

# ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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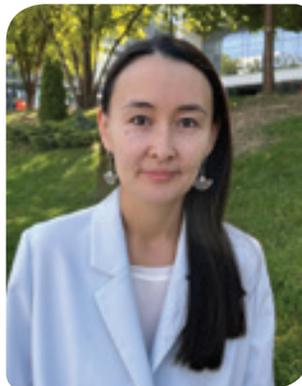
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This year KIMEP University celebrates its 30th anniversary. And I would like to congratulate my alma-mater with this impressive number! KIMEP was established a year after Kazakhstan's independence and is probably the only constant organization that was able to establish high moral and professional standards right from its creation, such as meritocracy and zero tolerance to corruption, and continues to keep adherence to these values.

KIMEP has educated many outstanding persons, who are now the leading professionals and experts in their fields. Thus, KIMEP has made an enormous input in incorporating essential core values to our society. In this issue we decided to interview one alumni from each year of graduation, to spread their success stories, and find underlying common values to which they were adhering on the way.

In this 12th volume of Alumni Magazine we gathered news, information about our events for the past academic year 2021-2022. This year KIMEP has welcomed many new faculty members, obtained first EFMD accreditation in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, ranked #1 in IQAA Institutional Ranking.

Our Corporate Development Department continues to run its projects, Alumni Talks, Career Talks, Femtorship and Mentorship programs and we are ready for cooperation and new ideas.

During spring 2022, KIMEP conducted a series of focus-group meetings with our alumni for gathering feedback and evaluation of KIMEP programs. During one of such meetings our alumnus Mr. Dulatbek Ikbayev proposed an idea of creating KIMEP Alumni Endowment Fund, which was supported by a group of other alumni and officially registered on September 15, 2022. You can read an article about this initiative on the page 86.

This year the University conducted two graduation ceremonies for the graduates of 2020-2021 in May, as last year due to COVID-19 many events were restricted, and for the graduates 2022 in June. Many graduates of 2020-2021 mentioned that the Ceremony was a meaningful symbol which allowed them to celebrate this important moment of entering a new stage in their lives. As the world population, and in particular Kazakhstani people, are returning to their active lives after pandemics and January events, and in the presence of constant world challenges, I would like to wish our people peace, prosperity and success!

I want to express my gratitude to Adil Valikhanov, Director of Translation Department and his team for their invaluable contribution, to Jeremy Lonjon, Communication Officer at the Office of the President, and to all the staff, faculty and alumni for their cooperation and support in creating this volume!

*Alfiya Ilyas  
Alumni Manager  
Corporate Development Department*

# MESSAGE FROM DR. BANG

Dear KIMEP Alumni,  
Welcome to the Twelfth Edition of KIMEP University's alumni magazine, and I thank you and welcome this opportunity to address you as the president of your alma mater. As ever, KIMEP University remains dedicated to providing the highest quality of educational orientation for its students despite the continuing struggle against the prevailing international and economic situation. As alumni of KIMEP, you are fulfilling the mission of our University in your work by being well-educated citizens and improving the quality of life in Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and beyond.

This fall 2022 semester marks the beginning of KIMEP's thirtieth academic year, and our university presses on as the vanguard of higher education in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. We have steadfastly refused to compromise the integrity of our institution.

It is my great pleasure to announce that KIMEP has been recognized as the #1 Leading University among all Humanitarian-Economic universities in Kazakhstan, according to the 2022 National Rankings of HEIs by the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA).

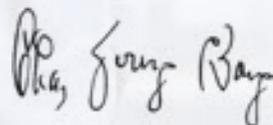
KIMEP has achieved another landmark as the first EFMD accredited university in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. On May 4, the EFMD Board of Directors officially approved our EFMD program-based accreditation for the Bang College of Business. This prestigious recognition reflects KIMEP's steadfast dedication to high-quality instruction, research, and student success. I would like to congratulate our entire academic community on this impressive achievement.

In line with our unwavering commitment to academic excellence, KIMEP is welcoming 12 new faculty members to our exceptional team of professors this year. These top professors will have their hands full with the newly enrolled 761 freshmen, an increase of 39% compared to last year! This is an outstanding progress after the struggles we had to face with COVID-19 pandemic and considering the challenges ahead.

KIMEP University is a student-based university, which means that we consider the student's education and welfare our top priority. As KIMEP alumni, this institution is your university, and we are here to help you realize your lifetime dreams and career objectives. I always welcome your letters, suggestions, and recommendations on ways that we can improve, and I love to hear from you.

I would like to thank you for being part of our impressive alumni network and staying in touch with your alma mater. On behalf of our faculty, staff, and the KIMEP community, I welcome you to read more about our achievements and plans for the near future.

Sincerely yours,



*Chan Young Bang, Ph.D.  
President of KIMEP University*

# NEWS FROM THE BANG COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22 AY

### NEW FACULTY MEMBERS IN 2021-22 AY

**Dr. Zafar Uddin Ahmed** joined BCB as a Professor of Marketing. He holds a Ph.D. degree from Utah State University, USA. Before joining KIMEP, Dr. Ahmed worked in Vietnam National University, American University of Ras Al Khaimah, Australian College of Kuwait, Kuwait University, Lebanese American University, University of Putra Malaysia, Fahad Bin Sultan University, Prince Sultan University, Texas A&M University, Fort Hays State University, Sacred Heart University, Nanyang Technological University, and Minot State University. Dr. Ahmed's research interests include Global Branding, Global Image, Global Business Ethics, Exporting, Global Entrepreneurship, and Global Services Marketing.

**Dr. Dariya Ainekova** joined BCB as an Assistant Professor in Operations Management and Information Systems. She holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Memphis, USA. Prior to joining KIMEP, Dr. Ainekova worked at the Fogelman College of Business and Economics of the University of Memphis. Dr. Ainekova takes interest in economic growth, macroeconomics and economic modeling.

**Dr. Larry Paul Pleshko** joined BCB as a Professor of Marketing. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Marketing from Florida State University, USA. Before joining KIMEP, Dr. Pleshko worked in Kuwait University, UAE University, Curtin University of Technology at Perth, Institute of Public Administration at Riyadh, Barry University (Florida), and Florida State University. Dr. Pleshko conducts research in various aspects of marketing.

**Dr. Halil Kiyamaz** joined BCB as a Visiting Professor in Finance. Dr. Kiyamaz holds a PhD degree from the University of New Orleans, USA. Dr. Halil Kiyamaz is a Certified Financial Analyst with over 30 years of teaching experience in universities around the world: University of New Orleans, Bilkent University, University of Houston-Clear Lake, Copenhagen Business School, Ada University, Paris University, East Chinese University of Science and Technology, IMADEC University, Kadir Has University, Brac University, Rollins College, and KIMEP University. His research interests cover Mergers and Acquisitions;

International and Emerging Markets Behavior and Anomalies; Mutual Funds Performances; Initial Public Offerings, International Corporate Finance.

**Dr. Sekip Engin Mendi** joined BCB as an Assistant Professor in Information Systems. He holds a Ph.D. degree Integrated Computing from University of Arkansas at Little Rock, USA. Before joining KIMEP, Dr. Mendi worked in KTO Karatay University, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, US Air Force Research Laboratory, Max-Planck-Institut fur Plasmaphysic, IABG mbH, Technical University of Munich, Istanbul KulturUniversity, and University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. His main interests are Image and Video Processing, Biomedical Informatics, Mobile Application Development.

### PROMINENT SCHOLAR HOSTED A RESEARCH SEMINAR FOR BCB FACULTY

On November 10, 2021 the Bang College of Business organized a Professional Development Research seminar for its faculty. The seminar was delivered by Professor Massaki (Mike) Kotabe from the Temple University, USA & Waseda University, Japan. Dr. Kotabe is a prominent researcher who has written more than 100 scholarly publications with well over 20,000 Google Scholar citations and has served as the Editor of the Journal of International Management for 17 years from 2002 to 2019.

### BCB HOLDS THE SECOND VIDEO CONTEST: BACK TO CAMPUS EDITION – “ROCK THE OFFLINE MODE”

In Fall 2021, the BCB Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) held the BCB Video Contest that invited BCB students to make a 3-minute video of creative and innovative ideas that would help students to adjust from online learning mode back to in-person classes. The contest was popular - 24 teams submitted their videos. On November 29, 2021 the jury chose the best three videos that received monetary prizes.



## MORE SOFTWARE TO PROMOTE BCB RESEARCH ACTIVITY

In Fall 2021, BCB provided access to EIKON Terminal to the research active faculty and students. In Spring 2022, access was complemented by SPSS, STATA, and EViews statistical treatment software packages.

## BCB STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN 1 MLN STARTUP COMPETITION

In November 2021, the BCB Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation organized a "Startup Million" competition sponsored by Shinhan Bank Scholarship Fund. The participants were offered to present a creative and innovative startup idea with a prototype and explain how they would plan to use 1 000 000 KZT in 5 months to further grow and develop the suggested entrepreneurial project. The grand prize for the winning team of the competition was 1 000 000 KZT. Seven teams presented their business projects by submitting 3-minutes video reviews of their business idea. The winner was identified on December 3, 2021 and awarded with a prize to implement their business plan.



## BCB ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING PROGRAMS RE-ACCREDITED BY INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

In January 2022 two leading professional accounting associations globally - ACCA and ICAEW - re-confirmed their trust in the quality of accounting education at KIMEP, renewing and expanding their recognition of the BCB degrees.



Thus, starting from 2019, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) considers BACTA graduates eligible for 8 ACCA exemptions out of 9, subject to the graduates' successful completion of corresponding courses at BCB. MACTA graduates are eligible for 6 out of 9 exemptions.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) re-confirmed its readiness to grant BACTA graduates exemptions from 6 out of 15 exam modules of ICAEW's ACA Qualification, which corresponds to the Qualification's Certificate level.

## VICE-DEAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN SARAJEVO, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA PRESENTATION TO KIMEP STUDENTS

On 7 February 2022, Dr. Edib Smolo, Assistant Professor and Vice-Dean for Scientific and Research Activities at the Faculty of Business and Administration of the International University of Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina gave an online guest lecture on Principles of Islamic Finance. Dr. Smolo has a PhD degree in Islamic Finance from INCEIF and commands 14 years of hands-on experience in Islamic Banking and Finance in Malaysia.

## BCB HOLDS THE NINETEENTH KIMEP INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE

On 8-9 April 2022, the interdisciplinary KIMEP International Research Conference (KIRC) was held. This year the Conference was devoted to the topic of "30 Years of KIMEP University: Local and Global Impact". The multidisciplinary conference consisted of 12 sessions and featured over 53 presentations in the areas of Business areas (Accounting and Finance, Management, Marketing), Social Sciences, Law, and Education, Literature and Linguistics.

## EUROPEAN IMA CASE COMPETITION: BCB STUDENTS WON BRONZE IN EUROPE

On 8-10 April 2022, the "Fly High" team consisting of BCB students Dilnoza Khusseinova, Zevar Mamadjonova, Eradzh Nasriddinov, Ehrom Saidov, and Allanur Vepayev, and prepared by Assistant Professor Zhanat Syzdykov, took second place in the European Final Case Competition organized by the Institute of Certified Management Accountants (USA), in Athens, Greece.

There were more than 25 teams representing various European universities. The organizers noted the high level of BCB students' presentation and preparation. The first place won by the Team of Masters students from the Economic University of Katowice, Poland, and the third - by the Team of bachelor students from the Vistula University from Warsaw, Poland.

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## BANG COLLEGE OF BUSINESS RECEIVES THE FIRST EFMD ACCREDITATION IN KAZAKHSTAN AND CENTRAL ASIA



On April 27 2022, the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) granted accreditation to the Bachelor of Finance program of BCB. The accreditation was granted for three years, with subsequent re-accreditation in 2025. KIMEP is the first university in Kazakhstan and the Central Asian region to achieve the EFMD accreditation. Only 106 universities worldwide were able to secure the rigorous EFMD program accreditation.

The EFMD is one of the three accreditation agencies (along with AACSB and AMBA) that jointly form the “Triple Crown Accreditation” of business schools – a status that confirms highest level of quality of business education. The achievement opens new global opportunities for the KIMEP University and the regional business education community. BCB plans to share its experience with fellow universities in the region and also continue with the accreditation efforts.

Commenting on this achievement, Dr. Nejat Capar, Acting Dean of the Bang College of Business said: “We are very happy that KIMEP University has received EFMD accreditation for its Bachelor of Finance program. This makes KIMEP University the first and only institution to have received such an accreditation in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Thanks to the vision and leadership of KIMEP University President Dr. Bang, KIMEP University has always been a leader in business education in Kazakhstan and the Central Asia since its foundation 30 years ago. EFMD accreditation is a recognition of this vision. As the Bang College of Business, we will continuously improve our programs and provide the best quality education and research in the future.”

## BCB ENTERS ACFE ANTI-FRAUD EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Bang College of Business has entered the Anti-Fraud Education Partnership with the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE, [www.acfe.com](http://www.acfe.com)). The ACFE is the world’s largest anti-fraud organization. It aims at reducing fraud and corruption worldwide by providing best-in-class training, offering the CFE credential and fostering a dynamic, global community of anti-fraud professionals.

Following the partnership, the ACFE has provided free resources including a sample syllabus, case studies and videos, to assist in adequately preparing students in the basic elements of fraud prevention, detection and examination. The discipline of fraud examination draws knowledge from accounting, law, criminology and fraud investigation principles. Now the ACFE offers the qualified BCB students a discounted membership providing access to members-only resources. In addition, student members interested in pursuing the Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) credential may be eligible to purchase the Student Package (CFE Exam Prep Course and CFE Exam).

## KIMEP UNIVERSITY BECOMES A SIGNATORY MEMBER OF UN PRME

In the result of the BCB initiative, on 20 June 2022, the KIMEP University joined over 860 leading business and management schools across 99 countries around the world that are committed to building a more sustainable future by implementing the Six Principles of PRME and supporting the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

As stated on their website, the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations-supported initiative founded in 2007. As a platform to raise the profile of sustainability in schools around the world, PRME equips today’s business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow. Working through Six Principles, PRME engages business and management schools to ensure they provide future leaders with the skills needed to balance economic and sustainability goals, while drawing attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact.

The membership will help KIMEP prepare students that are well aware of the latest SDG challenges and are equipped with knowledge to promote sustainable development in all dimensions of their professional activity.

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# NEWS FROM THE LAW SCHOOL

## NEW FACULTY MEMBERS FOR 2022-23

### Richard C. Linstrom, Esq.

Dean and Associate Professor of Law J.D., University of San Francisco



Richard Linstrom has been a global consultant on international academic affiliations, based in Penang, Malaysia. In addition to recent dean positions in Cambodia and Vietnam, he was head of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) branch campus in Singapore for three years and was Vice President and General Counsel of UNLV for seven years before that. Richard was with the Office of the Attorney General, State of Nevada for nearly a decade, where he served in a number of positions, including Assistant Solicitor General and Chief Deputy Attorney General in charge of the Las Vegas office. The Dean began his legal career in the U.S. state of Hawai'i, where he was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in Honolulu and then in private practice there doing criminal defense trials and appeals. He is also admitted to practice law in the U.S. federal District of Columbia.

### Sultan Sakhariyev

Senior Lecturer - Law  
LL.M. (cum laude), KIMEP University



Sultan Sakhariyev is a Kazakhstan state licensed lawyer with an extensive experience in international legal consulting. Mr. Sakhariyev's areas of specialization include corporate, contract, general commercial, and employment law. Sultan has also been involved in providing advice on personal data protection and e-commerce issues. He has participated in legal due diligence procedures of a major Kazakhstan telecom provider, an automobile distributor, and a bank. In addition, Sultan has provided legal support in several M&A projects. His research interests include anti-corruption law, human rights, and legal regulation of IT technologies and the Internet. Sultan is an active member of and in the management bodies of the Kazakhstan legal society "Iustus" Chamber of Legal Advisors. Thanks to this position he participates in legislative activities such as regulation of the legal profession.

### Alina Davar

Director of Experiential Learning and  
Professor of Practice  
LL.M. (with honors), KIMEP University



Alina Davar was a KIMEP Merit-Based Scholarship Awardee. Ms. Davar first worked as a Research Assistant in the Law School and was involved in the creation of the KIMEP Legal Clinic. Also at KIMEP, Alina was a regular participant and winner in Kazakhstan's Model UN. In addition to her active practice of law, she has been an adjunct faculty member at the School of Law for six years and has headed the Mentorship program as an alumni volunteer. In recent years, her professional work has focused on commercial law, providing legal advice and counsel in an international holding company- specializing in Asset Management and IT. She is KIMEP University's first-ever Professor of Practice.

## KIMEP GRAND NATIONAL DEBATE TOURNAMENT

The Law School conducted the first KIMEP Grand National Debate Tournament in English over the weekend of March 21 and 22. The event was held in the New Academic Building, home of the School of Law. There were three rounds of debate competition leading to a fourth and final round. Two different questions were debated during the first three rounds, and a third question debated during the final round.

Among the motions debated were:

- 1) This House Would Legalize Carrying Weapons
- 2) This House Regrets the Existence of NATO after 1991

Eighteen teams consisting of a total of 34 high school students from all around Kazakhstan participated in the two-day event. The final round panel of judges consisted of KIMEP administration and faculty, as well as KIMEP student: Dr. Timothy Barnett, Dr. Richard Linstrom, Dr. Gerald Pech, Dr. Nejat Capar, Dr. Jacob Reidhead, Mr. Daniil Litosh, and Dr. Fred Isaacs.

The top two teams with the best records in qualifying rounds took part in the final rounds.

Each side was allowed to speak for eight minutes in each round before being evaluated by the judge of the round.

Each side was awarded a “win” or “loss” in the opinion of the judge, while each speaker was also assessed individual speaking points (which determined the “Best Debater” award).

The student winners were:

**FIRST PLACE:** Kirill Demekhin and Seraphim Kotorov (100% scholarship to each)

**FINALISTS:** Alan Beket and Dinara Zamantayeva

**BEST DEBATER:** (Tied) Meruert Raushanova and Dinara Zamantayeva (50% scholarship to each)

The tournament was hosted by KIMEP alumnus Olzhas Suleimenov.



## SUMMER SCHOOL ON “HUMAN RIGHTS IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY”

WHAT DEFINES A STATE OF EMERGENCY?

WHAT ARE THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS CONTAINING STANDARDS FOR THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS DURING A STATE OF EMERGENCY?

All these and more topics were covered in presentations by professors of law, the Commissioner for Human Rights and human rights defenders during the Summer School “Human Rights in the State of Emergency” for Central Asia law students hosted at the School of Law from August 3 to 6.

The Summer School was sponsored by the OSCE Program Office in Astana, the USAID project “Safe Migration in Central Asia” which is implemented by the NGO Winrock International, and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Kazakhstan - Elvira Abilkhassimovna Azimova.

More than 20 lecturers shared their experiences and scholarship, as well as participated in open discussions with students on the following topics:

- Human rights and freedoms in emergency situations, and their categorization;
- The concept of limits and restrictions on human rights and freedoms, its consolidation in the sources of law;
- The legal regime of the state of emergency, its limits, and the rule of law.

18 out of 60 applicants were selected from among law students studying in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. They were assigned to three-person teams for a case study competition.



*“All student works are interesting. Many aspects of observance of human rights were reflected in students’ cases...many scenarios and algorithms have been developed for government actions from the point of view of collective interests, including personal rights and human freedoms. During such events students learn and show their critical thinking. We listen to extraordinary opinions,”* Elvira Azimova commented.

*She added:*

*“To date many countries have experienced emergency situations. State of emergency - a man-made situation, a situation of martial law and riots. Algorithms for ensuring public health, access to food and housing during an emergency are being developed by the state and human rights activists. We must be ready for it,”*

Three KIMEP students were members of each of the top teams:



FIRST PLACE TEAM: Danil Litosh

SECOND PLACE TEAM: Sofia Khalikova

THIRD PLACE TEAM: Aidan Norov

Danil Litosh was also judged to be the most active and engaged participant. Book awards were provided by Winrock International, which were presented by the Commissioner and the Acting Dean of the Law School, Dr. Linstrom.



## INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND SECURITY LAW A MAJOR NEW BOOK

KIMEP University Law School faculty have published a Research Handbook – International Conflict and Security Law.

The book has been published by the TMC Asser Press Dutch publishing house, and is distributed by the German multinational publishing company Springer.

KIMEP editorial team:

- Sergey Sayapin, Editor-in-Chief and Associate Professor, School of Law
- Rustam Atadjanov – Assistant Professor, School of Law
- Nicolas Zambrana-Tevar – Associate Professor, School of Law



The Research Guide will be useful for both students and researchers, for national and international judges, as well as for legal advisers to governments and international and non-governmental organizations.

This guide will answer the following questions:

- How does international conflict and security law is applied in the practice of states, international and national institutions?
- What are the challenges in applying international conflict and security law?
- What international crimes are committed in violation of these norms?
- What lessons and conclusions could be drawn from a number of conflict situations?

The reader will have the opportunity to learn various points of view of international experts representing all the major legal systems of the world.

# NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CSS FACULTY

Dr. Fransis Amagoh, Professor of the Department of Public Administration received "The Best Publication Award" award for 2021 and Dr. Alma Kudebayeva, CSS Research Director & Assistant Professor of the Department of Economics received "The Teaching Excellence Award" in recognition of distinguish teaching at KIMEP University. The awards were solemnly presented to our professors at the 2022 Graduation Ceremony in June 2022.



## THE ESSAY COMPETITION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS "THE EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN 2021: IMPACT ON SECURITY IN CENTRAL ASIA" (DECEMBER 2021-FEBRUARY 2022)

Following the fateful events that took place in Afghanistan in 2021 the Department of International Relations and Regional Studies decided to launch the Essay Competition on the topic: "The Events in Afghanistan 2021: Impact on Security in Central Asia" in order to activate student analytical and research skills. It was a good prize fund: 1st rank - 1 prize - KZT 200,000; 2nd rank - 2 prizes - KZT 120,000; and 3rd rank - 3 prizes - KZT 80,000.

MIR student Tara Matthews became the winner of the Essay competition. Timon Ostermeier (MIR) and Muhamedzhan Bazarov (BIR) won the second rank prizes. BIR students Alina Zafar, Aiya Siyaz and Ayazhan Yerzhomartova came third in the competition.

The competition was open for students of all programs. 32 essays were submitted from students of all colleges and all participants received certificates.

## NEW INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS AND CCASC ACTIVITY

CSS established partnership with Tsinghua University, a national public research university in Beijing, China. Tsinghua University is a member of the C9 League and is in Top-10 Universities of China. Additionally China and Central Asian Studies Center (CCASC) became a partner with Asia Center of Seoul National University, Top 1 University of Korea. These new connections are expected to be beneficial for development of research and cooperation, scholarly exchange.

This past year, KIMEP's China & Central Asia Studies Center (CCASC) has been venturing into a wide array of new activities. Apart from running a regular internship program, the center organizes expert talks and panel discussions, some of which can be viewed on our YouTube channel. This fall, affiliate scholars from Australia, the UK and the USA are visiting CCASC to carry out their fieldwork research and present their findings

to the KIMEP community as well as the wider academic audience in both in-person and online formats.

For more information about CCASC'S activities, check out the center's website [ChinaCentralAsia.org](http://ChinaCentralAsia.org) or follow us on Twitter: @ccasc\_kz

## NEW COHORT OF THE IMCEERES PROGRAM

In the 2022-23 academic year, a record number of students - 12 people will study under the IMCEERES program at the College of Social Sciences. They represent different countries and continents: China, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Netherlands and Russia. In previous years, a maximum of 5-6 people studied under this program at KIMEP.

For reference: KIMEP University is the only University in Kazakhstan cooperating as key partner in the Erasmus+ Joint Master scholarship program. As a consortium member, KIMEP offers the innovative joint Master's degree within the IMCEERES program. Two key partners in this Consortium are the University of Glasgow (Scotland, UK) and the University of Tartu (Estonia). Since joining the program, around 30 graduates of the IMCEERES have received diplomas from KIMEP University with a "Master of International Relations" degree.

## CSS ALUMNI EVENT

On May 20, 2022, a Reception was held with CSS graduates of different years, who were included in the KIMEP President's Club. During the meeting, the opinions of graduates on the development of the faculty, on the measures that need to be taken to keep up with the demands of the labor market were heard. "Economics" program graduates emphasized importance of data analytics and data science for their work as economists and in finance. They support the creation of the Data Analytics minor but would like to see similar courses at master level. "International Relations" graduates recommended developing soft skills applies to all spheres of life and establishing relations with the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia Regional Capacity Development Center (CCAMTAC) office in Almaty. "Public Administration" students asked KIMEP to consider restarting the Government Internship program that was handled in previous years. "Media and Communications" graduates proposed to invest more to Media Lab equipment and Invite successful DMC Alumni as part-time lecturers.

Som of these recommendations are already being implemented.



## EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS (INALCO), PARIS, FRANCE AND MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF KIMEP COMMUNITY BY ZHAMILYA UTARBAYEVA, INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR & ADJUNCT FACULTY OF THE CSS

I have been working at KIMEP for over 11 years, the first 7 years I worked in the international department, currently at the College of Social Sciences. I know many KIMEP alumni who are currently working both in Kazakhstan or abroad. From my own experience I know that in many parts of the world you can meet our successful alumni.

If to list the cities where I met our alumni, it will be a real geography lesson: London, Dublin, Milan, Paris, Seoul, Riga and others.

I visited some of the above-mentioned destinations because of my involvement in international projects. One of them is Horizon 2020 New Markets project (No 824027) of the European Commission, where the College of Social Sciences participates as associated partner. This means that scientists and researchers of CSS have the opportunity to visit the European partners of the project for a period from one to twelve months with some financial support.

European partners are Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland; University of Helsinki, Finland; Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia; University of Latvia, Latvia; and University of Languages and Civilizations (INALCO), Paris, France.

This year, I finally managed to take the opportunity to conduct research at a partner university in Europe. Because the focus of my attention was the educational relations of the countries of Central Asia, Kazakhstan and France, it is logical that INALCO become my place of residence. My host was an eminent scholar, and a professor at this University, Catherine Poujol. I had the opportunity to see one of the iconic universities in France, established back in 1795 with its historic campus in Saint-Germain and a new building in the 13th arrondissement of Paris, to work in a rich library. Around 200 oriental languages are taught at this university, as well as the strongest program in international relations.

This experience was precious to me as I have been in the project since the moment of application and I am glad that the European Commission provides the opportunity for researchers from partner countries to work in European universities promoting excellence.



And most importantly, I had the opportunity to personally meet KIMEP alumni and students who currently live and work in France, for example, Shamima Oshurbekova, a BIR graduate, who is studying for a master's program at one of the most prestigious universities in the world, Sciences Po and just recently earned a new position – as an Intern with the OECD - OCDE Paris in the Global Relations and Cooperation Directorate, Eurasia; Dilda Zhaksybek, who, after graduating from the IESEG School of Management, works at L'Oreal; with Daria Boronilo, who was also KIMEP student and won scholarship to study at Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree, WinTour program with a diploma from the Rovira i Virgili University (Tarragona, Spain), University of Bordeaux (France) and University of Porto (Portugal).

2 PhD students in Public Administration department also took advantage of the H2020 opportunity and held a secondment at Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech). And if our graduates decide to become part of the CSS PhD program, they get the chance to conduct research in European partner University by May 2024.

# NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION

## CHE LAUNCHED BA IN PSYCHOLOGY

Under the leadership of KIMEP President Dr. Bang, since June 2022, the College of Humanities and Education worked on the creation and development of the brand new academic program – Bachelor of social knowledge in the educational program 6B03103 Psychology – BA in Psychology in cooperation with the USA Association of Psychologists. As a result, the program was approved and entered to the State Roster on September 1st, 2022. Now, 20 newly accepted students study at the program.

The aim of the program is to train highly qualified specialists of the appropriate level and profile, competitive in the labor market, competent in the field of scientific and practical psychology, oriented in related fields of activity, capable of effective work in the field of psychology at the level of world standards, ready for constant professional growth, social and professional mobility. The educational program regulates and implements the goals, results, content, conditions and technologies of professional psychological training of future psychologists; provides fundamental and practice-oriented training of bachelor psychologists for work in various fields of professional activity.

## SUCCESSFULLY PASSING THE FIBAA ACCREDITATION

On 28 April 2022, KIMEP successfully finalized a four-day online international accreditation process for its new 12 academic programs through the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), a recognized accreditation body in Europe. Total of 22 FIBAA Expert Panel Team members of three Clusters assessed KIMEP Self-Assessment Reports with Annexes and evaluated KIMEP materials uploaded in 12 Program Base-rooms, which contain 108 folders with required materials, prepared by KIMEP colleges. Total of 120 KIMEP representatives, including senior management, faculty members, KIMEP students, program management, administrative staff from 11 departments, and university accreditation coordinators, participated in FIBAA panel interviews and in the entire process.

On April 26-28, 2022, CHE participated in this three-day accreditation process with its six new academic programs

which are the PhD in Education Policy & Management, PhD in Foreign Languages, Master in Education Policy & Management, Bachelor of Foreign Language: 2 foreign languages, Bachelor of Translation Studies and Bachelor of Cognitive Sciences, organized in two big clusters (clusters 1 and 2).

In late August, KIMEP received a positive feedback from the FIBAA panel teams and has sent its statements from three clusters. KIMEP will receive the FIBAA Commission decision on all 12 programs in Fall 2022 and will receive the FIBAA CEO in October 2022.

## CALE CONFERENCE 2022

CHE hosted its second Central Asia Language and Education Conference (CALE) in Almaty, Kazakhstan, via Zoom on May 26-27, 2022. This conference annually welcomes researchers working on language education, sociolinguistics, linguistics, second language acquisition, TESOL, and related disciplines. Although the conference overall has a special interest in how issues of language and language education play out in Central Asia, papers do not need to be related to Central Asia, and researchers do not need to be based in the region. The theme of this year's conference was "English as a Medium of Instruction in Central Asia".

Plenary speakers in 2022 were Dr. Simon Borg, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway; Dr. Bridget Goodman, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan; Dr. Andrew Linn, University of Westminster, UK (flew from UK to KIMEPU to present his speech); Dr. Juldyz Smagulova, KIMEP University, Kazakhstan. The Conference was a great success.



CALE plenary speaker Dr. Andrew Linn with the CHE administration

## ALUMNI REUNION 2022

With the support of KIMEP top management, all KIMEP colleges hosted KIMEP Alumni Reunion Dinners in April-May 2022. CHE hosted its Dinner Reception with the CHE Alumni on May 27, 2022 in Kazakhstan Hotel, Altyn Emel Hall. Total of 43 guests participated in the grand event and among them there were 23 MAFL graduates and the first MA in EPM graduate, the program newly launched in 2020 in CHE. Many graduates have achieved impressive results in their employment by moving to the top management positions in education (e.g. Timur or Aliya), to new international companies (e.g. Bagzhan), in teacher training and publishing (e.g. Bostan), or running their own businesses in education sphere (e.g. Claudia, Rimma, etc.). Some kept studying in PhD programs (University of Western Australia, Nazarbayev University, University of Georgia, and KIMEP).

The event was opened by KIMEP top management and was graced by the CALE Conference keynote speaker Dr. Andrew Linn, who was very pleased by both Conference and Alumni Reunion events' levels. Vote of thanks was given by first Alumni of MA in TESOL program in 2014 - Ms. Claudia Valbuena and Ms. Ziash Suleimenova. The graduates spoke very warmly about KIMEP University and programs. Everyone highlighted the quality of teaching, the organization of education following western standards, exemplary attitude towards students, etc. MAFL became a springboard for most of them because their career is in the educational sphere. It becomes

evident that almost all of them pursued their graduate degree for the continuous professional development and further advancements in their careers. Most alumni have built their careers as faculty members in universities and teachers at schools. Overall, CHE alumni are satisfied by their career trajectories after graduation. They gave their recommendations to the CHE administration, and since most alumni work in academia, they are interested in continuing their education in PhD in EPM or PhD in FL of KIMEP.

