



## IAFS Alum Finds his Passion in the International Game



Michael Carlson (IAFS '00) and Riley Sinn (PHIL '11) a student of [International Futbol X-Change \(IFX\)](#)

Michael Carlson (IAFS '00) discovered his passion for international affairs in his IAFS classes at CU. However, he had another interest that had been with him for many years. As a teenager, Carlson's family hosted a German exchange student, José Neumann, who shared his love of soccer. After Neumann returned to Germany, Carlson visited him and the two attended a professional German club soccer match, cheering for the home team Borussia Dortmund. "The energy of the crowd and surrounding the game was incredible, and my passion for playing soccer skyrocketed," explains Carlson. From that point on, he focused his efforts around a future in playing soccer professionally.

During his time at CU Boulder, Carlson joined the [Freiburger FC](#) team while taking a full semester of courses in Freiburg, Germany. He was impressed by the players' high level of skill and diversity, and the close bond among his teammates. He played with the team during the spring of 1999 during the Kosovo conflict. "My team had players from many countries such as Serbia, Bosnia, and Albania," shares Carlson. "Even with international conflicts happening on the grander scale, the soccer field was a place for us to come together and be united."

Carlson had an opportunity to play soccer again in Germany after studying abroad. However, he decided to decline the offer and to return to Boulder to finish his IAFS degree. It was a hard decision because it made his dream of becoming a professional soccer player even farther from his reach. A few years later, Carlson collaborated with Neumann, the German exchange student from years earlier, to form the [International Futbol X-Change \(IFX\) Program](#), a project close to both of their hearts. IFX is a premier international soccer organization providing total immersion programs to soccer players from around the world. They arrange for hundreds of players to join soccer clubs, complete academics, and experience different cultures.

For years, Carlson only wanted a career as a soccer player. However, his education, experiences abroad, and the development of IFX have shown him that life has a way of creating new, unexpected opportunities. "Today I tell my players this: I didn't think there was anything else I wanted to do other than be a soccer player, but experiences along the way showed me otherwise," he says. "Pursue your dreams and never limit yourself from new things that may come to surface."

## You're Invited

Please join us for the [International Affairs Spring Welcome Reception](#) on April 12th during the [Conference on World Affairs](#). Our guest speaker, Jeffrey Engel, will be presenting on the topic: Who Lost Russia, with Q&A to follow. This is a wonderful opportunity to mingle with alumni, friends of the program, and community members interested in global topics.

Thursday, April 12th, 2018  
5:30 - 7:00PM  
Koenig Alumni Center  
1202 University Avenue  
Boulder, CO 80309-0459

## Become Involved

Be a part of our Global Grants endowment! Global Grants support students as they study abroad and experience the world. Help International Affairs continue to grow our endowment by giving today. Please add the following to the Comments box during check-out: [Global Grants Endowment Fund #0151296](#)

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Contributions to our IAFS general gift fund are used for a variety of special projects and student programming, including speaker events, graduation ceremonies, and student awards. To donate to the IAFS Gift Fund, please click [here](#):

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# Learning Traditions of Senegal: IAFS Student Visits the Matam Region

With more than 50 countries available, [Global Grant](#) recipient Rachael Mattson (IAFS '18) had a daunting task of choosing where to study abroad. With her academic interests in politics and environmental issues in West Africa, she chose the Dakar Development Studies program in Senegal during the fall semester. Her time abroad proved challenging and fulfilling, including an internship with [ENDA Energy](#), an NGO that creates sustainable economic, social, and environmental solutions; a class trip to the [Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative](#); and a visit to Dakar's Mbeubeuss landfill. Throughout, she learned family traditions in rural Senegal.

One of Mattson's most memorable experiences was her 10-day visit to the Matam region in northeast Senegal, where she interacted with local farmers and learned about daily life in small communities. In Matam, the native language is Pulaar. "When local women saw me practicing my vocabulary, they enthusiastically came over to help me with pronunciation and grammar," explains Mattson. "It created a closer bond between us because Pulaar is very important in their culture."

During her stay in Matam, she attended a wedding as well as a baby-naming ceremony. She spent time with a young farmer, Djiby, who talked of his challenges in producing water for his crops. In several places of the region, she saw community initiatives for environmental and economic growth, such as gardens for women and funding programs for girls' education. "Of the many things I learned, I value being given the opportunity to understand how family and community are significant in Senegalese culture," says Mattson. Visiting Matam was more than just a visit to a rural area – it added to her overall understanding of Senegal's history and ultimately, how communities can shape their future.



Rachael Mattson (IAFS '18) in Galoyabe

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# Remembering the Vietnam War with Former IAFS Director Robert Schulzinger



Prof. Robert Schulzinger

Veterans Day.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the most significant events of the Vietnam War. In late January 1968, during the Vietnamese New Year holiday (Tết), communist Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army forces launched a surprise attack on multiple targets in South Vietnam. The attack ultimately failed militarily to dislodge the South Vietnamese and their American ally. However, politically and symbolically, Tet was a disaster. Back in the United States, the Tet Offensive played a pivotal role in weakening American public support for the war in Vietnam.

Former International Affairs Program Director and CU Boulder Professor of Distinction, Dr. Robert Schulzinger, is an expert on U.S. foreign policy, diplomacy, and the Vietnam War. He is the author of many studies, including the award-winning book, [A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975](#), and [A Time for Peace: The Legacy of the Vietnam War](#). His work has provided a greater understanding of the Vietnam War and its impact on the lives of ordinary Americans and Vietnamese. During his time at CU Boulder, his course on the Vietnam War continuously piqued student interest, filling to capacity every year. He shed light on how the devastating conflict in Vietnam changed America's political, social, and cultural environment. Today, the war is far from forgotten, and millions of Americans commemorate those who served in the Vietnam War on March 29, National Vietnam War