

Rubenstein Fellows Academy: 2014-2021 Impact Report

The Rubenstein Fellows Academy was a university-wide initiative to bring top thought leaders to Duke between 2014 and 2021 to share insight and spark discussion around global challenges.

Over eight years, the program brought a rich mix of talent to Duke to enhance the intellectual life of students and faculty. Collectively, the nine Rubenstein Fellows engaged deeply in the life of the university including teaching undergraduate and professional student classes, engaging with alumni and student-athletes, cultivating new archives at the Duke Libraries, leading Bass Connections and DukeEngage projects, mentoring and advising students, making career connections, shaping faculty research agendas, and writing new books.

What set the program apart from similar efforts elsewhere in academia was the focus on ensuring that **Fellows engaged deeply in Duke in a sustained and accessible way**, while also providing flexibility to each Fellow to chart a course most relevant to what they could best contribute to Duke.

The Rubenstein Fellows Academy was supported by a generous gift from David M. Rubenstein T'70. The program came to a close in 2021, but the impact of the Fellows at Duke, in the world, and on our alumni will surely continue.

A summary of the Fellows supported through this program, and their impact, can be found below.

James (Jim) E. Rogers, *former Chairman and CEO of Duke Energy (Rubenstein Fellow from 2014-2016)*



Rogers talks to students after class

As a Rubenstein Fellow, Rogers co-taught two iterations of a new interdisciplinary Master's level course that he helped design on *Energy Access in the Developing World*. Taking his commitment to mentoring seriously, he met individually with every student enrolled in the course, and also offered any Duke student the opportunity to meet with him over office hours during his Fellowship. He made numerous career introductions for students. Rogers co-led a [Bass Connections project](#) to develop new models for sustainable electricity access in the developing world. This team's work was continued through a DukeEngage project.

Rogers also helped develop the vision for the [Energy Access Project](#) at Duke – an initiative to develop environmentally sustainable models for expanding energy access in the developing world. This program continues today, and was renamed the James E. Rogers Energy Access Project in memory of Rogers, who passed away in 2018.

At the start of the course, the magnitude of global energy poverty seemed overwhelming – billions upon billions underserved with basic services critical to improvements in health, education, gender equality, and standard of living ... Without a doubt, Jim has proven to our class that these issues are not intractable, that they are within our talents and abilities to solve, and provided us the tools and skills to initiate change.

- Dennis Bartlett, MEM/MBA Class of 2017

Alex Dehgan '91, former Chief Scientist at the U.S. Agency for International Development
(Rubenstein Fellow from 2014-2015)

While at Duke, Dehgan harnessed Duke's interdisciplinary strengths to develop novel approaches to global challenges around sustainability, conservation, and development – including collaborating on the development of the Duke Tropical Conservation Initiative. Alex also taught a new social entrepreneurship course on *Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Conservation and Development*, which he turned into an open access Coursera course. Dehgan is now the CEO and co-Founder of Conservation X Labs, a technology company focused on solutions to the extinction crisis.

Alex's class brought a refreshing dose of practicality and feasibility to our studies as all projects, assignments, and classes were founded not in theory but in examples of real entrepreneurs who often showed up in person to impart wisdom... each piece of the class encouraged and inspired students to do and not just to study change.

- Xander Xent, MEM/MBA Class of 2016

Ambassador Jack Matlock '50, former Ambassador to the Soviet Union (1987-1991) and to Czechoslovakia (1981-1983) and Member of the National Security Council (1983-1986)
(Rubenstein Fellow from 2015-2018)

Matlock made a lasting contribution to Duke by preparing and donating a new [archival collection](#) to the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library. The collection, which opened in 2019, features roughly 200 boxes of materials from Matlock's 35-years in the Foreign Service including correspondence, diaries and journals, appointment books, daily notes, meeting notes, sound recordings, photographs, publications files, and personal files. These materials, which represent a unique and substantial record of U.S.-Soviet relations during the waning years of the Cold War, are now available for use by scholars and individuals with an interest in Cold War diplomacy and politics, and U.S.-Russian relations.

Matlock also engaged regularly with students, teaching two courses drawing connections between history and the current geopolitical climate, *Leadership in International Relations* and *The End of the Cold War and After*, and lectured on U.S.-Russian relations in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2016 and 2017 as part of the Duke in Russia summer program.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
June 17, 1988

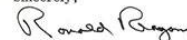
Dear Jack:

This brief interim between the Moscow and Toronto Summits leaves us little time to rest on our laurels, but I want you to know how much I appreciate your extraordinary labors and leadership in making our visit to the Soviet Union such a success. My three previous meetings with the General Secretary have each posed special problems, but none of them approached the complexity in strategy and logistics of our trip to the Soviet capital.

You, as always, went above and beyond the call in preparing our team for this historic event. It is rare that anyone who holds public office can say that implementation mirrored intention, but in this case -- with the eyes of the world upon us and hopes for peace and freedom entrusted to us -- we held firm to our plans and achieved our goals. I deeply appreciate your many months of work, your keen insight and judgment, and your steady presence throughout. From Finlandia Hall to St. George's Hall to Guldhall to home, this was truly a remarkable milestone in the pursuit of better U.S.-Soviet relations and the cause of world peace.

