



ASIA 21 YOUNG LEADERS MEET THE 2019 CLASS

ANNUAL SUMMIT • NORTHERN CALIFORNIA • NOVEMBER 15–17, 2019

ASIA 21 CHANGING THE WORLD

ISKANDER AKYLBAYEV

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
KAZAKHSTAN COUNCIL ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



KAZAKHSTAN

"For me, leadership is supporting the aspirations of ordinary citizens because behind every power struggle, common men and women are those who suffer the most."

ISKANDER AKYLBAYEV is Executive Director of the Kazakhstan Council on International Relations (KCIR). He is also a foreign policy analyst for the Qazaqstan Radio and Television Corporation and serves as an advisor at DASCO Consulting. Previously, Akyl bayev worked as a senior fellow at the Institute of Diplomacy of the Academy of Public Administration, providing training to early and mid-career diplomats. He is a member of the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations (HPAIR) and a fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS. From 2014 to 2017, he was a senior fellow at the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Kazakhstan, focusing on Kazakhstan's foreign policy and security in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Akylbayev received the Atlantic Council Millennium Leadership Fellowship and the Rumsfeld Fellowship in 2018, a mid-career program for young leaders from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, and Mongolia, and was awarded the MEXT scholarship by the Government of Japan in 2011. He received his M.A. in international area studies from the University of Tsukuba. He speaks Kazakh, Russian, Turkish, and Japanese.

ESRA'A AL SHAFEI

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
MAJAL.ORG



BAHRAIN

"Leadership first and foremost is sacrifice. It is a continuous learning journey, but genuine accountability is at the heart of good leadership."

ESRA'A AL SHAFEI is a human rights activist and the founder of Majal.org, a network of online platforms that amplify under-reported and marginalized voices. She and her team build web projects that creatively facilitate the struggle for social justice in the region. Al Shafei currently serves on the Global Future Council on Human Rights and Technology at the World Economic Forum and is a Director's Fellow at the MIT Media Lab. Previously, she was a Senior TED Fellow, Echoing Green Fellow, and Shuttleworth Foundation Fellow. Al Shafei is the 2018 recipient of the Global Trailblazer Award from Vital Voices, the Berkman Award from the Berkman Center for Internet and Society for her "outstanding contributions to the internet and its impact on society over the last decade", the Monaco Media Prize, which acknowledges innovative uses of media for the betterment of humanity, and the Most Courageous Media Award from Free Press Unlimited. In 2014, she received the Human Rights Tulip Prize, awarded annually by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organizations or individuals that support human rights in innovative ways. In 2017, she was elected to the Wikipedia Board of Trustees.

MARYAM AL-SUBAIEY

HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATION
QATAR FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT



QATAR

“Leadership is a way of life and it can be found in every person, regardless of their role in society. It is about pursuing a purpose, believing in oneself no matter the challenges, and through this path of purpose, helping others to find their way as well.”

MARYAM AL-SUBAIEY is Head of Media & Communication at Qatar Fund for Development. As an entrepreneur, she led innovative new projects at Qatar Television, where she was Director of Programs and Creation and the youngest and only woman to serve in a management role. She left Qatar Television after successfully launching the channel to pursue a career in creative entrepreneurship. In 2015, Al-Subaiey and a group of friends created a local initiative called Eid Gift to support less privileged children that live in semi-slums areas in Doha. In 2014, she launched Q Talent, a talent agency that develops local talents in the creative industry. A champion of youth and women empowerment, Al-Subaiey is also the founder of the UChange Qatari Youth Initiative and the Qatar Together Youth Initiative, which aims to spread values of civil society and productivity among young people. She recently won the British Council Alumni Award in the Professional Achievement category. In 2017, she became the first Qatari female jockey to participate in the Emir’s Cup. Besides her passion for horses and racing, Al-Subaiey is also an author and a poet, having published several children books in both Arabic and English. Her poems have been published in *Gathering the Tide: An Anthology of Contemporary Arabian Gulf Poetry* (2012), and she has participated in several poetry events in Doha, Kuwait, and Northern Ireland. In 2009, Al-Subaiey co-created *Dreesha*, a photo essay and the third book of the Qatar Narrative anthology series that provides a glimpse into their everyday lives of Qataris. She received her M.Sc. in development studies from SOAS University of London and her B.A. in political science from the University of Essex.

JESSICA AUNG

MYANMAR REPRESENTATIVE
GERMAN DEVELOPMENT FINANCE
INSTITUTION

FOUNDER
WYNEE



MYANMAR

“A leader inspires others to achieve the best of themselves and gives them the tools to do so.”

JESSICA AUNG is an impact investor and social entrepreneur focused on job creation and economic empowerment in Myanmar. She is the first Myanmar Representative at DEG (German Development Finance Institution) — a member of the KfW Banking Group — with a global portfolio of about \$10 billion. At DEG Myanmar, Aung leads financing in long-term, private sector investments that drive sustainable development. Previously, she worked at Anthem Asia, an investment firm where she was part of the team that raised a \$34.5 million fund backed by the IFC — a member of World Bank Group — to provide expansion capital to SMEs in Myanmar. Aung has been an advocate for expanding business opportunities to all. She founded the volunteer-driven initiative WyneeMyanmar.com (WYNEE), which advances workforce readiness among Myanmar youths, empowering over 5,000 in two years. She was selected to the 2018 Class of Asia Foundation Development Fellows. In addition, Aung has passed all three levels of the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Program and is a founding member of the CFA community in Myanmar. Her alma mater, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, presented her with the 2018 Nanyang Outstanding Young Alumni Award in recognition of her achievements in the Myanmar business community.

