

JULIE CHALFIN

2006-07 AAAS Diplomacy Fellow at the U.S. Department of State
Bureau of African Affairs, Office of Regional and Security Affairs

2005-06 AAAS Diplomacy Fellow at the U.S. Department of State
Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, Early Warning and Prevention Division

Four years after receiving her PhD in social psychology from Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, CA, social scientist Julie Chalfin is thrilled to find herself doing the type of work she dreamed of while finishing her dissertation. After completing her 2005-07 AAAS Fellowship at the U.S. Department of State—spending the first year in the U.S. Department of State’s Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization’s Early Warning and Prevention Division, and the second in the State Department’s Bureau of African Affairs’ Office of Regional and Security Affairs—Julie accepted a position as a foreign affairs officer in the Bureau of African Affairs.

“At the Early Warning and Prevention Division, I worked with U.S. government and non-government organizations in preventing, mitigating, and managing instability and conflict. In a short period of time, I learned a tremendous amount about the

U.S. government, and the policy-making and policy-implementing process,” Julie says. “My switch to the African Bureau allowed me to focus on a specific region while applying my background and skills to improve conflict and post-conflict environments.”

As a social scientist specializing in international conflict management, Julie has always been interested in Africa. Prior to her AAAS Fellowships, she worked as a psychosocial specialist for Save the Children, a DC-based humanitarian and relief organization. Her postdoctoral work includes traveling to Nigeria to assess their election proceedings as part of a team for the Carter Center, a human rights organization founded by former President Jimmy Carter; and working at the University of Pennsylvania’s Solomon Asch Center for the Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in Philadelphia.

During her fellowship with the African Bureau, Julie traveled to Sudan where she designed, oversaw, and led the implementation of several policies and programs to assist in post-conflict reform of southern Sudan’s military. Her present role as a foreign affairs officer for the State Department’s African Bureau entails working with multiple U.S. government agencies, U.S. embassies in Africa, and African states to develop, coordinate, and implement U.S. security policy in Sudan and Central and Southern Africa. “Thanks to my fellowship experience, I understand how to navigate the political landscape to effectively apply my academic and technical knowledge to inform and shape policies in Africa,” Julie says. “Plus, I learned more about the budget and policy-making process, and the many nuances and challenges that accompany each.”

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