



# 'Fostering Peace : Leave No One Behind'



ROTARY PEACE FELLOWS  
MEMBERS OF CLASS XIX & XX  
ANNUAL SEMINAR BOOKLET 2023

# Remarks from the Director

## Professor Roland Bleiker

Director, The University of  
Queensland Rotary Peace Centre



I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which The University of Queensland and the Rotary Peace Centre operate. On behalf of Centre staff and Fellows, I pay my respects to the Traditional Owners' Ancestors and their descendants who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. I recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our Annual Rotary Peace Seminar. I am particularly excited because this is the first time since 2021 that we are able to hold a comprehensive in-person event again, bringing together our Peace Fellows with the local Rotary community and other guests. Given COVID-restrictions we had to celebrate our past Peace Fellows and their work in various alternative ways, from smaller-scale events to online-seminars. Each Class managed to produce a comprehensive booklet. Thanks to my predecessor, A/Prof Morgan Brigg, who did a fantastic job steering us through these difficult COVID years. Thanks as well to our Centre Manager, Diana McCluskey, for her many years of service and for playing a key role in getting this Annual Seminar together. Allow me as well to introduce our new Deputy Director, Dr Sebastian Kaempf, who will assist the Fellows with their academic work and their Applied Field Experience.

The Fellows from Classes 19 and 20 who are here today should be commended for their resilience and commitment. They started their Fellowship in a challenging way because of COVID travel-restrictions. They either enrolled online, or

suspended for a while or started mid-year. Doing so entailed numerous challenges, including having to take online classes in the middle of the night and studying without an environment that offers direct support. But despite these challenges we managed to find a way forward, often based on individually tailored solutions for each Fellow. Fortunately, by July 2022 all Fellows were able to physically join us in Brisbane and we are now working together as a community, creating the kind of learning environment the Fellowship is designed to provide.

During our Annual Seminar this year you will hear about the Applied Field Experience from three Fellows from Class 19 and from six Fellows from Class 20. They have only recently returned from their AFEs, which took them to countries and places as diverse as Fiji, Germany, Nepal, Mongolia, Sydney, Cairns, Amman and New York. I hope that you enjoy hearing about their fascinating experiences and how our Program has helped them make a contribution to advancing peace. Nine Fellows from Class 21, who all arrived recently, in February 2023, will assist their colleagues to make sure the Seminar today goes as smoothly as possible.

Our Program this year has been spearheaded by an Organising Committee comprised of three Peace Fellows: Sarah Wind, Tunde Ogunyale and Nick Milward. A big thanks to them for their amazing work. As you can see, the program features both formal presentations by Peace Fellows as well as plenty of opportunities for more

informal interactions. If you are unable to attend in person, we are streaming the event online so that we can share our message for peace as widely as possible.

The theme of this year's Seminar is Fostering Peace: Leave No One Behind. This is a particularly pertinent theme as both scholars and practitioners are becoming increasingly aware that enduring peace is only possible through a broad-based inclusion of all parties concerned. Efforts at decolonisation are essential here, both in the realm of education as well as in policy approaches to addressing and transforming conflict. The Seminar theme will be addressed in a keynote by our own A/Prof Marianne Hanson, who directed the Rotary Peace Centre for several years. We are grateful to Marianne both her lecture and for years of service. Her big passion and contribution to peace has been through scholarship and engagement with the cause of nuclear disarmament.

Most importantly, I would like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Rotary Foundation and its broader community. There are far too many people to acknowledge in person. But please allow me to flag at least a couple of contributions. Jacqueline Azpeitia, our Program Officer from the Rotary Foundation in Chicago, is with us today and symbolises the amazing support we receive from the Foundation and its staff and generous donors. Leslie Smith, our Host Area Coordinator, is represented today by Michelle Davis. Both symbolise the wonderful support we and our Fellows receive from our local Rotary community.

Finally, we are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Rotary Peace Centre at UQ. I was lucky to have been there from the beginning, serving as its first director together with Marianne. I have since then taught Peace Scholars almost every year. This is why I feel particularly honoured and humbled to serve once more as Director.

Let us now celebrate – and learn from – the amazing experiences of our Fellows and the path towards peace that they are carving out.



## Statement from the Host Area Coordinator

# Leslie Smith

Host Area Coordinator,  
Rotary Peace Fellow Program, The University of  
Queensland



Welcome to the Rotary Peace Fellows' Seminar presented by Class 19 and 20. The Fellows' theme for this year's seminar is "Fostering Peace: Leave No One Behind".

Some of these Peace Fellows commenced their studies during the COVID-19 Pandemic and they have risen above all the challenges that this presented. They have experienced extraordinary times. Nonetheless, they have been able to put into practice some of their course learnings with a variety of unique field experiences and this seminar provides an excellent opportunity for them to share these with others including the many Rotarians and friends of Rotary who have supported them.

We are truly fortunate that they have been able to come to the University of Queensland to experience life as graduate students and enjoy the beauty of Brisbane and Queensland.

The investment in the Peace Fellow programme is both huge and extremely long term. I believe that when we look at what our Peace Fellow Alumni are now doing we can see the wide-ranging benefits and will continue to reap dividends from this program in the years, if not decades, to come. I stand in awe of some of the things currently being achieved by Fellows who have graduated from the University of Queensland.

An important facet of the program is the diversity of the Fellows; both geographical and occupational. Over the years, Peace fellows have demonstrated to us that the way to Peace has many different routes, it comes in different forms and has many different visages. The work of all our Fellows makes it possible for people across all nations to live richer, fuller and more rewarding lives. The diversity of our Fellows is therefore refreshing and exciting. All of them bring an amazing variety of talent and experience to the program which can only enhance the program and

ensure even greater success.