BING CHEN
CO-FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN
GOLD HOUSE FOUNDATION



UNITED STATES

“Leadership is service, vision, and uncompromising execution consistently employed, all at once.”

BING CHEN is Co-Founder and Chairman of Gold House Foundation, a collective of pioneering Asian founders, creative voices and leaders dedicated to systematically enhancing the Asian diaspora's societal impact and cross-cultural legacy. He is a founding architect of the multi-billion dollar digital influencer ecosystem as YouTube's Global Head of Creator Development & Management, where he was responsible for the global program strategy that elevated and monetized more than 500 million content creators worldwide. Today, Chen is Managing Director of a venture capital seed-stage fund that invests in new majority creators, founders, and leaders shaping tomorrow's most pressing problems. He sits on the board of directors and advisory boards of more than a dozen top digital media companies across three continents, including Google's Global Marketing Council, Bytedance, Baobab Studios, Omnicom's Sparks & Honey, and is active in philanthropic work with the Coalition of Asian Pacifics in Entertainment and Asia Society Southern California. Chen has been named a Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree, Top 35 Next Generation Leader and Most Influential Agent of Change by *The Hollywood Reporter*, ADCOLOR Catalyst honoree, Magic Johnson 32 Under 32 Innovator, and an Asian Chamber of Commerce Next Gen Leader. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in creative writing.

BONNIE CHIU
FOUNDER & CEO
LENSATIONAL



HONG KONG

“Leadership is the way to serve others and to give back to society. As the world is confronted with social and environmental challenges, we need leaders who can create a new values-based system where no one is left behind.”

BONNIE CHIU is an award-winning social entrepreneur, a gender equality advocate and a leading social impact and impact investing consultant. She is Founder and CEO of Lensational, an award-winning non-profit social enterprise which equips marginalized women with photography training and digital storytelling in 23 countries across Asia and Africa. Chosen as a Forbes 30 Under 30 Social Entrepreneur in Europe, she has been invited to speak in 16 countries, most prominently at two TEDx talks and at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in 2016, presented by President Bill Clinton. Chiu is also the managing director of The Social Investment Consultancy, a social impact strategy and research consultancy with offices in London, Milan, Hong Kong and Doha. She is a *Forbes* contributor on gender and diversity and was profiled as the Ambassador for Sustainable Development Goal 5 in the Lavazza calendar. She serves on various Boards, including the Global Alumni Advisory Board of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Women's Housing Fund Advisory Board of Big Society Capital. Born and raised in Hong Kong, Chiu has lived in six countries: Denmark, Singapore, United States, Germany, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom.

ZEN CHO

SPECULATIVE FICTION WRITER



MALAYSIA

“A leader carves out fresh paths, is grounded in community, credits the work of others, honors those who have gone before, and seeks new ways of doing things.”

ZEN CHO is the author of two historical fantasy novels – *Sorcerer to the Crown* and *The True Queen* – and a short story collection, *Spirits Abroad*. Her work uses fantasy to explore imperialism, diaspora, gender and sexuality, and cultural hybridity. She is the first Malaysian to be nominated for the Campbell Award for Best New Writer and to have won the Crawford Award and a British Fantasy Award. Cho is the editor of the anthology *Cyberpunk: Malaysia*. She was a juror for the Speculative Literature Foundation Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds grants, served on the Board of non-profit Con or Bust, and is a SFWA (Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America) mentor for emerging writers. She has appeared at literary festivals, conventions, and conferences in Malaysia, the U.S., the U.K., the Netherlands, Finland, and Hong Kong, and co-organized the Nine Worlds Geekfest convention’s first Race & Culture programming track. Cho has spoken about genre and social justice on BBC Radio, Minnesota Public Radio News and Al Jazeera’s online daily TV show, *The Stream*.

NIGHAT DAD

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DIGITAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION



PAKISTAN

“Leadership is rooted in what matters to you the most and this, I believe, comes through self-awareness and self-reflection. I see situations from multiple perspectives with an open mind which has marvelously led to healthy and collaborative relationships with diverse people beyond the borders.”

NIGHAT DAD is Founder and Executive Director of the Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) in Pakistan. DRF is a research and advocacy NGO that protects women and minorities from cyber harassment and defends their online freedom of expression. She is among the pioneers who started lobbying for internet freedom in Pakistan. Her career and initiatives came to be from her law education, during which she developed an interest in focusing on Information and Communications Technology (ICTs) to support human rights, democratic processes and digital governance from the policy perspective. Dad was an affiliate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University from 2016 to 2018. She was named a World Economic Forum (WEF) Young Global Leader in 2018, a Forbes Top 10 Social Entrepreneur in 2018, a TED Fellow in 2017, and a Next Generation Leader by *TIME* in 2015. She also received the Tulip Award as well as the Atlantic Council Freedom Award in 2016. Furthermore, Dad represented DRF at the U.N. General Assembly in 2018. She received her certification in internet governance from the Diplo Foundation in 2011.

VAFA GHAZAVI
PHD CANDIDATE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY



AUSTRALIA

“Leadership is about conviction, commitment and vision. It requires audacity but its touchstone is humility. Leadership is about promoting long-lasting change for the common good. This involves sacrifice — a deep belief in contributing to something bigger than oneself.”

