



International Affairs Program  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

## IAFS Alumni Newsletter

### February 2026



## Have a Heart: Support IAFS Students Studying Abroad

This February, we’re thrilled to continue our annual Have a Heart campaign, started by [U.S. Ambassador and IAFS alumna Mary Ann Casey](#), in support of the [Global Grants Endowment Fund](#).

During the 2025–26 academic year, [Global Grants scholarships](#) totaling more than **\$27,000** were awarded to **eleven students**, supporting study and experiential learning in countries including **Armenia, France, Germany, Morocco, Spain and Taiwan**. These scholarships break down financial barriers and make transformative global experiences possible for more students.

As students actively apply for Summer, Fall, and Academic Year education abroad programs, your gift can have an immediate impact. We invite you to explore our [Global Grant student stories](#) and follow [@cuboulderIAFS](#) on Instagram to see how these experiences are shaping future global leaders.

Will you Have a Heart this February and help empower IAFS students to change the world? It’s easy to [donate online!](#)



## Madrid in Motion: Abigail Hurst's Global Grants Story

Global Grant recipient and IAFS honors student **Abigail Hurst** is spending Spring 2026 in Madrid through the WorldStrides/ISA program at Antonio de Nebrija University. She's diving into intensive Spanish language coursework, exploring Madrid's café and tapas culture, and taking in local history and sports—most recently a Real Madrid match and a day trip to Toledo. Her first-month experiences are captured in **Madrid in Motion: Abigail Hurst's Global Grants Story**, now featured on the IAFS website.



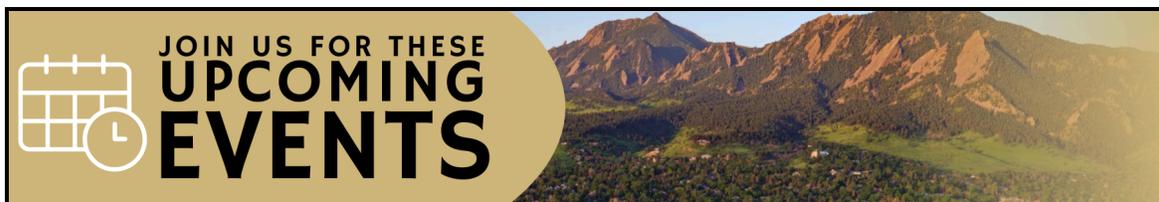
## Where Are They Now?

We're excited to continue our **Where Are They Now?** feature, highlighting IAFS alumni and the paths they've taken since graduation.

This month's **Where Are They Now?** interview highlights **Laura Rodriguez** (IAFS '07), currently Chief Strategy Officer and Director of Innovation Ecosystems at the **Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade** (OEDIT). The interview offers a look at her career journey, recent milestones, and life after CU.

## IAFS Faculty Highlight – John O'Loughlin

**Prof. O'Loughlin** is leading a research project in Kenya examining how climate change, food insecurity, and local institutions shape conflict and cooperation. [Learn about the project and recent fieldwork on the IAFS website.](#)



**International Women's Day**  
March 6, 2026

Join **WorldDenver** in celebrating **International Women's Day** with global leaders and changemakers for an evening focused on advancing gender equity and international collaboration.

**CU Boulder Alumni Weekend**  
April 10-13

**Alumni Weekend** brings Buffs back to campus for to reconnect with classmates, faculty, and the broader CU Boulder community throughout the weekend.

**Conference on World Affairs (CWA)**  
April 13-16

**CWA** returns this April with four days of conversations featuring global experts, artists, and thought leaders. In partnership with the **Center for Leadership** and the **Center for Asian Studies**, CWA recently announced **Malala Yousafzai** as the closing speaker.

**ICYMI:** This year's CWA also kicks off CU Boulder's 150th Anniversary Celebration—**pre-registration is now open**. Please **share your suggestions for notable Buffs** as part of the 150th anniversary celebration!

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## Have news to share?

Do you have stories to share or know of internships, jobs or events that may interest IAFS alumni or students? Email [iafs@colorado.edu](mailto:iafs@colorado.edu) and let us know!

Check out our [Alumni Spotlight](#) and [Internship and Job Opportunities](#) pages for updates.

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Donate to IAFS General Fund

Donate to IAFS Global Grants



**Be inspired. Be involved. Be international.**

# Be Boulder.

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