Dear Friends and Colleagues of the IEDP,

Spring is finally here! The month of March has been filled with a great number of activities, events, conferences and lectures. Our cohort has been incredibly busy navigating the Spring semester, working on our policy briefs, and other papers while attending one of the most important conferences of the year: the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference that took place in Washington DC, from March 8-13. The majority of our cohort attended the conference and many presented on a variety of interesting topics. The IEDPers proudly represented our program at the conference!

This edition of our Newsletter features a special issue of four Alumni who visited our cohort to share with us their experiences during their internships and their current career paths. Find below insights from the Alumni Panel featuring Molly Crofton, Kavita Hatipoglu, Laura McAdams and Hannah Weitzer. In addition, enjoy pictures from the CIES conference and other conferences and activities IEDPers have been attending throughout the month, along with this month's guest speaker Cristina Bicchieri. Don't forget to check our twitter section and social media updates.

We are thrilled that the weather is finally changing and look forward to a busy (but warm!) April.

All our best,

Abby Wacker & Irene Greaves
Co-editors

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**Alumni Visit the IEDP**

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**Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference**

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IEDP at CIES!

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Dr. Wagner presenting on early grade reading.
Molly Crofton
Molly graduated from the IEDP in August 2013. She interned with UNICEF in South Africa for 5 months. While there, she worked on a number of different projects ranging from education campaigns to push forward the HPV vaccine, to promoting collaboration amongst boys and girls in schools, to organizing social networking games and education materials to create a portal to connect educators and students all together, among others.

Molly remarked on how the IEDP provided her with a bigger picture of what international education should look like. She is currently the Senior Program Analyst at Mathematica, a policy research company that assesses the effectiveness of policies and educational programs in the US and internationally. Molly aligns herself with Mathematica’s mission statement: research for the public good. She has been working there for a year performing a variety of tasks, including coordinating data collection from hospitals for a Medicaid research project and analyzing data using SAS and Stata for education projects on teacher effectiveness projects and teen pregnancy prevention programs. Mathematica is employee owned and driven and currently US-focused, but looking to expand internationally. The two courses that Molly took during IEDP that relate most directly to her work are Program Evaluation and Applied Research and Reporting, as they gave her a foundation in research methods as well as experience with programming in Stata. Beyond those most direct connections to her current work, Molly feels that her IEDP coursework and extracurricular experiences, developed her ability to understand and critique research, and also enhanced her understanding of the importance of context in education and development. She uses the skills acquired in IEDP regularly in her work at Mathematica.

Molly advised the current IEDP cohort to get as much exposure as we can on our internships. She encouraged us to ask as many questions as possible and take advantage of every learning opportunity, such as attending conferences.

Laura McAdams
Laura is a 2013 graduate of IEDP. During her time as an IEDP student, Laura interned with UNESCO in Amman, Jordan, where she worked on the evaluation of a UNESCO funded non-formal education program. The internship gave
Laura currently works at Islamic Relief USA, in Washington, D.C., as the International Program Coordinator, Middle East and Europe Desk. Islamic Relief USA is a grant making, fundraising, and advocacy focused partner in the global Islamic Relief family. The Islamic Relief organizations work across several different sectors, including education, health, and disaster relief. Laura’s work involves her in a number of different tasks, including evaluating technical proposals, working on advocacy campaigns, and monitoring and evaluating projects. Through her M&E work with Islamic Relief, Laura has traveled to Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon.

Laura advises current IEDP students to make the most of their internships, and to embrace the autonomy given to many IEDP students in their placements, but to be sure to ask questions as needed. She also recommends students attend as many meetings as possible while on internship so as to learn more about the host organization as a whole, and also to meet interesting people. She also encourages IEDP students to come back and visit Penn after graduation!

Hannah Weitzer

Hannah graduated from Penn IEDP in 2011. Prior to coming to Penn for her Master’s, Hannah worked with several grassroots youth empowerment, education, and activism organizations in Israel/Palestine. At Penn, Hannah used the International Educational Development Program to reflect on her experiences and put them into a global, theoretical framework. In her reflections on the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as on other country case studies introduced in her coursework—she examined what was unique about each situation, and also what aspects of educational development in a particular context might be transferable to other areas.

After graduating from Penn IEDP, Hannah joined Global Nomads Group in New York City, where...
she is now Program Director. Global Nomads Group is a non-profit organization that promotes dialogue and understanding between youth the world over, through curriculum based, technology enabled, educational virtual exchange programs. Hannah's first project at Global Nomads Group was to design and implement a new curriculum-based virtual exchange program to connect youth in the United States and Afghanistan. She continues to manage this project, now in its fourth year, and has also expanded the program to include youth in Pakistan. Her responsibilities include program and curriculum development, managing partnerships with NGOs, working with teachers, running professional development and technical training sessions, and facilitating conversations between program participants. She also works in the area of strategic development, and is involved in designing organizational and regional strategies, proposal writing, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and donor relations.

Hannah encourages current IEDP students to use informational interviews as a way to discover what kinds of jobs exist in the broad field of international educational development. Such interviews help students to focus the job hunt, and also to understand the day-to-day realities of working in the field. Hannah also reminds current IEDP cohort members to simply enjoy being students while at Penn. When one's only job is to learn and grow within a vibrant intellectual setting such as Penn's, it is important to take advantage of all the resources that setting has to offer!

Kavita Harijopolu
Kavita graduated from the IEDP in 2013. She interned with the Aga Khan Foundation's Madrassa Research Center in Mombasa, Kenya where she looked at a training program that sought to bridge the transition for children in Madrassa preschools to primary school. Kavita's work involved conducting a process evaluation and ultimately provided recommendations for the improvement of the program.

Kavita currently works as a Senior Program Associate on the Education team of Results for Development (R4D), a development organization with features of a think tank and non-profit consulting firm. R4D uses multiple approaches in education, health, governance and market dynamics, to support the discovery and implementation of new ideas for reducing poverty and improving lives around the world. In addition to an emerging early childhood portfolio, the education team focuses its work on program evaluation, education financing, skills for work and out-of-school children. Kavita works closely with the early childhood projects, and also helps analyze trends with R4D’s Center for Education Innovations. She has also worked conducting research: household expenditure for schooling in Ghana. Other features of her work includes
Kavita had a great deal of useful advice regarding both the job search and internships. She highlighted the importance of cover letters when searching for jobs. She encouraged the current IEDP cohort to invest time writing a cover letter that fits nicely with the organization and explains how their mission and values resonate with our own. In terms of preparing for the interview process for jobs, she encouraged us to do our research, know who we would be working with, who will interview us and show interest and understanding of the work the organization does. Finally, she stressed the importance of connecting how the skills we’ve developed over time tie to the organization or company, since they want to know that we will be able to return value. She also had some advice about the internships: she stressed the importance of owning our role as intern consultants and she encouraged us to be proactive during our internships. Kavita’s last piece of advice is particularly important for us all as we embark on our internships and our job hunt: “pay attention to details!”