

2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT

THE FUTURE OF
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

ENGAGING WITH THE
WORLD GALA

THE CPD EXPERIENCE

Established in 2003 at the University of Southern California, the USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD) is a research, analysis and professional training organization dedicated to enriching the study and practice of public diplomacy in pursuit of a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Since its inception, CPD has become an ambitious and productive leader in the public diplomacy research and scholarship community and plays host to robust discussions about the future of public diplomacy.

RESEARCH

Our innovative research agenda bridges the study-practice gap and contributes to the intellectual foundations of public diplomacy scholarship.

CONVENING

Our events and conferences provide a space for the public diplomacy community to explore key topics and trends.

TRAINING

Our one-of-a-kind professional education and capacity-building programs equip practitioners with key skills needed to deploy effective and impactful public diplomacy.

AWARDS

Our annual awards celebrate exceptional public diplomacy practitioners in the public and private sectors.

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Message from the Dean

As we reflect on an extraordinary year at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD), I want to begin by expressing our deep appreciation to Dr. Jay Wang for his leadership during his time as director. Under Jay's direction, the Center has grown into a respected institution for public diplomacy thought leadership, forward-thinking training, and impactful events. We are proud and excited to welcome Jay as the director of the Master of Public Diplomacy (MPD) program and look forward to fostering new collaborations between MPD students and the Center.

CPD's work continues to be vital. As new technologies such as AI reshape global communications, public diplomacy plays a critical role in fostering international understanding and collaboration. CPD's efforts to chart the intersection of AI and public diplomacy have helped to address key challenges and unearth exciting new opportunities.

CPD is also advancing research in critical areas such as sports diplomacy, with a focus on global mega events coming to Los Angeles like the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Olympics, as well as city diplomacy and regional diplomacy. Additionally, the Center is exploring the role of cultural diplomacy through the arts with its stellar Stroum Arts & Diplomacy Series, supported by a gift from Annenberg alumna, award-winning theater producer and former U.S. Ambassador Cynthia Stroum.

Among the many highlights of the past year was CPD's inaugural gala, which recognized Blackstone CEO and founder Stephen Schwarzman as the recipient of the Excellence in Public Diplomacy Award. At the gala, entrepreneur and diplomat Goli Ameri also presented the annual Ameri Prize, which has become regarded as one of the most prestigious honors in the field of public diplomacy. The event gathered diplomats, scholars, and policymakers to recognize achievements in public diplomacy and cultural exchange, marking an exciting milestone for the Center.

Looking forward, CPD is well-positioned to continue its leading-edge work. With a focus on research, convening global experts, and training the next generation of practitioners, the Center stands as a critical resource for promoting and expanding the field of public diplomacy. We are excited to actively shape and evolve the Center to ensure that it continues to make impactful contributions in the years ahead.

Willow Bay



The Future of Public Diplomacy

A FIELD TRANSFORMED

Public diplomacy is at a critical juncture. To remain relevant and effective, practitioners must adapt to hyper-speed technological changes and an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape. They must learn to harness the power of artificial intelligence (AI) and tap into digital communities, while never forgetting the need for a human touch in public diplomacy.

“Public diplomacy is still fundamentally about relationships,” said Paul Kruchoski, Director of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy’s Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources at the U.S. Department of State, who spoke at a June 2024 event on the future of public diplomacy, co-hosted by CPD and the Public Diplomacy Council of America and held at USC’s new Capital Campus in Washington D.C.

Public diplomacy has long been about engaging foreign publics to shape perceptions, build relationships, and promote mutual understanding. And it remains so. However, as Kruchoski noted, the current reality presents unprecedented challenges.

“We are also competing not just with state actors but every other draw on people’s attention, affinity, and identity,” he explained. This competition includes corporations and civil society organizations, all of whom have access to advanced technological tools that enable them to shape narratives more effectively.

