



## Annual Letter 2014

### 2015 San Francisco Alumni Receptions

*Elaine Sedenberg (TX 2006), Western Regional Director*

Bay Area Alumni: Please join us for our first California regional event taking place on Thursday, January 22, 2015 at 6 p.m. at the SF Press Club (<http://www.pressclubsf.com/>) located at 20 Yerba Buena Lane, San Francisco CA 94103. Network and mingle over light appetizers provided by USSYAA, and please RSVP at your earliest convenience to Elaine Sedenberg ([western\\_director@ussyaa.org](mailto:western_director@ussyaa.org)) so appropriate reservations may be placed.

If you are unable to attend but are interested in future events in the Western Region, please contact Elaine for more information.

### Alumni Weekend 2014 in Review

*Chad Robinson (DE 2001) and Rachel Lowe (OR 2000), USSYAA President and former President*

Alumni Weekend 2014 proved to be an exciting time for alumni from across the country to reconnect and celebrate. The weekend included the annual Alumni Reception and Dinner, as well as a tour of the National Geographic Museum, as well as hosting the annual meeting at a new venue. Feedback from alumni was very positive for all of the events.

The weekend began with the Sixteenth Annual Alumni Reception and Dinner held on Friday, March 7, 2014, at the Top of the Town in Arlington, Virginia. The new venue offered spectacular views and an intimate space for our most incredible event yet!

The 2014 Rosalie Wynn Hearst Distinguished Public Service Award was presented to former Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico. Richardson was Governor of New Mexico from 2003 to 2011, as well as having formerly served as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and U.S. Secretary of Energy.

The 2014 James T. Molloy Alumni Service Award was presented to Reverend Harry Knox (GA-1979). Reverend Knox is the President and CEO of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights in Washington, DC. Prior to his position at RCRR, Knox was the founding director of the Human Rights Campaign's Religion and Faith Program. He has been an active pastor in Georgia and brought many friends and colleagues with him to the award dinner. The wife of the service award's namesake, Roseann Molloy, was also in attendance, which made for several special and touching moments. As an alumni, I always love attending the dinner as it echoes the experiences I felt in the program which encouraged me to continue serving.

On Saturday, March 8, 2014, alumni began the day with a tour of the National Geographic Museum. This was an informal event and alumni in attendance enjoyed the museum. Following the tour, alumni proceeded to the Daily Grill for the Annual Meeting. At this event, various organization business was discussed and a new slate of officers was elected.

The last event of Alumni Weekend 2014 was greeting the newest class of United States Senate Youth Program delegates at the Mayflower Hotel. As alumni reconvened at the Mayflower, many recalled fond memories of their Senate Youth experience while sharing insight and experience with the new delegates.

All the events were well attended, entertaining, and energizing. Thank you to all the members of the 2012-2014 Board of Directors for their hard work in making the 2014 Alumni Weekend events a success. We look forward to making them even more well-attended and inspiring in the future.

## **President's Report**

*Chad Robinson (DE 2001), USSYAA President*

First, let me begin by saying how incredibly honored I am to have been selected to serve as President of this prestigious organization. This is certainly an amazing honor for me. As I serve this organization, I stand on the backs of numerous great individuals whom I have had the pleasure of getting to know as they have served as President of the United States Senate Youth Alumni Association. Beginning with John Blakley and continuing through Bob Middleton, Randy Brantley, Norman Fortenberry, David Zavadsky and Rachel Lowe, each one has uniquely shaped and molded this organization. They have put an incredible amount of work into this organization and I hope I can live up to their example.

It is hard for me to write this, my first President's Report for the USSYAA, without reflecting back on my Senate Youth experience. I remember fondly walking into the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel with my mom and dad wondering what I had just entered into. What was a small town boy, like me, doing in this amazing place? I questioned myself even more when I sat down with my fellow delegates and began to talk. By the end of the week, we had formed a bond and I would find myself forever connected to this program. The next year I attended my first United States Senate Youth Alumni Association Alumni Weekend and got involved in ensuring that my experience would continue to live on in the lives of future delegates. I encourage you to do the same thing I did – come out and get involved. The USSYAA needs you to help us chart the course for the next fifty years of USSYP alumni. We need you to share your wisdom and talent, we need you to assist the program in their time of need and most importantly your fellow delegates want to catch up with you to stay in touch and see what you are doing. Together, we can do this and your Board of Directors wants to help in making that happen.

