



EXCURSION WITH US GRANTEES, OFFERED BY THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, OCTOBER 2012

# Newsletter Fulbright Commission Iceland



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## Greetings, dear friends

Message from Executive Director Belinda Theriault



Dear Fulbrighters and friends of Fulbright,

It is my great pleasure to send you this first newsletter from the Fulbright Commission. We have recently completed a major effort to compile alumni contact information and now have e-mail addresses for over 70% of all 1955-2011 alumni, including Fulbright, Cobb and Boas grant recipients. This has laid the groundwork for strengthening contacts with alumni, students and scholars, both from Iceland and the US. Whether your Fulbright experience dates from last year or 55 years ago, we want to ensure that we stay in touch and allow former grantees to follow the work of the Commission. We also hope this initiative will allow us to follow the achievements of our former grantees more closely. After all, you are an amazing and diverse group of people, who are contributing to society in many ways, as well as continuing to contribute to relations between Iceland and the U.S. I hope that by bringing everyone together electronically and providing a news platform, we can bring this group closer together and ensure that each and every grantee maintains a lifelong relationship with the Commission.

This newsletter is not only for alumni. It is for current grantees, friends of Fulbright, government and private sponsors and everyone who is interested in Iceland-US relations. I look forward to engaging with all stakeholders to promote the broader mandate for the Commission, i.e. to promote Iceland-US relations through a constructive dialogue, based on mutual respect and the sharing of ideas.

I hope you enjoy this first semiannual fall/spring newsletter. I encourage you to check out our Facebook page, where we post regular updates and to visit our website for more detailed news. If you have news that you would like to share, please send it to the Commission. We want to hear what you are up to and share your news with the Fulbright community. Please check out also our first Annual Report, published last spring. See: [www.fulbright.is/en/about\\_fulbright/annual\\_reports/](http://www.fulbright.is/en/about_fulbright/annual_reports/).

Let's stay in touch!

### FULBRIGHT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

#### Registration information

All alumni of the US-Iceland Fulbright Program, as well as Boas and Cobb grant recipients, are automatically members of the Fulbright Alumni Association in Iceland, which was established 4 years ago. This vibrant group does great work to strengthen the sense of community amongst Fulbrighters, including hosting terrific events. If you know any alumni who are not currently registered in our database, please ask them to send us their contact information, so we can add them to our mailing list.

To add or change contact information, contact: [fulbright@fulbright.is](mailto:fulbright@fulbright.is)

The following companies are proud partners of Fulbright Iceland

Vesturgarður ehf.

## Fulbright alumnus showcases film at RIFF

Andrea Sisson, Fulbright 2010-2011, came back to Iceland in October to showcase the film she shot and produced during her Fulbright stay in Iceland.

The film, "I Send You This Place," was accepted at the Reykjavik International Film Festival. RIFF has gained a well-deserved reputation as one of the most insightful and entertaining film events in Europe. Given the tough competition among young filmmakers to get a spot at RIFF, Andrea's accomplishment is all the more impressive. She embodies what Fulbright is all about, as she brings Icelanders and Americans together with exciting artistic projects.

"I Send You This Place" is a serious and beautiful film, comparing the drastic nature patterns of Iceland to the sometimes dramatic conditions of human nature, especially in those with mental and mood disorders.

Andrea has a brother who has struggled with depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia since the age of eight. The film is part documentary, part fictional performance, and part poetry. It explores her own perspective on illness, using Iceland as a guide, inspiring new paradigms and perspectives on illness, treatment, and human-nature.



*The Fulbright Commission hosted a reception to celebrate Andrea's film during RIFF, with support from the US Embassy. Here you can see the guest of honor with the Executive Director and Eric Green, Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy.*

## Join us for a traditional Thanksgiving celebration on November 17<sup>th</sup>

Ragnhildur Sigurðardóttir, Chairman of the Fulbright Alumni Association in Iceland (FFSÍ)



*US Ambassador Luis Arreaga and FFSÍ Chairman at Thanksgiving 2011*

The Fulbright Alumni Association in Iceland is hosting its third annual Thanksgiving celebration on November 17<sup>th</sup>. This is becoming a tradition that Icelandic Fulbrighters, Americans in Iceland and indeed everyone who wants to experience an authentic Thanksgiving look forward to with great anticipation. This year we will be at the Nordica Hilton Hotel. Celebrity chef Siggí Hall will be in charge of the food and I can think of no one better, since he has taught Icelanders for years how to serve up a traditional Thanksgiving feast through one of his best-selling cookbooks. This is a great opportunity for all friends of the United States to get together and share a lovely evening in the best of company. The American Embassy and the Fulbright Commission are also associated with this event, which is the main annual event of the Alumni Association. **The event will be advertised soon, but for now, please mark the date on your calendar.**

The Alumni Association also organizes the Alumni Talk Series. We started last year with a presentation by Fulbright scholar and renowned geophysicist Magnús Tumi Guðmundsson, who gave a wonderful talk on his research in Hawaii. Next up is Árni Kristjánsson, PhD in Psychology, who will talk about visual perception. This talk will take place at the Fulbright Commission on November 12<sup>th</sup> and it promises to be very interesting. The terrific thing about the talk series and the concept behind it is that these fascinating topics are presented in layman's terms, so even those with no background in the particular field can really enjoy the talks. Please join us on November 12<sup>th</sup>.

Let me say that I am very thankful that the Fulbright Commission has put so much effort into compiling contact information for the alumni database. We on the Board of the Alumni Association look forward to being able to contact alumni more effectively now. This should lead to stronger dialogue among the alumni group, which will hopefully lead to an even stronger alumni association. I want to encourage Fulbrighters to get involved in the work of the Alumni Association. Let us know if you have ideas about our work or expertise that you would like to share through the Talk Series. And for those of you in the US, when are you coming back to Iceland for a visit? When you do, how about letting us know, so we can plan to do something? After all, the Alumni Association is only as strong as we, the members, make it.

I hope to see many of you at our Thanksgiving event and other alumni get-togethers!

This newsletter is published by the Fulbright Commission Iceland and is also available online at [www.fulbright.is](http://www.fulbright.is)

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