I am constantly in awe of the power of connection. This is what Rotary is all about. We unite in friendship to realise truthful, fair, good-willed and beneficial outcomes in our communities and the world. For Rotary members and Peace Fellows our lives are forever transformed by this powerful network.

On behalf of Rotary and the Fellows I want to express our appreciation for the tremendous support of The University of Queensland Peace Centre staff. This year we welcomed Professor Roland Bleiker as director of the Rotary Peace Centre program since its inception and served as its first director together with Associate Professor Marianne Hanson. He has taught a class in the Master's program every year since then.

I also want to acknowledge the ongoing work and guidance provided by Graduate Centre Manager Diana McCluskey and our Rotary Advisory Board, including District representatives Michelle Davis and David Field and of course our Class representatives Emily Andre, Isadora Darwich and Jazmin Antista. It is an honour to be the Host Area Coordinator for such an amazing program with exceptional Peace Fellows.

# Program

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 10:00am – 10:30 am | Coffee, tea and registration desk open                               |
| 10:30am – 1:00 pm  | Opening remarks – Professor Roland Bleiker                           |
|                    | Welcome to Country – Steve Coghill                                   |
|                    | Welcome from UQ Rotary Peace Centre Director Roland Bleiker          |
|                    | Welcome from Associate Professor Morgan Brigg, Deputy Head of School |
|                    | Rotary Advisory Board welcome Ms Mish Davis                          |
|                    | Rotary Peace Fellow welcome  |
|                    | Rotary Peace Fellow Class20 Applied Field Experience Presentations   |
|                    | Break  |
|                    | Introduction to Key Note Speaker by Professor Roland Bleiker         |
|                    | Key Note Speaker Associate Professor Marianne Hanson                 |
|                    | Q & A  |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 1:00pm – 1:50 pm | Lunch   |
| 2:00pm – 4:00 pm | Breakout room (first round)   |
|                  | Break   |
|                  | Breakout room (second round)  |
|                  | Coffee, tea break   |
| 4:00pm – 4:45pm  | Rotary Peace Fellow Class 19 Applied Fieldwork Experience and Darwin trip presentations               |
| 4:45pm – 5:00pm  | Thank you remarks from UQ Rotary Peace Centre Director Roland Bleiker                                 |
|                  | Rotary Advisory Board thank you remarks and presentation of alumni certificates and pins for Class 19 |
|                  | Presentation of Janet Lawrence recognition 2023   |
|                  | Close   |
| 5:00pm – 6:00pm  | Cocktail hour   |

We would like to recognize the following Rotary Foundation endowed funds and the donors that established them for their support of this Annual Seminar event:

Shuhei Hotta Rotary Peace Centers Endowed Fund

Jennifer Jones and Nicholas Krayacich Endowed Annual Seminar

Karen Wentz and Ron Appuhn Rotary Centers Endowment

Sapporo East RC Ryuzo Kometani Peace Fund

Darryl Iseppi Endowed Fund

Dr. Robert and Ann Scott Endowed Rotary Peace Centers Annual Seminar

Frank and Shirley Ford Rotary Peace Centers Annual Seminar Endowed Fund

Tadashi and Keiko Nobuhara Endowed Fund for the Rotary Peace Centers



## Janet Lawrence Peace Fellow Recognition



This seminar is dedicated to the memory of Janet Lawrence, an indomitable volunteer and advocate for the Rotary Peace Fellowship program and The University of Queensland Rotary Peace Centre.

Janet suddenly left us on Christmas Eve morning in 2019, and the world lost a champion for peace. Janet had supported the Rotary Peace Fellowship program since 1999 when expressions of interest for Rotary Peace Centres were first sought. She undertook this advocacy alongside and through her roles as Club President (twice - Woden and Paddington) and as Assistant Governor for D9710. Janet saw a future world where peace was indeed possible, with Peace Fellows contributing to peace as representatives for two million Rotarians around the world.

Fast forward to 2004 and Janet, now a resident of Brisbane, became a strong supporter of the Rotary Peace Fellows studying at The University of Queensland. Her affinity with these wonderful and courageous trailblazers grew. She was counsellor for four Peace Fellows as well as numerous 'lost' Fellows, a host 'welcomer', and a 'landlady' to numerous Fellows over the years. These experiences led her to a three-year role as Host Area Coordinator for the UQ Rotary Peace Centre. She had responsibility for Rotarian counsellor selection and training as well ensuring satisfactory connections between Rotarians and Peace Fellows.

Janet's commitment and significant contribution to the program led to her being asked to serve on the Peace Centres Committee in 2017. Her 3-year term would have concluded in mid-2020. This role involves helping to guide the principles and policies

of the Rotary Peace Fellowship program and the appraisal of Peace Fellow candidates for the various centres around the world.

It was Janet's dream to use her gifts to assist with the selection and field deployment of Peace Fellows to help create peace in conflict situations beyond her immediate reach. She saw each Peace Fellow as an extension of herself – each Fellow serving to create a more loving and embracing world. In consultation with the UQ Rotary Peace Centre Advisory Board, it was agreed to honour Janet's legacy through the 'Janet Lawrence Peace Fellow Recognition'. The recognition reflects and celebrates Janet's values and spirit - Service above Self, Volunteering and Proactive Leadership – among the outgoing cohort of UQ Peace Fellows.

Since Janet was a strong fiscal supporter of the Rotary Foundation, we (her family of John Lawrence and our four sons) believe that it would be her wish to utilise her Rotary Foundation credits to complement the Peace Fellow Recognition with a Paul Harris Fellow.

As we recognise a Peace Fellow, Janet would be quick to point out that all Peace Fellows are already Peace Champions. She would call us to celebrate all Peace Fellows and peace advocates around the globe.

