

Damascus Full-Year Fellows 2010-2011

Tim Friese graduated this year from the University Michigan with an MA in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language. He is interested in linguistics, especially Arabic and Semitic historical linguistics, as well as contemporary literature and the arts generally. After CASA, he is interested in either returning to the US to teach or pursue a Ph.D., or remain in the Middle East.

Tara Hess graduated this year from The Ohio State University with an MA in Arabic, where she wrote her thesis in Arabic on the experiences of Iraqi refugees. She has studied at the American University of Beirut, the Lebanese American University, and through SIT and CIEE in Jordan. After CASA, she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Arabic and a second Middle Eastern language and would like to teach introductory Arabic classes.

Hadel Jarada graduated in 2010 from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Academically, she is interested in the philosophical dimensions of Islam and hopes to pursue a doctorate in Islamic intellectual history in the near future.

Rahaf Kalaaji has just completed her coursework in the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations PhD program. Her interests include Umayyad history, biographical dictionaries, classical Arabic literature and medieval Islamic scholarship. She has a bachelor's degree from Colorado State University and a masters' degree from the University of Chicago's Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

Susan MacDougall received an MA in Near Eastern Studies this year from the University of Arizona. Her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University was in Social Policy and Arabic. She was also a researcher at the Center on Law and Security at New York University. After CASA, she will return to school for her PhD in Anthropology, focusing on memory in the Iraqi diaspora.

Tracey Maher is a doctoral student in Arabic Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She is interested in Arabic language, literature, culture and teaching methodology. Previously she has studied in Morocco and Jordan. After completing CASA, she plans to return to UT to complete her degree and then teach.

Keri Miller is in the first year of a dual PhD program in Near Eastern Studies and Linguistic Anthropology at The University of Arizona. She has studied Arabic in Jordan for the past two summers. Her primary research interest is contact linguistics, particularly between Arabic, Turkic and Persian languages.

Amir Naim will graduate this year from Emory University with a BA in History and a minor in Arabic. Academically, he is interested in comparative legal theory. After completing CASA, he plans to apply to law school.

Ania Nikonorow graduated this year from Georgetown University with an MA in Middle East Studies. Directly after completing CASA, she plans to finish up a research fellowship in the region, and then pursue a PhD in comparative political history.

Noel Rivera is a first-year PhD student in Arabic and Islamic Studies at The University of Arizona. He holds an MS and BA in Geography from The University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Puerto Rico respectively. His interests include the process of Arabization and Islamization of North Africa. He likes to watch movies, eat ice cream and try his hand at cooking new dishes.

Elias Saba graduated from Cornell University in 2008 with a BA in Near Eastern Studies. He is currently a PhD student at The University of Pennsylvania in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. He is interested in early Islamic law and intellectual history.

Kaley Schroeder graduated from Bucknell University with a BA in International Relations and Music. She is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Arabic Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, where her primary research focuses on Arabic poetry in Sicily during the medieval period. Having studied Arabic in Morocco, Egypt and Syria, Kaley ultimately plans to pursue a PhD in Arabic Literature after CASA.

John Weinert graduated from Bard College in 2007 with a BA in French Studies and spent the following year working at the Subul Assalam Centre for the Arabic Language in Fez, Morocco. He is currently pursuing an MA in Arabic Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. His academic interests include language pedagogy and sociolinguistics especially the use of dialect in Arabic media.

Alex Winder is in the first year of his PhD in History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at New York University. He received his BA in history from the University of Maryland in 2003 and his MA in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University in 2009. His primary research interests are police and crime in early twentieth-century Middle East, Palestine in particular.

Adrian Wood-Smith graduated this year from Dartmouth College with a BA in Arabic Language and Literature. Adrian fell in love with Arabic after learning the alphabet from a book he picked up five years ago, and his immediate plans simply involve understanding the beauty of the language more and more. He has completed UVA's Arabic program in Yarmouk, Jordan, and Middlebury's program in Alexandria, Egypt.