VAFA GHAZAVI is a political philosopher and a former Australian diplomat. He is currently a doctoral student at Balliol College at the University of Oxford, where he studies as a John Monash Scholar, and is a Retained Lecturer in Politics at Pembroke College, University of Oxford. As a diplomat, Ghazavi served abroad in Kabul and Vienna. In Vienna, he covered the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. He has also worked on trade negotiations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), for the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, and in the Australian Foreign Ministry’s Iraq Taskforce. More recently, Ghazavi served as International Cyber Policy Adviser in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. He received his M.P.A. from Harvard University, where he studied as a Fulbright Scholar and did research under the supervision of Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, and his bachelor’s degree in economic and social sciences with First Class Honours and the University Medal from the University of Sydney. Ghazavi’s research interests include philosophy and public policy, political theory, the ethics and governance of artificial intelligence, and foreign policy.

FRANZ HENG
MANAGING DIRECTOR
LHT CAPITAL



CAMBODIA

“Leadership is no longer just about empowering; it is about bringing together talents. Great leaders create an environment where individuals strive and reach their full potential.”

FRANZ HENG is Managing Director of LHT Capital Investment Group and a board member of the Center for Khmer Studies where she supports Cambodia’s education and research capacity development. Following in the footsteps of her parents, who pioneered the first retail chain in Cambodia, Heng helped transform the small family business into successful retail chains across the country. Along with a stellar group of young Cambodian leaders on her team, she has ensured the development of the family business into other areas including education and investment in Cambodia’s young entrepreneurs. She believes successful and responsible businesses can contribute significantly to eradicating poverty and transforming societies. Heng received her B.S. in finance from Golden Gate University.

JIANLONG HU
FOUNDER
THE PASSAGE MEDIA



CHINA

“First and foremost, leadership means sacrifice and responsibility. Every leader must be willing to make sacrifices on behalf of others. Secondly, leaders should inspire and motivate others by creating vivid long-term visions.”

JIANLONG HU is Founder of The Passage Media based in Bangalore, India. The Passage Media is the first media house that brings together Chinese and Indian correspondents to cover stories about the two countries. Hu founded the media start up soon after he moved to India in 2017 and became inspired to write stories about India for Chinese readers beyond what is made available by Chinese media. The Passage Media is playing a significant role in enhancing people to people connections, and especially amongst technology communities. Hu has lived in a few countries, including Singapore and the U.S. In 2015, he was awarded the Humphrey Fellowship. Hu was previously a Beijing-based investigative journalist for the Guangzhou-based newspaper *Southern Weekly*, writing and reporting on environmental news.

SHIORI ITO
JOURNALIST & DOCUMENTARY
FILMMAKER
HANASHI FILMS



JAPAN

“In Japan, the word ‘kotodama’ refers to the belief that mystical powers dwell in words and names. I strongly believe this applies to those in leadership. A leader needs to understand the consequences of ‘kotodama’ and be responsible for their own words.”

SHIORI ITO is a journalist and documentary filmmaker based in London and Tokyo. She focuses primarily on gender and human rights issues. Ito won the silver award in the Social Issues category for her direction of *Lonely Death* at the 56th New York Film Festival in 2018. She has spoken up against sexism in Japanese society and institutions and is the author of *Black Box* (2017), a book based on her own experience of rape. The book won the 7th Free Press Association of Japan Best Journalism Award in 2018 and is now available in Japanese, Korean and soon in French, Swedish and Chinese.

AAYUSHI KC

FOUNDER & CEO
KHAALISISI MANAGEMENT PVT.
LTD.



NEPAL

“Leadership is about believing in yourself and your vision, even when everyone around you is laughing at the very idea, and about turning that laughter into appreciation over time.”

AAYUSHI KC is Founder and CEO of Khaalisisi Management Pvt. Ltd., a waste management platform that currently connects waste workers, in an industry with more than 13,000 waste workers, to waste sellers. Constantly seeking opportunities to learn and grow from, KC works to substantially increase the diversion of recyclable materials away from landfills. She works to raise public awareness of recycling in Nepal and ultimately hopes to create a waste management industry in the country. KC was named a Forbes 30 under 30 honoree in 2018 and describes herself as a rebel for a good cause.

JASON LIN

EXECUTIVE, INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND
PRODUCTION
ALIBABA PICTURES



UNITED STATES

“A true leader must be able to see different perspectives while widening his or her own understanding of cultures and communities of the world.”

JASON LIN is an executive at Alibaba Pictures based in Los Angeles. He is responsible for establishing and managing partnerships with premiere Hollywood production companies like Amblin Partners and eOne. Lin leads the development and production of a slate of China co-production projects, including the recently released *Peppa Celebrates Chinese New Year*. He also works to execute China releases of films such as *Green Book* and *A Dog's Purpose*. Previously, Lin was a director with United Talent Agency's (UTA) corporate development division, where he was responsible for the acquisition of The Agency Group, which later became UTA Music. As a director, Lin was also responsible for corporate investment, financing, and client advisory. Prior to that, Lin was an investment banking associate at Morgan Stanley and Moelis, executing deals for technology and entertainment clients. From 2004 to 2010, he was a vice president of development and production at the Jet Li Production Studio based in Shanghai. His producing credits include *Ocean Heaven*, *The Forbidden Kingdom*, *The Mummy 3*, *Fearless*, *The Warlords*, and *War*. Prior to that, he held strategic planning and finance roles at the Walt Disney Company in Burbank, California. Lin received his M.B.A from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and his bachelor's degree from the University of California, Berkeley.



