

## Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellows 2000 Winter Biographical Sketches



**Achal Bhatt** (Winter 2000, DEPS/SSB) received a Ph.D. in microbiology and molecular genetics at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School. She was selected as a Presidential Management Intern and has been working at the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Her thesis works involved using a genetic approach to identify novel drug targets within the bacterium that causes Tuberculosis. Achal obtained her BS in Biotechnology from Cook College at Rutgers University. Currently, she works part-time as a Health Communications Specialist at the CDC and promotes Childhood Vaccinations through the development of national partnerships. (Updated 9/2010)

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2000 Winter Biographical Sketches

Erika



**Engelhaupt** (Winter 2000, NAS/OPUS) is a science writer and editor at *National Geographic*. She completed master's degrees in ecology and evolutionary biology, specializing in biogeochemistry, at Tulane University and in environmental studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, with an emphasis on science journalism. Since then, she has written and produced stories for newspapers, magazines and radio including *The*

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*Philadelphia Inquirer*, National Public Radio, and *Environmental Science & Technology* and *Science News* magazine.  
(Updated 2/2016)



**Carlos Gonzalez** (Winter 2000, PGA/COSEPUP) is the Senior Manager for Global Regulatory Affairs at Novus International, Inc., an animal health and nutrition company headquartered in St. Louis, Mo. and operating in more than 90 countries, with total sales over \$1.2 billion annually. In this position, he works with business teams to bring new products to market worldwide and support continued sales of existing ones while also coordinating regulatory compliance and product registration efforts and strategy worldwide for the company. He worked for eight years at the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in a number of roles representing U.S. agricultural and trade interests (such as promoting U.S. agricultural exports, resolving technical barriers to bilateral trade, and monitoring trade partners' domestic agricultural policy), including Senior Agricultural Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Agricultural Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru (with responsibility for Ecuador and Bolivia), and as the Mexico Desk Officer and as a sanitary and phytosanitary trade specialist. Before working at USDA, Carlos was Director of Research and Analysis at DTB Associates, a consulting firm in Washington, D.C. specializing in agricultural policy and international trade. Carlos earned his Ph.D. in food safety and international trade from Yale University where he also received his M.S. in international environmental and pesticides policy. He completed his undergraduate work at Cornell University in natural resources. At Yale, he served as Program Director for International Food Safety Policy at the Yale Environment and Health Initiative (formerly Center for Children's Environmental Health). (Updated 08/2012)



**Carla Hanash** (Winter 2000, IOM/BGH) has a master's degree in public health from The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. She also has her bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in psychology from The George Washington University. In the past, Carla has worked for the National Institutes of Health as a Pre-Intramural Training Award Fellow. This experience has allowed her to publish a paper in the journal *Biological Chemistry* describing the effects of a newly described protein in relation to insulin. After completion of her Mirzayan Fellowship, she wanted to gain further experience in the research realm of public health. Through these experiences, she hoped to acquire a sound understanding of public health issues facing populations today.

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**Jianjun  
Ji** (Winter 2000,

No  
Photo  
Available

DBASSE/CPOP) is an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. He received both his MS and PhD from Mississippi State University, where he majored in sociology with a speciality in demography and family studies. He received his BA in English from Zhengzhou University in China. Janjun has also had training in population studies and demography from respected institutions in Beijing and India. Prior to his current work and

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studies, he was a visiting scholar at Portland State University in Oregon and was an associate professor in the Population Research Center at Zhengzhou University in China. (Updated 09/2001)



**John Kucewicz** (Winter 2000, IOM/NCPB/) is a PhD candidate in biomedical engineering, specializing in clinical, diagnostic ultrasound, at the University of Washington. He has his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M in computer engineering. Previously, John worked as a research engineer at Los Alamos National Laboratory and as a software developer at National Instruments, Inc. in Austin.



