

FOREIGN PRESS SCHOLARSHIP FUND HONORS AWARD RECIPIENTS

By Dina Pinos

The crown jewel of the Foreign Press Association, the oldest media organization in the United States is the Annual Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner. On May 8th, five outstanding students were presented with scholarships at the gala dinner at The Roosevelt Hotel in New York. The winners, coming from the four corners of the world, competed with other international students enrolled in graduate schools of journalism in the United States. They had a difficult assignment to enter the competition this year - a 750 word op-ed piece on how human beings interact in different ways; in the market place, in the struggle for political power and as peers within their communities.

Representing today's future journalists, the winners were, first prize Natalia Osipova from Russia, second prizes went to Gabriel Stargardter from United Kingdom and Charu Sudan Kasturi from India. Third prizes were awarded to Warangkana Chomchuen from Thailand and Nastran Tavakoli-Far from the United Kingdom. Prior to introducing our keynote speaker for the evening, Steve Kroft, Suzanne Adams reminisced and paid tribute to Mike Wallace. She stated the



Photo by John Rizzo

world lost a great journalist who had been a Guest of Honor at our 2007 Awards Dinner. It being the actual birthday of Mike, Suzanne offered a toast in his memory saying, "Wherever you are, Mike, Happy Birthday."

Suzanne then introduced our distinguished keynote speaker, Steve Kroft. Steve is the recipient of three Peabody Awards and nine Emmy Awards. He acknowledged the students dedicated work and wished them good luck as they move forward in their careers. He went on to discuss foreign journalism and described how he was bitten by the "journalism bug" early on when he was stationed on the battlefield in Vietnam. "I was escorting a network camera crew and some correspondents out on the field. From that point onwards, at age 23, I

knew exactly what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I wanted to become a television news reporter and a foreign correspondent." Steve said he was particularly pleased that after nearly 100 years in existence, our organization is still known as the Foreign Press Association and has resisted the more ecumenical descriptive term of *International*.

And so our 19th Annual Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner came to a wonderful conclusion. 2013 will mark our 20th Awards Dinner. So keep tuned. We hope to make it an event you won't forget.

LETTERS FROM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

NATALIA OSIPOVA

I would like to report on business and social justice from the U.S., EU or Russian bureau of an international media company.

The scholarship will help me to get skills necessary to achieve this goal. CUNY provides me with an excellent background and reporting experience in the U.S.

After my graduation in May 2013, I plan to intern at an international media company in New York for one year. I believe this experience will help me to get a job in a foreign bureau in the United States, Europe or Russia. I remain geographically open, because what matters to me is the quality of work I can do and the opportunity to work with professionals I can learn and get inspired the most.

GABRIEL STARGARDTER

On June 7 I will head to Mexico where I will be working for Reuters, covering the upcoming elections, and forward, the ongoing economic and social impact of the drug war. In the future I hope to work across the world, writing about global issues for an intellectual, curious and cognizant Anglophone audience. The money from the Foreign Press Association will be integral in allowing me to start work on a book I am hoping to write about the impact of Latin American folk music on the politics of the region.

CHARU SUDAN KASTURI

As India expands its footprint on the global stage, it is increasingly trying to increase its clout in the developing world -- particularly in Asia and Africa. From helping war-ravaged Afghanistan build a new parliament to competing with China for resources and projects in Africa, India is revealing a till now unseen side of its foreign policy. But there has been little reporting from the countries India has targeted on the impact of its strategy and policies - on the people of those countries, on India's diplomatic standing, and finally, on geopolitics.

I hope to utilize the New York Foreign Press Association Award to report from these countries, because following India's increasingly outward-looking foreign policy, will likely be crucial to understanding the power equations that will shape the world order in this century.

NASTARAN TAVAKOLI-FAR

I am passionate about ideas and innovation, people looking deeply and thoroughly into all manner of subjects and finding ways which society can benefit from this expansion of knowledge. As a journalist I am honoured to be able to speak to so many people passionate about exploring new paths and sharing these with others. I love the

power of journalism to inspire as well as to uncover and analyze, and hope to do all these through my career.

I am honoured to have been awarded Third Prize by the Foreign Press Association. I will be using this prize to travel around the Bay Area in pursuit of new ideas in the fields of tech and science, and how these will then impact not only the economy and society, but also on government. After this I will be returning to the BBC World Service in London.

