

c/o Ema Beeler
The Aspen Institute
One Dupont Circle, NW
Washington, DC 20036

To whom it may concern,

Before physically touching down in Aspen, Colorado, I could not have imagined how invaluable the opportunity to attend the 2017 Aspen Security Forum (ASF) would be. As a young professional in foreign affairs, the access to expert panels and networking opportunities in my field were truly unparalleled. To be able to attend the ASF without cost, and to be immersed in a dynamic cohort of likeminded young scholars provided benefits which I continue to feel even upon returning to Washington, D.C. I am grateful to have been a recipient of a Ricardo Salinas scholarship.

Whether seeing John Kelly discuss the nuances of DHS directorship, the Jordanian ambassador explain the nuances of the Syrian refugee situation, or four congress people debate the merits of various national security measures, over the course of the ASF I was inundated with valuable perspectives. Who better to learn about U.S. military strategy from than Joseph Dunford? Who better to interview these fixtures than the very top names in journalism?

In addition to the multitude of valuable panels I was able to attend, it was the informal meetings that made the scholarship so special. Casual lunch discussions with Ambassador Ahn of Korea, or Kori Schake about modern geopolitics, small group discussions with potential employers, and opportunities to talk one-on-one with directors of several U.S. government agencies all provided professional opportunities I could not have otherwise hoped for.

In addition to the Forum itself, the group of scholars was truly great, and the group of us from D.C. have now formed a strong bond which will carry into the future as we advance our careers in National Security and related fields. I will never forget the 2017 Aspen Security Forum.

Sincerely,



Peter Valente