



World Class Scholars

Creating Global Classrooms

Leadership, Board of Directors, Advisors & Staff

World Class Scholars Leadership

WCS has a diverse and unique leadership structure. A number of our leadership hold government, corporate or other positions that may preclude them from accepting a specific position or title within the WCS structure – but they are all active and engaged on an ongoing basis. In time, we expect a somewhat more traditional leadership structure to evolve.

This flexible leadership structure enables WCS to attract world class talent that is captivated by our unique vision and finds our audacious ambitions compelling.



SENIOR LEADERSHIP



David Beasley – Chairman of the Global Advisory Board. Former Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme, the world's largest humanitarian organization and a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. He

previously served as Governor of South Carolina and was a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. David also served as the Founding Chairman of the Center for Global Strategies, an organization dedicated to advancing developmental initiatives in underrepresented regions around the world.



Joe Andrew – Global Advisory Board. Founding Global Chairman of Dentons, the largest global law firm in the world. Previously, he was Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. As Global Chairman of Dentons, Joe was

the architect of Dentons' global strategy and his vision for the law firm of the future enabled Dentons' growth, integration and reinvention. In his role, he represented Dentons globally, engaging with clients, strategic partners, business leaders, government officials, and other key external stakeholders, a central focus of his work as Global Chairman.



Reem Al Hashimy – Global Advisory Board. Minister of State for International Cooperation in the United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. She was Managing

Director of the Expo 2020 Dubai mega-event, following which she was appointed CEO of Expo City Dubai Authority. Additionally, Reem manages the Vice President's Office for Political Affairs. She is Chairperson for Dubai Cares, a philanthropic organization, with the aim of improving access to quality education in developing countries.



Hilda Suka-Mafudze – Chair of the WCS African Advisory Board. African Union Ambassador to the United States. Prior to coming to the U.S., she helped lead diplomacy for more than two decades in

a variety of top government positions in her home country – Zimbabwe. Well known as a “quiet champion of democracy,” Hilda held ambassadorial positions representing her country in Khartoum, Sudan and South Sudan between 2010 and 2019, and most recently in the Republic of Malawi. From 2000 to 2005, Hilda served as an elected member of Zimbabwe's Parliament.



Tony Hall – Global Advisory Board. Tony Hall, Baron Hall of Birkenhead, is the former Director-General of the BBC and a distinguished leader in global media and the arts. During his tenure at the BBC,

he championed innovation in digital broadcasting and global storytelling, expanding the organization's international reach. He previously served as Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House and remains a passionate advocate for public service media, education, and cultural exchange.



Mark East – Technology and Education Advisor. Former Worldwide General Manager of Education at Microsoft, Mark led global strategy, partnerships, and product development for education systems in

over 100 countries. Prior to this, he served as General Manager for Microsoft UK's Public Sector, overseeing digital transformation across health, education, and government. A trusted leader in education and technology, Mark brings decades of experience building impactful, scalable solutions at the intersection of innovation, policy, and learning.





Jonas Rolett – WCS Partnership Director. Jonas worked for the Open Society Foundations for more than 20 years, including 6 years as the liaison between the foundation and its founder,

George Soros. He has particular expertise in Eastern Europe and has worked extensively on governance, elections, civil society, and development issues. Prior to joining Open Society, Rolett worked for the National Democratic Institute on election monitoring, civic engagement, parliamentary representation, and political party development.



Jeff Schilz – WCS CEO and member Board of Directors. Jeff is President of JS Management Group, a policy and government relations consulting company. Previously, he served as a

senior staff member to a South Carolina governor with responsibilities as Policy Director, Budget Director, and Cabinet Director. Additionally, he served on the College of Charleston Board of Trustees and as President and Executive Director of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. Jeff also manages WCS relationships with state governments in the United States.



Dr. Ajay Shukla – President of WCS Foundation and member of the Board of Directors. Ajay has a demonstrated history of transformational roles in the education industry as well as strong business development

skill in marketing management, advertising, sales, entrepreneurship, and customer relationship management. He has held senior leadership positions in the MENA region for American Express, Ambro Bank, McGraw Hill and Reader's Digest. He is also founder of HigherEducation.ae.



