Many issues that shape the quality of our lives have an international dimension. Global economic interdependence, the development of appropriate environmental strategies, the resolution of regional conflicts, and the enhancement of human rights all require a global perspective. Important aspects of the educational experience include discussion and interaction with people from diverse cultures. Since 1964, Kearney State College, now the University of Nebraska at Kearney, has sponsored an international conference to discuss issues of global importance. In 1988 the name of the conference was changed to honor Professor James E. Smith.

The concepts of globalization and technology are inseparable. However far back one traces the origins of globalization, whether to the development of rapid mass communication systems in the late-20th century, mass transportation systems in the 19th century, the scientific revolution of the 16th-17th century – it was always connected to specific technological advancements. We tend to think of technology as another form of liberation – providing us with tools that will always and inevitably improve our lives and offer us greater access to knowledge, freedom of movement, and increased prosperity. And yet, history and experience tell us that new technologies do not solve all our problems and, indeed, often create new ones. Mechanization in the workplace may increase labor safety and productivity, but it also results in layoffs. Social networking allows for vastly increased global and cultural interactions, but it may decrease real time contact with those closest to you.

Therefore, for this year’s conference we have chosen to examine the relationships between globalization, technology, and power, focusing in particular on the roles played by technology, the internet, and social media in globalization and democratization. Our speakers this year include experts on internet censorship in China, social media and democratization in the Middle East and Africa, cybercrime, linguistics and the internet, and cyber-racism. These experts come to us from countries that include Bangladesh, El Salvador, Ecuador, Germany, Israel, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Nepal, the Philippines, Zambia, Bulgaria, and India as well as the United States.

Through the information provided at this conference, we hope to introduce UNK faculty, students, and the broader Kearney community to the critical issues relating to globalization, technology, and power. It is our hope that members of the audience will be sufficiently inspired by what they hear at the conference to maintain a lifelong interest in international affairs.

AGENDA

Technology and Power: The Global Outcomes of New Media
Tuesday and Wednesday, September 24-25, 2013

Nebraskan Student Union Ponderosa Room

Conference Agenda

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

Ponderosa E
9:30 am

Opening Remarks

Mr. Moses Moxey, Student Body President
Industrial Distribution Major from The Bahamas

Ponderosa E
9:35 - 10:45 am

An Impossible Dream Becomes Reality: Nepal Wireless Networking Project*

Dr. Mahabir Pun, Founder/Director
Nepal Wireless Networking Project and
Himanchal Educational Foundation
Kathmandu, Nepal

Introducer: Mr. Bill Ballou
Member, Himanchal Educational Foundation
Past District Governor, Rotary International

*This presentation is sponsored through the generous support of the Rotary International Clubs of Kearney.

Ponderosa A/B
11:00 - 12:15 pm

The Role of Social Media in International Affairs

Mr. Jorge Ernesto Espejel Montes, Consul
Consulate of Mexico, Omaha, NE

Mr. Leo Herrera-Lim, Consul General
Consul General of the Philippines, Chicago, IL

Mr. Jonathan Daniel, Vice Consul
Policy and Communications
British Consulate-General, Chicago, IL

Moderator: Dr. Satoshi Machida, Associate Professor
Department of Political Science
**Ponderosa E**

11:00-12:15 pm

**Information Technology, Political Transitions, and Development Progress in Africa**

*Dr. Joseph Siegle*, Director of Research and Sr. Research Scholar
Africa Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University
Center for International and Security Studies, University of Maryland
College Park, MD

Introducer: *Dr. Frank Tenkorang*, Associate Professor
Department of Economics

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**Nebraskan Atrium**

12:30-1:30 pm

**Take a Delegate to Lunch**

Coordinator: *Ms. Barbara Amundson*, Senior Lecturer
Department of Health, PE, Recreation, and Leisure Studies

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**Ponderosa A/B**

2:00-3:15 pm

**The Centrality of New Media to Public Diplomacy**

*Mr. Parvathaneni Harish*, Consul General
Consulate General of India, Houston, TX

*Ms. Maya Karmely*, Consul for Public Affairs
Consulate General of Israel, Chicago, IL

*M. Ricardo Valencia*
Expert in Strategic Communications
Embassy of El Salvador, Washington, DC

Moderator: *Dr. Will Avilés*, Professor
Department of Political Science

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**Ponderosa E**

2:00-3:15 pm

**Narrowing the Gap between Rural and Urban Students in Bangladesh**

*Dr. Yousuf Islam*, Professor
Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Introducer: *Dr. Wyatt Hoback*, Professor
Department of Biology

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**Ponderosa E**

3:30 – 4:45 pm

**BBC Documentary How Facebook Changed the World: The Arab Spring**

followed by roundtable discussion
The story of how the Arab world erupted in revolution, as a new generation used the internet and social media to try to overthrow their hated leaders. Mishal Husain charts events in Tunisia and Egypt by meeting those who led the revolts and showing the unique footage they shot.

