

US-Israeli Policies Not Yet Working with Damascus

By Marc Gopin, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, mgopin@gmu.edu

The anti-diplomacy that has characterized American foreign policy for eight miserable years is coming to an end with the end of the Bush White House. But that does not mean that clear alternatives exist in complex places like Syria and its position in the Northern Belt of the Middle East. It is also true that when it comes to Syria, Israel is well ahead of the United States leadership in seeing opportunities. But Israel has been overly intimidated by the White House and its own responses have been thus far clumsy and uncreative.

Part of the reason for this is the massive ignorance of the inner workings of Syria that one finds in both Israel and the United States. I was told by a top former diplomat in Israel, who is the most knowledgeable person right now on Syria, that I know ten times more than the U.S. State Department about what makes the Syrian leadership tick. That frightened me, as I know very little. It is true that I have worked there for the last four years and that my Syrian partners and I have had some shocking successes in civil society programs that met with approval at the highest levels. But what



Above: The Golan hospital in Quneitra, Syria, near the disputed Golan Heights. Ruined in 1974, after the Yom Kippur War, the hospital remains on public display. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Commentary

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ICAR Launches Mentor Program

By Samantha Levine, ICAR Development Assistant, slevine2@gmu.edu

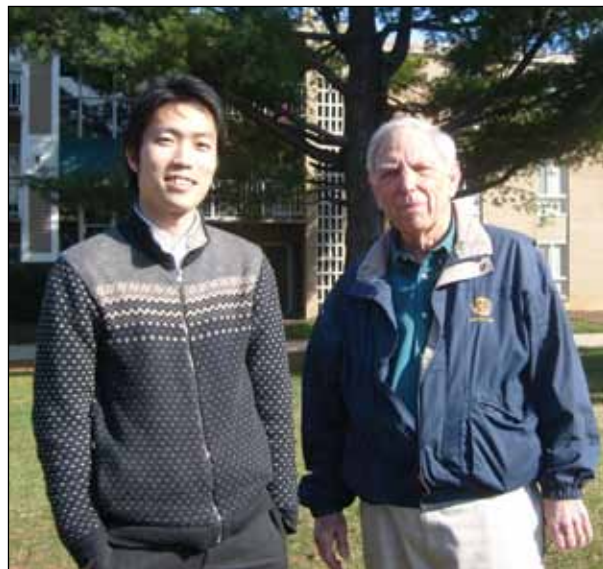
For second-year ICAR M.S. student Tommy Tomiyama, a resume and a quick interview are not the stuff of meaningful professional relationships. "I tend to believe in continuous one-on-one instruction, instead of one-shot, office-hour meetings where you have to figure everything out from that brief conversation," he said. So when Tommy learned about the new Advisory Board mentoring program, which was launched in February, he knew he wanted to take part.

There are 18 students and seven Board members participating in the program. The first meeting on February 12 was "spectacular—the number of students who came, the energy in the room, and on a night when there was an ice storm," recalled Board Chair K.C. Soares, who will mentor two students. The program aims to foster long-lasting relationships between students and Board members. The pairs will focus on the students' professional development and personal goals. "I serve on the Board for the purpose of assisting ICAR students any way I can," explained Board member Lester Schoene, who is Tommy's mentor. Lester earned his M.S. degree from ICAR in 1992 and has served on the Board since 1997. "If by making myself available to them to offer guidance based on my ICAR experience, life experience or current work experience, I will do that."

The mentoring program "fills a void," said first-year Ph.D. student Yves-Renee Jennings, who helped design the program with second-year M.S. student Matt Shugert. Both serve as representatives to the Board from Graduate Students in Conflict Studies (GSCS), ICAR's student government. "Many students don't see how they can transition into the real world," said Yves-Renee. "They don't have access to practitioners and individuals who can guide them."

Upulee Dasanayake, a second-year M.S. student who will work with K.C., is eager to learn more about the intricate workings and internal cultures of international organizations such as the United Nations. While such nuanced questions might be difficult to ask a professional in the course of a regular conversation, Upulee said, they are easier to broach when one has a personal relationship with that expert.

