

STRATA

AMERICAN FRIENDS

OF THE ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT FOUNDATION



German Research & Innovation Tour Midwest 2025 | Purdue University

Jessica Strattard Hamilton (third from right, in purple), AFAvH, with representatives from key partner institutions during the German Research & Innovation Tour Midwest 2025 at Purdue University. Pictured (left to right): Georg Bechthold, Director, DFG North America; Christian Strowa, Director, DAAD North America & Director, DWIH New York; Heidi Arola, Assistant Vice President and Senior International Officer, Office of the Provost, Purdue University; Michael Ahrens, Consul General of Germany in Chicago; and Bill Bihlman, Program Director, Composites, Fraunhofer USA

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OUR MISSION -

To become a leading source in the United States for the promotion of national and international networking, exchange, and creative collaboration among scientists, scholars, artists, and other professionals, consistent with the goals of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation of Germany.

OUR VISION -

To mobilize the intellectual curiosity, creativity, experience, and passion of Humboldtians to shape research, higher education, and professional development in the United States and beyond.



Jessica Strattard
Hamilton
VP of Advancement

If we were to summarize 2025 in one word, it would be **“Connection.”** This year, we deepened our ties with Humboldtians, partners, and the broader academic community, across disciplines, borders, and generations. In a time of uncertainty, we have worked with renewed purpose to ensure that science, dialogue, and trust continue to transcend boundaries, and to demonstrate, above all, that we are here for you, our Humboldt network.

Through in-person and virtual programming, we strengthened our network, elevated the voices and achievements of Humboldtians, and extended our reach across the United States. From the deserts of the Southwest to the Great Lakes states of the Midwest, our events and research exchange tours introduced the Humboldt network to university leaders, policymakers, and private sector partners, while also reconnecting with Humboldtians across these regions and introducing the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation’s opportunities to a new generation of emerging science diplomats. We look forward to building on this momentum in 2026, expanding our reach, and deepening the connections that make our community so extraordinary.

Our achievements are made possible by you, the Humboldtians who continue to strengthen and shape this remarkable network. The Humboldt Network Liaisons (HNL) corps now includes **89 volunteers and counting**, each contributing ideas, energy, and creativity to advance our shared mission of strengthening the programs and priorities of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation across the United States.



Ilonka Oszvald
Senior Vice President

Their enthusiasm helped spark a record number of alumni-led initiatives and grants in 2025, including a network luncheon with AvH President Robert Schlögl in Boston and a Humboldtian reception at the American Chemical Society Meeting in Washington, DC. HNLs also played a vital role in our Town Halls, where alumni and AvH senior staff came together to discuss developments shaping the global research landscape. We’re delighted to highlight these HNLs—and the impact of their work—in this issue of *Strata*.

US Humboldtians also continue to distinguish themselves as thought leaders in our **Humboldt Dialogues**, which bring together experts to explore pressing transatlantic issues. We look forward to continuing these conversations in 2026 and encourage alumni to share ideas for future topics.

At the heart of all this activity are the enduring values that define the Humboldt community—a spirit of curiosity that knows no borders, an openness to new ideas and people, an integrity that guides discovery, and a belief that knowledge shared freely can change the world. Our Board recently reaffirmed that **intellectual freedom, international collaboration, and the open exchange of knowledge** are essential to mutual understanding and progress. Every program we support, and every partnership we nurture, reflect these principles and the spirit of Alexander von Humboldt himself.

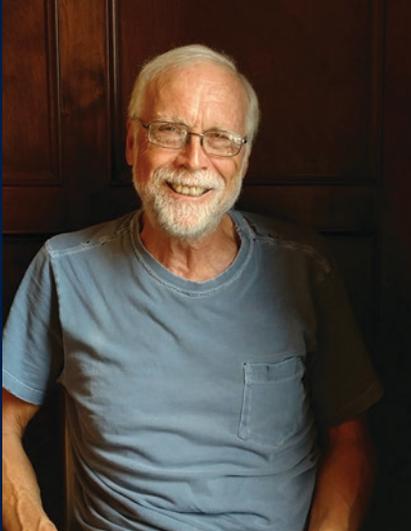
As we close 2025, we thank you, the Humboldt Network, for your support and participation in our programs. We are grateful for you and look forward to connecting in the New Year.

“Our achievements are made possible by you, the Humboldtians who continue to strengthen and shape this remarkable network.”

HUMBOLDTIAN DONOR STORIES | IMPACT MAKERS

A Conversation with PROFESSOR DENNIS J. DIESTLER (USS 1975)

GIVING BACK TO SUSTAIN THE HUMBOLDT EXPERIENCE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION



AFAvH: Could you describe your experience as a Humboldt Fellow? What did the fellowship mean to you personally and professionally, and how has it shaped your outlook or career in the years since?

