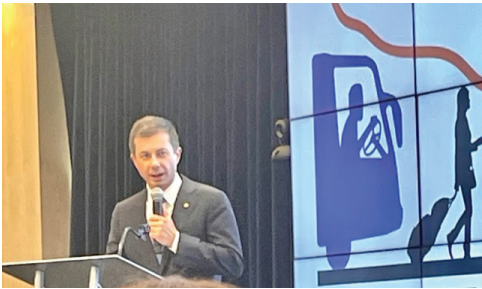




NOVEMBER 2024



## SWF GOES TO THE HILL IN WASHINGTON DC TO ADVOCATE FOR ROAD SAFETY AND OUR SPECIAL MISSION TO INCREASE SEATBELT USAGE ON MOTORCOACHES!



In May, SWF joined in the **2024 Capitol Hill Roadway Safety Advocacy Days** sponsored by the **National Safety Council**. Anne and Charlie convened with over 100 others suffering from the loss of loved ones on the roads. **The mission of the three days was to bring the message of the need for greater safety to our Congress and provide tangible actions for greater safety transportation today.** In teams of five, advocates circulated within the House and Senate and told their stories to representatives and their staffs with documents identifying bills needing support to meet this end. Our meetings with Rep. Jim McGovern, Sen. Sharrod Brown, Sen. Edward Markey, Lorraine Martin (Head of the National Safety Council) as well as attending an event with Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation, were some of the highlights of our Roadway Advocacy Days. We wanted to thank Rep. McGovern who is especially supportive of our cause to Increase Seatbelt Usage on Motorcoaches!



### SWF PUSHES FORWARD ITS RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF SEATBELT MESSAGING!

SWF and the UMASS Transportation Center are completing their seatbelt study in Boston's South Station and Union Station in Springfield. Peter Pan Bus Lines has been an important supporter of our grant. Our team from SWF and UMass is working on **passing an amendment or bill that would require all motorcoach riders in Massachusetts to wear seatbelts or be fined.** California has already passed a similar law and New York and Ohio are considering doing the same. We are working with our State Legislature to make this happen so we can save lives and prevent injuries.



Our messaging: Be Safe Sit-Click-Ride Please Buckle Up is on every motorcoach boarding area in Union Station (Springfield) and South Station (Boston) as well as on the Jumbotron in the terminal of Union Station.

### THE FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD

SWF has increased its financial support of the forum for safety training for study abroad professionals with another donation that establishes a **Sara's Wish Fellows Scholarship Program**. One or more Sara's Wish Fellows will receive full funding each year for the Forum on Education Abroad Professional Certification program. The Sara's Wish 2024 Fellow is Tatiana Berrios from UWC in Costa Rica.

See the attached one page insert to this mailing for a complete update on who received awards of financial support to attend The Forum's Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management Institute and other Health and Safety Programming.

University of Massachusetts Amherst International Programs Office

Last year we established with an endowment, The Sara's Wish Foundation Travel Award Fund. This gift is to provide Scholarship support for high-achieving undergraduates who are in financial need to pursue travel abroad experiences. SWF is excited to be working with IPO to have an impact on deserving undergraduates that want to travel abroad.



This year the award went to: Marieke Heitmann Bastoni who studied in Amsterdam. She tells SWF *“Truly, I am beyond grateful for the experience and opportunity.”*

# *An Update from Alina Simone about Her Two Documentary Films – Both Supported by Sara’s Wish Foundation*

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Black Snow had a sold-out international premiere this March at CPH:DOX in Copenhagen, where we won the FACT Award for best investigative documentary. For the first time, we were able to finally assemble our entire team in one place. Friends and funders who had followed our journey from our first shoot in Siberia in 2019 flew to Denmark during this epic week that was truly cathartic for all of us, given the harrowing turns Natalia’s life had taken since 2019, and the very real fear that the film would never be finished. **We are so grateful to Sara’s Wish for being critical, early backers of Black Snow and for never giving up on us.** Since March, Black Snow has been included in over a dozen international film festivals in Hong Kong, Brazil, Poland, the UK, Spain, Italy, Kosovo, Budapest, Portugal, Ecuador and Australia, where we won the world’s largest environmental film prize, the Sustainable Future Award, at the Sydney International Film Festival. We are happy to announce our North American premiere will take place on November 14th at DOC NYC, with our new executive producer, Erin Brockovich, there to cheer us on. We are so thrilled to finally bring this Black Snow to the US and are hopeful that our 2025 national film festival run will be just as successful as our debut year in Europe.