One of the most significant, and indeed revolutionary, of those tools is AI. AI is rapidly transforming the field of public diplomacy, offering innovative, easy-to-use solutions that enhance communication, content creation, and strategic engagement.

Practitioners must adapt to hyper-speed technological changes and an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

“AI has immense potential to support and enhance our work in public diplomacy,” said Alexander Hunt, Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Guinea. Hunt, who received the 2023 Ameri Prize for Innovation in Public Diplomacy, began using AI tools like ChatGPT to assist with content production and media summaries, freeing up time for his team to engage in more strategic tasks such as press freedom assessments and audience research. “AI has really allowed us to use our human brains for the analytical work that we were hired for,” Hunt explained.

DIGITAL HURDLES

AI and its proliferation also present new challenges for public diplomacy practitioners. Countries like Russia and China are investing heavily in information warfare, using AI and other technologies to spread disinformation and shape global narratives. While platforms like X and Facebook were once the primary disinformation battlegrounds, newer platforms have complicated the landscape. These platforms have become “multimodal,” said Dr. Josephine Luko of UT Austin, who joined a March 2024 panel hosted by CPD, exploring the evolution of disinformation and strategies to combat it. “They’ve gone from text-primary-based platforms to platforms that produce a lot of video and image content.”

In this rapidly evolving digital ecosystem, the organizational structure of public diplomacy will need to keep up, argued Kruchoski. “For every hour that you’re...feeding an administrative process, that’s time we’re never going to get back,” he said.

Kruchoski highlighted the bureaucratic hurdles that often prevent public diplomats from focusing on their core mission, such as managing travel orders, grant compliance, and social media accounts. To address this, Kruchoski advocated for streamlining processes and embracing hybrid work environments where human expertise is augmented by machine efficiency.

NEXT-GEN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

In short, the future of public diplomacy will be shaped by the intersection of technology and human relationships. As powerful forces like AI revolutionize the field, public diplomats must embrace new tools and platforms to engage global audiences, while remaining wary to track and counter threats like disinformation. Ultimately, public diplomacy’s continued relevance will depend on its ability to adapt to these rapid technological advancements while maintaining its core mission of fostering mutual understanding and trust across borders.



Research Reads

CPD released three in-depth research papers as part of our signature scholarly series, **CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy**.

- Diaspora Diplomacy, Emotions, and Disruption
by Alina Dole
- Global American Higher Education: International Campuses for Competition or Cooperation?
by Kyle A. Long
- Strategic Humor and Post-Truth Public Diplomacy
by Dmitry Chernobrov

Download at
USCPublicDiplomacy.org/Perspectives



Engaging With the World Gala

The autumn celebration honored global leadership and innovation in public diplomacy.

In October 2023, CPD hosted its inaugural awards gala at the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel, marking a significant milestone in the center's efforts to advance the field of public diplomacy.

The elegant event introduced the Excellence in Public Diplomacy Award, which was created to honor individuals outside of national governments who have made significant contributions to international relations.

The inaugural recipient was Blackstone CEO and co-founder Stephen Schwarzman, who was recognized for his leadership in global relations, particularly through initiatives like Schwarzman Scholars, a master's degree leadership program designed to advance cultural understanding between the U.S. and China. The award presentation was followed by a conversation with Michael Milken, Chairman of the Milken Institute, where they discussed the importance of global engagement.

"If you have a good size company like we do...we're constantly dealing with governments," said Schwarzman. "And if you can harness all of that goodwill, knowledge, execution capability and marry it with really smart policymakers, you have a really winning system."

The gala was attended by an array of luminaries, including former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin, and former members of the United States House of Representatives Jane Harman and Mimi Walters. Videos profiling both Schwarzman's global leadership and Hunt's work were screened, adding depth to the celebration.

The evening served not only as a recognition of individual achievements but also as a reflection of CPD's growing influence in fostering dialogue across international borders, making it a landmark event for the USC community and the field of public diplomacy.

The awards gala served to recognize individual achievements and reflect CPD's growing influence in fostering dialogue across international borders.

