

2003-04

Fellowship Focus

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Wi With tongue firmly in cheek, I have often stated that my decision to accept an AAAS Defense Policy fellowship reflected a leap of faith wrapped in the more comforting logic of rational choice. At the time, my professional and research focus seemed fairly distant from the realm of national security policy, and the thought of a mid-career break was daunting for a number of personal and professional reasons. But my fellowship experience proved nothing less than an exceptional experience. It provided me with a unique opportunity to return to national security policy after a nearly 7 year hiatus from the field, synthesize over 10 years of disparate research endeavors, and become intimately involved in the creation of a new technology focus area in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

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As a mid-career Fellow, I was somewhat concerned about my relative role in the office. I had worked as a senior researcher and manager for a number of years, and did not want to be in an environment where I would be treated as an intern. Fortunately, upon arrival, the senior staff embraced me as a member of the program management team and handed over to me a number of multi-million dollar programs. I handled projects that focused on bio-chemical

warfare detection and communication systems that enabled better operations with our allies. I was the member of a team that attempted to institutionalize a new method for acquiring commercial R&D products for the Department of Defense.

In addition, my mentor, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, not only used me as his Science Advisor, but handed me the responsibility of creating a new research initiative in the area of Computational Social Science modeling. This new research initiative not only involved organizing an international conference on anticipating and understanding societal instability, but the development of an innovation network composed of academics, professional consultants, and military analysts and operators. These various activities allowed me to develop program management skills, and to experience firsthand the joys—and challenges—of being entrepreneurial in an extremely large organization.

I was able to bring a number of hard-earned competencies to bear on issues of science and technology policy and management. Moreover, I was surrounded by some of the most enthusiastic professionals I have ever had the pleasure of working with. It was clear

that this group suffered from no bureaucratic malaise, and it was infectious. I was managing high-profile efforts, and they affirmed my efforts by helping me get smarter in the areas of program management. I like to think that their tutoring sessions paid off since I was awarded an AT&L Performance Award, and was able to establish a spin-off program in Computational Social Science Modeling at the National Defense University's Center for Technology & National Security Policy.

My fellowship year turned out to be an amazing experience, and allowed me to commence upon a new, yet familiar, career path. I recommend it highly as an option worthy of consideration, even for folks already established in a current professional field.

by Desmond Saunders-Newton

The author served as a Defense Policy Fellow from 2000 to 2001. He received his PhD in Policy Analysis from the RAND Graduate School and is currently a Senior Research Fellow in the Center for Technology & National Security Policy of the National Defense University and a visiting associate professor at the University of Southern California.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Po **POTENTIAL APPLICANTS** for the AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowship Programs often ask how they would transition from academia or industry into the policy world once they receive a fellowship. AAAS provides an outstanding orientation program, which is the first step of the transition. This month, the 2002-03 Fellows are convening daily for two weeks to hear accomplished speakers provide a first-hand introduction to how Washington works. Fellows also will participate in interactive workshops to facilitate learning about foreign policy and the federal budget. Altogether, the orientation offers 150 speakers and three simultaneous programmatic tracks to provide a broad foundation for the fellowship year.

Claudia J. Sturges

DIRECTOR, AAAS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

Focus On

AAAS Defense Policy Fellowships

The Defense Policy fellowships bring qualified individuals to the Department of Defense (DoD) to work on issues related to defense policy, technology applications, defense systems analysis and support, and program oversight and management. Since 1997, three or more Fellows have been chosen annually to lend their expertise to defense-related technologies in one of six different branches of DoD—the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the U.S. Army Research Office, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the Missile Defense Agency and the Office of Naval Research. At the same time, they increase their awareness of various aspects of defense research, such as defense systems development, basic and applied research, advanced technology development, and systems engineering.

AAAS Science + Technology Policy Fellowships

Help shape science and technology policy in Washington, DC, for up to one year. Contribute scientific and technical information and external perspectives to federal decision-making, while learning how government works. The AAAS fellowship programs provide a unique participatory public policy experience for scientists and engineers, through assignments involving domestic and international science policy issues. Stipends typically begin at \$58,000.

Fellows are placed in the Congress, the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Agency for International Development, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and other federal offices.

Faculty and post-docs are eligible. Applicants must have a PhD or an equivalent doctoral-level degree from any physical, biological or social science, any field of engineering or any relevant interdisciplinary field by the application deadline (January 10, 2003). Individuals with a master's degree in engineering and at least three years of post-degree professional experience also may apply. U.S. citizenship is required. Federal employees are not eligible. Approximately 50 fellowships are awarded each year in nine different programs.

The 2003-04 fellowship year begins September 1, 2003. Fellows attend a two-week orientation before beginning their assignments and participate in a year-long seminar series on topics relevant to science, technology and public policy.

For application instructions and further information: Phone: **202.326.6700** or www.fellowships.aaas.org.

AAAS is a non-profit, non-partisan organization. Since it was founded in 1848, AAAS has been dedicated to the advancement of scientific knowledge for the good of society as a whole.

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