

# Institute for Public Diplomacy & Global Communication

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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Annual Report

Fall 2020- Spring 2021

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## Major Accomplishments

In the fall, IPDGC was able to re-negotiate and sign a contract with the State Department and its subcontractor the Institute for International Education (IIE) for a \$124,000 grant to run the Distinguished Humphrey Fellows program on Misinformation in September 2021. Eighteen journalists and media professionals from Eastern Europe will be invited to spend two weeks in the US: one at IPDGC for training, and another with a host organization.

In January, we presented the fourth annual Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy to Senator John Boozman (R-Ark) at a virtual event. The presentation got considerable coverage on social media, and helped cement IPDGC's position in both the broader public diplomacy community and at the US Department of State.

Other highlights included the annual Walter Roberts lecture, which we reformulated as a panel discussion on global media freedom featuring former Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Rick Stengel, as well as two former directors of Voice of America.

### A. Distinguished Humphrey Fellowship Program

In November 2019, IPDGC was awarded a \$124,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, to host a [Distinguished Humphrey Fellowship Program](#) on Media and Information in September 2020. That program was put on hold because of the pandemic, and this year we managed to get a no-cost extension and to sign a contract to implement the program in the fall of 2021.

Distinguished Humphrey Fellows are senior professionals from foreign nations, who are leaders in their areas of specialization. This program is designed to bring these representatives together with counterparts in the United States for professional development and networking to facilitate cooperation on shared global challenges.

IPDGC will be organizing a one-week course that will focus on the topics of managing communications and strategies to counter disinformation for 18 representatives from Eastern Europe and Eurasia. (The number of participants was increased from 15 to 18 at the request of the Department of State.) The Distinguished Humphrey Fellows will also have a week of professional affiliation at U.S. news organizations, think tanks, non-profits, government, media or corporate sector with the goal of better understanding how these organizations implement best practices in digital and media literacy and fact-based communication.

It is our expectation that the Distinguished Humphrey Fellows will return home with a greater understanding of the threats to free, open, and fact-based media and communications and strengthened abilities to defend against them.

IPDGC will be working with the Institute for International Education, which administers the Humphrey Fellowship programs.

## B. IPDGC's fourth annual Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy

On January 27, we presented the Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy to U.S. Senator John Boozman, Arkansas's senior senator and the dean of the state's congressional delegation. We also announced a \$5000 grant from the Walter Roberts Endowment to Global Ties Arkansas, which will be used to support a competition to bring select International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumni back to Arkansas for follow-up projects with American mentors.



*Sen. John Boozman, Arkansas*

Speakers at the virtual event included Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Matthew Lussenhop, Global Ties Arkansas Executive Director Toni Carr, and Global Ties Arkansas board chair Vernon Markham.

With the support of the Walter Roberts Endowment Advisory Committee, IPDGC created this award for congressional leadership in public diplomacy in order to highlight the importance of something that for many Americans is largely invisible.

As the event was virtual, we were able to have a larger audience than usual, and guests included former IPDGC Public Diplomacy fellows, representatives from GW and the Walter Roberts Endowment, journalists, and members of the US Department of State's Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy.

[Here](#) is the story in GW Today.

### C. Walter Roberts Annual Lecture

Owing to the pandemic, this year we decided to reformulate the annual Walter Roberts lecture as a panel discussion. The topic was “What should the US do to promote global media freedom?” and featured a truly stellar panel of key players and experts, including former Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Rick Stengel, Former VOA director Amanda Bennett, USC Professor Nicholas Cull, and former VOA director (and IPDGC fellow) David Ensor as moderator. There were 95 people in attendance, which equals attendance we have had in the past at in-person events.

The Walter R. Roberts Endowment, which supports the annual lecture, was created by the Roberts family and is housed at the George Washington University. It has hosted annual lectures with prominent foreign policy figures since 2011.

The panel was featured on GW Today [here](#), and also covered by Voice of America. The video of the 2021 Walter Roberts Annual Lecture can be found [here](#) on the IPDGC website.

## Speaker and Events

The Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication hosted or co-sponsored 7 speakers and events during the 2020-2021 academic year. All but one featured either female speakers or moderators.

### A. Events (with titles, dates, and numbers of attendees) included:

Event	Date	Attendees
<b>Fall 2020</b>		
Investigative Journalism and Uncovering Human Rights Abuses Against Minorities in Indonesia, collaborating with the Sigur Center for Asian Studies ESIA, Organization for Asian Studies and Sigma Iota Rho*	10/13/20	-
<b>Spring 2020</b>		
Congressional Leadership Award to Senator John Boozman*	01/27/2020	30
Film Q&A with Bryan Fogel, director of the documentary "The Dissident", collaborating with LEAP initiative	02/02/21	-
Panel: Pandemic and Press Freedoms in Southeast Asia*	02/23/21	25
2021 International Women of Courage*	04/04/21	-



Walter Roberts Annual Lecture*	04/08/21	95
Book Talk: Television and the Afghan Culture Wars, in collaboration with the Sigur Center for Asian Studies*	04/13/21	23

\* Featured either a female speaker or moderator.