Phil Noble – Founder of WCS. For over 40 years he has been recognized globally as a pioneering entrepreneur and technology innovator in the civic sector – politics, media, non-profits, education,

and government. He is a veteran of over 350 political campaigns and public affairs projects in the US and 45 countries, including 10 US presidential campaigns and 35 national campaigns globally. His firm specializes in internet, technology, and new media strategic consulting for US and international clients in the civic sector. He was a Fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

“World Class Scholars is about changing the world for young people and that is a really big deal. We should all be a part of making it happen.”

Phil Noble – Founder, World Class Scholars



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Traci Little Al Shaali – is an international business development advisor and cross-cultural specialist who divides her time between Dubai and Minnesota. Her firm is Envision: Strategies for A Connected World. Currently, she also serves on the World's Fair Bid Committee Educational Fund for Minnesota. She is a former executive with Citibank Global Security Services in New York. She has an MA and BA from American University in Washington, DC.



Jon Butzon – is a member of the South Carolina State Board of Education and long-time education reformer. He is a retired Naval Officer, a retired small business founder and owner, and retired Executive Director of a non-profit community education improvement organization. He has been involved with WCS from its earliest years and leads our relationship development with schools and education officials in South Carolina. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Georgia State College and a master's degree from The Citadel.



Matthew Jennings – is President of Dune Ridge Consulting. Previously he was Director of International Affairs for the Americas for Etihad Airways. Matt is responsible for the WCS partnership with Etihad Airways and manages our ongoing relationship. He is a former US Congress Staff Assistant and then for seven years he was Head of Legislative Affairs for North America for the International Air Transport Association. He has a BA from Elon University and Masters Degree in Economics from George Mason University.



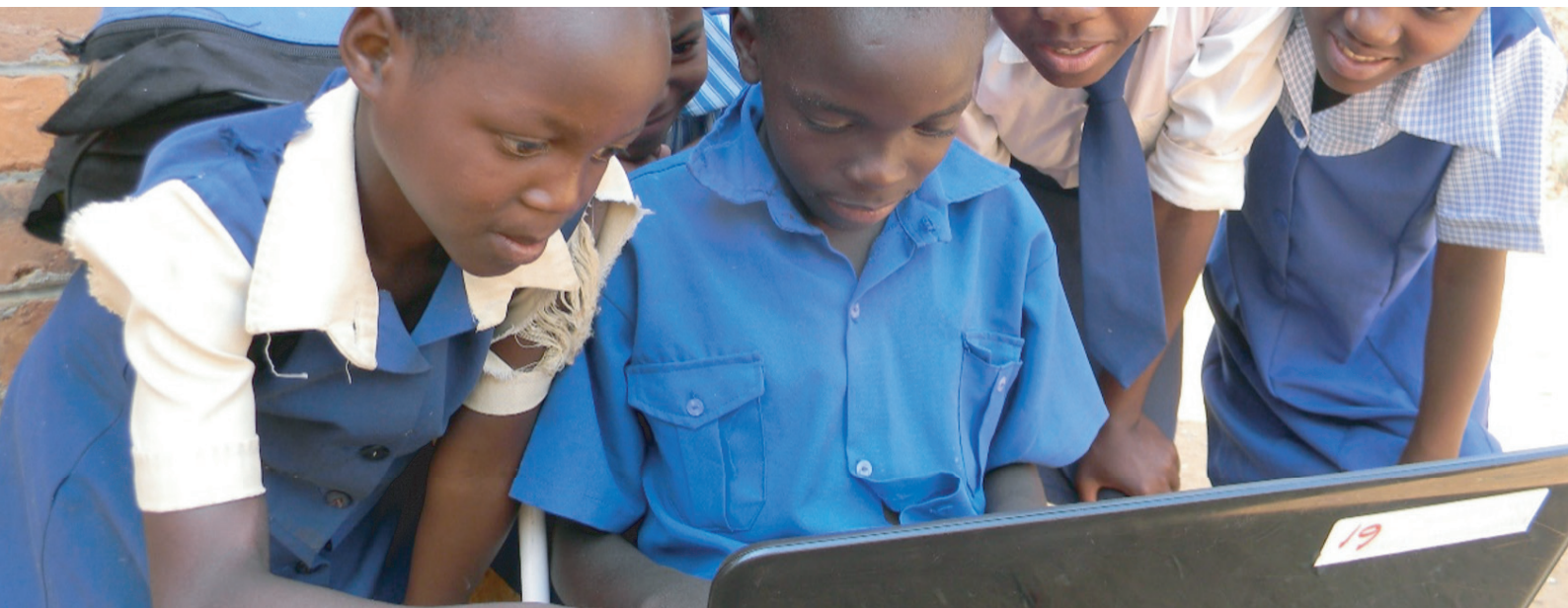
Anders Lonnberg – is the former Swedish Commissioner General for EXPO 2020. In this position, he was appointed one of three commissioner generals to be the liaison between the 194 participating countries and the leadership of EXPO. Anders is a former member of the Swedish Parliament and he previously held senior managements positions with Swedish Ministry of Education, SAS Airlines, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations and has served as a member of the Stockholm County Council.