As we look ahead to 2015, I am very excited to announce that we will be awarding the Rosalie Wynn Hearst Distinguished Public Service Award to former Senator and tireless advocate for the United States Senate Youth Program, Richard Lugar. During his thirty-six years in the United States Senate, Senator Lugar served on the Advisory Committee or as Chairperson of the United States Senate Youth Program on multiple occasions. His exemplary service to the people of the State of Indiana and the United States of America certainly merit him deserving of our award. In addition, we will be awarding the James T. Molloy Alumni Service Award to The Honorable Peter Buttigieg (IN-2000), Mayor of South Bend, Indiana. Mayor Buttigieg is not only the youngest mayor of a U.S. city with at least 100,000 residents, but he has also served his country as a lieutenant in the United States Navy Reserve, where he recently returned from a seven month tour in Afghanistan.

I am also excited to report that we are working on new regional gatherings in new places across the country. Please stay on the lookout for information and visit [www.ussyaa.org](http://www.ussyaa.org) to find out more. If you would be interested in holding an event in your area or on your college campus, please contact the Board of Directors; we would be interested in pursuing that with you.

Finally, let me say thank you to the entire Board of Directors. These individuals give of their time to serve the organization and for that I am extremely grateful. Our board has members that span program years, backgrounds and professional experience; it is this unique perspective that allows the board to be so successful.

I hope each and every one of you has a healthy and happy holiday season. I look forward to seeing as many of you as can make it in Washington, DC on Friday and Saturday, March 6-7, 2015 for Alumni Weekend.

## **Treasurer's Report**

*John Selmon Blakley, Sr. (MI 1976), Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair*

On a cash basis for the period of January 1, 2014, through November 30, 2014, the USSYAA had expenses of \$24,582, consisting of scholarships, the Washington event dinner, regional events and various operating and administrative costs.

The assets of the USSYAA are held at Fidelity Investments and are invested in a portfolio consisting mainly of mutual funds and ETFs. The year-to-date rate of return is 10.33% and includes dividends/interest, realized and unrealized capital gains/losses.

The USSYAA's Finance Committee continues to manage its investments with the goals of supporting the organization's mission. Contributions from members are a critical part of the alumni's goal of increasing scholarships and programs to ensure future success.

## Meet the Board

*James Brown (CO 2008), Communications Director*

The USSYAA Board of Directors meets regularly to plan the Alumni Weekend events, including the awards and scholarship programs, and plan national events. Ideas for how to improve alumni relations and communications are always welcome! We want to make the organization a useful resource for all alumni. Thank you to the members of the board for their commitment to the alumni.

The following will officers will serve through Alumni Weekend 2016:

President: Chad Robinson (DE 2001)  
President-Elect: Michael Gonzales (NM 1973)  
Vice President: Fernando Saldivar (CA 1994)  
Secretary: Jamarr Brown (SC 2005)  
Treasurer: John Blakley (MI 1976)  
Liaison Officer: Rawle Andrews (TX 1983)  
Parliamentarian: Zhan Okuda-Lim (NV 2010)  
Communications Director: James Brown (CO 2008)  
Technology Director: David Zavadsky (WI 1990)  
Alumni Programs Director: Amarilis Lugo de Fabritz (MA 1985)

Eastern Regional Director: Gil Valadez (DE 1997)  
Southern Regional Director: Chandini Bachman (AZ 1970)  
Northern Regional Director: Andrew Bradley (IN 1996)  
Western Regional Director: Elaine Sedenberg (TX 2006)  
Central Regional Director: Katie Jo Baumgardner (KS 2006)

## Alumni News

*Class of 1970*

**Chandini Bachman (AZ 1970)** still leads tours in the U.S. Capitol. Delegates in 2012 may remember meeting her parents, Connie and Charlie Bachman, at the 50th Anniversary Dinner at the National Gallery of Art East Building. Charlie wears a bow tie. On November 20, 2014, in a White House Ceremony, President Obama honored Charles W. Bachman with the 2012 National Medal of Technology and Innovation for fundamental inventions in database management, transaction processing, and software engineering. This was a marvelous event for the family and at the gala dinner that evening they got a picture with every family member present.

Rev. Dr. **Bob LaRochelle (CT 1970)** had two books published this year by Energion Publications, Florida. His five books, most of which involve the topic of ecumenism, are available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). He has served as part time pastor of two churches, in addition to his full time work as a school counselor in the South Windsor, Connecticut public schools. He also does consulting for local congregations.