For Michael Lawrence, a graduate certificate student who is featured in the ICAR Spotlight



Above: ICAR M.S. student Tommy Tomiyama with ICAR Advisory Board member and mentor Lester Schoene. Photo courtesy of Tommy Tomiyama.

section of this newsletter, participating in the mentoring program enables him to make contacts with Board members who are working in the field of conflict resolution. "Being able to meet with Advisory Board members such as Rob Scott who works with ADR [Alternative Dispute Resolution] programs in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, I have learned about the big and growing demand of ADR within the federal government."

Students are matched with mentors based on common interests, as well as the need to ensure an equal distribution of mentees among the Board members. The concept first emerged four years ago among former Board member Craig Zelizer and students including M.S. candidate Vanessa Noël Brown and Ph.D. candidates Jeremy Rinker and Nancy Beiter, who had all served as GSCS representatives to the Board.

The Board, participating students and GSCS officers have high hopes for the relationships that develop from the program. "I hope it would be for life," said Upulee. "I don't want it to end when I graduate and leave ICAR." K.C. added that "this is serious with the Board. I want to get this going and have a really good relationship with students for two years, and for doctoral students who

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—YVES-RENEE JENNINGS

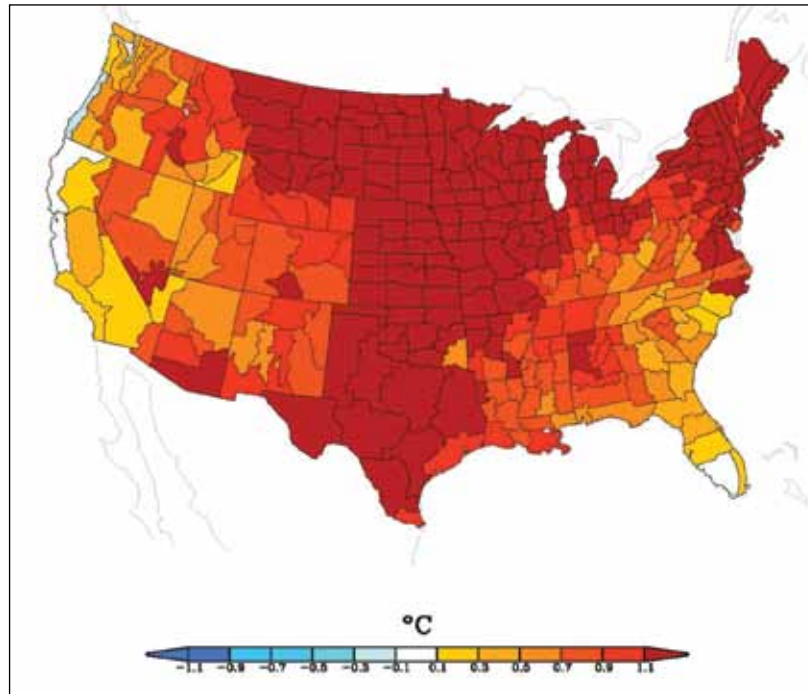
Mason Forum on Climate Change ICAR Takes Lead in Organizing Weekly Discussion

By Michael Shank, ICAR Government Relations Adviser, mshank@gmu.edu

If George Mason University's Paul Schopf, Ed Maibach and Michael Shank have their way, Mason will become a leader in trans-disciplinary approaches to climate change curriculum, research and public engagement. With the help of interested faculty, staff and students, and tech support from Hank Wolf, Scott Joy and Dan Gieckel, they are organizing a weekly Mason Forum on Climate Change to highlight what Mason is doing on climate change and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Launched in February, the first phase of the forum featured a broad variety of Mason-related activities, from internal operations to surveying national opinion. What might be news to many at Mason is that President Merten has signed the President's Climate Commitment, which puts the university on the path towards climate neutrality. Thanks to the driving force of Mason's Sustainability Coordinator Lenna Storm, the forum's first presenter, the likelihood of achieving neutrality sooner than later is greater.