Asia
Society

ASIA 21
YOUNG LEADERS

CLASS OF 2019

LEESA LIN

RESEARCH FELLOW, HARVARD
MEDICAL SCHOOL

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
LUPINE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION



CANADA

“Great leadership is understanding that the sum becomes greater than the parts when we all work together towards a common goal. It is to foresee what others cannot and to lead by example.”

LEESA LIN is a visiting scholar at Harvard Medical School and the founder and director of Lupine Children's Foundation. She has also conducted and managed the research and training activities for the Harvard Preparedness and Emergency Response Research and Learning Center (Harvard-PERRC/PERLC). Lin has devoted her professional career to implementation science and to translating evidence into policy, practice and intervention programs to build public health capacity to prepare for and respond to health threats. Her work has centered on the development, implementation and evaluation of social and behavioral change interventions that address critical public health issues, including large-scale health emergencies, risk communications, child health and development, and antibiotic/antimicrobial resistance (AMR). In the midst of the 2014 Ebola outbreak, Lin coordinated and developed evidence-based training materials on emergency risk communications for the World Health Organization (WHO). From 2016 to 2017, she led a knowledge synthesis project supporting the WHO guideline development on emergency risk communications. Lin also serves as a subject expert on emergency preparedness and global health for the European Commission. She received her M.S.P.H. in global health and population from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health on a full scholarship and her B.A. in psychology and Asian Studies from the University of British Columbia.

LESLEY MA

CURATOR, INK ART
M+



TAIWAN

“Leadership is always hard-earned, not a given. It is to put yourself in the shoes of your teammates and to invite them to see through your lens. A leader commits not only to their team's advancement but also that of the community at large.”

LESLEY MA is the curator of Ink Art at M+, a new visual culture museum opening in 2020 in West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong. She heads the museum's effort in collecting, exhibiting, and researching of ink art. In 2017, she curated the critically acclaimed exhibition, *The Weight of Lightness: Ink Art at M+*, and established herself and her institution as a leader in the field. In 2013, she co-curated *The Great Crescent: Art and Agitation in the 1960s – Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan* at Para Site, Hong Kong, which toured to Tokyo and Mexico City. From 2005 to 2009, she was the project director at artist Cai Guo-Qiang's studio in New York and was a curatorial coordinator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles from 2011 to 2012. A recipient of the Fifth Yishu Award for Critical Writing on Contemporary Chinese Art, Ma has published in Chinese and English and has written for artforum.com, *ArtAsiaPacific*, and other prestigious publications. She received her Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego, where her dissertation was on abstract painting in postwar Taiwan. She received her master's degree in museum studies from New York University and her bachelor's degree in history and science from Harvard College.



Asia
Society

ASIA 21
YOUNG LEADERS

CLASS OF 2019

JOHN MAK
CO-FOUNDER
MM COMMUNITY



HONG KONG

“Leadership is the ability to create a vision relevant to members and constituents of the community. More crucially, effective leadership involves the ability to put grand plans and visions into action through coalition-building and navigating across different stakeholders and interests.”

JOHN MAK is Co-founder of MM Community, a government finance and public relations solution designed to supercharge Myanmar’s public infrastructure development in local communities. Previously, Mak was a social entrepreneur based in Hong Kong and Myanmar. He founded a non-profit venture with the purpose of connecting civil servants, professionals, youth leaders and industry experts in Hong Kong with those in Myanmar for knowledge exchange. His initiative has gained widespread support in both Hong Kong and Myanmar, including from the highest level of government. In 2017, Mak founded another Myanmar-based social enterprise which seeks to revolutionize traditional processes of community development by facilitating the government in issuing government bonds to local citizens. Prior to his entrepreneurial work, Mak worked at a local think tank and a global communications agency. During his studies, he also gained experience in both Houses of the United Kingdom Parliament, the Administrative Service of the Hong Kong Government, the Judiciary, the District Council and the political section of a media organization. Mak was an inaugural Obama Foundation Scholar at the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy and is also a World Economic Forum Global Shaper and a former TEDx speaker. He received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Durham.

ERMEK MAMAEV
LAWYER
KALIKOVA & ASSOCIATES



KYRGYZSTAN

“Leadership means serving others by actively listening, understanding and taking actions. Furthermore, leadership is about taking responsibility for our actions and caring about those whom we lead.”

ERMEK MAMAEV is a lawyer from Kyrgyzstan whose practice focuses on complex civil litigation, investment protection, and natural resources law. He currently works for Kalikova & Associates, Kyrgyzstan’s leading law firm, counseling local and foreign companies investing in the country’s economy. In Kyrgyzstan, Mamaev works to advance the rule of law in both the private and public sectors, and advocates for practical reforms that will improve the rights and opportunities of vulnerable groups, such as girls and women in rural areas and persons with disabilities. Mamaev was the leader of the Kyrgyz team at the 2018 Leaders Advancing Democracy (LEAD) Alliance Summit and is the only male representative from Kyrgyzstan at the Women Deliver Young Leaders Program (Class of 2018-19), an initiative that brings together young advocates from more than 138 countries, with the aim of advancing gender equality, health, human rights, and wellbeing of girls and women. He recently received his LL.M. in sustainable international development from the University of Washington School of Law, where he was a recipient of the Barer Fellowship from the Barer Institute for Global Human Services, and his bachelor’s degree in international business law from the American University of Central Asia.