Recognizing an Innovative Approach to Visa Services

M

organ O'Brien was honored with the 2024 Ameri Prize for Innovation in Public Diplomacy for his groundbreaking work in transforming how visas are perceived and managed within the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs. As the Bureau's first-ever Industry Liaison, O'Brien's innovative approach reshaped visa services into a powerful tool for public diplomacy, supporting both economic and social policy goals. Through his efforts, O'Brien demonstrated the potential of visas to foster international engagement, advance U.S. economic interests, and promote U.S. values.

Recognizing a gap in how the State Department communicated its visa services, particularly during post-pandemic recovery, O'Brien proposed a domestic outreach strategy aligned with the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy's focus on local engagement. He designed the ambitious "Fifty for Fifty Campaign," which deployed consular officials to every U.S. state, engaging a diverse array of businesses, universities, and community leaders.

O'Brien's innovative pilot program, which relaunched domestic visa renewals, had a significant impact on businesses across the U.S. By reducing bureaucratic hurdles, O'Brien and his team enabled thousands of industry partners to renew visas domestically rather than traveling abroad, a move that supported over 2,000 businesses and played a key role during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2023 State Visit.



His efforts did not stop at the national level. O'Brien's outreach extended globally, improving international perceptions of U.S. visa services. His work culminated in high-profile successes, such as assisting the production crew of Beast Philanthropy, YouTube superstar Mr. Beast's philanthropic arm, in shooting a video that generated revenue to provide Thanksgiving meals to families in Philadelphia, and driving support for women's entrepreneurship programs abroad.

These engagements underscored the role of visa services as an essential element of public diplomacy. O'Brien's contributions have had a lasting impact, not only on the field of public diplomacy but also on how visas are used as instruments of cultural and economic exchange. His work exemplifies the innovative spirit and dedication that the Ameri Prize seeks to honor.



Event Highlights

↑ **David Ono**, ABC-7 News Anchor, presented “Defining Courage,” a docu-theater experience that honors the Nisei soldiers – Americans of Japanese ancestry who served in segregated units during World War II. Presented by the Stroum Arts and Diplomacy Series, the packed show was attended by one of the surviving Nisei soldiers, 98-year-old Yoshio Nakamura, a proud double Trojan, as well as actress Tamlyn Tomita, actor-filmmaker Edward James Olmos, and other luminaries.

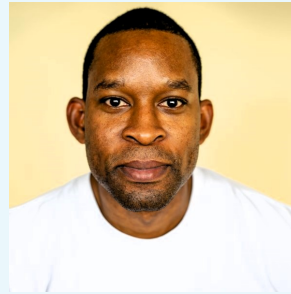


↑ **Integrating Artificial Intelligence into an Embassy's Public Diplomacy Workflows:** Left to right, Ameri Prize winner Alexander Hunt and entrepreneur and diplomat, Goli Ameri. CPD hosted Hunt for several online and in-person discussions about how AI can be used to supplement human work, rather than replace it.



← **The Stroum Arts & Diplomacy Series.** Left to right, Tony Award-winner Jason Robert Brown and Annenberg alumna, award-winning theater producer

and former U.S. Ambassador, Cynthia Stroum, kicked off an event series focused on the intersection of public diplomacy and the arts.



↑ **Dipo Faloyin** discussed his bestselling book, *Africa Is Not a Country*. So often, Africa has been depicted simplistically as a uniform land of famines and safaris, poverty and strife. Faloyin offers a much-needed corrective, weaving a vibrant tapestry of stories that bring to life Africa's rich diversity, communities, and histories.

↓ **Public Diplomacy in Latin America.** CPD co-hosted a discussion on impactful public diplomacy strategies in Latin America and the transformative role of digital media and technology in the region. Attendees gained firsthand insights into how public diplomacy efforts have effectively addressed pressing global challenges.

↓ **AI in Africa.** CPD and The Black Policy Institute hosted an online conversation that compared the African tech and AI landscape to Western counterparts, and explored data sovereignty, policy implications, unique challenges and opportunities.

