

3/02/10: Crapa Fellowship: Call for Applicants

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington D.C. -The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is now accepting applications for its 2010-2011 Joseph R. Crapa Fellowship Program. The application deadline is April 30, 2010.

The funded fellowships are available to select individuals with exceptional records of accomplishment and/or outstanding records of academic achievement in fields relevant to the work of USCIRF, including but not limited to, religious freedom and related human rights, foreign policy, international law, and security. USCIRF welcomes applicants from the U.S. congressional community, government agencies (including the State Department, USAID, and military and intelligence agencies), academia, nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, and other relevant fields. The inaugural 2009-2010 Crapa Fellows are:

- Dr. Timothy Samuel Shah
- Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love
- Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour
- Ms. Liora Danan

Citizens of any country may apply. Non-U.S. citizens without permanent resident status must obtain a J-1 exchange visitor visa to participate in the Fellowship Program. J-1 status requires recipients to reside in their home country for two years following the fellowship before applying for the H or L visa, or for permanent residency in the United States.

The term of each fellowship will be determined by the nature of the fellow's project, but will not exceed 12 months. It is preferred that fellows spend a significant portion of their fellowship in residence at the USCIRF offices in Washington, DC.

Applicants for a Crapa Fellowship should submit a proposal detailing the parameters of the project they intend to pursue during their time as a Crapa Fellow. This proposal should include a detailed budget, succinct statement of the area of intended study, the relevance of the study to the field of religious freedom, the format and timing of the product they propose to produce, and a brief overview of relevant existing work in the area of proposed study.

In addition, applicants should send a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and the names of three professional references USCIRF can contact directly. Applications should be submitted electronically to: crapafellows@uscirf.gov

Projects can be country focused or thematic and should seek to enhance and expand the policy work of USCIRF. Country proposals should focus on countries USCIRF recommends as "countries of particular concern," or CPCs, and/or those countries on USCIRF's Watch List. For thematic proposals, below is a list of sample topics of interest to USCIRF. This list is not exhaustive and is only meant to provide some examples of possible areas for fellowship research:

- The role of religion and religious freedom in counterinsurgencies and in combating religious extremism
- The developing parameters of religious freedom under international law, including an analysis of significant trends and strategies to impact the development in positive directions
- The impact of religious freedom in advancing the rights of women
- Government-sponsored intolerant materials and its impact on religious freedom
- Utilizing U.S. assistance effectively to promote and advance religious freedom
- Identifying the state's obligations to overcome impunity for abuses of religious freedom and related rights
- Confronting hate crimes related to religion while respecting freedom of expression and freedom of religion

Before joining USCIRF, Joseph Crapa spent a year as chief of staff to Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.). Earlier, he held legislative and public affairs positions with the Agency for International Development and the Environmental Protection Agency. He was chief of staff for Rep. David R. Obey (D-Wis.) from 1987 to 1997, the last three years as Democratic counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. He served as USCIRF's Executive Director from 2002 until his untimely death in 2007.

A committed public servant, Mr. Crapa guided USCIRF with consummate skill, combining a keen sense of public service with an abiding commitment to advancing the cause of religious freedom. He helped USCIRF amplify its voice and broaden its reach.