What might also be news is that while a majority of Americans consider climate change a "very serious problem," many are not engaging in the green actions they support, like buying fuel-efficient cars, using less energy at home, and recycling. Thanks to national research by Ed Maibach, director of Mason's Center of Excellence in Climate Change Communication Research, we now know that much more awareness-raising is needed. Or how many readers know that Greg Hero, director of Mason's newly formed Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship, wants



Above: Map shows above normal annual temperatures in 2006 for each of the 48 continental states. For a majority of states, 2006 ranked among the ten hottest years since 1895. Image: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

to create an M.S. degree in Sustainable Development, that Chris Jones, director of Mason's Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center, will study the impact of climate change on the management of aquatic ecosystems, or that Mason's New Century College and the Environmental Science and Policy department will launch an undergraduate minor in Sustainability? Thus, the need for a forum.

Additionally, says Paul Schopf, Associate Dean in the College of Science and co-director of Mason's Center for Science and Society, "The Center has taken on climate change as its flagship focus activity, and the Mason Forum on Climate Change seems like the perfect way to reach across the University to attract and coalesce interest in all aspects of the problem from modeling, monitoring and

prediction to issues of impact, mitigation, and adjustment in all aspects of society. The inclusion of ICAR brings in an exciting new dimension to the consideration of climate change."

For Ed Maibach, the sentiment is similar. "I joined the Mason faculty in Fall 07," says Ed, "to create a center on climate change communication research specifically because I believed Mason offers extraordinary opportunities for trans-disciplinary collaboration on climate change. As the Mason Forum on Climate Change is taking shape, I see it potentially offering exactly the kind of collaborative opportunity that I was seeking."

The forum is generating three reports on Mason-wide teaching, research and public engagement. Go to <http://science.society.gmu.edu/climate-forum/> to join the discussion. ■

initiatives

Darfur, Uganda Victims' Needs Focus of ICAR Prof's Lecture

By Sandra Cheldelin, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, scheldel@gmu.edu

EVENTS

Eight evenings of thought-provoking discussion. Eight minds grappling with the important issues of our day. Eight voices. That is the promo for the Vision Series lectures for Academic Year 2007-08 at George Mason University. On Monday, March 17, 2008, one of those eight voices was our own Dr. Susan F. Hirsch, Associate Professor and Director of the Undergraduate Program at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Bravo to Susan for her outstanding lecture on *Satisfying Victims and Healing Society—the Promise of Justice after Extreme Violence*.

Dr. Hirsch spoke not just from her academic, anthropological research on human responses to extreme violence—murder, rape, genocide—but also from her personal experience as a victim and survivor of a terror attack on the United States Embassy on August 7, 1998, in Tanzania. She carefully crafted a story that told of the complexity



Above: A child living in one of Darfur's many camps for internally displaced peoples. Photo: Yassmin Moor.

and nuances of trying to satisfy victims, who rightfully deserve social justice, with the needs for healing and moving on within their local communities. She presented evidence of a steady move towards global justice, including ad hoc criminal tribunals, hybrid or special courts, and most recently the International Criminal Court. They have their problems and critics—too remote to victims, too "Western" in style, too likely to erode the particularity of local legal systems—but they do promise a global platform for victims to stand up against their perpetrators without retribution. Seeking global justice, victims do tell their stories of violence to counselors for the whole world to hear.

Dr. Hirsch provoked the audience with a series of questions as she reflected on whether or not, after the trials, victims "feel" better. They might be only mildly satisfied, as victims' needs

vary. Do community members "feel" better? What is the healing process beyond the trials? As images of Darfur and Uganda were in the backdrop, she challenged us to consider ways to reknit the social fabric of broken societies in the aftermath of extreme violence. Beyond truth and reconciliation, reparation and rehabilitation, this might require old or new healing rituals grounded in local communities and culturally informed. It seems we must find ways for local, national and international systems to work together to satisfy victims and heal societies.

Dr. Hirsch left us pondering, too, the responsibility of the broader global community. Implicitly, the world community becomes implicated as soon as victims report their experiences. We have a shared moral and legal obligation to bring justice in the broadest and best sense. Clearly we have work to do. ■

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

For more info on events, email jlock1@gmu.edu.

