



Stevens Initiative

2024 Alumni Fellowship

This roster includes the names, affiliations, photos, and bios of the 18 Fellows and facilitators and partners for the 2024 Stevens Initiative Alumni Fellowship.



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Alumni Fellows

Abdelaziz Ait Nasser | Ait Ourir, Morocco

Virtual Exchange: Virtual Exchange for Teacher Candidates - Missouri State University

Year of Participation: 2024



Abdelaziz Ait Nasser is a dedicated English teacher from Morocco with a deep commitment to community development and education. As the president of the Aljizr Reading Club and vice president of the Maane Association for Culture and Development, he actively promotes literacy and cultural awareness in his community. Abdelaziz is also a former member of Ait Ourir's Youth Association, where he honed his leadership skills. Abdelaziz represented Morocco in the 2063 Model African Union, earning an Honorable Mention Award for his contributions. His passion for gender equality led him to secure funding to implement the Gender Equality Academy, an initiative that empowers women in his community. Abdelaziz also participated in the Educator to Educator international training organized by the Youth Policy Center, as well as various other programs, trainings, conferences, and camps. Through these experiences, Abdelaziz continues to give back to his community and supports others to achieve their full potential.

Alexis Olivia King | North Carolina, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge - IREX

Year of Participation: 2023

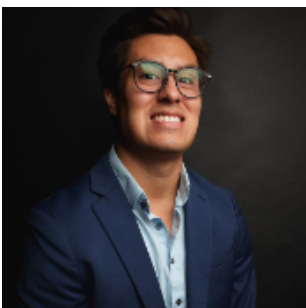


Alexis Olivia King Alexis graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in May 2023 with a double major in International and Global Studies (Concentration: Human Rights) and Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (Concentration: Global Communities). She earned International Honors and a Provost's Student Excellence Award, UNCG's highest academic honor. As an impassioned language lover and advocate, Alexis studied Spanish, French, and Arabic, focusing on post-colonial activism. She is a creative spirit who values community, alongside uplifting marginalized voices. These passions led her to spend this year volunteering on the Durham Public Arts Committee, while working towards a vocational and graduate certificate in Spanish Interpretation and Translation. In Fall 2022, Alexis studied abroad in Uruguay, where she completed a collaborative community mural with local recycling coordinators. She adores sea creatures and costumes. Now, she is a Community and Advocacy Organizer for the North Carolina Association of Educators and a Spanish Medical Interpreter.

Cristian Rodriguez | Michigan, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: Business & Culture: A Virtual Practicum - William Davidson Institute

Year of Participation: 2023



Cristian Rodriguez is a 2023 graduate from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of General Studies. While working as a youth facilitator for the Latinx Technology & Community Center last year, he organized the first college tour for the Latinx Leadership Academy at Michigan State University. This experience led Cristian to secure his current position as an Advise MI College Adviser at the Lapeer County Education & Technology Center. This year, Cristian partnered with his Local College Access Network to plan the first eighth grade Career Connections Conference at Mott Community College. He also implemented the first

Michigan College Access Network Summer Melt program at a career and technical education center in Michigan. Cristian's passion for community engagement resulted in a partnership with the Four County Community Foundation, which produced the new Family Legacy Internship.

Daniel Hamad Ameen | Erbil, Iraq

Virtual Exchange: Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge - IREX

Year of Participation: 2020



Daniel Hamad Ameen is a communications and education specialist with a diverse and comprehensive background. He holds a bachelor's degree in English language and literature from Soran University in Iraqi-Kurdistan. Daniel was selected to participate in an exchange program at Sapienza University of Rome where he interned with the Kurdistan Regional Government to address refugee issues. He has volunteered for more than five years and is dedicated to serving his community and empowering young people. Daniel organized his first workshop on entrepreneurship strategies and business plans, which inspired several of his

students to start their own businesses. Since 2020, Daniel has been involved with IREX, participating in Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge and Conversations. Daniel believes that these programs help individuals reach their untapped potential. Currently, he is pursuing a Master of Arts in applied linguistics TESOL at the University of Kurdistan, furthering his commitment to education and community development. Daniel plans to launch his first hub to empower young people to build their skills and impact their communities. He is interested in intercultural communication, leadership, traveling, and sustainable strategies in entrepreneurship.