MIA MITCHELL

SENIOR ADVISOR FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL



UNITED STATES

“To me, leadership means making decisions and engaging with the world with compassion and commitment.”

MIA MITCHELL is Senior Advisor for International Economic Affairs at the White House National Security Council and National Economic Council. At the White House, she has led the development and launch of the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative, which aims to economically empower 50 million women across the developing world by 2025. Mitchell also works on U.S. policy toward the G7 and G20, where she’s served as the United States’ Sous-Sherpa. Over the past decade, she has served in a variety of roles across the U.S. Government, including with the White House Office of Management and Budget, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and U.S. State Department. Outside of work, she spends her evenings and weekends working with Code for Nepal, a non-profit that she co-founded with her husband Ravi to increase digital literacy and the use of open data in Ravi’s home country of Nepal. Mitchell received her master’s degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School and her bachelor’s degree in government and economics from Smith College.

ALEX MOAZED

CEO & FOUNDER
APPLICO



UNITED STATES

“A future leader needs both skill and character: my team must trust that I have the expertise and the disposition to see our commitment through with integrity.”

ALEX MOAZED is Founder and CEO of Applico, where he works with Fortune 500 CEOs and boards to help them build or buy their own platform businesses. Clients include Ford Motor Company, Kloeckner Metals, and Reliance ADA Group. Recently, Moazed launched an exchange-traded fund (ETF) in cooperation with Wisdom Tree that will track stocks of platform businesses, enabling individual investors to benefit from the growing market share platforms command. In addition, he co-authored the best-selling book, *Modern Monopolies*, which examines and analyzes the platform business model dominating the 21st century economy. Moazed is a graduate of Babson College.

ENAYAT NAJAFIZADA
SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR
INDEPENDENT DIRECTORATE OF
LOCAL GOVERNANCE



AFGHANISTAN

“To me, leadership is creating a vision where idealism meets pragmatism. It is about getting your hands dirty on the ground and leading by example.”

ENAYAT NAJAFIZADA is a senior policy advisor for Afghanistan’s Independent Directorate of Local Governance. Born into a poor family, Najafizada’s family had a collective vision inspired by two pieces of advice from his grandfather — get the best education possible and make sure that no one is left behind, not just in the family but also in the community and society. His grandfather was known for his passion for education but also for being tough by making Najafizada’s father and uncles walk for hours to go to school with only a piece of oiled-bread in their bag that they ate on the way. Born during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Najafizada received his undergraduate degree from Balkh University and his graduate degree from the United Kingdom before returning to serve his country. He now works to help rebuild Afghanistan to ensure better education and working and living conditions for all Afghans who were left behind, and believes that it shouldn’t be a privilege to access quality education and basic health services.

PAK SHUN NG
DEPARTMENT HEAD
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE AIR
FORCE



SINGAPORE

“Leadership is a process of influencing others to believe in something that they would not otherwise and to pursue it together.”

PAK SHUN NG is a department head and a colonel in the Republic of Singapore Air Force. He previously served as a squadron commander and deputy director in the Singapore Ministry of Defence. He had also been seconded to the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry to work on policies related to SMEs and startups, where he helped develop the Public Private Co-Innovation Partnership program for Singapore’s public and private sectors to co-create innovative solutions that meet public needs and grow innovative enterprises. In his personal capacity, Ng serves on the boards of Singapore-based non-profit organizations such as the Counselling and Care Centre and the Woodlands Social Centre. He also serves in the Community Mediation Centre as a mediator appointed by the Singapore Ministry of Law, and is an advisory committee member for the Singapore University of Social Sciences’ Translation and Interpretation degree program, providing advice on curriculum matters. Ng received his master’s degree in international relations and his bachelor’s degrees in economics and public policy studies from the University of Chicago. He also received a master’s degree in sciences historiques, philologiques et religieuses from the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and a bachelor’s degree in translation and interpretation from the Singapore University of Social Sciences. Ng was a Sloan Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he received his M.B.A.

NIKORA NGAROPO

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
NNMD
YOUNG ANIMATORS



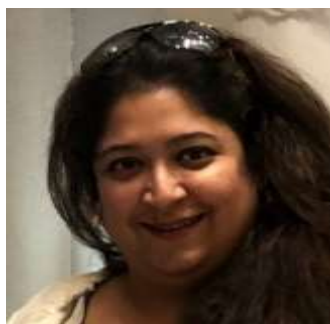
NEW ZEALAND

"I learned that leadership is everywhere and comes in all shapes and sizes; for me, it is about helping others achieve greatness."

NIKORA NGAROPO is Founder and Managing Director of NNMD and Young Animators and continues to lead with his work in the commercial and public sectors. He operates a business that provides a multi-tiered, multi-faceted technology ecosystem to educate the next generation of Aotearoa New Zealand digital creatives and provide sustainable pathways into the technology industry. As part of this work, NNMD is in discussions with the Canadian and Australian governments to create a pipeline to provide students of Young Animators with international pathways into their countries. He draws motivation from his passion to inspire young people in Aotearoa New Zealand to engage with technology, increase their digital literacy, and to follow a path into the technology and innovation sector. A young Maori with connections to the North Island tribes of Te Rarawa, Tuhoë, Ngāti Porou, and Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngaropo seeks to create impactful change through collaboration, partnerships, and relationships tempered by creativity, culture, and commerce.