April 4: Job Search Strategies for International Students

2:30-4:00 pm, Truland Building, Room 555

April 8: Internship and Thesis Information Session

4:30-6:00 pm, Truland Building, Room 530

April 8: Applied Practice and Theory Info Session

6:00-7:00 pm, Truland Building, Room 530

April 10: Prospective Students Information Session

6:00-7:30 pm, Truland Building, Room 530

RSVP: Erin Ogilvie, eogilvie@gmu.edu, 703.993.9683

April 11: Career Intensive on Development

10:00-4:00 pm, Truland Building, Room 555

RSVP: icarjob@gmu.edu

Entire events listing available at <http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

China, Tibet and the 2008 Olympic Games

By Ross Gearllach, ICAR M.S. Student

As the world has turned its attention to China in preparation for the upcoming Olympic Games in Beijing, history has begun to repeat itself. In watching the events play themselves out among the Tibetans, one cannot help but remember the events of April 1989 at Tiananmen Square. Both protests are led by individuals who possess great emotional and psychological influence over their fellow citizens. In Tiananmen, it was students calling workers into the streets to stand up for a more representative system of government. In Tibet, it is monks summoning the laity to protest the Chinese government's attempts to control the religious life of the Tibetan people and the government's policy of resettling ethnically Han peoples from the east to shift the demographics of the province and create a balance favorable to the Beijing government.



Then, as now, the world finds itself in an uncertain time, where changes to the social fabric are altering modes of living all over the world. And perhaps most importantly, China is incapable of closing itself in and dealing with the problem privately. Then, it was a historic visit from Mikhail Gorbachev that brought in foreign journalists. Now, it's the Olympics. Both situations have the effect of forcing the Chinese to accept the presence of foreign scrutiny, and they can no more retreat and handle the matter internally now than they could then.

The unfortunate ending of Tiananmen, however, should not be viewed as an ill omen. In experiencing these events again, both China and the world have an opportunity to learn from the mistakes of Tiananmen and begin social and economic liberalization anew. The West can facilitate this by quietly encouraging the Chinese to make peace with the Tibetans while acknowledging their sovereign right to govern their own territory.

The remarks of Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd are encouraging in this regard. The Chinese still feel disrespected on the world stage and the only way to convince them to listen to advice is to demonstrate that they are valued and that they can trust the West to treat them fairly. China, too, must take action. It must realize that calls for increased self-determination cannot be ignored forever, take steps to increase local control and move toward rapprochement with its citizens to facilitate the creation of a new system in which the people of China have a say in their future.

In the wake of Tiananmen, the West ignored the actions of the Chinese, determining that the need for stability was more important than encouraging an open, free society. We all suffered as a result. We now have a chance to correct our previous errors. We cannot afford to wait for the next one. ■

Recent ICAR Journal Articles, Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Calling for Clarity in Iraq

By Matt Shugert, ICAR M.S. Student
Washington Post, March 24, 2008

U.N. Security Council Must Act Preemptively - on Climate Change

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student, and U.S. Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY)
Christian Science Monitor, March 24, 2008

Identity, Autonomy, and Conflict in Republics of Russia and Ukraine

By Karina V. Korostelina, ICAR Professor
Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 41, Issue 1, March 2008

No to Nepotism

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Student
Friday Times, March 21-27, 2008

The American Elections: Prospects for a New US Foreign Policy

By Richard Rubenstein, ICAR Professor
Fokus Amerika, No. 2, 2008

A Mufti, A Christian, and a Rabbi

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor
Washington Post-Newsweek "On Faith" Blog, 03/12/08

A Debate That's Way Too Loud

By Marci Moberg, ICAR M.S. Student
Washington Times, 03/11/08

Let Ralph Nader Run

By Solon Simmons, ICAR Professor
Washington Post, 03/01/08

A New Policy for Pakistan

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Student
International Herald Tribune, 02/28/08

