Secular & Religious Approaches to Global Development: A Common Ground?

Undergraduate Fellows Report
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The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University
Over the course of 2006, Berkley Center Undergraduate Fellows, in collaboration with the Linz Ethics Project of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, compared and contrasted secular and religious approaches to global development. Under faculty guidance, a team of Georgetown undergraduates engaged in background research, conducted interviews with representatives of religious and non-religious non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and arrived at findings and policy recommendations. This report outlines the results of their work.

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, at Georgetown University, was created in March 2006. Its teaching, research, and outreach programs explore the intersection of religion with contemporary global challenges: relations among states and societies; democracy and human rights; global development; and cultural globalization. Two foundational premises guide the Center’s work: that scholarship on religion and its role in world affairs can help to address these challenges effectively; and that the open engagement of religious traditions with one another and with the wider society can promote peace.

For more information, visit the website at http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu

The Linz Ethics Project in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, the gift of Mrs. Brigitte Linz, honors the memory of Dr. Andrew Linz, career Officer in the United States Navy and Oral Surgeon. Dr. Linz was dedicated to providing opportunities through which young persons could develop ethical principles and put their moral commitments into practice.
NGOs are increasingly important players in the development arena. In 1948, three years after the founding of the United Nations, approximately 45 NGOs held consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Today, well over 2,000 NGOs, both faith-based and secular, hold this classification. Given the growth of these groups and the large potential for collaboration, there is a need to understand the potential, and pitfalls, of interaction between faith-based and secular development organizations.

Between February and October 2006, we set out to map this political and policy landscape, identify barriers to collaboration, and point to possible future avenues for cooperation in addressing global policy challenges. We conducted in-depth interviews with representatives of fifteen religious and secular NGOs active in the development field around issues of health care, environmental protection, and humanitarian assistance. The interviews were accompanied by a quantitative survey designed to gauge the potential for greater collaboration between faith-based and secular groups.
The Survey

The survey was divided into two sections; the first consisted of general questions, and the second referred to specific development sectors.

The first section asked interview partners to rank answers on a scale of 1 (“very little”) to 5 (“to a great extent”).

1. Overall, to what extent do faith-based and non-faith-based organizations collaborate in the development field?

2. To what extent has collaboration between faith-based and secular groups increased over the past five to ten years?

3. How significantly do differences in underlying philosophies affect collaboration among development organizations?

4. To what degree would increased collaboration among secular and faith-based organizations enhance the effectiveness of your program in achieving its mission?
The second section asked interview partners to assess trends in a particular development sector central to their work—for example health care, environmental protection, or humanitarian assistance.

5. Have faith-based groups become a more prominent actor in the _________ field/sector in the past five or ten years?

6. How would you rate the coordination between faith-based and non-faith-based organizations in shaping government policy in your organization’s sector?

7. How would you rate the coordination between faith-based and non-faith-based organizations in delivering development aid in the sector in which your organization works?

8. In the target populations you work with, to what extent do members of the community place an emphasis on faith and faith-based practices in their everyday lives?
A Religious-Secular Continuum

The interviews highlighted the existence of a continuum between religious and non-religious NGOs in the development field; there is not always a clear-cut distinction between them. For the study, we defined a faith-based organization as any group with a faith-based mandate, mission statement, or affiliation to a specific faith or set of religious beliefs. However, it is important to recognize that organizations that fall under this classification vary significantly. Where an organization is located on the continuum, therefore, is defined by how prominent the role of religion is in their work. For example, an organization such as La Comunità di Sant'Egidio, which balances a strong religious mission with an ability to speak about and approach development from a very secular perspective, might fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum.

Moreover, the identities of organizations are not set in stone. They may be established out of a religious motivation but then move away from these roots. For example, the Brother's Brother Foundation was founded by a Baptist in 1958 and affiliated with the Baptist World Alliance. The foundation's name, originally Brother's Keeper, a biblical reference, was later changed to Brother's Brother after a Nigerian pointed out that the poor do not need a keeper, but rather a brother. Today, the Brother's Brother Foundation may be considered very close to the secular end of the continuum. It has no reference to religion at all in its mission statement.

Of those organizations with an explicitly faith-based mission statement and ties, the vast majority are Christian. There is much less representation in the NGO community of the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, or other major religious groups. The main issue that then arises is the potentially problematic relationship of Christian organizations with non-Christian recipient communities and biases against some regions and groups.