Sunny Varkey – is Founder and Chairman of GEMS Education, the largest operator of private kindergarten-to-grade 12 schools in the world, with a network of 52 schools in 4 countries. Varkey is also a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. He is perhaps best known for his annual Global Education and Skills Forum that showcases innovation in education, and he gives one outstanding teacher \$1 million, with no strings attached.



Derek Wyatt – is the quintessential English renaissance man. He was an international rugby player for England, Oxford scholar, tech entrepreneur, Member of Parliament for thirteen years, writer, and publisher. He is a founder of Women's Sport, UK, The Computer Channel BskyB, the Oxford Internet Institute, A Digital Day for the Nation and The Brain Campaign. He has a BA from Open University and advanced degrees from Oxford University and Kings College London.



GLOBAL ADVISORY BOARD



Dr. Michalis Bletsas – is Director of Computing at the MIT Media Labs. He was one of the earliest supporters of WCS and helped design and fund the developments of WCS original platform. He was one of the designers of the One Laptop Per Child XO laptop. Previously, he was a Systems Engineer at Aware Inc. and one of the founders of the Greek mobile advertising and marketing company Velti S.A. He has a BA degree from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and a MSc in Computer Engineering from Boston University.



Ethan Chorin – is a Middle East and Africa-focused scholar and entrepreneur. He is known as a leading analyst of Libyan affairs, and for his applied development work in the Middle East and Africa, in the areas of environmental science and healthcare. He is Founder of Perim Associates which provides Middle East & Africa-focused litigation support, political risk and policy solutions to international law firms and their government clients. The company currently consists of 20 senior consultants (senior executives, former ambassadors, economists, veteran journalists) fluent in 8 regional languages.



Dr. Joe McCarthy – is the former Senior Associate Dean and Director of Degree Programs at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University where he had oversight responsibility for administration of four master's degree programs and two doctoral programs. McCarthy's professional experiences include ten years teaching and administration in independent and public schools in the U.S. and abroad, including suburban Boston and Washington, DC, The Hague, The Netherlands, and Athens, Greece.



Dr. Marina McCarthy – is the former Chair of the White House Commission on U.S. Presidential Scholars a recognition program for secondary students from across the nation who have distinguished themselves academically and/or artistically. For over 30 years she held numerous positions at Harvard University including Associate of the Davis Center, Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Visiting Scholar, Research Associate, Teaching Fellow and IOP Study Group Leader at the Kennedy School of Government. She has an Ed.D. from Harvard University.

AMBASSADORS



Dr. Levi Madueke – is Ambassador at Large for Africa. Dr. Levi was Commissioner General for the African Union at Expo 2020. Previously, he had retired from the African Union Commission (AUC) where he served as Head of Partnerships Management and Resources Mobilization Division. After assuming the position of Head of AU Strategic Partnerships in 2015, Dr. Madueke embarked on a fast tracked process of rejuvenating and elevating the African Union's Strategic Partnership. Dr. Levi received a B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering from University of Ife, Nigeria, an MBA from Enugu State University of Science and Technology and a PhD from SMC University, Switzerland.



Adam Dokurugu – is Ambassador for Ghana and West Africa. Adam is a teacher at Ridge A School in Tamale, Ghana. Adam has led the WCS program in Tamale, Ghana for six years – the most successful of all of WCS's programs in 67 countries. A totally unexpected benefit of Adam's program was that over five years, teen pregnancy rates in the pilot project classes dropped from 25% to 0%. He is leading our Clinton Global Initiative to 'prove the model' with expansion to 750 schools in Ghana and Somalia affecting 583,000 students and teachers – and then expand to all of Africa. He has an ICT Certificate from the British Council UKaid and Higher National Diploma from the Tamale Technical University of Ghana and a Teacher Certificate from the University of Cape Town Bagabaga College of Education.