## NEW FACULTY 2022 – DR. HOWARD GREGORY

In Fall 2022 the College of Humanities and Education welcomed a new faculty member - Dr. Howard Gregory. He is teaching Introduction to Computational Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics for students of BA in the Cognitive Science program. Dr. Gregory has a doctorate degree in linguistics, specializing in semantics and computational linguistics from University of London (UK). His research area lies in logic, computational linguistics, programming and information-based approaches to syntax. He has taught TEFL-related linguistic courses, and lectures in semantics at all levels. His previous research work related to programming includes developing the SHARDS project, a computational system for resolution of dialogue fragments and various kinds of ellipsis. Beside his academic job Dr. Gregory is an owner and director of Live Language Kazakhstan, a start-up language school. He has also taught English classes at all levels up to Cambridge Proficiency.



*CHE Alumni Re-Union 2022 participants*



## FIRST GRADUATES OF BA IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND BA IN TRANSLATION STUDIES PROGRAMS

On 14 May 2022, the first BAFL and BATS graduates received their diplomas. Since their opening in 2018 139 students have been enrolled. The programs are aimed at training highly qualified specialists in the field of foreign languages and translation. As a result of their education graduates acquired invaluable skills, which they successfully applied in the professional sphere. It is also important to note that all nine graduates are already employed. Diplomas were awarded to the graduates by the Dean of the College of Humanities and Education, Juldyz Smagulova. This year also marks the highest number of enrolled students to BATS and BAFL.

## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

CHE full time faculty member, Dr. Basem Al-Raba'a, published two articles on linguistic features in Jordanian Arabic language in *Glossa* and *Acta Linguistica Academica* journals. In his article "Reflexivity, reciprocity and collectivity in Jordanian Arabic" Dr. Al-Raba'a examines the syntactic asymmetries between reflexive and reciprocal constructions in Jordanian Arabic (JA), paying special attention to those with morphological marking. In particular, it will be argued that morphologically marked reflexives are one-place predicates, but their reciprocal counterparts are two-place predicates, with their internal arguments being realized either overtly or covertly in syntax. "On the morphosyntax of hybrid agreement in Jordanian Arabic" investigates the (hybrid) agreement patterns with collective and military rank nouns in Jordanian Arabic, both inside and outside the determiner phrase (DP).

1. Al-Raba'a, Basem, & Yoshihisa Kitagawa. (2022). Reflexivity, reciprocity and collectivity in Jordanian Arabic. *Glossa* 7(1): 1-38.
2. Al-Raba'a, Basem. (2022). On the morphosyntax of hybrid agreement in Jordanian Arabic. *Acta Linguistica Academica* 69(3): 334-364.

## MOBILITY

Dr. Juldyz Smagulova participated in the Sociolinguistics Symposium 24 in Ghent, Belgium on 13-16 July 2022. SS24 is organized by Ghent University in close collaboration with the Belgian sociolinguistic community. Dr. Smagulova presented a paper titled "Mobile Borders".

Dr. Kara Fleming took part in the International Conference on Sociolinguistics 3 that was held in Czech Republic, Prague on August 24-26, 2022. The conference is designed for researchers of sociolinguistics from all around the world. The main theme of the conference this year was diversity, media, and language management. Dr. Fleming presented a paper which was co-authored with Dr. Juldyz Smagulova - "Shame and social renegotiation: New speakers of Kazakh in Kazakhstan". This study aimed to show how the phenomenon of language shaming is developed in Kazakh speaking society, and how it affects the process of language revival.

On September 1-3, 2022 British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL) held its another Annual Conference 2022 in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where Dr. Kara Fleming made a presentation on the "Ideologies of the 'Russian World': Resisting not-so-soft power" about challenging the idea of the Russian world. Dr. Smagulova co-authored this paper.

# NEWS FROM EXECUTIVE EDUCATION CENTER

## “ONE AND A HALF DECADE OF SUCCESS AS A WORLD-CLASS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION IN KAZAKHSTAN”

For all of KIMEPians, a vast business community and high-ranking governmental bodies of Kazakhstan and beyond, the year of 2022 is marked by a glorious 30th B-Day of the best Business School in Kazakhstan and Central Asia – KIMEP University. This year also marked the 15th anniversary of KIMEP’s most prestigious executive program, the Executive MBA (EMBA) program, the celebration of which has started through its events and will be continued until the end of AY 2022-23.

What was the main achievement of the Executive Center of KIMEP within one and a half decade of its service to the country? The Center gives a clear understanding that though education and continuing education is generally considered a social service in public administration terms, it obviously has major economic significance: education is concerned with the development and upgrading of human capital, and quality human capital is instrumental and essential to driving the economic development of a whole society and maintaining its competitiveness in the business world and more. The need to nurture talent through education is particularly important for Kazakhstan today. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has emphasized that the country’s strength lies in its human capital. KIMEP University not only provides world-class business education opportunities at the undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels to meet the specific manpower needs of our society, but also offers a wide range of programs for working professionals and executives through its Executive Education Center programs. Needless to say, the KIMEP EMBA is a prime showcase of successful collaboration between an educational institution and business community of the country and beyond.

Back in 1994, we were the first University to offer world-class management education programs in the area. Through successful collaboration between KIMEP University and international funds and organizations, our higher education institution now hosts the best EMBA and Mini-MBA programs in the region accredited by international and national accreditation agencies,

including FIBAA, AFBE and IQAA. Both EEC programs, an Executive Master of Business Administration and a Mini-MBA Program, showed the highest standards and were successfully re-accredited for 7 years in 2018.

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF AN ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2021-2022

### EXECUTIVE MBA PROGRAM STUDENTS OF 2022

According to the agreement reached within the Memorandum signed between KazakhTelecom and the Executive Education Center (EEC) at KIMEP University, in 2022 Executive MBA program solemnly launched its R15 and R16 corporate cohorts in Almaty and in Astana. Twenty top managers who study in these two newly launched corporate cohorts, together with the other two current high-ranking cohort students of R14 and E13, are currently upgrading their skills through the latest business trends including decision science and big data science and many more throughout the KIMEP EMBA 15 modules. We wish our EMBA students the best knowledge gaining experience, personal and career growth after the completion of program!

## EMBA GRADUATION CEREMONY OF 2022

KIMEP University celebrated its 29th Graduation Ceremony with more than 400 students and 2500 guests at the Palace of Republic on Saturday, June 4th, 2022. Members of the KIMEP Board of Trustees, ambassadors, chief officers of the ministries, state agencies, representatives of international organizations and corporate sector, close relatives and friends of the graduates took part at the solemn Ceremony.





EMBA 2022 Graduation Reception at the Executive Education Center of KIMEP

This year 30 graduates of the Executive MBA program participated in KIMEP's Graduation Ceremony and in the Graduation Reception in the Executive Education Center where the graduates of the program received heartfelt wishes from the university top-management Provost Dr. Timothy Barnett, VPAA Dr. Joseph Luke, Dean of Bang College of Business Dr. Nejat Capar, the BCB full-time and adjunct faculty members and the new administration of the Center represented by Dr. Alma Alpeissova (Acting Associate Dean of EEC), Bakytgul Tundikbayeva (Associate Dean of QA), Zhanna Bolotova (EEC manager) and Madina Bakitova (EEC manager).

## MINIMBA AND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This oldest KIMEP program is certified by FIBAA, Germany, Bonn, provides participants with practical training, which is conducted by experienced instructors who work in real business. Within AY 2021-22 three groups of MiniMBA successfully completed the program requirements and were certified. All of them successfully completed 12 modules of the program and received the certification in the field of Management. Among our current graduates there are the leaders of the corporate organizations such as: LLP Appak, Bohemia, KazakhExport, JSC "Almatytemir", Sazankurak, Medical Academy, Transtelecom, JSC Caspian Beverage Holding, LLP Borusan Makina Kazakhstan, JSC NGSK KazStroyService.

Due to different interests and needs of clients, the program offers both individual courses for advanced training and a series of courses on specializations that will allow the professionals to gain fundamental knowledge and skills. The course program is updated annually. This year, the Program has introduced new advanced courses in Information Technology, Finance: Asset Management, Alternative Investments, Mergers and Acquisitions, Investments in Stock Market Instruments, as well as special courses: preparation for CFA (level 1), ACCA.



Mini MBA program graduates

MiniMBA program is planning to launch new corporate groups with the Borusan Makina Kazakhstan, the loyal partner of KIMEP EEC for more than a decade. Newly appointed EEC Director Dr. Talgat Kukenov and Bakytgul Tundikbayeva (Associate Dean of QA) met with the HR Director and top-administration of Borusan on the 22nd of July 2022: Mr. Ardak Uderbayev, HR Director at Borusan Cat Kazakhstan, Mr. Azat Mizambayev, HRM and Ms. Zarina Atabayeva, Training & Development Coordinator, who expressed their deepest gratitude to the program, which trained several cohorts of their employees from 2011, and their willingness to cooperate further.

Currently, 28 open enrolment students of Mini MBA are studying at EEC, the number of groups may increase as admission to the programs is open all year round.

## EEC PROFESSIONAL PLATFORM

KIMEP HR Club takes its history from 2009 and is one of the most successful non-profit projects of KIMEP University. The club is a specially developed platform for HR professionals from the industry, where they can discuss cases, update their knowledge and get new tools and wide network.

On June 23rd of 2022, the Executive Education Center re-launched KIMEP HR Club sessions in the recently renovated Valikhanov building halls of KIMEP University. KIMEP HR Club welcomed 50+ participants representing 35 companies, including: Big 4, banks, Toyota Motor Kazakhstan, ANCOR Central Asia, Optimum Recruitment, ACG, Fashion Retail Kazakhstan, Grand Technologies of Resources, Alageum, Magnum, TechnoPlus LTD, Cloud Maker, Fonte Capital LTD, and many others.

The new moderator of the HR club, Mr. Berik Bitabarov, Vice President for Human Resources

Management, Board of Trustees member at Kazakhtelecom JSC, and Ms. Alexandra Pak, a key-note



speaker, Petrel AI HR Director and a member of the Board of Directors, PHRI Certified Trainer, in their speeches emphasized the need to discuss the issues of developing and implementing an HR strategy that modern leaders face after the COVID-19 lockdown and the importance of regular meetings with HR directors and HR managers to discuss new employment schemes, talent selection, employee reskilling, corporate culture and many more. They highlighted the latest global trends in human resource management, including next-generation employment expectations, HR functions and workforce automation, employee wellbeing programs, creative recruitment and employment forms, and new forms of employee work. HR managers discussed solutions proposed in the context of the consequences of COVID 19.

HR club continues its work every other month gathering more and more HR directors who see the need in such platforms and work actively towards its growth.

## NEW PERSPECTIVE: DO- IT GOES TO WORK

Today the technologies and IT solutions are being introduced everywhere, in all the sectors of the economy in order to simplify business processes and make people's lives more comfortable. The demand for qualified IT specialists has increased dramatically during the pandemic. Companies will increase competition for personnel, and the most professional employees will have the opportunity to receive a high salary. According to the statistics in 2021 labor market in IT sector of Republic of Kazakhstan remarkably increased by 67% in the period from July-August, in comparison with last year (resources <https://profit.kz/news/61823/Obzor-rinka-truda-v-IT-sfere-RK>). Therefore, Executive Education Center at KIMEP University offers the following advanced courses of IT: Business IT Strategy and Structure, Introduction

to Programming, Web Technologies in Business, Java programming, Big Data Management and Analysis, Digital design, Advanced Power BI, Automation of business processes etc.

Another great news from Executive Education Center is the launch of KIMEP IT Scientific & Educational Center.

In this perspective IT center will offer IT training courses for students/professionals; Programming summer boot camp and hackathon starting from SU 2023; Authorized IT centers for technical support and exams; IT startup competitions & IT Business incubator; Collaboration with venture Investment companies; Guest lectures from famous IT leaders and founders; Annual IT round tables; Full cycle software development and all IT services, etc.

The Executive Education Center of KIMEP University has over the years provided training to tens of thousands of working executives, contributing significantly to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of management practices in Kazakhstan. In particular, Almaty's strength lies in being a financial hub of the country, in professional services and high-value added activities. All these require a continual supply of top-notch world class personnel. To preserve this competitive edge, KIMEP and EEC will continue to invest heavily into providing a world-class education to enhance the quality of teaching and nurturing talents, attracting more professionals to open professional platforms and providing high quality executive trainings in the region. Through these measures, we aspire to further develop Almaty city into a hub of high-end management education, thus to sustain the vibrancy and competitiveness of Kazakhstan's economy, and the success of the KIMEP University with its executive trainings is certainly a fitting role model which will scale new heights in the decades to come.

# OFFICE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

## 2021 IQAA INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM RANKING

We are proud to announce that according to the results of 2022 Institutional Ranking of HEIs conducted by Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA, [www.iqaa.kz](http://www.iqaa.kz)), **KIMEP University won the 1st place on institutional level among humanitarian-economic universities in Kazakhstan.**

Moreover, KIMEP University received 1st place in the Ranking of HEI websites among Humanitarian and Economic HEIs. Criteria for this ranking include website dimensions, content, website updateability, design and ease of site navigation, site presentation in the state, Russian, English and other languages, number of visits, number of links to the site and site speed.

Institutional ranking of humanitarian-economic universities in Kazakhstan-2022		
Place	University name	%
1	KIMEP University	100
2	Karaganda University of Kazpotrebooyuz	89.13
3	Almaty Management University	86.24
4	Esil University	69.66
5	The Kazakh-American Free University	58.11

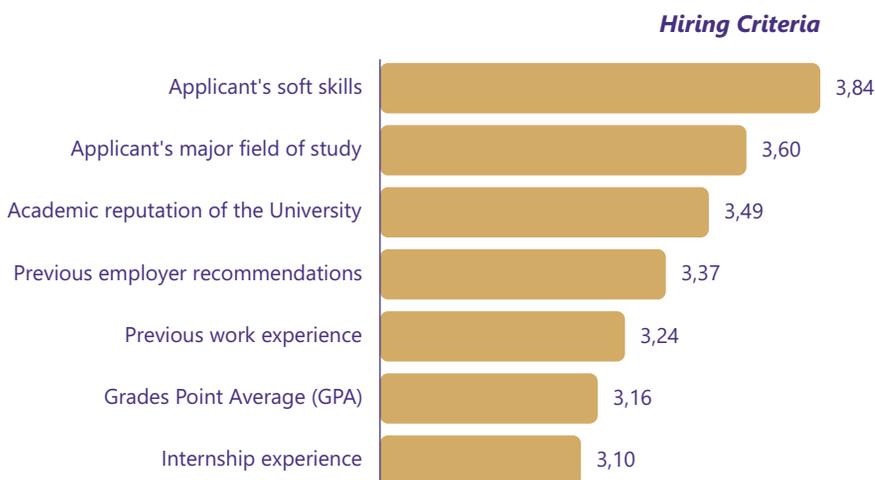
In the Ranking of scientific publications KIMEP also secured 1st place among Humanitarian and Economic HEIs. This ranking assesses the publication activity of the faculty and staff of universities which includes indicators of publication activity and citation of scientific publications in the Science Index system (RSCI core) over the past 5 years, the number of scientific publications and citations per article in the Science Index system (RSCI core), the number of scientific publications in far abroad over the past 5 years (using information from the Web of Science databases by Clarivate Analytics (formerly Thomson Reuters) and SCOPUS by Elsevier), the number of publications and citations per article in Web of Science and the number of publications and citations per article in Scopus.

## SURVEY ON EMPLOYER SATISFACTION WITH KIMEP ALUMNI 2021

63 companies employing KIMEP University alumni took part in the survey. Employers mostly valued such qualities of their employees as ability/willingness to learn (3.97 out of maximum 4.00), quality of work and professional attitude (3.92 each), verbal communication skills (3.89), and ability to apply knowledge and prioritize the goals (3.87 each).

In general, majority of surveyed companies (76%) were satisfied with skills and qualities of KIMEP University alumni. They were more satisfied with graduates' proficiency in English and Russian (3.76 and 3.73 respectively), as well as with their computer skills (3.73).

Overwhelming majority of surveyed companies (97%) stated that they would continue hiring KIMEP alumni in the future. As the important criteria for hiring an employee, respondents indicated candidates' soft skills (3.84), their major field of study (3.60) and academic reputation of the University (3.49).



# KIMEP JOB FAIR 2022

On the April 1st, 2022 KIMEP Career Center conducted annual Job Fair. The main goal of Job Fair is to assist KIMEP graduates and students to be familiar with current labour market and find appropriate job and internship placement. This year there were 37 companies-participants and about 400 students and graduates, who was able to obtain some advice on how to improve their CVs from Career Counsellor - Meruyert Adaibekova, Associate Adviser, PhD, MBA.

## Companies-participants:

- Air Astana
- Fly Arystan
- Alina Group of companies
- Almaty Akimat
- ABRIS Distribution Kazakhstan
- Beeline
- British American Tobacco Kazakhstan
- BSH Home Appliances
- Centras Capital
- Coca Cola
- Colliers International
- Deloitte TCF
- DASM Group
- DANONE
- EFES Kazakhstan
- Engineering company "KAZGIPRONEFTETRANS"
- Eurasian bank
- EY Kazakhstan
- Grant Thornton
- HomeCreditBank
- PricewaterhouseCoopers Tax & Advisory
- International company "Scientific publications - Publ. Science"
- Kolesa Group
- KPMG Kazakhstan
- MARS
- MAZARS
- Nestle Kazakhstan
- McKinsey & Company
- Metro Cash and Carry
- Morgan Lewis
- Philip Morris KZ
- Synergy Partners Law Firm
- Samsung
- Technodom
- TengizChevrOil (Atyrau)
- Unicase



In this volume of Alumni Magazine we decided to interview one or two graduates from each year of graduation to recall the path that the University and its students went through. KIMEP is proud of its graduates among which there are many celebrities, officials, entrepreneurs, media owners, lawyers, professors and high profile specialists in other fields.

These interviews present living memories of each period of history in Kazakhstan. What were the economic, social and political conditions after gaining independence, the first economic boom, and subsequent economic crises, pandemic, etc. We asked our alumni the following questions: why did you choose KIMEP, how did it affect your life, and what was the role of KIMEP in changing society?

For some alumni KIMEP was a dream, for some a chance to change their lives, others trusted our University's reputation and the recommendations from relatives and friends. Each interviewee shared their unique and inspirational experience, and I hope our students and alumni while reading these articles will find those special words which will help them to come closer to their dreams, or will be inspired to new beginnings. And as our Alumna Dana Minbaeva says in her interview: "Aim higher in everything you do!"

# ASSEL KARAULOVA, PRESIDENT AND CEO AT KAZAKHSTAN PRESS CLUB/PG COMMUNICATIONS, MBA 1994

**I entered KIMEP in 1992** – at the time of a complete rearrangement of everything in the country. Kazakhstan was just opening up for international community. By that time, I already graduated from the faculty of journalism of the Kazakh State University, and worked as a journalist. Purely accidentally, I saw an advertisement of admission to KIMEP in the newspaper, with some abbreviations completely incomprehensible to me – like MBA or MPA. Training in English was attractive – I wanted to improve my English, which was already not so bad, and to obtain a Western education. I remember the atmosphere of being worried by the results of entrance exams. Thus, I joined the KIMEP's first intake. At first, there were just English classes lasting almost all summer long – so that we could further understand lectures in English. Not too many people were there, and everyone seemed to be a very interesting person.

## **It's hard to describe KIMEP of 1992–94 in a nutshell.**

To start with – we were the first ones. KIMEP was the first institution to provide Western education. It was a completely unique university with a special approach to everything. Dr. Bang, the University President, was hyper-energetic – as always. There were outstanding professors, like Richard Hale, and many others. Taking their classes in English was a complete novelty for all of us. Besides academic knowledge there was something even greater – a lot of cultural development, intercultural experience in the process of communicating with professors and with other students. It was an amazing atmosphere of openness and transparency. After the Soviet universities for the first time we saw a student-centered approach to education – the one, where you are not only taught, but also carefully listened to, and given time and opportunity



to express yourself. Moreover, the whole uplifting atmosphere in the country was amazing. I remember that large projects of privatization and freedom of media and democratization began right then. This was a period, when Kazakhstan started to build a truly open, transparent society by the Western standards. There was a special spirit of freedom, a desire to get to know the world. So, we namely, the first KIMEP cohort – caught all this

**The cohort of 1992–94 was truly amazing.** All of us became great professionals – bankers, members of Parliament, auditors in the Big 4 companies, professors, top managers in international organizations, in the UN structures, in New York, in London, in Kuala Lumpur – you name it. Our uniqueness is seen not only from our careers. Our class was different by having a very active civic stand and cosmopolitanism. We all are actively involved in the development of civil society, writing, speaking in public, defending our points of view. We all keep in touch and we proudly bear the title of the First Class of KIMEP – the best, the highest quality. At our graduation we received diplomas from the hands of the President of the country. We were hired by the best companies. Our class was extremely sought after – back

then with our MBA or MPA degrees we were completely unique in the market. We were the ones to choose what job offer and which position to take.

**One can judge the success of our class graduates just by a small list of several names.** Ualikhan Kaisarov is a Member of Parliament, an active political figure of Kazakhstan. Serikzhan Mambetalin is also a politician, a businessman in the past, now actively working on creation of new political parties and political projects. Saida Zharbolova – for a long time headed the bank in Kazakhstan, now moved to another country. Dauren Diyarov is the head of a news agency. I, myself have been working in communications for all my life and now head the communication group of the Kazakhstan Press Club and the National Association for Public Relations. Saule Baidilzhanova is the owner of a large company. Talant Kalieva worked in the Big 4 companies all her life and now represents one of these companies in Astana. Elena Kolyuzhnaya is a big figure in academic world, working in one of the leading universities of the UK. Aliya Mukhamedyarova works at the Asian Development Bank, and now is in one of top positions in Malaysia or Singapore, if I'm not mistaken. All these people now being known as major experts, consultants, members of boards of directors of companies, started their careers from scratch – right after KIMEP, which basically gave us all a great new chance in our lives. Nowadays we may have a lot of young people with Western education, who studied abroad, but back then it was something completely extraordinary. We were the first ones, and therefore in great demand.

**About the statement that KIMEP changes the society** – this is true, especially in relation to the first generations of KIMEP graduates. From the very beginning KIMEP alumni do not just obtain education, but change the world around them. They are the ones to bring new standards to work, to open Kazakhstan to international professionals, to work abroad themselves, to show Kazakhstan and Kazakhstanis to the outer world. This all is based on the principles learned from KIMEP – transparency, competitiveness, professionalism and ability to rely only on your own strength. KIMEP graduate is usually a person with a sense of self-responsibility, self-confidence and self-presentation.

**In regards of leadership** – this topic is very fashionable now, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. As for myself – I have always put the team, the people at the forefront. I became the head of a company very early, after graduating from KIMEP. To me the most important rule of a leader is to think about people – not only about

your own ambitions. Without a team one will not achieve any success and will not bring in any change. A leader has to be responsible and empathic, to turn people on, to motivate them and to lead by example. It is extremely important to believe in what you do – otherwise you can't do it well. Leaders have to be visionaries, who can explain things and inspire other people.

**My career, actually, has developed more in strategic communications and PR,** than in the media. Yes, I am a journalist by my first degree, but these are slightly different things. I would therefore like to state in a more broad sense that today one of the most important functions for all companies is reputation management. Reputation is the main intangible asset that a company has today, with value and importance being difficult to overestimate. If the company is public, its reputation on the stock market also matters. Communications sphere is changing very dynamically, always bringing up some new and very interesting aspects. Development of digital communications and of social media have truly reshaped both business and interpersonal relations. Therefore, I believe it is a great time to apply new knowledge by those planning to pursue their careers in communications, in the media, in public relations and in marketing.

**No company today can do well without the function of strategic communications.** When I started my career, it was quite rare. Now it is everywhere – in all state bodies, in all national companies, in all NGOs. In the sphere of international commerce it goes without saying. Moreover, the function of communications today is not only corporate, but also interpersonal. We all see that promotion of a personal brand through social media is very important for the development of any career.

Therefore, if you are inclined to this, now is a great time to build a career and to apply the knowledge and approaches of digital communications to the traditional market. Your business and management competences will help a lot, because communication is one of the business functions. If you look at all large corporations – professionals in charge of communications are at the level of top-management – such as vice presidents or board members. Thus, a great time has come in this sphere, with a lot of creativity and new tools unavailable before. There are great career paths in the media, in business and in the governmental agencies, including brilliant opportunities for promoting some personal projects through social media and for creating some interesting multimedia platforms. I wish you success in your endeavors.

# AIDA ALZHANOVA, MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT, FOUNDER OF ACG FIRM, MBA 1995

**I like telling the story of how I got into KIMEP.** It was December 1992, I was eight months pregnant, sitting at home and languishing from boredom. The only entertainment was reading newspapers, which were handed to me in stacks from work every day. Almost every newspaper had an announcement about the second set of students at KIMEP. I was interested because the ad “sold” a certain Western dream.

**It was a transitional period** in the country, a very difficult economic situation – state organizations were closing around every day or suspended their work for an indefinite period. People were not paid a salary – the future was completely uncertain. And amid all this chaos, we were promised world-class knowledge and profession.

**I applied to KIMEP 10 days before giving birth to my daughter** under the surprised looks of the admissions staff. And I took the entrance exams on the day when my daughter turned forty days old and my family celebrated this date without me – I had an entrance exam all day: in the morning there was mathematics and in the afternoon English.

**I had a good level of English proficiency** since I graduated from a special English language school. Nevertheless, it was very difficult to study completely new and incomprehensible sciences in English, especially with a baby.

**Two years ago, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of KIMEP graduation.** Since there was a quarantine, the celebration was held online. We were glad to see each other again, and the situation was so warm and friendly that we didn’t want to leave the party. Some students of our course were already not very young at that time – most of them entered KIMEP after several years of work. There were a lot of guys from Yakutia. One of our classmates was 40 years old at the time of admission. And during our graduation meeting 2 years ago, she said that



she was very grateful to KIMEP for the fact that at the age of 40 she managed to change her life so radically. She now lives in Washington and is a leading expert in her field.

**We continue to keep in touch** via chat and since many fellow students live abroad, we do not meet very often, but we communicate very actively in the chat – something happens every day there, especially after the war started in Ukraine.

**In the post-Soviet space,** it was the first university providing business education for managers, economists, and financiers who would understand how business and the global economic system work. At that time all the teachers were foreigners. And they inspired us that we were the future elite of Kazakhstan, and we felt ourselves that way.

**At that time, the population in our country lived in poverty,** the average salary then was \$ 10 a month and we were paid a scholarship of \$20 a month. The university brought foreign textbooks: it was the first time we saw such textbooks, beautiful, printed on good quality paper, they smelled so nice, it was like getting to know something elite. KIMEP had the coolest disco club in the city, and everyone wanted to go to it – there was some incredible freedom and a completely new spirit.

**Nowadays there are a few similar universities, but then it was the first university where we studied entirely in English,** where only foreign professors taught and there was the coolest disco ever! It was a building in the traditional Soviet style, it was not equipped as it is now, but it was still the best, and we were so proud because we felt like the future elite of Kazakhstan (laughs). I must say that the teachers had a different unusual for us approach: they joked, and came in jeans, but were strict and fair, despite the friendly relations with the students. One of the accounting teachers repeatedly told us: “cheating is the biggest crime; I will immediately expel you from the classroom”. During the exams, he walked with binoculars and watched the students – such an experience was new for us.

**KIMEP had a direct impact on my career.** At one of the disco parties, I met my former colleague. She told me that she works at the UN as an assistant, and they need a receptionist. I was genuinely outraged: "I? At the reception? No, I am the future elite of Kazakhstan! (laughs). But when she said the salary was \$25 a day, I immediately took off the crown and agreed. (laughs) I had a good working relationship with the UN representative, who was from the UK, and he invited me to work part-time on one of the projects after my receptionist assignment finished. At that time, the UN in Kazakhstan was preparing the first Human Development Report. It was necessary to collect information, accompany the visiting experts and translate for them, as well as organize meetings. I combined my studies with work for six months. It was insanely difficult because I had to prepare for the defense of my diploma and pay attention to my little daughter.

**Later, the UN representative office announced the opening of the office of the UN Population Fund** and the recruitment of staff – I applied and successfully passed the recruitment process. I was the very first employee of this foundation. For several months I was both a representative, a program manager, and a secretary until the staff was recruited. It was an exciting time. New things always motivate me.

**When we were studying, inflation skyrocketed: we were all half-starved,** and many of us wanted to be bankers, closer to money. Many took out credits in finance and accounting. But I liked such courses as Project Management, Strategic Management, and Organizational Behavior. Now I am studying for a Ph.D. in management, too, but it is also related to gender equality.

**The situation with gender equality in Kazakhstan is far from normal.** But there is no ideal country in terms of gender issues. All the problems of gender discrimination stem from the presence of various gender stereotypes that have been developed for centuries. Therefore, it is impossible to overcome it very quickly. But in those countries where the rule of law prevails, where everyone is equal before the law, and where discrimination is being fought very hard, the situation is much better.

**There are quite a few problems related to the rule of law in our country** – not everyone is equal before the law, we have a different interpretation of equality before the law, and because of this, we have corruption and distortion of the Constitution. I don't understand how it was possible to introduce a provision on the first president into the Constitution. You cannot create classes in the constitution. The Constitution is a document that

should guarantee the equality of every citizen living in our country. Any citizen of Kazakhstan, if he/she does not contradict the requirements of the constitution, has no criminal record, has the right to run for deputy or president. Now activists have achieved that there will be 30% of self-nominees. When the rule of law exists, then equality begins to manifest itself.

**In our society, there is a firm belief that a man should earn money,** if a man does not earn, then he is not a man. If a woman doesn't earn, that's fine. If she earns, it's great, if not, then it's okay, women are allowed not to earn a lot. And this is a stereotype. When a boy is born, everyone says that this is the future president of Kazakhstan, or akim, or prosecutor. And when a girl is born, they say: oh, it would be nice if she grew up beautiful and married. No one says, "I want my daughter to become a president." Now the attitude to power is changing: if earlier in history it was always a struggle for new territories, the ruler was a warrior, now what is happening in the world is already remnants of a past era, I think this Uranian war will be one of the last major wars.

**Today we need to build economic relationships between countries,** we need to be friends, and cooperation will contribute to economic growth. You don't have to be a male to do that. I see those female managers work better. The task of the manager is to convince everyone and debug all the processes, put everyone in their place, explain everything, and women do an excellent job with this. This is what women do in the family. This is what the Minister of Economy does: he decides what the country needs to buy, what to sell, how to properly allocate resources, and so on. By the way, our American teacher at KIMEP told us: "You know, when I come to the family and see that the wife looks good and the house is in order, I always say: you can easily run for the president office." He also said, "Do you know the principles of the organization? If you have managed to organize your house, your company, you can already be a president." It's all management. Of course, the scale of resources is different, but the principles are the same.

**Returning to the issue of gender, since these stereotypes exist, inequality arises,** and people believe that a woman cannot rule. Inequality can be measured by statistics: we have 52% of women and 48% of men, it begins after the age of 40 because men have a shorter life expectancy. Women, because they do more housework, are more active, drink less, and smoke less, hence they live longer. And if they live longer, it means they take better care of themselves. All health ministers should be women. Secondly, we have 43% of women with higher education and 38% of men with higher education

in the labor market. At the same time, we have a wage difference of about 25%. Because women are more likely to work in low-paid positions. For example, the director of the department is a man, and the deputy is a woman, that is, it is such a workhorse that does all the work. The Minister is a man, and the Deputy Minister is a woman.

**Our Constitution states: “No one should be discriminated against based on gender, age, ethnic group, religion or social status.”** In our society, there is an internal gender inequality that affects everything, the distribution of labor, and the distribution of responsibilities within the family. Many family decisions, and even such fateful ones as buying an apartment, are made by a woman. And since women can make such key decisions in the family, why can't they make government decisions? This year we have written many petitions on the law on domestic violence, there is also an initiative of the President on a 30% quota for women in the final list of deputies of parliament, now there are 27% women, there is also a 30% quota for women on boards of directors. When we start talking about it, usually men start talking about where we will find so many women. I have a counter question: where do you get so many people who put the country in a difficult situation, with such resources?

