



Summary

The Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BAFF) was founded in 2010 to provide opportunities for citizens of the Baltic states to gain education and professional development through exchanges in the U.S. From inception through 2019, scholarships and awards worth more than \$17 million have been awarded.

History

BAFF is the legacy foundation created by the Baltic-American Enterprise Fund (BalAEF). Established in 1994, among BalAEF initiatives were some 19,800 mortgage loans and 125 business investments. In 2008, as BalAEF prepared to exit its investments, the Fund's leadership, building on the experience of other Enterprise Funds, created a legacy foundation, the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BAFF). BAFF was established in 2010 and authorized by USAID to fund educational exchange programs collectively known as BAFF Scholarships. With an endowment from BalAEF that would exceed \$35 million after returning \$25 million to the U.S. Treasury, BAFF has thus far disbursed more than \$16 million in scholarships to over 650 individuals and more than 100 organizations.

Mission

Continuing a longstanding American commitment to the Baltic region, the BAFF mission is "to deepen the ties between and among Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United States through programs of education and exchange centering on economic growth and democratic values".

U.S.-Baltic Ties

BAFF is accomplishing its mission through an extensive commitment to educational exchange programs. The BAFF Scholarships are a gift from the American people to the citizens of the Baltic states, to further build and strengthen the friendship and goodwill existing between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the United States.

Governance

BAFF financial and program oversight is provided by a **Board of Directors** who serve *pro bono*: Chairman Mr. Kim G. Davis, Ms. Danguole Spakevicius Altman, Ms. Joanne Medero, Ambassador Michael Polt, Mr. Peter Ragauss, Dr. Asta Sendonaris, Mr. Richard C. Sheridan, Secretary Rodney Slater, the Honorable Mark Sullivan, and Mr. Andres Trink. BAFF retains the services of Mr. Alan Griffin as Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer and Mr. Matthew Elkin as Counsel. BAFF also benefits from the contributions of the **Board of Advisors**, BAFF Research Scholar alumni and other highly respected Baltic academic and business leaders, who assist by evaluating research project proposals and Baltic-American Dialogue applications. BAFF has chosen third-party program administrators to implement its programming, rather than hire staff and develop programming independently. CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange administers the majority of BAFF programming.

Current Programs

The **Professional Internship Program** offers enrolled post-secondary students and recent graduates a fully-funded opportunity to complete an internship in a U.S. company or non-profit organization to gain professional career experience and training. The **Research Scholar Program** provides established academics the opportunity to collaborate on a research project with their U.S. colleagues. **BAFF Leadership Academy** offers high school students full scholarships to participate in a summer program designed to develop entrepreneurship expertise while experiencing life on a U.S. college campus. **Baltic-American Dialogue** provides funding for Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian public organizations to host speakers from the U.S. to travel to the Baltics to speak on topics of mutual interest and importance. **Baltic-American Security Exchange (BASE)** facilitates the exchange of critical knowledge and establishes contacts between Baltic and U.S. security experts. **Transatlantic Business Awards** recognize innovative achievements by Estonian-based companies with an emphasis on their contributions in strengthening economic ties. The award is administered jointly by BAFF, the U.S. Embassy in Estonia, and AmCham Estonia. Similar programs in Latvia and Lithuania recognize innovation and entrepreneurship in collaboration with American partners or the U.S. market. The **Latvian-American Innovation Awards** are awarded in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Latvia and the American Chamber of Commerce Latvia. The **Lithuanian-American Innovation Awards** are presented in partnership with the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania and the American-Lithuanian Business Council.



Scholarships and Grants, Inception-December 31, 2019

<i>Scholarships & Grants</i>	<i>Participants & Grantees</i>	<i>Awards to date</i>
Professional Internships	354	\$10,353,475
Graduate Scholars	27	\$677,786
Research Scholars	66	\$2,755,617
Leadership Academy	198	\$1,339,023
Enrichment Trips		\$392,836
Alumni Activities		\$260,605
Estonian-American Innovation/Transatlantic Awards	14	\$119,066
Latvian-American Innovation Awards	4	\$34,864
Lithuanian-American Innovation Awards	5	\$53,373
Baltic-American Dialogue Grants	120	\$647,203
Baltic-American Security Exchange Grants	33	\$407,779
ASU-McCain Institute Baltic Fellows	3	\$375,000
AABS Travel Grants	39	\$65,400
Other Grants	6	\$180,788
Total Scholarships & Grants		\$17,662,815

Recent Host Organizations and Institutions

Professional Internships—Baltic-American Chamber of Commerce, Protheragen, Skanska, International Bar Association, Center for European Policy Analysis, Plug and Play, SAP, We Travel, Prezi, Wheeler Kearns Architects, Elegran, AON, Poseidon Paddle and Surf, Brand Assembly.

Research Scholars—Penn State University, National Center for Atmospheric Research, University of Iowa, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Arizona State University.

BAFF Alumni

The Baltic-American Freedom Foundation Alumni Association is governed by three country presidents, chosen by democratic vote. The country presidents organize social and networking events and volunteer opportunities. Alumni events include the annual Thanksgiving dinner, alumni participation in the Riga marathon, and numerous local networking events. BAFF alumni are notable for their entrepreneurial focus. Several have established companies in the tech sector, and others are active in creating linkages between Baltic companies and the U.S. entrepreneur ecosystem in Silicon Valley. Early in 2020, members of the inaugural BAFF Alumni Council will convene to collaborate on a portfolio of alumni programs to ensure the ongoing impact of BAFF participation.



CIEE

CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange has been chosen by BAFF for the administration, management, and program support for BAFF scholarship programs. Since 1947, CIEE has been in pursuit of its mission “to help people gain understanding, acquire knowledge, and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world.” CIEE is a non-profit organization designated by the U.S. Department of State to administer international work and study exchange programs. CIEE also administers scholarship programs on behalf of the Albanian-American Development Foundation, the Hungarian-American Enterprise Scholarship Fund, and the Romanian-American Foundation.

Staff

BAFF scholarships are administered by BAFF Regional Program Director Ilze Doskina and three scholarship representatives—Eeva Kauba, Estonia; Ilze Bembere, Latvia; and Ingrida Laurinaviciene, Lithuania—who travel extensively throughout the region to promote the scholarships, meet with prospective applicants, and provide orientation for scholarship recipients. A U.S. team led by Laura Lyons provides overall direction and participant services during their scholarship experience in the U.S.

Contact BAFF

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