Guest  
Speaker

Associate Professor  
Marianne Hanson



## Associate Professor Marianne Hanson



Associate Professor Hanson was a Stipendiary Lecturer in Politics at Magdalen College, Oxford University before she joined the University of Queensland in 1995. She has been a Visiting Scholar at the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues, Department of International Relations at the University of British Columbia, a Visiting Fellow at the Department of International Politics, University of Wales, Aberystwyth and a Visiting Scholar at Sciences Po in Paris.

### Research Interests:

International security - especially from a critical security studies perspective, and focussing on the role of law, institutions and norms in shaping security policies; European security - the role of institutions such as NATO and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); Arms control and disarmament - particularly the debate on the elimination of nuclear weapons and the efforts to delegitimise the use or possession of weapons of mass destruction; human rights - both within Australia and at the global level, and with a strong focus on the creation of legal institutions (such as the International Criminal Court) designed to uphold human rights; humanitarian intervention - the theory and practice of humanitarian interventions and the implications of these for issues such as state sovereignty, human rights and global justice; normative International Relations theory and the role of ethics in world politics - the evolution of a series of norms and other constraints affecting world politics, and which includes an emphasis on concepts such as good international citizenship and human security. The 'English School' of thought in International Relations theory - the theoretical framework most closely associated with Hedley Bull, John Vincent and others focussing on the construction and operation of an 'international

society'. Associate Professor Hanson is currently working on a book titled 'Humanitarianism and nuclear weapons: building a global prohibition regime without the great powers' which examines the growth of norms and legal constraints on the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

Pictured with Associate Professor Hanson is Rotary Peace Centre alumni Ramanathan Thurairajoo with a Nobel Peace Medal and Rotary Peace Pole.



# Class XIX Peace Fellows 2021 - 2023



## Emily Andre

USA



Emily Andre acknowledges the traditional custodians and ancestors of all sea, country, and land of Meeanjin (Brisbane). She pays her respects to elders past, present, and emerging and acknowledges their lore and creation spirits. Indigenous communities globally hold an incredible amount of knowledge in conflict resolution, mediation, and creating societies that work for all members. Emily hopes their wisdom guides the discussions in the 2023 Annual Seminar.

Emily grew up in Antioch, Illinois, USA before completing her bachelor's degree in International Studies at American University in Washington, DC as a 3-Year Global Scholar. She then served as a United States Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal where she worked with counterparts on designing and developing projects focused on the nexus of food security and gender equity. As an international development professional with roughly eight years of experience, Emily has managed and participated in several different USAID projects centred around leadership development and making government more inclusive. Her professional experience has encompassed community development, knowledge management, organizational development, and facilitation.

During her time as a Rotary Peace Fellow, Emily completed her AFE with the Peace and Conflict Studies Institute of Australia (PaCSIA) where she worked on climate-change related dialogue processes in the Fiji Islands. This experience allowed Emily to co-author a UNDP-funded Facilitator's Guide to Integrated Mediation Dialogue and Multi-Party Process for Climate

Change Impacted Communities. Emily's professional interests are in mediation and facilitation, and she hopes to become accredited and certified as a Mediator and Facilitator of participatory processes, community development initiatives, and interpersonal and organizational conflicts. Emily's research interests are in combatting political polarization/extremism and exploring the role that misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories play in creating conflict. Upon graduation, Emily is ideally looking to combine her professional and research interests in some way, shape, or form. She is very grateful for the opportunity to have studied as a Rotary Peace Fellow.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Rotary Club of Antioch Illinois, USA  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Taylor Bridge Brisbane  
District: 6440  
AFE Country: Fiji Islands & Australia



# Krissta Kirschenheiter

USA



Krissta Kirschenheiter feels most at home on islands. Her childhood was spent growing up on the islands of Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and on Saipan, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). She then earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Hawaii on Oahu and although she attended law school in Las Vegas, she spent a summer during this time to return to Micronesia as a legal intern on the island of Palau. Once she became an attorney, Krissta devoted her career to poverty law, practicing in a variety of civil legal matters, including immigration, family law, housing, employment, and disaster relief and recovery. Additionally, she has directed national and international pro bono legal assistance projects throughout the State of Nevada, the CNMI, the FSM and most recently in the Caribbean on the U.S. Virgin Islands. Living and working on small islands has enhanced Krissta's understanding of the everyday impact climate change is urgently having on island communities. It is for this reason she sought to return to school and earn a master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies as a Rotary Peace Fellow at the University of Queensland.

Krissta intends to explore global solutions to better address climate change, especially in regard to its implications on the people of small islands states and territories. Specifically, Krissta's areas of interest include environmental justice, rule of law, human rights, ecofeminism, conflict management and environmental peacebuilding. For her Rotary Applied Field Experience, Krissta spent two months living on Rabi Island in Fiji, working with the Banaban Community on pressing legal and governance concerns, as well as environmental, gender and climate change issues. On Rabi, Krissta provided an in-depth review of the Banaban Lands Act of 1965 and Banaban Settlement Act of 1970 to address needed revisions to the law

and drafted a proposal to bring back the election of the governing council. She also reviewed the Kiribati Constitution Chapters 3 and 9 to address urgent action for the nomination of the Banaban House of Assembly member, trained local police to improve law enforcement, and worked closely with Rabi Island Court and Land Court Judges on customary law legal cases and other matters of concern. Krissta is extremely grateful for the many actors that make up Rotary and the University of Queensland, each of whom have all played a critical role in affording her these life-changing opportunities to better her career devoted to serving others.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Rotary International District 2750 of Japan's Pacific Basin Group  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary District 9620, Paddington Club, Brisbane  
District: 9360  
AFE Country: Fiji Islands



# Ana Prada

Colombia



Ana Prada- Socio-ecological conflict transformation for peacebuilding. (Cooktown – Sydney, Australia)

What is the relationship between peace studies, positive peace and ecosystem conservation? This question motivated me to travel around Australia doing my internship as a Rotary Peace Fellow and student of the master's degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Analysis in two completely different organizations: Learning from Nature and the Institute for Economics and Peace.

