

# KOSOVO AMERICAN EDUCATION FUND

*Quarterly Newsletter, March 2022*



*Women's History Month: Celebrating KAEF Alumnae*

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# UPDATES FROM KAEF FELLOWS

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The KAEF 2020-2022 cohort started their educational journey during one of the most uncertain years for the global public health, with the COVID-19 pandemic putting the world to a halt. With no exception, the KAEF program, and the higher education institutions in the U.S. navigated through the pandemic by adapting, adjusting, and most importantly, continuing the important work.

Fast forward to today, KAEF's 2020-2022 cohort has one student already graduated, and three others will join KAEF's alumni community very soon. In addition, this cohort introduced the first online graduate degree to the program. Read about Zana Cena, Jon Hajdini, and Aid Sopjani's experiences as KAEF fellows, as well as Yllza Hoti's perspective as KAEF's first online graduate student.



**Zana Cena** (LL.M., Duke University, 2021)

Since graduating from Duke Law School, LL.M. Program, I have been working as a Legal Associate at Hodaj & Partners law firm in Prishtina, Kosovo. Starting work immediately after the LL.M., has enabled me to already use some of the skills and knowledge I have acquired through my courses. Currently, as a Legal Associate, I have already had exposure to various areas of law such as Mergers & Acquisitions, Start-up Law and Corporate Finance, fields which I studied in depth during my time at Duke. Even though the LL.M. is only two semesters long, I tried my best to challenge myself with different classes. I did so, by choosing courses which intertwined law with finance. This has pushed me outside of my comfort zone and has helped me tremendously in understanding more complex issues that I stumble upon at work. Anyone who is interested in pursuing an LL.M., should absolutely apply to KAEF, to further enhance their skills and carrier prospects!

*"I am very grateful to KAEF for giving me this opportunity, and now my focus - hope this is the case for other fellows as well - shifts to the real challenge: making Kosova a better place to live and an example for the entire region." - Jon Hajdini*



**Jon Hajdini** (Finance, Brandeis University, 2022)

Now that I am getting closer to officially graduate from Brandeis University with a master's degree in finance, I can say that I am extremely happy for the decision I made to apply for the KAEF scholarship in the summer of 2019 – and I would suggest to anyone that is reading this to do the same because you never know. The past two years in the United States, even though in the middle of the pandemic, have been nothing but amazing, filled with invaluable experiences: from travelling to the West Coast of the USA and visiting some of the most beautiful places on Earth to working hard with world-class faculty members and friends from around the world. In terms of the academic aspect, which is the main goal of the program, the best thing about studying at a US institution is that everything you learn in theory, you put into practice, which I think is very important in order to be able to really understand more complex problems. Additionally, the majority of the professors are people from the industry who work at the leading financial institutions, so everything you learn will be used in the future either at your job or during the interview process for that job. In conclusion, I am very grateful to KAEF for giving me this opportunity, and now my focus – hope this is the case for other fellows as well – shifts to the real challenge: making Kosova a better place to live and an example for the entire region.

## UPDATES FROM KAEF FELLOWS



**Aid Sopjani** (MBA, University of Minnesota, 2022)

I can confidently say that the past two years have been the most transformative of my life. My journey has had a huge impact on me, both personally and academically.

In personal terms, I consider myself lucky because I came to the United States during an interesting time where I got to personally witness various historic events unfold. For one, my first year here was during the height of the Covid pandemic. While this has made some things more difficult, I generally consider it to be one of the most important factors of my journey. Facing these difficulties has made me more resilient, independent and adaptable to unforeseen situations. Additionally, being in the United States during an election year is a great way to immerse yourself into the American political culture and really understand the importance of this process. Finally, living in Minneapolis, the city where the historic 2020 protests in America—and the world—started, gave me the opportunity to witness the power, and importance, of civil engagement.

