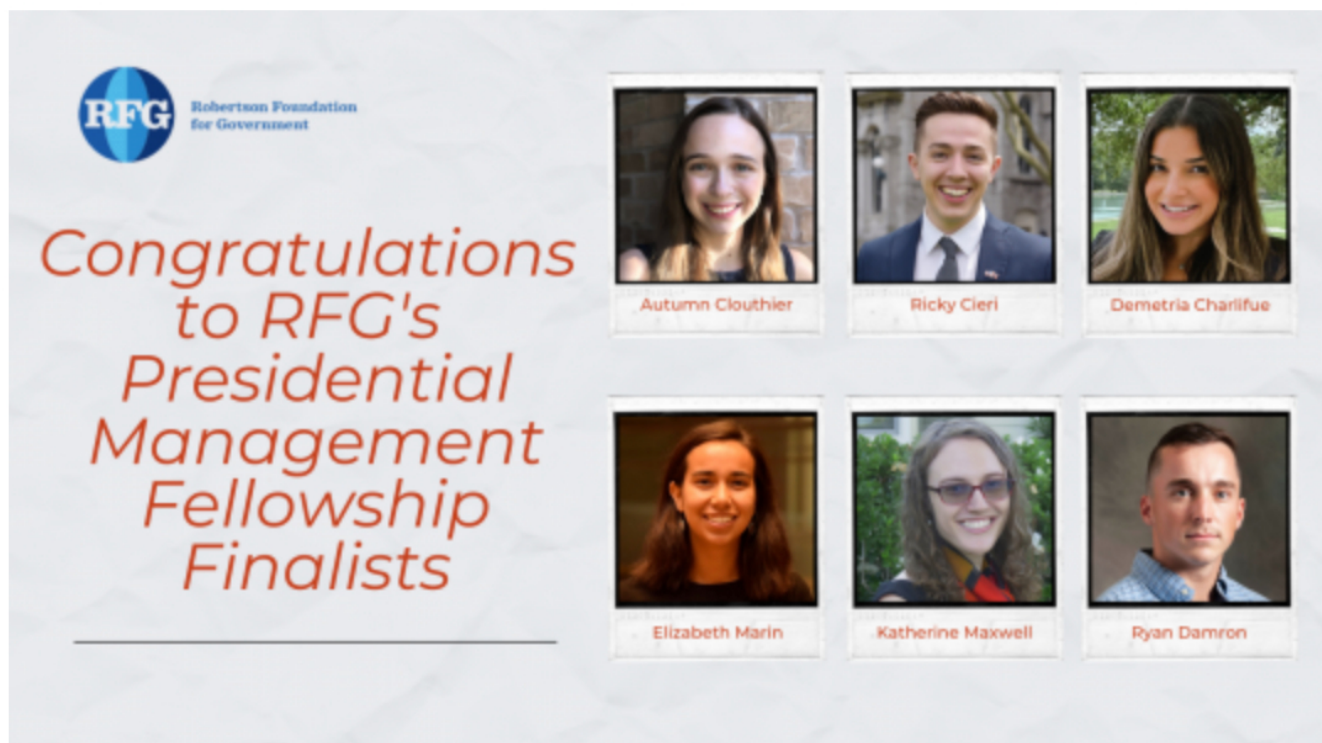




# the ROBERTSON REPORT

*Public Service. National Leadership. Global Engagement.*

**Quarter 1 - March 2022**



## RFG Congratulates Fellows Selected as PMF Finalists

Six Robertson Fellows were selected as Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Class of 2022 Finalists: [Autumn Clouthier](#) (Bush), [Ricky Cieri](#) (Maxwell), [Demetria Charlifue](#) (Bush), [Elizabeth Marin](#) (Maxwell), [Katherine Maxwell](#) (Maxwell), and [Ryan Damron](#) (Maryland).

As PMF Finalists they are currently vying for a PMF appointment at Federal Agencies such as the U.S. Space Command, USAID, and the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, and State, among others. Once appointed, these Presidential Management Fellows will complete a two-year long leadership development program that includes employment at a Federal Agency, management training, rotational assignments within the U.S. Government, and the opportunity to convert into a permanent civil service position at the conclusion of the program.

A prestigious leadership development initiative, the PMF Program was founded more than three decades ago and annually offers an entry point into government service for candidates

three decades ago and annually offers an entry point into government service for candidates with advanced degrees. PMF Finalists were chosen from an applicant pool of more than 8,000 individuals and join a cohort of more than 1,000 candidates chosen as PMF Finalists. RFG is proud of their accomplishment and applauds their steadfast commitment to a career in public service.