**This year many international organizations started active work on gender issues, and I was invited to participate in 3 projects.** Two projects are related to women's entrepreneurship, this is a very hot topic as of now. I think this is one of those steps that will allow women to become economically sustainable, and economically stable women are less likely to be subjected to domestic violence and often have political ambitions. The more women there are in parliament, among the ministers – the less aggressive these countries are, and they have a more social agenda. They will invest more in the development of schools, hospitals, and other social projects. And it will be useful for everyone, and men too. The World Economic Forum has estimated that 138 years are needed to equalize the situation with gender inequality around the world. This year we are ranked 65th on the global index. If we have more women on the boards of directors, we will rise by another 20–25 points. We are making progress, but we must not stop, because other countries are also moving on. I think that in 2–3 generations the situation will change. Even now, the current generation of millennials and centennials, especially centennials, these young people are generally different: they are more tolerant and independent, perhaps because they were born in the information

age, they have a lot of information. All people are born to be happy. How to be happy? To do this, a person must feel safe and be able to realize himself the way he or she wants, and not the way the parents or society want it. We missed the moment when we had a lot of petrodollars. Instead of investing this money in education and educating people, we started holding Expo or Astana Economic Forums. With that money, it was possible to train good teachers. And now we are reaping the “benefits” in the form of unskilled specialists in kindergartens, schools, and organizations and the outflow of educated citizens abroad.

**Higher education institutions reflect what's going on in our country.** Take your board of directors, and management and calculate as a percentage how many women you have. And it will be seen that in general there will be more women workers, by about 60 percent. But there will be more men in top positions, with a moderate presence of women. If you can't achieve gender equality at the university, how can you communicate this to students? This requires a gender policy or a gender focal point at the university, where the goal will be to increase the number of women, for example, by 10%. For example, when the UN announces vacancies, they say that we welcome women from developing countries, and all other things being equal, if there are male and female candidates, they will choose a woman, if it is a white and black woman, they will choose a black woman. Women need to be given a head start, for so many years men stood on the shoulders of women, and we had no rights. If you don't have rights, it means that you are a thing.

**I would like to wish students to do everything following their interests so that life is interesting.** Don't go somewhere because you need to go there for money or because it's prestigious. Listen to yourself, because if you are interested and people see it, sooner or later you will start earning good money. When you are interested in something, you will delve into it, study, and try to learn new facets, and you will not do it formally. And then everyone will see it and pay appropriate rewards for your knowledge, because they will be unique, and interesting, and you will be able to talk about them interestingly. And don't stop. Now it's a lifelong education. Everyone should study at any age. Last year I entered for a Ph.D., I'm about to retire, but I'm studying for a doctorate, and I'm very happy. My fellow students are young girls and boys, and it's interesting for me to communicate with them. I get a lot of pleasure from it! Don't stop, always study, but most importantly, do what you like, and sooner or later it will bring you income!

# DANA MINBAEVA, PROFESSOR OF HRM, KING'S COLLEGE OF LONDON, RESEARCH PARTNER AT NORDIC HUMAN CAPITAL ADVISORY, MBA 1996

## **I first heard announcement about the admissions to KIMEP**

in the autumn of 1993. I have just graduated from the Karaganda Polytechnic Institute with a Diploma of Mining Engineer. Unfortunately, at that time the mining industry began to shut down so there was no work. My diploma, despite all its qualities, did not help me to get a job. It was a rather difficult time. I did everything I could: I had night shifts, I washed the floors, cleaned the public bathrooms, started own business and even took accounting courses. I was just trying to survive. And so when I heard the announcement about KIMEP, I immediately understood that it was my second chance to get the education needed to get a job and somehow advance in life.

**But wanting to do it was not enough.** The first year cost \$300, and I didn't have any money or sponsors. To get in everyone needed to pass two tests in English, and I only knew ABC. So, I got myself an English textbook and cassette tapes of English lessons for my Walkman. And to get the \$300, I started speculating on the currency exchange market. At that time, the infrastructure of the financial market in Kazakhstan was very slow and inefficient. This meant that I could buy currencies (US dollars) in one city, travel to another city overnight, and sell them at a higher price in the morning. By doing that, we could precede the market for about 24 hours. However, sometimes we were unlucky or too slow, and the net income was only \$5 per trip. I spent so much time travelling by train, but then I had the time to study English. In February 1994, I got the money to finance the first year of the MBA, and in March I passed the two exams.

**Often, when I tell this story to the journalists** or at the career workshops, people often regard this as "very entrepreneurial". It was not about that. It was about survival and responsibility. I didn't have another chance. Everything depended on me. I had enormous support from my family but no one to really help. That was an opportunity, I know it wasn't perfectly legal, but I stopped when I earned 300\$.



**The most interesting thing about studying at KIMEP** was most likely the study itself. Everything was new. We had to study things like microeconomics and macroeconomics in a completely new way. There was a lot of pressure to perform, as we were part of the 'new elite', and you could really feel the pressure from all directions. So, I had to study hard. But I also had to save up another \$300 for the second year of tuition. Paying

for the second year was a little easier, as I speculated on markets instead of currencies. The demand for spirits and tobacco was huge. The retail market was offering good margins, and none of the large trading houses had their own distributors. So, it was an easy market to earn money on. I stopped my 'entrepreneurship' the day I paid for my second year at KIMEP, but I still feel ashamed about making money on spirits and tobacco.

**Among ourselves, we had such a diverse mix of strong personalities,** all of them with university degrees and majority with work experience. There were a lot of non-Almaty residents. There was a great mix of backgrounds - engineers, economists, social workers, etc. I think this degree of diversity really helped us a lot. Regardless who we were and where we came from, for all of us KIMEP was a new beginning and a unique opportunity to make a difference. And we did, we do and we will. We met in 2016 for the 20th graduation anniversary. It was great to see how much we collectively achieved. Some of my classmates are still working at KIMEP. One of our classmates is a Prime Minister of RK now. Few are leading large financial institutions. There are several CEOs and owners of large businesses. People took different paths, they went different directions, they got established in different countries and on different continents. We planned to meet for the 25th anniversary but had to cancel because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am already looking forward to our 30th anniversary in 2026.

**KIMEP helped me to choose my profession.** After graduating, I decided to join KIMEP as one of the first local faculty. And I have been enjoying my choice ever since.

**The most important things in my profession** are a willingness to learn new things, willingness to continuously expand your knowledge and challenge own assumptions. I think people who want to work in the academia should be attracted by these aspects rather than anything else. The greatest thing about my work is an opportunity to engage in truly impactful research. I believe that whatever you do at academia should start with research, research that is meaningful, that is impactful, that is rigorous and relevant for practitioners, particularly in my area. My teaching has always been embedded in my research. I bring my research to my classrooms and I get inspiration for future research from discussions with my students. And when I do this right, I see lightbulbs going off in the eyes of my students, I watch them lean forward in interest, and I witness the transformation of their minds.

**For those who are already in the academia**, and are in junior position, my advice would be to work on the research publications. In our profession publications are something that opens lots of doors, so publishing in the right journals, producing impactful research that gets published in the good journal, that is something that I would advise junior faculty to focus on. It is hard work (if it wasn't hard, everyone would do it). But it will pay off, believe me.

**KIMEP also opened the world for me.** My experience from living in different countries, especially the last 22 years in Denmark, have taught me a lot of things and helped me to define my values. Now I know that every member of a society has a responsibility to that society. I was born and raised in a country where culture, values, and languages were suppressed; history was rewritten; and science and education were pushed to their knees by those in power. I truly believe that as researchers and educators, it is our responsibility to protect and serve society, to help to solve its challenges, and to continuously transform our fields, and to do so despite external pressures of any kind.

**I always loved to work with practitioners.** When working in KIMEP, I organized the first KIMEP Guest Lecture series and established KIMEP Evening Program. I live by two other mottos in my work life: "there is nothing so practical as a good theory" and "there is nothing so theoretical as good practice". So, I take my responsibility for knowledge dissemination very seriously. I also have my own consultancy business – Nordic Human Capital Advisory Aps ([www.nhca.dk](http://www.nhca.dk)). We help organizations improve their evidence-based decisions within the areas of workforce planning, diversity & inclusion, leadership, engagement & well-being, talent attraction, development and retention,

performance management, employee recognition, rewards, HR automation and more. I hope one day we could also work with organizations in Kazakhstan, but HR analytics is still at its early stages in that region.

**Can I finish by a word of advice, particularly to my female colleagues?** In my professional life, I continually follow Eleanor Roosevelt's advice: "Do what you feel in your heart to be right—for you'll be criticized anyway. You'll be damned if you do and damned if you don't". Couple of years ago, I made a rookie mistake—I gave unsolicited feedback to an employee with whom I was working on a project but who was not reporting to me. I felt in my heart that it would be helpful for this person to know how we could improve our collaboration. However, she felt differently. As a result, I was called in by her superior (who was my indirect superior), who gave me some worrying feedback: "You are too pushy, too ambitious, and difficult." After receiving this feedback, I took a deep dive into leadership research and self-management books. I found one explanation, which I formulated as a question to my direct superior: "Would the feedback have been different if my name was Dan?" His answer was "I don't know." Yes, we heard this before: when a woman excels at her job, she is often categorized as "too pushy," "too aggressive," and "difficult." If a woman is confident, she does not seem nice enough. But if she is considered nice, she probably is not making enough difference. So, I took an even deeper dive into the literature and learned something that I have been tried to do everyday now: I learned that if I want to change things, I cannot please everyone, and that if I am pleasing everyone, I am not making enough progress. Remember that.

**I am often being asked: "If you turn back the time what would you do differently?"** I am also asked about regrets: "Do I have any regrets?". I don't have any regrets, probably I would do few things differently, but not regrets. However, if I would change just one thing after graduating from KIMEP, I think I would aim higher in everything I do. Don't settle for the average, aim higher, be ambitious. Ambition is not a bad word and being ambitious it is not a bad character. To me it's more about knowing what you want and doing everything you can to get there. I know it's more difficult. The higher you aim, the more difficult it becomes. Aiming higher gives you an opportunity to learn more and experience more. I guess I didn't aim higher at the beginning of my career because I wanted to play safe and feared failing, which is natural when you are young. It is only later in life I learned to concern myself not with what I tried and failed, but with what is still possible to do.

## GANI UZBEKOV, FOUNDER AND CEO AT S1LKPAY, MA 1997

**Our class of 1997 was, still is the best class in the history of KIMEP.** Well, speaking seriously – every class is unique in its own way and is a reflection of its time. We studied during 1995–1997 and I think we were the 4th class of KIMEP. The uniqueness of our class is that we were lucky to be at the crossroads of two periods, when the old system was fading off and the first shoots of market economy were slowly appearing. The knowledge gained at KIMEP really helped us after graduation. Studying at KIMEP was a breath of fresh air for us – the youngsters striving to gain knowledge and the best practices of the West.

**Most students at that time didn't have the opportunity to study abroad,** so KIMEP was the only one and, in fact, it became some kind of Harvard of Central Asia. Scholarships and financial aid from the university were the only salvation for some of us, including myself, and I am really grateful for this chance. I will never forget Dr. Yoon teaching Macroeconomics, or Dr. Williamson, who taught Accounting. I also remember Corporate Finance classes – at the final exam you could hear a fly flying – any movement, a turn of your head, and you were immediately kicked out of the class. There was also a young instructor Alper, using such a creative approach to teaching Macroeconomics that everyone understood everything easily and immediately.

**Student life was also very vibrant.** Just mentioning Fan Club is worth a lot. Students got selected to participate in international conferences – purely for knowledge. My own first trip abroad, to attend an international conference, took place precisely thanks to KIMEP and its faculty. Lots more to remember, indeed. The most important thing, of course, is people – my fellow students, professors, staff, the atmosphere of socializing with them. By the way, our class was the first one to publish the “KIMEP Times” newspaper – a kind of Facebook of our time.



**My first job was at “Arthur Andersen”** and I got it thanks to KIMEP. Lisa Gialdini – back then the head of the company, was lecturing at KIMEP and left application forms for those who wanted a job. Obviously, the competition was enormous, but I managed to go through all the stages of interviews and got a job offer two months before graduation – mostly due to the knowledge gained at KIMEP, as the interview questions were very subject-specific. Without this knowledge in accounting, taxation and law, I would hardly be able to get a job there. Actually, after graduation I had four job offers from Western companies, but I chose “Arthur Andersen”. Further on, at work, my experience gained at KIMEP and support of the professors certainly helped me to continue my education and get a full scholarship at the London School of Economics (scholarship of the school itself) and at Harvard University (J. Kennedy Scholarship).

**The most difficult thing in my career was to be independent** and to defend my point of view, especially during civil service.

**Are there any KIMEP graduates in my company?** Of course they were and they are. I was probably lucky, because I met only those graduates who have strong personalities, independent judgment and vast knowledge.

**About the statement that KIMEP provides education changing the society** – of course it does! KIMEP has been around for many years, producing lots of graduates that work all around the world. Mostly they are leaders in their spheres and keep driving the progress and innovations; they essentially are the influencers of the societies where they live and work at. I think the selection at KIMEP itself also explains this statement.

**I would like to wish everybody** a good health, a competitive spirit, a peaceful mind and the ability to cherish our values – all of it not only to students, but also to us, the alumni. Go forward, don't be afraid to change the world!

## MURAT KOSHENOV, DEPUTY CEO AT HALYK BANK, MBA 1998

**I remember my studies at KIMEP** as a sort of colourful kaleidoscope of different events, discussions with classmates in the library, hallways, and classrooms, cheerful parties in the Fun Club. Before KIMEP I graduated from the Physics Department of Kazakh National University; there were only 2 girls out of 27 students in the group – almost a complete male team. KIMEP had a completely different environment – various courses, group work and discussions, business games. There was a lot of theory and practice as well, and I have the most positive and vivid impressions of my student time at KIMEP.

**I used to think that our class was the funniest and noisiest**, but when I mentioned this to my son – also a KIMEP alumnus, he told me that every class probably thinks this way. During my studies KIMEP had only the master's programs, so each year there was only a current intake and a cohort of the previous year intake. There were many charismatic students in our class – whatever event we organized it always attracted students from other intakes. Moreover, our class was the first one to start online chat groups – initially it started by Yahoo, then moving to WhatsApp. Somehow our groups grew into business forums uniting 5–6 different cohorts. Our class was very active and we still keep in touch. We do not necessarily meet once a year or gather for some anniversaries, we can just write, "Hey guys, we haven't seen each other for a long time, let's meet this Friday", and everyone will get together.

**I think our class was very lucky with the faculty.** There were many very interesting, and brilliant professors. First, Lawrence Yun – a brilliant intellectual who taught Macroeconomics and Microeconomics, giving a very strong economic foundation. He is now a Chief Economist for a very influential US National Association of Realtors. Antonio Torralba was also a bright professor, teaching Corporate Finance. Not only did he actually give theoretical knowledge, but he also shared a very bright business simulation concept. He divided his classes into small groups; each group represented a company and went through 10–15 different business seasons with a certain budget, having to make decisions about investments, expansion, or reduction in sales. We had only some scarce information about some economic indicators based on which we made decision – changes in the exchange rate, a decrease in GDP, an increase or decrease in inflation. The real picture was revealed after we submitted our proposals. Often it was very different from our assumptions. There were situations



where people increased their profitability or were on the verge of bankruptcy; there were many emotions, it was very interesting and heated. The most interesting thing to do after these business simulations was to make presentations, which just turned into some kind of a carnival. Each group showed their imagination and creativity. My classmates and I still like to reminisce of what excellent and interesting course that was.

**I also remember Duncan Williamson** – my instructor in Financial Accounting. My personal experience with him was very interesting. There was the last exam, which I could not attend due to personal circumstances. I asked the professor beforehand to let me take it separately, so he gave me a very interesting assignment to complete. It was financial statements of 20 unnamed companies from different industries. I had to determine which statement belongs to the aviation industry, which to the hotel management sector or oil and gas production, and so on. No other hints. At first, I was shocked. How can I possibly identify these companies? Luckily, there was and still is a great library in KIMEP. I spent three days there trying to identify sources of information. Fortunately, I found a guide from Robert Morris Associates – a guide to all US companies from different industries. I checked the list and was more or less sure in 10 companies. For example, one balance sheet had very large indicators in leased assets. I realized that most likely these are airlines, because airlines lease their planes. Thus, I was certain in half of the answers and the second half I just completed by trial and error. I ended up getting a B. I was very happy. I remembered this assignment for the rest of my life. I realized that even without any knowledge in the very beginning you could come to solutions by searching for information. I am grateful to this professor for giving a chance to not fail the course and for giving me such an interesting assignment.



**I came to KIMEP after studying physics** with a very high academic workload. I had to read a lot before, so I had no issues with being ready to learn. I think back then we were lucky that there were not many distractions, such as Internet and gadgets. The only things that were distracting us from learning were either communication with others or different events. Discussion of assignments and preparation for classes were also part of our communication.

**Regarding the statement that KIMEP provides education that changes society** – yes, I believe so for several reasons. KIMEP sets a good foundation of knowledge in various areas: business, economics and management. It develops correct behavior patterns for young people; constant work on yourself; search for various information without only relying on information given by faculty. Another thing that distinguishes KIMEP from many other universities is the proper approach. During the first few classes students learn that any work should be done independently, one cannot rely on plagiarism, and all learning is built on the absence of corruption. Working in groups is a very important positive moment. Besides, I can see that KIMEP creates an active position among students. It provides great opportunities to participate in the university life, and this is not only participation in various student organizations, which in itself provides a great experience, but also the opportunity to join the Student Government. Thus, the voice of students is heard by the administration. These things very strongly and favorably distinguish KIMEP from other universities in our country.

**About leadership** – it is very important to be honest and open with your team; you should try to lead by example. If you require something from your team – follow these rules yourself. We live in a very dynamic time, many new technologies appear regularly. If you do not constantly improve your competencies, you can roll back. Being impartial is very difficult, it does not always work out, but you have to try. A leader also needs to try working with the existing team, and to develop some new directions to achieve tasks and goals together. It is probably a little more difficult than bringing your own team with you

wherever you go. If you join a new team you get some additional drive witnessing how people change, you can captivate them with your ideas and charge them; thus you will learn a lot from them too.

**About modern banks** – they are no longer those traditional, highly bureaucratic organizations that many still think to this day. Banks, especially in Kazakhstan, are at the forefront of the development of new technologies – a lot of different products and services go online. Banks go beyond traditional banking services, develop their own eco-systems and in many areas you may not even guess that a certain service actually belongs to a certain bank. Take kino.kz, selling movie tickets – since recently they have offered a service for selling tickets for various events, including the Jah Khalib concert. This application is part of the Halyk Group. There are many examples like that, so working in a bank now is not a boring monotonous job, but more of developing an ecosystem and digital products&services. The Halyk Group is present in different countries, and I know that many students from neighboring countries come to KIMEP. In Uzbekistan, our Tenge Bank is developing very rapidly. We give opportunities for young people to find something interesting for them not only in Kazakhstan, but also in neighboring countries.

**Seemingly, the present time is somewhat similar to my time at KIMEP.** In the mid-90s there were very big changes in the economy, the country was rebuilding itself, the economy was moving from the post-Soviet to the market style one. Young people who did not have tunnel thinking, who were flexible and knew English had great opportunities. I remember it was enough just to know English to get a good job, not even talking about the excellent knowledge that students gained at KIMEP. Each KIMEP graduate received at least 4–5 job offers; you could choose where you wanted to go and what you wanted to do. Current situation is similar to the 90s due to rapid changes in technologies – boundaries between different industries are blurred. The approach to working with clients is changing dramatically. Old competencies do not always work in new realities.

**Often young professionals are more creative** and do not have any pre-set working schemes and thinking. Add new technologies to the mix and you can build a very good career. There are so many great opportunities for learning right now, and I am talking not about standard learning, but extensive free access to many information resources such as Coursera, Udemy, YouTube. For example, one of my favorite lecturers Damodaran (those who studied Corporate Finance probably know him) has all of his courses from basic to advanced on YouTube. This is an incredible opportunity. The past generation of students could not dream of it. Therefore, I would recommend current students to invest more time in developing their competence, and upgrade new skills because there will always be new prospects in the market.

## YERZHAN DOSSYMBEKOV, MANAGING PARTNER AT GRANT THORNTON, MBA 1999



**I went to KIMEP to study** by the advice of some of my friends – we actually got admitted and studied together there.

**About my first job** – searching and hiring process was absolutely different back then than it is now. The Western system is more democratic and transparent. A special Business Communication that I took actually helped me a lot.

**The “trick” of KIMEP is that it is a well-established system of education** with all due processes, which does not change its mode of operations even if particular people change – faculty, staff, top-managers. As a result, the quality of education remains stable. No less important – KIMEP has preserved its unique indomitable inner spirit for all these years.

**I can state for sure – KIMEP really does provide education to change society.** This is vividly seen when you study there. KIMEP has transformed us, and we, in turn, have changed our business environment, the nature of relationships, and, finally, the society.



**About my classmates** – of course, we keep in touch. We run into each other during work and usually KIMEP graduates immediately recognize each other, even if they are not the same graduating class, and this makes interaction and cooperation easier and more fruitful.

**The candidates that we look for to hire** as auditors and consultants have to have the following qualities: a good basic knowledge of accounting, the ability to calculate and to learn quickly, initiative, communication skills, self-discipline and self-motivation.

**I would like to wish KIMEP,** first of all, to keep maintaining a high level of education quality (for example, timely updates of curricula, motivation of faculty members, professional development, etc.). Secondly, it would be great to allocate more scholarships to students showing excellent academic results, with no account to the social status, but purely academic merit-based – to motivate and reward the best ones. Third – I would keep the share of international faculty members at a fairly high level. This is necessary so that KIMEP does not turn into an ordinary (even the best) local university.



## GAUKHAR MASSANGALIYEVA, HEAD OF FINANCE TEAM, HOME CREDIT BANK KAZAKHSTAN, MA 2000

I came to KIMEP following my forward-minded classmates from Kazakh National University, who, after graduating from KIMEP began their successful career ascent. Back then my decision was a rather bold step: that year (1998), I was taking care of my newborn daughter and realized that I would have to work twice as hard as my classmates not burdened with a family. However, the understanding that studying at KIMEP would eventually give me and my baby a new bright future made my choice even more confident. The KIMEP building, the auditorium in which the entrance tests took place, the applicants themselves (with shining eyes) – all this fascinated me and gave a confidence in correctness of my step.

It seems that my classmates of 1998–2000, are the most bright representatives of various social strata, who have come from different parts of Kazakhstan with a firm intention to improve their lives and the life of a society as a whole. By the time we entered KIMEP, Kazakhstan began to show the first positive changes: many foreign investors actively building their business, the banking system of Kazakhstan rising on its feet, the demand for young, energetic, language-proficient and eager to apply the newly acquired knowledge to markets and finance just went amok.

I remember very well how after having successfully passed the exams we actively discussed the bright rises of former graduates of KIMEP and our own future perspectives. I remember our joint projects (for a former Soviet student that was certainly a very unusual and vivid experience). I remember exceptionally talented, “straight ‘A’” students with impeccable English and my silent stubbornness in storming the language in my desire to “catch up and overtake”. It seems that our class of 2000 was some kind of special wave of ambitious, confident, daring young people aimed at victory. It was actually confirmed by the further history of our Class-2000.

I remember well **Dr. Ramamonjisoa**, our professor of Accounting. We, the graduates, still remember his passion for the course itself as well as the discipline demanded by him through his own example: being late for 2 minutes to his class was like a death! The



image of Dana Minbaeva comes up very clearly in my memories – she was one of the first young professors to return back home with a good Western degree. Her competence and amazing charisma were very inspiring.

**My friends – the previous graduates of KIMEP**, helped me to get a job: my close friend helped to compose my first CV and attached her own recommendation letter to it. Since success of my KIMEP graduate friend was beyond any doubts the big company listened to her opinion and invited me for an interview. Of course, my KIMEP degree and ability to demonstrate the knowledge of Macroeconomics and Microeconomics in English at the interview played a great role.

**About leadership** – now, being the Head of Accounting Department in one of the leading banks of Kazakhstan with western shareholders, I can confidently state that I actually made it as a leader. Certainly, the sprouts of leadership developed on the grounds of my own inner nature during my studies at KIMEP. KIMEP’s atmosphere is pervaded with the spirit of leadership, of striving to goals, of great teamwork and of a healthy competition.

**About difficulties** – at the very beginning of my career it was really hard to analyze my mistakes. Only after a while I understood that awareness of the problem and its analysis is what makes you stronger and what gives an opportunity to move on with gained knowledge and experience.

**Luckily, now there are many graduates of KIMEP working in our bank.** Their main qualities are live interest in business and ability to work in teams. It seems that KIMEP hasn’t changed its traditions in this sense: graduates of this university go into the world with healthy curiosity, ready to work together on the path to their joint success.



## ARMAN ZHOLDASBEKOV, GENERAL DIRECTOR AND OWNER OF PLAST INVEST, MBA 2001

**I chose KIMEP because at that time it was the best university** in the country for the master's level education. I think it probably is still the best. Shortly before our class entered KIMEP, Dr. Bang returned to the university after a long absence and took major efforts in terms of the quality of education. I remember how the faculty was extremely responsible in assessing the students performance. I especially remember Dr. Elia Ramomonjisoa for his charisma. Almost all the knowledge acquired was subsequently useful in business – whether it is Marketing, Logistics or Corporate Finance, and of course, Business English.

**Among many skills that I gained at KIMEP** I can point out the teamwork, tasks setting and compliance with deadlines; and, of course, life-long learning – after all, certain knowledge, as you know, becomes obsolete over time, you need to be in trend.

**My student time was engrossed in studies** – there were not so many extracurricular activities back then. I remember some sports competitions – football for example, definitely strengthening the sense of friendship among the team members.

**Our Company – “Plast Invest Production” was founded in 2004** on the grounds of another business that I was engaged in before joining KIMEP. Initially, it was a trading company – a dealer for a polyethylene pipe factory. After 4 years of gaining some experience, we opened our own production, starting with one production line.



**About competition from the Chinese side** and production of polyethylene pipes in Kazakhstan – in fact, at the time when we founded our company, there was not much competition, as a result the company grew fairly rapidly. China uses a different kind of water pipes, also the protective duties on final products play in favor of the domestic market. The main difficulties of doing such a business Kazakhstan are the worn-out energy sector, the lack of technical personnel, difficult tax administration and the absence of material and technical basis.

**As for considering myself a leader – yes, I prefer to think so.** My experience tells me that a person has to be born with leadership talent; it is not possible to educate someone to be a leader. The rules of successful leadership have a certain system, a set of rules, responsibility for subordinates and for the decisions made, as well as creativity. I believe KIMEP is successful in teaching all these skills.



# NAZGUL ALMASSAYEVA, HEAD OF DEPARTMENT FOR PROBLEM BANKS, KAZAKHSTAN DEPOSIT INSURANCE FUND, MBA 2002

**Back in 1998 KIMEP was the only university that offered education compliant with international standards** – that was the reason why I chose it. I studied one year on MA program and transferred to MBA for my second year. All these years were very positive despite sleepless nights of preparing for the finals. One professor of Accounting had quite a difficult name to pronounce – Dr. Elia Ramamonjisoa. We used to joke that whoever pronounces his name on the move without error should have an immediate Pass for his course. In general, faculty members of the university left only good memories.

**Most of all I'm proud** that despite very good and promising job at the National Bank of Kazakhstan, I instead entered KIMEP without any further regret. I also received full HESP scholarship to pay my tuition at KIMEP. Actually, the most important skill that KIMEP taught me was teamwork. Now, at my job my favorite thing is the opportunity to help people solve their financial problems to the best extent I can.

**I think it is not possible to give just one universal advice for all current students.** The main thing is to love what you do, or at least to do it with pleasure and to always be a self-educating person.

**Regarding the statement that KIMEP provides education to change society** – if we compare our Alma Mater with other universities of Kazakhstan, then the answer is probably yes. Contrary to my previous university, from which I graduated in 1991, KIMEP offered



the opportunity to compose my own schedule and to choose the instructor; there were lots of projects with the result depending on successful teamwork. That is the major point – studying at KIMEP also teaches a student to make a choice and to respect the choice of others, which further positively affects his or her life and our society as a whole.



## OLZHAS KHUDAIBERGENOV, SENIOR PARTNER AT THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES LLP, MA 2003

**I entered KIMEP in 2001** – at that time it was the only university in our country providing education in English by the Western standards. I don't know about the studies at the undergraduate level, but when I studied for my Master's degree, our program united the best candidates from all over the country. There were about 60 people in our cohort. A cohort in a usual university consists of about 30 students with one or two of them as distinctive leaders; in our case almost all 60 of us were leaders. Everyone had a well-established personality with own holistic worldview, initiative and determination. At that time only 50–60 people a year were sent to study under "Bolashak" program; KIMEP allocated a large number of scholarships on its own, so the best minds tried to enter KIMEP. The key feature of graduate programs students was their incredible energy drive – everyone tried to be usefully busy, to set goals and achieve them, to do something on an ongoing basis.

**Our cohort seemed to be kind of an experimental one**, although it was never declared so. In various economics courses we had to read more complex versions of textbooks. For example, in Macroeconomics II we took Mankiw's textbook instead of Romer's. It was a very complex book, with every chapter containing 30 to 70 formulas, each consisting of 12 to 15 variables. Most of all in my work Macroeconomics and, of course, English proficiency were useful, also KIMEP taught me the best course of financial analysis in Excel.

**Regarding the statement that KIMEP delivers education to change society** – yes, KIMEP has influenced me the most by making me more self-disciplined. The study load was such that if you miss 2–3 days of classes, it was quite hard to catch up – you had to do everything on time. This turned to be a crucial skill in my career. In addition to my main activity, I also serve as a consulting expert for various governmental and non-governmental organizations, task forces, expert groups. I try to cope with it all – that is where my time management and multitasking skills learned at KIMEP become relevant. I have to confess – it is not possible to perfectly balance everything, and surely, you have to sacrifice your sleep or the time you spend with your family. Or at some point you have to give up the additional workload, because the existing one is enough. Yet, as of now I am coping – thanks to KIMEP training.



**About leadership** – a leader must be a source of trust and fairness in the company. The rest is a matter of technique. It is not so relevant to the topic of leadership, but as a person setting an example to somebody, I'm most proud of the fact that I never gave or took bribes. I want to live the rest of my life the same way and wish others to follow it.

**My advice to current applicants, when they choose a university and a major** is to pay your main attention to teaching standards and faculty members of a particular university or program.

**In regards of areas of the economy that will be actively developing in Kazakhstan** in the forthcoming years – I think all areas will develop, but especially IT and agriculture spheres are going to be the leading ones demanding the best professionals.



## EMILIA RO, FOUNDER OF NRC CONSULTING, BSS 2004

**I was looking for an education in accordance with international standards** that will help me to grow knowledge, critical thinking and academic excellence. KIMEP was the top of mind choice according to all criteria.

**My peers are the generation that still witnessed “Soviet style” high school education,** but was left in a changing and challenging world, where knowledge and standards have transformed and environment was more demanding. I truly believe that my KIMEP peers got the best out of both educational systems to be successful in a world of change.

**Y2K was coming over us** and we were well equipped for hard work, dedicated academic effort and achievements in all areas of our student life. The main difference of my KIMEP peers was that we were versatile and very flexible, very ambitious and we never gave up on quality. We were ready to work hard and play hard. Almost all of my KIMEP friends were very active, studying and working in different projects (both social and commercial), were involved in various activities and made meaningful connections along the way.

**First of all, KIMEP showed me how to study and work hard to achieve my goals.** During my studies I understood that everything has its structure and approach, I learned to do things in a strategic way and then break it down to tactics. Academic knowledge is available from many sources, but the approach to



education and hard work that KIMEP gave me was one of a kind. Thanks to my skills I could always be a bit more fast, a bit more structured, a bit more dedicated than other peers and alumni of other universities. Critical thinking and research skills helped along my career as well.