## Learning from Nature

Learning from Nature is an innovative and disruptive sustainable farming research centre created to solve environmental problems associated with climate change. The research centre is located in Cooktown, Queensland. My principal outcomes from this applied field experience, on balance, were one article published on the 3Colibris website and the videos produced and uploaded on the Learning from Nature YouTube channel. My main take-away from my research stay at Learning from Nature was that ecologic agriculture offers valuable inputs for climate change mitigation; however, in socio-ecological conflict contexts, it is necessary to study social systems and ecosystems to understand the nature of conflicts and the forms of direct violence, cultural and structural. In this sense, peace studies must open up to analyze socio-ecological conflicts instead of focusing solely on social conflicts, as the classical peace studies theory has done.

## Institute for Economics and Peace

The Institute for Economics and Peace is a research center created to transform how the world understands peace by promoting positive peace as a framework to build sustainable peace in the world. The Institute for Economics and Peace is headquartered in Sydney, with regional offices in Latin America, North America, Eurasia and Africa. One of my main tasks during my internship at the Institute for Economics and Peace consisted of supporting the operation of the IEP Ambassadors program, a program offered to peace practitioners from around the world to certify themselves in the development of social projects in positive peace, under the scheme of systems thinking developed by the Institute. This AFE experience motivated me to strengthen the actions of my organization 3Colibris and to continue researching how sustainable agriculture can contribute to the transformation of socio-ecological conflicts in the world.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Bogota Centro  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Bribie Island  
District: 8241.  
AFE Country: Australia.





# Class XX Peace Fellows 2022 - 2023



## Isadora Brasileiro Darwich



Brazil/Italy

Isadora acknowledges the Turrbal people as the Traditional Custodians of the Meeanjin lands. She recognizes their unity with the earth, the waters, and the community. She pays her respects to Elders and Ancestors, their wisdom, and their traditional knowledge. She hopes that culturally safe practices can become the standard of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, for all other First Nations that also suffer the devastating and ongoing effects of colonization, and for the populations that peacebuilders aim to assist – on the principle of doing no harm and humbly approaching those peoples that may have much more to teach us, than us them.

Isadora Darwich is an intercultural mediator from Brazil who works with refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced people. Having a multidisciplinary background and a lifetime commitment to global peace she graduated as valedictorian with a BA in International Relations (2015), while interning at the Consulate of India, and co-authoring an article with the Head of the IR Department of Ibmecc College. Afterward, Isadora gained valuable research experience in public policy in the non-profit sector in Washington D.C. Coming back to Brazil she specialized in conflict resolution, joined Mediators Beyond Borders International, and co-founded her own kombucha company. Later, she worked full-time as a mediator and coordinator of Satisfactio Chamber of Conciliation and Mediation, and concluded a two-year systemic psychotherapy training, further qualifying to resolve international conflicts and empower others using non-violent communication.

Before coming to Brisbane as a Rotary Peace Fellow Isadora was a Refugee Assistant, helping in the adaptation and settlement of Venezuelan refugees arriving on the Amazon border of Brazil. She ran a women's empowerment program called Força Mulheres, identifying the need of having

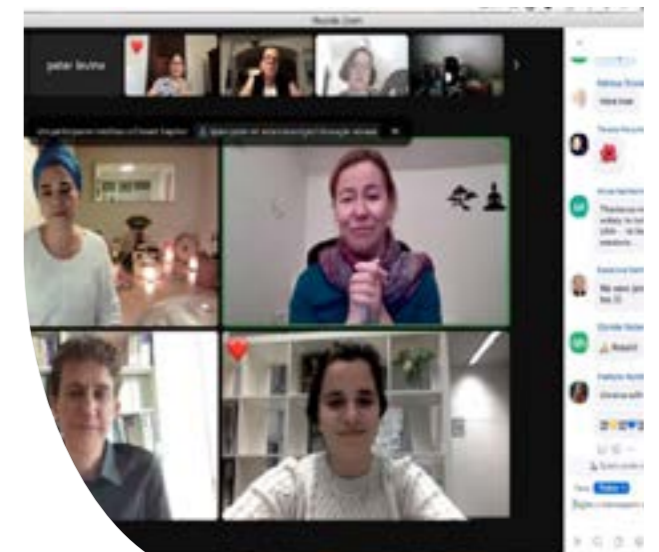
a strong support network for refugees after they have left the shelter. More than teaching concepts such as purpose, self-care, identity, and entrepreneurship, she understood that they needed a safe space to share stories and traumas, to heal, and rebuild a new community in the São Vicente II shelter.

During her AFE and placement in Germany, she had the opportunity to connect her experiences as a mediator and systemic therapist with trauma-based interventions for conflict prevention and resolution. Working closely with the Crisis Response Coordinator and co-chairs of the Somatic Experiencing Ukraine Task Force (SEUTF), she supported communication, coordination, and development of activities for SEUTF remotely, and on-site. Her goal is to apply those trauma tools to improve the well-being of forcibly displaced populations, and other vulnerable communities to foster bottom-up peacebuilding.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Rotary Club BH Oeste Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Pine Rivers District: 9620

AFE Country: Germany (and remotely US)



# Jennifer Eck

USA



Jenny Eck is from Helena, MT (a small town nestled in the Rocky Mountains of the western US). Prior to commencing her studies at the University of Queensland, Jenny co-facilitated trainings across Montana for organizations looking to address secondary trauma in the work place. From 2018-2021, she was the Executive Director of the Friendship Center, a nonprofit organization providing shelter and crisis services to those impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in central Montana. From 2013-2018, Jenny served three terms as an elected legislator in the Montana House of Representatives, including a two-year term as House Minority Leader. During her tenure, she passed eleven bills into law and also chaired the subcommittee which overhauled the Legislature's anti-harassment policies and procedures.