**Royal F. Oakes (CA 1970)**, after practicing law as a partner with the firm of Barger & Wolen for 36 years, became a partner with the national law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson following the merger of the two firms. Royal specializes in business litigation and employment law, and continues to provide legal analysis for ABC Radio News, Inside Edition and KNBC Channel 4 in Los Angeles. He also serves as guest host for the nationally syndicated "Dennis Miller Radio Program," and for KABC Talk Radio in Los Angeles.

### *Class of 1975*

Forty years after her USSYP visit to Washington DC, **Carol Frost (AK 1975)** returning to our capital city to serve as the Earth Science Division Director at the National Science Foundation. In that capacity she'll serve as NSF's principal spokesperson in the area of earth sciences, directing all Earth Sciences Division activities, including assessing needs and trends in geosciences research and education, allocating resources, implementing overall strategic planning, and setting policy. It is a great opportunity for her to contribute to the nation's science and education mission at the highest level. She starts the position on December 15, 2014.

### *Class of 1977*

**Alan Aldinger (OH 1977)** is vice president and manager, media relations, PNC Financial Services Group, Pittsburgh. He has wonderful memories to this day about his experience in Washington in 1977.

### *Class of 1979*

**Tom Lee (TN 1979)** is now the managing principal of CivicPoint, LLC, the government affairs affiliate of Frost Brown Todd, an AmLaw 200 firm where Tom remains a member. CivicPoint provides government relations services throughout Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee. Tom lives in Nashville, where he and his spouse, Laurie, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in 2014.

### *Class of 1982*

**Keith Martin (DOD/WV 1982)** recently joined the Initiative for Risk Management at the African Development Bank, based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. He is supporting the financing of major infrastructure projects throughout Africa. Keith also continues to maintain his base in Brazil, where he advises Aon Brazil on international trade and investments, and serves as Senior Regional Advisor for Veracity Worldwide, a New York-based firm specializing in reputational risks.

### *Class of 1985*

**Michael Buckley (MA 1985)** is currently the Vice President for Public Affairs at the BrightFocus Foundation. He lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, with his wife and two children.

**Steven Rice (WY 1985)** moved to Turkey with his family in July. He heads the political-military unit at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara.

### *Class of 1988*

**Gordon Hendry (IN-1988)** was reappointed by Governor Mike Pence to the Indiana State Board of Education to a four-year term through June 30, 2018. There are eleven members on the Board of Education, ten of whom are appointed by the Governor with no more than six from one political party. The Board of Education oversees K-12 education in Indiana. He was also elected in October to the 16-member board of directors of the National Association of State Boards of Education, the only national organization that works to strengthen state leadership in education policymaking, promote excellence in the education of all students, advocate equality of access to educational opportunity and assure continued citizen support for public education. Gordon's day job is with CBRE, a global commercial real estate company, where he works with and advises public officials at the city, state and university levels on their real estate portfolios, in particular assisting with major development projects. Finally, in November he participated in the interviews of each of the ten finalists for Indiana delegates to the 2015 US Senate Youth Program. He is confident that the two delegates selected will represent our State well in Washington, DC next spring! He lives in downtown Indianapolis with his wife and two young children, the eldest of whom attends the Indianapolis Public Schools.

### *Class of 1990*

**Nathan Humphrey (CA 1990)** has been living the past year in a 1740 rectory on the water with his wife and two children in Newport, Rhode Island, where he is the Vicar of the Zabriskie Memorial Church of Saint John the Evangelist. He has

fond memories of his time with "Mom" Hearst and is proud that the alumni association on whose founding board he served continues to thrive.

**Linda Kramer (ND 1990)** is the Director of Library Services at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN

#### *Class of 1991*

**Todd Foreman (KY 1991)** emigrated to Britain in 2001 and is now a British citizen. He is running as a Labour Party candidate for a seat in Parliament at the general election to be held in May 2015. You can learn more about Todd at his campaign website [www.todd4nesomerset.com](http://www.todd4nesomerset.com).

#### *Class of 1992*

**John Blair (NM 1992)** became the Director of Intergovernmental & External Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior in January. In June, he married my husband, Billy Black, in Provincetown, MA. They live in Washington, D.C.

