



July 2025

## NEWS

### ICWA welcomes new trustees

#### Jackson Janes

Jackson Janes is a resident senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund and president emeritus of the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, DC.



#### Joel Millman

Joel Millman is a former fellow (El Salvador, 1987-1989) and trustee who was a longtime reporter for The Wall Street Journal covering global issues, immigration and the Pacific Northwest. He was later spokesman for the International Organization on Migration in Geneva.

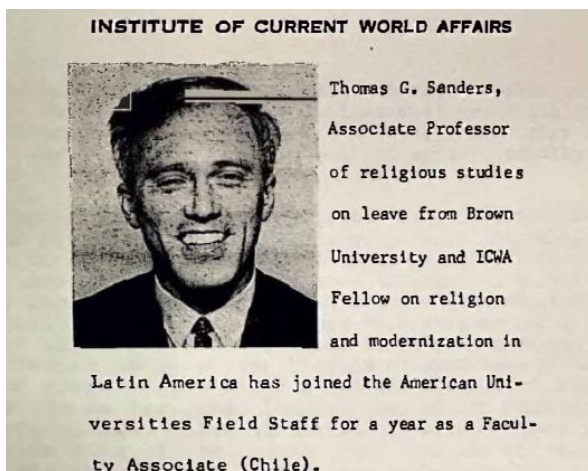


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## Centenary registration coming soon

ICWA's centenary celebrations in Washington, DC will kick off with discussions at the **House of Sweden** in Georgetown on **November 14**. Please mark your calendars to join ICWA alumni debating global issues from democracy, economies and political movements to the environment and culture.

Agenda and registration coming soon.



### Thomas Sanders dies

A religion and Latin America scholar, former ICWA fellow and dedicated runner, Tom was also a 20-year veteran of ICWA's sister organization the American Universities Field Staff.

#### [Read obituary](#)

<https://www.icwa.org/tom-sanders-dies/>



## ICWA in New York

New York ICWAns gathered at the Lotos Club in June for a centenary-year dinner to recognize longtime stalwart institute supporters Ed and Grace Sutton.

## FELLOWS

### Edric Huang



### On building solidarity

The Trump administration's freeze on foreign aid assistance has had "catastrophic results," for LGBTQ+ groups around the world, **David Mixner Fellow Edric Huang** reports from the 10th ILGA Asia conference in Singapore, the largest gathering of LGBTQ+ activists on the continent. Activist groups had relied on USAID, he writes, as societal stigma and discriminatory laws discouraged local donors.



# Brett Simpson

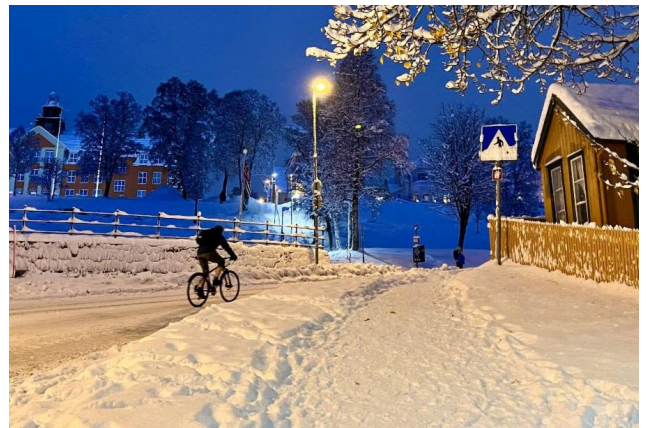


## Greenland chairs Arctic Council

At a precarious moment for the Arctic Council, which is facing existential threats from both Russia and the United States, Greenland takes the helm for the first time, **Peter Bird Martin Fellow Brett Simpson** reports. She asks whether the council's first-ever Indigenous chair will effect change in the current climate.

## On thinning ice

As the long Arctic winter abated at Brett's base in Tromsø, Norway, it remained a force to be reckoned with. "Ice is the protagonist," she writes. "And like any good character, she's dynamic and evolving."



## Rifles, skis and snow tanks

On the day several NATO countries held military exercises in Finland last February, temperatures should have been far below freezing. But with the sun splitting through forest trees, Brett writes, it was clear that climate change will provide a mounting challenge in addition to the threat from Russia.

## High latitudes, high tensions

Arctic Frontiers, an annual international conference held in Tromsø in January, felt palpably political this year, Brett reports. She was also a panelist at the event. Three years after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the post-Cold War era of polar peace may be coming to an end.