Let's Hear it for the New York Phil

By Tatsuaki Tomiyama, ICAR M.S. Student
Financial Times, 02/27/08

History Education and Social Identity

By Karina V. Korostelina, ICAR Professor
Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, Vol. 8, Issue 1, 2008 ■

Michael Lawrence Terryne Murphy

By Erin Ogilvie, Assistant Director, Student Services, Graduate Admissions, eogilvie@gmu.edu

By Erin Ogilvie, Assistant Director, Student Services, Graduate Admissions, eogilvie@gmu.edu

Michael Lawrence, a graduate certificate student at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), has had an interest in labor management issues for a long time. Beginning as a news writer and engineer at NBC Radio Network in New York, where he was involved in a 17-week strike, Michael also worked at National Public Radio, and for the past seven years at United States Senate Radio-TV as the Senior Media Relations Coordinator. As a federal employee, he was introduced to the Federal Mediation Conciliation Service (FMCS) which seeks to mediate labor disputes to shorten times of strikes. "This opened

As the Deputy Chief Information Officer at the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), Terryne Murphy found herself in the middle of workplace conflicts. Murphy, a graduate certificate student at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), wanted to further her understanding on how to deal with conflict in a positive way within her agency. At the time, Murphy was taking psychology classes at GMU. Reading up on what ICAR had to offer, she thought that it would be a perfect fit to help her professionally. Murphy ultimately decided to enroll in ICAR's Advanced Skills track.



Photo: Lauren Burke



my mind up about mediation and through an informational interview with the deputy of FMCS I was told there were a number of 40-hour mediation trainings I could complete. But if I was in the Washington area, the best program to learn about mediation and conflict resolution is at ICAR. With my experience as a Union Shop Steward, and now as a federal employee, I have found that the [ICAR] advanced skills certificate is the best fit for my interests in Federal Alternative Dispute Resolution."

When asked how the ICAR program has impacted his life, Lawrence replies, "Through the lens of conflict analysis and resolution, it changes so much about the way that I read the newspaper in the morning, the way that I see conflict here at the Senate and as liaison between the Senate, Press, and Capitol Police—the Press wanting more access, the Senate wanting less access. The program has changed the way I see conflict within my own work." Lawrence is a true example of the success of ICAR's newest graduate program. His experience resonates with working professionals looking for a potential career change or wanting to take their conflict resolution skills to a new level. "I would reassure people, although the ICAR website may have a specific focus on international or intractable conflicts, I have never felt that my interest in mediation is not valid. Someone in the federal mediation field said that this is the best program to be in. That should definitely say enough." ■

“Most programs are set up to have information traveling in one direction. That isn't what the [ICAR] certificate program is about. I am treated as a practitioner and challenged to think that way immediately.”

—TERRYNE MURPHY

At EOIR, Murphy oversees the operations contract responsible for maintaining IT systems. "We have two major components whose concern is the adjudication of immigration cases and their appeals. Our customers are primarily the United States Immigration Courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals. Conflicts definitely do arise on how to tackle problems."

The certificate program has impacted Murphy's professional life. "I find myself in the middle of things and I am better able to translate the knowledge I have learned and advise and counsel my staff a little better." Murphy feels that the certificate will enable her to have a bigger impact on the organization and help people within the organization deal with conflict without her. "When you give people the skills on how to navigate through their own issues, it is empowering." Murphy is continuing the program on a part-time basis and enjoys the flexibility of the program. "Most programs are set up to have information travelling in one direction: expert to student. This isn't what the [ICAR] certificate program is about. I am treated as a practitioner and challenged to think that way immediately." ■

icar spotlight

US-Israeli Policies Not Yet Working with Damascus

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is astounding is that billions of American tax dollars are not buying more savvy. Those dollars cannot buy savvy because the White House does not want savvy about Syria any more than it wanted savvy about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Anti-diplomacy reaches its tentacles into every aspect of our current foreign policy. It is not incompetence. It is simple aggression.

Here are two false dichotomies that must be dispensed with both in Israel and in the United States: 1) that a rapprochement with Syria must lead to a sell-out of Lebanese democrats and of Palestinians, and 2) that in order to deal with Syria they must be willing to cut off Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran—effectively all their major alliances.