Jenny has a strong background in political organizing and has served on numerous local, state, and national boards. She got her start in politics working on Barack Obama's presidential campaign in 2008 and went on to run Hillary Clinton's Montana campaign in 2016. Jenny is the proud mother to two children, Sage (age 20) and Owen (age 17).



As a Rotary Peace Fellow, Jenny is particularly interested in exploring peace and conflict through the lens of gender-based violence and women's empowerment. Jenny spent her AFE in Nepal where she interned for an International NGO called Mission East. During her internship, Jenny split her time between the country headquarters in Kathmandu and their service area in Karnali Province. As part of her AFE, Jenny had the opportunity to travel to one of the most remote regions of Nepal: the Humla District. It took nearly 48 hours of travel via domestic flight, prop plane, Jeep, and trekking to get there. Getting to talk with the women of Humla about their lives, hopes, and personal challenges was the highlight of Jenny's experience. She became particularly interested in understanding the practice of "chhaupadi" (menstrual taboo), which is still practiced in Nepal. However, overall, Jenny's internship focused on project evaluation, grant writing, project proposal recommendations, and in-depth field interviews with project beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, and field staff. In the future, Jenny plans to focus her career in the INGO sector working with projects engaged on the community level to address women's empowerment and barriers to gender equity (including climate change and gender-based violence). She also wishes to continue to learn and teach somatic experiencing skills to help humanitarian aid workers impacted by secondary trauma.

Jenny is grateful to Rotary International and Rotary local clubs for the opportunity to join incredible Rotary Peace Fellows from around the world in studying at the University of Queensland.

Rotary Sponsor Club: the Missoula Rotary Club  
Rotary Host Club: The E Club of Australia Nomads  
District: 5390  
AFE Country: Nepal

# Nicholas Millward

USA



Nick Millward grew up in rural Pennsylvania, but has had the opportunity to live in Japan, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolia for the last 5 years. After graduating and commissioning from the Virginia Military Institute in 2014, Nick served as the Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team Company Pacific Executive Officer in Yokosuka, Japan, and a Light Armored Reconnaissance Company Commander in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He left the Marine Corps in July 2021 and moved to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to begin a Masters in Central Asian Studies at the American University of Central Asia. His research interests include identifying opportunities for integration and collaboration between the Central Asian, Northeast Asian, and Indo-Pacific regions. He focuses primarily on Mongolia's role for stability and security within these three regions. While pursuing his academic goals, he continues to be a dedicated volunteer promoting international community building efforts as a leader in Yokosuka Council in Asia-Pacific Studies, Friends of Mongolia, and Lantuun Dohio.

As a Rotary Peace Fellow, Nick's academic interest has centered around Mongolia's position in Northeast Asia and how it responds to internal and external stressors. Mongolia represents a beacon of democracy, bordered by Russia and

China, which makes its engagement with ethnic minorities an interesting space for observation. His Applied Field Experience (AFE) took place in Mongolia and examined the precarious positioning of nomadic pastoralists in the nation-state. Nick served as a Research Assistant at the International Institute for the Study of Nomadic Civilization (IISNC) for the duration of his AFE. Headquartered in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Nick had the opportunity to learn under incredible researchers and anthropologists who advocated for the preservation and protection of nomadic culture or Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). The IISNC held their 5th Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly in November, where representatives from Kazakhstan, Turkiye, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolia met to collaborate and reinvigorate the role of IISNC now that COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

Nick is grateful to Rotary International, the Peace Center at UQ, and Rotarians world-wide for supporting such a unique and incredible opportunity to learn.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Allentown West Rotary Club  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Sumner Park  
District: 7430  
AFE Country: Mongolia



# Rebwar Mohamed

Iraq



Rebwar Mohamed- I was born and raised in the Kurdistan region of Iraq where I graduated as a primary school teacher but never had a chance to serve in the education sector it was my passion because of the political turmoil, instability and the conflict that the country has always been going through.

I left my country in my mid-twenties and resettled in the United Kingdom for 13 years and this has given me a great opportunity to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds. There, I earned my bachelor's degree in International Relations and English language in the school of Humanities and Social Science in the University of Westminster / London. Then, I returned to Kurdistan in 2013 and found my career in the humanitarian sector, started working for international NGOs in 2013, then the UN refugee agency since 2016. In this profession, I first engaged with Syrian refugees following the onset of the Syrian crisis and the arrival of 250,000 refugees, and later with internally displaced people (IDP) fleeing the central and northern governorates that came under the influence of ISIS from June 2014. Since 2013, I am proud to have served refugees and IDPs especially women and children covering a wide range of activities such as in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), livelihood, protection, education, cash based

intervention and activities and advocacy to promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and IDPs on one hand and the host community on the other.

Following my application for the fellowship, I was thrilled to learn that I was selected to be a peace fellow as I am the first one from Iraq to be fortunate enough to take part in this journey with my other peace fellows.

For my internship, I joined Terre Des Hommes/Italy (TDHIt), the Italian organization which provides humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees in Jordan and the most vulnerable Jordanian persons with specific needs (PWSN). The internship was a great opportunity to meet a diverse group of people from Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Italy. In addition, it provided me an insight into how different the humanitarian action is from one contest to another as I witnessed a huge difference between the Iraq context compared to the Jordan context.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Rotary Club of Amman Citadel  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Loganholme District: 2452  
AFE Country: Jordan.



# Abdulrasaq Ogunyale

Nigeria



Nico Tunde Ogunyale is a lawyer, mediator, founder and Executive Director of the Peacepace Initiative, a youth-led nongovernmental organization that is focused on peacebuilding, good governance, and human rights advocacy in Nigeria.