With Black Snow complete at last, I was also able to resume work on my second documentary feature, **Fear Zone**, which follows former live-action film star David Katsarava as he sets out to defend the lawless borderlands of Georgia from the Russian military, who are quietly moving borders, stealing land, and terrorizing rural villagers. **With support from Sara’s Wish, we were able to extend production with two additional shoots in Georgia after David was severely beaten by national riot police at an anti-government protest this summer, and soon after, declared his run for parliament in this October’s make-or-break elections. On the strength of our existing edited scenes (funded with the help of SWF back in 2022), we were able to pre-sell the film to public broadcasters in Denmark and Estonia this year.** I am currently back in the edit — my favorite place to be! — shaping all this raw, terrifying, touching, revelatory footage. Very much hoping I will be able to share this film with all of you in 2025.



*Alina Holding the Award*



*David and Alina*

**Thank you, Friends of SWF!**

*Alina*



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# *Messages from SWF Scholarship Recipients*

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I had an incredible time working in Lagos and am very grateful for the opportunity to do so! We worked directly with *4 Communities By Communities*, an organization leveraging the talents of Nigerian scientists and that is led entirely by the Nigerian community, and the *Nigerian Institute of Medical Research*. We were also collaborating with teams from Washington University and Wake Forest University.

In terms of my personal experience, I found working abroad extremely fulfilling and that it deepened my passion for global health. Working with disenfranchised populations has always been a passion of mine, and working directly with the populations affected and local scientists meant that I could build upon existing infrastructure in a culturally appropriate manner.

***Thank you so much, Friends and Supporters of Sara's Wish Foundation!!  
Rayna Haque***



Dear Friends at Sara's Wish Foundation.

I've recently arrived in London and am beginning to make this new city my home. The journey into my studies on Climate Change and Planetary Health has kicked off, offering deep insights into the delicate balance between human actions, our health, and our planet's well-being. The diverse perspectives of my international colleagues enriched discussions and my learning experiences. I cannot thank Sara's Wish Foundation enough for supporting my journey and believing in me.

**Looking forward to sharing more updates with you!**

**Warmly,  
Tsehay**



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Sara's Wish Foundation generously supports The Forum on Education Abroad in advancing health, safety, security and risk management efforts in education abroad. This year, Sara's Wish Foundation contributed \$12,500 to support safety training for study abroad professionals through our partnership with The Forum on Education Abroad. Thanks to this generous support, The Forum was able to offer the highest volume of health and safety learning grants to be given in the association's history, with 21 grants offered across 15 higher education institutions and organizations.

Included in this gift was the establishment of the first ever Sara's Wish Fellow, who received funding to enroll and participate in the Forum on Education Abroad Professional Certification program.



Sara's Wish 2024 Fellow,  
Tatiana Berrios from UWC Costa Rica

In addition to the inaugural Sara's Wish Fellow, Sara's Wish funding was also allocated to support study abroad professionals who needed financial support for their travel and registration costs to attend The Forum's Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management Institute and other Health and Safety Programming. Establishing these scholarships is one way for the Sara's Wish Foundation to fulfill its mission to "sustain Sara's living spirit by promoting travel safety standards and practices around the globe."

List of institutions/organizations (21 total awards):

- Abraham Consulting Agency
- ACT- American College of Thessaloniki
- EDU Africa (Global Learning Collective)
- Gallaudet University
- George Mason University
- North Park University
- Princeton in Africa
- SIT
- SUNY Albany
- Syracuse University
- UNC Chapel Hill
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- University of Vermont
- UWC Costa Rica
- World Learning