Gabriel Ordaz | California, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge - IREX

Year of Participation: 2023



Gabriel Ordaz is a recent graduate of California State University, Sacramento with a bachelor's degree in business administration with concentrations in marketing and international business. Gabriel currently serves as the corporate communications associate at Millennium, an environmental consulting business.

Through his passion for social entrepreneurship, Gabriel founded his own mathematics tutoring company and has guided over 50 students to academic success. Gabriel is committed to continuous learning and development. He always pursues new opportunities to apply his skills in diverse environments and works to

enrich the education of others.

Khaled Salama | Shibin Elkom, Egypt

Virtual Exchange: Global Circles - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2024



Khaled Salama is a recent computer engineering graduate with a focused interest in autonomous driving, embedded systems, and robotics software engineering. He led the Robocon team at Menoufia University for two years, demonstrating exceptional leadership and technical expertise. Khaled also joined international robotics teams at the IDC Robocon competitions, where he secured second place in 2023 and third place with the Best Design award for the 2024 competition.

Khaled is actively engaged in research on climate and sustainability, specifically in wildfire control, and has presented his findings at international conferences, as

well as showcased his innovative solutions in hackathons. Beyond his technical pursuits, Khaled is deeply committed to cultural exchange and global collaboration, serving as an ambassador for the Aspire Leader Program. Khaled currently seeks a Master's scholarship to advance his expertise in autonomous systems and drones. His diverse experiences and unwavering dedication position him as a promising professional poised to make significant contributions to his field.

Marietta Song | Tennessee, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: Global Solutions Conversations - IREX

Year of Participation: 2024



Marietta Song is a studio art alum of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). Marietta graduated in May 2024 with Magna Cum Laude and is an aspiring multimedia artist and designer. Marietta is currently working as a graphic design intern for a magazine publishing company in her hometown of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Her passion for art and her experience living in low-economic areas led Marietta to become the Summer 2024 Fellowship Artist of UTC's Office of Access and Engagement. Recently, Marietta produced a data visualization art series, which depicts her journey as an Asian-American in the form of data and is currently on display until fall 2024. Marietta seeks to continue her art series, create new projects, continue her Japanese studies, travel to different countries, and possibly return to school. In her free time, Marietta enjoys spending time with close friends, playing video games, writing screenplays, and drawing new sketches.

Maryam Al-Ojel | Aden, Yemen

Virtual Exchange: Qisana - Amideast

Year of Participation: 2022



Maryam Al-Ojel is a 22-year-old intern at Amideast and a partnerships intern at the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Through her internships, Maryam is gaining invaluable experience in the nonprofit and humanitarian sectors. As an alumna of Amideast's Qisasna program, Maryam co-facilitated the program, helping two cohorts of Yemeni and American participants produce podcasts. This experience motivated her to join the Women's Voice Without Borders initiative and attend an intensive workshop on podcast hosting in Erbil, Kurdistan. Furthermore, Maryam participated in the Student Leaders Program, an in-person exchange program at Georgetown University. Driven by her passion for empowering women, Maryam founded and hosts the "Sanad" podcast, which aims to empower women to study abroad. She also participated in the COP28 simulation model hosted by the British University in Egypt, where she advocated for the resolution of the climate crisis in Yemen.

Nayantara Kapoor Arora | Oregon, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: The Experiment Digital - World Learning

Year of Participation: 2018



Nayantara Kapoor Arora is a Rhodes Scholar from Portland, Oregon, currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in clinical medicine, concentrating in global health at Oxford University. As an alumna of World Learning's The Experiment Digital, Nayantara was inspired to create grassroots change in her community. She received an alumni grant from the Stevens Initiative to support the production of a three-season podcast. Nayantara's podcast uplifts immigrant, multicultural, and youth voices, reaching audiences in over 17 countries. Additionally, Nayantara co-founded, and served as president, for the Youth Advocates for Immigrants & Refugees, a youth-led organization that fosters cross-cultural communication through art and storytelling. She studied Arabic through NSLI-Y and is fluent in four languages. Nayantara interned with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, where she developed content highlighting alumni of exchange programs. With these diverse skills and interests, Nayantara will pursue a multidisciplinary career in activism, healthcare, and community-building. She is passionate about approaching equity, social justice, and human rights through empathy and research.

