Fellowship Programs

Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program

Named in honor of NED’s principal supporters, former President Ronald Reagan and the late U.S. Congressman Dante Fascell (D-FL), the Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program enables democratic activists, practitioners, scholars and journalists from around the world to deepen their understanding of democracy and enhance their ability to promote democratic change. Funded by the U.S. Congress, the program is based at the International Forum for Democratic Studies, NED’s research and publications arm, in Washington, D.C. Reagan-Fascell fellowships are typically five months in duration and focus on the political, social, economic, legal, or cultural aspects of democratic development.

The Reagan-Fascell program seeks to deepen the knowledge, broaden the perspectives, and strengthen the morale of some of the world’s most committed and courageous democratic practitioners, journalists and scholars. The International Forum for Democratic Studies offers fellows a collegial environment in which to conduct research, exchange ideas with counterparts, and build ties that contribute to the development of a global network of democracy advocates.

In 2009–2010, the Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program hosted leading democratic activists, journalists, and scholars from a wide range of countries, including Afghanistan, Australia, Guatemala, Iraq, Kenya, Pakistan, Russia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Korea, Syria, Tanzania, Turkmenistan, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows in 2009–2010

Mr. Emmanuel Abdulai (Sierra Leone)
"Freedom of Expression in the U.S. & Sierra Leone"
October 2009–February 2010

“The ongoing campaign for a freedom of information law can help to ensure that oil does not become yet another resource curse; that democracy does not degenerate into kleptocracy; and that the people of Sierra Leone are empowered to demand answers from the country’s leadership.”


Dr. Migai Akech (Kenya)
“Regulating Political Power in Kenya through Separation of Powers and Administrative Law”
October 2009–February 2010

Dr. Migai Akech is an independent researcher based in Nairobi, Kenya. He has taught at the University of Nairobi, where he was a Senior Lecturer, and at New York University School of Law. During his fellowship, Dr. Akech wrote a paper examining how the distribution of power within Kenya’s executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government affects democratic governance. Entitled “Abuse of Power and Corruption in Kenya,” the paper was accepted for publication in the January 2011 issue of the *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*. On December 15, 2009, he spoke at a panel presentation on “Hate Speech in Divided Societies,” sponsored by the Center for International Media Assistance, and on February 23, 2010, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “Abuse of Power and

“While Kenya’s Draft Constitution provides norms and values that can enhance government accountability, there is an urgent need to establish strongly institutionalized procedural and public participation mechanisms that will circumscribe the exercise of power.”

Mr. Salah Albedry (Iraq)
“Developing Research Centers in Iraq”
November 2009–February 2010

“Iraq needs to develop public policy-oriented research institutes, or think tanks, that can supply policy makers with timely research and analysis. By educating politicians and offering recommendations on matters of public policy, Iraqi think tanks can go a long way toward strengthening political institutions, increasing transparency, and improving decision-making.”

Mr. Salah Albedry is founding director of the Enmaa Center for Research and Studies, an NGO that seeks to stimulate debate on public policy issues within Iraqi civil society. He previously served as a NED consultant, providing technical support to Iraqi NGOs and monitoring grantee activities in south-central Iraq. During his fellowship, Mr. Albedry examined ways to develop the capacity of research centers in Iraq and facilitate their ability to promote good governance through the sharing of best practices. On February 17, 2010, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “The State of Iraqi Research Institutes: Current Challenges and Prospects.” He also gave a talk at the University of Pennsylvania on January 14, 2010, entitled “Current Developments in Iraqi Civil Society.” Attending workshops in Washington, D.C., on capacity building and NGO-development strategies enabled Mr. Albedry to return to Iraq equipped with tools to enhance his work in nonprofit management and training.

