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Albert Beckford Jones, AM 1988

Bridging the Corporate and Nonprofit Worlds

"Bringing minds together to work to improve the world, the quality and standard of life for everyone is very rewarding."

Albert Beckford Jones, AM'88, travels the globe in an attempt to bring the world's brightest minds together to solve some of the globe's most challenging problems. He serves as the senior advisor to the president of the U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF), a nonprofit organization that promotes peace and prosperity through international scientific and technical collaboration. Authorized by Congress and established in 1995 by the National Science Foundation, CRDF funds research and development projects, provides international partnership opportunities for scientists, and strengthens university research in science and engineering.

Explained Jones, "The promotion and application of science and technology collaborations are the foundations for achieving the kind of economic, academic, and technical success necessary for peace and prosperity around the world."

As part of this overall effort, Jones helps develop, organize, and implement CRDF's global strategies and international business development initiatives. This involves advising senior staff on partnerships and matching the organization's programs with collaborators' needs. Jones often travels to countries where CRDF hopes to set up programs, establishes relationships with international public and private sector leaders, and lays the groundwork for services to begin.

Based in Arlington, Virginia, and active in 30 countries, CRDF's projects and services cover a range of issues. They include building high-tech peer review systems and virtual science libraries, establishing centers of excellence in research, developing programs that contribute to global nonproliferation objectives, and leading workshops on institution building, innovation, proposal writing and research management. One such project—the Global Research Partnership at Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah University of Science and Technology—funds science and engineering research at 60 universities around the world.

Jones is passionate about his work and the programs he has been a part of during his time at CRDF. When he joined the organization in early 2008, Jones made the switch from the corporate world to the nonprofit sector. He explained, "The organization was looking for someone that brought together entrepreneurial and public policy experience plus private sector and international experience, as well as a working knowledge of a foreign language, and I had all of those elements."

In fact, Jones credits his public policy degree with the flexibility to work in both the public and private sectors. He has often used his policy knowledge to form public-private partnerships in his past roles at corporations. His career demonstrates the training to link the two worlds of public policy and private enterprise as well as the versatility of a public policy education.

But, Jones also believes that the key to a fulfilling career is using the policy degree as a foundation and building upon it with more education, work experiences, international travel, foreign language skills, and professional relationships.

As evidence in his life, Jones points to not only to past jobs, but board appointments at universities and nonprofit organizations, including a chairman position of the Public Policy and International Affairs Fellowship Program based in Washington DC. "My career is a journey for which every experience is an enriching factor."



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