Introducer: Dr. Will Avilés, Professor Department of Political Science

Panel:
Dr. Will Avilés, Professor of Political Science
Dr. Chuck Rowling, Assistant Professor of Political Science
Dr. Satoshi Machida, Associate Professor of Political Science

Ponderosa E
7:30 pm

The Involvement of U.S. Companies in Internet Repression in China

Mr. Harry Wu
Human Rights Activist, Director
China Information Center, Fairfax, VA

Introducer: Dr. Charles Bicak, Senior Vice Chancellor Academic and Student Affairs

Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Ponderosa A/B
9:05-9:55 am

Technology, Power and Rural Development

Mr. James Chisenga, Counselor – Economic
Embassy of the Republic of Zambia, Washington, DC

Dr. Yousuf Islam, Professor
Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Moderator: Mr. Shawn Kaskie, Director
Center for Rural Research and Development

Ponderosa E
9:05-9:55 am

Position, Scale, Direction: Aspects of Global English

Dr. Michael Adams, Associate Professor
Department of English, Indiana University
Bloomington, IN

Introducer: Dr. Megan Hartman, Assistant Professor
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<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ponderosa A/B</td>
<td>10:10-11:00 am</td>
<td><strong>New Media and Globalization</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mr. Simeon Stoilov</strong>, Consul General&lt;br&gt;Consulate General of the Republic of Bulgaria, Chicago, IL&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mr. Mario Soos</strong>, Deputy Consul General&lt;br&gt;German Consulate General, Chicago, IL&lt;br&gt;<strong>Moderator: Dr. Roy Koepp</strong>, Assistant Professor&lt;br&gt;Department of History</td>
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<td>Ponderosa E</td>
<td>10:10-11:00 am</td>
<td><strong>Social Movements, Cloaked Websites, and The Struggle over Ideas in a Global, Networked Society</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Dr. Jessie Daniels</strong>, Professor&lt;br&gt;Urban Public Health, Sociology and Critical Psychology&lt;br&gt;CUNY – Graduate Center and Hunter College&lt;br&gt;New York, NY&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Introducer: Dr. Claude Louishomme</strong>, Associate Professor&lt;br&gt;Department of Political Science</td>
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<td>Ponderosa A/B</td>
<td>11:15 – 12:05 pm</td>
<td><strong>Surveillance and Cyber-security in our Globalized World</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mr. Kyle Cronin</strong>, Director&lt;br&gt;Information Assurance Lab&lt;br&gt;Dakota State University, Madison, SD&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Introducer: Ms. Angela Hollman</strong>, Lecturer&lt;br&gt;Department of Industrial Technology</td>
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<td>Ponderosa E</td>
<td>11:15-12:05 pm</td>
<td><strong>TED Talk – Ethan Zuckerman Listening to Global Voices</strong>&lt;br&gt;followed by roundtable discussion&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;The web connects the globe, but most of us end up hearing mainly from people just like ourselves. Blogger and technologist Ethan Zuckerman studies how the whole world uses new media to share information and moods across cultures, languages and platforms. He wants to help share the stories</td>
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of the whole wide
world and talks about clever strategies to open up your
Twitter world and read
the news in languages you don't even know.

Introducer: Mr. Stephen Amundson, Senior Lecturer
Department of Industrial Technology

Panelists:
Dr. Ralph Hanson, Professor of Communications
Dr. Christie Maloyed, Assistant Professor of Political
Science

Ponderosa A/B
1:25-2:15 pm

Gender, Inequality, and Social Media

Dr. Jessie Daniels, Professor
Urban Public Health, Sociology and Critical Psychology
CUNY – Graduate Center and Hunter College
New York, NY

Ms. Silvia Ontaneda, J.D., Consul General
Consulate General of Ecuador, Minneapolis, MN

Moderator: Dr. Linda Van Ingen
Associate Professor of History
Director of Women's & Gender Studies Program