↓ **The Engaging with the World Gala.** Left to right, Jay Wang, Louise Linton,

Willow Bay, Steve Mnuchin, Stephen Schwarzman, Christine Schwarzman, Jane Harman, Michael Milken, and Barry Sanders attended CPD's awards gala at the Beverly Hills Hotel, honoring excellence and innovation in public diplomacy.

↓ **Planning for the Future: PD 2034.** At USC's Capital Campus in Washington, DC, Paul Kruchoski of the U.S. Department of State explored how public diplomacy practitioners are adapting to a rapidly changing environment and overviewed the skills and resources needed for the future.

↓ **Creator Culture and Public Diplomacy.** USC Annenberg Professor David Craig joined an online conversation on the emergence of a new wave of native social media entrepreneurs as cultural producers—YouTube vloggers, Twitch gamers, Instagram influencers, TikTokers, and others—and how the disruption shapes storytelling formats and impacts public diplomacy.

↓ **Understanding and Combating Disinformation in Public Diplomacy.** In light of the dozens of national elections occurring worldwide in 2024, CPD hosted a timely panel discussion at the USC Capital Campus exploring insights from academic research on the nature and scope of disinformation and strategies to combat it.

↓ **A Deep Dive Into AI and Public Diplomacy.** CPD hosted USC Viterbi Professor Kristina Lerman for a virtual conversation on emotional expression on social media, and AI in public diplomacy. The discussion drew from Lerman's research on emotions and polarization in digital spaces.



Research Networks

2024-26 CPD RESEARCH FELLOWS



Jess Carniel
Associate Professor, University of Southern Queensland
A Study of the Eurovision Song Contest as an Enabler of Participatory Diplomacy



Myoung-Gi Chon
Associate Professor, Auburn University
South Korea's Soft Power Impact in the United States



Alexander Evans, Ph.D. O.B.E.
Professor, London School of Economics
Cyber Public Diplomacy

2023 CPD DOCTORAL DISSERTATION GRANT RECIPIENT



Phuong Mai Anh Tran
Ph.D. candidate at the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa, Canada

Tran's research focuses on analyzing international scholarships for higher education through a public diplomacy lens.

2024-26 U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMAT IN RESIDENCE



Joshua Shen
U.S. State Department

What first got you excited about public diplomacy?

Growing up as an Asian American immigrant to the United States, my desire to understand how American culture, values, and society share similarities with people across the globe echoes my own search for self-identity. What are universal commonalities? What differences are a product of distinct histories and philosophies, and how do we manage those differences? How do we avoid the very human instinct to simplify and generalize the "other" while affording nuance and complexities to ourselves?

It wasn't until several years after graduating college that I learned of jobs in the United States government for diplomats who could help bridge these gaps. Thus, having first trained and worked as a journalist and an educator, I felt drawn to the public and personal engagement opportunities of a career in public diplomacy.

Tell us about your research at the Center.

There is no bilateral relationship more important to future global peace, prosperity, and sustainability than the complex and challenging ties between the United States and the People's Republic of China, full stop. Simply put, too many people in powerful positions are eager to push us towards greater distrust, enmity, confrontation, and even military conflict.

The State Department provides its diplomats the opportunity to work with a whole-of-society approach to explore alternative policies and platforms to ensure that this competition does not explode through misunderstanding to an all-out war.

My research seeks to better understand the audience of China's nearly 300,000 international students in the United States while providing policy recommendations to refine U.S. policies that can help enlist, rather than antagonize, these people as future mediators in a more stable, mutually prosperous relationship.



CPD Summer Institute, Class of 2024

At CPD's signature two-week summer training, mid-career public diplomats and international communication professionals gather on the USC campus to refine their public diplomacy toolkits, explore the latest scholarship, and collaborate with a group of peers on real-world projects.



