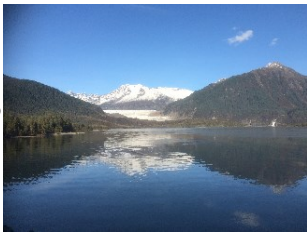




UNISHKA'S SUMMER INTERNS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

The UNISHKA Intern Program welcomed its first round of students to Alaska for the summer of 2019. Lauren, Cole and Nick from Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania, split their time between researching corruption in the office and hiking the 200+ trails around Juneau. Their work has found them researching and writing about official corruption from Guatemala to Romania and almost every country in between. According to Dr. Chris Corpora, head of the UNISHKA Intern Program, the project provides an excellent training ground for analysts to learn the research skills necessary to uncover and report international corruption.

It has not been all work, however; the summer has also been filled with hikes, helicopter rides, kayaking, canoeing and cruises.



The interns are housed at the University of Alaska-Southeast (UAS) which affords them the opportunity to enjoy weekends floating on Auke Lake or exploring the Mendenhall Glacier to escape the unusually hot weather that plagued Alaska in June.

CORRUPTION IN PARADISE

One of the island countries below is, in fact, not a real country. Can you pick out the fictional country?

- Kiribati
- Comoros
- Dominica
- Tuvalu
- Nambutu

To help you narrow down the choices, you should know that in 2016 Prime Minister Ielemia was convicted and jailed for corruption and abuse of office in this South Pacific island. Answer: Tuvalu.

Likewise, in this Caribbean paradise Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit is rumored to be resigning under allegations of corruption, money laundering and fraud: Answer: Dominica

President Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed in this Indian Ocean country, is suspected of embezzling more than \$100 million, in part from selling citizenship and passports via “mafia” networks. Answer: Comoros

If you’re paying attention, your choices have been narrowed to Kiribati and Nambutu. Both of which should sound familiar. To give you one last clue, in 2006 at the Embassy of Nambutu in Madagascar, a British Agent crashed into the Embassy in an attempt to interdict a terrorist finance organization and corruption ring. Eventually, this British Agent helped to bring in more than \$600 million dollars for Columbia Pictures. Answer: James Bond 007 created havoc for the fictional country of Nambutu in Casino Royale.

The real country of Kiribati is located in the Central Pacific Ocean where, despite its beauty, corruption is widespread.



VALUES-BASED BANKING*

Money is a form of democracy, even a political act, and each time we open our wallet to pay for a product or service, we are voting for the future that we want to see.

Where we put our money matters — not only for our own financial security but to ensure the wellbeing of our planet. Following the financial crisis of 2009 and fueled by environmental degradation, more and more people are turning to ethical banking services that value economic, social, and environmental impacts.

Values-based banking prioritizes people and the planet over profits. Also known as ‘ethical banking’ or ‘sustainable-focused banking’ this movement represents all the banks and financial institutions that use money to deliver economic, social, and environmental change. A values-based, or socially responsible, bank uses “finance to be a force for good as opposed to just a force for profit,” says Keith Mestrich, president and CEO of Amalgamated Bank.

From the outside, these banks are like other banks. They offer a wide range of services, from personal savings accounts to business loans and venture capital funds. What sets them apart is how they do it — where they put their customers' money, how they manage lending and credit (by providing loans and services to sustainable projects, individuals, and entrepreneurs, and avoiding investing money in the pure financial and speculative economy). For example, **Amalgamated Bank** (the United States largest value-based bank) only invests in carbon-free, tobacco free and environmentally responsible investments.

“Banking on values means ‘People before Profit.’” said Marcos Eguiguren, executive director of the *Global Alliance for Banking on Values* (GABV). “Practicing banking in a way in which the priority of bankers is focused on enhancing society and the planet and getting profit only as a consequence — a consequence of doing the right things and doing them the right way.”

The global movement toward values-banking was born in 2009 at the beginning

of the financial crisis. This is when the Global Alliance for Banking on Values was founded. Today, GABV has 48 member banks, banking cooperatives, credit unions, microfinance institutions, and community development banks from five continents. Collectively they serve more than 24 million customers and hold up to \$110 billion of combined assets. To join GABV, banks must have a minimum of \$50 million in assets and be committed to social banking and the ‘triple bottom line’ of people, planet and profit.

Of the 48 GABV member banks in the world, only 11 are located in the United States and none are located in Alaska. **Tongass Credit Union** in Ketchikan and **MAC Federal Credit Union** in Fairbanks are certified *Community Development Financial Institutions* (CDFI), which means they reinvest in their local communities including low income and underserved populations. Outside of Alaska, however, there are 11 GABV financial institutions in the United States.

1. **Verity Credit Union** in Seattle, WA
2. **Vermont State Employees Credit Union**
3. **Beneficial State Bank** in CA, OR, and WA
4. **Amalgamated Bank** in NY and DC
5. **Sunrise Bank** in Saint Paul, MN
6. **Southern Bank** in AR and MS
7. **National Cooperative Bank (NCB)** in Crystal City, VA
8. **Missoula Federal Credit Union** in MT
9. **First City Bank**, Washington, DC
10. **First Green Bank**, FL
11. **New Resource Bank** in San Francisco, CA (recently merged with Amalgamated Bank)

If your money is your representative, what are you saying?