## Outreach/ Other

### A. Emergency Summer Internship Awards:

The Walter Roberts Endowment (WRE) and the Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication (IPDGC) created a \$15,000 fund to support opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students at the George Washington University, thus enabling them to undertake internships in public diplomacy programs during summer 2021.

Six grants were awarded to students to support unfunded internships or similar opportunities in public diplomacy as determined by the Walter Roberts Endowment. The six grantees are scheduled to work at the Alliance for International Exchange, Strategies for International Development, the Press Office at the US Embassy in London, Global Ties US, and with IPDGC.

### B. Public Diplomacy Fellow:

IPDGC is fortunate to have a full-time diplomat in residence, whose salary is paid by the State Department. Emilia Puma, the public diplomacy fellow for 2020-2021, has continued in her predecessors' tradition of being both active and helpful. Emilia taught an introductory course in public diplomacy during both the fall and spring semesters, and advised the IPDGC director in the areas of programming and outreach.

Former public diplomacy fellow Robert Ogburn continued to contribute to the PDx (Public Diplomacy Examined) podcast series, available on our blog and also [here](#).

### C. Other Fellows and Affiliated Faculty:

Former Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine and Former VOA Director David Ensor stayed on as Walter Roberts fellows, helping to raise the status and visibility of IPDGC. Both continued to be available to moderate events, contribute to the "Smart Power" blog, and advise the director of the institute.

As Walter Roberts fellows, Tara Sonenshine and David Ensor join former senior diplomat Robert Ogburn and veteran public diplomacy expert Bruce Gregory, the author of the highly regarded "Resources on Diplomacy's Public Dimension," as affiliated faculty.

## Fundraising

During the academic year 2018-2019, IPDGC supported the fundraising efforts of the Walter Roberts Endowment board – the annual payout of which helps to fund the institute. This year we raised about \$6000 for the endowment through gift solicitations.

## Digital Development

### **Podcast – Public Diplomacy Examined, PDx**

This year IPDGC produced 13 original podcasts, with students from graduate and undergraduate Public Diplomacy courses interviewing PD luminaries like Dr. Sarah Hilyer, Executive Director of the Center for Sport, Peace and Society at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and Matthew Lussenhop, the director of the State Department’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs.

The production of the PDx podcast has now completely transitioned over to IPDGC, and is managed by Program Coordinator Yvonne Oh, with help from its original showrunner, former Public Diplomacy Fellow Robert Ogburn (2017-2018). As this is a volunteer effort, the availability of student interviewers is essential. Public Diplomacy faculty helped recruit students for the opportunity to interview PD practitioners and leaders.

The PDx podcasts have attracted a good number of listeners, and there have been over 100 downloads. In summer 2021, PDx will be enhancing its social media outreach with Instagram.

### **Social media platforms - Facebook and Twitter**

Facebook and Twitter are the go-to social media platforms for IPDGC. Both continue to do well with engagement with the public and students. Twitter is most active when IPDGC announces upcoming events

Looking ahead, Facebook and Twitter will continue to be our academic and “big picture” platforms, while the other platforms - LinkedIn and Instagram - will be used to target more specific audiences. LinkedIn will be more focused on career and professional development as many of our students use the platform for networking and job-seeking. Instagram will support the PDx podcast.

## Walter Roberts Endowment

IPDGC operates in large part on the generosity of the late Dr. Walter Roberts (1916-2014). Roberts was a foreign policy consultant and former Foreign Service Officer who began his public diplomacy career with the Voice of America and retired as associate director of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). He was appointed by President George H.W. Bush and reappointed by President Bill Clinton to the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

In addition to his career in government, Dr. Roberts also taught the first course on public diplomacy at GW's Elliott School of International Affairs, teaching for 10 years. He is the author of "Tito, Mihailovic, and the Allies, 1941-1945" and wrote numerous articles on foreign policy and public diplomacy. He was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Washington Institute of Foreign Affairs.

In 2005, Dr. Roberts established the Walter Roberts Endowment to support public diplomacy research and programming at GW. The Institute for Public Diplomacy was formed to carry out such activities, later becoming the Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication. Housed jointly between the School of Media and Public Affairs and the Elliott School of International Affairs, the Endowment supports events, research, and other programming on the practice and study of public diplomacy. Dr. Roberts passed away in June 2014.

IPDGC and GW remember Dr. Roberts' generosity and legacy through the Endowment and its activities.