Training Highlights

For nearly two decades, CPD has been the leader in training public diplomats and international communication professionals.

CPD trainings are regularly conducted on the USC campuses in Los Angeles, California, and Washington, D.C., as well as virtually.

INTEGRATING AI INTO YOUR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY STRATEGY

AI and Bots for Public Diplomacy

How Will AI Shape the Future of Public Diplomacy

Current Policies and Practices of AI in Public Diplomacy

Fundamentals of AI and Applications in Public Diplomacy

AI for Public Diplomacy Storytelling

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING FOR INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY

Public Diplomacy Strategy and Program Planning

Public Diplomacy Monitoring and Evaluation Techniques

Understanding Theory of Change for Public Diplomacy Impact Assessment

Survey Design and Best Practices

Virtual Reality and Immersive Storytelling



GET TO KNOW CPD'S PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FACULTY

Creator Culture & Public Diplomacy

David Craig
Professor at USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

What is creator culture?

Creator culture refers to entrepreneurs who have developed an expertise at harnessing social media platforms to build online communities from which they can derive both economic and cultural value. Creators operate across multiple platforms, and the value of the global creator economy is estimated somewhere between 20 billion and half a trillion dollars.

How does creator culture intersect with public diplomacy?

My research focuses on just that: the expanding role of creators in social advocacy and public diplomacy. Creator culture emerged from the margins, with Asian-Americans and queer creators playing a pivotal role in its early years. These creators not only profit from their communities but also advocate for them, becoming symbols of social movements and agents of change. Both the Obama and Biden administrations recognized creators' potential in promoting key initiatives such as healthcare and global political awareness, including support for U.S. involvement in Ukraine. Programs like YouTube's "Creators for Change" initially focused on fighting extremism and disinformation in regions like the Middle East and Southeast Asia. These examples are just a fraction of the advocacy and diplomacy work creators are involved in globally, as we see a growing intersection between creative influence, social impact, and global political efforts.

How do creators go about building community?

Creators in today's digital culture don't see their followers as traditional fans or audiences but as participants in a unique relational dynamic. This approach prioritizes interaction over mere broadcasting. Creators use content not just to disseminate information but to foster engagement, encouraging likes, shares, and subscriptions. Their success hinges on maintaining authenticity, as any dissonance between their on-camera persona and off-camera reality can lead to a collapse of their community and business model. Creators do a ton of invisible labor to build and maintain relationships with their communities, such as responding to comments and tailoring content.

How can public diplomacy practitioners work with creators?

Organizations or governments must be very strategic in collaborating with creators. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, creators must align any message with their established rapport with their community for it to resonate. A creator suddenly advocating for an unrelated cause without integrating it authentically into their content risks confusing or alienating their audience. To navigate this, organizations have adopted diverse strategies, from partnering with creators on specific campaigns to focusing on fundraising collaborations. Any advocacy or public diplomacy campaign must be tailored to the nuanced relationships between creators and their communities.

In Their Own Words

CPD BEHIND THE SCENES



Naathapit "Otto" Lamsam
*CPD Programming & Operations Assistant,
USC Master of Public Diplomacy Candidate*

I became interested in public diplomacy while serving as a conscript in the Royal Thai Army. I wasn't aware of the meaning of the term then, but my experience managing social media communications for my brigade made me interested in how government entities brand themselves to the general public. Not long after I finished my service, Thai news publications began discussing how and why Thailand should promote its many cultural assets to the rest of the world. This kickstarted my research into public diplomacy, which quickly led me to discover USC Annenberg's Master of Public Diplomacy program and the Center on Public Diplomacy.

During my past year as a Master of Public Diplomacy student and an intern at CPD, I have been able to explore the ways public diplomacy can be put into action. A highlight was being part of the team that brought the live performance of *Defining Courage* to USC as part of CPD's Stroum Arts and Diplomacy series. Another standout experience was helping organize the CPD Summer Institute. I was fortunate enough to sit in on the sessions and learn new skills, such as prompt-engineering generative AI to tailor it to public diplomacy-related tasks. I am grateful to my colleagues at CPD for immersing me in the multi-faceted and ever-changing field of public diplomacy.

