



The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is pleased to announce Mr. Batuhan Aydagül as the 2012 Patricia Blunt Koldyke Fellow for social entrepreneurship in primary and secondary education. The Chicago Council is honoring Aydagül as a Koldyke Fellow for his efforts to generate innovative solutions to challenges in Turkey's schools, education system, and education policies. He is the coordinator and a board member of the Education Reform Initiative (ERI) and a member of the advisory board at the Mother Child Education Foundation (AÇEV) in Istanbul, Turkey.

Aydagül is a fourth generation professional in the field of education. He originally studied business and was a trader, but quickly discovered that education was "in his blood" and turned to the education sector to work in schools. Realizing his interest in public education and ambitions to do policy work, he pursued a master's degree in international education administration and policy analysis from Stanford University and graduated in 2002. At Stanford, Aydagül analyzed the 1997 Compulsory Education Law in Turkey, tracing how local (the tensions between seculars and Islamists) and international (the role of the global "Education for All" movement) conditions and actors interact to shape education policy.

Aydagül works as the lead policy analyst at ERI, playing a key role in shaping ERI's education programs. ERI was launched in 2003 within Sabancı University with the goal to improve education policies that ensure access to quality education for all children and to ensure that policy processes are participatory, innovative, rational, and transparent. Currently supported by nineteen Turkish institutions, ERI tackles three challenges of significant importance to Turkish education: increasing quality in education, reducing disparities among schools, and fulfilling students' rights in education.

At ERI, Aydagül has written on a wide range of issues pertaining to K-12 education in Turkey, varying from religion and education to gender parity in education. His contributions to education have also included playing a key role in the emergence and development of the Annual Best Practices Conferences in Turkey, which reached more than 15,000 teachers in nine annual conferences and thirty-one provincial workshops around Turkey. Today, he is widely recognized as a pioneer and public voice in education policy in Turkey. Between 2007 and 2008, Aydagül was seconded to the Ministry of Education in Liberia to support education reform there, becoming one of the first Turks to undertake such a responsibility in development.

Aydagül will spend a week in Chicago from November 5 to 9, 2012, to exchange ideas about education policy and teacher training with civic, media, business, and academic leaders. The fellowship experience will aid him in his goal of learning about trends and developments in education to advance education policy and practice in Turkey. The Fellowship is designed to provide Aydagül with perspectives on our city's best practices that will enable him to effect meaningful and sustained change in Turkish society while simultaneously educating Chicagoans about Turkish education and society. Aydagül's week in Chicago will include a major public address for The Chicago Council on Global Affairs on Wednesday, November 7, 2012.

The Patricia Blunt Koldyke Fellowship is funded by the Koldyke family to recognize a social entrepreneur between the ages of thirty and forty-five who is working to transform his or her society through innovative solutions to pressing educational problems and inadequacies. This year, the selection committee focused on social entrepreneurship in primary and secondary education in Turkey. The 2012 Fellow, Mr. Batuhan Aydagül, was selected from an extremely competitive applicant pool.