Ponderosa E
1:25-2:15 pm

Technology Sourcing in Nebraska

Mr. Lance Rall, Director of Quality Assurance
Mr. Tyson Hyatt, Project Manager/Product Manager
Ms. Sandra McNeel-Maxcy, Assistant Director of
Automation
Mr. Wallace Harwood, Automation Lead
Xpanxion, Kearney, NE

Introducer: Dr. Ross Taylor, Associate Professor
Department of Marketing and Management Information
Systems

Ponderosa E
2:30-3:20 pm

Modern Technology and Economic
Globalization

Ms. Susan Bigg, President/Owner
Horizon Designs Inc., Kearney, NE

Mr. Travys Woodside, International Project
Manager
Chief Agri/Industrial Division, Kearney, NE
Moderator: Dr. Ron Tuttle, Professor
Department of Industrial Technology

Biographies

Technology and Power: The Global Outcomes of New Media
Tuesday and Wednesday, September 24-25, 2013
Nebraskan Student Union Ponderosa Room

Biographies

**Keynote Speaker:**

**Mr. Harry Wu**
*Human Rights Activist*
*Director, China Information Center*

Having spent 19 years incarcerated by the Chinese government in the Laogai—the “Bamboo Gulag”—as a political prisoner, Harry Wu survived beatings, torture, and starvation. He witnessed the death of many of his fellow prisoners from brutality, disease, starvation and suicide. After his release in 1979, Wu moved to the United States and repeatedly risked his life returning to China to document slavery and human rights abuses. In 1995, Wu was arrested in China, found guilty of “stealing state secrets,” sentenced to 15 years in prison, and was then expelled. Since his release, Wu courageously vowed to continue to expose human rights violations in China. He has continued to travel the world to tell of the abuses the Chinese government inflicts on its own people.

Wu is the author of several books including *Laogai – The Chinese Gulag*, a theoretical analysis of the Laogai system in Communist China, and the international bestseller *Bitter Winds*, a powerful account of Wu’s imprisonment and survival that displays extraordinary acts of courage and of unforgettable heroism. In 1996 Wu wrote *Troublemaker: One Man’s Crusade Against China’s Cruelty* which explains why he willingly returned to a country where he spent 19 years in labor camps and whose dictatorial government wishes only to do away with him.

Wu has testified before various congressional committees, as well as before British, French, German, and Australian parliaments, the European Parliament, and United Nations bodies. Most recently, he has become a prominent voice in the struggle to oppose Chinese efforts to control the internet. In 2009 he provided testimony to the United States Congress on "The State of Global Internet Freedom."
Wu is currently Executive Director of the Laogai Research Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to documenting the Laogai system and exposing other human rights abuses in China such as the death penalty, organ harvesting, and the “One Child Policy.” He also heads the China Information Center, an online Chinese-language news and commentary website directed at mainland Chinese readers. Wu has received numerous awards for his activities, including the Hungarian Freedom Fighters Award in 1991, the Martin Ennals Human Rights Award in 1994, the Human Rights Advocate Award of the Harvard Foundation of Harvard University, and the 1996 Geuzen Medal of Honor from the Dutch Foundation for the Geuzen Resistance Movement, as well as other international honors.

For more information on this speaker, please visit www.apbspeakers.com.

Conference Speakers:

Dr. Michael Adams, Associate Professor  
Department of English, Indiana University  
Bloomington, IN

Dr. Michael Adams is Associate Professor of English at Indiana University in Bloomington. He specializes in nonstandard English and in the history, theory, and practice of lexicography. Professor Adams is the author of Slayer Slang: A Buffy the Vampire Slayer Lexicon, Slang: The People’s Poetry, editor of “Cunning passages, contrived corridors”: Unexpected Essays in the History of Lexicography and From Elvish to Klingon: Exploring Invented Languages, as well as co-editor of Contours of English and English Language Studies, and co-author of How English Works: A Linguistic Introduction, both with Anne Curzan. He is editor of American Speech, and serves as President of the Dictionary Society of North America.

Ms. Susan Bigg, President/Owner  
Horizon Designs Inc., Kearney, NE

Ms. Susan Bigg is the President and Owner of Horizon Designs Inc. Established in 1982, Horizon Designs Inc. has transitioned from a U.S. manufacturing company to a diverse design, sourcing, and importing company for a wide range of clients throughout the U.S., including top theme parks, publishers, advertising agencies, entertainment businesses, high profile retail and specialty stores, and more. Products include bags, small accessories, paper packaging, apparel, fashion accessories, and novelty products. Ms. Bigg holds a degree in Sociology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, where she minored in Art and Business. She actively volunteers her time in numerous campus and community organizations.