In academic terms, my MBA at Carlson School of Management (University of Minnesota) has enabled me to gain tremendous knowledge through various courses. The institution takes pride in the fact that it is a research-focused school, and this has given me the opportunity to be taught by professionals who are spearheading new research and are experts in their fields. Another highlight of my education has been participating in experiential programs. For two semesters, I had the chance to work with two different US-based companies where I helped them assess new markets as well as overcome operational hurdles. Furthermore, the program has made it possible for me to meet people from very different backgrounds. In fact, I now have friends coming from all the continents in the world. All these factors combined have given me the full American MBA experience and knowledge that I can hopefully transfer when I come back to Kosovo.

*Because of all this, I am very grateful to KAEF because this would not have been possible without their help and support. Thank you!*

# MY ONLINE MBA EXPERIENCE



**Yllza Hoti** (Online MBA, University of Minnesota, 2022) - As I'm approaching the end of my Online MBA experience, I can't help but think about the many questions I had as I was beginning this journey back in 2020. As the first KAEF fellow to pursue online studies, I felt that I was missing out on valuable advice that the KAEF alumni community typically provides. At the same time – however – I was more than happy that KAEF had provided me an opportunity to complete my graduate studies without having to give up my career commitments here in Kosovo. Having now successfully completed about 90% of my MBA courses, I am happy to provide the much needed reassurance that yes – an online degree is doable, and most importantly, it is a very valuable experience.

One of many benefits of choosing the online path for your graduate degree is the fact that you can continue to work as you study. If you're at a point in your career where you don't wish to change your job, the online program allows you to grow academically without disrupting your ties to your existing professional network. Furthermore, the design of fully-online programs is such that it gives you high flexibility – with the exception of team work, it's up to the individual student how they structure their own schedule. At the same time, however, it's important to note that this type of flexibility can also become a challenge. Because you're in charge of how you plan your studies, being organized and keeping track of important deadlines becomes a crucial step to success.

Similarly, it becomes your responsibility to ensure that group members are aware of your time-zone difference, so that they can accommodate your schedule (you don't want to end up having 2 AM team meetings!). The experience with the Covid-19 pandemic has truly highlighted the importance of technology, as well as the extent to which this technology can be used to make our lives easier. As I reflect on these past two years of completing my MBA at the Carlson School of Management, I'm happy to realize that despite the 7-hour time difference, I've managed to (virtually) meet some great people who are now part of my professional (digital) network. For anyone who is considering choosing the online path for the graduate studies, I highly encourage you to do so. Sure, this new form of learning may be more challenging than the traditional classroom, but it definitely helps you grow personally as you adapt to this new style of learning.

*Finally, 2 pro tips:*

- 1. Create a dedicated study space, and*
- 2. Submit assignments by your local time-zone deadline (or you'll end up pulling many all-nighters :)).*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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KAEF's March newsletter is dedicated to its alumnae, recognizing their achievements and contributions as they become role models by paving the way for the new generations of female leaders in Kosovo. They are sharing their journeys, and some valuable advice drawn from experience.



**Nita Gojani** (MA, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2009)

KAEF, and the opportunity it gave me to complete a Master's degree at SAIS, has opened up a lot of doors in my professional life and prepared me for a career in international development. Studying at SAIS gave me strong foundations to work in the field of human rights, and the confidence to continuously challenge myself and seek new opportunities for growth. After working in the UN system for five years, four of which were in Kosovo on women's rights and transitional justice with UN Women, I have since 2017 been working with Save the Children Norway and focusing on children's rights and good governance. This job has given me an opportunity to work towards fulfilment of children's rights in various countries in East Africa, including as Program Director for Save the Children in Sudan. I am currently based in Venezuela, from where I support Save the Children's work in the region on good governance for child rights and on child protection.