**I fully agree with the statement that KIMEP provides education that changes society.** And it has a long and successful proof to it. Kazakhstan, being young and ambitious state, had highly demand for professionals and achievers to build the fundamentals of an independent state. And the only key was the right education. KIMEP have settled the academic standards and fundamentals of human capital for our country and was a “factory of stars” for political, economic and social areas. KIMEP is a strong brand, which grew its power through years of independence, associated with quality, high academic and intellectual achievements and best alumni. Education should change society for the better and in the end it is the main purpose of it.



**I started my entrepreneur way in KIMEP** when me and my friends organized a small interpreting agency. It was fun and a very amusing experience. Now I'm the owner and founder of NRC Consulting, the company that provides marketing and business consulting for business in different segments.

**My way as an Independent marketing consultant has started organically.** People were contacting me by the recommendation and reference. Gradually I felt that my career direction had enough grounds to live and develop by itself. I didn't have any difficulties in setting up my consultant career, but it's only due to my extensive experience in international and local companies. Before going to consulting one has to have sufficient experience, portfolio, knowledge, skills and know the standards. Otherwise, it doesn't work.

**I was always a bit nerdy about medicine and biology.** I was dreaming about medical career. Actually I wanted to be neurosurgeon. But life brought me to KIMEP and I never regret it. However, I'm the kind of person that doesn't let go on dreams and desires. That's why I've studied and graduated from the biggest and respected

Institute of Integrative Nutrition, New York with an Integrative Nutrition Health coach diploma in 2021. I've studied medicine throughout pandemic times from 2020. In 2021 I've become a student of Medical college and now I continue my study. There is no much secret to combining everything. It's the time discipline and support of the family.

**I am and will be active in marketing&business consulting** and develop business of my clients further. My dream is to see Kazakhstani brands and business all set up for in-market excellence. I also started my health coaching practice and I'm happy to lead my clients to their better health and performance. I will continue spreading the knowledge of integrative health and holistic approach to well-being in Kazakhstan society.

**Be consistent in what you do and train your grit.** Life is not a sprint. It's more of the long marathon. You have to know your strength and plan it till the end of the distance. Try different type of projects. Volunteer and participate in different type of business. Build strong network and meaningful connections. Work is not always about the money. It's more about experience, skills and network that you get in the end.



# DULATBEK IKBAYEV, PARTNER, MCKINSEY & COMPANY, BSC 2005

**I entered KIMEP in 2001, that year was the third intake of bachelors to KIMEP.** I remember the recruitment team came to Petropavl and they told about the University, and for me the main trigger was that it was fully Western Style Education system, in English, with many teachers from abroad. For me it was an opportunity to obtain high quality education, while staying in Kazakhstan, and, in particular, in Almaty. I liked this idea, and that is why I chose KIMEP.

**I am keeping in touch with many classmates and peers.** We really have built up network and community, and we still stay close. At that time KIMEP was number one university, and many alumni achieved various results. We have this sense of community and after nearly 20 years we are still keeping in touch. I think many peers from my stream have strong leadership skills. Many classmates are leaders in various areas, different people tried different fields, even during the university years, and we see them now in the leading positions in many companies, running their own businesses, so our group of peers, they were leaders by nature and were results oriented. Now there are many other universities like Nazarbayev, KBTU, in our times KIMEP was number one, and attracted best people, best talents and people were very good in studies, in spending quality time together and participating in extracurricular activities.

**I am proud of making a lot of true friends.** Most of my good friends are from KIMEP. KIMEP made me professional, but apart from that I had the opportunity to participate in many extracurricular activities, which I liked. I was a president of student government, we initiated opening a debate club, the University gave us opportunity to do something, to lead some projects, to develop our personal, leadership and communication skills. It gave us a lot of opportunity to try something outside of academic activity. So I am proud that we initiated debate club together with my friend Baurzhan Jazykbayev, that while being a president of student government we made some changes to the students' life, and we even organized a Commencement party for fresh students. I am also proud that we really obtained good knowledge that allowed us to go further professionally, go to the good companies and grow within them professionally.



**I liked Business Quantitative Analysis,** because I like Maths, and we had a good teacher Dr. Vassiliy Voinov. I liked History of Kazakhstan, our teacher Mr. Abylkhochin was the source of fun, all his classes were so much fun, you are not only gaining a knowledge, but you are also having a great time. I liked this atmosphere during his classes. I also liked Finance, the Corporate Finance, Introduction to Finance, all courses about Finance.

**If you want to build a career in consulting,** firstly, of course you must study well. You should also concentrate on what you really like and try to go deeper into that field. Secondly, I would advise not to only do the studying, but also do a lot of extracurricular activities. Because what we look for in our candidates is not only good grades, but his leadership profile. What he has

done not only during his studies, but outside of his studies. I would advise to do some social related project, some student project, something pro bono or whatever. Trying something new, trying and taking the leadership role, being one team, working together as a team with different people, that would help a lot. Thirdly, I would advise to not only concentrate on the core subjects themselves but understand what else is interesting for you and take an extra classes and courses, developing yourself in that field.

**I see a lot of leaders among KIMEP graduates.** Another distinctive characteristic of KIMEP alumni is that they are result-oriented. I see that many alumni set ambitious goals and deliver the results. The level of integrity is also higher among KIMEP graduates. During our studies, cheating was not allowed, you really received the grade you deserved. I think that KIMEPIans are much closer to each other: the level of collaboration, building the relationship with each other, friendship with each other is also higher compared to other universities. This I see in different streams of graduates, alumni from previous years, and years after are really bond with each other.

**My career experience has also taught me that leading is not about yourself** but is about your team. So the good leader is someone who really builds team, establishes good relationships within the team and lead them to achieve some goal. A leader must be ambitious, the goal of a leader is to set high aspirations, high targets, and great ambitions. And motivate and energize the team to achieve those. Leadership is not about doing everything yourself, it is understanding what is the goal, setting the bar high, building the great team, building connection, right atmosphere, where everyone performs their best. Another important moment is right distribution of tasks and right motivation for each member of a team. People are different and people are motivated by different factors, you cannot force someone to do things he does not like. So you need to find the right balance between the facts that work should be interesting, the motivation system should be there. Leader should take the responsibility for failures, for any decisions, he should back up his team all the time. Whatever is done a leader is ultimate responsible person be it success, or be it a failure.

**I agree that KIMEP provides education that changes society.** And I hope that it is still valid. First of all, KIMEP is about integrity and transparency and building trust, which is quite essential in our community, in our society. Secondly, the University is not mainly for profit, just one fact that during these 30 years that KIMEP exists 14000

graduates have graduated from KIMEP, and I already see these graduates holding different positions as leaders, be it in business, public service or everywhere. So I would say that KIMEP has changed our society a lot, these people are leaders of change in their spheres everywhere differently. Thanks to KIMEP, they obtained their foundation there and they built up on that core. I also think that the other thing that was changing our society is the quality of education. We really received good quality education, and all international companies, local companies hire from KIMEP, so many years have passed and the bar is still there. This shows that KIMEP changes society, you see the results.



**I wish the University to prosper.** I wish everyone to stay positive. Everything will be good! Never be distracted with any kind of difficulties or failures. Support our University. We are opening up this KIMEP Alumni Endowment Fund. I wish everyone would participate there and support the future generation of students, especially those in need, and to give back to the University and the society as a whole.

# KURALAY MUKHAMEJANOVA, INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ADVISOR, BUSINESS COACH, MBA 2006

**When I applied to KIMEP, I already had a bachelor's degree in Mathematics.** I graduated from the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics of Kazakh National University (KazNU). I got married while studying at the university, gave birth after graduation, and while I was at home with a child, I realized that in order to find a good job with a high salary I would need to speak a foreign language and have deeper knowledge. I wanted to get a master's degree somewhere abroad, but I couldn't because at that time my son was only 2 years old. My cousin graduated from KIMEP 5 years before me and my classmates from KazNU at that time already were graduating from KIMEP. I had examples of people around me who had good job offers. Therefore, in order to achieve this too and to fulfill my dream of getting an MBA degree I chose KIMEP. I consider KIMEP as the best university in the Kazakhstani education market.

**I was the best graduate with the highest GPA, and the employers themselves hunted me when I was still studying at KIMEP.** I didn't work while I was studying, because I had a small child, and if I would combine studying with work, I wouldn't see him at all, as I spent so much time at the institute. When I was still studying, foreign companies like the Big4, Philip Morris and Mars hunted me. But at that period of time, I turned down all offers because I didn't want to sacrifice the relationships with my son.

**I really enjoyed studying at KIMEP.** It was like a breath of fresh air. I was a student two years before entering KIMEP, and then I was on maternity leave, therefore, it was like immersing into the student life and feeling careless again. There was a very interesting student life at KIMEP. The library was one of my favorite places, namely the master's library, it was separate from the bachelor's one. I don't remember that I spent so much time at the library of KazNU, like I did in KIMEP. I spent a lot of time there with my classmates. I was there every day for several hours, between classes if there was a free time, or after them. Preparation for exams, midterms, and finals - all this took place in the library. The students were all very friendly, we still keep in touch with many of them. We spent a lot of time together, helped each other with our studies, communicated outside the institute. I liked this student atmosphere. I also loved our canteen, we often dined together, it was a great time. I really liked



many teachers. I sincerely admired them and studied with pleasure. Dr. Vassiliy Voinov, Dr. Sang Hoon Lee and Dr. Mujibul Haque were my favorite teachers.

**After graduation, I had invitations for interviews** but I decided to take a break due to some personal issues. When I solved them, I called KIMEP Career Center and said that I was ready to consider offers. The first employer called me the same day, the next day I went to an interview and they immediately made me an offer to start working on Monday. Other employers began calling me on my first working day. I worked there for three months, and then I switched to Big4. I initially wanted to work in Big4. The only thing that stopped me was work-life balance, my son was still small then, and business trips and non-stop work scared me. But I realized that I needed good experience, and therefore, after 3 months of work with the first employer, I accepted an offer from PWC and joined Advisory Department, Transaction Services.

**The biggest mistake people make is not saving.** Many people have this prejudice that you can save or invest money only if you have a large income. In fact, if you approach personal finance management consciously, then you realize that you are able to save at least 10% of your current income. As, in theory, the difference between 90% and 100% is not significant. If you spend 90 thousand instead of 100 thousand, you will not feel the difference in the standard of living. On the other hand, you will set aside 10%, in fact, you will pay yourself. That's why the biggest mistake is the belief that I don't have money to save or invest. If people do not save at least 10% of their small income, they will not be able to save when their income grows. Because people's psychology functions in such a way that often our needs grow faster than our income. And the more the income, the less money is enough for one's life. That is why it is important to control expenses and to save at least 10% of income. Therefore, the biggest mistake people make is not controlling their expenses, not saving money and thinking that it is possible only with large incomes. Another mistake is that many people want to immediately get something even if they cannot afford it. They take loans or installment plans, they deceive themselves, they take it, and take it, and take it, and in the end, it leads to a very large amount of a monthly payment which is incomparable with their income. I recommend taking control of your expenses and save at least 10% of income.

**There are many people around me who do not have financial education** or work experience, but who have learned to save money. During my 1.5-hour consultations I provide my clients with personal financial plans and recommendations of suitable financial products to achieve their financial goals. Of course, it will take time to become literate in investments. I devoted 2 years to studying finance at KIMEP. And I think that even with an MBA in Finance from KIMEP, without investing experience, it is difficult to go straight into the financial market and be successful. KIMEP gives such a great inner understanding of financial laws, principles, how the financial market works and so on. Of course, one needs an experience in this field. Most of my clients do not have financial background and, therefore, prefer long-term investment products that have capital protection guarantee. For instance, a long-term investment plan to S&P 500 ETF with principal protection is one of the best international saving plans. Some of my clients start investing not fully realizing what it is, but then over time they begin to understand it, and after a few months a good understanding comes. I also meet people who started trading without any experience and did it like in a casino. Unfortunately, they lost a part of their capital.



Therefore, a person needs to obtain some knowledge before starting trading on a stock market or to consult with financial advisor. I would recommend to go deep into technical and fundamental analyses. I personally don't really support trading strategies. I prefer long-term investments.

**Investments in the real estate in CIS countries are very common**, because in Soviet times, it was important to have your own apartment. If we look at the US, people prefer to rent an apartment and don't worry about that at all. But we still have it, in our common subconscious, that everyone should have their own apartment. If it is an apartment in which a person wants to live, I am not against it. I have an apartment, it gives me some feeling of comfort, peace, etc. But when a person buys 3rd or 10th apartment in order to invest money, I think that a small mistake occurs. If we calculate how much money a person invests in the apartment, and these are usually large sums of money, and if we calculate the dollar value of a real estate over time, we realize that it is not profitable. If we look at such perspective as 10 years, a person today invests a large amount of money to purchase a flat. There is a possibility that in 10 years this apartment will cost more in tenge. But if we convert everything into dollars, the result will be different. Real estate in a long run in our country is not profitable since

every 5-7 years our currency devalues. And the value of real estate decreases in dollars. It will be more profitable if people put this amount even on a bank deposit, they will at least save the dollar value. But if they invest this sum in a proper way, it can result better. For instance, Warren Buffett recommends to invest in S&P 500 ETF in a long run as S&P 500 has grown so much over the past 15 years.

**Many people are now investing in cryptocurrencies,** they believe that cryptocurrencies will rise in price, but this is very risky. Therefore, if we consider personal investment portfolio management one can invest in such risky assets no more than 10-15% of capital depending on a risk attitude of a person.

**There are many different books on financial management.** If we are talking about people who have not faced personal finance management at all, then I would recommend books which are easy for reading, like "The richest man in Babylon" by G. S. Clason. This book helps to understand how to generally approach financial management and explains why it is necessary to save at least 10% from any income and to control expenses. You can also read V. Savenok's "A million for my daughter", R. Kiyosaki's "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" and "Cashflow Quadrant", B. Schafer's "The Road to Financial Freedom" and N. Hill's "Think and Grow Rich". These are books for self-development, to obtain some kind of awareness of finance, but this is not professional knowledge. If a person wants to trade and have deeper knowledge I would recommend reading "Technical Analysis" by J. Schwager. If you consider long-term investments, then you need to analyze them fundamentally.

**Regarding the absolute collapse of the stock market,** I can say that there were many crises such as a great depression or the crisis of 2008. Over the past century, the United States has experienced crises about once every 25 to 30 years. However, the most recent history shows financial crises arising a bit more often. The US, for example, suffered a major stock market meltdown in 1987, then the dot-com bubble in the early 2000s, and then the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. There are recessions in the market, it is true, but if we look at the history, the phases of growth in the market are much longer than the phases of decline. Therefore, crises occur, but the possibility of a complete collapse is unlikely. Wealthy investors buy cheap stocks when the market is down. Therefore, now it is just the right time to invest, but still, you need to analyze before investing. If you do it using long-term investment plans with principal protection, the risks and prices will be averaged out, because sometimes you buy cheaper, sometimes more expensive, and at the



end you will come to good financial results. In investing, it is not the smart one who wins, but the patient one. You need to try not to make emotional decisions.

**The younger a person is, the more capital they will get.** The more time that an investment has to compound, the greater the potential return will be. This explains why compound interest is a pertinent concept for young investors. The sooner an investor begins saving, the more returns they'll have by the time of retirement. For example, if a person saves \$100 a month during 40 years starting at the age of 20, they will invest overall \$48,000. If they invest at 8-10% per annum they will be able to come to a capital of a half a million dollars. The sooner students start saving money by choosing the right saving plans, the better results will be. If necessary, I can help you to reach your financial goals. Many young people in the US plan their early retirement. They invest for a long period of time and by the age of 45-50 they start getting a passive income from their savings. They can do anything they like and enjoy their financial freedom. Time helps in investments, so I recommend that everyone start controlling their expenses as earlier as possible and save 10-30% of any income. You need to agree with yourself in advance that you save at least 10% of your income on an ongoing basis. First you need to save, and then to spend, not vice versa. If there is not enough money, look for additional sources of income. Another recommendation for students is to invest in self-development, read books and enjoy your life. A successful person is one who makes everything in time, and who is happy. Time is precious. Happiness does not depend on anything. Therefore, if we are happy and grateful for what we have, and try to respect our time, invest in a timely manner, and do at least what we want to do during a day, then there will definitely be a success.

# ALI KOICHUMANOV, ENTREPRENEUR, FOUNDER OF APEC TRAINING CENTER, BSC 2005, MBA 2007

**I got my both undergraduate and graduate degrees from KIMEP.** I was fresh out of the Archimedes mathematical school in Almaty, and went to the Mechanics and Mathematics Department of the Kazakh National University. There, to be honest, I had enough of math for the rest of my life. KIMEP at that time was something extremely special – rather a dream, not a choice. Mentioning MIT or Harvard now is less awe-inspiring than mentioning KIMEP in the 90s. The country was different. My parents had a salary of \$150 a month and an apartment in Almaty could be bought for \$ 5000. I heard from relatives and friends that KIMEP graduates had a salary of \$ 1000 a month – it was impressive, even magical.

**I didn't even tell my parents I applied to KIMEP** – my parents were born and raised Soviet people, for them it mattered that I entered KazNU, received a scholarship, they wanted me to get my degree there. I started studying at KazNU and, after the first month I saw an announcement of the first undergraduate intake to KIMEP. When my parents found out that I got enrolled to KIMEP, they were mad at first, although it is something to be proud of – the competition was enormous, about 2000 applicants for 300 places. That undergraduate cohort was a very first one and a very bright one – the smartest applicants from all over the country. For me it was more of a gamble, I did not believe it would work out at all. I am from an ordinary family, my mother is a teacher, my father is an engineer, I was born in Karaganda region, we moved to Almaty in the mid-90s, KIMEP seemed unreachable. Maybe back then it was just my perception of an extremely impressed provincial guy. Well, when I got enrolled my parents scolded me, but then forgave me because I had a very high entrance exam score – I think made it in the top 20.

**I found myself amongst other fellow students,** who came from all over the country – the youngest, talented and ambitious ones. Now there is a lot of competition, foreign universities come to the country, universities from China and Russia, for example, give scholarships – so



many talented school graduates go abroad. There was no such opportunity then, KIMEP was the only one, the intake was highly selective. Over time, I observe that the vast majority of KIMEP graduates have become successful. Maybe KIMEP does not always make students smarter, but it teaches them to be successful, which is slightly different. Example: I studied at the mathematical school and at the department of Mechanics and Mathematics of Kazakh National University – there were not less intellectually gifted guys, yet in terms of being successful any KIMEP student would give them a head start. There are hard skills that can be learned at any university, but there are also soft skills taught specifically at KIMEP: speaking in public, presentation, practical application of theoretical knowledge.

**I mostly remember the professors who taught me at my MBA level** – it was not so long ago. From my undergraduate studies I remember Ottavio Angotti, the professor of Accounting – with a lot of real business experience, he was kind and strict in his own way – I now understand that he treated us like his own children and these are fond memories. I still follow his advice not to play lotteries and not to go to the casino. I also fondly remember Dana Stevens, Mujibul Haque, and especially Sang Hoon Lee – a professor from South Korea. He was one of the iconic presenters, a celebrity of finance sphere with a vast practical experience, going far beyond theoretical knowledge – an extremely valuable factor. Indeed, a practical experience is more important than going through some theory, especially now, when any information can be found in a couple of clicks. I also remember Yelzhas Aubakirov and Serzhan Nurgozhin, for their energy and dedication. Being young professionals themselves, they shared all their knowledge with us, the youngsters.

**MBA students mostly already are professionals** making plans to further advance their career or business. MBA helped me in terms of networking, I met many graduates, with whom I continue to keep in touch today. In business, you often work with people you know and trust – actually the people you went to school or to parties with. It also helps to know that these people are competent in their fields. You know, it is a problem for Kazakhstan – the lack of more or less comprehensible and stable standards in education – you can't be sure about what is the real knowledge of a graduate with a degree in economics. As an employer, I see a shortage of competent personnel. In Almaty and Astana, the situation is better, but in other regions of the country it appears to be sad. Yet, if I received a CV from a KIMEP graduate, I know that a person at least knows English, and for sure has some basic set of skills, which is hard to say about other universities.

**During my studies the hardest thing was (and still is) to make a difficult decision on time**, to get out of the comfort zone. Also, when I was a student, courses like Strategic Management or Organizational Behavior seemed vague for me. At the very beginning of your career, you use your technical skills – IT, finance, accounting, etc. With years of experience the in-depth understanding comes, technicalities fade into the background – you can always find the professionals, more competent in a specific sphere. Your task becomes to formulate a vision, to find the right people, to get them all together. There is such a misconception that an entrepreneur is a hot-shot in a cool expensive car. In fact a successful entrepreneur is, first of all, a hard-worker. My own example: if there is a holiday, 99% of my employees are off work, any employee can take a vacation, or just quit the job – I don't have this choice, I can't quit. When you are 20, free as a bird, with no major obligations, making a decision is completely different than having to consider the interests of your family or of a large team of employees and partners. For instance, in Atyrau we have 3 000 employees, with their families, it adds up to more than 10 000 people, which brings in an aspect of social responsibility. And yes – we didn't create Google, still, we create comfortable working conditions, we try to invest into development of employees, although we do not receive state subsidies.

**About our company – Some 6–7 years have passed since the founding of APEC Training Center**, and today the Kazakhstani technical professionals can obtain internationally certified trainings without going abroad. These certifications come from the largest international centers for welding, installation, electrical works, drilling, works with oil equipment, work at height, occupational

safety and many others. In the professional field, such brands as NCCER, ECITB, IWCF, IPAF, CSWIP, NACE, IRATA, City & Guilds, IOSH and NEBOSH are internationally recognized, and as a result, professionals with such certificates are in demand in Kazakhstan and abroad. APEC Training Center has built campuses in industrial regions of Kazakhstan, such as Atyrau, Tengiz, Aktau, Aksai. For trainings and assessments by the international standards, we bring in the instructors from the US and the UK, we also undergo regular audits for quality compliance, and invest into infrastructure and equipment.

**The second major area of our business is the FSSA (Full Scope Service Agency) project.** Here we focus on the supply of human resources for large projects in Kazakhstan. Often the large projects are implemented in the remote regions of our country. Our task is to mobilize the qualified personnel from all over the country, to train and retrain the people to create the most comfortable conditions for logistics and accommodation at the place of work.

**With experience came an understanding what really is worth developing and investing into.** Our educational project is not just a business for me. Education has always been not the most profitable area with a slow payback. Still, for me it is a mission, the reason to stay in Atyrau, although I had lived and worked in various countries of Western Europe, America and Africa. When I returned to Kazakhstan, I discovered that our country is still more similar to Africa than to Europe or America. I started to ask myself – why is it so? I found out that it starts with the basic pillars lacking: education or interpersonal culture. I know it is impossible to change the whole world at once, but one can create own little world build with love care and common sense, and if there are many such little worlds, their synergy will change the prevailing situation.

**In our education projects we focus** not only on hard skills, we also try to expand the angles of peoples' worldview. We work on many large oil projects – Kashagan, Tengiz, Karachaganak; the owners of these companies are very wealthy investors ready to pay big salaries, and a simple welder at our project may earn 2–3 million tenge a month. An industrial climber with an international certificate at our projects may get \$ 15 000 per month, and this profession can be learned in a year and a half. This is more than what a graduate of some MBA program in Kazakhstan earns. The welder's work is not glamorous, and, of course, such salary requires a welder to be very competent, and internationally certified. Yet there are not too many kazakhstani professionals like that. In general, our vocational and technical education is in a neglected state. In the higher

education we have KIMEP, Nazarbayev University, KBTU; in the sphere of secondary education – Kazakh-Turkish Lyceums, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, Haileybury. Still no one cares about vocational and technical education. In the meantime, if you look at European countries, the ones earning master’s degrees represent a very small percentage, doctorate degree holders – even less, and the majority of working population are restaurant managers, carpenters, builders, etc. – representatives of simple, yet very necessary professions. Regretfully, our country doesn’t really care about these simple professions at all. The problem is that on one hand we have a shortage of professionals in any field, and on the other hand, we have thousands of unemployed people. This is the formula of countries with a lame system of education. My goal is to introduce such an education, with a focus on a global market.

**KIMEP University has a very bright setup in this sense – the Career Center.** Any university can make boastful statements, but if your graduates stay unemployed it means you are doing something wrong. When I was an undergraduate student at KIMEP, me and some other guys used to go to the Career Center and to ask for an opportunity of a part-time job as translators or assistants, and by our senior years, even before graduating, many of us already had job offers. This is the way it should work. Also, the Career Center organized various events, such as job fairs. In fact, our company tries to implement similar mechanisms. For example, one of the areas of our efforts jointly with large companies is cooperating with the state-owned vocational schools. There are about 800 such schools in the country, often they lack any vision, experience and knowledge of how to transform a Soviet-format school to a modern educational facility. We, in turn, have this vision. Before, such trainings could be only obtained abroad – in Houston, Aberdeen or Dubai; we try to bring these types of trainings to Kazakhstan, with a focus on vocational and technical schools, but we also have an additional education program for university graduates. For example, we cooperate with PetroSkills – one of the world leaders in additional education in oil and gas industry. Once founded by Shell and PBP, this is an advanced training course, lasting 2 to 6 months, by the MBA program scheme, without interruption from work – a student will get a profile easily understandable by businesses. What I mean is, if you get an LL.M degree, everyone at the global market understands what it means. But there are some credentials in post-Soviet education, being incomprehensible to the wider world. We try to bring the local credentials to global standards. Our mission is the human capital development in the technical sphere.

**This is a private initiative – we do not place any advertisements** for the far and wide society; we have specific clients, basically everyone in need knows us. As for the state support – we went to one Minister of Education 7–8 years ago and offered to take stagnating educational institutions into entrusted management, the minister supported this, but this minister resigned a year later; another year later, the new minister resigned. Finally, we decided to build our own educational facilities, with all necessary infrastructure, including gyms, dormitories – this requires enormous resources. To gain wide popularity among the public one needs to put in efforts and investments. Recently, we started to expand our presence in the ore mining industry. Our clients and employees are simple people – welders, fitters, electricians. Yet they actually represent 60–70% of the total population. Our project is 7 years old, and during this time we have come a long way.

**About leadership – there is no magic formula here.** Patience and hard work, striving forward. Do everything you can do today. Don’t forget about family. When you have a reliable rear in the form of a family, this helps, and children give meaning to everything you do. When you are alone, you don’t really need much, and having to raise children is a great motivation source, that further scales up to become a benefit for the society at large.

**As for KIMEP – surely, it has already largely influenced the society.** I personally know Dr. Chan Young Bang and his family and admire him. I remember the old KIMEP campus, previously the Soviet higher party school. A Korean-born American professor came to transform it into a modern university – and actually did it. The first cohorts were small, but in the historical perspective, KIMEP had a strong impact on the whole country, having radically changed certain areas. Importantly, KIMEP began to produce modern cadre for our market in the early 90s, when only a few could travel abroad and qualified managerial and financial personnel was sorely lacking. The University has formed a leading workforce for the financial and banking sectors. Our alumni are now taking the leading positions in all market sectors, including the oil and mining industry, the public sector and in the SMEs. They have a solid track record as very competitive professionals, making their successful careers in Kazakhstan and on a world-wide scale. Many of them later obtained further degrees from the world’s best universities, such as Stanford, Oxford or Cambridge. Virtually all of them make a visible contribution to the development of our country. KIMEP has today become a strong Kazakhstani brand associated with the quality of modern education.

**My message to the current students**

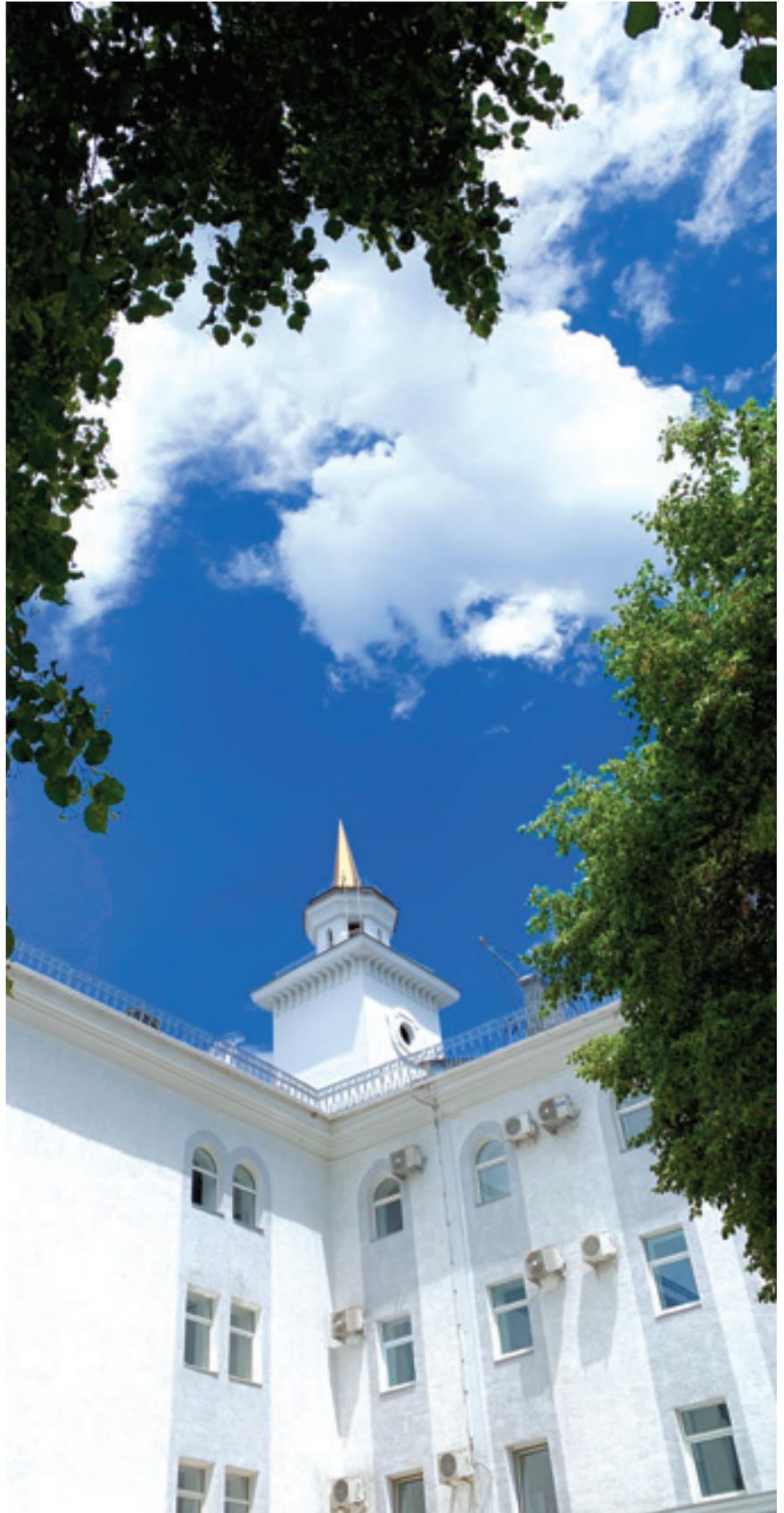
is the following. During your studies you take many different courses. Some of them you like and prefer over the others, which seem to be incomprehensible or redundant. Believe me – all these courses will be very important in the future. Strategic Management, Organization Theory, Personnel Management become important especially at the stage of managing my own business.

**For me business is a combination of several components:**

the right team, availability of resources, correctly built processes and smart sales. Success is not a bag of money that suddenly falls on your head. It is a staircase with thousands of steps, each being a small solution. Start early, work weekends, stay in the library, overcome fear of interviews, convince the right person or a company, get up after a fall or failure – and much more. Not too many people start a business before or right after graduating – most graduates have to go through a stage of hired work. Anyone wishing to have own business should use the experience of being someone's employee as an opportunity to learn, to test your ideas, to hit the bumps and to make mistakes "at someone else's expense." In your own business, you will have to pay for mistakes.