Mr. Kyle Cronin, Director  
Information Assurance Lab  
Dakota State University, Madison, SD

Mr. Kyle Cronin serves as an Instructor of Information Assurance and directs the Information Assurance Lab at Dakota State University. He is a candidate for the Doctor of Science in Information Assurance at
Capitol College in Laurel, MD. Mr. Cronin teaches in the undergraduate and graduate Network Systems and Administration, Information Assurance, and Computer Science programs at DSU. His research in IT security and cloud computing has been featured at various conferences across the US, including the Black Hat briefings in Las Vegas, NV. Additionally, Cronin provides IT consulting services for small- to medium-sized businesses with special focus on securing current environments, implementing efficiencies by utilizing virtualization, and leveraging cloud-computing services to securely reduce overall IT expenditures.

Dr. Jessie Daniels, Professor
Urban Public Health, Sociology & Critical Psychology
CUNY – Graduate Center and Hunter College, New York, NY

Dr. Jessie Daniels is an internationally recognized expert on Internet manifestations of racism. She is the author of two books about race and media, *White Lies* and *Cyber Racism*, and dozens of peer-reviewed articles in journals such as *New Media & Society*, *Gender & Society*, *American Journal of Public Health*, and *Women’s Studies Quarterly*. Her most recent book, *Google Bombs, Cloaked Sites and Astroturf: Propaganda in the Digital Era* is forthcoming from Routledge. Daniels maintains a scholarly blog, RacismReview, with 200,000 unique visitors monthly and well over 2 million visitors since 2007. As one of Forbes Magazine’s “20 Inspiring Women to Follow on Twitter,” you can find her on Twitter: @JessieNYC.

Mr. Wallace Harwood
Automation Lead
Xpanxion, Kearney, NE

Mr. Wallace Harwood joined the Xpanxion team in 2012 and has since been helping Xpanxion grow with innovative ideas and tactical changes. Before Xpanxion, Wallace gained over 10 years’ experience in the IT industry. A lifelong learner, Wallace has a deep drive to succeed and continues to do so as he progresses within Xpanxion. Wallace also has a strong desire to see Kearney continue to grow as a strong community and a center for technology in the area.

Mr. Tyson Hyatt
Project Manager/Product Manager
Xpanxion, Kearney, NE

Mr. Tyson Hyatt brings a unique perspective to the *Technology Sourcing in Nebraska* panel as one of the original two employees of Xpanxion’s Kearney location. He has progressed with the company, beginning as a quality assurance tester with an eagerness to lead. Mr. Hyatt now serves as a project and product manager, coordinating people, business needs, and processes to see projects through to completion. He is adept at helping clients determine what they need from their software and making sure their expectations are exceeded.
**Dr. Yousuf Islam, Professor**  
**Dept of Computer Science and Engineering**  
**Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

In addition to his post as Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, Dr. Yusuf Mahbubul Islam heads the Human Resources Development Institute at Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. His interests extend beyond core subject teaching to getting teachers to teach better and students to learn better. To consolidate and improve his skills in this area, he did a second Masters in Instructional Design Technology 22 years after completing his PhD in 1988. Picking up on the challenge of turning around culturally shy students studying in traditional-bound rote-learning environments, he has recently put together a set of highly successful classroom teaching techniques that he has labeled as Participatory Engaging Teaching techniques.

**Ms. Sandra McNeel-Maxcy**  
**Assistant Director of Automation**  
**Xpanxion, Kearney, NE**

With over 10 years’ experience in the technology and software industries, Ms. Sandra McNeel-Maxcy has a wide knowledge across many tools and technologies within the software development space. Sandra continues to learn and adapt as new technologies develop. She coordinates fast-paced teams and projects, with an innate ability to be an efficient decision maker and communicator.