## **A Message from RFG President, Geoff Robertson**

Dear Fellows and Friends,

I want to wish you a healthy and happy start to the spring season. I would also like to share my excitement at having Dr. Robin Renee Sanders join our Advisory Board. A former senior career U.S. diplomat, Dr. Sanders now spearheads efforts at improving business and trade relationships between the U.S. and African nations through her FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative and her FE3DS LLC advisory firm. Please join me in welcoming her to the RFG Family! Additionally, I must express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Michael Schneider, who will be retiring from his role as RFG Career Advisor at the end of this month. Dr. Schneider has been an integral part of the RFG team for more than 10 years and has provided incredible support to our fellows and alumni as they navigate their careers in federal service. We wish him the absolute best in his retirement and thank him for all that he has done on behalf of the Foundation.

On a separate, yet important note, recent tragic events in Ukraine have led me to recall the original vision for what would become the Robertson Foundation for Government. The Foundation was created with a mission to help defend and extend freedom throughout the world. Charles and Marie Robertson took seriously the call by President John F. Kennedy to the nation, especially young people, to support our democratic ideals through public service. We were engaged then in an historic struggle between rival values and systems of governance. From the vantage point of the founders of the Robertson Foundation, this struggle demanded the best efforts of our nation.

The reality and global impacts of today's conflict in Ukraine underscore for us as a Foundation the importance of cultivating public service leaders and a globally engaged federal workforce capable of defending democracy and addressing present and future international security threats. The Foundation remains committed to nurturing these talented, dedicated federal public servants to build good governance, foster international stability and cooperation, and secure freedom in our nation and across the globe.

To all of our fellows and alumni, thank you for your continued efforts in public service and for making our family's mission a reality. We are proud to have RFG alumni and fellows currently serving on Ukraine Task Forces across government. Your efforts in support of global security and the protection of the Ukrainian people are the embodiment of what my grandparents envisioned over 50 years ago.

Sincerely,

Geoff Robertson

## **Dr. Robin Renee Sanders Joins the RFG Advisory Board**





Dr. Robin Renee Sanders is the newest member of the RFG Advisory Board. She comes to the Advisory Board with extensive experience as a senior career U.S. diplomat, having served as U.S. Ambassador to the Republics of Nigeria and the Congo, as Africa Director for the White House National Security Council, and as a diplomat posted to countries such as Senegal, Namibia, and Sudan.

Dr. Sanders is currently the CEO of the FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative and the FE3DS LLC advisory firm, both of which specialize in promoting business, trade, and investment between the U.S. and African nations.

[READ MORE ABOUT DR. SANDERS](#)

## Alumni Spotlight: Mark Titus Hoover

[Mark Titus Hoover](#) (Fletcher, 2015) was recently selected to join the Aspen Strategy Group's second class of [32 Rising Leaders](#). These Rising Leaders are chosen for their work in the national security and foreign policy fields and for their ability to drive change through dialogue, leadership, and action. In recognition of this honor, we connected with Mark to discuss his goals for engaging as a Rising Leader with the Aspen Strategy Group.

Currently serving as a Foreign Affairs Officer at the Department of State, Mark shared his driving motivation for public service and the lessons he has learned throughout his career in the Federal Government.

[READ MORE](#)



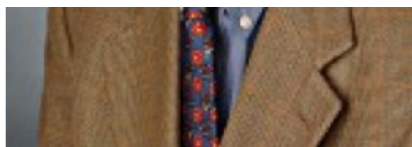
## Dr. Michael Schneider Retires from RFG



After more than 10 years of service as the Career Advisor to the Foundation's fellows and alumni, [Dr. Michael Schneider](#) will be retiring from this role effective at the end of March 2022. He has graciously agreed to continue advising the Foundation's staff and board.

RFG would like to express our profound gratitude to Dr. Schneider for all that he has done on behalf of our RFG fellows and alumni and for his incredible contributions to the Foundation's mission and efforts.

An avid writer and dedicated public servant who served in the U.S. Foreign Service and the Civil/Senior Executive



Service with the U.S. Information Agency and the Department of State for more than 30 years, Dr. Schneider has written regularly on behalf of the RFG newsletter. The following piece written on the eve of his retirement, reflects on the lessons learned during his time in government and identifies future foreign policy challenges that RFG fellows and alumni will face. He offers insight, guidance, and encouragement to our fellows and alumni, whose "leadership will meet the tests of time."

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## The Special Robertson Opportunity: Taking on the Challenges of Global Affairs

*By Dr. Michael Schneider*

In 1961 just as Charles and Marie Robertson were envisioning a foundation to help fulfill JFK's call to public service, a fledgling reporter for the Newark (NJ) Evening News applied to the Foreign Service of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA).

On October 20, 1962, my class of USIA junior FSOs was sworn in. We awaited the iconic journalist and then-Director of USIA, Edward R. Murrow, to administer the oath of office. When he didn't show up for the ceremony we were dismayed. Our trainers had assured us he would welcome us officially.

A far more important reason kept Murrow at the White House that day: to advise Kennedy on how the U.S. should deal with the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The world teetered on the edge of a nuclear cataclysm. We wondered what we had signed up for. The tension was radioactive. But leaders stepped back from the brink, and over time found a way to compete and conflict short of all-out war.