Dennis Diestler: The greater part of my career was spent as a professor of chemistry at Purdue University (1969–1992). A distinct highlight of that career was a sabbatical at the Technische Universität München (TUM) during the 1975–1976 academic year. Through the efforts of Professor Wolfgang Kaiser, in whose research group I hoped to work, I received the prestigious Senior US Scientist Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which covered my expenses generously. Of course, the immediate professional

benefits came from my association with top-notch scientists at the TUM. Since the award also provided ancillary funds for travel around Western Europe, I was able to increase considerably the number of my scientific acquaintances. Not only did I enjoy several collaborations on specific subjects during my stay in Munich, in subsequent years I had a number of fruitful collaborations with German colleagues whom I met and befriended while I was an awardee. All of these long-term interactions have convinced me of the value of international cooperation.

AFAvH: Your decision to make such a generous gift is such a meaningful gesture. Could you share what inspired you to make that gift, or a particular moment or memory from your fellowship that influenced your decision to support American friends of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AFAvH) in this way?

Dennis Diestler: My gift is essentially an expression of my profound gratitude to the AFAvH for its promotion of the work started by the AvH, whose largess allowed me to develop the international connections that have led to so many fruitful collaborations over the course of my career.

AFAvH: When you think about the causes and organizations that you choose to support, what values or principles guide you most? In what ways do you feel that the AFAvH advances those same values?

Dennis Diestler: Probably the greatest number of my contributions to the various philanthropic organizations I choose to support are based on the immediate good I believe they do for needy people (e.g. food, shelter, medical attention). In a sense, my gift to AFAvH, which I assume will go toward the support of researchers in need, can be viewed as similarly based.

AFAvH: How do you envision your gift making an impact—whether on the broader Humboldt network or the future of transatlantic collaboration?

Dennis Diestler: Though I do not wish to dictate specifically how the AFAvH should use my gift, I am confident that it will foster international cooperation.

AFAvH: What would you like future Humboldt Fellows to know or remember about the experience of being part of this global community?

Dennis Diestler: Engagement in international cooperation among scientists of diverse outlook can lead to important advances in the state of our knowledge of specific fields. One can derive great personal pleasure from one's own contribution to the effort. But, to me, the most satisfying result of the experience has been the formation of lifelong friendships. I still communicate regularly with former colleagues, whom I first met while a Humboldt Fellow. 🌐

INTERVIEW

AvH Secretary General Dr. Markus Zanner and Deputy Secretary General Dr. Katrin Amian

Humboldt Foundation/Nikolaus Brade



There is a new leadership team at the helm of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Dr. Markus Zanner assumed the post of Secretary General in May and Dr. Katrin Amian began her tenure as Deputy Secretary General in October. We look forward to working with both in the coming years to deepen transatlantic research collaboration.

AFAvH: We live in challenging times—what role do you see for the AvH in terms of bridging the funding gap for scientists and scholars whose funding has been cut; for example, researchers from the United States?

Markus Zanner: We see the challenges that scientists and scholars in the United States and elsewhere in the world are facing. Our US network is a pivotal source of talent for us as we continue to follow how the funding situation is developing in your country. We are also aware of the impact of US developments on the international research community and are seeing increased interest in our programs from international researchers.

Germany and the AvH have responded to this challenge by taking a clear stance on the vital importance of reliable funding, academic freedom, and international scientific cooperation. The Global Minds Initiative Germany is a key step. The additional funding from the initiative will enable the Humboldt Foundation to respond to strong demand from abroad and a record-breaking number of outstanding applicants by awarding more Humboldt Research Fellowships, Humboldt Research Awards, and Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel Research Awards.

AFAvH: The Global Minds Initiative has seen the first fellows arrive in Germany. What makes this program special compared to other funding programs?

Katrin Amian: Many of the building blocks of the Global Minds Initiative Germany are “tried and true”—they have proven to be successful in attracting a variety of career levels and needs. What’s more, the Humboldt Research Fellowship, the Humboldt Research Awards, and the Bessel Research Awards are all programs that aim at starting or stabilizing international cooperations through brain circulation, not brain gain. In addition, we have also worked to make the Alexander von Humboldt Professorship more competitive.

We are also currently working on expanding our portfolio. A new program, the Humboldt Research Professorship program, will offer flexible formats to engage top international researchers in cooperation with research institutions in Germany. We hope to launch this program soon.

AFAvH: How can the Foundation combat the growing distrust in science on both sides of the Atlantic?

Markus Zanner: Communication is key! In our strategy, we focus on developing our unique network into a forward-looking tool for values-based science diplomacy. This is our duty.