*One of the most important things that has contributed to my career development has been to not shy away from challenges and from taking on new responsibilities. And I have learned that in order to feel fulfilled in my career, I need to be in an environment where my contributions are appreciated and where I can maintain a balance between work and life.*



**Albina Berisha** (MBA, Monterey Institute of International Studies, 2010)

After graduating from California, one of the most beautiful areas in the United States and one of the most interesting studying experiences, I returned home. I came back motivated and energized by the experience, inspired by professional faculty and connected to a diverse group of people from all over the world. I took back with me the values of building relationships, questioning, and debating important concepts. Since then, I joined development organizations and I currently work in the area of youth employment, being a team leader of a project that aims to bring the youth of Kosovo to more job opportunities. The most valuable contribution is doing analytical research, bringing market actors together and supporting them to maintain the relationship and have an impact. Through my work we are changing the lives of young people in Kosovo by providing more options for them to get more relevant career information, jobs and have more training opportunities. All of these are based on relevant information that come from the labor market.

*My recommendation to young people especially to young women would be to continuously invest in knowledge and education. No matter what career choice they make, the dynamics change so there is a need to search for trends and innovations so that they are able to stay competitive.*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Brikena Avdyli** (MA, American University, 2013)

I will be forever grateful to KAEF for the opportunity to pursue my graduate studies in international development at the American University in Washington D.C. The experience has been rich in so many ways – an incredible opportunity to learn, network, get introduced to new cultures, make new friends, and so much more. I returned with a lot of enthusiasm and energy to apply everything I had learned into my next steps, and it was exciting to see that fellow KAEF alumni had the same sense of mission, regardless the different backgrounds. Since I returned in 2013, I have worked in local and international organizations and institutions, and each of them was an opportunity to grow professionally and give back. For four years I worked to make the electoral process more inclusive for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. After that, I had the opportunity to work at the office of former President Jahjaga, in different components including the testimony on lack of justice for war crimes directed at the Committee of Foreign Affairs at the US House of Representative, as well as co-organizing the 20th anniversary of liberty in Kosovo, with key speakers President Clinton and Secretary Albright. Now, as I serve as the Executive Director of the Jahjaga Foundation, along with my team, I have the opportunity to implement projects that have an impact. From donating a mammogram equipment to producing a clothing line that offers employment to marginalized groups to publishing a magazine highlighting women and men who work for a better future, and so much more, I am grateful that I get to use the energy and enthusiasm that I came back with almost 10 years ago in this format. Through this experience I have met and worked with a lot of young girls, and I know their potential achieve anything they set their mind to. To them I would only say – work hard and enjoy the journey. Your work will take you from there.



**Bardhë Krasniqi** (LL.M., Loyola University of Chicago School of Law, 2014)

Since graduation from Loyola University of Chicago School of Law in May 2014, I have supported Kosovo institutions with advice and technical expertise on legislative drafting to bring Kosovo legislation in compliance with international law and human rights instruments. The international law knowledge and expertise gained through the LL.M. degree have enabled me to support Kosovo in various areas of the Rule of Law system. Through such expertise, I supported the drafting of more than 100 pieces of legislation and policy papers. While supporting Kosovo institutions in establishing a solid legal framework to bring Kosovo closer to the European Integration path, I'm paying special attention to women's role in Kosovo society, in particular concerns related to gender equality and gender-based violence. Currently, I am serving as a Public Legal Education Expert in issues of Domestic Violence and Marginalized Groups at the European Union Justice Sector Programme Kosovo, EUKOJUST. On daily basis I am supporting the Kosovo institutions to improve the access to justice for women and marginalized groups, particularly in the field of domestic violence, and strengthening the Free Legal Aid system. *My advice for Kosovo young women and girls is to believe in themselves and pursue their dream to become whoever they want. Investing in education and career will empower them to make choices for their own future.*

*"Work hard and enjoy  
the journey. Your work  
will take you from there."  
- Brikena Avdyli*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Fjolla Bakalli** (MBA, Monterey Institute of International Studies, 2014)

I was first introduced to Silicon Valley's technology startup world through my graduate studies as a KAEF fellow. While my MBA was in General Management, one of my professors would bring students from incubators in the Valley to pitch as part of his Business Strategy class. Up until that point, I had never been exposed to more exciting innovations. These young entrepreneurs were disrupting industries from healthcare to retail, and more. I was immediately drawn to startups and technology's transformative potential.