**Dr. Mahabir Pun, Founder/Director**  
**Nepal Wireless Networking Project**  
**Kathmandu, Nepal**

Dr. Mahabir Pun is a Social Entrepreneur for community development. After graduating from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 1992, he returned to the village he left 24 years earlier to start Himanchal Higher Secondary School, which he still directs along with the Himanchal Educational Foundation. In 2002, he created the Nepal Wireless Networking Project, a social enterprise providing internet access, electronic commerce, education and telemedicine to remote villages in Nepal. Dr. Pun is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Innovation on Access Provision Award from the Australian Information Society Innovation Fund, the 2012 “Ujjwal Kirtimaya Rashtradeep” Medal from the President of Nepal, and the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, described as the Asian equivalent of a Nobel Peace Prize.

**Mr. Lance Rall**  
**Director of Quality Assurance**  
**Xpanxion, Kearney, NE**

Mr. Lance Rall is an alumnus of the University of Nebraska-Kearney. After receiving his degree in computer information systems, he served as a lead web developer before beginning his career in software quality assurance. Mr. Rall is currently the Director of Quality Assurance at Xpanxion, and with his experience in software development process engineering, he has helped the young company develop a mature business structure through comprehensive processes.
Dr. Joseph Siegle, Senior Research Scholar  
Africa Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University  
Center for International and Security Studies, University of Maryland  
College Park, MD

Dr. Joseph Siegle is the Director of Research at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University and Senior Research Scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland (CISSM). Drawing on field experience from over 20 countries, Dr. Siegle has written widely on the political economy of democratic transitions, stabilizing fragile states, and the critical role of information in strengthening institutions of accountability. He has advised a variety of international organizations, where his work has helped advance the concept of democratic accountability. He is co-author of *The Democracy Advantage: How Democracies Promote Prosperity and Peace* (Routledge, revised edition 2010).

Mr. Travys Woodside, International Project Manager  
Chief Agri/Industrial Division, Kearney, NE

Mr. Travys Woodside graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 2006 with a degree in Industrial Distribution. He then began his career with the Chief Agri/Industrial Division in Kearney, working with Domestic Inside Sales and as the Manufacturing Expediter. In his current role as International Project Manager, Travys assists customers in designing and quoting grain storage and handling facilities including production site storage, coop facilities, and port facilities. He also assists with training global dealers on product offerings and quoting tools. His territories include Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine), Turkey, Yemen, and South Africa, and he also does some work with the sales staff at the Chief UK location.

Diplomats:

Mr. James Chisenga, Counselor – Economic  
Embassy of the Republic of Zambia, Washington, DC

Mr. James Chisenga has been Counselor – Economic, for the Embassy of the Republic of Zambia since March of 2012. Prior to joining the Embassy, he held administrative positions with the University of Zambia, Lusaka for 15 years, including time in Central Administration, with responsibilities including admission and examination of duties, and Assistant Registrar for the University. Additionally, Mr. Chisenga has worked with local and international organizations in Zambia, researching to find solutions to social problems that affect Zambians, such as poverty, HIV and AIDS and other community development related efforts. He earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Public Administration with Development Studies from the University of Zambia.
Mr. Jonathan Daniel, Vice Consul
Policy and Communications
British Consulate-General, Chicago, IL

Mr. Jonathan Daniel serves as Vice Consul for Policy and Communications at the British Consulate-General in Chicago, where he manages the United Kingdom's political relationships, public diplomacy initiatives, media relations, and digital communications in a region of 13 Midwestern states. He launched the Consulate's first social media channels in 2009, supported the Prime Minister’s delegation to the Chicago NATO Summit in 2012, and delivered the British Government's first 'Pop-Up Consulate' in March 2013. Before joining the Consulate in 2008, Jonathan worked as a paralegal, photojournalist and reporter. He graduated from Wheaton College with a BA in political science and communication in 2007.

Mr. Parvathaneni Harish, Consul General
Consulate General of India, Houston, TX

Mr. Parvathaneni Harish assumed charge as the Consul General of India in Houston in 2012. He has served in Indian Missions in Cairo and Riyadh and headed the Post as Indian Representative to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza City. Additionally, he worked in the East Asia and External Publicity Divisions in the Ministry of External Affairs. For five years, he was the Joint Secretary and Officer on Special Duty to the Honorable Vice President of India and Chairman of the Council of States of the Indian Parliament, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari. He earned a Mechanical Engineering degree from Osmania University in Hyderabad, India.

Mr. Leo Herrera-Lim, Consul General
Consul General of the Philippines, Chicago, IL

Mr. Leo Herrera-Lim is the Consul General for the Philippines in Chicago. A career diplomat, his prior postings have included Philippine Embassies in Washington, D.C. and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In the Philippines, he served in the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Senate, and the Regional Trial Courts. He has extensive experience working with foreign governments, international organizations, and financial institutions. He was intricately involved in the crafting and formulation of Government policies and positions on bilateral, multilateral, and special issues. He studied economics and law at the University of the Philippines.