Nancy joins me in acknowledging our lasting debt to you for your countless contributions.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Jack F. Matlock
American Ambassador
Moscow

A personal letter from President Reagan to Jack Matlock, now part of the Ambassador Jack and Rebecca Matlock Papers at the Rubenstein Library

General Martin E. Dempsey A.M. '84, retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Rubenstein Fellow from 2016-2021)

General Dempsey regularly co-taught in the Sanford School of Public Policy on American civil-military relations and in the Fuqua School of Business on management and leadership.

In addition, Dempsey collaborated with the Duke Program on American Grand Strategy to convene security and defense experts, engaged with the Fuqua/Coach K Center on Leadership & Ethics and Duke Athletics. Dempsey continues to serve as a leader in residence at the Fuqua School of Business.

Sarah Bloom Raskin, former Deputy Secretary at the U.S. Department of the Treasury (2014-2017) and Governor of the Federal Reserve Board (2010-2014) (Rubenstein Fellow from 2017-2020)

Raskin worked closely with the Rethinking Regulation program at the Kenan Institute for Ethics and the Global Financial Markets Center at Duke Law to improve the public's understanding of markets and regulation, which included launching a blog on financial resiliency and regularly engaging with the press. Raskin taught several courses at Duke Law, led a Bass Connections project [How Do Cyberattacks Hurt Me?](#), and mentored and advised students on careers in the public sector.

Raskin is now the Colin W. Brown Distinguished Professor of the Practice of Law at Duke Law and was nominated to serve as the Vice Chairman for Supervision at the Federal Reserve.



General Martin Dempsey (seated second from left), Rubenstein Fellow from 2016-2021, with Professor Peter Feaver and students following a class dinner



Students attend a talk on financial regulation with Sarah Bloom Raskin and Congressman Barney Frank at Duke Law

Robert Bonnie M.E.M. '94, former Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at the U.S. Department of Agriculture
(Rubenstein Fellow from 2017-2019)

Bonnie taught multiple masters courses at Nicholas School of the Environment, advised master's projects, led two Bass Connections projects, and launched a research project to explore rural attitudes towards environmental conservation, including securing grants to Duke supporting this work.

One of Bonnie's Bass Connections teams, [Turning the Mid-Century Decarbonization Strategy into Concrete Policy for U.S. Forests and Agriculture](#), developed [recommendations](#) for a carbon bank to manage carbon released from the forestry and agricultural sectors. Bonnie, who was appointed Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation at USDA in 2021, is now spearheading a [new USDA initiative](#) based on the carbon bank idea developed by the Bass Connections team.



Robert Bonnie (right) and students from his Bass Connections project team in Washington, DC

One of the best parts of my Duke experience is that I've had the opportunity to work closely with people like Robert Bonnie, who are incredible leaders and experts in their fields. Robert has brought his substantial insider knowledge of environmental issues and politics in the US to our project, and has helped guide our team towards recommendations for carbon sequestration policies that might actually make a difference on a national scale. Our team had the opportunity to go to DC and meet with the influencers in this field, which we could not have done without Robert's connections and initiative. This has been an invaluable experience for me in many ways, and I'm grateful that opportunities like this are possible thanks to the Rubenstein Fellows Academy.

- Kendall DeLyser, Master of Environmental Management/Master of Forestry, Class of 2018

Eric Perakslis, former Chief Information Officer and Chief Scientist, U.S. Food and Drug Administration
(Rubenstein Fellow from 2019-2021)

As a Rubenstein Fellow, Perakslis developed and led cross-campus collaborations to position Duke Health as a global leader in data science applications and training. He is now the Chief Science & Digital Officer at the Duke Clinical Research Institute where he continues to advance the Duke Health data infrastructure.

The Rubenstein Fellowship confirmed my suspicion that Duke has the potential to revolutionize the perceptions and practice of translational medicine. The collaborative culture between clinicians and scientists, the non-traditional partnerships across the university, the operational capabilities of DCRI and the willingness to undertake disruptive experimentation will continue to create new models of medical progress.

- Eric Perakslis

Dikgang Moseneke, former Deputy Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa
(Rubenstein Fellow for Spring 2020)

Justice Moseneke explored current challenges to constitutional democracy and rule of law while at Duke. He co-taught a joint graduate and undergraduate course, *Legal Analysis for Development Governance*, in the Sanford School of Public Policy, participated in events and roundtables, guest lectured in selected courses, and worked on his second memoir, reflecting on his time in judicial office.

He was awarded the 2020 Bolch Prize for the Rule of Law by Duke Law. Unfortunately, this amazing visit was cut short by the pandemic in March 2020, but not before many in the Duke community had the opportunity to be inspired by Justice Moseneke's career.



Susan (Sue) M. Gordon '80, former U.S. Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence
(Rubenstein Fellow from 2020-2021)

Gordon taught courses on national security policy and leadership in the public sphere. A three-time captain of the Duke women's basketball team who graduated magna cum laude in 1980, Gordon also engaged regularly with the Duke Alumni Association and with Duke Athletics.

Learning from Sue Gordon is one of the most memorable, impactful experiences of my life to date. Sue's vulnerability, honesty, and thoughtfulness on issues ranging from cyber security and AI to leadership and civility have reshaped the way I think about the role of business in the world. What I also appreciated about Sue was her effort to immerse herself in the Fuqua community while here. She took her personal time to give talks to student organizations, mentored students one-on-one, and volunteered to speak at prospective student events. Myself and countless others are grateful for the term we got to spend learning from Sue, and in her words, she's now "family for life."

- Sarah Izzo, MBA, Class of 2021