**Delvyn Case (ME 1992)** studied music at Yale, then got his Ph.D in composition at Penn in 2001. He is currently assistant professor of music at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. He is active as a composer and conductor, and has been especially interested in community- and educationally-oriented music-making during his career. Del has written an opera as well as chamber, vocal, and educational music, but his "greatest hit" is his holiday overture Rocket Sleigh, which was performed in 2014 at the Kennedy Center by the National Symphony Orchestra. He recently remarried after losing his first wife to cancer in 2011. He has two daughters, 14 and 8, and they live in Quincy, Massachusetts.

**Kimberly Hamlin (NY 1992)** has her first book published in May of 2014 by the University of Chicago Press. It is called *From Eve to Evolution: Darwin, Science, and Women's Rights in Gilded Age America*. Here is a link: <http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/F/bo17934003.html>. In addition she received tenure at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and became Director of the American Studies Program. She also received the 2014 Margaret Rossiter History of Women in Science Prize from the History of Science Society. She lives in Cincinnati with her husband and two children.

#### *Class of 1996*

**Jordan Abshire (IA 1996)** and his wife, Amanda, welcomed their first child, Rhett James, into the world this past Easter Sunday, April 20, 2014.

#### *Class of 1997*

**Thomas Vaniotis (ME 1997)** graduated this summer with an MS in Management from the Simon Business School's NYC program, achieving Dean's List throughout and specializing in corporate strategy, marketing, entrepreneurship, and economics. Thomas lives in midtown Manhattan with his wife of 4 years and works as a software product manager at Liquidnet, the global institutional trading network. He enjoys using his undergraduate majors in music and philosophy and post-graduate studies in the culture of the Middle Ages to participate in the city's intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic life. He's an active volunteer at the Church of the Holy Innocents, the site of New York's only daily Latin Mass.

#### *Class of 1999*

**Jeremy Utt (VA 1999)** achieved National Board Certified Teacher status from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in November 2013. He is currently a mathematics teacher at Francis W. Jones Magnet Middle School in Hampton, Virginia, where he also serves as the adviser of the school's National Junior Honor Society chapter. The William and Mary Alumni Association Board of Directors awarded him the Young Alumni Service Award. He was presented with the award at the June 2014 meeting of the William and Mary Alumni Association's South of the James Chapter, of which he is currently the President. He is engaged to Amanda M. Moreland of Stafford, Virginia. They got engaged in August 2014. The wedding will take place in Williamsburg, Virginia in August 2015.

### *Class of 2001*

**Meg MacWhirter (MD 2001)** graduated from Georgetown's School of Foreign Service with a degree in International Politics and then served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Grenada where she worked on gender based violence and HIV/AIDS projects. In the Office of the President of Georgetown University, she led high-impact planning processes to take advantage of emerging opportunities for the institution and helped as part of the team staffing President John J. DeGioia. She pursued an evening MBA and graduated from Georgetown's School of Business in 2012. Meg's career is focused on advancing global health equity and social entrepreneurship, engaging actors across the public and private sector. She is currently a Senior Consultant in Deloitte Consulting's Federal Human Capital practice, supporting clients in areas including change management, capacity building, and communications. Her experiences range from gender programming and stakeholder engagement at the community level to policy development and project management, and her primary projects are USAID-funded health systems strengthening projects. She is looking forward to reconnecting with the USSYAA community!

### *Class of 2003*

**Allison (Schmidt) Lycke (IA 2003)** and her husband Cody Lycke welcomed Gabriel Isaiah, who was born June 24, 2014. Gabe was also welcomed by big brother Jackson (age 2). Allison left the corporate world and is blessed to serve in her current role as full-time mom and chief operations officer of the Lycke household. The Lycke family resides in Forest City, Iowa.

**Ezra Temko (DE 2003)** just started a Sociology PhD program at the University of New Hampshire this fall. He moved up here from Delaware where he was working as a community organizer for Americans for Democratic Action.

### *Class of 2004*

**Iris (Macadangdang) Yeung (MI 2004)** graduated from the University of Michigan and got her masters in Elementary Education and her teaching certificate in August 2014. She also married her best friend Jeffrey Yeung on November 22, 2014.

### *Class of 2005*

In July of 2014, **William Huan (CT 2005)** and his wife Caroline welcomed their first child, Evelyn Frances Haun, into the world. She was baptized in October 2014 at Saint Patrick's Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., where the couple was married and are parishioners. William also concluded his clerkship with Judge Claude M. Hilton of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. He joined the law firm of Hunton & Williams LLP in its Washington, D.C. office in September. He is an associate in the firm's antitrust practice. Later in the year, William was also nominated to the Thomas More Society of America's Board of Directors. William and his family reside in Chevy Chase, Maryland and are always eager to meet other U.S. Senate Youth Alumni.