# Rowland Robinson

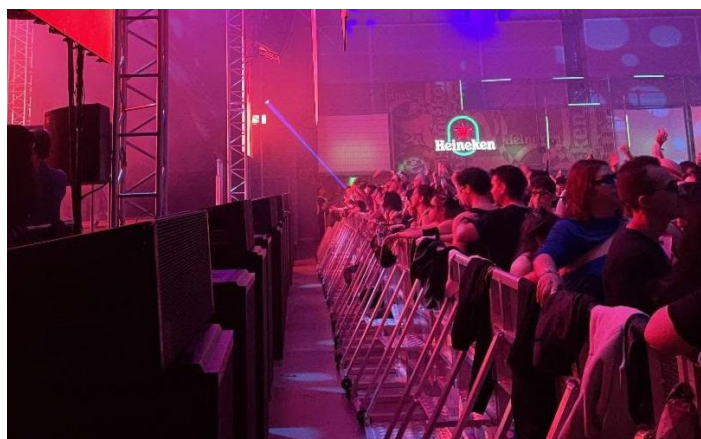


## Portugal's addiction treatment at a crossroads

Portugal's successful addiction treatment model is coming under strain thanks to budget cuts and waning political support, **Andrew Weil Fellow Rowland Robinson** (above, R) reports in his last dispatch from Lisbon before departing for a year in Brazil. He says Portugal faces a critical shortage of medical professionals that has been decades in the making.

## In Portugal, promoting safety at the party

Rowland visits a Lisbon non-profit that provides an essential safety service for recreational drugs users, outside the reach of state health organizations. The group tests batches of drugs and sends warnings about dangerous levels of contaminants through social media and chat groups.

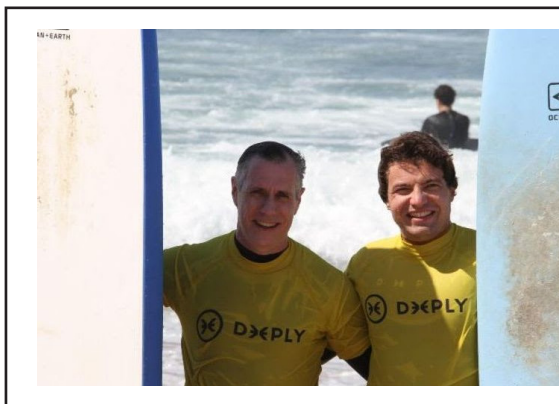


## MAGA 2.0 upends international narcotic drug policy

Rowland traveled to Vienna in March for the 68th Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Traditionally guided by the US agenda, discussions ended in disarray this year when the Trump administration announced its plan to stop cooperation, he writes, opening a path for others to assert autonomy and global leadership.



Read more dispatches on our [website](#).



## Mid-fellowship visit

**Rowland Robinson** took Executive Director **Gregory Feifer** for a surfing lesson in Porto, Portugal in April.



As the institute marks its first 100 years, we're looking back at the writing and achievements of our fellows over the last century.

### Sharon Doorasamy (South Africa, 1994-1996)



#### **Thelma's shoes**

Sharon subtly blends trifling quotidian details with the momentous events of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and reflects on her own condition. May 1996

### Steven Butler (South Korea, 1983-1986)

#### **South Korea votes for democracy**

Steve describes the 1985 legislative election that brought the New Korean Democratic Party into the National Assembly as the main opposition party, a popular rebuke to the military dictator, Major General Chun Doo-Huan. April 1985



### Cheng Li (China, 1993-1995)



#### **A visit to China's richest village**

Cheng visits Huaxi—founded by the investor Wu Renbao and billed as the country's richest village—and questions whether it's a good model of Chinese communism. March 1995