GLOBAL ADVISORY BOARD



Eli Ovits – has worked in a range of sectors including philanthropy, media / government relations, communications, and strategy. He was Spokesman for the Israel Defense Forces, representing Israel to elite media outlets. He was appointed the first Global CEO of the British nonprofit Limmud – enabling the organization to expand across 44 countries. He is founder of Altruists – connecting people across the globe. He has a BA in Development Studies from the University of Leeds and an MA in Diplomacy and National Security from Hebrew University.



Steve Skardon – is a longtime advisor to the WCS Board and NGO entrepreneur. Since 1992, he is the longtime director of the Palmetto Project, an entrepreneurial non-profit group in South Carolina. Until 2020, when WCS became an independent organization, the Palmetto Project served as the incubator and fiscal agent for WCS in its development phase. Steve is a former staff member for Congressman Thomas P. O’Neal, Speaker of the US Congress. He has extensive experience advising and directing the management of literally several hundred non-profit organizations.



Hayes Roth – Hayes Roth is founder of HA Roth Consulting LLC, a marketing consulting firm specializing in strategic positioning, brand development, design and business writing with particular expertise in corporate, non-profit and healthcare branding. Previously, Hayes spent 19 years at Landor, where he was Chief Marketing Officer and led Landor’s global marketing and business development group, building the firm’s leadership position as the world’s pre-eminent strategic branding and design consultancy. Hayes regularly lectures at several universities.



Dr. Markku Wilenius – is the former Dean of the Dubai Future Academy. He is a renowned futurist, author and speaker with more than 25 years’ experience in future studies. Dr. Wilenius previously worked as a Professor of Future Studies at the University of Turku and is also the UNESCO Chair in Learning Society and Futures of Education. He has been a member of the prestigious Club of Rome for 10 years. In 2002, he was part of the Finnish delegation at the landmark Johannesburg Sustainable Development Summit. Mr. Wilenius worked in the private sector as a senior executive for Allianz, three foundations and start ups.

AMBASSADORS



Pablo Silva – is Ambassador for Brazil and The Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). Pablo is Founder and CEO of Paideya Educação e Tecnologia Paideya Educação e Tecnologia Mar a startup Edtech company focused on adding value to students’ lives by connecting them with the best teachers in the world through technology and advanced tools that help kids around the world to have access to education. Previously, Pablo was Zone Operations Manager Expo 2020 Dubai. He is a graduate of ESPM – Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing specializing in business, management, marketing, and related support services.

FRIENDS OF WCS



Simon Glinsky – is best known as the Co-founder of Match.com where he wrote one of the first Internet business plans and provided start-up leadership and led strategic activities including branding, marketing, hiring, establishing facilities and supported fundraising. He is the Founder of The Glinsky Group, a firm specializing in senior business advisory and strategic leadership consulting, with expertise as an executive advisor, transformation consultant, venture capital partner, and social impact leader. Prior to this he was Senior Managing Principal for CEG Worldwide and Co-founder of Clean Energy Finance. He has a BS from the Wharton School and an MBA from Stanford University School of Business.

SPECIAL ADVISORY BOARD



Linda Anukwuem is an Executive Consultant with Quanten Consortium Angola, LLC, where she is responsible for coordinating relationships among contractors and advisors. She also negotiates agreements with local, state and national officials in the US. Prior to joining Quanten, she served as Chair for the City of Houston's Mayor's International Trade and Development Council for Africa.



Antony (Ton) Beumer most recently served as Secretary General of the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament. Prior to that role he was Secretary General for the Party of European Socialists. He holds a Doctorate in Western Sociology from the University of Utrecht.



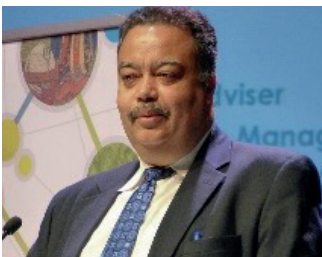
Richard Dickerson is owner and president of RAD Communications, a business and political consultancy specializing in planning, government relations, campaigns and grassroots lobbying. Previously he served in Afghanistan as Senior Director for Strategic Communications for the United States Agency for International Development and in Washington, DC as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Department of Energy.