REFLECTIONS OF A DIPLOMAT IN RESIDENCE



Matthew Asada
CPD's Former U.S. Public Diplomat in Residence (2022–24)

What were some highlights of your time at CPD?

I really enjoyed the teaching component of this two-year fellowship and collaborating with my Annenberg and CPD colleagues. Each week, I looked forward to meeting with my undergraduate and graduate students and learning from them and sharing lessons from my 20-year diplomatic career. Together we went beyond the classroom to learn from everything that America's second largest city has to offer. We visited Japan's world-class public diplomacy engagement space in Hollywood, broke bread at an iftar at the Qatari Consul General's residence in Beverly Hills and even crossed the border to Mexico to visit the U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana.

A highlight was working with MPD student Otto Lamsam and a team from across USC to deliver the first university performance of *Defining Courage*, a live-action, mixed-media storytelling of the Japanese American Nisei soldiers during WWII. The show was especially meaningful to me, as my granduncle fought for the decorated unit while his brother and sisters, along with 120,000 other Japanese Americans, were unjustly incarcerated for three years by the U.S. government.

What's your next assignment?

I am currently assigned as the Press Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Accra. I look forward to applying the storytelling lessons I learned at USC and absorbed in Los Angeles to the communications of the U.S. Mission to Ghana. Ghana is having a moment with sports and the arts, diaspora connections, and commercial diplomacy. I am excited to build on these initiatives – and West Africa's ties with Southern California – in this next chapter.

Finally, I hope to continue my efforts to strengthen diplomacy and promote diversity within the Department of State. My final publication from my time at USC came out on my first day in Ghana. In the September 2024 issue of the *Foreign Service Journal* I recounted the story of the "Decade-Long Campaign to Reform Assignment Restriction Programs."

THE USC MASTER OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (MPD) PROGRAM



The MPD program at USC Annenberg is sharpening its focus on academic excellence and practical engagement to address the evolving challenges of global communication and international security.

“Our mission combines academic rigor with practical relevance to find innovative solutions to today’s public diplomacy challenges,” said the program’s director, Jay Wang. “With global communication and security more critical than ever, public diplomacy has gained new urgency. Our program, the nation’s first, plays a key role in advancing its impact.”

The program’s renewed strategic focus includes three core pillars: advancing research and theory, providing a cutting-edge curriculum for future public diplomacy practitioners, and fostering a collaborative space for intellectual exchange. Specifically, it emphasizes the following key areas:

Strengthening the Curriculum

The program is enhancing its curriculum to address the growing role of data and digital technology, while maintaining leadership in public diplomacy education. With faculty expertise and a global expert network, students will gain essential skills for today’s public diplomacy landscape. Initiatives like “Public Diplomacy Next” will explore future trends in international engagement.

Expanding the DC Presence

The program is expanding its presence in Washington, DC, launching a pilot at the USC Capital Campus in Spring 2025. This initiative will offer students real-world application of theoretical concepts and create a platform for scholars and practitioners to discuss key issues. An international immersion program will also launch next summer, starting at Expo 2025 Osaka.

Leveraging the ‘L.A. Moment’

With Los Angeles hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympics, the program is capitalizing on the city’s role as a global hub of cultural innovation. Research and teaching programs will focus on the international engagement opportunities these mega-events present, exploring their global reach and local impacts.

With faculty expertise and a global expert network, students will gain essential skills for today’s public diplomacy landscape.

THE WORLD OF EXPOS



César Corona

CPD Assistant Director of Engagement and CEO of ExpoMuseum.com

World Expos led me to public diplomacy, and public diplomacy led me to USC. While studying electronics engineering at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), I worked for the Mexican National Section at Expo 1998 Lisbon, where I learned about Expo 2000 Hannover. After two years of learning German and a rewarding experience as a host in Hannover, I realized my true interests lay in international relations, inspiring a shift in my academic direction.