He had his Applied Field Experience (AFE) with the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) at their global head office in Sydney between November 30, 2022 – February 17, 2023. IEP is an independent research-based think tank that aims to create a paradigm shift in how the world thinks about peace, and it champions the Positive Peace campaign as a form of peace education. Here are the highlights of some of his accomplishments working with the IEP for 12 weeks with dates:

1. Reviewed 60 Rotary -IEP West and Central Africa Rotary Positive Peace Activators Applications - December 1 -6, 2022.
2. Supported the IEP partnerships team to deliver the Savannah Pride Positive Peace Workshop for 30 South Sudanese youths and parents on December 2- 3, 2022, at Blacktown, Western Sydney, NSW. The workshop strengthened the participants' community resilience and social cohesion and

enhanced their sector capability.

3. Authored a report on the IEP's Philippines Positive Peace Workshops on December 12-13, 2022.
  4. Assisted the team with preparing the IEP micro-credentials material catalogue - January 10, 2023.
  5. Facilitated a 2-day Positive Peace Workshop to 31 young leaders across Nigeria over Zoom. January 26 - 27, 2023.
  6. Co-authored the IEP Stronger Together Project Report submitted to the funder, NSW Government. January 31, 2023.
  7. Assisted the Partnership team in compiling the details of 204 Rotary Peace Clubs. February 15, 2023.
  8. Assessed 64 IEP Ambassadors' Projects. February 13-16, 2023.
  9. Advised IEP's Executive Chairman and founder, Steve Killelea, and the IEP Directorate on some relevant political issues in Nigeria towards effective decision-making about the IEP work in the region. January 2023.
- Besides his engagements at the IEP, he also attended some meetings of the Rotary clubs of Lane Cove and Sydney. Additionally, he was a guest speaker at RYLA, organized by District 9685, Sydney. He has a long-term ambition to continue to inspire hope and engage in peacebuilding activities, particularly peace education and security, dialogue, and mediation. He is grateful for his Rotary Peace Fellowship experience.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Rotary Club of Yola, Nigeria,  
Rotary Host Club: Rotary Club of Calbooture District: 9110  
AFE Country: Australia



# Sarah Wind

USA



Sarah Wind is from the United States and completed her bachelor's degree in Business Management from the University of Alabama before moving to South Korea to teach English. After five years abroad, she returned home to the United States and completed her master's degree in International Relations with a focus on diplomacy from Northeastern University. Since then, Sarah interned with the United States Embassy in Switzerland, worked on a project at the Center for Victims of Torture that provided training and support to human rights defenders exiled from their home country, and managed USAID projects in the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan focused on participatory governance, women's representation in government, and youth participation in politics.

As a Rotary Peace Fellow, Sarah has focused on narrowing her field of interest and expertise to international security issues such as terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, and armed conflict, and how each of those issues are addressed under international laws. For the Applied Field Experience, Sarah interned with the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism in New York. She worked with UN Member States, civil society, and regional organizations to support the

development of the new Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (which the General Assembly will review, debate, and adopt the final document in June 2023) and the Secretary General's New Agenda for Peace (which will be released in 2023). Sarah also helped manage a high-level event on the newly defined form of terrorist attacks based on XRIRB (xenophobia, racism, or other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief), and had the opportunity to join and report on Security Council meetings.

Sarah's studies and AFE experience have provided her with the invaluable knowledge, tools, and networks needed to excel in her career at the end of the Rotary Peace Fellowship program. In the future, Sarah hopes to work with the United Nations to counter international security threats such as terrorism and violent extremism, with a secondary focus on international law and regulations in that field.

Rotary Sponsor Club: Minnesota Veteran's Club  
Rotary Host Club: Australia Nomads  
District: 9360  
AFE Country: United States



# Class XXI Peace Fellows 2023 – 2024



## Yessica Aguila Rodriguez



Mexico

Impacting social and economic development worldwide has long been my most important professional goal. Not only have I committed my time and energy to development and peace studies in my native Mexico, but I have personally experienced the upward mobility that both offer. I have a strong interest in navigating multicultural settings. I have been part of international projects during my collaboration with the United Nations (UNODC - Mexico and UNDP - Kazakhstan) and I also organized human rights workshops for indigenous children in

my home state for the NGOs sector, among several other social projects.

Social and economic development have been my path from scarcity to opportunity and I would cherish the chance to help others do the same. Now I have the opportunity to contribute to the vital mission that Rotary International is doing in this world through the Rotary Peace Fellowship at the University of Queensland. It's an honour.

## Gololcha Baru



Canada

Gololcha Baru came to Canada as a son of a political refugee from Ethiopia. Settling in the Central Park neighbourhood of Winnipeg, Manitoba he grew up to the harsh realities of poverty, gangs, and racism. It was this upbringing that shaped his views and motivated him to change the narrative of individuals from marginalized communities. Upon graduation from the University of Winnipeg he began working at the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc. (IRCOM Inc.) in the same neighbourhood where he arrived as a refugee 20 years earlier. During his time at IRCOM he disrupted for the better many sectors such as education, justice, sport, and health for newcomer youth. In 2020, he was chosen as a United Nations People of African Descent Fellow with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human

Rights. After participating in the fellowship, he was a part of a group of global civil society actors and institutions that successfully lobbied for the operationalization of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent that held its first session on December 5, 2022 in Geneva. Prior to beginning his Rotary Peace Fellowship he worked at the municipal government of Winnipeg in the recently formed Community Development Division developing and implementing the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy that aims at making Winnipeg more welcoming to newcomers by better meeting their distinct needs, improving newcomer access to City services, and increasing public awareness and education on human rights, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

# Isabella Cordua

Italy



Isabella Cordua is a researcher with significant experience leading research and evidence-based advocacy projects. She is currently the Research Coordinator at the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR), where she oversees investigations on the localization of humanitarian aid.