An organization's location along the spectrum of religiosity does not necessarily relate to the degree to which it sees religion as an important factor for delivering aid. A majority of those interviewed in our study stated that faith is recognized as being a very important issue within the populations of developing countries. Religious channels for providing aid have often been found to be very trustworthy, especially when compared with corrupt governments. Essentially, asking local religious groups among target communities to deliver effective aid simply makes sense. Accordingly, it is not uncommon to find strictly secular groups such as Oxfam International partner with religious groups in developing countries.

Evangelism and Proselytizing

Not surprisingly, given the strong representation of certain Christian groups in the development field, controversy surrounds the issue of proselytizing. Many interviewees expressed a firm stance against any groups that proselytize, and evangelical organizations were often singled out as groups with which collaboration is especially difficult. However, given the rise of the conservative right in the U.S. and the Bush Administration's Faith-Based Initiatives,
the place of evangelical organizations has grown significantly within the public consciousness. As a result, questions about the nature of proselytizing as it takes place today and the varying definitions of evangelism are extremely pertinent.

In one enlightening interview with Andrea Bartoli from La Comunità di Sant’Egidio (CSE), we learned that the term “evangelical” is often incorrectly associated with proselytizing. In fact, CSE calls itself evangelical yet emphasizes that it does not use food to preach the gospel and never uses charity to buy people’s allegiance in any way. He explained that “evangelical” simply means to “preach the gospel.” In the U.S., on the other hand, evangelism has a stronger association with the objective of changing someone’s pre-existing beliefs. In both the Christian and the Muslim context, it can refer to proselytizing, and not just witnessing to the truth.

Samaritan’s Purse is an unequivocally evangelical organization that “serves the Church worldwide to promote the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.” They will generally not work with Muslim organizations, for example, which is against their mission statement. Because of their forthright evangelism, they are often not allowed into Muslim countries. Some Muslim countries, such as Indonesia, will allow them in as long as they do not openly preach the gospel. The important question that arises in this case is whether this strongly evangelical organization proselytizes. Although they may not in the traditional sense, they may be taking a more subtle approach. In any case, perceptions of evangelical groups and the varying definitions of evangelism needs to be explored in further depth.

Islamic aid organizations, such as Islamic Relief, can rely on the zakat, a contribution required of all Muslims. Mostafa Mahboob of Islamic Relief explained how the zakat has given his organization a steady stream of contributions (as is the case with other faith-based organizations that have direct links with explicit religious doctrine). However, the Muslim organizations interviewed do not believe advocacy connotes proselytizing. Mostafa Mahboob elucidated this point: “[Islamic Relief] does not go to a region with aid in one hand and a Qur’an in the other; this is counterproductive. Our mission is to relieve pain and suffering.”

“Religion is seen as a potent force for transformation on both a personal and collective level.”

—Peter Adriance, Bahá’í International Community
Oxfam America
A Secular Perspective from Elizabeth Carty

Our meeting with Elizabeth Carty, the National Outreach Coordinator of Oxfam America, provided many insights into the development agenda of a secular organization and potential areas for increased collaboration between secular and faith-based organizations. Oxfam America, an American NGO, has a budget that consists primarily of donations from foundations and private individuals, and does not receive government funding. Oxfam world-wide has a structure akin to a federation, and Oxfam America is the U.S. branch. Therefore, it is important to note that observations about Oxfam America do not necessarily apply to branches of Oxfam in different countries.

Oxfam’s independent funding mechanism has given it great flexibility in making policy decisions and greater cultural sensitivity in executing projects. For example, Oxfam America was one of the only NGOs to remain in Nicaragua and Vietnam in the 1970-80’s during periods of armed conflict and tumultuous relations with the U.S. government.

In addition to reserving policy flexibility, the fact that Oxfam America does not receive government money prevents its funding from being subject to sharp fluctuations resulting from governmental budget cuts. Groups that do receive government funding have had to scale back projects on occasion due to sharp decreases in government funding.

Oxfam’s independence thus manifests itself in two ways. First, as aforementioned, Oxfam America has greater policy freedom, and none of its aid is subject to stipulations about money returning in some form to the United States. Secondly, Oxfam’s development partnerships are subtle: partnering directly with local groups and not overtly claiming sponsorship. Oxfam thereby effectively garners community involvement and ownership.