### *Class of 2006*

**Benjamin Backsmeier (IL 2006)** was promoted to Captain in May 2014 with the United States Army. He recently returned from Afghanistan as part of the 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 82nd Airborne Division. The deployment lasted roughly 9 months and his unit conducted operations through Regional Command (RC) - Central, RC-East, and RC-North.

**Kaitlin Irvine (WV-2006)** received her Master's of Education in School Counseling from the College of William & Mary in May. She moved to Philadelphia in June, where she works as the College Access and Success Coordinator at Summer Search, a youth-development nonprofit that provides weekly mentoring and summer travel opportunities to low-income high school students, as well as advising and support to and through college. She feels lucky to be working full-time following her passion! Kaitlin would love to connect with other alums who are either in the Philly area, working/interested in education, or both! Contact her at [kaitlin.irvine@gmail.com](mailto:kaitlin.irvine@gmail.com).

*Class of 2007*

**Sam Inman (ME 2007)** is attending The George Washington University to obtain an MBA. He works for GWU and was recently promoted to Chief of Staff, Office of Military and Veteran's Affairs. Sam is engaged to Kathryn Yarnall of Charlestown, RI.

*Class of 2008*

**Monica Cutler (ID 2008)** graduated Cum Laude from Boise State University in Boise, Idaho with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, American Government and Public Policy emphasis in May 2013. Shortly after graduation, she moved to Denver, Colorado where she is currently pursuing a Master's of Public Administration with a focus on nonprofit management. She is actively involved with the MPA Student Association (the student group for School of Public Affairs). She was *finally* able to leave her retail job after 5 years and currently is a student assistant at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus in the Office of Alumni Relations. Monica continues to volunteer judge and coach for the Boise State University's speech and debate team as time permits, among other local volunteer projects. She was able to meet up with **Jordan Lofthouse (ID 2008)**, briefly last year when he was leading Japanese tourists on hikes throughout Colorado.

**Brian Helm (NC 2008)** was awarded a Regional Artist Project Grant to buy sound equipment for his band Ol' Blind Jimmy. They just started playing shows in March, so this has been a great year.

In May 2014, **Adam Smith (KS 2008)** graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a Master of Arts in Educational Administration. In the same month, he began work as the Coordinator for Student Union Programs at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK.

*Class of 2009*

**Benny Becker (WV 2009)** graduated from Brown University with a degree in linguistics, and he was selected to speak at the opening ceremony of graduation- the baccalaureate. In January he is moving to Israel where he'll be producing segments for the new English version of "Israel Story," which is basically the "This American Life" of Israel.

*Class of 2010*

In the November 4 General Election **Markus Batchelor (DC 2010)** was elected an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in the 8th Ward of Washington DC. At 21, he is one of the youngest elected officials in the District of Columbia. Learn more about ANCs at [anc.dc.gov](http://anc.dc.gov) and about me at [www.markusbatchelor.com](http://www.markusbatchelor.com). He will be sworn in on January 2nd.

**Hahn Chang (MN 2010)** will be graduating from Columbia University in the spring. He has a few USSYP connections at Columbia. **Sam Dunkle (SD 2011)** and Hahn are in a senior thesis class together and **Noel Gutierrez-Morfin (WA 2011)** lives on the same floor as Hahn. After graduation, he will be going back home to work at McKinsey and Company as a Business Analyst in their Minneapolis Office, which he is super stoked about. He will actually be working with **Jordan Rasmusson (MN 2011)**, so it is super exciting to be working with another USSYP-er. While he is a very proud USSYP 2010'er at heart, it is so great that the USSYP connection is strong across years.

**Jonathan Larson (NE 2010)** graduated from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln with a B.A. in Political Science and commissioned as an officer in the United States Navy. With orders to the USS *Ross*, a guided-missile destroyer stationed in Rota, Spain, as a division officer, Ensign Larson now serves in the Navy's 6th Fleet area of operations.

**Grace Keating (RI 2010)** graduated from Saint Anselm College in May 2014, and now lives and works in Manchester, NH for US Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). She is on the Constituent Services staff and spent time in the summer and fall volunteering on the reelection campaign in her free time.

**Rajiv Tarigopula (MO 2010)** graduated this May (Class of 2014) from Harvard College with an AB in Economics and from the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences with an SM in Computational Science & Engineering, after which he moved to New York. He is currently working in NYC now.