WARANGKANA CHOMCHUEN

The scholarship will help fund a production of my documentary when I return to Thailand. For five years, I worked with several foreign news organizations and I saw news and stories being told from their point of view. My Thai colleagues and I often dream of telling our own stories in our own voices. We dreamed of having the luxury of time and the funding to make our own news documentaries. The scholarship will enable me to achieve my professional goals and dreams. I will always be grateful to the New York Foreign Press Association for this.



RECENT FPA EVENTS REPORTED BY JAN LATUS

LIFE BEFORE AMERICAN IDOL

For those who associate amateurs contests with enormously popular TV shows, such as American Idol, there is a reality check: the first Amateur Nights were held as early as 1934.

The competitions were organized by the newly opened Apollo Theater at 125th Street in Harlem, as a live version of Ralph Cooper's radio show "Amateur Nite Hour." One of the first winners was no less than Ella Fitzgerald. Since then Amateur Night has been a launching pad for countless future big names in show business, such as James

Brown, Stevie Wonder, Lauryn Hill, Dionne Warwick, Michael Jackson and the Jackson Five, Billie Holiday, Luther Vandross, and Sarah Vaughan. Thanks to the invitation of the Apollo Theater current president and CEO, Ms. Jonelle Procope, FPA members were invited to attend one of a typical Wednesday amateur nights. The evening was organized with the help of Resnicow Schroeder Associates. Before the show began, we were treated to a lovely cocktail reception and a tour led by the Apollo legend Billy Mitchell. Aptly nicknamed Mr. Apollo. He has attended Amateur Nights since

he was nine in time to witness the sensational debut of Michael Jackson. Billy Mitchell tried to explain to us the social and political background of the Apollo Theater, which for decades functioned in the racially segregated society.

FPA members who attended the Amateur Night show were not disappointed. The talent pool was amazingly deep and the professionalism of those "amateurs" could put to shame pop-music stars in many countries. And there is certainly no match to the enthusiastic acceptance of the Apollo audience.

DIGITAL ASSASSINS

FPA members met on June 6 at Kennedy's for a presentation by Richard Torrenzano. He is chairman and CEO of The Torrenzano Group, a reputation and high-stakes issues management firm specializing in building and protecting corporate reputations, enhancing shareholder value and helping clients grow their businesses. It was his second presentation for the FPA. This time he talked about his book "*Digital Assassination. Protecting Your Reputation, Brand, or Business Against Online Attacks*," written jointly with Mark Davis, a former White House speech-

writer. The book was published in 2011 by St.Martin's Press.

In his vivid and convincing presentation, Mr. Torrenzano gave some shocking examples of tarnishing someone's reputation just by posting untrue information. Such was a case of John Steigenthaler, an assistant to Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Someone wrote, for unknown reasons, in a Wikipedia entry that "For a brief time, he [Steigenthaler] was thought to be directly involved in the Kennedy assassination of both John, and his brother Robert. Nothing was ever proven". Even though the entry was eventually corrected, it took 180 days. Steigen-

thaler's reputation and his career prospects were permanently damaged, since information once posted on the Internet can be replicated by other sites, without legal responsibility.

Torrenzano advised that someone's false information or vicious comments should be removed as soon as possible, so we should check constantly to determine if something new regarding us has been posted on the Internet. He advised us to think twice before sharing any information that could potentially be used against us. His conclusions were rather pessimistic. As he said, "Something once posted on the Internet, will stay forever on the Internet."

THE TASTE OF TEQUILA

It is odd that some alcoholic drinks we enjoy, sip slowly and pay a premium for, while other varieties we drink absentmindedly.

Marketing is largely responsible for why we find some drinks, such as cognacs, single malt whiskies and wines, more sophisticated than others. Tequila, Mexico's national shot, wildly popular in bars across the United States, is only recently trying to win accolades among discriminate drinkers.

FPA members came in large numbers to Bonham's to learn about tequila. Previously we enjoyed tastings of California wines and American bourbons. At this time, our hosts from Brown-Forman invited a representative of a major Mexican tequila distillery, Casa Herradura. Mr. Ruben Aceves

Vidrio, a man of exquisite manners, explained to us the intricacies of tequila making.