MIR NADIA NIVIN

GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL
REFORM SPECIALIST
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME



BANGLADESH

"My leadership style is best demonstrated in inducing and managing change and inspiring others towards a common goal."

MIR NADIA NIVIN is Governance and Institutional Reform Specialist at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), where she has worked for the past 12 years with a particular focus on democratic governance and peacebuilding. She is currently assigned with UNDP Malaysia, assisting the government in implementing reforms in the areas of elections, parliament, the justice sector, and anti-corruption. She previously served as Head of Governance with UNDP Afghanistan — which was one of UNDP's largest governance portfolios — implementing programs of several hundred million dollars. She has experience serving at the UNDP headquarters in New York, UNDP/UNV headquarters in Bonn, UNDP Pakistan, and UNDP Bangladesh. Prior to joining UNDP, Nivin was a lecturer at BRAC University and worked for several years as a journalist. She received her M.P.A. from Harvard University and her master's degree in computer science from California State University, Sacramento.

NIKHIL PAHWA
FOUNDER & EDITOR
MEDIANAMA



INDIA

“Leadership involves inspiring, organizing, directing and empowering people towards a common, shared goal. The position is not an entitlement, but an opportunity.”

NIKHIL PAHWA is an entrepreneur, journalist and activist. He is Founder and Editor of MediaNama, a publication and community focused on helping build an open, fair, and competitive digital ecosystem. Pahwa is currently working on expanding MediaNama’s readership and community in Asia, in order to drive cross-border collaborations on technology policy. MediaNama was recognized as an Ecosystem Builder in India by *Fortune* in 2016. He also led the Savetheinternet.in campaign in India, the largest grassroots campaign in the history of India that brought together 1.1 million people, leading to the creation of the strongest net neutrality regulations in the world. Pahwa is a leading voice for internet freedom in India. He has advocated for the right to privacy and has pushed back against India’s biometric ID system, censorship rules, and surveillance. He is a founding member of PEN Delhi, the Delhi chapter of PEN International, which campaigns against attacks on writers. He was also the founding chairman of the Internet Freedom Foundation, which works on open Internet issues in India. Pahwa is a TED Fellow and was named one of Indians of Tomorrow Under 35 by *India Today* in 2012.

**MEGHA
RAJAGOPALAN**

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT
BUZZFEED NEWS



UNITED STATES

“As a journalist, leadership means telling important stories that other media organizations are ignoring, and telling them ethically and with sensitivity.”

MEGHA RAJAGOPALAN is an international correspondent for *BuzzFeed News*, based in the Middle East. Previously, she was *BuzzFeed News*' inaugural China bureau chief and a political correspondent for Reuters in Beijing. She has reported widely across China, South Korea and Southeast Asia on stories ranging from the North Korean nuclear crisis to the drug war in the Philippines. Rajagopalan was awarded the Human Rights Press Award for first documenting the rise of mass surveillance targeting Muslim minorities in China. In 2019, she won a Mirror Award for her work uncovering the links between Facebook and communal violence in Sri Lanka. Previously she was a Fulbright fellow in Beijing and a research fellow at the New America Foundation in Washington D.C. She is a recognized expert on the subject of mass surveillance, and has spoken about her work at Yale University, Georgetown University, SOAS University of London, the European Council on Foreign Relations, the Oslo Freedom Forum, SXSW, and other forums. Rajagopalan also appears regularly on TV and radio programs including on NPR, BBC World News, CBS News, and Al Jazeera. She speaks Tamil and Mandarin Chinese.

RHEA SINGHAL
FOUNDER & CEO
ECOWARE



CANADA

"If my actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, then I am a leader."

RHEA MAZUMDAR SINGHAL is Founder and CEO of Ecoware, India's first and largest sustainable packaging company. Singhal founded Ecoware after moving to India from the U.K. with the sole aim of solving India's plastic menace. The company has since disrupted the food packaging industry by introducing a fully compostable alternative to plastic. Ecoware is made from the waste of agricultural crops that would otherwise be burnt, thus contributing to reducing air pollution. One of Singhal's greatest successes has been persuading Indian Railways, the largest food service operator in India, to switch to Ecoware biodegradable trays. Prior to founding Ecoware, she was a senior sales executive at Pfizer Inc., Singhal was awarded the Nari Shakti Puraskar in 2019, the highest civilian honor for women by the President of India. In addition, she is a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader (YGL) and a member of the CII National Committee on Women Empowerment & Clean Air. Singhal has been featured in major national and international publications and has appeared as a speaker at events for Salesforce and the National Commission for Women in India. She has attended the University of Bristol, Oxford University and Harvard University.

MAY SRIPATANASKUL
CEO
LUKKID



THAILAND

"I think a leader is one who knows the way, does the way, and shows the way."

MAY SRIPATANASKUL is CEO of LUKKID, an innovation consulting enterprise that helps organizations innovate and develop new products and services through design-led approaches. Since 2013, Sripatanaskul and her team have worked with over 80 leading business in Thailand, including leading financial institutions, telecommunication operators, and manufacturers. LUKKID provides design thinking training, customized innovation co-creation programs, and executive coaching on corporate innovation initiatives. Sripatanaskul has extended her design thinking work beyond the corporate world by introducing and promoting the concept of social development and equity in Thailand. She is currently working on integrating her expertise in design thinking at the systems level, working with systems thinking experts in Thailand to develop a "social systems laboratory" that leverages the integrated process of systems thinking and design thinking to address social and equity problems in Thailand. Sripatanaskul was named an Atlantic Fellow in 2019 and an Equity Initiative Fellow in 2018. She received her M.B.A. from Stanford University and was a d. leader at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (Stanford d.school).