At the same time, we know that we need to reach core target groups (in the political arena, civil society, and the media) to strengthen trust in the scientific process and in researchers. The AvH believes that the Humboldt network, which embraces diverse specialist knowledge, can contribute

to this discourse—in Germany and beyond. For this reason, we have installed formats and created spaces for members of our network to make their knowledge available to decision-makers in the political and social arenas.

AFAvH: How can AFAvH contribute to the Humboldt Foundation’s goal of supporting researchers on both sides of the Atlantic?

Katrin Amian: With more than 5,500 Humboldtians, the Humboldt Network in the United States is still the largest in any one country in the world. American Friends of AvH plays a crucial and highly valued role in engaging with these Humboldtians and, beyond that, with the entire research community in the United States. Especially in challenging times, it is essential that we stay in touch and uphold our sense of community. Every event that American Friends organizes and every networking opportunity it provides is an important contribution. Experienced transatlantic collaborators like our Humboldtians can help sustain the ties between our countries even when the political climate is changing. American Friends of AvH is our key partner in the United States and helps us ensure that researchers in Germany and America benefit from mutual exchange. We are very grateful for this cooperation and are looking forward to continuing it.

Continued on page 7

MEET SOME OF OUR HUMBOLDT NETWORK LIAISONS

Humboldt Network Liaisons (HNLs) are Humboldtian volunteers from all AvH fellowship and award programs based at public and private research universities, liberal arts colleges, as well as at government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and in the private sector. They are a diverse,

interdisciplinary group of 89 individuals who play a vital role in sustaining the connections among the over 6,000 members of the US Humboldt Alumni Network in the United States and ensuring the visibility of the Humboldt Foundation and the strength of the applicant pool of future Humboldtians.

Josh Crites
Director, Strategic Initiatives
Brawner & Company

Allen Liu
Professor of Mechanical Engineering
University of Michigan

Susanna Schellenberg
Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science
Rutgers University

Thomas Pegelow Kaplan
Professor of History and Louis P. Singer Endowed Chair in Jewish History
University of Colorado, Boulder

Chris Yeomans
Justin S. Morrill Dean of the College of Liberal Arts
Purdue University

Emmeline Kao
Senior Deployment Manager
US Department of Energy

Daniela Ostrowski
Assistant Professor of Biology
Truman State University

Allison Haskins
Global Partnerships Manager
North Carolina State University

Joyce Pham
Associate Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry
California State University, San Bernardino

Terron Ferguson
Chief Executive Officer
Yancy Holdings, Inc.

David Kim
Associate Vice Provost and Inclusive Excellence Advisor, International Institute Professor, Department of European Languages and Transcultural Studies Community Engagement Advisor, Division of Humanities
University of California, Los Angeles

Melanie Cobb
Jane and Bill Browning Jr. Chair in Medical Science
University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

J. Laurence Hare
Executive Director of Undergraduate Excellence and Global Engagement
Associate Professor of History
University of Arkansas

Dominique Pando Bucci
Principal Attorney
Pando Bucci Law, PLLC

DONOR HONOR ROLL • January 1, 2024–December 31, 2024

\$1000 and over

Timothy Angelotti
Janis Antonovics
Gray Organschi
Architecture, LLC
E. William Colglazier
Charles Curtis
Peter Drescher
Daniel Fallon
Uwe Fink
Richard Haglund
Hisashi Kobayashi
Edward A. Kravitz
Timothy Joseph
Larson*
Leonard Lopez
Anthony McHugh*
Robert McMeeking
Grace Seto
Mark Stinski
Pat Wilde
Heike Winter Sederoff*

\$500–999

Michael Bailey*
Peter Baldwin
Magali Isabelle Billen*
Robert Bitmead
James Blank*
Timothy Breen*
Stephen Buchwald
Angelos Chaniotis*
Catherine Epstein
Christian Haenel*
Richard Jantz
Timothy Joseph
Larson*
Kevin Lemley
Alan Levander*
Anrim Meyburg*

Jeremiah Nelson
John Perepezko
Loren Ponds*
John Rehr*
Zhifeng Ren*
Malcolm Richardson*
Matthew Roller*
Elizabeth Silver-Schack
Richard Spontak*
Govindan Subramanian
Richard Jay Wallace*
Ajit Prithiviraj
Yoganathan

