

FASPE

FELLOWSHIPS AT
AUSCHWITZ
FOR THE STUDY OF
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

FASPE operates under the auspices of the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.

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NYU Journalism Students Chosen for Unique International Ethics Program

Kristian Jebsen and Laura Smith Join Groundbreaking Program for Journalists

New York, NY— **Kristian Jebsen** and **Laura Smith**, students at New York University’s Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, are two of 12 journalism students and young journalists chosen by FASPE (Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics) to participate in a two-week program that will take place this summer in Germany and Poland.

Now in its sixth year of operation, FASPE is a unique international program that explores the history of the Holocaust as a way to engage graduate students across five different fields (business, journalism, law, medicine, and religion) in an intensive study of contemporary ethics in their discipline. FASPE is predicated upon the power of place, and in particular, the first-hand experience of visiting Auschwitz and traveling in Germany and Poland, where Fellows study the past and consider how to apply the lessons of history to the current ethical challenges they will confront in their own professions.

Professionals in the pre-War World II era in Germany were known and respected internationally. Yet, leaders (and practitioners) in each of the professions, and often the institutions they represented, played a fundamental role in designing, enabling and/or executing the crimes of Nazi Germany.

Run under the auspices of the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York, FASPE examines what role professionals in business, journalism, law, medicine, and the clergy played in Nazi Germany and underscores that the moral codes governing these essential professions can break down or be distorted with devastating consequences. “By educating students about the causes of the Holocaust and the power of their chosen professions, FASPE seeks to instill a sense of professional responsibility for the ethical and moral choices that the Fellows will make in their careers and in their professional relationships,” said C. David Goldman, founder of FASPE.

Over the course of 12 days, Fellows will participate in seminars run by leading scholars who serve as FASPE faculty, and attend lectures with a range of guest speakers. The program integrates historical, cultural, philosophical and literary sources; survivor testimony; and workshops in Berlin, Auschwitz and Krakow.

(more)

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The 2015 FASPE Journalism program will be led by Andie Tucher, Associate Professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and Director of the Doctor of Philosophy in Communications program; and Marguerite Holloway, Associate Professor at the Columbia Journalism School and Director of the School's program in Science and Environmental Journalism.

Currently completing his master's degree in journalism at NYU, Mr. Jebsen is drawn to issues as diverse as natural resource extraction and conflict, and collective guilt and national trauma. "Today, I believe lessons from the Holocaust can be applied to global warming and the rampant environmental degradation we are witnessing throughout the world," Mr. Jebsen said of his interest in FASPE. Mr. Jebsen, who received a bachelor's in political science and history from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, worked in Latin America and with Journalists for Human Rights in Ghana prior to attending NYU. In Ghana, Mr. Jebsen had to confront the many issues involved in reporting on trauma, he said. "I think FASPE, with its network of scholars and journalists engaged with this very topic, can help me get closer to a better understanding of these questions and thus help me become a better reporter," he added.

"As a journalist, I am insatiably curious about how governments, individuals, and corporations arrive at decisions to marginalize, exploit, or even eradicate the less powerful," said Ms. Smith, also nearing completion of her master's in journalism at NYU, "FASPE would give me the opportunity to dive deeply into this question." Ms. Smith, who is enrolled in the literary reportage concentration at school, is currently working on a long-form project about an outdoorswoman and author who went missing in 1939. A native of Washington D.C., Ms. Smith received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Virginia and worked for two environmental organizations in Vietnam and Burma, before attending journalism school. She has also reported on climate activism and is a contributor to Slate.com. "I am concerned that financial interests increasingly outweigh human interests and that this is one of the greatest ethical dilemmas many face today," noted Ms. Smith, "Through FASPE, I hope to explore these ideas not from an ideological standpoint but, rather, via relentless ethical questioning."

Mr. Jebsen and Ms. Smith will join a group of 62 FASPE Fellows who represent a broad range of religious, ethnic and racial backgrounds, and who were chosen through a competitive process that drew nearly 1,000 applicants from around the world. FASPE covers all expenses, including transatlantic and European travel, food, and lodging. Over the past five years, FASPE has worked with close to 250 students using curricula designed in partnership with faculty from Yale Medical School, Yale Law School, Columbia School of Journalism, and Georgetown University.

FASPE Journalism Fellows, along with the Business and Law Fellows, will begin their trip in Europe this year. The first leg is in Berlin, where Fellows have the opportunity to study the city's historical and cultural sites and work with FASPE staff and guest scholars. Educational workshops will take place at the House of the Wannsee Conference, the site where representatives of German State and Nazi Party agencies convened in 1942 to draw up plans for the Nazis' "Final Solution."

The Fellows then travel to Oświęcim, Poland, the town the Germans called Auschwitz, where they will work with the distinguished educational staff at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Sessions devoted to contemporary ethics take place in seminar rooms at Auschwitz and at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, one of Europe's oldest and most prestigious universities. The final leg of the trip will be held in Krakow, Poland, where Fellows will explore the city's rich Jewish, Catholic, and Polish history.

Upon return, each Fellow will submit a final essay focused on a contemporary ethical issue chosen by the Fellow. Select essays will be published in the annual [FASPE Journal](#), which includes essays from Fellows across all disciplines.

“FASPE is committed to a long-term relationship with the Fellows in order to sustain the ideas raised during the Fellowships. FASPE fosters an active network of alumni Fellows and provides forums for continuing dialogue among the Fellows as they move forward in their careers,” said Dr. Thorin Tritter, Managing Director of FASPE. “An annual Alumni Reunion and Symposium is held each year where Fellows from the most recent Program present papers and all gather to discuss the impact of their fellowship experiences and current ethical issues.”

About FASPE

FASPE works under the auspices of the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust and in cooperation with Jagiellonian University, Krakow; the Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz, Berlin; and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim, Poland. To view a video about FASPE, visit www.FASPE.info. The topics the 2015 FASPE Fellows will study can be found on individual program pages that include more details about the [Business](#), [Journalism](#), [Law](#), [Medical](#), and [Seminary](#) programs.

Lead support for FASPE is provided by C. David Goldman, Frederick and Margaret Marino, and the Eder Family Foundation. FASPE is also supported by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and other generous donors.

About the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

The Museum’s exhibitions educate people of all ages and backgrounds about the rich tapestry of Jewish life over the past century—before, during, and after the Holocaust. Current special exhibitions include *Hava Nagila: A Song for the People*, on view through April 22, *Discovery and Recovery: Preserving Iraqi Jewish Heritage*, on view through May 18, and *Against the Odds: American Jews & the Rescue of Europe's Refugees, 1933-1941*, on view through fall 2014. It is also home to the award-winning *Keeping History Center*, an interactive visitor experience, and Andy Goldsworthy’s memorial *Garden of Stones*. The Museum offers visitors a vibrant public program schedule in its Edmond J. Safra Hall and receives general operating support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

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