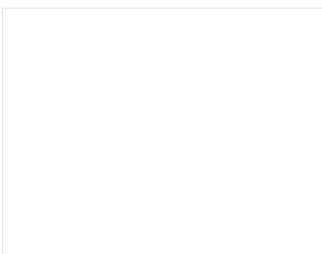
Ambassador Sayer Daudzai is an expert in business development who has worked in both the public and private sectors in economic and corporate diplomacy, geoeconomics and project management. He served as Afghanistan's Acting Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates until 2023. Ambassador Daudzai has also held senior roles with Capital Star Insurance and Velocity Consulting.



Sara Hakimi is a former Afghan diplomat and policy analyst with experience in international affairs, diplomacy and democracy promotion. She has held key positions at the Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has represented Afghanistan in multiple countries. Sara holds master's degrees in International Relations and Security Studies, and a BA in Political Science. She is a passionate advocate for women and youth empowerment and contributes to global policy development as a Non-Resident Policy Fellow at the Andiana Foundation.



Richard Kerby is the principal at Richard Kerby LLC, a consulting firm that provides policy advice and technical assistance to governments related to digital transformation. Previously, he was the Senior Inter-Regional Advisor on e-Government for the UN Department of Economic and Security Affairs. Over the course of his career, he has worked in more than 60 emerging and developing countries.



Solomon Saul is a businessman and activist with experience in marketing, sales and management. He has worked at senior levels in both the United States and internationally, leading sales teams and opening markets for tech companies. In addition to his work with World Class Scholars, Saul volunteers with the Give Life Foundation to expand the bone marrow registry worldwide.

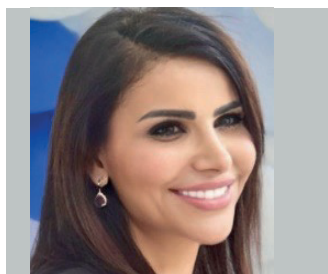


Jeannine Scott is Founder and Principal of America to Africa Consulting, LLC, through which she brokers trade and investment linkages between US and African companies. She also serves as Country Manager for Omatapalo, Inc, an EPC firm with operations in Angola, several other African countries and Europe. Previously, Scott served as President of the US-Angola Chamber of Commerce, Senior Vice President of Africare, and Advisor and Alternate US Executive Director of the African Development Bank.



Jeff Thindwa spent more than 20 years at the World Bank. He held numerous positions with Social Sustainability and Inclusion, the World Bank Institute and the Governance Practice, leading teams that specialized in participation and social accountability in World Bank operations and in transparency, accountability and stakeholder engagement. His positions included Practice Manager for social accountability, Practice Manager for Open and Collaborative Governance and Manager of the Global Partnership for Social Accountability. A Malawian, Thindwa has background in law and political economy and is a leading thinker on the practice of social accountability and the intersection of government and civil society.

WCS SENIOR STAFF



Yasmeen Ali – is Director of School Operations, Dubai. Yasmeen works directly with the individual schools to develop smooth partner – school matching and facilitating the ongoing programmatic operations. She manages Global Classroom #1 located in Deria International School. Prior to joining WCS, Yasmeen was Communications Manager for the Ajman Academy in Ajman, UAE. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Ajman University. She is a native of Jordan and is of Palestinian descent.



Brannen Greenslade – Chief of Staff to Founder. Brannen is an education and organizational leader with a career rooted in educational administration, leadership, and program development. As Chief of Staff to the Founder of World Class Scholars, she supports the strategic direction and execution of WCS's global education initiatives, working closely with leadership and partners to translate vision into effective programming that supports educators, connects learning communities, and expands access to connected learning worldwide. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Texas Christian University and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership from George Washington University.



Michael Gunter – Technology Support. Michael has worked in technology for nearly 20 years. He has a passion for helping others understand what can be possible with technology. In his years of experience, he has worked with Apple and Best Buy to ensure those around him are comfortable and understand how the tech world affects them. With patience and dedication, he has worked with people all over the globe to spread his love for technology and the possibilities it can show others. He currently works as a Geek Squad Services Manager for Best Buy in Charleston, South Carolina, USA.



Andy Gowder – WCS Attorney. He is a founding partner of Austen and Gowder of Charleston, South Carolina. Andy serves on several nonprofit boards in the Charleston area, including the Preservation Society of Charleston, which he will chair beginning in January 2023, and, as a significant part of his practice, is general counsel for many local, regional, and national nonprofits and closely held corporations. He received his JD (cum Laude) from Wake Forrest University School of Law and his BA (summa cum laude) from Wofford College where he was a Phil Beta Kappa.