STEPHANIE SY
FOUNDER
THINKING MACHINES



PHILIPPINES

“Great leaders are able to pull the best out of people and cultivate greatness in the service of a vision.”

STEPHANIE SY is a technology entrepreneur and Founder of Thinking Machines, a technology firm that helps organizations make better decisions by building artificial intelligence tools and data platforms. Working with various sectors, including the civic sector, government and academic institutions, the company has grown to become Manila’s best data science firm and a regional contender with core offices in Manila and Singapore. Prior to founding Thinking Machines, she worked at a startup until its \$350 million exit via Google acquisition. Post-acquisition, she worked at Google. Sy received her bachelor’s degree in management science & engineering from Stanford University.

GITA SYAHRANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SECRETARIAT OF SUSTAINABLE
DISTRICT ASSOCIATION



INDONESIA

“Leadership for me means to serve a purpose bigger than yourself and communicating your purpose with such clarity that it excites others. Most ultimately, leadership means being kind.”

GITA SYAHRANI is Executive Director to the Secretariat of Sustainable District Association or Lingkar Temu Kabupaten Lestari (LTKL), which seeks to accelerate and better support sustainable Indonesia’s sustainable vision and emission reduction targets. The organization represents more than 52,000 square kilometers of forests and 55,000 square kilometers of peat with nearly one million farmers. Previously, Syahrani served as the senior program manager for the Indonesia Palm Oil Pledge, a leading member of the Planning and Funding Deputy of the former National REDD+ Agency, and the sustainable commodities and business manager at the World Resources Institute Indonesia. A firm believer in collective impact, she also co-founded and runs several community-based projects such as Hutan Itu Indonesia, a campaign to position forest as Indonesia’s identity, SiDalang & Indonesia Plastic Bag Diet, a waste management movement, and the Social Corporate Lawyer Society (SocolaS), a network of legal practitioners committed to providing low-cost corporate legal service for SMEs, social enterprises and social movements. Syahrani received her LL.M. in climate change and energy from CEPMLP, University of Dundee, where she studied as a Chevening Scholar and her LL.B. from Padjadjaran University Indonesia. She also earned a diploma in environmental law from the Washington College of Law at American University.

VAN NGOC TA

CHIEF LAWYER
BLUE DRAGON CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION



VIETNAM

"To lead means to create and foster trust. When we trust each other, work becomes more effective. When we trust each other, we can work together to change the world."

VAN NGOC TA is Chief Lawyer at Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, a charity that rescues Vietnamese children in crisis, including street kids and victims of human trafficking. He has personally secured the freedom of over 800 trafficking victims and provided legal representation to 90 victims of human trafficking and sexual abuse in 48 court cases. His tireless efforts have earned him the trust of police and government officials, who regularly invite him to assist in their anti-trafficking and law reform initiatives. Furthermore, Ta's work is recognized by the international community. He was named a TIP Hero by the U.S. State Department in 2014 and received the inaugural Trust Women Anti Trafficking Hero Award from Thomson Reuters Foundation in 2015. More recently, he was recognized as a ZICO ASEAN 40 Under 40 honoree and was named an Asia Foundation Development Fellow in 2018. Ta received his master's degree in sustainable development from Brandeis University and his bachelor's degree in law from Hanoi University of Law. He received his license to practice law from Hanoi Judicial Academy.

KAREN TAY

SMART NATION DIRECTOR, NORTH AMERICA – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, SINGAPORE GLOBAL NETWORK – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE

FACULTY – SINGULARITY UNIVERSITY



SINGAPORE

"Having convictions, but being truly open to change and learning, is an essential part of my leadership. Listening deeply to the people I want to serve, my team members and my stakeholders forms the foundation of any sustainable change."

KAREN TAY is Smart Nation Director (North America) at the Singapore Prime Minister's Office and Regional Vice President in the Singapore Global Network. A pioneer in both roles, she is building a team that forges strategic relationships with tech talent communities, industry, governments and international organizations to support Singapore's development into a "Smart Nation" and Southeast Asia's development into a top tech ecosystem. In addition, Tay is a faculty member at Singularity University in Silicon Valley, where she teaches business executives, global organizations, policy-makers, and startup founders on topics at the intersection of tech and public good, including the future of governance, smart cities, and technology policy. She is the editor of *Technology and Public Good*, which has drawn over 50,000 visitors to date, and is also an executive coach focused on supporting women and minorities in tech. An innovator and leader in the Singapore Public Service, Tay has two passions in public service – finding ways for people to partner with the government and building a more inclusive society. Prior to her current role, she founded the Ministry of Education's strategic communications group to enable a stronger feedback loop between policymakers, educator, and parents; started the Social Policy Review Committee under Tharman Shanmugaratnam, which pushed major policy reforms to make Singapore's preschool, healthcare, and disability policies more inclusive; was a founding member of the Strategy Group in the Prime Minister's Office; and helped establish the Singapore Institute of Technology to support vocational students in obtaining degrees. Tay is also a seasoned political speechwriter. A mother of two, she resides in Palo Alto, California with her family.

ALISTAIR THORNTON
CO-FOUNDER
YOUNG CHINA WATCHERS



UNITED KINGDOM

"I believe the most powerful and long-lasting societal changes occur when leaders start from the mindset of serving — serving others and serving a cause — rather than leading."