Ms. Maya Karmely, Consul for Public Affairs
Consulate General of Israel, Chicago, IL

Ms. Maya Karmely was appointed Consul for Public Affairs at the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest in 2010. In 2012, for one year, she assumed additional responsibilities as Acting Deputy Consul General/Deputy Head of Mission. In addition to collaboration with elected officials, community leaders, organizations, and institutions, she is responsible for public diplomacy, including cultural and academic affairs and digital media. Ms. Karmely works to promote US-Israel relations and to expand Israel's outreach through intellectual exchange and cultural dialogue. Ms. Karmely received her Masters degree (cum laude) in cell research and immunology from Tel Aviv University and has had her work published in multiple international journals.
Mr. Jorge Ernesto Espejel Montes, Consul
Consulate of Mexico, Omaha, NE

Mr. Jorge Ernesto Espejel Montes holds a degree in International Affairs from the Universidad Nacional Autonoma De Mexico. He has been part of the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs since 1982. Until his appointment as Consul of Mexico in Eagle Pass, Texas, he served several roles: Department Head of the Legal and Interagency Coordination of the General Office of Protection and Consular Affairs, Sub-Director of Nationalization and Naturalization of the General Office of Legal Affairs, OIC of the Protection Area in the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles, and Deputy Consul in the Mexican Consulate of McAllen, Texas. He has been the Consul of Mexico in Omaha for six years.

Ms. Silvia Ontaneda, J.D., Consul General
Consulate General of Ecuador, Minneapolis, MN

Ms. Silvia Ontaneda is an International Law Attorney with 20 years of experience in foreign policy related to the rights of immigrant children and women, including intellectual property rights pertaining to ancestral knowledge and the impact on immigration. She founded the International Latina Women Association, Minnesota Chapter and works with Mujeres Siglo XXI, a nonprofit organization that promotes political and academic leadership among Latina women. Ms. Ontaneda has been honored by the Minnesota Women’s Press as the Change Maker of the Year and has been named Woman of the Year by the En Familia television program.

Mr. Mario Soos, Deputy Consul General
German Consulate General, Chicago, IL

Mr. Mario Ingo Soos is the Deputy Consul General of Germany in Chicago. Before coming to Chicago he served as Deputy Chief of Mission of the German Embassy in Slovenia. Prior to Slovenia he served as head of the climate and energy team at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. Other assignments include tours as head of unit for regional cooperation in Southeast Europe at the Foreign Office in Berlin, Deputy Chief of Mission at the German Embassy in Cyprus, and postings at the German Embassies in Colombia and Croatia. Mr. Soos is a career diplomat, having served the German Foreign Office since 1989.

Mr. Simeon Stoilov, Consul General
Consulate General of the Republic of Bulgaria, Chicago, IL

Mr. Simeon Stoilov, an International Economic Relations graduate with more than 14 years of international business management experience, was appointed Consul General of the Republic of Bulgaria in Chicago in 2011. Immediately before that assignment, he was the Marketing Director of Eurohold Bulgaria AD, a Bulgarian Investment Company that operates in 6 countries, focused on the Automotive Industry, Insurance, Leasing and Financial Services. During this same time, Mr. Stoilov also served as General Manager of Ita Leasing EOOD, Milano Motors EOED, a Member of the Board of Directors of Bulgaria Holding EAD and Auto Italia EAD, all subsidiaries of Eurohold Bulgaria AD.
Mr. Ricardo Valencia  
Expert in Strategic Communications  
Embassy of El Salvador, Washington, DC

Mr. Ricardo Valencia is Head of Communications, Press and Public Relations at the Embassy of El Salvador. Since his arrival in 2012, the Embassy has transformed its public diplomacy approach to one that is modern, global, and flexible. He is responsible for designing and implementing multi-level strategies focused on the Salvadoran diaspora, Latin and American media, and additional stakeholders. He advises the President and top administrators on issues including strategic communications, US-Salvadoran relations, security, and immigration. Valencia previously worked as an investigative and political reporter and has been the central contact for CNN, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, El Nuevo Herald, Al Jazeera and The Miami Herald. Valencia can be found tweeting at @ricardovalp.