Shadi Walid Basha | Jenin, Palestinian Territories

Virtual Exchange: Connect Program - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2023



Shadi Walid Basha is a dedicated computer engineer who currently works as a backend website developer. While in college, Shadi took an active role in student life as he organized and participated in various events, fostering a strong sense of community among his peers. Separately, he kindles a love for the environment, which guides his values and influences his outlook on the world. Shadi's journey in the tech world has been fueled by his passion for art and technology. Looking forward, he hopes to enter game development.

Soumaya Fredj | Sousse, Tunisia

Virtual Exchange: Connect Program - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2021



Soumaya Fredj is a 25-year-old graduate with a master's degree in english cultural studies, with a concentration in american studies. At the University of Sousse Council, Soumaya was the first female student representative for two consecutive years and participated in different regional advancement projects for graduate and undergraduate students. In 2019, Soumaya was the regional coordinator for students' orientation sessions. As an alumna of the Soliya Connect Program, Soumaya's virtual exchange experience was an excellent opportunity to foster deep friendships and learn about others. Soumaya remains close friends

with her Soliya peers. She also continues to pursue her interest in intercultural communication by attending different international events and seminars. She is currently applying for a doctorate program and seeks new learning opportunities at home and abroad.

Suha Younis Hasan | Benghazi, Libya

Virtual Exchange: Business & Culture: A Virtual Practicum - William Davidson Institute

Year of Participation: 2021



Suha Younis Hasan recently graduated from the University of Benghazi, Faculty of Medicine, where she earned a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree. During medical school, Suha co-founded a non-profit organization to support medical students and junior doctors in their research endeavors, providing structured learning resources and mentorship. Suha's involvement in other student-founded NGOs enabled her to contribute to her community by promoting health awareness campaigns and similar initiatives. While in medical school, Suha pursued her commitment to healthcare advocacy by balancing her studies with a

leadership role in an award-winning global technology start-up as Lead Product Manager. In this position, she guided a talented team of engineers, designers, and quality assurance personnel to develop digital healthcare solutions, which enhance access to care for vulnerable communities. Currently, Suha works as an intern doctor while continuing in a new role as Lead Solution Architect. In this capacity, she leverages her medical background and technical expertise to shape advanced and impactful healthcare solutions, further contributing to her community.

Thomas Emad Gergis | Sohag, Egypt

Virtual Exchange: Global Circles - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2024



Thomas Emad Gergis is a medical student at Sohag University in Sohag, Egypt, and an alum of Soliya's Global Circles. Thomas is actively involved in the Sohag Medical Students' Association (SMSA) and is part of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA). Thomas played a significant role in SMSA's "Village 2022" project, where he helped fundraise and provide health education to a remote village, increasing access to and awareness of essential medical services. He also assists in hosting medical exchange students in Sohag. Thomas supports students' learning inside the hospital and guides them in the city

of Sohag. Outside of his medical pursuits, Thomas works part-time as a graphic designer and is involved in local acting groups. In 2018, he wrote, directed, and acted in a play, winning first place in a local competition. Thomas aims to combine his medical career with a deep interest in human sciences, particularly in psychology and philosophy.

Wiem Trabelsi | Sfax, Tunisia

Virtual Exchange: Connect Program - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2024



Wiem Trabelsi is a 22-year-old graduate with a bachelor's degree in English literature and civilization. Wiem is a passionate social activist with a strong commitment to environmental and civic causes, and currently serves as the environmental projects focal point for the Ifriqiya Association. Additionally, Wiem is enrolled in the Civil Society Program at the Tunisian School of Politics. Wiem is also an alumna of the Safir EU program, which is dedicated to advancing sustainable development goals in the MENA region. Wiem is from Sfax, Tunisia, and is interested in peace and conflict resolution, human rights, climate change,

history, and geography.