**I wish the anniversary class of KIMEP graduates and everyone else to be successful.**

You obtained an excellent academic training – now make your dreams come true in reality. Today, on the one hand, you have all the opportunities open, and on the other hand, you have a great responsibility. You are entering a more competitive market than we did. Today, you can't surprise anyone by being proficient in 2–3 languages, and by having the diplomas from the best schools. Use your time wisely. KIMEP graduates, as a rule, know how to create their own future – now it's your turn to do it!



# ASSET IRGALIYEV, CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENCY FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REFORMS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, BAE 2008

**I was choosing a university to study back in 2004** and the choice was not so big – actually between KIMEP and KBTU. My choice fell on KIMEP, because of English as the language of instruction. During admission I looked through the statistics of KIMEP graduates and saw how they were represented in different spheres of economics; I also heard different success stories. I met KIMEP graduates and understood that their career path was quite successful. I was also attracted by the American teaching standards.



**There are lots of vivid memories associated with KIMEP.** One of them is when I was just admitted to studies. All classes taught in English, the whole system being absolutely different. Students could choose the time of lectures, organize their own schedule, meet professors and even do some research in cooperation with them. The quality of instruction and of presentation of study materials was a masterpiece in itself. At the very beginning I had a certain understanding of economics, but after studying at KIMEP it turned to be a more in-depth one. If I may say – I was born in 1986, and I was reborn again at the first lecture of Microeconomics, having started to understand the principles of this course.

**My favorite professors at KIMEP and vivid memories associated with them.** For sure – Galiya Sagyndykova, who taught Public Economics. I remember her explaining the difference between an economist and an accountant using the example of a bolt. Also, using various very easily understandable examples, she explained the versatility of economics as a science. I would like to mention Dr. Abu Islam, the professor of Microeconomics, who very well clarified what Demand and Supply are and where they intersect. I think that everyone who attended his lectures will understand why I singled out this professor.

**As a KIMEP student,** namely at the Microeconomics class I understood that my future profession will be related to economics. I realized that economics is a science not only describing all spheres of human life, but also forming and reshaping them. It was interesting, for instance, to look through various economic theories, such as game theory, Nash equilibrium and Pareto Optimality, and to see how people can behave in different situations.

I remember also describing the theory of “why people get married” from an economic point of view. It’s fascinating. There I realized that I wanted to make economics my future profession. After having obtained my undergraduate degree from KIMEP, studying at further levels was not extremely difficult. I did my Master’s at the University of York in the UK and then went on to Master’s of Philosophy and Economics at the University of Nottingham. In both cases I was quite well prepared thanks to

my previous academic experience. There were students from different countries, including England, but I did not feel weaker among them. Moreover, in terms of academic performance, I was among the top 5 students.

**I believe that the most important principle that KIMEP and any other good university makes you learn** is the skill of continuous self-development. In my case this is the merit of studying at KIMEP and it still helps me in many ways. Well, of course, the basis of economics that I studied helped me a lot both in education and work-wise. I worked as an economist in London, then I returned to Kazakhstan and now I am in the civil service. My first job was the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London. Initially, when I got a job at the EBRD, my goal was that I would work for 3–4 years in order to gain experience abroad. However, I always wanted to return to Kazakhstan and to work in the civil service in order to develop the economy here. So I ended up in the Ministry of Economics.

**My advice to students on their path to a successful career** would be as follows: Now is the ideal time for you to accumulate the maximum possible knowledge in just 3–4 years. Tomorrow, when you enter the labor market and get a real job, unfortunately, there will not be much time for self-development and namely for building up a foundation to help you advance in the future. Your major foundation of knowledge is being built right now. Tomorrow it will determine the path you will choose. So, I advise you now to devote as much time as possible to accumulation of knowledge. Wish you all success in your endeavors!

# NURDAULET AIDOSOV, CEO AT JUSAN BANK, BSC 2009

**Quite early I understood that I want to build a career in financial sphere.** KIMEP at the time of my choice was and still is the best university in our country, especially when it comes to finance as top companies mainly recruited KIMEP graduates. Moreover, I decided that I want to work in an international financial institutions so that I can learn much more including global standards. So, on my last year of study I joined RBS and later HSBC Bank.

**Later when I returned to KIMEP as the adjunct lecturer** I was asking my Finance students about their choice of future profession. Half of them found it difficult to give exact reasons, the remaining replies were: "Well, my friend went here to study, I decide to do it together with a friend" or: "Well, I like this or that subject." or: "My parents told me to study here". There was one interesting answer: "Beautiful girls study at KIMEP, that's why I came here". Well, I do confirm the statement about the beautiful girls at KIMEP, but... In fact very few answered: "I researched the future of this industry" or "I see myself only in this sphere". Very few gave a thought to it beforehand, few asked the elder professionals about their career, or analyzed the future of the industry before making a decision. Of course at the age of 17-18 your decision making is not as good, and it is not.

**I mean – it is necessary to clearly understand what are you going to do in the future** and to define what is yours and what is not. Are there any perspectives of particular profession, and, if yes, are they stable or you'll need to gain some additional skills to advance? Take the financial sphere for instance. Today the major financial organizations need not just financial professionals, but the ones with hybrid knowledge – Finance plus IT or Finance plus Law. This kind of a professional will for sure be in demand. The future belongs to hybrid professions. KIMEP has always had the system of majors and minors in different spheres with a possibility of taking free electives. I also asked students if they would like to change their major. Some said that they would like to switch to marketing, others even mentioned cinema or fashion industry. Some regretted about their choice, realizing it wasn't theirs. Still, there is a second chance to change your career path – a master's degree. Sometimes you need some work experience to understand this. You get a job and in a while understand that there is a gap in your



education, so you need to continue to study. I would recommend having some work experience before getting into the graduate studies level.

**I studied in the 2000s,** started to teach in 2016 and my own gaps became obvious to me. During my student times smartphones were just appearing. Now you can obtain your MBA via YouTube – there is a lot of information around. If you don't understand something during class, you can easily search it online and study yourself just by watching video lessons. So, the major difference between our generations is that we learned offline by listening to teachers and reading books more, and current students are more "digitalized". This is not

bad especially in finance – a very progressive sphere. In mathematics two plus two has the same meaning for five thousand years, but the financial sphere was one way a hundred years ago, a completely different way ten years ago, even more different now, and who knows which way it will turn ten years later. The basics may remain the same, but with technology and innovations many things change quite quickly. One has to keep up with it.

**What I liked most about KIMEP** was the flexibility in shaping my own schedule, choosing courses and teachers. Secondly students and student life. I would also note opportunities to study internationally via exchange programs. In my case it was the University of Economics in Prague for a summer semester – an amazing experience. Faculty composition is also noteworthy. They all have own approaches to teaching, different requirements, yet one thing is common – the professional attitude towards teaching. I remember Professors Natalya Pya and Vasilliy Voinov very well, with their open book exams and a very effective teaching format. I also remember Marat Bakpayev, who taught Marketing in a very exciting manner. Macroeconomics was taught by Nickolay Povetkin – he used a very interesting approach to teaching, I still remember his fascinating examples about our economy and importance of spending. Then there was Bakhyt Baideldinov with Calculus. Maya Katenova taught the Principles of Finance. She gave a lot of information to study, especially for the reading week, while students used to see this week as a vacation. I remember taking the Negotiations in Business course by Dr. Patrick Low for my first summer semester. When I came to class and saw the attendance sheet I understood there were only seniors and graduate students – the course was designed for them. I somehow got registered to it by mistake together with my friend. Anyways, it was a very interesting experience for a freshman to go along with seniors and MBA students. Learning from Dr. Low was amazing. This class helped me a lot further on when I had to do negotiations in real business. There was also a very interesting course – Research Methodology by Dr. Zhuldyz Smagulova, who taught how to present things properly in writing, how to make presentations and so on. Now today I still use what I learned there. Selecting the right courses in the right order certainly helps both in the study process and in your further career and life.

**In other universities students get allocated to definite groups** and study there for all 4 years. In KIMEP there are different groups for different classes. We never had a concept of a 'group-mate', yet we are in touch. We all work in different industries and we don't see each other

often, but when we do, it's always worth it. As a rule, you become very strongly connected to someone you started taking classes with the very first year, when you have to learn and to overcome difficulties together. Exchange programs are also a very good tool to make friends.

**My leadership abilities surely got developed at KIMEP** through group work, presentations, etc. It's a great way to learn not to be shy, to participate in presentations, to take on projects – such things always come handy in the career, as well as the ability to argue your point of view and to persuade others during discussions.

**My advice to students wishing to build a career in finance** is two-fold. First: be efficient. Try to absorb all information and experience available while you are young and your mind is flexible. Take electives, try a double major, use your student life opportunities. Second: be thoughtful when selecting a place of internship or your first job. Your first employer really means a lot in your life, so try to choose a good one – with a good corporate culture, interested in nurturing the new staff members. I also know that many KIMEP students have entrepreneurial skills. Try some entrepreneurship also, to test whether it is your cup of tea or not – any experience you will gain will be useful for the future.

**Today as an employer, when selecting an employee, I look more at motivation a person.** Sometimes a candidate is very qualified, but simply lacks motivation, and will show low efficiency. On the contrary, some candidates with no experience are so motivated – they will surpasses everyone else in no time. Another major thing is skills. Knowledge is important, but may become obsolete, so skills matter, such as multitasking, fast-learning, rational thinking and so on. KIMEP really does great work on skill developments. Some entrepreneurial spirit and creativity will serve you well in finding a thousand ways to accomplish a task, rather than looking for a thousand reasons not to.

**Regarding the importance of education on your success path** – of course, everyone is turned on by the story of Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook. However, I have met very few people who have achieved success without appropriate education. On the contrary, I see a lot of people who succeeded after studying a lot and hard. So, yes – education is important, it is even crucial both for an individual and for the country as a whole. One should never stop learning something. For example, my three degrees is not a ceiling. Learning new things is always relevant to your life and career. Continue to learn all your life – and good luck in it!

# MURAGER SAURANBAYEV, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF RK, BAIJ 2009

**While studying in high school, I was hearing a lot about KIMEP** as one of the best universities in the country. The reputation of the University was exceptional, hence, it attracted many students from all over the country. The University offered American style education system with many experienced top-class foreign professors. I wanted to learn from the best, to be a part of the KIMEP community. I was impressed with everything that KIMEP had to offer, and decided to apply for the Media Management course along with my fellows.

**One of the most memorable periods of my studies at KIMEP** was an internship at the Mazhilis of the Parliament under Mr. Krepak's management. It was such an incredible opportunity for me and my friends to work in the Mazhilis, to learn the workings of government and to be surrounded by deputies who are responsible for the trajectory of the country through legislation. This internship was our first step to the public service, and it convinced me that I want to start my career working for the government and make my own contribution to the development of Kazakhstan.

**I also had a great opportunity to study in Hong-Kong** thanks to the student exchange program that was organized by KIMEP. I spent several months there, which enabled me to experience diplomacy firsthand. I worked at the Consulate General of Kazakhstan in Hong Kong, and this experience helped me to decide that I want to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Overall, I think that our peer group at KIMEP was very ambitious. Many of the alumni now hold leading positions in the country and abroad. I think the unity of the students was an excellent trait. Also, students were full of great business ideas. Many of them were building their companies and promoting them at the University. This experience helped them to develop the necessary skillset to become very successful businesspeople or reach leading positions in the state organizations.

**KIMEP has changed me as a person.** It is the place where I acquired not only academic skills but also learnt how to communicate with people from different backgrounds. This ability has been incredibly useful for me in my diplomatic career, as I engage with people from different backgrounds almost on a daily basis. It has also helped me to adapt to my work abroad and find commonalities with people of different nationalities.

Networking was also at a very high level at the University. KIMEP alumni was one of the strongest communities back in 2010, and it is still one of the most useful communities for career development. In addition, I was elected as a vice-president of the Student Government in 2008. This position gave me an opportunity to develop my leadership and organizational skills, which I find very helpful at my current job. KIMEP taught us to be adaptive to different situations in life and, certainly, it gave us broad opportunities to build a career both at state bodies and in the international organizations.

**There are many things I loved about studying at KIMEP.** To name just a few examples:

1. Environment – a very friendly environment that made my life at KIMEP very safe and interesting. Both professors and students were open to new projects and events. Every student could feel genuine support from the University's leadership. We are still in contact with some professors and even became friends. KIMEP professors always treated students as equals, which enabled us to build great relationships with them. The trust and friendship that we gained helped us in our studies, and I feel privileged to still stay in touch with many of the professors.
2. Events – as one of the organizers, I enjoyed hosting different events on various occasions. It was a perfect opportunity for networking. We had a chance to invite very influential and famous speakers who covered very important topics and issues of that time. In many ways, the events were an extension of our studies. We learned not just from academic lectures and seminars, but also from speakers who participated at our events.
3. Social life – it was the best place to build contacts due to numerous social events, forums and meetings. While academic studies are, of course, a priority at University, social life facilitates the final progression into adulthood, as one learns to adapt to different personalities.

**I agree that KIMEP provides education to change society,** as the approach to studying is different from other Kazakhstani universities. KIMEP focuses not only on the academia, but also on communication, art, and leadership. This comprehensive approach enables students to acquire skills and knowledge that are

necessary to impact society. It also helps the students to open up as a person, which in turn influences their life and future career. In addition, KIMEP instilled in us the idea that our future work and career matters not only for personal growth, but also as a way to change society for the better. I personally have applied this lesson throughout my career, and when I retire, I hope to look back on my career with the knowledge that I have made a positive change to our country and society.

**When I was a freshman,** I participated at the KIMEP's talent show "Show Time". I performed with our national instrument dombra, which was the first extracurricular activity at the University. After graduation, I was the KIMEP alumni ambassador in the capital. We hosted different events and meetings, including charity events. Our community is still in touch and we help each other in matters of career or personal issues. We always try to help graduates to find their first job. Now, it is a useful platform for networking.

**I work as Deputy Chairman of the International Information Committee at the Foreign Affairs Ministry.** It is a demanding and very interesting job, as we face different challenges and opportunities every day. First and foremost, I want to highlight the fact that I have the opportunity to work with very experienced professionals who literally contributed to building our statehood when we first gained independence. In addition, I greatly enjoy taking part in different types of discussions and negotiations. I am a believer in the idea that hard work facilitates faster personal growth. By immersing myself in challenging situations in my job that require me to always be on my toes, I push myself to be the best version of myself. Finally, I feel honored to contribute to the diplomatic service of our state. Diplomacy remains indispensable in our world, and I'm privileged to be a part of it.

**Fortunately, we don't really face huge challenges at my current job,** not least thanks to my amazing colleagues, who are always on hand to deal with any issues that come our way. At the same time, our job remains demanding on a daily basis, and perhaps my biggest challenge is to always remain on top of things, to motivate my colleagues and to make sure that I am always available to deal with any difficulties that may arise and ensure that I never let my team down.



**I would advise students and alumni who want to build their career in the state bodies to be patient and determined.** Working in state bodies takes a lot of time and energy, but it's worth it, at the end when you know you are making a positive difference. Be passionate about your job and do not be afraid to offer new ideas and suggestions to your managers. Fresh minds will undoubtedly improve work and our country as well. Accept that challenges may come your way at times, but never lose heart and view difficulties as opportunities to grow and learn.

**I wish every student to write their own story** with passion and determination. Challenge yourself to do better each time and to improve yourself with each step. Aim to become the best version of yourself. You will achieve your goals and ambitions if you give it your best shot.

# AIGERIM KHAFIZOVA, CEO AT EDGRAVITY, BSS PS 2010



**The turning point for choosing KIMEP** was when University representatives visited my high school in Uralsk in 2005–2006. I was sold on the idea of taking courses such as History of Civilizations, Political Science taught by foreign professors in English.

**In my cohort at BSS, most of us were very globally focused.** Almost all of my friends at KIMEP did exchange programs abroad – in South Korea, in the UK, Netherlands, and me in Turkey. I remember how we were paying attention to brochures and flyers with global opportunities on KIMEP walls. And this is how we ended up attending conferences in Czech Republic, Switzerland, etc. I guess this “International Relations” lense and openness to opportunities defined who we became after graduation: some of us pursued master’s degree and

PhDs abroad, some ended up working with international organizations, others built partnerships between Kazakhstan and the world.

**I personally believe in the power of higher education.**

Studies at KIMEP provided me with a solid foundation that I can carry with me anywhere I go. For example, in the 2010s I applied for a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship and got selected. I attribute my success to getting a degree from KIMEP: 1) while applying I had good English language scores 2) and it was comfortable for me to do Master’s in the US because I already had an experience of studying in a North American-style environment at KIMEP. Moreover, the International Relations foundation I built at KIMEP has been instrumental in my current career – building partnerships internationally as I have a solid understanding of global affairs.

**I am very grateful to all of my professors,** as what I’ve learned at KIMEP helped me a lot later in life. I am especially grateful to Dr. Richard Rousseau. I enrolled in almost all of his classes, my favorites: Middle East Politics, Government and Politics in Europe, and International Political Economy. Also I loved the Leadership and Management course with professor Aliya Tankibayeva, and Introduction to Political Science with Togzhan Kassenova.

**At the moment, my professional career is comprised of the following:**

- Being a founder and entrepreneur at my edtech company Edgravity. What I love about this work is that I wholeheartedly believe in the power of education and seeing it realized at Edgravity brings me utmost joy. I am mostly involved in business development and partnerships at Edgravity now;
- Being a consultant for educational projects like the one run by INCO and funded by Google.org, where I consult NGOs on how to transition their learning online, or consulting businesses on how to apply the newest tech in their learning processes.

What I love doing the most: working at the intersection of technology, education, business, and international development. And I love sharing knowledge with others. This is how I ended up doing e-learning training in Brazil, India, Thailand, and other places.

**Looking at what my peers from KIMEP are doing now** in Kazakhstan and abroad, I definitely agree with the statement that KIMEP provides education to change society. All of them are change-makers in their own areas from finance to diplomacy, and I learn so much from them.

**Back in the days we didn't have many options for specializations:** my peers were choosing either economics, finance, or international relations. I loved learning foreign languages, history, and traveling. That is why I chose International Relations. But I think that somehow intuitively I made the right choice. As my IR degree provided me with a global perspective and understanding of the world from the macro perspective. This is a very important skill at my current work. For current applicants I would suggest looking at what you like/enjoy the most. I believe we can only succeed and be happy when we are doing things we are good at. But what about those who do not know yet? That's fine. Most programs offer general subjects during the first year: do that, explore, do internships, travel, get to know people from different industries, talk to them, read, learn. Be curious. Only by trying you can find out what you are good at. I do not believe that there is only one purpose, I believe in trying things. Always stay curious.

**Edgravity is an education technology startup** with a mission to promote lifelong learning and empower adult learners with life, and professional skills. It was incorporated in 2018 by two female founders – me and Ulpan Avezova. The company initially was an online course creation studio.

In late 2019, Edgravity partnered with one of the top 5 most popular online courses on Coursera Barbara Oakley, which led to our pivot to becoming an online learning platform, where we work with top experts and co-create, do marketing, and take over the organization of the learning process.

Now Edgravity has two business divisions:

- 1) online course creation studio and corporate training provider. We work with B2B clients from corporations to international organizations
- 2) online courses on practical education for a B2C audience.

We collaborate with top experts and create in demand courses on topics from parenthood to skills for the digital economy. Our primary target

audience: women 25–40 years old who are mostly interested in continuous education according to studies. We have 12,000+ customers, and we are grateful for their trust in us. Edgravity is a diverse team of 14 education technologists, journalists, engineers, and creators.

**We are always open for collaboration.** We follow our Roadmap of courses based on the skills gap and what our learners need the most. So if there is a match between the instructor's expertise and the problem that solves our learners' needs – we are ready to partner.

**I would suggest gaining experience/expertise in the industry** or in your profession. In my case, I started my business in education already having had an experience in e-learning both in Kazakhstan and internationally. I launched Edgravity after completing my master's degree in the US, internship at Udemy, and working in e-learning in Pakistan. Having experience is good for building a startup, because you already have industry connections and knowledge. But on the other hand, I know successful entrepreneurs who just started their businesses out of school without prior experience. I guess this is very individual. Also starting small is good, for example, launching a prototype. I was not planning to become an entrepreneur. One day, my friend connected me to an instructor who wanted to create an online course. I signed up for the project, it worked out well, it solved a customer's problem, I got paid. This is how it started. If you want to launch a school, why not first try launching a one-hour training course. Talk to people, get feedback – this is how it begins. Just start, and let the work teach you.



# ALIBEK YESSOV, CEO AT ZOODPAY, BSC 2007, MBA 2011

**I chose the KIMEP undergraduate program because** back then in 2002 it was one of the few options where there was an excellent education, a good reputation, plus the profession itself. I was inclined towards mathematics, and I thought that finance is close to good money, so I chose finance, therefore -KIMEP. It was the only good university in the country with a good reputation. Then I acquired master's degree – for the sake of having a complete, full-fledged education.

**It is hard for me to compare my class with other ones in KIMEP.** We entered at the beginning of 2000, which means there were people born in 80's and their conscious childhood fell on 90's. The 90's were difficult, the economic recovery began towards the end of the 90s and early 2000s. This left a certain imprint on our generation, because we were striving to achieve success, it was some kind of hunger for knowledge. On the other hand, our class was so strong, because another option was only KBTU with mainly oil and gas majors, there was less competition; today there are more universities competing for students. Back then KIMEP was more of a monopoly, a university that used to take the best applicants, with very good academic standing. There were, of course, some students from rich families, but having to study together with academically hungry ones, they also raised their level.

**KIMEP is unique,** because education is delivered by the Western standards, with credit system, possibility for students to choose classes and instructors. Textbooks are the world class ones. My fellow classmates who gained their undergraduate degrees abroad said they essentially read the same textbooks. Again, the major factors are the professional level of faculty and the complete absence of corruption. It was crucial when none of us could "buy" better grade during finals. I guess this gave everyone the proper understanding that in your life you need to achieve everything by yourself, with your perseverance, knowledge, and without trying to bribe the system.

**During my student life,** I organized a couple of successful billiard tournaments at KIMEP. I did not go to the Student Government – I just had no time for it because of some very intensive internships. I actively communicated with everyone, but then there was just a Student Government, not the vast array of student organizations.



**About my leadership qualities –** I think KIMEP made a direct impact in this sense, including such simple things like selecting your own schedule and instructors. This forms a certain freedom of thinking the basics for assuming leadership further on.

**I would advise young students to be active** in some non-academic events, like clubs – they must definitely participate. Coordinating something, organizing events, or successfully electing a new chair of the club – this all gives you a valuable experience that not all universities can provide. It really gives a unique opportunity to test your skills, your ability to work in a team in real life. Afterwards, when you get your first job – the main principles will be the same. Business companies in their dynamics development are similar to communities and clubs of a university.

**Again, if you want to gain some work experience without wasting your time** during university studies – try to get some part time job. I would advise to start working as early as possible. I've been working at Procter and Gamble since my 4th year of studies (I applied after 3rd year). KIMEP helped me in many ways, the first of which is my English proficiency, second being critical and causal thinking skills. Again, the fact of having to choose your classes schedule on your own contributes to the development of thoughtful thinking process. Your professor gives you basics in terms of critical thinking. And the third one is noteworthy: at the interview I was asked whether I have the experience of a leader in a team or in a group of people and I tried to resolve conflicts. In fact I had tons of examples from my student life when as a team leader of many projects I resolved conflict situations. Since KIMEP has modern educational system, you interact a lot with others. For example, we did group projects and I coordinated the groups' work; this really helped to sharpen leadership and team working skills. Indeed, at the interview, employers look more at interpersonal skills than to the real proficiency in accounting or finance – this allowed me to successfully pass the interview.

**About my startup** – Zoodpay is a Swiss startup operating in the CIS and Middle East countries markets. This is an ecosystem similar to 'Kaspi', but outside of Kazakhstan, a marketplace to buy things in installments, with own risk model; there is also an opportunity of stock loans financing for sellers. We provide financing, so we also earn the interest rate for this. My responsibility is operational functions at a global scale – working with partners, logistics processes, support services, some HR issues.

**My advice to aspiring startups in Kazakhstan** – the very first thing is not to limit your ambitions. Try to think as broad as possible. Do not limit yourself only to Kazakhstan, come up and develop something implementable in many countries. If you plan to do something here, can it also be implemented in the CIS countries and in the Middle East, and further on in Europe and America. The second is, of course, your team. A founder definitely needs a strong team to go with. If you choose great guys and delegate essential functions to them, they, as long as the company is growing will also recruit some other talented guys to their units. Finding talented people is one of the hardest success factors. The third one is to be able to correctly count your numbers –



your earnings and losses from each transaction. Evaluate yourself soberly. There is such a thing as a fail fast – if you can tell you are not earning much with a certain model, you don't need to try it further on and wait for imaginary earnings to become real. Wishful thinking does not work as a forecast. Forecasts need to be clear, showing for sure if you need to change a business model or even to take another niche with another product. However, do not be afraid that something may not work out; it will definitely work out from the second or third time. If not – see the above.

**As to what I value the most in people**, I guess it is the interpersonal skills, the way one communicates with others. A sales person, for instance, should surely be able to competently and convincingly substantiate something, to explain and to negotiate, to be empathic. Further, of course, some specific experience is needed. A managerial position requires experience in managing people, ability to motivate and to discipline. Just a professional experience without the necessary soft skills rarely helps.

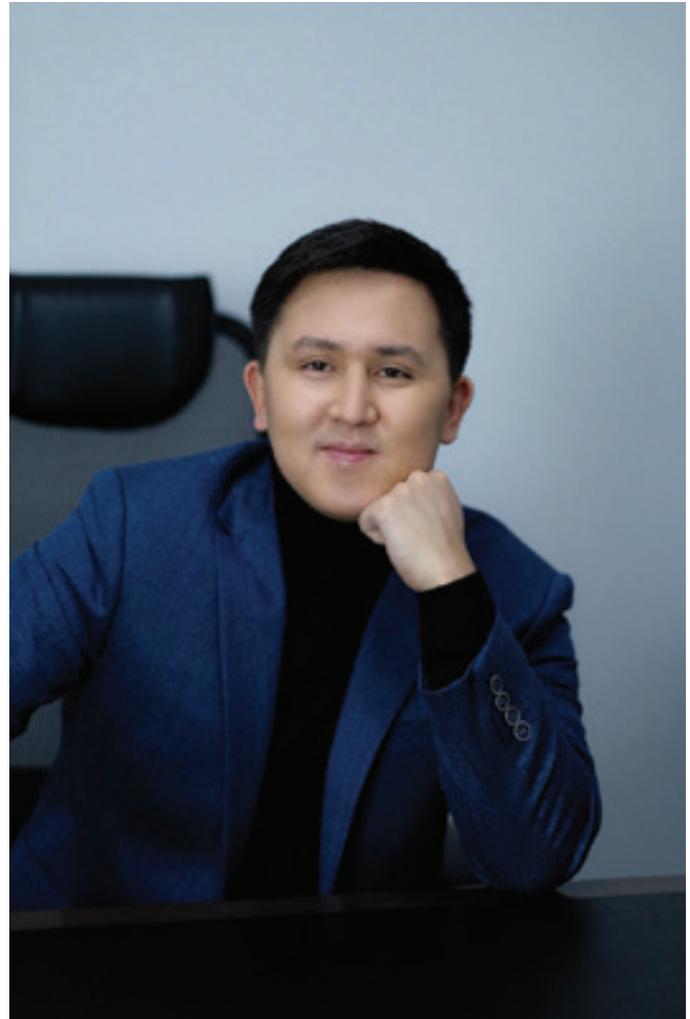
# NURSULTAN BILISBEKOV, DEPUTY GENERAL DIRECTOR AT INTEGRA CONSTRUCTION KZ, BSC 2012

**Applying for KIMEP was the recommendation of my parents.** My uncle was one the first KIMEP graduates, and my mother always wanted me to follow in his footsteps. Initially, I studied in the chemical-biological class and wanted to become a doctor. But once I had read Dreiser's book "The Financier", it inspired me to study Finance, so KIMEP was the obvious choice. I've considered KBTU as an option as well, but ultimately chose KIMEP.

**Our stream is people born in the late 80s and early 90s,** people who were born in the Soviet Union, but grew up in independent Kazakhstan. These people witnessed all the troubles of that time. Therefore our peers are distinguished by an active position in life and lack of fear of difficulties, as already had gone through this. In this regard, I think adaptability along with eagerness for new achievements distinguishes our flow.

**I remember Dr. Donald Hoskins, he has been teaching Investments, Derivatives,** a very open and peculiar professor, unfortunately, he passed away. I recall during his first lecture, he was sharing his experience with us, that he ran one of the hedge funds in Brazil. And he said that he was a guest at one TV program, where he was asked if he believed in Brazil. He answered that Brazil's economy was growing and it was good idea to invest there. While Dr. Hoskins was delivering positive prognoses at that moment the market in Brazil was falling as a result of Asian financial crisis in 1998. After this show there were memes about him because of this mistake. After that, he moved into education and private investment. But having a very wide experience, he shared it interestingly, and he provided me with investment ideas.

**I also remember Dr. Callahan, he gave lectures in Corporate Finance.** This subject was very difficult, as well as exams, but provided deep knowledge. Another memorable teacher is Dr. Nurlan Orazalin, he taught Accounting, a very energetic teacher. I really liked him. Also Zhanat Syzdykov, a brilliant teacher, his knowledge, his approach and energy were making students feel enthusiastic. Perhaps the most important thing about teachers is the energy that they can share with students and charge them. I've been teaching not so long ago, online at KazGU during the pandemic, and I felt that I lack this energy, in terms of the fact that there are a lot of students, everyone has a different background, different



goals, and it's difficult to captivate them with your subject. And those teachers that I have listed, they could ignite the audience.

**While I was at KIMEP I participated in various extracurricular activities,** Thanks to that I formed a circle of friends, built networks. For me the most memorable and useful was the LDP program given by Dilbar Gimranova. I was constantly attending lectures by various businessmen and politicians. It was interesting to listen to firsthand information about what they did, how they did it, and what was happening in the market. This helped me to establish a general vision of Kazakhstan, world market and business environment.

**We keep in touch with classmates, and even cross paths at work.** Just recently, there was a deal with my classmate and friend Vladislav Suslov, Managing Director of ForteBank, and our company closed the deal with them. Our long-standing friendship helped to facilitate communication and to come to a quick mutual understanding. I keep in touch with many my coursemates, as we all studied finance, we often see each other. In this regard, KIMEP has provided such a good platform for networking, where we know each other, understand each other and communicate in the same language.

**I work for Integra Construction.** And the main difficulty in the work of our company is the issue of liquidity. We are trying to solve it through banks, shareholders, and attracting new projects. The question of personnel, is also one of the main ones. If we take our company, we have a total staff of 2000 people, among them about 10-15 people are directly related to finance. The turnover is very high, constantly new problems and needs associated with the growth of the company arise. We as a group entered Integra 2 years ago. And we came in a period of crisis when the company was in decline. The company's total turnover was about 25 billion KZT with a negative net margin. In 2 years, we quadrupled the company's total turnover, revenue, brought it closer to 100 billion and entered a positive profit. And, accordingly, this is associated with a high level of workload and stress. In such a situation, personnel, mutual understanding, and team spirit are always important. Now a very good team has been formed in the company, with a common vision and strategy. We support each other. I hope our team will only grow stronger.

**As for problems with personnel,** in our case, main reason is overestimated salary expectations. And since at the time when we entered the project, the company was in decline - expecting a lot of return on each employee was not only impossible, it was not entirely right. The main strategy of our team was to give bonuses from future projects in which they will participate. When new candidates came with their own expectations, they immediately wanted to earn a lot and people were disappointed, and this is understandable. Some have faith in the project, have faith in the team, trust in people, trust in shareholders but not everyone can afford it. Many have families, businesses, or other current needs that they want to cover and are not ready to wait and trust in the beginning.



