

# Institute for Public Diplomacy & Global Communication

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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**Annual Report  
2017 - 2018**



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# Overview

IPDGC had an exceptionally busy 2017-2018 – hosting 32 guest speakers, launching a new podcast series, increasing its social media presence, and capping off the year with a first-ever award for Congressional leadership in public diplomacy.

In May, we presented the first annual Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy to Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn) at a ceremony in the Senate Foreign Affairs Conference Room. The event received considerable media coverage, and helped cement IPDGC's position in both the broader public diplomacy community and at the U.S. Department of State.

Other highlights included the annual Walter Roberts lecture, the US-China Social and Cultural Dialogue, and current Public Diplomacy Fellow Robert Ogburn's creation of the Public Diplomacy Examined, better known as PDX, podcast series.



# Key Events

The Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication hosted 32 speakers and events during the 2017-2018 academic year. Many of the speakers were guest lecturers in PD Fellow Robert Ogburn's undergraduate public diplomacy class. Almost half of the events featured either a female speaker or moderator. Three noteworthy events were:

## *The U.S.-China Social and Cultural Dialogue*

*September 28, 2017*

IPDGC and the Sigur Center for Asian Studies co-hosted the U.S.-China Social and Cultural Dialogue in the Jack Morton Auditorium. The program was opened by GW President LeBlanc, and featured remarks by U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao, People's Republic of China Vice Premier Liu Yandong, and U.S. Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos. The program consisted of a wide-ranging dialogue between four "next-gen" Americans and four Chinese special guests, who discussed topics including education and the environment, health, media, and the arts and culture. George Washington University Professor Bruce Dickson co-moderated the discussion



Chinese Vice-Premier Liu Yandong joins Chinese students for selfies at George Washington University on Thursday.  
(Photo credit: Dong Leshuo / CHINA DAILY)



Liu greets Yao Ming, one of China's most famous professional basketball players, who played for the Houston Rockets.  
(Photo credit: Dong Leshuo / CHINA DAILY)

The event was attended by over 250 people and was one of the George Washington University's most publicized events of the semester. It was broadcasted on C-Span and several international TV networks. The event attracted much attention to the IPDGC's activities, and led to a total of 16,000 online impressions and a record engagement rate of 7.1% on the day of and following days.



U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao delivers a speech at a public event of the first U.S.-China Social and Cultural Dialogue at the George Washington University on Thursday, with Vice-Premier Liu Yandong (center) and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos looking on. (Photo credit: Zhao Huanxin / CHINA DAILY)

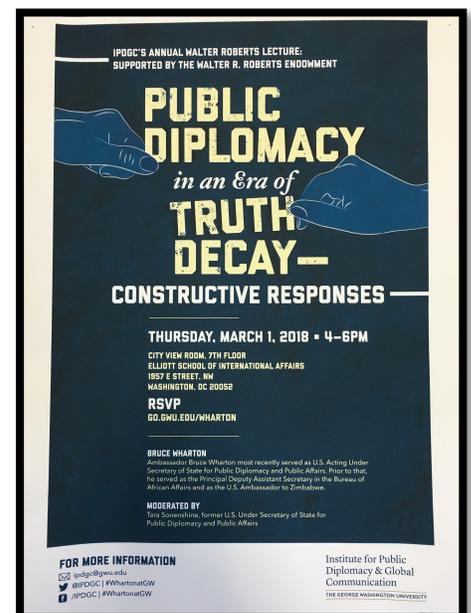
## *IPDGC's annual Walter Roberts Lecture - Public Diplomacy in an Era of Truth Decay: Constructive Responses*

*March 1, 2018*

The annual Walter Roberts lecture, "Public Diplomacy in an Era of Truth Decay" featured keynote speaker Ambassador (ret.) D. Bruce Wharton. Bruce Wharton served as an officer in the Foreign Service of the United States from 1985 to 2017. His career included assignments in Latin America, Africa, and Washington, and short-term work in Europe and Asia. In his last assignment, he was the U.S. Acting Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

The discussant was former U.S. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine.

The lecture was attended by almost 100 people and was live-streamed on IPDGC's Facebook page. Held in the City View Room of the Elliott School of International Affairs, the event was followed by a reception.



# Key Events (cont.)

*IPDGC's first annual Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy*  
May 7, 2018

"We created this award because we wanted to highlight something that for many Americans is invisible... the majority of Americans have no idea what public diplomacy even is, let alone how the programs that are carried out in their name provide direct benefits to the United States," said IPDGC director Janet Steele in her remarks at the ceremony to award the Walter Roberts Award for Congressional Leadership in Public Diplomacy.