Before joining NEAR, Isabella co-led a study on child trafficking in India and Nepal for Global Insight. She was the lead researcher of the first comprehensive study of women's incarceration in Sierra Leone with the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice

and AdvocAid. As part of her work for Defence for Children International Sierra Leone, she led the evaluation of a project aimed at preventing child trafficking in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. Isabella holds degrees in journalism and law from City University of London and an MSc in Law and Society from Leiden University.

# Paru Ikupu

Papua New Guinea



It is time to step out of my comfort zone and serve humanity in the world stage. This notion has been disconcerting me since I obtained my MA in International Development at Flinders University, South Australia in 2014. I've worked with CARE International -a reputable international humanitarian organisation, and government departments in my home country, where I've build up specific experience in humanitarian aid, governance and service delivery, and education. I am optimistic that my dream of assisting in international disaster management, and deployment in conflict zones as a peacekeeper will be realised soon. After completing my fellowship, I am keen to work with UN and Rotary International peace keeping or any global

disaster management spaces where I can contribute significantly. In the local front, I hope to assist marginalised youths to take a positive perspective at life and also to engage in leadership building with local primary schools.

# Nancy Nguyen

USA



A child to working-class Vietnamese refugees and granddaughter to a prisoner of war, Nancy Nguyen understands the multigenerational impact of war and violence and the strength of institutional change. Nancy has experience working both with impacted communities and key stakeholders in advancing the needs of immigrants and refugees. She previously conducted emergency aid for Congolese refugees in a Ugandan refugee settlement, administered immigration casework with the International Rescue Committee, investigated refugee resettlement legislation with the United Nations Association, and developed policy proposals to U.S. diplomats.

Nancy also has experience mentoring and advancing the policy priorities of migrant youth. As a Princeton in Asia Fellow at a private university in Thailand, she lectured and facilitated intercultural exchange between ethnically Thai, Chinese, Burmese, Karen, Shan, African, European, and U.S. American students with wide ranging socio-economic backgrounds and learning abilities. Most recently, she served as the Civic Engagement Organizer for a grassroots non-profit advocacy organization, the Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans. In that role, she led state-wide and local policy campaigns related to voting, elections, and language access and relaunched a Youth Congress for refugee youth to build political power.

# Emilia Portis

Argentina



Emilia Portis is an Argentinian activist focused on the fulfillment of human rights and community development in slums. She started her career working in TECHO, a youth-led non-profit organization that works in popular settlements to create a just society fighting poverty and inequality. She has more than 7 years of experience leading projects in the fields of housing, infrastructure solutions and community organization towards human rights fulfillment. The last project she coordinated was the National Slums Census, a

public policy developed by various stakeholders to generate accurate and official data of the existing slums in the country. Security, peace and development are interconnected issues and the Master's programme will give her the opportunity to deepen the knowledge she possesses in these areas, in order to keep on working as a female leader advocating for the adoption of informed policies towards the social and urban integration of slums in Argentina and Latin-America.

# Udaya Shanmugam

Canada



Udaya Shanmugam is a peace activist, mind-body wellness practitioner, and an advocate for the rights of displaced peoples. Udaya was born and raised in Sri Lanka. She identifies as a Tamil-Canadian. Udaya is passionate about the protection of children's rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Udaya has worked with Indigenous communities in Canada and Palestine at the grassroots and policy levels. Prior to pursuing the Rotary Peace Fellowship, Udaya held various

portfolios at the United Nations Children's Fund. She holds a Masters in Criminology and Legal Studies and Bachelor degrees in Peace and Conflict Studies and Criminology from the University of Toronto.

# Natalia Suarez Viatela

Colombia



Natalia Suárez Viatela is a woman committed to crime prevention and peacebuilding in Colombia since 2011. She studied Government and International Relations at the Universidad Externado de Colombia. She completed her last semester at the Institut d'Études Politiques, Sciences Po, Bordeaux, France.

She worked for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Colombia for seven years supporting the Terrorism Prevention Branch and the Global Programme against Money Laundering. In 2017, she contributed to the design of the Illicit Finance Strategy as an anti-money laundering specialist in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs at the US Embassy in Bogotá.

Since 2016, she has been contributing to implementing the FARC Peace Agreement as a volunteer with Embrace Dialogue. She worked for two years supporting the reincorporation process of former FARC combatants (2019). Her recent work includes research for the Global Mine Action Programme 'Exploring the potential of Mine Action in stabilisation and peacebuilding contexts, Colombia case study', facilitating dialogues for the United States Institute of Peace in areas affected by the armed conflict, supporting the Truth Commission's 'Community of Pedagogical Practices for Truth, Memory and Non-Repetition', doing peace pedagogy in schools and promoting partnerships and initiatives related to peace education.

# Cassandra Varanka

USA



Cassandra Varanka is originally from the small state of New Hampshire in the United States. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Peace & Justice from St. Michael's College in 2012.

Cassandra most recently served as Professional Staff Member for the United States Congress Committee on Homeland Security. Additionally, Cassandra served as Legislative Assistant to Representative Jan Schakowsky, managing the legislative process leading to the passage of the Women, Peace, and Security Act. This legislation codified the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security.

Cassandra's experience also includes serving as Policy Director for Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), working to promote women's voices and perspectives in advocacy toward nuclear disarmament. As the Advocacy Director at Foreign Policy for America (FP4A), she collaborated with external advocates and foreign policy experts to develop the organisation's biennial policy agenda highlighting 20 of the most pressing issues in Foreign Policy and working with Congress to address these issues.

Cassandra is proud to be a Political Partner with the Truman National Security Project.

