training Teams of DCLCP staff and other UM faculty members, the men and women of the Montana Army and Air National Guard also receive pre-deployment training to better prepare them to cope with the languages and cultures they will encounter when deployed. To date, the majority of this training has been centered on the Arabic language and Iraqi culture, though in recent months there has been an increased focus on Afghanistan.

To accomplish all of this, the DCLCP has established a language and culture center of excellence by assembling a remarkably capable faculty of linguists and regional experts—with extensive teaching backgrounds and most with an advanced education. Additionally, we have recruited graduate students and visiting scholars from Central and Southwest Asia to attend the UM and serve as teaching assistants in our program as a means to further refine our courseware and provide supplemental instruction to our military students. Equally as important, the diverse and talented academic reach embodied in the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center, and in other departments across the campus, has enabled the DCLCP to fortify the entire program by leveraging these skills and abilities against our training needs.

Montana and The University of Montana can be very proud of this program that makes such a meaningful contribution to our nation’s security, the compelling needs of our brave military, and our collective understanding of the diverse cultures and ways of life that make up our increasingly complex world.

Senator Mike Mansfield would be very pleased to see his name on this one.
The Arabic program at the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center (CSWA), Department of Anthropology, has been awarded a grant from the U.S. National Security Agency through its STARTALK program to teach intensive Arabic to high school students in summer 2011. This is the fourth consecutive summer that CSWA receives funding to teach intensive Arabic (during summer) through its Montana Arabic Summer Institute (MASI), since summer 2008.

MASI has been a great success locally and nationally. Brooke Sauro, a MASI graduate and senior high school student at the Loyola Sacred Heart Catholic High School has received a “1789 Scholar Award” from Georgetown University. It is noteworthy to mention that this award is given to only 150 of the roughly 19,000 applicants. The award and other scholarships that Brooke has received from Georgetown University provide her with a full tuition scholarship. In addition, Brooke has earned an incentive scholarship, the Sultan Qabus bin Said Arabic Language and Culture Scholarship, through the Arabic Department, where she will major in Arabic Studies. In thank-you e-mails to the MASI team, Brooke wrote: “I had an incredible experience at the Montana Arabic Summer Institute. The program inspired me to embrace a broader perspective of the world and encouraged me to continue studying Arabic in college.” The MASI team is very proud of Brooke’s achievements and wishes her all the best.

The 2011 summer institute will run for four weeks, from June 20 to July 15, 2011. We are expecting an enrollment of 36 high school students in the institute’s two levels: (a) Level 1 for new students, and (b) Level 2 for returning students. Students will receive five college credits as well as $100 upon successfully completing the institute. The grant will cover the tuition fees, instructional materials, and transportation for field trips. More information about the institute and registration will be available online at www.umt.edu/cswa/arabic before May 13th and by contacting the institute’s Co-Director and Outreach Coordinator, Samir Bitar, at samir.bitar@umontana.edu.

In the forthcoming newsletters of the Central and Southwest Asian Center, I will present the cases of conflict in North Cyprus [between the Republics of Turkey and Cyprus], the Caspian Sea [between Iran and the former Soviet republics], and Kashmir [between India, Pakistan and China]. The cases will be presented using basic ideas from Borderology, as well as based on travels in these regions. The end result of this series of articles may be a future course offering from the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center. Interested readers are urged to look for the following forthcoming articles.

Borderology 101: The Cases of North Cyprus, the Caspian and Kashmir
Bharath Sriraman, Professor, Dept of Mathematical Sciences

In this regular feature for the Central and Southwest Asian Center Newsletter, the burgeoning area of borderology will be unpacked based on travels in North Cyprus, the Caspian region of Iran and Turkmenistan, and Kashmir. Borderology is a field of study developed by researchers in the Barents sea region of the Arctic. These researchers include policy makers, economists, cultural workers, political philosophers and scientists. The goal of this area of study is to understand the basic nature of conflict in areas of shared resources at the intersection of natural and/or artificially drawn borders, and find ways in which resources and responsibilities may be viewed symbiotically as opposed to conflicting.

On Monday, March 14, 2011, the Central and Southwest Asian Studies Center and the Montana World Affairs Council hosted Israeli Deputy Consul General, Gideon Lustig. During the visit, Deputy Consul General Lustig met with Provost Perry Brown and other members of the UM administration. In addition, Mr. Lustig spoke to the local media and visited Hollgate high school. The final event in the visit was a public lecture to over 200 campus and greater Missoula community members that took place at the North Balloom, University Center.

MASI 2011 Funded and Alumni Go National

Israeli Deputy Consul General Speaks on UM Campus
In diamonds, cutters constantly debate the perfect cut. How many facets, what angles and where to position the table are just some of the questions that determine brilliance and fire. As a rule of thumb, the ideal brilliant cut sports a cool 58 facets with a 56.3% diameter table and a 41.1° crown angle.