As I immersed myself in state theory and diplomatic law, I struggled to find a theoretical framework to understand and explain how accredited government representatives engage with the public at World Expos. This search for a framework led me to a scholarship at McGill University in Montreal, where my professor of Canadian Foreign Policy, Dr. Marc Lanteigne, introduced me to the concept of public diplomacy.

It was an instant connection: the framework I had been looking for.

From that moment, my focus on diplomacy, public diplomacy, and World Expos deepened.

After sharpening my understanding of diplomatic law at the General Directorate of Protocol of Mexico’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I was awarded a Fulbright-García Robles scholarship to pursue a master’s in public diplomacy at USC. At USC, I collaborated with Dr. Jay Wang on a project at Expo 2010 Shanghai and later on Expo 2015 Milan and Expo 2020 Dubai. I also led a project for the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) at Expo 2012 Yeosu and visited its pavilions with my public diplomacy professor, Dr. Nick Cull, continuing our visits at Expo 2015 Milan.

Through these experiences, I’ve built a diverse network of contacts in the Expo world, collaborating with them to establish theoretical foundations for studying World Expos through a public diplomacy lens. By merging diplomatic law with communication theory, I aim to advance both the understanding of Expos and the broader field of public diplomacy.

Alongside my work at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, I lead Expomuseum, and collaborate extensively with the Institute for the Study of International Expositions (ISIE). Drawing on this wealth of knowledge, I am currently writing a book on public diplomacy at World Expos and planning research projects for upcoming Expos 2025 Osaka, 2027 Belgrade, and 2030 Riyadh. With each new project, I am inspired to build bridges between cultures and contribute to the evolution of public diplomacy at World Expos.

Message from the Chair

This past year has been an exciting time of growth and achievement for the USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD). We continued to lead in forward-thinking research, with a focus on the intersection of public diplomacy and technology, such as AI, while expanding our role as a global convener of thought leaders. Our programming included the launch of the Stroum Arts and Diplomacy Series, which highlighted the connection between public diplomacy and the arts through inspiring discussions with artists and innovative storytellers.

A key highlight of the year was our inaugural gala, where we had the honor of presenting Stephen Schwarzman with the Excellence in Public Diplomacy Award, recognizing his remarkable contributions to international relations through initiatives like Schwarzman Scholars. The evening was a celebration of CPD's accomplishments and a testament to the power of public diplomacy in shaping global conversations.

In September, we presented the 2024 Ameri Prize for Innovation in Public Diplomacy, which honors U.S. foreign and civil service officers for creative and scalable initiatives that advance global public diplomacy, to Industry Liaison for the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Morgan O'Brien.



Barry A. Sanders
Advisory Board Chair

Endowed by entrepreneur and diplomat Goli Ameri, the ceremony was held for the first time in Washington, DC, at USC's Capital Campus, in front of a packed house.

We also welcomed two distinguished new members to our board this year. Farah Pandith, an author, foreign policy strategist, and former diplomat, brings invaluable expertise in countering extremism and advancing global engagement. Additionally, Gary Hart, former U.S. Senator for Colorado and author of 21 books, joins us with a wealth of knowledge in policy and leadership.

Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to outgoing Director Jay Wang, whose vision and dedication have been instrumental in CPD's continued success. His leadership has left a lasting impact on the field of public diplomacy and positioned CPD as a leader in this dynamic space for years to come.

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CPD is grateful for the generous support of individuals, foundations and institutions committed to building the field of public diplomacy. We are pleased to acknowledge the following contributors over the past year.

Goli Ameri	Beth Ann Kuch
Fariba & Hormoz Ameri	Loida Lewis
Annenberg Foundation	Mimi & Robert Liu
Colleen & Bradley Bell	Michael Medavoy
Lynn Booth & Kent Kresa	Pacific Council on International Policy
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Thank you!

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