**Maarika Liivak** (Winter 2000, PGA/CSTL) is an attorney at Covington & Burling, LLP specializing in corporate and intellectual property licensing transactions for biotechnology and pharmaceutical clients. Maarika is a 2003 graduate of the Yale Law School and earned a master's degree in genetics at Yale as well. Maarika earned her bachelor's degree in molecular biology and biochemistry in 1998 from Rutgers University. Maarika was a Mirzayan Fellow in 2000 for the Science, Technology and Law Program. (Updated 04/2009)



**Christopher Meaney** (Winter 2000, DBASSE/CSMEE) is a PhD candidate in molecular virology and microbiology at the University of Pittsburgh, interested in gene therapy. He graduated from the College of Wooster (Ohio) with a BA in biology. Chris received a MS in genetics from the University of North Carolina, worked as an Instructor for an undergraduate *Drosophila* laboratory at MIT, and then in research labs at Massachusetts General Hospital before moving to Pittsburgh. Chris enjoys hiking and sightseeing.

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**Susan Morrissey** (Winter 2000, DELS/BCST) received an AB in chemistry from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa, and a PhD in chemistry from Texas A&M University, College Station. Sue is an assistant managing editor of the government and policy group for Chemical & Engineering News, a weekly news magazine published by the American Chemical Society (ACS). At C&EN, she writes about science and policy issues that impact the chemical community. (Updated 10/2011)



**Barbara Pastina** (Winter 2000, DELS/NRSB) is a consultant at Saanio & Riekkola Oy in Helsinki, Finland working on the safety case for the geologic disposal of spent nuclear fuel at the Olkiluoto site. Before leaving for Finland, she worked in the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board from May 2000 to February 2006. Prior to joining the National Academies, Barbara was a staff scientist at the Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique in France. As a radiation chemist, she studied the effects of ionizing radiation on water and particularly on radiolysis-related problems in the cooling circuit of nuclear reactors. (Updated 10/2011)



**Brett Piercy** (Winter 2000, PGA/IOAC) is Senior Planning Consultant at EDR Group. Ms. Piercy's work focuses on economic development strategy, job creation potential of major infrastructure projects, socioeconomic impact for EIS filings, and fiscal impact analysis. In the area of fiscal impact, Ms. Piercy has estimated the impacts of residential, retail and mixed use developments as well as airports and military bases. Prior to joining EDR Group, Ms. Piercy worked at Economics Research Associates as an associate, gathering and analyzing data to write economic base analyses, affordable housing studies, fiscal and economic impact studies, and other planning aids for public, private, and non-profit sector clients. She has also held positions as a Mirzayan Fellow at The National Academies and as a community development intern with New Economics for Women in Los Angeles. Ms. Piercy holds a master of science in

urban studies and planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Science, a master of Pacific International Affairs from the University of California, San Diego, and a bachelor's degree in political science from California State University, Fresno. (Updated 8/2010)



**Elena Rodriguez-Vielles** (Winter 2000, DELS/BRWM) has been working on a doctorate in civil engineering at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. She completed her MS in civil and environmental engineering also at the University of Utah, and received her BS in physics from the University of Santiago de Compostela, in Spain. Before her current choice of studies, Elena worked at EnviroEnergetics, located in Salt Lake City, conducting research on anaerobic biogasification of solid wastes. As a Mirzayan Fellow, she worked with the Board on Radioactive Waste Management (now the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board). Elena also has a professional degree in music (piano).

## Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellows 2000 Winter Biographical Sketches



**Julie Schneider** (Winter 2000, STEP & PGA/GUIRR) is Program Director, Office of China Cancer Programs at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) based at the U.S. Embassy, Beijing. In this role, Dr. Schneider is working to expand NCI cancer research partnerships with Chinese institutions and to develop new channels of communication with Chinese scientists. Dr. Schneider joined the NCI in 2002 as an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellow, and led efforts to develop biospecimen best practices to support the development of genomic- and proteomic-based cancer interventions. Before joining the NCI, she worked at Genaissance Pharmaceuticals in New Haven, Conn., a start-up biotechnology company focused on pharmacogenomics. Dr. Schneider obtained her doctoral degree in human population genetics from the University of Oxford and her bachelor's degree in biology from Yale

University. (Updated 8/2010)