An example of how Oxfam’s financial independence shapes its work can be seen in development initiatives promoting women’s rights. In Mozambique, Oxfam America funded local groups that implemented new legislation at the close of the civil war allowing for women to own property. Another project provided free legal services for women in Senegal. In both instances, since Oxfam funded local groups there was a high degree of community ownership. This meant that the advancement in women’s rights was not rejected or dismissed as an imposition of foreign culture and values.

Given the importance of community involvement, Oxfam often works with local religious groups that have similar development goals. With regards to field work, collaboration with faith-based organizations often occurs during emergencies or humanitarian disasters. Faith-based organizations also collaborate at the policy level on issues such as debt relief and trade justice.

The Jubilee Campaign, which aimed to have the debt of developing nations forgiven, is
a notable example of collaboration among faith-based and secular organizations, as these groups came together to advocate for changing Congressional policy. Religious organizations played a key role in influencing members of Congress with similar faith affiliations. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops took a particularly strong stance on debt relief and lobbied members of Congress.

Finally, it is important to note the considerable common ground among the mission statements of secular and religious development NGOs. Groups such as Interaction that aim to centralize information about these groups, their mission statements, and initiatives are very useful in keeping groups aware and abreast of others’ initiatives. Groups like Interaction are especially important in promoting collaboration regarding advocacy on issues of common interest, while policy and advocacy are some of the most important forms of collaboration among religious and secular NGOs.

Bahá’í International Community
A Religious Perspective from Peter Adriance

The Bahá’í International Community is an NGO in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with active development initiatives in issue areas such as: grassroots participation in sustainable development, the status of women, education, racism, and human rights education.

Peter Adriance, a representative of the Bahá’í International Community interviewed by the Berkley Fellows, spoke of the centrality of religion and faith in the lives of most people, including those giving and receiving aid. Mr. Adriance said, “The generality of human-kind recognizes a spiritual dimension to life. Traditional development approaches have ignored that to their peril. Increasingly, people are recognizing this dimension needs to be considered to move forward.” This recognition makes the work of faith-based organizations especially relevant.

Faith-based organizations in general have multiplied over the past few decades, yet they overwhelmingly represent the Christian tradition. Our interview with Mr. Adriance was particularly notable for the interesting insight he provided into a different tradition’s philosophy toward development.

The Bahá’í Faith believes that all faiths worship the same “God” through different means; given this theological orientation, the Bahá’í International Community tries to act as a “unity-builder” among faith-based and secular organizations-building love, understanding,
and “unity in diversity” through encouraging group interaction and participatory, non-confrontational decision-making practices.

Mr. Adriance also recognized that religion has often unfortunately been abused, giving rise to public skepticism about religious affiliation in general. “Sometimes religion can be an impediment, because so much is wrong with the way religion has been exploited and misused. While religious fanaticism has reaped extraordinarily bad outcomes, this does not negate the critical role that faith communities can play in development.”

Abuse of religion by some should not bar the benefits that can be gained today from understanding and utilizing the religious dynamic. Not only are religious groups able to present themselves as effective development partners, but religion itself is also a way to establish links between members both within developing communities and across national boundaries. “Religion can be a potent force for positive transformation on both a personal and collective level.” With emphasis placed on the positive potential of faith-based organizations, it is likely that collaboration will continue to increase.

Collaboration on Issue Areas

Crisis situations are generally times of heightened collaboration. Response to the 2004 tsunami was often cited as a critical event that saw many groups coming together to deliver assistance as rapidly as possible. Although there may be competition among groups at times, it was generally agreed that crisis situations promote cooperation.

Traditionally, Western aid organizations have used interlocutor organizations, such as the American Islamic Congress (AIC), to help them establish programs in Muslim countries. However, direct links can be established between Western aid organizations and non-Christian target communities to effectively bridge the communication gap. In this connection, Jana Al-horr of AIC noted that the Qur’an acknowledges prophets from the Jewish and Christian traditions as well—a basis for interreligious understanding. A non-threatening, interfaith approach provides a potential method for Western faith-based organizations to gain trust outside their own aid communities.