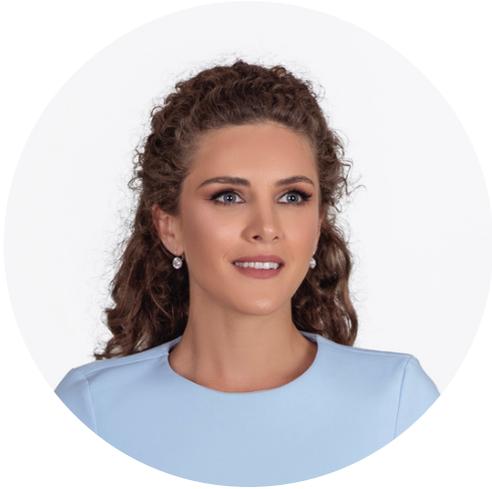
Following my graduation, I followed my instinct and joined the technology startup space in London, UK as employee number five. Joining a company at such an early stage is a very high risk, high reward situation. However, I wanted to be part of a team where I could make significant impact, and a startup was exactly that. After almost 3 years at a startup, as an operator, I helped grow the business to over 6,000 customers, putting processes in place, growing the team, mentoring others, and becoming part of the leadership team. This experience opened doors in my career and life including to the current role within Shopify's Corporate Development team. Shopify is a publicly traded company and at a very different stage of growth compared to my startup. I am part of a strategic team leading investments and acquisitions to accelerate Shopify's product roadmap. The role that I'm in now gives me the perfect vantage point, exposure and ability to lead innovative initiatives while still staying close to startups and the newest technology trends. Throughout my career, I sought opportunities that challenged me and helped me grow, but I always stayed true to what I cared most about and for me that's the ability to make an impact.

*I have my parents and three older sisters to thank for paving the way for me and showing me that as women we can always push boundaries nationally and internationally. I was lucky to not have to look far for my role models, as they were around me in my family. That being said, all of us have examples of women role models and men who support women to achieve their potential. Today we are lucky to live in the age of the internet. Whether your role models are near or far, my advice to you as a woman is to reach out to them as you will find that most people are willing to lend a helping hand. Be true to yourself and follow your passions and interests. Seek opportunities that expand your horizons such as KAEF and don't be afraid to change course as you learn and grow. Take advantage of the power of the internet to nurture a stronger network for yourself and use your drive to create opportunities that transcend boundaries!*

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**Annea Hapçiu** (MA, American University, 2017)

The KAEF program enabled me to learn tangible skills that I was able to directly transfer to the organizations, companies, and staff that I was working with. It was important for me to put in movement the priceless education that I received through KAEF to the beneficiaries and audiences that engaged with the products, services, programs and projects that I had the chance to design after completing the fellowship.

*Over the years, after providing opportunities to thousands for professional development, I have come to understand that those with the greatest chance of success in their career and in anything develop a sincere desire to learn, an enduring sense of responsibility, a comradery with those they work with, a gratefulness for the opportunities that are given to them and an understanding that you could always do better.*



**Fjolla Kondirolli** (MPA, Cornell University, 2017)

I am a PhD researcher in Economics at the University of Sussex, and I work as a researcher at the London School of Economics, in the UK. With the generous support from KAEF, I did a master's in public administration (MPA) at Cornell University, during which time I did an internship at the World Bank. The academic training and the professional experience that I was able to get through KAEF has been invaluable not only in terms of professional skills but, perhaps more importantly, in opening the horizon of opportunities for professional and personal growth. Since finishing my degree, I have been able to apply the rigorous academic training and the inter-personal skills that I have gained by working with professionals from around the world, in conducting research that is rigorous and influential for policymaking.