**Each business is unique** and therefore, it is impossible to single out any identical anti-crisis measures. Anti-crisis measures are primarily related to adaptability. But there are basic principles that are related to finance. When we enter a company, we look at the operating part, we immediately try to cut some of the costs, the cost of bonuses or people, because the company faces problems. Then we look at business processes so that they are not duplicated, in some cases we reduce and improve these processes. This is one of the main high-level things. Then there are the issues of growth, constantly reducing or improving something is possible but it is difficult, so it is best to grow. When a company grows, everyone feels it, there is an enthusiasm, there is a cash flow that can already be shared. The good anti-crisis management is to increase revenue, start and attract new projects, and build preventive measures in advance. Good anti-crisis management is primarily related to preventive measures: to determine what could be a potential risk, to put up some kind of barriers for preventing the problem from escalation in the operating system or finances, etc.

**I am planning to continue working with our team,** we have a very well-coordinated team comprised of real professionals. I see that we will build new projects with them, implement business ideas, and I hope that I will be able to implement my own business ideas, where it will already be possible to reach the level of a shareholder and investor.

## ZAURE TURSUNOVA, FOUNDER OF THE STEPPE, BSC 2013

**I chose KIMEP**, because I wanted to transfer from a foreign university to Kazakhstan. The only university that at that time suited me in all respects was, of course, KIMEP. I was impressed by the quality of education at KIMEP, given that I had no experience of university studying in Kazakhstan. Comparing KIMEP with my previous university in Dubai, I can state that KIMEP by no means lags behind.

**Certainly, KIMEP influenced me as a person** – especially in regards of leadership skills. Working in groups, internships and constant projects gave the opportunity to test myself as a leader – this is certainly not possible in many other universities. All projects I took part in during my studies gave me the opportunity to express myself.

**I would advise KIMEP students to interact very closely and intensively with each other** in terms of projects, and in the student life. It is important because, the communication skills we acquire when working with other students come in precisely handy in the real-world work. We should not forget that networking is one of the strongest qualities, considering that KIMEP community is very large. Building up all useful and important contacts starts from your student days – it is not something to be neglected. Take an active part in student life – it's a must!

**Regarding the statement that KIMEP changes society – yes**, KIMEP really is the innovator and the improver of our society. Probably, this must be the only university that really changed the mindset and set the standards for other universities, a benchmark for a long period of time. It also left the huge mark in lives of each of us as a place where people want to bring some positive and creative changes.

**Business in general is a challenging story**, and the university has prepared me well for this. The main challenge in my project is creating news hooks and hiring employees. After all, media is a 24/7 flow of information, requiring endless self-development as a cornerstone of a successful project. This industry needs people trained to be flexible, to adapt to extremely rapid changes. Not so many universities actually train journalists and media professionals and even less really explain what media is, what it means to work there. I believe KIMEP copes with this task very well.



**I founded The Steppe project far back in 2016.** Why “far back”? Because in the media events and one’s rhythm within even a single project change so fast that 1 year goes for 5 ordinary ones. I created the project because I wanted to change our society, or rather, our mindset, the attitude towards journalism and journalists. Thus, a project was born, telling the stories of people, who change our lives, of the progressive people interested in everything. Our first and foremost value is that a good education is a cornerstone of happy and productive life. Therefore, for 6 years already The Steppe really tries to give people a new approach, an alternative viewpoint to what is going on in the country and worldwide. We try to inspire people, because nowadays there is a lot of negative information, and not so many nice and positive events. Accordingly, our mission is to give people an opportunity to have a fresh look at things. I have 15 in-house members in my team, all with different backgrounds and work experience. Some came as trainees just fresh from a university, some are well-experienced professionals. 80% are KIMEP graduates – it wasn’t on purpose, it just happened so. The Steppe aroused a great interest among the young generations – the millennials, the Z generation – as a brand and as a place to put some worthwhile efforts into. We keep hiring people with different backgrounds, and of course, it doesn’t matter what university a person studied at – skills are what we care for. As for KIMEP graduates – when they come to us, we already have a rough idea of what values they bring and what they have been trained in.

**What did KIMEP teach me?** Of course – how to come up with successful brands and projects. That is why The Steppe is not only a media, but also a brand. We develop a special online and offline community, our merch, our events, a kind of a media eco-system around us. This is our main advantage.

**I think everyone should be happy just by the fact of waking up and facing a new morning.** I advise students, including KIMEP graduates, to enjoy what they do, to find something worth waking up with pleasure and to doing it. To find your niche you have to come up with a project that you will enjoy and that will be demanded by others. Thus, you will be able to influence people's lives and this is actually a success. Remember – success is a complex thing; it is reachable step by step, slowly but surely. Make sure to communicate with each other, create common projects – it will help you in your life and work after the graduation. Networking and soft skills form the basis of your growth. Do things that will impact your own life and lives of people around you. Be creative!



# MANSUR KHAMITOV, PHD, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MARKETING, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BSSPA 2011, MBA 2013

**My favorite classes in KIMEP** were all my public administration classes (because they taught us effective governance, management, and service) as well as marketing classes. The latter inspired me to immerse myself with the field of marketing even further and subsequently build a career as a corporate marketer followed by becoming a Marketing Professor, Researcher, and Educator.

**I still have fond memories of all my Professors** over the years and do my best to keep in touch with many of them. Several of them stand out as they were instrumental to my interest in and passion for academic marketing research: Elmira Bogoviyeva (my MBA marketing thesis advisor), Richard Tansey (another of my marketing Profs who facilitated my excitement about the US academic job market), and Roger Baran (he was visiting KIMEP one of the summers from DePaul University in Chicago).

**I participated in the KSA student government** (as a senator, VP, and eventually President), it was one of the most memorable highlights and was definitely instrumental to my post-college career path. It helped me become more effective at building relationships, servant leadership, networking, and not just listening but hearing my peers. All of these skills and abilities subsequently came in handy both during my corporate stint back in Kazakhstan and throughout my current academic career in the US, Singapore, and Canada.

**I've kind of always known and felt I'll end up at KIMEP**, even though I've done my home work and conducted a thorough research of a number of different universities and majors/specialties, and I have really been drawn to the University. I was a bit undecided and was alternating between public and business administration though, which is probably why my two different degrees from KIMEP turned out to be public administration (BSSPA) and business administration (MBA in marketing). For current applicants, my piece of advice would be to 1) build a brief comparative spreadsheet detailing all the pros and cons of each desired university and major/specialty, 2) take time to talk to several different current and former students from these universities, and 3) not to give up or get disappointed if you don't end up being admitted to your dream university and/or specialty.



**I found it very valuable that** many of my KIMEP faculty possessed rich and diverse international perspectives and experiences. Liberal arts style of education was interesting for me as well. I also really enjoyed having different classmates across various courses and getting to know them.

**In my capacity as a Professor of Marketing, Branding,** and Consumer Behavior, I've had an opportunity and privilege to teach and closely interact with students in the US, Singapore, Canada, and Kazakhstan (including international students from 100+ countries) over the last seven years. I'd say that academically

speaking, differences are minimal and that many of our local Kazakhstani students are as bright and talented as the ones abroad. Certain differences emerge on other dimensions: our students may sometimes on average be less outspoken, creative, and driven yet are more humble, polite, and respectful.

**You have to believe and have faith in yourself** and your potential, even though it may sound like a cliché. An academic career, especially at a top university overseas, may seem like a rather lofty or unattainable goal, but nothing is impossible with the right combination of hard work and talent. Second, you have to proactively take advantage of any teaching and sharing knowledge opportunities that come your way (whether as a class guest speaker, a corporate trainer, an ad hoc/sessional lecturer...). Third, you may want to reach out to and secure an optimal set of mentors, coaches, advisors, supporters and so on.

**I have no doubts that each and every batch of KIMEP alums represent high achievers** and bright minds. My KIMEP peers were and still are a particularly brilliant bunch. We keep in touch on social media and have get-togethers from time to time where we celebrate the many accomplishments of our peers. A rather notable event that coincided with the year we started our undergrad studies (2007-2008) was the global financial crisis. Thinking back, I'm sure this exogenous shock likely played its role in building/strengthening our characters, fostering discipline and hard work, instilling empathy, and teaching to be nimble and agile early on.

# AKHMET ISHMUKHAMEDOV, FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, SAUWAT.STRATEGY, BSC 2010, MLLM 2014

**KIMEP has a very unique student life, student atmosphere.** I mean by that different aspects. First is openness of our students, openness of the campus, where we could express our opinions, maybe it is because there were many Western professors who were open to our to answer our challenging questions. KIMEP offered the real credit system where we had full freedom to select professors and courses. We took the responsibility for all our curriculum that we were going to take. I think that freedom to choose taught us responsibility and accountability. Second aspect is team projects. The third is student organisations. For example I was part of AIESEC (International Association of Students in Economics and Business), Economic Club, KELT (KIMEP English Language Theater). The fourth aspect is living in a vibrant KIMEP dormitory. All that experience taught us communication. A final aspect is that KIMEP is quite famous for its network. Network with my peers and alumni prepared me for my future career. By networking I want also to add, that KIMEP attracted guest speakers as part of our education process. And I still remember vividly many speakers, including from Toyota company, United Nations, National Bank, BIG4, and others.

**Currently I run two companies in Singapore.** I decided to open my two companies in Singapore, firstly because after graduating in 2018 from the National University of Singapore, MBA program, I had a strong in-depth understanding of Singapore and overall Southeast Asian market, and its attractive business opportunities. Singapore is an international hub. It means flow of high-quality talents. Secondly, because of a strong competitive atmosphere the best and the most innovative products appear. My first company is called Sauwat Strategy Private Limited, it is a management consulting company that I have first incorporated in Kazakhstan back in 2015, but in 2020 fully moved headquarters to Singapore. Our clients are currently small and medium enterprises (SME) who are planning to enter South East Asia or Central Asia.

**The second company is Sauwat.Education Private Limited** – it is an EduTech HR company, it's a startup. Startup atmosphere and startup industry in Singapore is quite developed and it was easy for me to find first business angels to invest in my business. I also invested my own money and we created a platform in 2020. It has been already almost two years since establishment, web



version is fully working, and we are currently working on further product development, and market expansion. We are planning to operate in the markets of Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Brazil, Kenya, and Nigeria. Apart from Kazakhstan, our target markets are one of the biggest education markets worldwide because of the population and number of schools. Official name of our platform is sauwat.education. It is a B&B platform that helps schools in remote areas to find high quality teachers who will teach online live academic courses from any part of the world. For example, Kazakh speaking teachers living in Singapore, or Russian/Kazakh speaking teachers in the United States who can teach online live at school in Kazakhstan. It's an academic course so teacher becomes a teacher at school, s/he teaches Math's or English, programming, or physics as a teacher, students come to class and teacher is teaching in online live mode. It's like a normal class: teacher holds exams, gives grades. School can select those suitable teachers in the platform, they can identify requirements, like knowledge of Kazakh,

Russian, English, identify time-frame and how much they can pay. You will be surprised but that there are many Kazakh speaking teachers worldwide, who would actually like to teach in Kazakhstan.

**Our company Sauwat Strategy is helping clients to enter Central Asian and South East Asian markets.**

Our clients are small and medium enterprises, who value services, and don't have big budget, We don't work with large companies because large companies work with other consulting companies like Big4. For example, Korean company would like to enter with their products to Singapore's market. Sauwat Strategy helps them with 5 services. First, as they do not know the market, we prepare the market research report, the industry analysis. If they are involved in the education business, they want to know the trends in Singapore and South East Asia, or information about the competitors, possible partners, and statistics of that particular market. In other words, we are doing that report based on secondary data. If they want primary data, they want us to talk with experts, to gather real time data, we also conduct it as part of the primary research. After that these SMEs check the report and say ok, let's enter Southeast Asian market. Next question is how to enter this market? Is it better to work with government institutions, private entities, with e-commerce, with private retailers? With kindergartens, or schools, so they are looking for recommendations for the strategy? That is why the second service that we do is defining market entry strategy. After that they say ok, good, we think that entering the market working with the private institutions, for example starting from Singapore then going to Indonesia is the right track. But who should be our partner, who should we work with? Because establishing own branch is costly, working with local partners is a preferred choice for clients. Therefore the third service we are helping them to find this partner, and to do due diligence. So we do partner due diligence. We narrow it down to top 3 partners and then we organize meetings with them and negotiate the deal. After that they need to do different kind of meetings, negotiations, we support them with the pace of negotiations. We actually prepare both sides, our client side and potential partner side, to make sure that it is a win-win situation. And final part is executive search. We introduced this service recently, if our client wants to extend the scale of a business we can find a director for that company. These are our five services, and they directed at both sides, Central Asia and South East Asia, but since we are based in Singapore and, in particular, in terms of the client base, according to our data around 85% of clients are interested in South East Asia and only 15% in Central Asia.

**The idea about Sauwat.Education, about this concept of creating platform to support schools to find teachers,** for online learning started in 2019, and at that time I was already teaching online live at International School of Economics, KAZGUU University since June 2018. It was the first time KazGUU allowed it to do, because there was kind of fear of this online live, as mostly in Kazakhstani institutions the concept of the distance learning is understood differently. Distance learning is meant when students send their homework by email and teacher may check them once in a quarter and gives them feedback. But there is no online live interaction. Maybe once in a quarter they would gather together, sit down and conduct a seminar but actually the concept of live teaching during normal curriculum time was not a common trend in Kazakhstan. In 2019 when I got more experienced in online live teaching, and observing positive feedback from students, I thought that we can help schools in remote areas of Kazakhstan by this online live teaching. Back in 2016, as part of my consulting work I was researching about the problem of incomplete schools in Kazakhstan, and I was surprised that more than 50% of our government schools are fallen under definition of incomplete schools. It's a situation where pupils from different grades, for example grade 5 to 9, seat together in one classroom and learn academic subject, for example math, together, and a teacher has only one academic hour to explain content to this diverse group of pupils. Such situation happens because of infrastructure problem and lack of teachers. Moreover, there are many cases when teachers are not subject experts. That is why I thought at least we could help schools to find qualified teachers who would teach online live. In 2019 when I was talking to investors, they would say it's impossible, nobody would sit down online live, until 2020 came. When 2020 came they called me and said seems like your idea is viable , everybody is online live now. I said, yes, it is still relevant, we created a team for developing the platform, consisting of the software engineers from among the National University of Singapore's students. Based on enthusiasm of building something meaningful for schools, we created team of software engineers, marketers, MBA students from the National University of Singapore, and started actively building the product in May 2020. I even recruited the Chief technology officer from Bookings.com to support platform architecture. We officially launched our product in February 2021. As of now our platform has ~200 teachers on board and 100 schools signed up. But it's just a drop in a water: in order to bring significant value to our schools we need as many teachers as you would like and as many schools as we can. Our goal is onboard

50,000 teachers and 10,000 schools by first quarter of 2023. Until we reach that all the services that we provide are for free. I mean right now any school can sign up it is free. Any teacher, qualified teacher can sign up, there is no commission, subscription, anything, and they can use it for free. We just need to do more marketing. We are currently working on bringing more investment for marketing purposes, and checking other markets in Brazil and Indonesia.

**Singapore is very competitive,** especially consulting, there are so many consulting companies in different industries and different services. I think what keeps us relative and competitive, it's my own attitude to work, credibility, honesty that we are adherent to and empathy to our clients: sometimes we can do pro bono if we like the project, sometimes we can negotiate quite compromising deals with our clients, we are flexible. And also my personal network by the way. Personal networks that I built through my education including KIMEP, including my studies in the US, Korea, Chile, Philippines, Belgium, UK, and Singapore of course, that helped. That all creates supporting bubble, I would say, we are operating with. And I don't remember when the last time I wrote commercial proposal, most of the time we receive clients as part of the referral, and I think that shows our strength.

**I do not think that leadership is inherited,** and I don't think that I am a leader, I'm just learning, like a lifelong student. In terms of the journey to establish a company, to run a company, skill set received at KIMEP was very important. I can recall course that is still running in KIMEP – it is Leadership Development Program, I think I participated in every session when I was at KIMEP. During these lectures prominent business leaders, government leaders were sharing their experiences with students. I liked that they were transparent, open, so as students we could ask any comfortable/uncomfortable questions and still they would reply. That of course gave me some background. I can't say that this skill I took from this lecture, that skill from that lecture, overall experience created that lateral knowledge which my brain uses whenever it is necessary. Another thing in terms of the leadership that I learned during my studies at KIMEP, it was an experience of being residential assistant in dormitory. It was very beneficial because at that time I was responsible for the 3rd and 4th floors, making sure that students are staying safe, engaged, that required to come up with programs, solutions, and the residential assistant team was very friendly, we still keep in touch, most of the residential assistants with whom I worked with are now in the high positions either in the

government or in a private sector. Another thing when I look back in terms of the leadership skills that I got in KIMEP, it is team projects, there were so many team projects. I was quite wise in terms of working in these team projects. Sometimes, I was just executer, sometimes I volunteered to lead the team, sometimes I would just watch, I took different roles, it helped me to empathize with my peers. I think in leadership, empathetic leadership is important, where you try to actually put yourself in the shoes of your clients, colleagues, stakeholders. I am not a strict person, but if it comes to execution and final result I can be quite demanding, and sometimes my teammates would say that I am pushing at them, but it is because I like perfection.

**How to build a good team in business?** First of all, when we create a team we must understand why we need this team, roles and tasks which we perform. Some of the team members we would select intuitively, we just feel that they are good, even though we did not do any proper assessment. For some team members we need to do proper hard skill assessment, and then of course soft skills. In other words to create a team, there should be a combination of hard skills and soft skills. I want to share one example, when I just established my first company Sauwat Strategy, it was hard for me to hire employees, because I thought that I cannot get those skills that I need, at that time I decided to start teaching at a university. That was my motivation to teach, because I felt when you share your own values while you teach you can select those students to be part of your team. That is how I started teaching at KAZGUU University, there were 20 students who went to my company and six of them were actually invited as employees. They share the same values that you share, because when there is hard situation you have to be sure that team performs regardless, there is no excuses, sorries. In a team what we really value is the same values. My values are empathy, fairness, honesty, perfection. Of course we have to be dependent to our clients too. In consulting we have project based teams, we have network of experts and project would get them together. When we are bringing them together the alignment for the team is a task, they are motivated by the task, we want to make sure that all of them align to that task.

**Recently I randomly met my friend and a peer from my KIMEP stream at the airport in Singapore.** We bumped to each other. We recalled different stories. At that time I just thought probable every stream feels that they are quite unique, as this is our experience, and we think that we have quite unique experience, because we did these things, that things, we did better than our

previous stream. We as a stream of 2004 were checking what 2003 batch was doing, and tried to do better, invite better guests, do commencement better, it's kind of fare competition were we want to do better than the previous stream. Our batch was very creative and quite ambitious, in terms of distinctive events, in 2004 or 2005, we did a very good show time. I think it was invented for the first time in KIMEP, where KIMEP students would show their talents, it was quite successful. I do remember that event, because a lot of students participated. Our stream also implemented cameras to the dormitories, as we had a problem with stealing laptops. And we suggested to put cameras. I think we also won American University of Central Asia of Bishkek in rugby. Academic wise I am not sure, as I do not have the statistics. We still keep in touch with our peers. Those who studied well and did volunteering work, community work, all of them are quite successful. But when I look at those who were not active as a student, as a community builder I feel that they are still searching their kind of meaning of what they need to do. When I look at that, if you ask me what I recommend to freshmen, I would definitely recommend to take all aspects of student life at KIMEP: it's not only studies, it is a lot of community work, where you need to give something too. That means you become a better person too. Skills which you receive in the community work, in the extracurricular work as part of the student body, in terms of the communication in terms of leadership skills, adaptability, help you to become more adaptable, in terms of the cultural understanding. As KIMEP being an international body allows an opportunity to meet people from different countries and cultures. I got my first Korean friends there, I got my first Swedish friends there and we still keep in touch, I got my first Italian friends there and I really appreciate that too.

**Alumni should support each other genuinely,** I will be frank, of course not everyone are friends with each other, of course there is sometimes personality miss match, because I quite strict in terms of values. If person is not honest or not responsible for his actions, if person jumps on somebody's head without thinking, I can't do business with that person or actually continue to collaborate at any terms. My recommendation would be to make sure that your honesty, credibility serves for easy collaboration, it's like in a poem: you should protect your credibility from a young age. Whatever you do at university you feel like nobody will remember it, but it is actually remembered, you can't take it away, and then it affects your future business collaboration. And if you were doing well it affects your future collaborations too. It is very important. Keep your credibility from the beginning from a freshmen year.



**Being entrepreneur is very rewarding experience,** because you are building something for your generations. You are deciding on the strategy, the area, the projects, and you always have an opportunity to say no to something that you do not want to do, and nobody can impose you to take a project because if you don't want – you don't want. Unfortunately when working for a corporate company sometimes we have to compromise what we really want to do, because we are employed by someone. I always recommend starting your own business. To take a risk while you are student is easier: less to lose. It's better to have failing experience at earlier stages, and the more you do – the more experienced you become gradually. When I was a KIMEP student and after I graduated, I thought it's better to work for a corporate company, because it's kind of safe, it's a good office infrastructure, and when I was offered to work in some small enterprise, I thought it's not reputable, I thought how my peers would look at me. That is why I think right now if I would be asked to work for a small or medium enterprise I would definitely jump in to do that. Because you do everything, and you are working usually with the founder, because it is lean companies, your growing pace is quite fast. If you start your business during your studies and continue – it is even better, because when you are young there is a lot of energy, a lot of crazy ideas, fewer investments required. When you starting a business it's important to start from small but very profitable in the short period of time, that gives you motivation, because from the beginning we want to do everything, as a result we can't focus on one particular product or service. I would definitely recommend to start a business, it's rewarding, it's a crazy journey, but the earlier you do – the better.

# ARAILYM ASHIRBEKOVA, NATIONAL GENDER EXPERT, UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, MIR 2015

**I chose KIMEP because** the best professors in my field worked there at the time of my application, the University brings leading speakers and professors to provide quality education. KIMEP also has very good facilities, library and lecture halls.

**I studied Master's degree in International Relations,** and I got the impression that my peers had more intellectual interests than entertainment. We would attend movie nights with critical thinking. Even gatherings at dinner parties would be about our subjects and ideas.



I AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT KIMEP PROVIDES EDUCATION TO CHANGE SOCIETY, IT TRAINS AND TRANSFORMS LOCAL STUDENTS TO BECOME GLOBAL LEADERS.



**The most useful skills** which I obtained from Master's degree for my career where research and communication skills.

**If you want to build successful career,** you must be disciplined, work hard, network, read and write a lot. Also, get some data analysis skills.

**Gender issues are structural and systemic.** There is no single explanation to all gender issues in Kazakhstan. It depends on the context: rural, urban, ethnicity, sector. For example, in agriculture the gender pay gap is more than 30%. It means men earn 30% more than women. Another example, since the start of pandemic sexual and gender based violence increased by 30% in Kazakhstan. So, holistic and targeted approaches are needed to solve these issues.

**I would advise students to train and work on their own inner power.** Constantly gain new skills and knowledge. You are your main asset.

# YERKEGALI MASHIR, CEO AT AZIMUT SOLUTIONS GROUP, EXMBA 2016

**My choice fell on KIMEP University**, as I realized the need for additional education in the process of working in an international company. When making a choice I focused on high ratings at the national and international level, as well as international accreditations from recognized accreditation agencies. In brief, I can name the following reasons that helped me to make the right decision: the university's rating, the courses at the Executive MBA program and, of course, the strongest team of practicing teachers.

**There were more than 15 students in our group**, each of my colleagues who came to study on the course is an accomplished person in business with a high status in his/her career. From the first day of training, we realized that we all "speak the same language", both in matters of business and life, therefore, we still maintain warm relations and, at the right time, we can provide professional and personal support to each other, if necessary. The MBA program at KIMEP is for many not only education, but also high-quality networking. A strong supportive environment and high-quality communication is what perhaps distinguishes our alumni group.

**I combined work with studying ExMBA.** It was very convenient for me to combine full-time work with the opportunity to study on Friday evenings and weekends. I really liked the flexible schedule, the opportunity to come to lectures during holidays and weekends. The study was a pleasure and did not harm the work. When you have the choice to relax on Friday evening or go to training, and you choose training, this is an excellent discipline and further develops the skill to be in good shape and spend your free time more efficiently.

**A key component and indicator of readiness for the next career step** is the ability to develop strategic thinking and translate it into action. On the MBA program, graduates work on numerous international cases and, therefore, are perfectly prepared to solve the most non-standard tasks. The diploma itself in the modern world remains an element of status, for me personally, studying at the ExMBA program gave impetus to solving practical issues and, as a result, to increasing expertise and competence in managing a company.



**I agree with the statement that KIMEP provides education to change society.** Those who studied and study at KIMEP know the mission of this educational institution. The goal of KIMEP is to nurture educated citizens and improve the quality of life both in Kazakhstan and in neighboring countries. It all starts with the perception and our attitude to the challenges in business and life, in this regard, KIMEP qualitatively changes the paradigm and expands consciousness.

**I believe that soft-skills and leadership are skills that we gain with experience**, and it is important to always search for productive experience. At the ExMBA program

at KIMEP, training takes place among top managers and managers, of course, the exchange of experience and communication with each other has a very positive effect on strengthening leadership skills. I would also like to note large amount of courses and disciplines that affected the development of leadership skills and qualitatively changed our views on familiar issues. I believe that sustainable long-term success comes from teams where leaders reach their potential rather than wasting time and energy on things that don't excite them. But in order to become a successful employer, it is not enough to provide employees with free memberships to a fitness center, install ping-pong tables, allow them to work remotely, or open a laundry. You must put your whole soul into the work and turn it into an exciting activity. Successful companies invest in training and development of their employees, giving them the opportunity for professional growth. Without professional growth in education and discipline, it is very difficult to become a successful and respected leader.

**A person who starts a business must be an expert in what he does.** It is important from the first day of training to go into practice and train expertise in a narrow direction. To create an effective business, an idea is not enough. Its founder must have a whole range of qualities that will help manage business processes, inspire and competently guide the team to achieve their goals. Let me list for you some of the basic skills that a successful businessmen should have:

- personal characteristics of a person (this is manifested in actions and decisions)
- acquired skills (as I mentioned earlier, improving skills, both professional and personal)
- build a strong team and manage it
- have a clear and sober understanding in sales, marketing and finance
- 100% responsibility for the result
- consciousness (a successful businessmen act consciously, understands the motives of their own and others' actions, have a developed, well-pumped intuition, which helps to make decisions quickly)
- ability to think long term
- compare yourself to yourself, not to others.

**The IT market is perhaps one of the fastest growing** in the world, Kazakhstan is no exception, as we belong to the global ecosystem. Analysts who know how to work with big data in the next 3-5 years will be the most demanded specialists around the world. The data that analysts deal with is the golden niche of the present and the near future. I would also like to note that the IT sector in Kazakhstan has been actively developing in the field of telecommunications for many years. This is due to the fact that mobile operators invest a lot in the development of the industry, allocate resources for the education of specialists, adapt international expertise, and follow tendencies and trends at the global level.

**I really want the University to continue to keep the bar in the field of vocational education** and create programs that can motivate graduates not to go astray and develop all sectors of our country. For me, KIMEP is a community that has become an important part of life. I want to thank the faculty for their work and contribution to education. I wish success and good luck in the achievements of both students and teachers. This is a great work!



# TAIR NAZKHANOV, FOUNDER NAZKHANOV&PARTNERS LAW COMPANY, MLLM 2017

**I chose KIMEP because** I consider it now and when I entered as one of those universities that are leaders in the development and formation of legal culture. That is, I was very impressed with the fact that KIMEP has zero tolerance for corruption and that education was given in English, for me it was critical.

**I can't compare my KIMEP peers with other streams of KIMEP graduates,** but I studied at KazNU at two faculties and at the University of London, so I can compare my experience at these three universities. I was very lucky as all my fellow students everywhere were very wonderful guys. As for KIMEP, I was the oldest student, everyone was much younger than me, and my fellow students charged me with their energy and positive attitude, I really liked them. In the evenings I came to study, after a working day, after trials, prisons, etc., and did not feel tired at the lectures with my fellow students, I enjoyed how they were studying. They were actually very study-oriented, they were purposeful.

**I did not study at KIMEP for a formal diploma,** because at the time of admission, I was already an established lawyer, with extensive experience. I came to KIMEP in order to gain knowledge, knowledge in the field of criminal law, and I got it. It broadened my horizons and gave me the opportunity to understand more about law as such.

**In 2007 I created the Forum of Advocates,** and was actively engaged in social activities in the field of promoting legal knowledge among society. And I was faced with the fact that, unlike foreign universities, there were no legal clinics in our local universities. I was a member of the Council of Employers of the KazNU Faculty of Law. And I came across the fact that people who graduated from a university had only theoretical knowledge, which could not always be used in practice, the graduates did not have the skills to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice. Naturally, this causes difficulties in adaptation for graduates. And that is why I came up with an idea to establish a Legal Clinic. I have always treated KIMEP with great respect. In addition, my father graduated from it, then it was the Higher



Party School. That is why for me, this building has a certain traditional value. And I decided to create a Legal Clinic at KIMEP, because in my opinion the most advanced students are KIMEP students. I made a proposal to Dr. Bang and the Dean of the School of Law about the opening of a Legal Clinic. My request was supported, I also said that law firms, and in particular my firm "Nazkhanov and Partners", are ready to provide intellectual and material assistance in order to create this Clinic. And we created it. At the very beginning, we the founders from law firms and our company actively took part in the work of the Legal Clinic, students used to come to us with their requests. Later KIMEP learned how to organize the work in its Legal Clinic itself. And I am proud that I stood at the foundation of KIMEP's Legal Clinic.

**It is necessary to separate the concept of leadership** in relation to the organization management, and in relation to the leadership in one's specialization. It is very difficult to combine professional advocacy and being a leader. Because these are slightly different things. Managerial functions take a certain amount of time. It should also be borne in mind that managing lawyers is extremely difficult, since each of them is a star, because if you want your law firm to be successful, then you must work with stars, or raise future stars. My requirements are really high. I am a demanding leader. But those people who stay with me, I am not afraid to say this words, these are the people who are cooler than me, possess better skills and knowledge than me in their particular specialization. I value them very much, because thanks to them the effectiveness of the legal services provided by the law firm is achieved. The issue of leadership is also important from the point of view of the development of personal characteristics. Because, let's say if you are a lawyer, the work of a lawyer involves mostly independent work. In this case a person develops independently, as if in himself. But if you are a leader, if you want to gather people around you, then you must also develop as a person; you must think not about yourself, you must think about the people who

work with you. You must provide certain conditions for work, you must know what is happening in their family, how is their health, what are their needs, try to satisfy those needs, which can be intellectual, material, spiritual. A leader must find a common language with different people, with people with a complex character. I noticed that some professionals have a very difficult character, many of them are prone to conflict, and you need to find a common language with them. You need to put aside your interests.

**I am happy to accept KIMEP graduates for internships.**

Because KIMEP graduates are distinguished by high standards, first of all, to themselves. They are excellent students in the best sense of the word. These people are purposeful, hard working. In addition, knowledge of English is of course an advantage. The law office has certain specificity. We accept students for internships and this is not hiring. We take people for internships and train them from 6 months to a year. As for hiring, we are hiring assistants. I choose interns and assistants. First of all, these should be people who want to learn, want to gain knowledge, and who at the same time are not prone to conflict. Because one of the main problem among people, especially in our field, is the inability to negotiate. You always need to be able to negotiate with your colleagues, clients and even with the opposite side, that is, communication skills must be at a very high level. Communication skills are very important for a leader. Recently, the number of cases in the Kazakh language has been increasing. This is an objective process and we pay attention to it, we try to hire assistants for internships with such a competitive advantage as knowledge of Kazakh. Not just with knowledge, but with impeccable knowledge of the Kazakh language. People should be able to write documents in Kazakh, to write correctly, because a lawyer can be identified just by reading the paper he compiled, even without talking to him. By lawyers' papers one can determine which lawyer wrote it. That is, a person must first have a culture – the ability to write legal letters and be literate in the knowledge of the Kazakh language.

**None of the international law firms can provide legal services in English, but we can.** That is, in my law firm, among the partners there are graduates of American and English universities. Accordingly, this is our competitive advantage. With respect to criminal cases in the economic sphere, there is no such law firm as ours in Kazakhstan. Because of this, we receive requests from our partners, foreign law firms' requests that involve a Kazakh component. These are criminal cases related to the legalization of money obtained by criminal means, with



frauds. We even work on high profile cases related to our former officials who are now hiding abroad. There is a demand for our services, and this is due to the fact that we occupy our niche, which no one can fill in Kazakhstan.