When choosing a course curriculum, as in diamonds, there are guidelines for students to follow. Each school, each major has a map to reach the end product, a degree. What many students don’t realize is that beyond core classes, there is room to adapt and construct their UM education to reach their own optimal brilliance.

Though many internship options were offered in weekly emails, they fell short of my aspirations. This October, I took the MBA internship guidelines, and within its objectives, visualized an internship that fit my passion, my career goals and my desire for adventure.

Having worked the last three years in the diamond industry, I contacted mentors and colleagues searching for an opportunity that fit my objectives. IDEX (the International Diamond Exchange) gave me a green light as an intern under its Editor-in-Chief Edahn Golan, and its CCO Tamar Katsav. For one month and 150 hours, I lived and worked in Tel Aviv, Israel in the second largest diamond bourse in the world.

Safeguards in place, it was time to work. In a different country work is just getting on the bus. Bus schedules, menus, and conversation - it was all in Hebrew. The more you admit you are an idiot, the more people are willing to help. My favorite phrase became “Lo, hevanti!” - I don’t understand!

The diamond bourse, however, I understood all too well. Israel is a diamond country. Though they have no mining projects they are perfectly situated between African/Australian mining and Belgian/English (DeBeers) sourcing. Aside from India, Israel is the largest cutting center, meaning they take rough diamonds and cut them to polished perfection. From polished, the diamonds can be sold unset to wholesalers or can be set by manufacturers and sold to jewelry stores.

Mostly, Israel exports its polish (unset) to wholesalers. Working on the news desk, I learned more of the intricate dealings of the business. The desk allowed me to see the business from mine to market. Most interestingly, was the conference in India and the upcoming Kimberley Meeting in Jerusalem.

Yes, these conferences dealt significantly with “blood diamond” issues. The Kimberley Process, which regulates these diamonds, bravely tries to restrict and enforce stipulations across countries, cultures and customs. In theory, it works. In practice, it falters.

While news rolled in, like diamonds in the surrounding offices, the important thing to remember was - it is not what is on the desk that you want, it is what the person is still holding on to. Lunch at the local hummus joint was more worthwhile in gossip than the press releases coming from DeBeers London. When Zimbabwe’s Minister of Mines Obert Mpofu announced Zimbabwe’s intent to export its rough, which is currently restricted by the Kimberley Process, it flooded the bourse with questions.

Fortunately, I remembered to think beforehand. Beyond corresponding with my bosses about work, they knew my itinerary. A block from the beach, I subletted a studio apartment complete with Wifi and amenities; I even had my boss talk with my landlord to ensure security and that I wasn’t being completely duped.

Most importantly, I had registered my trip with the US Embassy. They knew my exact travel dates, my address in Tel Aviv, phone numbers, emergency contacts - everything. My roommate in Missoula had a copy of my passport and I carried another copy in separate suitcase, in case mine was lost or stolen.

Continued on Page 7
With a Kimberley meeting on the horizon, did Zimbabwe expect the ban to be lifted? If not, was Zimbabwe going to flood the market with illegal rough? This rough would be cheaper and Zimbabwe has good quality, could a failing cutter afford not to take advantage? How would others protect themselves if their neighbor was selling Zimbabwe polish?

Questions, speculation and gossip ensued past my internship. It still ensues and remains a personal interest. The Jerusalem convention did not lift the Zimbabwe ban and Mpofu went on to start preparations for Zimbabwe export anyway. If Zimbabwe exports rough the Kimberley Process will fail and ‘blood diamonds’ will be intertwined with clean stones in a magnitude that has not been seen since 2003.

The end of my internship was bittersweet. The diamond industry would go on without me, while I studied forecasting and contract laws. Yet, a month of hummus and a strange half-life in Tel Aviv made me long for American football and a glass full of ice.

Diamonds may be my best friend; but I had to dream them first.
Central & Southwest Asia Brown Bag Lecture Series

All presentations are held from 12:00 noon to 1 p.m. in the Central & Southwest Asian Studies Center seminar room (Old Journalism 303) and are free and open to the public.

Wednesday, March 9:
If You Are Squeamish, Don’t Prod the Beach Rubble”: The Post-Soviet Exclaves of Transnistria and Kaliningrad
Presenter: William Stearns, Independent Scholar

Thursday, March 24:
The Failure of Development in Central Asia
Presenters: Stanley & Delyla Wilson, Students, The University of Montana

Monday, March 28:
‘Economic Development and Sociocultural Change in Kashgar: Challenges to Identity
Presenter: Nathan Domitrovich, Student, The University of Montana

Friday, April 1:
The Origins of Muslim Brotherhood and its Impact on Egyptian Politics
Presenter: David Williams, Student, The University of Montana

Thursday, April 14:
Women in Contemporary Afghanistan
Presenter: Shaima Khinjani, Student, The University of Montana

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