The first recipient of the Award was Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (*pictured above, receiving the award from IPDGC director Janet Steele*). A consistent supporter of U.S. Public Diplomacy, Senator Corker has defended the funding that makes public diplomacy programs possible.

By highlighting the contributions of Senator Corker, IPDGC hopes to raise awareness of the practice of public diplomacy, and its importance to the American people. At the request of Senator Corker, the event was small, but nevertheless attracted considerable attention. Apart from Director Steele, the event featured remarks from other speakers: Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Marie Royce, Broadcasting Board of Governors CEO John Lansing, University of Tennessee Center for Sport, Peace and Security Director Sarah Hillyer, and GWU Walter R. Roberts Fellow David Ensor.



At the same ceremony, the Walter Roberts Endowment awarded a \$5000 grant for sports diplomacy to the University of Tennessee's Center for Sports, Peace, and Society.

Guests included GW students from Tennessee, representatives from GW and the Walter Roberts Endowment, journalists from Tennessee and national media, and members of the US Department of State's Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy.



(From L-R) Broadcasting Board of Governors CEO John Lansing, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Marie Royce, GWU Walter R. Roberts Fellow David Ensor, U.S. Senator Bob Corker, IPDGC Director Janet Steele, and University of Tennessee Center for Sport, Peace and Security Director Sarah Hillyer. (All photos courtesy of Broadcasting Board of Governors)

# Other News and Activities

## Public Diplomacy Fellow Robert Ogburn



Robert Ogburn, the PD fellow for 2017-2018, has been one of the most active and successful fellows that IPDGC has ever had. Over the course of the year, Robert taught an introductory course in public diplomacy during both the fall and spring semesters.

He also took the lead in developing content for Take Five, IPDGC's blog, and developed and produced a series of podcasts called PDX, or "Public Diplomacy Examined". He participated in various university events such as Graduate Student Career Development Careers in Public Diplomacy panel and SMPA brown bag talks.

In addition, he provided valued advice to the IPDGC director in the areas of programming and outreach.

The PDX podcast series included student interviews with PD practitioners Ambassador (Ret.) Bruce Wharton, former Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine, Laura Tedesco, Cultural Heritage Program Manager at the Bureau of South & Central Asian affairs, as well as esteemed faculty Walter Roberts Fellow David Ensor and IPDGC director Janet Steele.



### About the Program

The Public Diplomacy Fellows Program is one of IPDGC's longest-running partnerships with the Department of State. Each academic year, the Department nominates an experienced Foreign Service Officer for a one-year detail assignment at GW to conduct research and teach a course on public diplomacy.

**Note: IPDGC faced a challenge** in September, when we learned that there had been a State Department-wide freezing of details, including that of our Public Diplomacy fellow. At the request of Director Janet Steele, GW President Thomas LeBlanc sent a letter to Secretary Tillerson asking that the GW detail be renewed. A week later it was announced that we would have our fellow for the academic year 2018-2019. In April, we announced that senior Foreign Service member Karl Stoltz will be joining us for the upcoming academic year.

# Other News and Activities (cont.)

## The Walter Roberts Award for Studies in Public Diplomacy

Each year, the Walter Roberts Endowment grants one student in the Global Communication M.A. program \$1,500 for accomplishments in public diplomacy-related work and future career aspirations in the field of public diplomacy. This year, the Endowment is thrilled to award **Laura Brendle** as the recipient of the Walter Roberts Award for Public Diplomacy Studies! A second prize of \$500 was awarded to **Riker Pasterkiewicz**.

Laura and Riker join a distinguished group of Global Communication alumni who put into practice the teachings they received in public diplomacy while at GW and in their careers as public diplomacy professionals. Congratulations to the both of them – Raise High!



**About Laura** A graduate of the Global Communication Masters program, Laura was also most recently the program assistant at IPDGC. She previously worked in the United Kingdom as a freelance producer and production manager, where she produced a number of award-winning short films. Laura earned a BA in film production at the Arts University Bournemouth. After graduating from GW, she will be continuing her work in communications in the DC area.