Today the Russian military causes terrible pain and suffering among the Ukrainian people and is destroying Ukrainian cities. Leaders in the West are providing support to Ukraine and are aware of the Russian challenge to international order and peace, yet are reluctant to take steps that might lead to an escalated conflict.

We seem to have returned full cycle to that time some 60 years ago in which every move of the great powers implied a possible nuclear war – except that nuclear war today would be far more devastating.

In those six decades, I've seen major changes and ongoing global challenges. I enjoyed the opportunity in my own public service to contribute a little to American interests and a better world regarding each of these changes. My work with Robertson Fellows has revealed to me how much more complex the world of 2022 is from the 1960s.

Each of the revolutions of the past six decades offers important opportunities for RFG Fellows to fulfill the mission posed by the original 'new frontier' concept of the early 60s and to pave the way to master new frontiers in this century.

CONTINUE READING



## RFG Hires Robertson Alumna as New Chief Program Officer

In January 2022, RFG hired one of its own! Sharon Swabb (UCSD, 2012) joined the RFG team as Chief Program Officer for Fellowships and Career Development. In this capacity, Mrs. Swabb leads the Foundation's professional development programming for its fellows and alumni, along with providing career advising services. She also oversees the Foundation's alumni engagement efforts and joins with our Vice President in managing the Foundation's operations and partnership engagement.

Mrs. Swabb most recently served as a Career Coach at The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. Prior to that, she was a political appointee at both the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the White House Presidential Personnel Office.



[READ MORE ABOUT SHARON SWABB](#)

## Communications Update



The Robertson Foundation for Government is excited to announce that it will be working with Melwood Global, a strategic communications and creative design firm, on the creation of future content for its newsletter and social media platforms, along with the implementation of a long-term strategic communications strategy. As fellows and alumni, you may be contacted by the Melwood Global team in support of RFG's communications efforts. To that end, we would like to introduce [Amanda Munger](#), a partner at Melwood Global, and [Laura Giordano](#), an account executive at Melwood Global, who are directly working with RFG.

[READ MORE ABOUT MELWOOD GLOBAL](#)

## Professional Development Resources

### RFG Professional Development Fund

A friendly reminder that RFG offers funding up to \$599 annually to RFG alumni in support of their professional development. If you would like more information and to apply for this funding, please contact Sharon Swabb at [sswabb@rfg.org](mailto:sswabb@rfg.org).

### The Washington Post Subscription

Members of the U.S. military and government with a valid .mil or .gov email address are

eligible for free digital content access to The Washington Post! To start your free digital subscription, please click [HERE](#).

### **Open Opportunities on USAJobs**

[Open Opportunities](#) is a federal government-wide program offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees and internships to students. The program facilitates collaboration and knowledge sharing across the federal government. Find opportunities across government that will help you make new connections and develop yourself as a professional!

## **Upcoming Events**

### **April 4**

#### **DHS Office of Intelligence & Analysis Virtual Career Profile Session, Hosted by the University of Maryland, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)**

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET

To RSVP, please email Eva Coll at UMD START at [escoll@umd.edu](mailto:escoll@umd.edu)

### **April 4**

#### **Careers in Commercial Diplomacy, Hosted by APSIA**

12:00 p.m. ET

The U.S. Department of Commerce Recruitment and Outreach Team will speak on careers in the U.S. Commercial Service. To register, please email [CS-AssessmentTeam@trade.gov](mailto:CS-AssessmentTeam@trade.gov) with a message indicating you would like to attend the "APSIA information session on the Department of Commerce's Foreign Service Career as a Commercial Diplomat on April 4, 2022."

### **April 5, 8:30-10:00 a.m. ET & May 3, 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET**

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Service Officer Trainee Recruitment Program**

The USDA is hosting virtual public information sessions to recruit Foreign Service Officers for its Foreign Agricultural Service. Register for these sessions [HERE](#)

### **Week of April 18 - Date and Time TBD**

#### **RFG Alumni Career Panel: Careers in Conservation & Environmental Sustainability**

In recognition of Earth Day, we here at RFG will be hosting a virtual panel presentation on careers in conservation and environmental sustainability. The presentation will feature RFG alumni speakers, who have pursued careers in this field. Please stay tuned for additional details regarding this event.

### **May 11**

#### **NextGen Virtual Training Summit: Getting Ahead in Gov**

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. ET

This summit is geared towards those just starting out in public service or who have a few years of experience. The agenda will include sessions on career planning, peer management, creating your personal brand, managing up and more! You'll learn the concepts and fundamentals to build the career you want in public service. There is no cost to attend!

[Learn more and register here](#)

## Follow RFG on LinkedIn



### We Would Like to Connect With You

We encourage you to connect with RFG on LinkedIn, where you can receive the latest and greatest RFG news along with exciting updates about our fellows and alumni.

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