# UQ Rotary Peace Fellow Alumni



## Class I

Matthew Bright USA, District 6440  
Francesca Del Mese UK, District 1260  
Carolyn Fanelli USA, District 7710  
Path Heang Cambodia, District 3350  
Ryan Hendy Canada, District 6400  
Amy Kay USA, District 7600  
Sophia Knöchel Ledberg Sweden, District 2350  
Rebecca Milligan USA, District 6310  
Christian Oakes USA, District 6970

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Yoshio Chikamatsu Japan, District 2580  
Noëlle DePape Canada, District 5550  
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Sanjana Hattotuwa Sri Lanka, District 3220  
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Karla Castellanos USA, District 6990  
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Arik Gulner-Ofir Israel, District 2490  
Santosh Mehra India, District 3150  
Godfrey Mukalazi Uganda, District 9200  
Maria Fernanda Salina Argentina, District 4880  
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Mneesha Gellman, USA, District 5130  
Mohamad Taib Hampden, Malaysia, District 3300  
Sallie Lacy, USA, District 7690  
Ólöf Magnúsdóttir, Iceland, District 1630  
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Matias Omar Tanzania, District 9200  
Emily Todd USA, District 6560  
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Fanney Karlsdottir Iceland, District 1360  
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Lucindia Garrido District 9780  
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Erica Rose Jeffrey USA, District 5150  
Naing Ko Ko Myanmar, District 9920  
Nissa Rhee USA, District 3650  
Ana Maria Rodriguez Contreras Colombia, District 4290  
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Saila Huusko, Finland, District 1420  
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Rachel Hall Beecroft, USA, District 5950

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Kristina Sintia Dewi, USA, District 5960  
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Folashade Samuel, Nigeria , District 9125  
Leanne Simon, USA, District 7710  
Laurie Smolenski, USA, District 6400  
Tony Zhang Han, China, District 0052  
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Nadia Mahmood, Canada, District 5550

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Katsa Brenneman, USA, District 5470  
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Nicholas Drushella, USA, District 7610  
Guled Ibrahim, USA, District 5100  
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Sok Heng Ly, USA, District 5950  
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Norihiro Fujimoto, Japan, District 2760  
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Maya Glassman, Israel, District 2490  
Ana Belén Harb, Ecuador, District 4400  
Megan McKeown, Mexico, District 4185  
Tesyfaye Ayalew Mekonen, Ethiopia, District  
Linh Nong, Vietnam, District 7620  
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Ana Prada, Colombia, District 4281

## Class XX

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Nicholas Millward, USA, District 5415  
Reboar Mohamed, Iraq, District 2452  
Abdulrasaq Ogunyale, Nigeria, District 9125  
Sarah Wind, USA, District 5950



## Staff and support

# Diana McCluskey



Diana McCluskey commenced as the Manager for both the Rotary Peace Centre and Graduate Centre at the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland in 2016.

Her role includes strategically managing the regular operation of both Centres which include administration, student engagement and employability and marketing and events. A program manager for many years, Diana has been working in the tertiary education field since 2009 including managing the award winning QUT industry mentor program, and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine's John Flynn Placement Program – a national mentor

program matching medical students with GP mentors in regional, rural and remote Australia. Prior to working in this space Diana worked in the disability sector managing national employment programs.

Diana is originally from Hong Kong and was educated in England. She has 4 adult children and lives in Brisbane. Her husband's previous membership of the Bardonia Rotary Club gave her insight into the wonderful work Rotarians do – and in 2023 she was made a Paul Harris Fellow for her work in the UQ Rotary Peace Centre.

# Professor Roland Bleiker



Roland is Professor of International Relations, Director of the Rotary Peace Center and Coordinator of the Visual Politics Research Program. He has a passion for cross-cultural and interdisciplinary learning. He has taught over 60 courses at UQ, from introductory classes on Peace Studies to advanced subjects on International Relations Theory, Nonviolent Resistance and Human Rights.

Roland's research explores how images and emotions shape political phenomena. His books include *Visual Global Politics* (Routledge, 2018); *Aesthetics and World Politics* (Palgrave, 2009/2012); *Divided Korea: Toward a Culture of Reconciliation* (University of

Minnesota Press, 2005/2008) and *Popular Dissent, Human Agency and Global Politics* (CUP, 2000). His main current research project is an interdisciplinary ARC Linkage collaboration (2022-2026) on The Politics and Ethics of Visualising Humanitarian Crises.

Roland grew up in Zürich, Switzerland, where he was educated and worked as a lawyer. He studied international relations in Paris, Seoul, Toronto, Vancouver and Canberra. Roland also worked for two years in a Swiss diplomatic mission in the Korean DMZ and held visiting affiliations at Harvard, Cambridge, Humboldt, Tampere, Yonsei and Pusan National University. He is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

## Staff Support

# Dr Sebastian Kaempf



Dr Sebastian Kaempf is Senior Lecturer in Peace and Conflict studies as well as Deputy-Director of the Rotary Peace Centre.

Seb is an award-winning peace studies teacher and successful scholar, working on the relationship between ethics and war as well as on the role of information technology in peace and conflict. He has a Ph.D. from Aberystwyth University and BSc and Masters from the LSE. He won a prestigious Australian National Award for Teaching Excellence and has produced a MOOC called 'MediaWarX'. Seb's involvement with the Rotary Peace Centre focuses on the Applied Field Experience; the International Day of Peace and Academic mentoring.

## Additional thanks

We deeply appreciate all the hard work that has gone into the success of our Rotary Peace Fellowship.

To all of those who have helped us on our paths to success - we thank you.

### UQ

Professor Morgan Brigg

Associate Professor Marianne Hanson

Ms Emily Sievers

Ms Ros Roche

### Rotary

Ms Jacqueline Azpeitia (Rotary International)

Ms Michelle Davis

Mr David Field

Mr John Lawrence

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Rotary Host Counsellors