Mr. Andrés Cañizález (Venezuela)
“The Chávez Era: Political History of and Democratic Challenges to Venezuelan Journalism”
March–July 2010

Mr. Andrés Cañizález is a senior researcher at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello’s (UCAB) School of Communication, in Caracas. During his fellowship, Mr. Cañizález traced the relationship between journalism and political power during the Chávez era, making significant progress on a book-length manuscript. He was invited to give presentations at the Organization of American States, Tulane University, Sacred Heart University in Puerto Rico, and the Center for International Media Assistance. In addition, Mr. Cañizález contributed weekly articles on freedom of expression and the Venezuelan media landscape to the “Infocracia” column in TalCual. His efforts to promote freedom of speech and freedom of the press were recognized by the International Catholic Union of the Press, which awarded him its 2010 Titus Brandsma Award. In October 2010, the Embassy of Canada in Caracas recognized Mr. Cañizález “for his outstanding rigor in analyzing the situation of freedom of expression in Venezuela.”

Dr. Jimmy Dube (Zimbabwe)
“When the Weak Constrain the Strong: Challenges of Grassroots Democracy in Zimbabwe”
March–July 2010

“As long as Zimbabwe fails to address the issue of electoral violence, the results of the election will not reflect the will of the people—and democracy will remain elusive.”

Dr. Jimmy Dube is co-chair of the Oxford Institute of Methodist Studies and lecturer at the United Theological College in Zimbabwe, the largest ecumenical training seminary in southern Africa. In 2005, Dr. Dube co-founded The Healing of Memories and Justice Project, a program that housed, nursed, and resettled survivors of political violence following Zimbabwe’s 2008 elections. During his fellowship, Dr. Dube explored ways in which the church can advance grassroots movements alongside local African communities. He undertook intensive research for a manuscript chronicling challenges to democracy in Zimbabwe, and his “An Open Letter to Graça Machel” was published in the Guardian on April 20, 2010. In addition, he gave a presentation at “Dare to Shape the Future: A Conference on Zimbabwe,” held at Africa Action, in Washington, D.C. On June 17, 2010, Dr. Dube delivered at NED a moving account of “Ordinary People: The Untold Story of Electoral Violence in Zimbabwe.”
Mr. Zahid Ebrahim (Pakistan)
“When the News Brings Democracy: Chronicling Pakistan’s Pro-Democracy Movement”
March–July 2010

Mr. Zahid Ebrahim is an advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan who drew international attention to the lawyers’ movement that facilitated Pakistan’s return to democratic rule in 2008. He has fought to protect the right of free expression throughout South Asia, on behalf of organizations such as the Pakistan Broadcasters’ Association, Interights, Frontline, Article XIX and the Commonwealth Press Union. During his fellowship, he chronicled the pro-democracy movement undertaken by lawyers, judges, and the media in Pakistan and analyzed the prospects for a lasting partnership between these groups to sustain democratic order. His op-ed, “Understanding Faisal Shahzad,” appeared in the May 27, 2010 issue of the Express Tribune in Pakistan. On June 17, 2010, Mr. Ebrahim gave a talk at the Heritage Foundation entitled “Anti-Americanism in Pakistan: What Fuels It and How It Can Be Countered,” which was also the subject of his interview with Voice of America the following month. On June 22, 2010, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “The Black Coat Revolution: How Pakistan’s Lawyers Turned the Tide Against General Musharraf’s Dictatorship.”

“What the Black Coat Revolution offers lessons for future democratic movements: activists seeking political change should identify unifying goals; use professional associations to build broad coalitions; harness the power of new media; and negotiate political space in exchange for legitimacy.”

Mr. Mohammad Ishaq (Afghanistan)
“Educating for Democracy in Afghanistan”
March–July 2010

Mr. Mohammad Ishaq is deputy director of the Afghan Institute of Learning, one of Afghanistan’s largest NGOs providing education, health services, human rights, and management training to rural and poor urban Afghans, primarily women and children. During his fellowship, Mr. Ishaq explored ways to translate democratic principles into practice through education in Afghanistan. He participated in a teacher-mentoring program run by the Toledo Federation of Teachers and visited public and private schools to observe and record student-centered teaching methodologies. His outreach included presentations to Washington-area teachers on “Afghanistan’s Education System,” sponsored by the Center for Inspired Teaching. On July 15, 2010, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “How Education Can Make Democracy Succeed in Afghanistan.” Mr. Ishaq returned to Afghanistan intending to implement civic-education curricula and student-centered pedagogy in schools and educational centers run by the Afghan Institute of Learning.