**Matthew Topitzer (CT 2010)** graduated from the University of Delaware with a B.S. in Management and commissioned as an active duty Officer in the United States Army. As a 2nd Lieutenant he is assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in Camp Hovey, South Korea.

After graduating from Yale University in May, **Josh Rubin (NY-2010)** spent the summer interning at the Clinton Foundation in New York City, and now works as a speechwriter at the State Department in Washington, DC.

#### *Class of 2014*

**Jesse Austin (NH 2014)** is a high school senior, pursuing a degree in Political Science, awaiting a response from Harvard, Brandeis, and Boston University to potentially be enrolled for the Fall of 2015. He has chosen to do his senior project based on the idea of "service". He has created a "Service Board" for the school, in which anyone who seeks to know of service events and opportunities in the community can easily access it. The purpose of the board is to not only inspire students to take part and understand the importance of service, but also help strengthen the connections between the school and the community. The Service Board will take a permanent residence in the school, will be utilized for years to come, and will also be the first step in promoting the possibility of making service hours a requirement for graduation. He was greatly inspired by the USSYP to pursue this particular project. Jesse has been recognized as a Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen, and he received first prize for the Voice of Democracy contest at the school level. He will be moving on in the VOD competition, and he is applying for the DAR GC Scholarship. He is also in the running for various of other scholarships, including the Coca-Cola Scholarship, which are based on the premise of service, character, leadership, and academics. Lastly, he was elected as Secretary of the National Honors Society of the state of New Hampshire (his highest position thus far).

As **Daniel Rose (TN 2014)** left the USSYP 2014 program, he was more than proud to call himself a USSYP delegate. There is a certain amount of honor that one has when you have met such amazing people, heard so many motivational speeches and shook so many important hands, and he can certainly attest to all of those after one week in Washington D.C. with the USSYP program. He graduated this year as Salutatorian of his high school class and was admitted to Vanderbilt University via Early Decision where he now attends. He has not declared, but most definitely will, a double major in Neuroscience and Spanish with a Pre-Medicine track to pursue my dream of being a neurological surgeon. Also, he is currently the president of his dorm house. There are 10 freshman dorm houses and his is named Stambaugh House. Daniel's role as president includes bringing his house together as a community through programming different events, delegating tasks to other members of my House Advisory Committee, and working alongside the other house presidents to create an enjoyable experience for The Commons, the freshman campus. On top of that, being president automatically makes him a senator for the Vanderbilt Student Government where he votes on bills and resolutions to make Vanderbilt University a better living-learning environment, enjoyable to students of all backgrounds. He is a part of the Community Building, Outreach, and Diversity Committee where a group of students, including myself, program events to improve the diversity and community around the campus. He has also been doing great in all of his classes and he is looking at a GPA above a 3.0 for his first semester. He hopes everyone who reads this has had a wonderful Thanksgiving and he wishes the best of luck to the applicants for the program next year. He knows that they will LOVE the experience if admitted.

## From the Editor's Desk

*James Brown (CO 2008), Communications Director*

Since graduating in 2012, I have been running my own business in social and digital media strategy for small and medium businesses in Hong Kong and Singapore. In the spirit of new year changes, I will be living in New York City in 2015 and would love to connect with alumni in the area! Feel free to email me at jamesbrown1190@gmail.com.

I do my best to keep up with the Class of 2008, including in the past two years: visiting **Will Drevo (NE 2008)**, who is working to start a business in pharmaceutical data analysis; spending a great weekend with **Kylie Angell (CT 2008)**, a nurse and doula advisor; going to a Billy Joel concert with Congressional staffer and concert photography professional **Matt Becker (ND 2008)**; traveling to Vietnam and India with **Jonathan Koch (IL 2008)**, a fellow aviation enthusiast; learning the ins and outs of New York from **Adam Wexelbaum (FL 2008)**, who works on LGBT advocacy; and catching up with **Julie Raisch (NY 2008)**, **Jessie Kaplan (VT 2008)**, **Monike Santana (ME 2008)**, **Rustin Fakheri (IL 2008)**, and **Johnny Schaffer (CO 2008)** for drinks in Washington.



Please consider joining USSYAA's Official Facebook group named

**United States Senate Youth Alumni Association**

and LinkedIn group named

**United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Alumni Network**

**A digital version of this newsletter may be retrieved online at <http://ussyaa.org/news>**