ALISTAIR THORNTON is Co-Founder of Young China Watchers (YCW), a global community of China-engaged young professionals, which he founded in 2010 and has now grown to include more than 5,000 members across 10 chapters. YCW's mission is to connect and educate the next generation of China-engaged leaders by hosting regular roundtable discussions (more than 90 in 2018), an annual flagship conference with King's College London, two mentorship programs with Tsinghua University and the London School of Economics, the annual YCW Pulse Survey and a blog, including a partnership with Asia Society's *ChinaFile*. Thornton is also Product Strategy Lead at Facebook, where he leads global strategic projects for Facebook's commerce initiatives, including marketplace, Instagram shopping, and payments. Previously, he worked at Eachwin Capital, a hedge fund that invests in technology companies, and was Senior China Economist at IHS Markit, a data and research company. Thornton received his M.B.A. from Stanford University and studied philosophy at The University of Edinburgh. He lived in Beijing from 2008 to 2013 and speaks Mandarin.

FARHAD WAJDI
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EBTAKAR INSPIRING ENTREPRE-
NEURS OF AFGHANISTAN



AFGHANISTAN

"Effective leadership is building a collective vision of success for followers. A true leader would sacrifice their present for a better future."

FARHAD WAJDI is Founder and Executive Director of Ebtakar Inspiring Entrepreneurs of Afghanistan, an NGO that addresses poverty, gender inequality, and violence against women in Afghanistan through social entrepreneurship. Wajdi was spurred on by widespread gender inequality that deprived Afghan women of their basic human rights to education, health and freedom. He started his initiatives as early as 14 years old when he helped build a school in a small refugee town in Pakistan: his dedication to providing education protected 800 refugee children from child labor. Additionally, he runs a social venture and a consultancy firm with the mission of raising funds to incubate social business ideas that can lead to sustainable change in Afghan communities. Wajdi was named an Asia Foundation Development Fellow for the Emerging Leadership for Asia's Future Program in 2019 and an EDD Young Leader by the European Commission in 2018. Most recently, he was named a Thomson Reuters Foundation Scholar.

NAT WARE

FOUNDER & CEO
180 DEGREES CONSULTING



AUSTRALIA

“Leaders push boundaries in a direction that moves the world towards one that is more just and more sustainable, where present and future generations can live with dignity and to their full potential.”

NAT WARE is an award-winning social impact economist, entrepreneur and speaker. He is Founder and CEO of 180 Degrees Consulting, which he founded at 19 and built it into the world’s largest consultancy for non-profits and social enterprises, with 115 branches across 35 countries. The organization provides affordable consulting services by utilizing the untapped talent of top university students as consultants. So far, 180 Degrees Consulting has provided more than two million hours of consulting services to clients. At 16, he raised \$100,000 to build an orphanage in Thailand. At 25, he received a Ph.D. from Oxford University, where he invented new ways to finance education and measure poverty, social impact, and government performance. Ever since, Dr. Ware has been called “the father of social impact economics.” He is a Rhodes Scholar, Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree, Australian Young Achiever of the Year, World Economic Forum Global Shaper, and was a visiting fellow at Princeton University. Dr. Ware is the recipient of the Oxford Vice-Chancellor’s Social Impact Award, the Saïd Prize for Top Oxford M.B.A. Student, the Arthur Lewis Prize for Best Performance in Development Economics at Oxford, and the Convocation Medal for Best All-Rounder at Sydney University (1/33,000 students). He received the highest score for his speech at the World Debating Championships, a “No Corrections” for his Oxford PhD (top 1 percent), and is the only two-time Global Winner of the St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award. Dr. Ware has swum the English Channel to raise money for charity, given three TEDx talks, and is also the founder and CEO of Forte, a new way to finance education.

SAVERA WEERASINGHE

FOUNDER & CEO – MSH PACKAGING INDUSTRIES

FOUNDER – ANANTA SUSTAINABLES



SRI LANKA

“Effective leadership should be catalytic in nature; it should recognize the inherent potential of all those within the community and envision opportunities for collaboration. It should enable modes and means that create a strong, collaborative community that serves all.”

SAVERA WEERASINGHE is CEO of MSH Packaging Industries, an industrial paper sack manufacturer. The organization attempts to make the manufacturing facility environmentally and socially sustainable by solar powering the facility, employing 72 percent of women, and providing free meals and transportation. She is also the founder of Ananta Sustainable, Sri Lanka’s first sustainable packaging sourcing, supply and solutions provider offering industries with compostable packaging and waste management solutions. Ananta works to promote awareness of single-use plastic consumption by organizing community events such as trash sculpturing, plogging races, and workshops. Weerasinghe is also the co-founder of MiddyFund Inc, a New York-based non-profit that teaches ethnic minority middle and high school students to use design thinking to design, develop, and pitch solutions for social and environmental issues they face in their communities. She has also hosted Soneva Kiri’s Waste to Wealth Innovation Symposium in Thailand, Mandala Mornings-Jeffersonian tables for thought leaders in Sri Lanka, and Trash Talks, a platform for ideas and actions around waste management. Furthermore, Weerasinghe was a curator for the first international Women of the World festival in Sri Lanka and a panelist at the Singapore Eco Film Festival. She speaks on the effects of single-use plastic and the need for sustainable packaging at industry conferences, community events, schools and more.