“What Afghanistan needs is a nationwide literacy campaign that targets young and old alike. . . . Working together, local and international actors must focus on education reform both as the springboard for individual empowerment and as a prerequisite for the development of democracy in the country.”

Mr. Sangsoo Kim (South Korea)
“The Voice of Freedom: Improving Radio Programs for the Citizens of North Korea”
October 2009–February 2010

Mr. Sangsoo Kim is a former anchorman for Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation, one of South Korea’s three main television networks. As MBC anchor, he hosted the MBC late night news, the country’s most-watched and highest-rated program during its time slot. Mr. Kim also hosted a weekly news magazine, “North Korea Observatory,” the longest-running domestic news program covering North Korean affairs. He is the author of The Life of North Koreans (2005) and producer of an award-winning documentary series called “Maritime Silk Road.” During his fellowship, Mr. Kim explored ways in which media broadcasts — particularly those from the United States and South Korea — may contribute to a viable democratization process in North Korea. On February 18, 2010, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “The Voice of Freedom: Improving Radio Programs for the Citizens of North Korea.” After his fellowship, and before returning to Seoul to continue his broadcasting work, he served as a visiting scholar at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

“The crucial role of shortwave radio should not be understated; such broadcasts represent an important and effective instrument for opening up vital information channels between North Koreans and the rest of the world.”
Ms. María Martin (U.S./Guatemala)  
“Transnational Media’s Potential to Promote Rural Journalism in Guatemala”  
March–July 2010

“Guatemala’s major media are beginning to open doors to indigenous and rural journalists, who provide news from beyond the capital. These rural journalists are enhancing the national media and empowering local communities.”

Ms. María Martin is director of the GraciasVida Center for Media, a nonprofit organization devoted to the practice of independent journalism in the public interest, with offices in the United States and Guatemala. During her fellowship, Ms. Martin helped create a documentary film on rural journalists at risk in Guatemala, excerpts of which she screened at a presentation at NED on June 25, 2010, entitled “The Promise of Rural Journalism in Guatemala’s Fragile Democracy.” In addition, she explored opportunities for collaboration with the Guatemalan immigrant community in order to develop a digital portal linking rural journalists with transnational audiences. She recorded interviews for a bilingual reporting project, “Central America After the Wars: New Challenges to Democracy,” to be published on the Internet at www.afterthewars.org and to be aired on public radio. María returned to Guatemala with the idea of launching a public-education campaign concerning the role of a free press in Guatemala.

Ms. Rosemary Mwakitwange (Tanzania)  
“Fighting Corruption in Tanzania’s Media”  
March–July 2010

Ms. Rosemary Mwakitwange has served as executive chairperson of East Africa Business and Media Training Institute, a private, nonprofit organization specializing in professional training for journalists, and as founding CEO of New Habari Limited, Tanzania’s largest private publishing company. During her fellowship, Ms. Mwakitwange investigated the factors affecting the sustainability of media houses, and whether those factors lead to corruption among journalists. She also exchanged ideas and experiences with counterparts in the field of international media development and gathered resources on the business of journalism. On April 29, 2010, she participated in a symposium on “Supporting Independent Media in Africa,” sponsored by the Center for International Media Assistance. On June 30, 2010, she gave a presentation at NED entitled “The Business of Journalism: The Missing Link to Freedom of the Press in Tanzania.” Ms. Mwakitwange returned to Tanzania to host a new TV talk show, Let’s Talk Business.

Mr. Peter Novotny (Slovakia)  
“Nonpartisan Election Monitoring and Voter Education in America and Eurasia: Best Practices”  
October 2009–February 2010

“Until media organizations begin to adopt sound business practices, the problem of corruption will continue—further denying Tanzania’s citizens a real stake in the democratization process.”