Both of these false dichotomies assume that there is one, and only one, reactionary voice in Syria, and that it is the voice of Syrian expansionism and unprincipled use of terror. But I have learned this is only one voice inside the universe of Ba'athist leadership, and it is in fact a shadowy position that is despised by many others in leadership positions.

The liberal Ba'athist voice at very high levels is looking to a normalization of relations in the region that will allow the Syrian economy to thrive, modernize and integrate in such a way that the people will want to stay with the current leadership. And the one way to get there is the return of the Golan and a just Palestinian settlement that will allow Syria to maintain its pan-Arab image. Secondly, the liberal voice despises the abuse of Lebanon, sees it as against Syria's long-term interests, but will also not allow an aggressive American posture to make Lebanon



Marc Gopin, above, is an ICAR Professor.

into an anti-Syrian base.

When you are bargaining with a tough customer you always appeal to the liberal side of their internal debates, because your aim is to challenge them, to put them on the defensive, and to see whether the liberal or the militant voice comes out on top.

It is the same with the issue of Syria's allies. The liberal Syrian position is that Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas are marriages of convenience, but that they are also vital to Syria's stability for the time being. The counter-offer from the West then is to challenge that liberal position and say, "Ok, I get that you will

not cut off Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. But you can signal to us that you will be cooperating with your allies more and more only on defensive postures not aggressive ones, and we, correspondingly, will reduce our aggressive aims of isolation and regime change." In other words, tit for tat, steady confidence building that moderates Syria's role in the conflict.

This we could sell in Damascus. Israel should be the first to send the signals, but I reiterate to my Israeli colleagues that if you try to cut a separate

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ICAR Co-Hosts Career Fair with SPP

By Jenny Lock, ICAR M.S. Student and Events Coordinator, jlock1@gmu.edu

The School of Public Policy and the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) at George Mason University hosted a career fair on Tuesday, March 4, 2008, on the Arlington Campus.

This year we had 28 employers in attendance and 25 ICAR students. Our students arrived prepared with resumes and were all dressed professionally. Staff could tell through the hum of excited voices and wide smiles of both students and employers that great connections were being made. Employers noted that they were quite impressed with the quality of ICAR students in attendance and several mentioned that they would like to hold information sessions and interviews at ICAR later this spring. ■



Above: ICAR M.S. students speak with a representative from the United States Agency for International Development. Photo: Michael Shank.



Above: ICAR M.S. student Eve Tango speaks with an FBI representative. Photo: Michael Shank.

US-Israeli Policies Not Yet Working

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deal with Syria and stiff the Palestinians, it will backfire. President Bashar al-Assad cannot turn his back on the Palestinian cause without undermining his entire legitimacy. It is time then to face a comprehensive peace. If Israel has courage now with the Syrian track, and they



Above: [From left to right] Hind Kabawat, Grand Mufti of Syria Sheikh Hassoun, and Marc Gopin. Photo courtesy of Marc Gopin.

inform the so-called pro-Israel lobby of Israel's clear intentions to normalize their northern border for the first time since the founding of the state, my experience in Washington suggests that a weak White House and Congress will sheepishly follow. This approach will strengthen the liberal Ba'athist voice, or at the very least force Syria to show its colors. ■

ICAR Launches Mentor Program

Continued from page 2

want to come." Tommy reported that his first meeting with Lester in mid-March was "amazing". The first part of the meeting was a personal resume clinic in which Lester "consulted me in

improving my resume by helping me determine the important parts of my background and strengths," said Tommy. "Lester described his background and his work

experience and said I could ask him anything and he would help if he could." Tommy is looking forward to being able to call on Lester for advice as he nears graduation and afterwards. Having a mentor, Tommy said, "is a huge asset". For more information, or to sign up, please contact Matt at mshugert@gmu.edu or Yves-Renee at yjenning@gmu.edu. ■



Above: Designers of the mentoring program, ICAR M.S. and Ph.D. Representatives to the Advisory Board Matt Shugert and Yves-Renee Jennings, respectively.

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