Get ‘Good Banking’ for a change!

* Adapted from Shareable (see: <https://www.shareable.net/a-shareable-explainer-what-is-values-based-banking>)

“EVERY JOKE IS A TINY REVOLUTION”

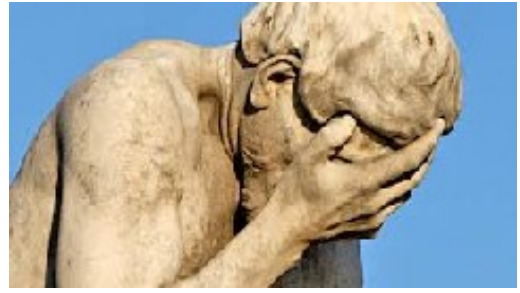
July 1 is International Joke Day. The history of International Joke Day is a bit murky. Regardless of its origin, however, of the fact remains that people everywhere could use a bit more humor in their lives.

Gelotology is the study of laughter and how it affects our physical and mental health. Research has found that telling jokes, laughing at jokes and watching funny videos improves ones physical and mental health. Laughter reduces blood pressure, causes a reduction in stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, and increases the immune system, among others.

In the Western World, standalone jokes are attributed to the Greek mythological character *Palamedes* who is also attributed with the invention of dice. Indeed, it was the Greeks who had the first known comedy club in 350 BC, called **The Group of Sixty**. Members chose to meet at the Temple of Heracles, where their sole purpose was to get together and exchange jokes. According to legend, Alexander the Great’s father, Philip of Macedon actually paid scribes to write down the jokes for him. These were then used in political speeches and public addresses.

Politicians are like diapers. They need to be changed regularly and for the same reason.

A different and much older genre of humor is the pun or paronomasia. First appearing in ancient Egypt more than 5000 years ago, puns were heavily used in the interpretation of dreams. About 4500 years ago, in ancient Mesopotamia, puns were injected by scribes into cuneiform; even finding their way into the Hebrew Bible. Samuel Johnson once referred to puns as the “lowest form or humor” while Alfred Hitchcock stated, “Puns are the highest form of literature.” Perhaps the best pun in American history comes from Abraham Lincoln who responded to a distractor who accused him of being two-faced. “Sir,” responded Lincoln, “If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?”



ANTI-CORRUPTION & HUMOR

Most societies are founded on principals of justice but are simultaneously awash in the realities of social and political imperfections. “Comedy can bring awareness to these discrepancies in a way that we can hear,” says Nancy Goldman, Adjunct Professor at New York University. “This makes humor a powerful communication tool and potential change agent and expands its value far beyond its common role as entertainment;” or as George Orwell so aptly put it: “every joke is a tiny revolution.” Humor, for example, can be used to bring awareness to a social issue:

If you're going to pay a bribe, always go to a female politician. You only have to give them 77% of what you would have had to pay a man!

“Humor plays an important role in framing the mood of a political action,” says Erica Chenoweth, a political scientist at the University of Denver who studies nonviolent resistance. “When campaigns are starting to build popular support, the more it looks like a big party, the better.”

The last man to enter parliament with honest intentions was Guy Fawkes on the 5th of November 1605.

“Humor is a powerful tool to captivate a wide range of audiences, attract media attention, provoke contemplation and disarm the opponent without giving offense” says Philip Duhamel, Canadian civil resistance organizer; “because after all, isn’t laughing the best way to show teeth that bite?”

“People are taking their comedians seriously and their politicians as a joke.” —Will Rogers

Sources:

“*Stop Me If You’ve Heard This...A History and Philosophy of Jokes*” by Jim Holt, 2008.
Combating Corruption in India by Verma and Arvind. 2019.



SOCIAL MEDIA

 <https://www.facebook.com/Unishka-Research-Service>

 <https://twitter.com/UNISHKAResearch>

 <https://www.linkedin.com/company/unishka-research-service-inc/>

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS AND OTHER ACKNOWLEDGMENT DAYS

July: National Ice Cream Month

July 01: International Joke Day

July 14: Bastille Day

July 17: World Day for International Justice

July 30: World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

August: Summer

August 09: International Day for the World's Indigenous Peoples

August 19: World Humanitarian Day

August 26: Women's Equality Day

September: Hispanic Heritage Month

Sept. 02: Labor Day

Sept. 05: International Day of Charity

Sept. 07: World Forgiveness Day

Sept. 10: Suicide Prevention Day

Sept. 15: International Day of Democracy

Sept. 21: International Day of Peace

Sept. 28: International Day for Access to Information

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Hariyatu Bangura is a young woman in Sierra Leone, fighting for justice. On March 6, 2017, Hariyatu resigned her full-time position with the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to become a politician – representing her community in the country's male-dominated parliament. After a hotly contested



general election in March 2018, Hariyatu won the right to represent her local constituency in parliament. Unfortunately, the highly corrupt parliament refused to seat her and her seat was unconstitutionally taken away from her and handed to the ruling party candidate without any right to appeal. Living in Sierra Leone, there is very little a young woman can do; however, you can do something to help her.

[See: [One woman's plea for justice in Sierra Leone – Is anyone listening?](#)]

Please send an email to Ambassador Maria E. Brewer and urge her to press the government of Sierra Leone for justice: brewerme@state.gov

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