*My advice for women in Kosovo is to push the frontier and dream bigger than what society tells them it's achievable.*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Rozafa Ramadani Mavriqi** (MIDP, Duke University, 2017)

KAEF scholarship has had a tremendous impact on my personal and professional growth. It gave me the opportunity to study in the United States, at one of the most prestigious universities in the world – Duke University, Sanford School of Public Policy. I went to Duke to develop a strong set of analytical skills in a data driven environment as well as to gain a better understanding of the complex economic conditions that are hampering international development.

In the Master of International Development Policy program, I have considerably expanded my quantitative and project management skills by challenging myself with some of the most advanced classes offered at the program. Furthermore, the academic program has given me the opportunity to effectively work in teams and expand my presentation and public speaking skills. In addition to studying in a mid-career international program with a very diverse group of students, through KAEF scholarship, I had the chance to work as a consultant at the World Bank, Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group. During my time at the World Bank, I have conducted qualitative and quantitative analysis on economic and financial aspects of fragile and conflict-affected countries. Working and studying in an international environment has given me the opportunity to understand and adapt myself to different ways of thinking and behaving. Aside from academic and professional gains, KAEF gave me the opportunity to learn how to live independently far away from home – this is something I will cherish for the rest of my life.

For almost four years now, I work as a Private Sector Development Specialist at Millennium Foundation Kosovo (the Implementing Entity of the Millennium Challenge Corporation's Kosovo Threshold Program). This work experience offered me the chance to apply the skillset I gained during my master studies, by working on some of the most complex projects in the energy sector. Namely, tackling the regulatory and financial burdens for independent renewable energy producers, as well as addressing the low labor force participation of women in the energy sector.

*My advice to all young women who are starting to build their careers is to: 1) use every opportunity to learn - either through a training, volunteer activity, or internship; 2) reach out to your role models who are already working in your field of interest in order to pick their brain on professional advice; 3) study abroad to become independent in all aspects! We as Kosovars are blessed to have generous scholarships such as KAEF. Work hard and use the available scholarship opportunities to brighten your future!*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Nita Bicurri** (MPA, Syracuse University, 2018)

Upon completion of my Master's Degree in Public Administration with a focus in International Development Administration, and a Certificate of Advancement Studies in Civil Society Organizations from Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University in New York, I returned to Kosovo to work for the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Because of this extraordinary education and experience, I was able to achieve through KAEF, I now manage the Women, Peace, and Security Program within NDI. Through this program, we are focused on developing policies and platforms to support and empower women to overcome the barriers and achieve full political participation. Today, Kosovo is making important progress. More women are playing meaningful roles in public life-within political parties as candidates and leaders, through civil society organizations, and leading in government. However, we are still far from reaching parity, as such, more work is to be done by women and men of our country.

*I encourage young girls to be active in public life because democracy can only deliver and be sustainable when all citizens no matter their gender are included in the political arena.*



**Plarentina Desku** (MBA, Syracuse University, 2018)

Soon after the successful completion of my Master's degree at Syracuse University, I returned to Kosovo to continue working with Smart Center, a test prep center which I co-founded in 2013. Due to the knowledge and the skills acquired, as well as the unique experiences I was exposed to, I managed to contribute to the exponential expansion of the center, and consequently enabled hundreds of students to study abroad through scholarship programs. KAEF has played a great role in changing my life, and in return, I try to change the lives of other students by providing them with the necessary support to pursue advanced education.