Mr. Peter Novotny is program director of Obcianske Oko (Civic Eye), a Slovak election-monitoring organization, currently serving as coordinator of NDI’s Election Observation Mission to Jordan for its 2010 parliamentary election. During his fellowship, he examined nonpartisan election-monitoring and voter-education programs in the United States and Eurasia and worked on an NGO election toolkit that offers information, best practices, and case studies for nonpartisan election observers around the world. On November 30, 2009, Johns Hopkins–SAIS invited him to speak on the “Challenges to Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe.” On January 28, 2010, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “The Backlash Against Election Monitors: How the Profession Can Respond.” In advance of Slovakia’s June 12, 2010, parliamentary elections, Mr. Novotny published an analysis of Slovak election legislation for Project Volebny Inforservis (Election Information Service), available online at www.infovolby.sk.
Dr. Benjamin Reilly (Australia)  
"Strengthening Democracy in the Asia-Pacific"  
March–July 2010

Dr. Benjamin Reilly is a visiting professor at Johns Hopkins–SAIS, on leave from his position as professor of political science at the Australian National University (ANU). During his fellowship, Dr. Reilly researched the increasing trend toward “political engineering” of key institutions in Asia’s new democracies, presenting his findings at a NED event on July 19, 2010, entitled “Democracy in East Asia: An Elephant’s Graveyard?” Dr. Reilly also gave a talk at IFES on July 22, entitled “Political Reform in Mongolia,” as well as one at the Foreign Service Institute on July 28, entitled “Democracy in Southeast Asia.” In addition, he wrote a book chapter, “Democratization and the Demise of Consociationalism in Southeast Asia,” for the edited volume *The Crisis of Democratic Governance in Southeast Asia*, edited by Aurel Croissant & Marco Bünte (Palgrave, forthcoming). As a consultant to the United Nations Development Programme in Mongolia, Dr. Reilly wrote a report on “Representation and Inclusiveness through Electoral Systems.”

“A pattern is developing across East Asia where governments appropriate the symbolism but not the substance of democracy: economic and political efficiency is the primary goal, often achieved at the expense of representation.”

Dr. Nikolay Rudenskiy (Russia)  
"Hate Speech & Freedom of the Press: Where America Draws the Line"  
October 2009–February 2010

Dr. Nikolay Rudenskiy is the deputy editor of Grani.Ru, an independent online media outlet. During his fellowship, Dr. Rudenskiy examined how freedom of the press in the United States relates to the problem of hate speech, with special attention to the Internet as an important channel of new media. He gave a number of lectures during his fellowship, including “Political Democracy vs. Economic Efficiency in Russia” (University of Louisville, November 30, 2009), “Hate Speech in Divided Societies: Should It Be Regulated?” (Center for International Media Assistance, December 15, 2009), “Shrinking from Brainwashing: The Russian Media’s Response to Political Challenges” (NED, December 10, 2009), as well as presentations on media politics and Russian perceptions of the United States at the Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Rudenskiy wrote an editorial for www.Kasparov.ru in December 2009 and conducted interviews on the state of Russian media for RTVi and Voice of America Russian Service.

“Perhaps the biggest challenge to freedom of the press in Russia comes from within the media itself, which appears, by and large, neither ready nor willing to stand up for its rights. . . . No positive change is likely unless the press itself realizes the importance of its own freedom.”

Ms. Fatima Tlisova (Russia)  
"Untold Stories of Journalists in the North Caucasus"  
March–July 2010

Ms. Fatima Tlisova is an award-winning investigative journalist from the North Caucasus currently working at Voice of America. Over the past decade, she has covered the most sensitive topics affecting the North Caucasus, including human rights violations, women’s rights, nationalist sentiments, and extremism. During her fellowship, Ms. Tlisova worked on articles and short documentary videos telling the stories of journalists exiled from the North Caucasus. Her documentary, “Brutal Censorship,” profiles the lives of journalists facing repression in the North Caucasus. In addition, Ms. Tlisova produced other films on the struggle for Circassian rights and the state of the Circassian diaspora. On June 15, 2010, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Brutal Censorship: Targeting Journalists in the North Caucasus.” Following her fellowship, she continued her ongoing collaboration with the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting and her involvement in the Circassian National Movement for Genocide Recognition.