The health sector is dominated by the issue of varying approaches to family planning. The difference of underlying philosophies among organizations comes to the surface most often in this area. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa, has drawn much attention from the global community. This awareness, coupled with the hard-line stance of Catholics and Christian conservatives on abortion, has made reproductive health rights an especially divisive issue. It is important to recognize, however, that the health sector has enormous potential for collaboration. As Ray Martin from Christian Connections for International Health (CCIH) points out,
it is difficult to politicize getting medicine to sick children.

Partnerships between NGOs and corporations, foundations, and foreign governments present possibilities for collaboration that need to be explored in further depth. Although controversial, partnerships between NGOs and corporations are often effective, since corporations are sometimes able to donate not only funds but in kind resources. Governments provide all-important funding and permit access to target communities. Therefore, the study of the relationships between NGOs and governments is essential, especially in light of recent developments in Russia and China limiting NGO activity. Ray Martin of CCIH also emphasizes the growing relationship between faith-based organizations and secular professional organizations. The partnerships with non-NGOs are fundamental forms of collaboration that need to be examined further.

Funding
Through our interviews we found that how and from whom organizations get their money is extremely significant. USAID is one of the most prominent sources of funding for NGOs. Organizations that secure USAID funds are able to have much larger budgets than organizations that depend completely on donations from the private sector. There are drawbacks to this approach, however. First, the organizations must cater their policies and development plans to U.S. government policies in order to effectively compete for funds. As a result, some of their other donors may demand accountability. Oxfam America does not compete for USAID funds; Elizabeth Carty, one of its representatives, suggested that there is sometimes benefit in people not knowing that aid is coming from the United States. In addition, she pointed to a growing emphasis on grassroots movements that encourage not only more donations but also greater personal involvement at the local level. Of course, not accepting USAID funds often means needing to get by on a smaller budget.

The U.S. government's role of providing funds has an under-appreciated influence on collaboration. Organizations not only compete for funds, but often come together to develop proposals. President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI), introduced in 2001, have resulted in increased funding to faith-based organizations, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Ray Martin from CCIH emphasized that this increased emphasis on the role of faith-based organizations within government policy has actually resulted in greater collaboration between secular and religious groups because there is a greater chance of being selected if a religious group is included. This example demonstrates the power that the U.S. government has to potentially encourage greater collaboration within the development field.

In the context of a competitive funding situation, one area of friction between faith-based and secular organizations lies in groups' perceptions of the other actors' motivations. Religious institutions have been present in developing nations for a very long time and have a ten-
dency to be skeptical of secular organizations perceived to have specific political agendas. Meanwhile, secular groups have a tendency to feel chided by religious organizations that pursue development in the name of higher religious ideals and sometimes act as if secular groups are less relevant development actors because of their secular mission statements.

Advocacy

Many organizations have advocacy branches that aim to influence government policy. We found that advocacy is an excellent area for collaboration when secular and faith-based organizations share similar interests. United, organizations hold more weight in influencing policy than they do apart. In addition, secular groups often turn to religious groups to lobby for a certain policy area, such as free trade, in order to make a moral appeal to a specific policy-maker.

For example, The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) works with national agencies to craft a consensus within policy that represents the Jewish voice. Following the creation of resolutions within Congress, committees edit and amend them to form policy. Once this has occurred, the members of the JCPA act to either support or oppose the legislation depending on how they think it relates to the group’s policy and goals. The JCPA is slightly different from the other organizations interviewed because advocacy work is the group’s primary focus. The JCPA concentrates on work related to democratic pluralism and social justice, which reflects their dedication to the Jewish commitment known as “tikkun olam,” or the repair of the world. With this approach, the JCPA and other advocacy groups take on the responsibility to improve the capacity of member agencies to pursue more competently the public affairs agenda.

Not all organizations choose to do advocacy, however. The Brother’s Brother Foundation, for example, is able to maintain high efficiency in aid delivery in part because it does not expend funds on advocacy. This greater efficiency makes the organization more appealing to the individual donor, who may be certain that his or her money is going solely to the aid of a target community.

“The faith community is what holds the world together.”

—Karen Dempsey, Brother’s Brother Foundation
Conclusions and Recommendations

• Highlight Instances of Positive Interaction. Collaboration between faith-based and secular actors in the development field has increased markedly over the past few decades as more faith-based NGOs have come into existence. Still, there remains a great deal of skepticism about mixing faith and development, especially in the U.S. Success stories should be brought to the attention of a wider public.