**From the childhood, my parents taught me to work,**

to treat work with respect. In addition, I worked as an investigator, at that time we did not have the concept of time management, we prepared a plan for each criminal case. And before the start of the working day, we made a plan of what we would do during the day. And we strictly followed it. After I became a lawyer, I continued this habit. It should also be taken into account that as a university student I studied at two faculties simultaneously. I had to go to a lecture at the Faculty of Philology and immediately go to a lecture at the Faculty of Law, and they were in different buildings. But I was able to graduate from both faculties and from one of them with honors.

**As for multitasking,** I don't like doing multiple things at the same time, it's impossible and not right. My working day starts at 5 am. I clearly plan my own day, and divide it on the time that relates to learning, on the time that relates to work, on the time that relates to sports, and on the time that relates to the family. I try not to mix one with the other. I have a certain amount of time devoted to each activity. And accordingly, I carry out all my tasks, respectively, with the strategic and tactical goals. That is, the fulfillment of daily goals should lead me to the realization of strategic goals. Well, I am a practicing Muslim and 5 times prayer disciplines a person. You always think about what you will do in between prayers. And of course everything works out, and if it doesn't work out, then it's the will of God.

# ELNORA ROZMUKHAMEDOVA, FOUNDER OF ER10, BAI 2011, MAI 2017

**My admission to KIMEP was a fateful event.** It started with the fact that I learned about this University at the age of 14, being a schoolgirl in Tashkent. I came across leaflets that my father brought from a business trip for my brother. I saw pictures of happy students who were so cosmic for me, who transmitted a story of the International University, that there are such happy, light, creative faces, and, probably, I had such a visualization and I thought of KIMEP and decided that when I grow up, I will try to enter KIMEP. I lived in Tashkent, studied at one of the central schools and dreamed of becoming a journalist. When the time has come to apply to the University, the reality introduced its own adjustments, I decided that I would enter the Faculty of Humanities in Tashkent, and tried to obtain a scholarship. But one day, during the last school days, I came to the school in our uniform. I was one of the few students who came in the uniform, and our teachers sent those students to the exhibition. There I saw a KIMEP team that was engaged in the recruitment of applicants, and they gathered guys who would like to take exams in Tashkent. I immediately refused, although I was delighted to see the KIMEP booth. They offered me to try my English, I talked to them, they were surprised by my level of English, and I decided to test my English. As a result, I was accepted to KIMEP, but the fate turned out so that I stayed in Tashkent for another year due to family reasons. However, a year later I realized that I want to leave the city, we called KIMEP, and they told us that my contract is valid, that I had an academic leave automatically and they are waiting for me. I arrived during summer intensives, and I was walking around the campus, and a manager from the marketing department came up to me and said you are so cheerful, positive, you have an interesting appearance, let's take a picture of you for a brochure. And I ended up on a brochure, the similar brochure which I saw at the age of 14. In general, the visualization was fully realized, I ended up at KIMEP and on the brochure, and spent the most amazing 3.5 years of my life. But most importantly, I made the right decision, international journalism in the form in which I later needed it. I actually received the entire level of knowledge that professionals need.

**After some time I returned to KIMEP as a teacher,** I also often come as a guest lecturer and I can say that I saw some dynamics and differences in our streams.



I can say that my peers were the most versatile, the most charged people. On the one hand, we came and found ourselves in the environment where there were many activities, when every month a new event takes place at KIMEP. I'm now looking at all my colleagues and what are they doing now, what positions they occupy – these people are without borders. They can, roughly speaking, graduate from BSc but do creative projects, work at an embassy, organize city exhibitions, and make festivals. In fact, we were all without borders and KIMEP allowed us to think even more broadly. When I was studying journalism, I was the president of the Pencil Student Organization. It was kind of crazy idea to do creative exhibitions and find artists in a business school. And we did it. And it served as the basis for the fact that I always think wider and try to do something new.

**At KIMEP we were taught critical thinking,**

to check and double-check any information. When we studied there were no social networks in such amount, we learned to find some sources in the Internet. Therefore, thinking critically and checking and double-checking all sources is the first thing. The second is to analyze the information. Research Methods was the most boring subject turned out to be the most useful, at least in my field, in PR, journalism, you really dig deeper and get to the point, it has shaped me as a professional. And this is also thanks to our professors, who have taught us skills of analytical and critical thinking, finding and verifying information and exploring constantly. I remember the first subject in my first year was anthropology. It would seem as an unnecessary subject for an international journalist but it also taught me to some extent to observe, get to the bottom of something, and analyze.

**I studied both undergraduate and graduate programs.**

In my bachelor's degree I developed a general understanding of communications, networking and PR, and creating public relations. When I started to work from the 2nd year, I realized that I want to dive deeper into the working in public relations, so I chose a narrower area of study for my master's degree. Working on the master's degree thesis helps you become the best in your field. Otherwise, you won't be able to submit your project to KIMEP. At the undergraduate level it's more about all-round development, it is communication, it is networking, and it is advancing myself from various sides. At the master's program I really liked the concentration on my project and the high acceptance rate. My master's degree at KIMEP became the basis of my research, which I later used in the format of training and educating people.

**After our undergraduate studies at KIMEP** we came out not just as journalists, writing people, editors. We came out with an understanding of what media management is, how to manage a project, what kind of people are needed, plus the opportunity to practice in different places. During my studies I already had an understanding that I would have my own business in the field of media but I constantly seemed to lack experience. And now, after 12 years in various positions, including leadership positions, I came to understanding that this niche, namely online publications about IT startups



was free. Then in 2017 there were no IT media in Kazakhstan that would meet the criteria of a good quality internet journal for people's education, inspiration. Perhaps my experience and my strategic perception of this area plus business skills helped me to put everything together. The networking is also important. What is interesting, now, when 10–15 years have already passed after graduation from the University, I can make one call to my classmate and the issue will be resolved – we built good relations and support each other. And here, too, I am grateful to KIMEP.

**I employ KIMEP graduates and students in my company.**

In particular, I hired my student Arina. She is a 22-year-old graduate. She came to us as an intern. In six months, she trained and became a producer and she leads projects with good quality and competence. There is a view that KIMEP graduates rate themselves very highly in terms of wages and privileges. Yes, it's not bad because I also valued high myself. But when you are an employer, it is a bit difficult to prove that one also needs experience to get a high salary. Nonetheless all the guys with whom I collaborated, they understand that at the initial stage you need to gain experience, and then provide for some of your expectations and needs. Therefore, in my case, those guys who came to us for internship and who stayed with us, they understand that you need to gain professional skills and have experience in analyzing information, these interns learn very quickly, and this is a distinctive feature of KIMEP graduates. Arina practically from the beginning mastered a new profession in six months, yes, it is at the intersection of journalism and PR communication but completely new skills. She absolutely coped with this, and wants to continue to grow. Yes, I am happy to hire, I will hire and I want to give opportunities to the KIMEP graduates.

**I am a promoter of strategic thinking,** and especially for the heads of the companies. With this respect you immediately treat promotion, firstly, as a job, and secondly, as a strategy. Those companies that come to the market seriously and for a long time, should think first of all about the promotion strategy, and not about the tools. Because as a rule, they immediately create pages on social networks, put on some video posts for promotion, this is a mistake. It is very important to understand what we say, and how we say it, how our

words spoken today will resonate in 3 years, in 5 years, what are our core values? Today, people come to the company and customers and staff, for values, and not for services and goods. We want to buy what resonates with us. Therefore, I am a promoter of strategic thinking in the field of PR. One always needs a strategy, then brand design based on positioning, and only then promotion. This is why, I see my mission in entrepreneurship in Kazakhstan and Almaty in putting things in order in matters of PR, so that managers and performers have a slightly different attitude to this in terms of quality and sustainability.

**Any field of activity requires a high level of energy and emotional resources.** In my case, I always have the option to stop. I have the opportunity to go out with my children to the mountains on the weekends. I really love nature, meditation, and reboot, I believe that changing activities gives you more energy. And now I am at the point where I am completely satisfied with what I am doing. Of course, there are some minor annoyances and difficulties – but I understand that this is entirely my responsibility. When you do what you love, you lose much less energy and in fact you don't need to wait for X hour to rest, in a year or six months, when the vacation comes, and you can have opportunity to have pause during the week, reboot and change areas of activity. And dancing, by the way, thanks to KIMEP, when I was a student, I had an opportunity to teach dances to girls in the dormitory in order to be able to earn extra money. And this desire to dance, throw out unnecessary emotions through the body and return energy is also still with me. And therefore, it is very important here not to forget about the body, about emotional intelligence, about spirituality and then everything will be good!

**Always ready to share my experience in terms of public speaking,** to help master this skill. Briefly speaking, when clients come to me, including managers, everyone has this impostor syndrome. I always say that every person is unique by nature, he has something to say. Therefore maintain the state of a champion in yourself before going on stage, praise yourself, thank yourself, this is all about emotions. People are not born ready-made presenters, actors, or bloggers. On the technical side it's a skill. How you hold your body, how your articulation is developed, you need to include public speaking in your schedule, treat it like going to the gym, and every day do articulation, listen how you speak, record yourself on video. This is 100% a common practice, anyone can become a speaker for a million if he trains every day and most importantly, if he really wants to share his message with the world. You need to find topics that really are your mission in life and,

purely technically, improve your speaking skills. I would advise everyone to record public speaking, people underestimate this tool.

**If we talk about my business about Er10,** I closed it every 2 months in my head. Because when you take responsibility for 10 people of employees, and you take responsibility for their lives, their salaries, but probably the vision of that final point, the goal which I want to reach constantly keeps me in good shape and allows me to find new opportunities. As a good friend of mine says, "one problem – a thousand solutions", therefore, when you feel like you are about to give up, you need to find a new solution and move on.

**Over the years of working in a personal brand** on the public personality of the leader, and becoming a certified coach, I came to understanding that the resource state of each person is different. What is the resource state, it is when we have some kind of emotion that gives us the maximum resource. For someone it is satisfaction, for another person it could be happiness, love, or desire to save. That is, there is no ideal recipe. The most important thing is to find your most comfortable state when you work along the path with least resistance. The less stress, the less efforts out of exhaustion – the better. And here is the formula for success – this is, probably, to find a resource state, to find an area in which you want to constantly grow and develop, which you enjoy, and most importantly, this is probably not to go astray, go your own way. Because professionalism comes when you go in one direction and do not change profession every 2–3 months.

**I wish students to treat the study years at the university as one of the brightest periods in their lives.** Because here you get pleasure from communicating with peers and teachers, as quarantine has shown, there is no better thing than live communication. And now, looking back at that period, I advise you to stop, be in the moment, enjoy events, courses, maybe even be more attentive to what they give, as they give a lot, and get involved in some deeper nuances of learning English. Yes, you can finish KIMEP at some average or above average level but you can take much more than this level. Make connections, the more contacts – the more communication in adulthood. Responsibility for an active student life and the development of the University lies with the students, as well as with the teachers and staff. During our student years we created special atmosphere at KIMEP, I also advise current students to create such atmosphere so that the University will be staying in the leading position.

# SEDRED ASRETOV, CEO AT RANKING.KZ, BSC 2018

**I am from St. Petersburg**, so, when I came to Almaty, all the recommendations of relatives were about the three universities – KIMEP, KBTU and Nazarbayev University. Considering that I am a “born and bred” humanitarian, I chose KIMEP, because the social sciences programs of KIMEP are top rank in Kazakhstan; plus an international diploma – the choice was quite obvious. I entered KIMEP in 2012, graduated in 2017, but received diploma in February 2018.

**My intake is 2012**, yet my class seemed to be kind of an “old school” one” – the last class not really affected by controversial ‘innovations’ of the Ministry of Education and Science – no necessity to write a diploma paper at the undergraduate level, no threshold scores to be eligible to take finals. Our class was very friendly, everyone knew each other quite well; as a BCB student I had a lot of friends from the Law School. All my best friends come from KIMEP actually.

**As a student I was not really so great in academic performance** or super-active in student organizations, but the key point to be proud of is being a KIMEPian in general – it gives a lot of benefits in the labor market, in our society at large. Extracurricular life was active, all student organizations well developed, many intellectual and entertainment activities, so it was a great experience – with a substantial academic background, but also endless networking, a growth-supportive environment. I think that this is exactly what distinguishes KIMEP and its graduates – it somehow gets built into us, one can easily recognise a KIMEPian, even outside the campus. There is a certain KIMEP identity we all can be proud of.

**I majored in Finance** and, given that I am a humanities person, it was challenging for me. Still, the more complex the course was, the more practical application I see in it now. I always loved the courses taught by Dr. Olga Uzhegova, like Corporate Finance, or Operations Management by Yevgenia Kim, despite their complexity. These classes implied some stressful tasks or presentations, but I still use certain techniques I learned there. Financial Institutions Markets by Maya Katenova and some other courses related to investment evaluations were difficult – I don’t mean difficult is bad. I mean the more difficult the specific course is for you personally – the harder you work on it, so it sinks into your mind deeper. There were many technicalities and calculations,



but it was all taught in a very exciting way, without even a bit of monotonously going through a textbook. There was a lot of cases, thanks to the rich experience of our professors – they always gave examples from their personal cases and past projects, so academic theory has always been enriched by high-quality practical examples. This motivated students to self-development, to making up their own minds – not just a theoretically presented problems, but the ones with immediate applications to the stock market, to management and so on.

**Regarding the statement that KIMEP delivers education to change the society.** This is definitely true, no matter how immodest it may sound. Some may say this is too pretentious, but there are many specific examples of our alumni taking high positions in the ministries and governmental agencies, in businesses locally and internationally, actually changing the society. There is no need to fabricate cases – they are around us. KIMEP clearly established an academic environment aimed at forming the layer of creatively thinking professionals in the society. It definitely at least changes the mentality of students, which, further is projected to everyone they meet, communicate or work with. In any working environment, if there is a KIMEP graduate, there is an immediate connection of minds and some kind of support.

**On leadership.** I’m certainly flattered to be called a leader, but this word is actually so abstract – there is no special methodology to become a leader; at

the same time a leader is quickly recognized in any environment. Being a boss is not equal to being a leader. The leader is rather a core that everyone is drawn to, an authority having no need to use the authoritarian levers, a symbiosis and balance of being soft and rigid in using the management tools, so that your team can trust you. One can head a team, but a true leadership comes up only after experiencing “combat conditions”. Only in difficult situations that test your personality your true qualities are manifested. In a positive environment, one can be sweet and good-natured, but “as soon as the going gets tough – the tough gets going”. So, leadership techniques can be developed (KIMEP actually is very successful in delivering its Leadership Development Program), but certain inner qualities of personality have to be there to become a leader. A leader is a self-driver without a need to be motivated by someone from outside. Some are very skilled professionals, but not leaders – they are performers in need of having clear tasks, deadlines and specifics to be set for them. There is also a need of some pressure of circumstances, because a positive and too ‘rosy’ environment is a lousy driver and motivator for people. In the bottom line, a leader is the person knowing how to properly balance and manage all the senses, to make strategic decisions with a cool head, having a “gut feeling” for others and being a strong professional in own field – there is no way to be an amateur and to have and appropriate authority at the same time.

**My career in Ranking.kz started from coming as a trainee** right after graduating from KIMEP. It was my first official job, and I had to undergo a rather tough selection process. I had some experience of being interviewed by banks and financial institutions; I all at once abandoned the idea of being employed by the Big4 companies – I wanted a different environment. Yes, a career in the Big4 and the experience it gives you are great, but I just had other goals and objectives. So, I started as an intern, and grew to the position of a CEO in 2.5 years. I view it not as a major success story, but rather as certain career checkpoints that I passed. It was not a story of momentary success or a lucky coincidence – it was 100% hard work, I had to show initiative, involvement and motivation to the possible maximum. I took on much more than the average workload. For me it was a new environment, a huge stress, because as a student you somehow feel the support of friends, community, professors, you are given certain concessions. At work you are left to yourself in an absolutely unpredictable environment. The 1st year was nothing but a struggle for survival – it always seemed that I am not working hard enough, that someone always does something better than I do. Actually this “imposter syndrome” haunts me until now, and thanks to it, I probably manage not to stagnate and always absorb some new knowledge.

See, whenever you start to engage in narcissism and complacency – it is a clear sign that you are on the way to stagnation and degradation.

**What led me to this position** was extremely hard work and interpersonal skills. This one is an important aspect, sometimes a key one, because not every skilled expert becomes a top manager – it also requires soft skills that KIMEP also actively promotes and teaches students. My presentation skills helped me, both at the selection stage, and to this day, since now I am mostly involved into managerial work. Still, I personally make reports and presentations for investors – the only thing that I do not delegate to anyone. My main responsibilities are communication with partners, clients, setting goals, and so on. At the start, you put a lot of efforts into building up your hard skills, yet the higher you climb the career ladder, the less “manual work” you have, and the need for well-developed soft skills grows. In networking, in sales, in strategic management, the horizons expand and hard patterns fade away. Before, I used to neglect that for the sales to go well the salespeople actually need to be well-educated. I also thought that HR function is absolutely redundant, but then I started recruiting employees, and humbly realized that it is much easier to be on your own in a job search than to be on the other side and interview many people a day. Thus, I understood the importance of an HR function, which, unfortunately, is not valued appropriately in our country, being perceived as office work and bureaucracy. A real HR manager is a great psychologist able to understand someone’s inner troubles, strengths and weaknesses in advance. I had to learn this from my own experience, going through all ‘trials and tribulations’ – I came as an intern in the midst of an internal crisis, and, then at the position of CEO in 2020, we had to face a pandemic-related crisis like everyone else. I had to hire and fire employees – a difficult psychological exercise requiring to argue competently, to be unbiased, and to make informed decisions. I had sleepless nights, but any manager goes through this when there is a real need to. The team is the key in any process or business – a technology can be imposed on anything, but without the right people and trusting relationships between coworkers it is hard to set up an effective workflow. A team working well without a sabotage or unhealthy competition is worth a lot – it brings efficiency to the entire business, and you don’t have to waste your time and efforts on showdowns, castling and turnover. These were the key efforts I had to make.

**Our company originally was a startup formed in 2013.** Back then the concept of venture capital and investments in Kazakhstan was at the level of definitions. Now the presence of venture funds, of foreign and

private investors is incomparably higher. Our founders managed to attract serious investments. Our business model has been pivoted many times because in our age of rapid technological development and of changing geopolitical trends, it is impossible to follow just one pattern. If you come from a creative IT environment, you should always be at the forefront of the latest trends, so our business model is constantly reshaped and changed. Ranking.kz does monitoring and analytics in Kazakhstan and in the entire region. We provide data analysis and visualization to clients, and based on our expertise and analysis, we make recommendations and promote their services and products. We did not immediately come to this model. Initially, it was a subscription to our database, the technological core of our company – we accumulated a huge amount of data in dynamics, broken into more than 70 indicators disclosing the entire life of Kazakhstan. Back then, the market was not ready for such a model, it is not quite ready even now, so we went into a slightly different but adjacent area. We are an IT company, yet we render the services of consulting, media and promotion – so we always wear several hats at the same time. We understand the burden of responsibility – we work with open data that can greatly affect a particular area of activity or an organization, such as a bank, a ministry, etc. Reputational risks are on a par with financial ones, and we have a very well-established business process, with all decisions made based on a data driven approach. We work by a B2B principle with large businesses, we are just useless for SMEs and individual entrepreneurs, our services are expensive, only large companies or quasi state-owned companies may afford it – the financial sector, telecommunications, governmental bodies.

**2020 was a turning point for us** also – we, like everybody else were affected by the pandemic. The only comforting fact was that we are not alone in such a difficult situation. It revealed all the strengths and weaknesses of our team and of particular employees – kind of an all-sided super stress test. Still, we were much better prepared in terms of labor organization than the entire market or than our clients. A couple of years before the pandemic, we very thoroughly redeveloped our entire infrastructure, so that we could work regardless of location and not lose efficiency. During the first lockdown, everyone just took their laptops and went home, and nothing stopped, nothing collapsed. At the same time, our clients, like banks or large organizations, mostly just didn't understand what to do. It is obvious – the larger the company is, the less mobile and the more clumsy it becomes, with a lot of bureaucracy and delays of coordination and decision-making. Respectively, during the global crisis and decrease of profits, companies can't afford any additional analytics and promotion. We faced the fact that our entire clientele had to take

a pause and to understand what to do. Yet this became a starting point for a boost of further development for us. Such super-stressful situations force you to make strong-willed decisions that you would never thought of in a favorable situation. This gives the opportunity to conquer the new heights. Despite of the pressure, panic and fear, those who were able to digest it all and make the right decisions seem to have become stronger – there are enough cases of players in the market who coped with this well. Unfortunately, many SMEs, individual entrepreneurs, retail businesses faced a severe blow. On a global scale this crisis, of course, brought nothing positive, but in particular cases, for instance for us, it gave an opportunity to completely review all processes, to try to digitalize possible, to become more mobile. It sobered us up as a sign that everything is changing – the world, the economies, the industries, with a new approach to management, like hybrid offices, remote work and so on. For example, to this day, 90% of our team works remotely. When the opportunity was given to return to the office, no one wanted to, and this did not affect efficiency of work in any way.

**Regarding the current events in Ukraine** – of course, for all of us, this was a shock and a great tragedy. We had flashbacks from the 2020 and thought again of the period of pauses, incomprehensible decisions and unnerving communications with our clients. However, this did not happen. There were a couple of weeks of hassle and miscommunication – everyone was just waiting. This, of course, sounds cynical and not very appropriate, but everyone just started to get used to what is happening and to adapt to working in the new conditions. We are closely monitoring the economy throughout our region so that we can somehow preventively communicate and give recommendations to our clients, but in general this is not comparable to what it was in 2020. We were lucky enough not to have clients involved into export/import logistics. Again we understood that the world now is absolutely unpredictable and it is impossible to construe long-term strategies for 5 or 10 years, as everyone did before. We switched to some tactical decisions because it is simply inexpedient, and even dangerous to develop long-term strategies and products.

**Regarding my own success** – first of all, I am grateful to the Almighty for everything that happened to me, I am grateful to my mother, to relatives who supported me throughout my entire student life and in career. The word "success" is something too loud for me – these are kind of checkpoints of my career and life path, depending on the combination of factors... A good school, and a good university, support from loved ones, motivation, the ability to keep myself in a good shape, a hunger for knowledge – this all combined leads to some kind of achievements, including success.

# MADI SAKEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT FRONTIER KZ LLC, BLLB 2019

## **Why did I choose KIMEP?**

At that time, and even now, KIMEP had a good reputation. There were not so many universities that I considered in terms of quality, like Nazarbayev University, etc. Ultimately, having decided on a specialty, I made a choice in favor of KIMEP, because it was interesting in its approach to the educational system in terms of presence of foreign teachers, available courses, and opportunities to choose a course. I also won a KIMEP scholarship and it was a decisive factor.

**I got the feeling that our stream was a conscious and active generation** which, on the one hand, understands that studying is not the only priority because many friends were engaged in extracurricular, volunteer activities, and internships. One gets the impression that these students are not purely immersed in cramming, this is a generation of active, independent people who organized different student organizations at KIMEP, or headed them. Now, watching my peers, I get the impression that this is the generation that knows what they want to do. There was such a stereotype when students dream of working in Big4 or Mars, and for many there was a stereotype that this is the best place to make internship or work. You can say about your generation that there is an understanding that the job market does not end there. This is probably the generation that overcome this stereotype, and looks a little wider at the market and at their capabilities. And about my colleagues at the Law School, I can say that there are more students who are imbued with the values of what they were taught. That is, in addition to their professional knowledge, they are genuinely into the values of law, justice, and the rule of law.

**Education at KIMEP gave me hard skills and taught structural and critical thinking.** On the one hand, this is entrenched within the course of studying jurisprudence.



This is a key skill that is the basis of specific legal knowledge, the ability to think structurally and systematically, to understand what the system is built from, and how to complete it, disassemble it in parts. And on the other hand, there are a number of social sciences and other courses that you take in addition to your main subjects, as economics and philosophy, without which critical thinking cannot be created. On the other hand, the experience of studying at KIMEP provided presentation and public speaking skills, this is what teachers naturally ask when you come across assignments on certain topics. There were also additional opportunities at the University in the form of Moot Court Championships – simulation of trials, debate tournaments, and theater.

**Participation in various extracurricular activities sets the flexibility of thinking.** You see different activities, you absorb different skills and, in principle, you encounter different people. But along the way, doing all this, you create in yourself the confidence that any business is feasible for you. It is feasible for you to assemble a team, it is feasible for you to work with different people, or to start your own business, or to retrain. In my personal experience, although I am a lawyer by education, I am now the owner and CEO of an IT company that deals with fairly new things on the market, Big Data, and analytics. This would not have happened if some flexibility of thinking had not been created while studying at the University.

**I am most proud of the fact that I was able to participate in quite difficult competitions,** this is the European and International Debating Championship, the global Moot Championship Court – Jessup Cup, in public international law. I managed to create this challenge for myself and to organize such an experience for myself. Partly, the University helped, and, it was possible to attract sponsors, fund raising, this is also a good experience that was laid down during studies. I am proud

that it had an impact on others. At that time, we were reviving the Moot Court culture which, at some point, disappeared or was not established in its normal form at the Law School. And as far as I know, after we organized local championships and after our trips abroad, this practice continued and I hope that it is still developing.

**When I started working in an IT company, I already received the necessary specific knowledge** about certain technologies, technological processes in the course of work. It was such a smooth transition when I began to be interested in other areas, not limiting my career to just law. I was a member of the working group which was working on the legislation that regulate issues related to digital technologies. While working on this legislation for 2 years, I immersed in the IT market, in the organization of digital technologies and processes, and at some point there was an opportunity to lead a small IT team. I was invited as a manager, but later it was transformed from simple project management to being a CEO at IT company.

**Our company has two main activities**, these are data management software, that is, the collection, processing and storage of large amounts of data, large processes associated with this, on the other hand, these are analytical products, machine learning models. How does big data help? In general, this can be summarized as data driven decision making, now one way or another, all processes, regardless of the industry, tend to be data driven so that the processes are visible, that is, all kinds of data are taken into account at any stage of production, so that decisions are made based on this data. In a business context this is usually a matter of cutting costs or increasing revenue. In the context of industrial companies, this is everything related to smart planning, infrastructure, purchase of equipment, forecasting the operation of equipment, how much will be produced, how many costs will arise due to the deterioration of one or another infrastructure. In the context of non-industrial large companies, this is most often work with the client base in terms of preventing frauds, both on the part of employees and clients, this is work on keeping the flow, when big data helps to predict the customers which are more likely to drop out and continue to work with this client segment, simultaneously understanding the reasons for dissatisfaction, or it is an opportunity to work with the client base in terms of increasing income: sell to specific segments, or resell any products in relation to specific client segments. In relation to the state this is also an important process that is just getting on its feet. It is the ability to organize state administration based on a database. These are all sorts of applications, and in the context of what we are working on, this is an opportunity to better monitor and predict inflation. In another project, in the context of a pandemic, big data allowed the Almaty

municipality to better identify risks in terms of disease waves and specific outbreaks. Where specific prevention measures and resources should be prioritized. This is an opportunity to understand, based on data, which segments of small and medium-sized businesses need to be supported to a greater extent, where residents of a particular area are limited in various types of services or access to objects of social significance. Ultimately, in the context of the state this is an opportunity to better prioritize your work, better plan certain development measures on the part of the state.

**What I like most about my work is the opportunity to create** and see the embodiment of my ideas, to be useful. I like my work because it is designed to measure the effect and you have the opportunity to see benefits which data analytics has brought to data driven processes in the context of state's social projects or in the context of business and its economic indicators.

**I would wish students and graduates to maintain and develop the flexibility of their thinking**, to create opportunities for themselves to assess how flexible your thinking is. Constantly challenge yourself to this subject. This is important because the world is volatile, each of us may face an unforeseen situation or an unforeseen opportunity that should not be missed. Therefore, you need to be prepared and be flexible. By flexibility of thinking, I mean to develop comprehensively and be ready to master a new area of knowledge. Develop financial or business analytics, even if this is not your work. Have an interest in the economic and social processes that take place even if it does not directly concern you, and it seems to us that this is not clear and we will not understand the truth. Try to critically evaluate certain sources of information. Be interested in politics and culture, and science and, in general, new technologies and areas of knowledge. Secondly, do not underestimate the importance of hard skills. Everything that is connected with a particular science should be of interest, wherever possible – to keep yourself in good shape in mathematical, near-mathematical disciplines, well, try not to miss those hard skills with which you started. That is, if you are a lawyer, try to create a foundation for yourself of legal knowledge. If you are an economist, then create solid knowledge in economics. Don't underestimate the value of hard skill of knowledge, this is compared to a popular trend now, when people think that soft skills are more important in achieving success. I would focus on hard skills. Soft skills will develop in parallel. Well, the last thing is to think about what your values are, constantly update your moral compass, not be indifferent to political and social processes, not be apolitical, and look at these issues through the prism of your values that you have created for yourself.

# BEKNUR RAKHMANKULOV, FOUNDER OF ALATAU STREETWEAR, BLLB 2017, MLLM 2020

**I would like to express my gratitude to KIMEP** for the opportunity to learn public speaking and presentations. There were lots of presentations during the courses, it was also possible to participate in the debate club. And once I took a subject called Rhetoric in the Kazakh language, and as part of this course, I spoke at one event in the Great Hall. The program was constantly changing there: some participants came, and some - didn't, and I had to cross them out, then someone came again and I had to add that person again. I had such a beautiful speech, I was delivering it beautifully with an expression and at one moment I just read out what I had already read, and it was so obvious, everyone immediately began to smile and I continued with the words "As I have already said ...", the whole hall began to laugh, there were about 500 people. With time I realized that, in the moment, you don't need to correct the mistake, you just need to accept it. In that situation, at first I felt very embarrassed, I thought it was a failure. But now, when I remember this incident, I understand that after that situation I was not afraid at all, the worst thing had already happened, everyone was already laughing and it's okay, I survived.

**I noticed that the students who came after my stream** seemed to have more enthusiasm for brain games. I witnessed that these guys were constantly signing up for some competitions in Astana, Tajikistan, Belarus, and America. And concerning the students, who were studying prior to us, I can't say that among them there were fewer, let's say, smart people, for some reason there was no teamwork, but there were cool parties. I remember this for sure, because when I entered, in 2011, I have a feeling that there were more grandiose parties than later in the upcoming years. At the same time, the previous generations of students succeeded in creating students organisations, like KADA, Legal Clinic, and others. While the students who came later did not create such organizations. This is what I could notice if we talk about the difference. One gets the feeling that the students before us could collectively create things, and the students after my stream were more interested in some kind of academic trips.



**I combined studies and work.** I took a subject Digital Graphics in Business, taught by Dr. Uldana Baizyldayeva. And I am very grateful to her, because even though it was an optional subject, but after completing it, I was using this knowledge in my part-time job. I worked for Association of Higher Educational Institutions of Kazakhstan, they entrusted me with their books so that I had to customize the pictures there to fit their needs. And for this job I received very good salary, although the work was not so difficult. I had to make a bunch of pictures in a short time, for instance, a thousand pictures in two days. And it was cool when it was out of midterms, then it was easy to organize it: just went to a lecture, then hurrying back, not stopping anywhere and avoiding chatting with anyone, coming home, having a quick lunch and immediately getting into work, and making these pictures until night. The next day, the same thing, and so in two days it was possible to complete the volume. Sometimes I woke up very early, that is, I slept for 4 and a half hours. But I didn't go to bed late, on the contrary, I went to bed much earlier and got up something around 2 am and then made pictures until morning. This is how I organized my time. And during the midterms, yes it was difficult. It was necessary to prepare for the midterms very well in advance. I tried not to miss lectures and seminars, because if you don't skip lessons, at least you will get a pass for sure. This is the strategy I built and combined.