“Nowhere is the heavy hand of the Kremlin more visible than in the North Caucasus, where Russia seeks to stifle separatist conflicts and silence independent journalists in the name of its ‘war on terror.’ . . . The world should not turn a blind eye as Russia wages its campaign of repression against the people of the North Caucasus.”
Mr. Farid Tuhbatullin (Turkmenistan)
"The Influence of Exiled Activists on Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of Turkmenistan"
March–July 2010

"[In 2006], Turkmenistan’s citizens welcomed . . . Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, a former health minister whose accession to power brought new hope for political reform after two decades of repression. Sadly, this optimism has diminished, as it has become clear that Berdymukhammedov has no plans to break from his predecessor’s policies."

Mr. Farid Tuhbatullin is chairman of the Vienna-based NGO Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights, an activist network that gathers independent information on the current state of human rights in Turkmenistan. During his fellowship, he examined how exiled activists can influence the politics of closed regimes, using the experience of Turkmenistan as his primary case study. On June 4, 2010, he spoke at a NED event entitled "From Turkmenbashi to the Present: Prospects for Change in Turkmenistan," and on June 21, he gave a talk at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs in New York, entitled “Activism and Policy: Prospects for Change in Turkmenistan.” In addition, Farid gave briefings at the United Nations and the Department of State on current conditions in Turkmenistan. He also engaged with members of other exiled communities, including Uyghur and Chinese democracy activists.

Radwan Ziadeh
"Democratization and Political Division in the Middle East"
October 2009–February 2010

Dr. Radwan Ziadeh is founding director of the Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies. During his fellowship, he examined democracy promotion efforts during the “third wave” in order to develop an effective model for democratization in the Middle East. His many presentations included "Looking Back & Moving Forward: Human Rights in the Arab World in 2009 and Beyond" at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; "Islam and the 'West' in the Media after 9/11" at the University of Colorado–Boulder; and “Syria’s Democratic Past: Lessons for the Future” at NED. His article, "The Syrian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: The Track of Lost Opportunities" — published in The Middle East–Peace by Piece: The Quest for a Solution to the Arab-Israeli Conflict — was one of several book chapters and articles completed during his fellowship. In November 2009, the Middle East Studies Association awarded Dr. Ziadeh its 2009 MESA Academic Freedom Award.

"Syrian activists should carry forward the momentum from the 2000–2001 ‘Damascus Spring’ and subsequent reformist declarations to advocate for a just resolution to past grievances and a peaceful transition to democracy.”

Radwan Ziadeh
Visiting Fellows Program

In addition to the Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program, the International Forum for Democratic Studies hosts a small Visiting Fellows Program for scholars and practitioners with outside funding who wish to be affiliated with the Forum. During the 2009–2010 fellowship year, the Forum hosted two Visiting Fellows from the United States.

**Dr. Valerie Bunce (United States)**

"After the Elections: Democratic Development and Decline in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Serbia, and Ukraine"

January–May 2010

Dr. Valerie Bunce is professor of government and international studies at Cornell University. A leading expert on Central and Eastern Europe whose research focuses on comparative democratization and democracy promotion, Dr. Bunce has written several books, including *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State* (1999). During her fellowship, Dr. Bunce completed her latest book (co-authored with Reagan-Fascell alumna Sharon Wolchik), *Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Post-communist Countries* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and began a new book project, "Tricks of the Authoritarian Trade," focusing on how authoritarian leaders try to block democratic change. On May 5, 2010, she gave a presentation at NED entitled, "When Does U.S. Democracy Assistance Work?"

**Dr. Mary Speck (United States)**

"Cuba: Democracy and Revolution, 1950–1962"

October 2009–September 2010

Dr. Mary Speck is a seasoned journalist with experience reporting on Latin America. She holds a Ph.D. in history from Stanford University, where she wrote a dissertation entitled *Let There Be Candy for Everyone: The Politics of Sugar in Cuba: 1902–1952*. Dr. Speck has served as an editor with the Washington Post, as a reporter covering foreign policy at the *Congressional Quarterly*, as a foreign correspondent for the *Miami Herald*, and as a freelance reporter. During her fellowship, Dr. Speck completed a book manuscript based on her dissertation. She also began researching Cuba’s failed democratic movement from 1950 to the consolidation of communist rule in the early 1960s and plans to publish the results in the form of a book. In January 2010, Dr. Speck gave a talk at NED entitled, "Democracy in Cuba."