• Establish a Clear Purpose. Collaboration, while useful, should not be overly idealized. Effective collaboration must address a specific need. Recognizing that NGOs have limited budgets and resources, collaboration can even be detrimental, decreasing operational efficiency by taking resources away from existing projects.

• Create Forums to Promote Information Sharing. The secular-religious divide may be attributed in part to ignorance. Forums to facilitate increased communication would likely contribute to increased collaboration and decreased competition among groups. Some organizations, like the World Faith Development Dialogue, have already emerged to address this issue.

• Recognize, Understand, and Utilize the Religious Dynamic. The populations receiving development aid are overwhelmingly religious, and they often trust religious actors more than governmental actors. About half of U.S. charitable giving goes through formal religious institutions. To deny or ignore this religious dynamic would be detrimental to effectively mobilizing and administering aid.

• Listen to the Voices of Target Communities. Making the voices of the target communities heard is essential to successful NGO programs. The idea of being sensitive to cultural differences has become ubiquitous within the development community. But this sensitivity is only a first step. Organizations should better adjust existing programs in response to feedback from target communities.
American Islamic Congress
American Islamic Congress is a non-profit organization that “grew out of the ashes of September 11.” They believe it is the duty of American Muslims to foster respect for human rights and social justice at home and throughout the Muslim world. The organization seeks to promote interfaith understanding and dialogue, to attack human rights violations, and to support human development, with a focus on the Middle East. [www.aicongress.org](http://www.aicongress.org)

The Bahá’í International Community
The Bahá’í Faith is the youngest of the world’s independent monotheistic religions. Founded in Iran in 1844, it now has more than 5 million adherents in 236 countries and territories. Bahá’ís come from nearly every national, ethnic and religious background. The worldwide Bahá’í community is committed to advancing global development. [www.bahai.org](http://www.bahai.org)

Bread for the World
Bread for the World is a nationwide Christian movement that seeks justice for the world’s hungry people by lobbying the nation’s decision makers. The Bread for the World Institute seeks justice for hungry people by engaging in research and education on policies related to hunger and development. [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)

Brother’s Brother Foundation
A Pittsburgh-based charity, Brother’s Brother is a religious aid agency with a worldwide reach. It partners with corporations, institutions and organizations worldwide to both provide donations and distribute them abroad. [www.brothersbrother.org](http://www.brothersbrother.org)

Christian Connections for International Health
Christian Connections for International Health (CCIH) is an information-sharing organization with the goal of promoting international health and wholeness from a Christian perspective. Founded in 1987, CCIH has been a forum for discussion, networking, and fellowships among Christian organizations as well as secular professional organizations and has been especially active in confronting the HIV/AIDS epidemic. [www.ccih.org](http://www.ccih.org)

Comunita di Sant’Egidio
Comunita di Sant’Egidio is a Catholic Church “public lay association.” It was originally established in 1968 and has since spread worldwide. The Community’s work includes charitable work as well as a more particular aspect of development work: brokering political peace agreements between warring factions. It sponsors a prominent annual interreligious gathering, The Prayer for Peace. [www.santegidio.org](http://www.santegidio.org)

Islamic Relief
Islamic Relief is an independent NGO founded in the UK in 1984 by Dr. Hany El Banna. In accordance with their Muslim identity, they primarily are concerned with the alleviation of poverty worldwide to establish social and economic justice. Additionally, Islamic relief works in orphan support, education, water and sanitation, and the Waqf (Muslim religious endowment for charitable purposes). [www.islamic-relief.com](http://www.islamic-relief.com)
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
The JCPA works with national agencies to craft a consensus within policy that represents the Jewish voice. On the development front, the JCPA has been active in mobilizing support around a range of issues, including Darfur, poverty, equal rights and social justice, energy, the environment and public health.
www.jewishpublicaffairs.org

Latter Day Saints Charities
Latter Day Saints Charities is an international aid organization sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It is firmly committed to eliminating suffering where most needed and assisting regions in dire need. LDS Charities supports programs ranging from humanitarian need to agriculture to poverty reduction.
www.lds.org/ldsfoundation

Lutheran World Relief
Lutheran World Relief is an aid organization established in 1945 that reaches out to 35 different countries. LWR believes in teaching communities to care for themselves, their communities and the environment by empowering them economically and socially. The environment, sustainable agriculture, and fair trade are paramount concerns.
www.lwr.org