**I initially wanted to become an architect,** I liked to draw and paint. But it turned out that my uncle proposed to help with the payment, and my mother insisted on KIMEP. Mom asked if I could cope with my studies at KIMEP and I replied that yes, I should try, and so I entered KIMEP. Obtained knowledge of jurisprudence helps, at least I don't get confused in moments when there is something related to taxes or changes in the legislation, I can quickly find it, read it myself. When there is a need for some kind of contract, I can do that as we were taught to do all this at KIMEP. That is why I don't say that I wasted my time, no, I think that I got a great academic experience and even though I don't work in this sphere, the theory of law, all this knowledge, help me to somehow navigate through life .

**During my studies I participated in the Moot Court Club.** Thanks to the members of this club, I visited many places while participating in legal competitions. Our team travelled twice to America, to Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Astana, and here in Almaty there were also several competitions. It was very interesting event, I really enjoyed it. In the CIS countries and in our country, our team was at the top. In Belarus, we lost to the Russian team due to a minor mistake, we misinterpreted one sentence and it had a detrimental effect on the result. Even the judges at the end said that we were leading and lost due to an unfortunate mistake. In America, it is more difficult to win, because they have a different system of entering to universities. If in Kazakhstan, students enter a university at the age of 18 and graduate at 22, in the USA, they go to a university at 22, which means they are much more mature, plus it is their native language. For instance, one american student at the competition told us that he had graduated from a high school, after that graduated from a college with a major in law, worked as an assistant to a judge, to a prosecutor, worked some time in private practice, and then went to the university, and at the university decided to take part in Jessup. And is it really possible to compare, in fact, a person who is more mature, has extensive experience and us, who were going there on enthusiasm. And nonetheless we were marked in the ratings, and given a lot of compliments for speaking. In the CIS, yes, we are very strong, because everyone is of the same age.

**The hardest thing is to change yourself.** Because often you want to complain about something or blame someone else. But it's hard to admit that the problem is because of you. The hardest part was working with people. There were very high expectations and I really thought that people just do everything themselves. In fact, they do not understand what is going on in your head. And you have to pay a lot of attention to people,

and then they will take up some tasks that you did. But if you do not know how to pay enough attention to people, then there will be no result. Not because they are bad, but simply because the interaction between people is happening in that way. And I was setting aside this lesson for a very long time and now I understand that it was me. You need to be patient, you need to be a friend, and you just need to clearly communicate everything, and show the entire scope of work very clearly, and convey the importance of these tasks because every person wants to be someone, and not just a performer, let's say so. You need to not just assign tasks, but assign a person to a responsible role and frankly tell him: I trust you as a partner, and not as a subordinate. But in order to come to this, you must first admit to yourself that now you are not the main person, roughly speaking, now the people are the main, and you are the coordinator, you just have to explain tasks very clearly to everyone, establish communications, and then you will notice how your work is going very well, quickly, efficiently, if any problems arise, they are solved locally, and you just have to be in touch and set the general pace. Until you understand this moment, you will do everything yourself, get nervous, run, try to be on time everywhere, hate life, blame everyone but yourself. I think that moment was the most important insight.

**Most of the time I create design myself.** But I consult with the guys who like clothes, prints, who follow the trends and then we come to a common decision. Sometimes I can create something that they do not like, then they justify that it will not work and we refuse from such ideas. And since 2012, I have been drawing in graphic programs, basically sitting in Pinterest, analyzing what is happening on the site, sometimes I just write which prints are trendy this year. I analyze all this information, then I look at trends in Kazakhstan, as world trends come to Kazakhstan with delay, then I combine everything and create a product. When you create design you must do it from the client's point of view. You can make oversized T-shirts, but then people over 35, even 30, are not your target audience. But youth under 30 - they will buy it with pleasure. The company currently has 6 people. I do all the design work, draw a sketch, then the designer-technologist sews the model. Then we order an image, put it on the product and see how successful the product is, taking into account its cost and sale price. If everything is successful, then we start production.

**I believe in just 4 questions:** Who are you selling to? What are you selling? How do you sell? At what stages do you sell? If you follow these 4 questions, you can take on any project. First of all, always "who", not "what". Many people make a mistake here. Recently I had a

meeting with a guy, he says I'll buy 15 sewing machines, I say you don't have to buy them, you just need to find a good atelier, buy a T-shirt in the Mega, bring it to the atelier and ask to sew exactly the same, they will sew it for you. You do not need to have your own equipment and people to start doing something, you just need to understand who you are doing it for. If for young people - then something youthful, if for adults, then something more restrained, because it is in this age category that people begin to meet business contacts and they prefer to look more impressive. Then you ask the question "What can I sell to this person?" If this is a young person, then an oversized T-shirt, if an older person, then a standard-cut T-shirt. Next step is asking yourself "How do I sell it?" It often happens that people place an order, receive a product, and then do not know how to sell it. This is how our brain works, it thinks now I will open the door and enter the room, and the point is to first find the room, because if there is no room, then there is no door. And how to do it? Often people reply: "through Instagram", but Instagram is also just a platform, you can't just post photos on Instagram and immediately sell the product. Visit all the shopping centers, find contacts who will sell your product. Someone will agree, you leave your product to him, and during a month a person will

be selling it. And the last question is "at what stages", you need to set yourself "midterms", roughly speaking, some kind of intermediate deadlines. The deadline has come - do analyze your activities. Have you correctly answered the questions to whom you sell, what you sell, how you sell, and what are the deadlines? If there is an error somewhere, the whole cycle repeats again, and over and over again. I often meet 40 year old entrepreneurs, they are so tired and when you talk to them they always talk about commerce in a realistic, pragmatic way, like in a joke: "I thought it was hard for me to work 5/7, because of this I decided to start my own business, now I work 7 days out of 7".

**Mistakes constantly arise**, you have to take on the responsibility for them. At first you blame others, then you begin to realize that you need to blame yourself, and you try again, and this "again" is simply endless. Until the picture becomes more or less clear. The hardest thing is at the very beginning. It's hard to admit to yourself that you won't be a lawyer, it's hard to tell the relatives, who expected that with such cool diploma you would go to work for a big company or organization, whereas you will sell T-shirts instead. But I decided to do what I like the most and I am excited to be on this path.



# DINMUKHAMMET ZHOLDYBAY, ENTREPRENEUR, BISB 2021

## **At the time of entering KIMEP, I already had a technical specialty.**

I chose the BISB program, in short, this is IT management. I studied at Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) with a major in computer science, and I won Olympiads, took 1st place in the Asian IT Championship. I knew how to create projects, but I did not know how to sell them, how to communicate with investors and develop a business. Both KIMEP and the program interested me precisely in this respect. It was a new program at KIMEP. I also won a scholarship of N. Aliyev, for which I am very grateful, as they allowed 10 students to receive a high quality education.

## **Our stream studied during pandemic.**

My training took 2.5 years and as I was told, no one has ever completed a bachelor's degree so quickly. For the first year and a half, I studied full-time. On the last year of study government declared quarantine, and no one could understand what to do and how, thanks to the professors, they responded so quickly, everything went smoothly. The level of education has not deteriorated much. Our stream on the BISB program was the first, there were only 20 students. There were not enough students, so I took many subjects as Independent Study, and once it happened to me that I took 6 subjects of Uldana Baizylidayeva on Independent Study.

## **When I was in my first year, I opened my own school of robotics.**

I decided to teach children from kindergartens. I agreed with 10 kindergartens. I hired students to teach kids. They went to private kindergartens, taught them the minimum set: fine motor skills, mathematics, and other basic things. It's like Lego sets but with motors. This is how my first year went. In the second semester I worked at Halyk Bank in the IT office. Before that, I had never worked in an office, I was doing always something on my own. And this was my first experience in the office. It was very interesting. Big bank, big company, lots of insights. I never imagined myself as an office worker before because my parents



worked in the office all their lives. I always wanted to have my own business. When quarantine began, I was transferred to a remote location. I worked for a month and quit as I realized that office work is not mine. After that, I worked online with Shymkent city akimat. We had a partnership, we developed a system for analyzing data on coronavirus patients, we collected data from 25 hospitals in the city. We did data analysis of the sick, made forecasts, and subsequently Shymkent took the lead in the decline in coronavirus. The team involved was very large, developers, specialists from the Ministry of Health, Bagdat Mussin was aware of this project. And at the same time I was completing my studies at the University.

## **KIMEP has a very convenient and flexible system, you can choose**

a professor, subject, time. So it was not so difficult to combine study and work. Plus I took subjects for Independent Study. When I worked at Halyk Bank, I had 29 credits, but I only came to the University 2 days a week because of the Independent Study I could do assignments and researches remotely. The rest of the days I went to work.

**I love freedom,** it's important to me, that's why I chose to start my own business. In business, it's also important to learn from your mistakes, so mistakes don't scare me. When I studied at KIMEP, I realized what exactly I like to do, that I am not a techie, but a creator. I got good skills in Accounting, because our professor Zhanat Syzdykov built an excellent base and everyone who studied at KIMEP advised to take his subjects. And I agree with this recommendation. I also liked the subject of Digital Graphics by Uldana Baizylidayeva. I loved to draw since my childhood and we were shown how to digitize anything. I knew how to do it but after this subject, I asked myself why not create logos and stuff. That is how I came up with an idea of opening a branding agency.

**Being an entrepreneur,** I learned first of all to work with partners. When you work with people, the most difficult thing is to control processes. For example, since I am connected with IT, if you write a command to the computer, it will do as it is written, but this does not work with people. You need to be able to motivate employees. Correctly build relationships with partners because thanks to them, the entire business chain will be built.

**You have to be attentive to people.** Some choose good skills and do not attach importance to the character of a person. We choose something between, even if there is no base but if a person wants to learn, develop, we will take him. In Shymkent, there is a lack of staff and, since we are a branding agency, we need designers who are also in short supply. And that's why we hire people who are motivated to develop because it's easier to work with them, they have enthusiasm. Also, you should always separate recommendations from reputable people who can recommend a good employee, from recommenders who want to help relatives and friends. This is why I don't like the civil service, because from childhood I heard from my parents that frauds are constantly taking place there. Therefore, I am against such things and I evaluate candidates only according to professional qualities.

**All universities should fulfill the mission of changing society,** but not all of them do it. But I can say that KIMEP has been doing this for 30 years. I can say this because



KIMEP graduates occupy top positions. I was invited to one of the reunion dinners but unfortunately, I could not come, and there were people who have achieved a lot in their fields of activity. And all these are indicators that other universities should strive for. KIMEP has the most flexible education system, and for those who love freedom, this is a great opportunity to get a quality education.



# MADI MASHAKOV, DIRECTOR, TMF GROUP, BSC 2008, MBA 2010, DBA 2022

**I graduated from KIMEP three times.** When I was about to apply to the bachelor program the University had a very good reputation, and relatives who graduated from KIMEP were very well employed, it was a leading university. Not cheap, but with benefits, and gave a lot, both in terms of education and learning outcomes. Having finished my bachelor's degree in 2008, I decided that I would definitely go to study for a master's program in order to expand my knowledge a little. When I entered the PhD, I knew that it would be difficult, since I was employed, but I knew that I had a fuse of knowledge that would help me finish, there were also some drafts but during the doctoral studies these drafts changed several times because the business environment has changed. And the relevance of research in society was constantly changing, and it was necessary to concentrate on something, and I chose corporate management. Being in the position of a manager, I was interested in moving in this direction. Why exactly KIMEP? Because I already knew this University, I received positive recommendations from third parties and in general I saw that people who go to KIMEP are people who understand what it will give and understand what they should invest in it.

**I liked the training format,** flexibility of curriculum, and the experience of interacting not only with your group but with all students, this helps a lot with employment. I really liked the quality of training, it was a little difficult at first but if a person has a desire, he will be able to accept the format, raise the level of training, if before that he was weak. I also like that many professors have foreign experience and it is possible to communicate with them not even on seminar topics, these are people with a large portfolio. And KIMEP gives you the opportunity to come to the Office Hours and discuss things with them. Well, in general this is the first university that introduced the credit system, quite successfully.

**During the master's it was easier to combine study and work** because the training took place in the evening format, I was a young specialist, and this is a normal



practice for people who can organize their priorities and time. People who already have some kind of background understand what needs to be done now, what can be done later. It was difficult at the PhD, although it was not required to constantly visit lectures, here University gives a large degree of freedom but it is difficult in terms of technical requirements, pace, and if a person is not ready for this, it will be very difficult for him. A person must love what he does. And then he will be able to combine studies with profession, in which he has invested, and he will be able to see his future career advancement. He must see clear parallels, what he wants and what he will get, it all depends on him.

I wanted to quit PhD about five times, it seemed to me that I didn't see the end, constant assessments, when it seems to you that you did 80% of the work, it turns out that you did only 30%, you didn't realize how long it would take, a very laborious process, but in general, just because I liked doing it, I was hungry for the results of my research, I was able to complete my studies. I also trust the results of my research because I was motivated by how much I was willing to pay for such research. And if you hesitate in the answer, then your research is not so good. Are you ready to invest your money in your own research? If the answer is yes, then you did something useful. This is the very first question you need to ask yourself. If there is no enthusiasm, of course, you can finish your doctoral studies, but this diploma will simply lie on a shelf. People just don't go to doctoral studies, because financial, career, family issues arise. A person must be ready for this.

**The following skills and knowledge gained during the training** were most useful in the work: these are crisis management, project management and time management. These are the three basic skills with which a person can achieve anything. If a person learns to manage his time, cope with his difficulties objectively, weighing the risks, consequences, probabilities, and the third – project management, using certain tools for a certain time. What result can he achieve? Because even if you have a good plan, there is no chance that it will not change, sometimes

it happens on the eve of the deadline. Crisis management is very important, time management is very important, project management is the main thing: any promotion in a career is a project, any certification, for a project, a person must set a goal for several years and, under the magnifying glass of project management, make an assessment of where he is. And if a person has done these three things, then with a probability of 90% the person will be able to achieve everything he wants. Prioritize by time, by importance, by understanding of the task and understanding of the necessary tools. Treat everything with irony, everything can happen, no one can guarantee a 100% result. Always understand that there will be force majeure, additional factors that will affect the result.

**It is rare when an applicant understands and has a clear idea of what he will do** in the chosen specialty. For example, he chose accounting and he will not understand until he has completed half of the program whether it suits him or not. Therefore, when asked why you chose the university/specialty, I cannot give a specific answer. I chose Accounting because it didn't fit into the logical order I was used to in life. My first education was Management, I have always positioned myself as a manager, and in accounting I have always taken the minimum, just for understanding, since I am not an accountant, and there was no need. Accounting was the most difficult for me for criticism, for analysis, logical explanation, and common sense. All other subjects somehow fit in my head, but Accounting did not. To expand my understanding of Accounting I decided to work in the accounting department, and I liked it so much that I decided to take it as a 2nd major in my master's program. And in my PhD studies I also took Accounting, as I decided to realize myself in this area. An accountant may be very technically savvy, but he may not be a very good owner of some strategic task. He may not quite correctly interpret the question, or even understand it. Therefore, management helped me a lot in this. I am glad that I got my first degree in management and the second in Accounting.

**I received the job offer immediately after graduating** with the bachelor's degree but not every company was ready to allow employees to continue studies, and I already had a plan to enter the master's program. And TMF gave me such an opportunity for a flexible working day. I also worked with clients, managed several projects at once. At that time, I was a junior accountant and it was interesting for me to work in a multitasking environment and combine a master's degree. And after graduating from the master's program, I had no questions in terms of work experience. I directed resources to go further up the career ladder.

**We have employees who are KIMEP graduates** and we work very well with KIMEP. We have a job fair. We organize it once a year. Also, the department working with

corporate clients publishes vacancies for which students can apply for an internship. We have a lot of interns, so we will definitely consider candidates with KIMEP education. We are looking for orientation to results in our candidates, as I said project management skills. KIMEP employees understand what they can give the employer and what contribution they can make. At KIMEP, it's just set like this: either you closed the subject or you didn't. Employees with KIMEP education also have a desire for self-realization. Self-realization of an employee is important for the common interests of the employee and the company. KIMEP people are careerists. They understand that the most important resource they have is the opportunity to gain knowledge and further realize their education by 100%, and for this they will invest time and effort. People don't go to KIMEP just to get a diploma. These are results oriented people. These are people who know their own worth. Having received a diploma, they will not stop and will go further.

**I would like to recommend the book "48 laws of power"**. It contains elements of life situations, the lessons a person can learn from various situations. In general, crisis management is not some kind of methodology for certain steps. It is not some kind of regulation. This is a general assessment of one's condition in relation to one's processes. It turns out to be more psychological work on oneself, it can be some kind of source of information or life experience. But it should be aimed at the fact that a person himself extracts an algorithm for some actions. It is difficult to classify it we can call it a life experience. It is a specific path of a certain person. A person should not be demotivated by a mistake, should not be emotionally depressed. In every situation a person should understand that every mistake is an experience, a lesson. Crisis management is his feelings which he received through trial and error, of his own or others', how to make sure that processes do not control you, but you control the processes, and decisions are not made emotionally. Crisis management is more about the accumulation of experience – the situational experience.

**I would wish the students and graduates of KIMEP to be pragmatists**, as it is said, train hard to fight easy. I would like to wish them to be pragmatists to understand that the business environment can change, so that they are ahead. It happens that everyone will be happy and employed but there is always competition. I want to wish them to be two steps ahead and cultivate knowledge in themselves which will be in demand as much as possible, namely not technical knowledge but an understanding of the market, an understanding of expectations, to be savvy. In principle, these skills are enough. You need to cultivate and multiply them in the future. Do not to stop, set new goals, know what you want. Be realistic and do not stop at some small victory but move on.

# FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

This year by the initiative of Dr. Bang KIMEP University held series of focus group meetings in the format of Dinners with alumni from each college during spring semester. During dinners Dr. Bang appointed guest alumni as members of President's club. These meetings were conducted with the aim of gathering feedback and evaluation of KIMEP programs. We are grateful to all participants for their active involvement and interest in University's development. During these meetings alumni were able to speak up about their experiences, challenges, success stories, and present their ideas and proposals. In particular it was expressed that there is a

growing demand for knowledge in data analytics and data science, more courses dedicated to the development of soft skills are also required. Among other suggestions were opening IT courses for adults and employees, increasing social media presence of the University. During the meeting of focus group from BCB college our alumnus Mr. Dulatbek Ikbayev made a proposal to create the KIMEP Alumni Endowment Fund sponsored by KIMEP alumni by getting in touch with as many KIMEP graduates as possible. This initiative was supported by other alumni, among whom are Dauren Alybayev, Anarbek Gilmanov, Arman Gubaidullin and Aslan Shangutov. Please, read more about this initiative in the next article.



# “KIMEP ALUMNI ENDOWMENT FUND”: PROVIDING ACCESS TO BROADER GROUP OF STUDENTS TO EDUCATION THAT CHANGES SOCIETY

It all started in May, 2022 during the focus-group meetings with KIMEP faculty and administration. Dr. Bang delivered the speech about the history of KIMEP and how it all started back in 1992, the facts which we did not know before. At that time it was much easier to allocate funds to selected tiny group of students who could go abroad and obtain western education in top north universities. But Dr. Bang’s idea was different, he wanted to create such university here in Kazakhstan, university which could give access to high quality western style education in English language without leaving the country, university which would provide the opportunity to much broader group of population to world class education.

We all remember mission of KIMEP – education to change society. When we were students, for most of us, it sounded just like ordinary slogan, but now when we look back and see the results which have been achieved during last 30 years it looks very real. More than 13,000 graduates, who are currently being leaders in public sector, business, social organizations, all of us are the leaders who change our society and want to make it better. KIMEP played very important role in our lives and provided this opportunity for us to live a better life.

The idea came to us that it’s now our turn to give back to our alma mater and to future generation of leaders by providing them with the opportunity to receive education which will change their lives. We thought how to bring this idea to life and how to make it sustainable over time, not just one-time effort, and the best solution was to create KIMEP Alumni Endowment Fund which was officially registered on September 15. The importance and effectiveness of similar funds has been proven in many western Universities such as Harvard, Oxford and many others. Moreover in his address to the nation, Kazakhstani President mentioned that it is important for the future of higher education to promote and support the endowment funds in our country (by the way it was after we launched the process of Fund registration 😊)

The objectives of the fund are threefold:

1. Support distinctive applicants from lower income families through tuition sponsorship and monthly scholarships, thus providing opportunities to get quality education for a wider population (mainly from smaller cities and rural areas)
2. Help university become one of the leading global institutions (Top-50 by 2030 in the composite ranking)
3. Promote “endowment funds culture” in Kazakhstan among other alumni groups and help develop local capital market

The mechanism of the endowment is simple: graduates or any other sponsors donate funds, the endowment accumulates this capital and increases its financial capacity by investing. Endowment is non for profit organization, consequently none of its founders get monetary benefits and every fiscal year it reports on the activities and goals achieved.

Initially we plan to allocate majority of funding to scholarship program for students who are applying to KIMEP with lower share being accumulated in the Fund for investments, while we plan to increase the share which is accumulated gradually over time. Our ambition is to sponsor 10% of KIMEP students by 2028 which is ~200 students annually. In the future we also plan to finance R&D and innovation related activities which would help KIMEP to become one of the leading global universities.

We feel that this is the right time to support our University and younger generations to be able to obtain the opportunities that we benefited from and pursue world class education. We hope that all the KIMEP graduates will share this idea and contribute to the fund activities. More details to follow soon. We really count on everyone’s support and believe that together we can make this happen!!!

*Founding partners of KIMEP Alumni Endowment Fund: Dulatbek Ikbayev, Dauren Alybayev, Anarbek Gilmanov, Arman Gubaidullin and Aslan Shangutov*

# FEMTORSHIP PROGRAM

Last September the Corporate Development Department (CDD) organized an event for mentors, femtors, mentees and femtees, where we summed up the results of Mentorship and Femtorship programs, highlighted achievements and awarded participants with Certificates. During October 2021 we chose new Mentors. We were happy to see that the program was supported by our alumni, and in the academic year 2021-2022 the number of Mentors reached 27 persons, compared with 9 Mentors in the academic year 2020-2021. In October CDD organized a webinar for mentors by an experienced mentor Ms. Ainur Amanzholova. Ms. Amanzholova has told what it means to be a mentor, how to build a relationship with a mentee, and how to achieve good results. In spring CDD conducted two separate meetings with participants of both programs. During these meetings participants were able to share their feelings and thoughts about the progress of the program and played a mafia game.



# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Femtorship 2021-2022 is the project established by the Corporate Development Department (CDD) in January 2020. The program is dedicated to help current students to make decisions about their career, to share professional guidance and experience from KIMEP female alumni professionals. In the initial year there were 4 femtors: Kamila Lukpanova, Irina Kopylova, Zarina Aitkulova and Talita Zhumatayeva. This year three new femtors: Aidana Bassen, Dinara Serikova, and Gulnaz Shakhmagambetova joined our femtors' team. This year we had chosen 10 femtees who would have a great chance of receiving knowledge and experience from first hands.

This autumn we will announce a new call for Mentors for the academic year 2022-2023, the announcement will be published in our social media accounts and in the KIMEP Alumni Weekly Newsletter.



# ALUMNI TALKS

During the academic year 2021-2022 KIMEP Alumni Association conducted series of Alumni Talks broadcasts with KIMEP graduates of different years, where we had discussed different topics and alumni shared useful information about career, business and happiness.

- 1 Asset Begaliyev, BSC 2007 "Find and start your own business and gain freedom"
- 2 Sedred Asretov, BSC 2018 "Startup career: from intern to CEO"
- 3 Gulnar Amangeldina, MLLM 2021 "Self branding lawyer: why do you need to become a brand today?"

- 4 Dana Isabayeva, MAIJ 2006 "Life and happiness management"
- 5 Tatyana Gorbacheva, MA 1997 "What every Kazakhstani citizen should know about taxes?"
- 6 Olzhas Khudaibergenov, MA 2003 "Discussion of current issues in Kazakhstan", moderator - Eldar Madumarov, PhD, Chair of the Department of Economics, KIMEP University

# CAREER TALKS

During the 2021-2022 academic year the KIMEP Career Center conducted series of "CareerTalks" broadcasts and MOCK interviews for all Kazakhstan's students.

During these sessions our speakers shared valuable information about their career experiences, gave advices on how to present themselves in the interviews, how to build career in different types of employment and generally shared their ideas about networking, career and success.

Since September 2021 CC has held sessions with

- 1 Speaker: Ms. Aigul Barmagambetova, Head of Content Management Department at Viled.kz, KIMEP alumnae, BSc 2006  
Topic: Fashion Industry: How to get in and build a career
- 2 Speakers: Ms. Aliya Balykbayeva, Senior Associate, Human Resources and Professional Development Department  
Ms. Rozalina Chicherova, Employer Brand & HR Communications, Talent Team  
Topic: Career Talks: EY: Path to success
- 3 Speaker: Ms. Yuliya Yudina, HR Director of Holding company, career advisor, KIMEP alumnae, BSc 2004  
Topic: LinkedIn: professional networking
- 4 Speakers: Ms. Irina Lee, HR Specialist, People Department, KPMG  
Ms. Adi Atzhanova, Recruitment Marketing Specialist, People Department, KPMG  
Topic: Build your Brilliant Career with KPMG

- 5 Speakers: Ms. Julia Martsinkus, HR Director  
Ms. Galina Demurina, Head of Training Department  
Topic: The 5 common mistakes students make when starting a career
- 6 Speaker: Ms. Ainur Amanzholova, certified HR professional, and Head of HR in JSC "Kazakhstan Sustainability Fund", KIMEP alumnae, MBA 2005  
Topic: "Career Plan Development"
- 7 Speaker: Ms. Aigerim Magzumova, KIMEP alumnae, BIR 2018 and participant in the Mars Leadership Experience Program (MLEP)  
Topic: MARS Kazakhstan: Leadership and Project Management
- 8 Speaker: Mr. Vecheslav Kim, HR Brand Ambassador of the Alina Group of Companies, KIMEP alumnus, BFIN 2020  
Topic: Alina Group, Successful interview, Internship program presentation
- 9 Speaker: Mr. Bekishev Askhat, Professional Business Coach, Training and Development Specialist  
Topic: Storytelling: stories for results
- 10 Speaker: Mr. Bekishev Askhat, Professional Business Coach, Training and Development Specialist  
Topic: Personal Branding
- 11 The program for the development of young specialists "Zhas Orken"
- 12 Speaker: Ms. Mukasheva Rada, HR manager, Recruitment Specialist, Centras Capital  
Topic: How to build a successful career in a financial holding, and what are the most demanded professions?

- 13 Speaker: Mr. Alibek Yessov, KIMEP alumnus, MBA 2011, Startup co-founder  
Topic: Diversity of careers in international companies - think big!
  - 14 Speaker: Mr. Nikita Shabayev, United Nations Volunteer (UNV), Kazakhstan Country Coordinator  
Topic: UN Volunteers programme in Kazakhstan,
  - 15 Speakers: Mr. Dulatbek Ikbayev, Partner, McKinsey & Company, KIMEP alumnus, BSc 2005  
Ms. Elena Kuznetsova, recruiter, McKinsey & Company  
Topic: "Career at McKinsey & Company";
  - 16 Speaker: Mr. Bekishev Askhat, Professional business coach, training and development specialist  
Topic: JTI: "How to build a successful career"
  - 17 Speaker: Ms. Aizhan Kakenova, General Manager, Talent Management Department of the HRMD, curator of the Izbasar program, Kazatomprom Internship Program  
Topic: "IZBASAR" for young specialists
  - 18 Speaker: Mr. Nariman Mannapbekov, ADB's Country Director, Kazakhstan Resident Mission  
Topic: ADB's Operations in Kazakhstan
  - 19 UN Career Week
  - 20 Speaker: Ms. Ainur Amanzholova, certified HR professional, KIMEP alumnae, MBA 2005  
Topic: "Career Plan Development"
  - 21 Speaker: Mr. Bekturganov Almaz, Incompass intern, KIMEP alumnus, BIL 2020  
Topic: INKOMPASS internship Program at Philip Morris Kazakhstan
  - 22 Speaker: Mr. Mariko Hall, External Relations, UNHCR Representation to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan UN Refugees Agency (UNHCR)  
Topic: UN Refugees Agency (UNHCR), presentation
  - 23 Speaker: Mrs. Juliya Yudina, Organization Development Director, EA investment holding, KIMEP alumnae, BSc 2004  
Topic: Job Interviewing process
- Mock Interviews:
- 1 Expert: Sofiya Sherimova, Senior Recruitment Specialist at PwC Kazakhstan, KIMEP alumnae, BSSPA 2014
  - 2 Expert: Olga Yegorova, Senior HR manager, ChocoFamily Holding
  - 3 Moderator & Expert: Nazym Osserbayeva, Certified Professional Coach/ Head of Talent AcquisitionHomeCreditBank, HR manager



# GRADUATION CEREMONIES

This year KIMEP University conducted two Graduation Ceremonies as last year due to the pandemic public gatherings were forbidden.

On May 14th the Graduation Ceremony for the classes of 2020 and 2021 was held at the Palace of the Republic. 338 alumni received their Diplomas from Dr. Bang. The key note speaker at the graduation was Mr. Yerkin Tatishev, Chairman of the Board of Directors of "Kusto Group". Mr. Tatishev was awarded with Honorary Doctorate Degree in Business Administration of KIMEP University.

The Graduation Ceremony for the class 2022 was conducted on June 4th. 368 alumni were awarded diplomas, Mr. Asset Irgaliyev, The Chairman of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of Kazakhstan delivered a speech as a key note speaker.



# CONTACT US

## WAYS TO KEEP IN TOUCH

- Have you changed your job, email or phone number? Update your contact information electronically: [cdd@kimep.kz](mailto:cdd@kimep.kz) or [www.kimep.kz/portal/account/registeralumni](http://www.kimep.kz/portal/account/registeralumni)
- Keep up to date on events, news, contests, and more via e-mail.
- Get together with alumni in your region or who share your interests.
- Build your professional networks and connect with Alumni through KIMEP official pages on Facebook @kimepalumniassociation and Instagram @kimep\_alumni\_association

## ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES

If you would like KIMEP to highlight your professional or community service activities, personal or family achievements, we will be happy to include your profile in alumni-related publications.

Please contact [cdd@kimep.kz](mailto:cdd@kimep.kz) to participate.

## SERVICES FOR ALUMNI

KIMEP is proud of its Alumni. The success of the Institute depends primarily on the success of its graduates. KIMEP is pleased to offer the following list of benefits for its Alumni, and encourages Alumni to take advantage of the following services.

- 10% discounts for the trainings of Professional Development Programs (PDCP) of the College of Continuing Education of KIMEP, as well as foreign language courses and preparatory courses for the children for the admission to KIMEP.
- Free access to the information resources of the KIMEP Library.
- Free entrance to the KIMEP Sports Center.
- Rental of the conference halls of KIMEP with 20% discount for the conferences, trainings, and seminars.
- Career Center offers its services to help alumni to find good candidates among KIMEP graduates for work or students for internships opportunities.



# BACHELOR IN PSYCHOLOGY (BA IN PSYCHOLOGY)

The goal of this program is to train professionals in the theoretical foundations and basic methods of psychology and also, to give an insight into the applied branches of its disciplines such as possessing skills and techniques that can be used in order to measure, explore and develop individuals, groups or organizations through experiments. Students will obtain an integrated knowledge of education, communication, socialization, learning, and human development. It is also aimed to provide modern knowledge and true sense of vocation that support further learning in any psychology MA.

## THE BA IN PSYCHOLOGY IS FOR YOU, IF YOU ARE:

- Interested in general psychology, human behavior and society
- Ready to pursue psychology related career
- Looking to go directly into the workforce immediately after college

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The program opens doors for a professional career and lays the groundwork for an academic career, especially in an international context. You will be a strong candidate for junior positions in all jobs that require skills in analyzing, designing, or improving human interaction, presentation, and communication.

## CAREER OPTIONS FOR PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE HOLDERS:

- Therapy and counselling
- Training and development
- Mental health support
- Career counselling
- Human resources
- Social work
- Clinical psychologist
- Educational psychologist
- Forensic psychologist
- Health psychologist
- Occupational psychologist
- Psychological wellbeing practitioner





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