Yahya Abdulwali | Aden, Yemen

Virtual Exchange: Qisasna - Amideast

Year of Participation: 2024



Yahya Abdulwali is a marine engineering student from Yemen. Yahya was born in the rural city of Lahij and in 2011, moved to Aden where he lived amongst a diverse population and experienced a range of cultures. As a student, Yahya not only excelled academically, but has sought to develop leadership skills and build his network. Yahya's involvement in Amideast's Qisasna, which connects Yemeni and American students through podcasting, deepened his appreciation for cultural exchange. In 2019, Yahya co-founded the Sawa Initiative to tackle local issues and provide crucial support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yahya's efforts reflect his

continued commitment to lifelong learning, leadership, and community impact.

Yasmeen Bani Ali | Jerash, Jordan

Virtual Exchange: Global Scholars Achieving Career Success (GSACS) - LaGuardia Community College

Year of Participation: 2022



Yasmeen Bani Ali is a dedicated community pharmacist who graduated with a bachelor's degree in pharmacy in 2023. She is passionate about community and voluntary service and has actively organized and facilitated health awareness events in her community. Yasmeen has a strong interest in project management and joined a team of volunteers to support their graphic design work in their community and humanitarian efforts. Yasmeen's team earned second place in the Prince Hussein Award for Voluntary Work.

Zac Clark | California, U.S.

Virtual Exchange: Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge - IREX

Year of Participation: 2022



Zac Clark is the founder and executive director of The HomeMore Project, a 501c3 nonprofit organization serving California's homeless community of nearly 180,000 people. Zac built the HomeMore Project while studying international business and marketing at the University of San Francisco. Upon his graduation in 2023, he received the Student Leadership Award and the Dean's Service Award for his impact on over 2,000 people experiencing homelessness combined in 2023 and 2024. In 2025, Zac and the HomeMore Project plan to launch a scalable transitional housing model, utilizing tiny homes. Zac is now a master's in urban

planning student concentrating on Economic Development and Housing at UCLA. He seeks to leverage resources and networking opportunities to continue building The HomeMore Project to become a household name in the State of California.

Zakaria El Kanouni | Casablanca, Morocco

Virtual Exchange: Global Circles - Soliya

Year of Participation: 2024



Zakaria El Kanouni is a dynamic individual with a bachelor's degree in organizational management and entrepreneurship. As an art enthusiast and social activist passionate about showcasing the history of Casablanca and Morocco, Zakaria created the initiative Zho With Who. The initiative helps young people develop their soft skills and work on their mental health through art disciplines, yoga, and organizing tours exploring the rich history of Casablanca. through art disciplines. He was the recipient of the first place prize for the ENACTUS Entrepreneurship Exchange Program in 2022. He collaborated with numerous

NGOs and served as the manager of the Business and Entrepreneurship Club at the Cultural Annex of the U.S. Consulate Dar America, where he managed various initiatives and workshops. Zakaria also took on the role of project manager for KidoGeek, a startup dedicated to teaching children AI and coding. Additionally, Zakaria has participated in numerous national and international fellowships and programs, especially in entrepreneurship, including Soliya's Global Circles, where he engaged in discussions on world citizenship and social media.

Facilitators

Jamila Naboulsi | Fellow Assistant



Jamila Naboulsi is an engineering student, social activist, kickboxing champion, hiker, and 2023 Stevens Initiative Alumni Fellow. Jamila wears many hats, each one a testament to her versatility and commitment to making a difference in her community. As the founder of "Guard Up Morocco," Jamila empowered young women through martial arts and sports to instill the values of discipline, respect, and teamwork. She also promoted responsible and sustainable hiking by launching the "Eco-Friendly Hiking" initiative, which inspired others to protect our natural resources. As an alumna of the Sustainable Development Virtual Exchange 2020, Jamila used her experience to lead virtual workshops on entrepreneurship, leadership, and social work. Jamila has a deep passion for volunteering. By working as a facilitator and leadership trainer for the GAP Association in Turkey, Jamila developed skills that help her to be an even greater advocate and leader.