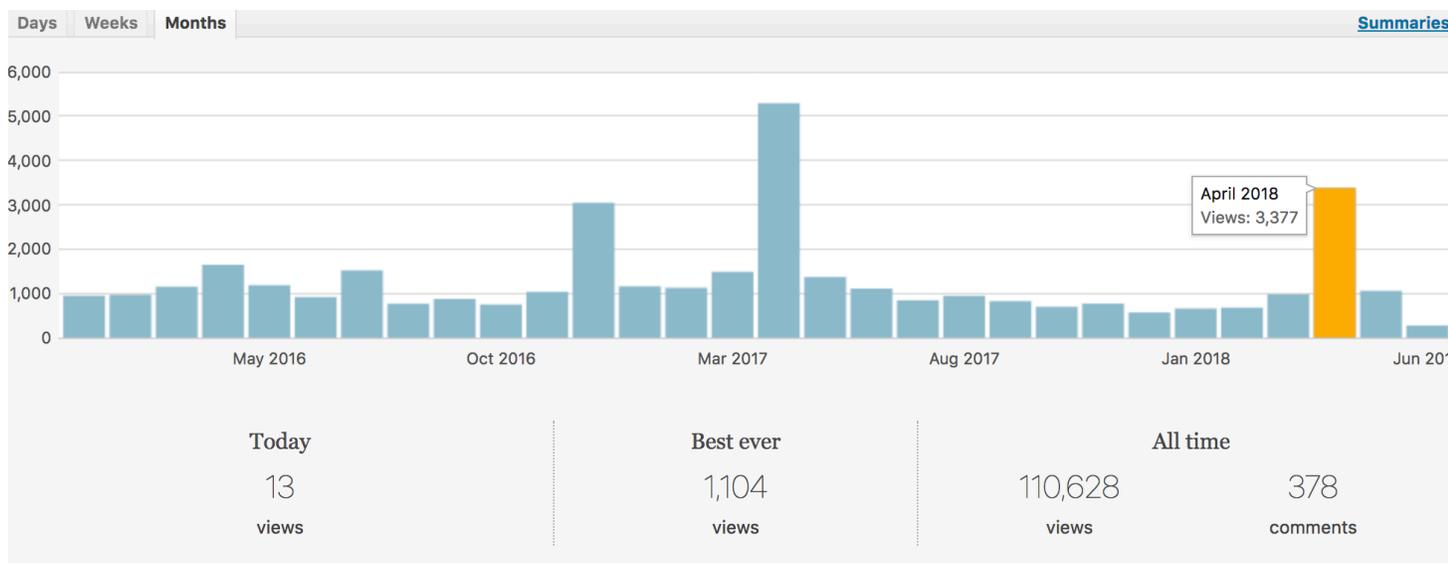


**About Riker** Currently, a senior communications associate for international programs at New America, Riker has also had prior experiences in public diplomacy work. Prior his New America position, he worked at the U.S. State Department in strategic communication in the Secretary's Office of Global partnerships and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Riker is a proud native of the New Jersey coast, has a BA from the University of Vermont, and has studied and traveled in many parts of Latin American and Asia.

# Digital Development

## TakeFive Blog

In 2017-2018, The TakeFive Blog was more active than ever. Students of both the graduate and undergraduate course in Public Diplomacy contributed to TakeFive with their analyses of public diplomacy issues, as well as several event recaps. Twenty-five blog posts were published over the year, with many receiving several hundred views and some receiving thousands.



The IDPGC director also recruited U.S. Ambassador (ret.) Mark L. Asquino, IPDGC's Public Diplomacy Fellow during 2010-11, to write regular posts for the Take Five bog.

## Social media activity

Through the diligent efforts of Program Assistant Laura Brendle, IPDGC's Twitter outreach grew to a consistent monthly average of around 5,000 -- an increase when compared to prior monthly impressions at around 200, and an impressive engagement rate of 2.1%. The engagement with student accounts in particular, as well as other GW-affiliated accounts has been instrumental in improving IPDGC's Twitter profile.

Both IPDGC's Twitter and Facebook have continuously received an average of 4-6 followers/likes per month, which is a steady increase for both of these platforms. The live streaming and increased tweets have resulted in better engagement with our audience -- meaning that followers were actively responding to IPDGC's content by liking, sharing and commenting.

# The 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 has written 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.

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

## **Fundraising:**

During academic year 2017-2018, IPDGC supported the fundraising efforts of the Walter Roberts Endowment board – which funds the institute. This year we raised a total of \$113,050, which included a \$100,000 gift from the Roberts Family.



# Institute for Public Diplomacy & Global Communication

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

When we think of IPDGC, we think of an institute with a role and responsibility to...

**A**dvocate for the importance of Public Diplomacy

**B**ring value to old and new partnerships

**C**onvene and collaborate

**D**elve deeper than the headlines

**E**ngage with now-generation as well as next-generation Public Diplomacy practitioners and watchers

**F**ulfill Walter Roberts' vision for trans-Atlantic Public Diplomacy and beyond

**G**lobalize our efforts through a robust online presence