The original tequilas come only from several regions of Jalisco in Mexico. The city is a destination for tourists, who can visit 150 distilleries making about 1500 different kinds of tequila. The oldest, Casa Herradura, began production in 1870. The original hacienda still stands. In 1873, for the first time, tequila was exported to the U.S. As legend goes, the founder, Aurelio Lopez, while inspecting agave fields, found a shining object which turned out to be a horseshoe (herradura in Spanish.) This ancient symbol of luck and protection is still featured on labels of tequilas manufactured by Casa Herradura.

All tequilas are made from

fermented agavas but their taste, aroma, color, and price vary. We tried three basic varieties to detect and recognize the differences.

The least expensive and the most popular is called "silver", the youngest one. Although government regulations don't require aging, Casa Herradura goes to extra lengths to keep it fresh tasting. It is aged in toasted oak barrels for 45 days. Herradura Reposado is aged for 11 months. The most mature Herradura Anejo is kept in oak barrels for two years, double the Mexican government mandated period. In the U.S., these three varieties cost \$30, \$48, and \$55 per bottle.

Today, Mexicans drink tequilas from sniffer glasses with soda. Tequila silver is considered an aperitif, Reposado goes well with entrees, and Anejo is served with desserts.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

By Suzanne Adams

I would like to offer my appreciation to our members who served as judges to ensure the success of the FPA Scholarship Fund Awards. We have noticed that each year brings more submissions from students than previous years.

The major requirement in the application process was for each student to submit an OP-ED article of 750 words in which they were asked to discuss the following topic:

According to Aristotle, Man is by nature a social animal. Tina Rosenberg, in her new book, "Join The Club" examines the idea that human behavior is defined by our relationships with our acquaintances. Peer pressure, she states, can lead to acts of great courage or to great harm. The subtitle of her book is "How Peer Pressure Can Transform the World." Her premise, basically, is to unlock the secret of using peer pressure to "transform the world". Calling it the "social cure", Rosenberg examines how social networks can address some of the world's most stubborn problems from adolescent cigarette smoking to oppressive power.

Human beings interact in several different ways; in the market place, in the struggle for political power and as peers in their community. The author argues that the third kind of relationship, the search for status and peer approval is the most powerful motivator of our personal behavior and that it can be employed to remedy social ills.

In your essay discuss how this is manifested in your country. What specific factors contribute to your argument? How does this power of social networking in your country remedy social ills?

For the many hours they spent reading, re-reading and evaluating submissions from students at graduate schools of journalism in the United States, I offer my sincere thanks to the Scholarship Awards Committee:

Bill Blase
Alan Capper
Roberto Socas
Laura Thompson

SINCERE THANKS

The overwhelming success of the FPA Scholarship Fund is due entirely to the support of our corporate contributors. We are extremely grateful for your continued dedication to this program.

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CHRONICLE

By Suzanne Adams

What a thrill it was for me to turn to Page 11 of the New York Times on June 12th to see that **Daniel Duzdevich** was a recipient of a Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship For New Americans. Daniel is the son of our Editor **Agnes Niemetz**. He has "translated" *Darwin's Origin of Species* into clear modern English.

Long time member, **Eugenio Chang-Rodriguez** has had a new book published. It is entitled "*Ideology and Praxcis of Prada, Mariategui and Haya (The Three Most important Essay Writers of Peru)*". Well done, Eugenio. And add to that, for his contribution toward the in depth study of Peru, Eugenio has been awarded a *Doctore Honoris Causa* by the National University of San Marcos.

Kudos to former FPA President, **Gabe Plesea** upon the publication of another book entitled "*A Romanian Reporter at the United Nations*." Surely, there are some fascinating stories to be told.

A delightful memoir has just been published by **Sumner Glimcher** entitled "*A Filmmakers Journal*." Sumner retired as the Director of the Department of Film. Video and Broadcasting at NYU's School of Continuing Education.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

We are extremely grateful to the Executive Committee of the Scholarship Fund for their assistance and commitment to our wonderful program:

BILL BLASE
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IMPRESSUM

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E-mail, snail-mail or phone corrections to Suzanne Adams; fpanewyork@AOL.com
Website: www.nyforeignpress.org

Editorial Staff:

Suzanne Adams, Agnes Niemetz, Dina Pinos, Jan Latus, John Rizzo