Kholoud Khalifa | Consultant



Kholoud Khalifa is a consultant at the Stevens Initiative where she works to build content for the Fellowship and facilitates training. Kholoud is also a lecturer at the University of Applied Science in Vienna, and previously lectured at the American University in Cairo. She has been a long time fellow, senior facilitator, and coach at Soliya. Prior to her current position, Kholoud worked for the United Nations as a communications officer and advocated for refugees in Egypt and Austria. She has a Bachelor of Arts in journalism and mass communication from the American University in Cairo, and holds a master's degree in conflict resolution from King's

College London.

Rawan Nasir | Program Associate



Rawan Nasir is a Program Associate at the Stevens Initiative where she works to support the external affairs team and the alumni portfolio. Prior to joining the team, Rawan worked with international exchange students, helping them to navigate their transition to studying in the U.S. Rawan has also worked to prepare young adults for their undergraduate studies by guiding them through the college application process. Rawan holds a Bachelor of Arts in global affairs with a double concentration in the MENA region and media, communication, and culture, as well as a minor in the Arabic language from George Mason University.

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Melissa Kirschner | Program Officer



Melissa Kirschner is a Program Officer at the U.S. Department of State where she oversees a portfolio of international exchange programs. As an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota, Melissa participated in three international programs, studying abroad in Italy, England, and Ghana. It was from these experiences that her love of exploration, exchange, and education abroad was born. After earning her bachelor's degree in studio art and psychology, Melissa began her career in fundraising and development, working in art and education institutions. She left fundraising to pursue a career in international education and exchange, working

as the director of volunteer travel at Uearth the World—a small service-learning organization. Since then, she has held positions on the campus relations team at The Education Abroad Network and was the Chicago Programs Manager for Global Glimpse—a nonprofit organization providing leadership development and global citizenship programming for high school students.

Guest Facilitators

Gabi Hunt | Program Associate



Gabi Hunt is a Program Associate at the Stevens Initiative, where she advances the program's strategic partnerships and drives events and convenings. She formerly elevated and shaped the Initiative's communications and external-facing strategy. Prior to joining the Stevens Initiative, she completed internships and projects with Middle East Policy Council, the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, and UNICEF. Gabi holds a B.S. in Diplomacy and International Relations, B.A. in Environmental Studies, and a minor in Arabic from Seton Hall University, where she graduated summa cum laude. As an undergraduate, she spent time in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. For the most part, you can find Gabi trying new restaurants and recipes in DC, splitting time between vacationing in Montana and hanging out in her home state of Delaware, or trying to spot miniature dachshunds on streets around the world.

Haili Lewis | Program Manager



Haili Lewis is a Program Manager at the Stevens Initiative where she advances the strategic implementation of the Initiative's communications and partnerships portfolio. In her role, Haili is a key contributor to building an ecosystem of people worldwide committed to bringing virtual exchange to young people everywhere. Before joining the Stevens Initiative, Haili worked for the Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program where she focused on events and communications. She previously held internships at the U.S. Department of State, Voto Latino, and the European Parliament. Haili has a B.A. in international studies with a concentration on U.S. foreign policy and a regional focus on Europe from American University in Washington, D.C., where she graduated magna cum laude with honors. In her free time, Haili enjoys traveling, cooking, and exploring new places in Chicago.

Samantha Walter | Program Coordinator



Samantha Walter is a Program Coordinator at the Stevens Initiative where she supports the implementation of the Initiative's external affairs portfolio. Prior to the Initiative, Samantha worked as a Communications Intern for the social enterprise, One Acre Fund where she advanced their communications objectives. In her free time, Samantha enjoys exploring Washington DC, which she proudly calls her new home! Samantha earned a bachelor's degree with honors in History from Brown University.



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