Oxfam America
Oxfam America, an affiliate of Oxfam International, is a secular non-profit organization. Oxfam has campaigns on several continents with its primary goals the establishment of social justice and reduction of global poverty and hunger. Its campaigns primarily take the form of public education initiatives, emergency aid assistance, and advocacy.
www.Oxfamamerica.org

Population Connection
Population Connection is the national grassroots population organization that educates young people and advocates progressive action to stabilize world population at a level that can be sustained by Earth’s resources.
www.populationconnection.org

Samaritan’s Purse
Samaritan’s Purse is a non-denominational evangelical Christian organization that provides assistance to victims of natural disaster, war, disease and famine. Founded in 1970, Samaritan’s Purse has provided assistance to countries all over the globe through projects such as Operation Christmas Child and the Children’s Heart Project.
www.samaritanspurse.org

Trust for the Americas
The Trust for the Americas is a not-for-profit affiliate of the Organization of American States. With a combination of private and public sector funds, the Trust invests in education, technology, and transparency projects all over Latin America.
www.trustfortheamericas.org

World Faith Development Dialogue
The group is an initiative originally established in 1998 by James Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank, and Lord Carey, then Archbishop of Canterbury. The primary goal of the organization is to facilitate dialogue about religion and development between people of different faith traditions. The organization holds conferences and seminars and promotes scholarly research.
www.wfdd.org.uk
Participant Biographies

Elizabeth T. Augustine
Elizabeth is a senior at Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service (SFS) majoring in Regional and Comparative Studies. She has served as a volunteer teacher in Rajasthan, India and studied abroad in Cairo, Egypt. In 2004, Elizabeth became a John Carroll Fellow and, in 2005, was named a Peter F. Krogh Scholar. She is currently Alpha Sigma Nu’s Georgetown Chapter President, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Scott Chahanovich
Scott is a Junior Arabic and Economics major in the College of Art and Sciences. Scott has spent time in Yemen, where he had an opportunity to observe the challenges of development in a very poor country first-hand. Scott hopes to pursue a doctorate in Middle East Studies.

Jonathan Gotterer
Jonathan is from Nashville, TN and attended high school at Montgomery Bell Academy. A member of the Georgetown College Class of 2009, he is pursuing a double major in History and Spanish. In addition to issues of international development, Jonathan is also interested in environmental studies and conservation. He hopes to study abroad in Ecuador and Italy.

Caraleigh Holverson
Caraleigh transferred to the School of Foreign Service in 2005 from a community college in Chicago, Illinois. A Jack Kent Cooke Scholar and former All-USA Academic First Team member, she studies international politics and development. This past summer she studied abroad in France. In addition, she serves as a co-chair for the University’s Honor Council and a tutor for incarcerated individuals studying for their GED.

Maheen Kaleem
Originally from the state of California, Maheen is a senior in the School of Foreign Service. Majoring in International Politics with a certificate in Justice and Peace, she is actively involved in a number of student organizations revolving around human rights issues such as juvenile justice reform, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, and the genocide in Sudan.

Caitlin G. Kelly
Caitlin, originally from Pittsburgh, PA and currently a senior in Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, has majored in International Politics, and studied the French and Chinese languages. Caitlin studied abroad in both France and China during her time at Georgetown and is particularly interested in the development of Asia. After college, she plans to attend law school.
Sasha Kinney
Sasha is currently completing her degree in international politics and development in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She is fluent in Spanish and Japanese. Her interdisciplinary studies have focused on human rights, Africa, humanitarian logistics, and US foreign policy. She is originally from the Philadelphia area.

Laura M. Levin
Laura, a senior in Georgetown College originally from Connecticut, is pursuing a Government major. This past summer Laura interned in the Congressional and Public Affairs department of the Millennium Challenge Corporation in Washington, D.C. Laura spent the fall of 2005 in Fiesole, Italy. She is also a former member of the Georgetown University Women’s Rowing Team.

Courtney Morgan
Courtney is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences from Palo Alto, California. She studies Government and Spanish. Courtney spent last summer working on a poverty reduction project in El Salvador through her internship at the Organization of American States, and she plans to spend the spring semester volunteering in Guatemala and working for the United Nations Development Programme office in Guatemala City.

Andrea Strnad
A California native, and a transfer to Georgetown after two years in community college, Andrea graduated in 2006 from the School of Foreign Service, where she majored in International Politics.