# Andrew Tabler (Syria, 2005-2007)

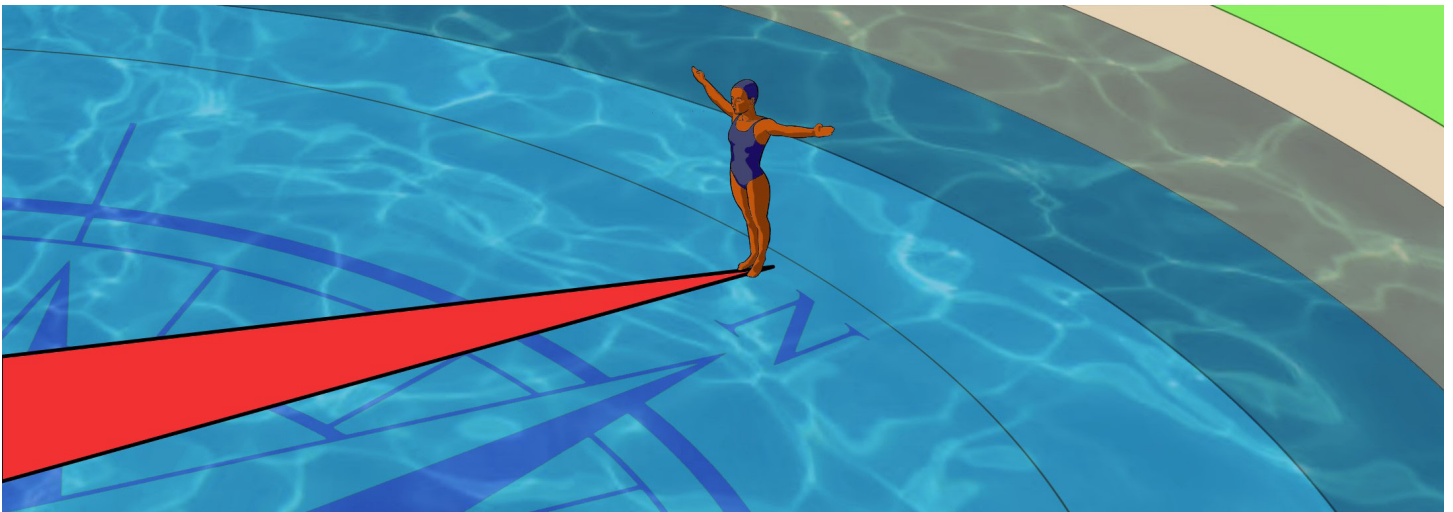
## **Democratic striving in Syria**

Six years into Bashar al-Assad's 24-year rule over Syria, Andrew addresses coalitions and movements striving for democracy. Attending an opposition sit-in, he narrowly escapes mob violence. March 2006



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## NEW IN COMPASS



[Matthew Chitwood](#) returns to the small village in rural China where he lived during his fellowship.

[Neil Gregor](#) discusses Mein Kampf's impact 100 years on.

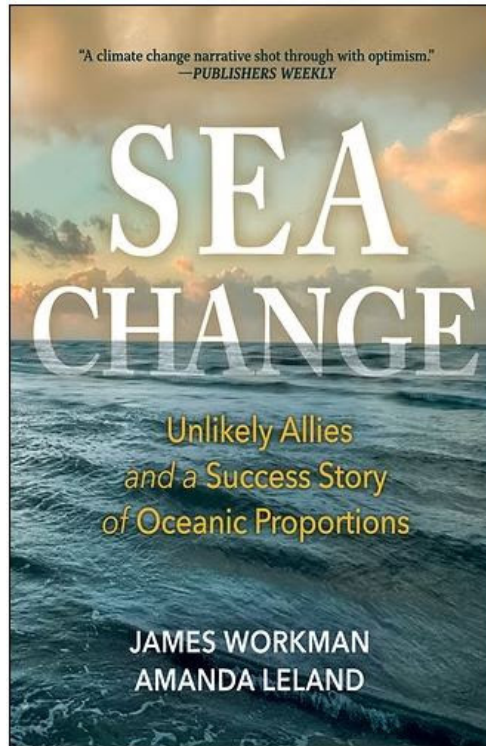
[Joel Millman](#) considers Suriname's "Casablanca."

[Ilya Kolmanovsky](#) asks when people fight for their freedom.

[Read Compass](#)

<https://compass.icwa.org/>

# ALUMNI



**Jamie Workman** (Southern Africa water issues, 2001-2003) and Amanda Leland's new book, *Sea Change, Unlikely Allies and a Success Story of Oceanic Proportions*, will be published by [Torrey House Press](#) in September.

"[Israel's Crimes of the Century](#)," **Suzy Hansen** (Turkey, 2007-2009), *New York Magazine*, June 16, 2025.

Rep. **Pramila Jayapal** (India, 1995-1996) [spoke with Steve Inskeep](#) about the White House's plans to slash critical foreign aid and public broadcasting on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," June 4, 2025.

**Andrew Rice** (Uganda, 2002-2004) and Isabelle Brouman received the 2025 Continuing Coverage in a National Magazine Award from the New York Press Club for "Trump's Trials" in *New York Magazine*.

"[How a Pentagon contractor built a global empire—and a massive tax evasion scheme](#)," by **David Kenner** (Saudi Arabia, 2019-2021), International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, May 23, 2025.

## UPDATES

After 15 years in Latin America, **Ezra Fieser** recently returned to New York City with his wife and daughter.

**Scott Erich** and wife Emily welcomed their second son, Franz, in 2024.

*Please send your news to [icwa@icwa.org](mailto:icwa@icwa.org).*



# SOCIAL MEDIA



**Edric Huang** witnesses two very different public gatherings in Taiwan in April. He joined worshippers welcoming the sea goddess Matsu with a pilgrimage. He also attended a rally to recall conservative Kuomintang Party legislators over Chinese influence.

We also invite you to follow us on **X, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn** and **Threads** for updates from our fellows in the field, analysis and commentary on global developments, alumni news, upcoming events and more. Please tag ICWA in any of your relevant posts and share any feedback or ideas!



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## ABOUT ICWA

*The Institute of Current World Affairs has sent outstanding young professionals abroad for more than 97 years to acquire deep understanding of global societies. Institute fellows have become some of America's leading experts on international cultures and affairs, thanks to the unique fellowships first designed by our founders Charles R. Crane and Walter Rogers. We continue their tradition with your [support](#).*

*Join the [ICWA Legacy Circle](#) by making a planned gift commitment to sustain our mission for another 100 years.*

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