*My advice to women, in particular, would be to grow and help grow. Get educated, travel, stay curious, advance your careers, and never settle for the status quo. In the process, empower those around you by fostering their best qualities – because the best leaders are those who help create other leaders.*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Albulena Basha** (Economics, Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University, 2019)

Transformative – the word that comes to my mind every time I think of the impact of KAEF in my life. I was awarded a KAEF fellowship in 2017, and I was placed at Iowa State University. I earned two master's degrees – one in economics and the other in sustainable agriculture. I was inducted into two honor societies and received two teaching awards (one at the university level and the other at the North American level). In addition to my academic training, I presented my research at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Missouri in 2018 and at the Midwest Economics Association meeting in 2019, both of which enabled me to meet well-known professionals in the field. My thesis research was published in the highly-respected scientific journal *Agricultural Finance Review*.

After completing my graduate studies, I returned to Kosovo and worked as a junior economic advisor for GIZ. While there, I worked in economic and agricultural development by implementing development funds through various projects that helped empower agricultural associations, women-led cooperatives, and public institutions. These experiences motivated me to pursue a PhD degree so that I can lead development projects instead of just contributing to them. This is why in 2021 I accepted an offer from Iowa State for their fully-funded economics PhD degree program. I am passionate about teaching and research, and I am confident the best way for me to help my country is by acquiring advanced training in methods for implementation of development ideas that help Kosovo grow.

*My advice to women in Kosovo is to chart your own destiny. Take advantages of opportunities like the KAEF fellowship which challenge you in ways in which you have never been challenged before. Pursue your goals - even if it means leading yourself into male-dominated fields like agriculture or economics.*



**Tringa Krasniqi** (MBA, George Washington University, 2019)

Becoming a KAEF fellow was a goal of mine ever since I first heard about the fellowship. Having a chance to complete an MBA goal fully financed is once in a lifetime opportunity. As expected, this MBA Program provided all that I imagined it would and more. I got to learn inside the classroom just as much as outside the classroom. Conducting financial analysis, building business models, and conducting negotiations were just a few core elements learned during the classrooms. My intellectual knowledge grew with each peer and professional I met. The exposure to new ways of thinking such as constantly putting oneself in uncomfortable situations created a feeling of unease at first – but that is where real growth happened. I will forever be thankful to KAEF and encourage everyone who fulfills the eligibility criteria to apply.

Since finishing my MBA studies, I've moved back to Kosovo and opened an organization. Looking back at the application essays I wrote for KAEF, my interest lay in bringing back to Kosovo the business knowledge learned in the United States to create a social enterprise. With his goal in mind, Iy Journey Kosovo was born, the mission of which is to help students gain admission to universities abroad and win scholarships.

*My advice to all the women in Kosovo is to not have dreams - have goals instead. Dreams remain idle without working to them. Goals have a target date set. So set those goals and go after those. Remember that everything great ever achieved started as a goal.*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Hana Bacaj** (Economics, Vanderbilt University, 2020)

Many times, I have been asked the same question, by my family and friends – was the KAEF experience worth it, and why? So here is my attempt to answer this question, and I hope it convinces others who might be considering applying for the KAEF scholarship, to go ahead and take the chance of a lifetime.

My decision to apply for KAEF was one of the best decisions so far, and I am beyond proud to be an alumna of this great fellowship. My life aspirations to bring a significant difference in my country were in alignment with the KAEF goal: "the long-term economic development of Kosovo through the education of its people. In addition, the experience and knowledge gained because of this opportunity was the right tool to shatter the glass ceiling many women face. The KAEF experience deepened my networks and connections with people from the development field and transformed my knowledge. I brought back this knowledge to Kosovo in a variety of ways.

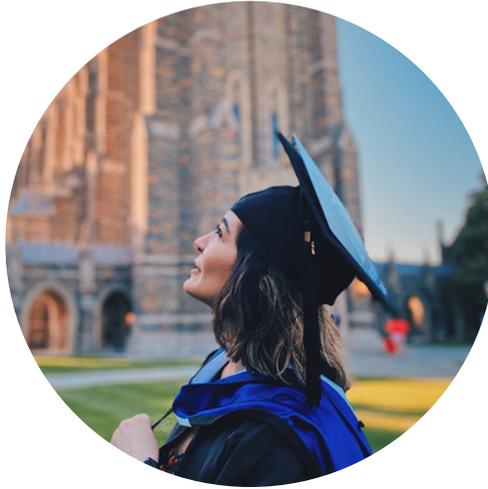
Upon my return to Kosovo, I started working in the field of development, specifically education, which is one of the core determinants of sustainable development. I supported the development and implementation of a VET graduate tracking system which will ensure that Kosovo's VET system has consistent evidence on graduate employability and skills relevance to labor market needs. In addition, the luxury of having uninterrupted time to focus on topics of interest during my master studies turned out to be a very productive opportunity to map out where do I see myself in the future. Investing the time and effort to learn and develop new skills has paid off richly, as I am now starting a new role in managing many projects which analyze issues related to gender, social inclusion and child development, among others. These research studies will help give proper policy recommendations, and give a clearer idea of where Kosovo stands in certain areas.

*I want to say to all women out there, that there is always a way to jump the invisible barriers that hold women back, especially in the labor force. Although we as women cannot change history, we can certainly control the future. Therefore, I consider education the foremost weapon to empower women and help bring about changes in society, ranging from gender equality to cultural solidarity.*

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# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CELEBRATING KAEF ALUMNAE

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**Liridona Osmanaj** (MIDP, Duke University, 2020)

KAEF is a lifetime opportunity. Being from Kosovo, for most of us, getting an education in the U.S, and especially in all the esteemed universities that KAEF fellows pursue their studies in, would have been only a dream.

Besides the financial support, KAEF, as a Department of State financed program, has now established its presence and reputation in top universities throughout the U.S, making the journey of being admitted to top programs easier, since KAEF fellows already undergo a rigorous selection process.

Studying International Development Policy at Duke University, challenged me as a person and as a professional. However, I left Duke transformed. I now saw the world through a different lens, was able to analyze matters in so much depth, and not only. The analytical thinking, and the evidence based knowledge you gain, helps one be plugged in to the latest trends, helps you to scan situations, problems, sectors and generate solutions that work. And there was no other way. The peers you studied with, the professors you were exposed to, the way the education system is tailored, made it inevitable to leave the program without growth and development, in the personal and professional sense.

After Duke, I returned to Kosovo. The first year was not easy. Although not talked about as much, returning to your home country after studying or working abroad, takes time to re-integrate, socially and professionally. Moreover, my time at Duke really challenged a few of my core beliefs; so I was going through a period of self-reflection before deciding the next step in my career.

After trying out a few engagements, I realized that I want to use the knowledge I got from the policy school, my experience as a development professional, and the new knowledge gained through classes I took in the business school to start a social enterprise on a topic I have always been passionate about: mental health. So, I co-founded and am leading 'Hajde Folim', a social enterprise centering around mental health and self-care; while at the same time working as a consultant for various organizations and companies, such as UNICEF, RYCO, and other entities in Kosovo and abroad.

*Advice to women on career: No one has it all figured it out. So, take the first step and you will figure it out throughout the journey. Men are much better at having the confidence to take risks. We also have to get better at grabbing opportunities even when we don't feel ready because most likely we are. It's the patriarchy which whispers in our mind words of doubt.*

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# KOSOVO'S FUTURE BEGINS WITH EDUCATION

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*The 'Kosovo's Future Begins with Education' virtual fundraising campaign started in October 2020 as the program, much like the rest of the world, had to adapt and navigate through the changing circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the ongoing pandemic affected all aspects of our lives as we knew it, through this fundraising campaign, the KAEF program was assured that even at the most uncertain times, its longtime community of friends and supporters, and its alumni community, would continue to vouch for the program's success.*

*Today, we are sending our heartfelt gratitude to all our individual and corporate donors, local and international, alumni, and our friends at Google--your support and trust reinforces our vision of a modern Kosovo: intellectually curious, economically competitive, and socially aware. Thank You!*

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