\$250–499

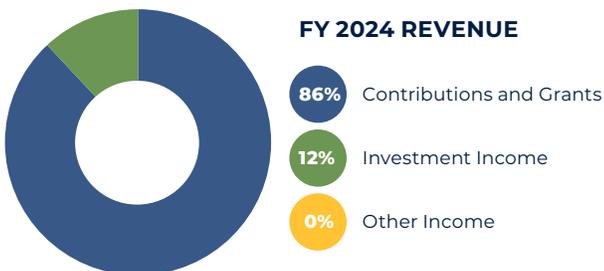
Lee Ann Banaszak
Paul Bartlett
Steven Bernasek
Mordecai Blaustein
Hinrich Bohn
Keith Bowman
John Boyer*
James Clark
William Cramer
Louise K.
Davidson-Schmich
Tracy Davis
Trisha Davis Muller
H. Joachim Deeg*
Michael Doyle*
Sanghamitra Dutta*
Estia Eichten
Christopher Field
Gail Finney
Edwin Fuller Jr.
James Garrett Jr.
Fritz Gesztesy*
Jessica Hamilton*
Richard Helmholtz
Joseph Patrick Henry*

Charles Russell Hille
Allen Hjelmfelt
Zackary Johnson
Russell Jones
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Peter Koehler
Bruce Krogh*
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Larson*
Heikki Lempa*
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Brigitta Malm*
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Reinhold Mann
Gale Mattox*
Larry McLerran
Dale Medearis*
David Lynn Moehring
Hans Othmer*
Ras Bihari Pandey
Terry Paul Pinkard
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Richard Porter
Anant Ramdas
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Sally Sedgwick
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Frederick Smith*
Joseph Richard Smyth*
Randall Snurr
Ubaldo Soto
Andrea Stith*
Jenny Strauss Clay
Charles Home
Trautmann
Kevin Trumble
James and Hildegard
Vary

Michael Wiescher*
Arjun Yodh
Jeffrey Zink
Up to \$249
Neal Abraham
Tulay Adali
Philip Allen
Abby Anderton
Clifford Ando
Anthony Arduengo III
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Stephen Cramer
Gholamreza
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M. Denise Dearing
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Barbara Dutrow
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Michael Faehrmann*
Zhigang Zak Fang
Robert Field
Alison Flatau
Lazar Fleishman
Piper Foster Wilder*
Robert Frakes*
Gregory Freeze
Perry Frey
Bretislav Friedrich*
Lisa Gabel
Tzeno Galchev

AUDITED REVENUE & EXPENSES | FY 2024 \$1.0 M BUDGET



Lev Gasparov	Jiri Janata and	David Mason*	Kenneth Reardon	Nathan Stoltzfus*
Sukumar Ghosh	Mirosława Josowicz	Judkins Cooper	Mark Rectanus*	Nicholas James
Robert Gilbert	Peter Jelavich*	Mathews*	Sudhakar Reddy	Strausfeld
Geoffrey Giles	John Johnson*	Brian McCook*	Hans Ritter*	Peter Strittmatter
Yury Gogotsi*	Jerome Scott Jordan	Kevin McCrimmon*	Kenneth Rose*	Eric Sundberg
Paul Goldberg	Jagmeet Kanwal	Yolanda McGill	James Rovnyak	Sarolta Takacs*
Eric Goldberg*	Tapas Kar	Darrin McMahon*	Rainer Rumold	Birgit Tautz*
Michael Goodhart	Shun-ichiro Karato	Curtis Menyuk*	Wolfgang Sachse	Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo*
Stephen Goodnick	Dennis Kehoe	Carmelo Mesa-Lago	Marvin Salin	Martin Terplan
Channe Gowda	George Kenagy	Harold Metcalf	Hugo Sanabria	Klaus Truemper
Brian Grady*	Kevin Kenny*	Gerald Meyer*	Joseph Sanger	Joseph Turner
William Albert Graham*	Wolfgang Ketterle	Ognjen Miljanic*	William Saul	Alexander Tzagoloff
David Grainger III	Lawrence Kim	Cecilia Miller*	Robert Schippa*	Raju Venugopalan
Alan Grinnell	Gary Kinsel	Jerald Andrew Mitchell	Barnett Schlinger	James Vignos
Scott Hafemann*	Ruth Klausner*	Bert Breon Mitchell*	Ingo Schlupp*	Andrey Vilesov
Sossina Haile	Charles Knobler	Timothy Moore	Joachim Schnier*	Bernhard Vogler
Owen Peter Hamill	Maria Koehler	Bruno Nachtergaele*	Meinhard Schobeiri	Min-Chi von Trentini
Ronald Hanson	Jocelyne Kolb	Sriram Narasimhan	Julian Schroeder*	Matthias Vorwerk*
James Harris	John Kovar*	George Paul Neitzel*	Lenhart Karl Schubert	Sigurd Wagner
Wick Haxton	Efrain Kristal	Jay A. Nelson	Ruth Scodel	Abdul Waheed
Kingsley Haynes	Simone-Gunde Kulin	Mark Nelson	Peter Sedwick*	Richard Walker
Franz Hefti	Mark Alan Kulstad	Nadav Nur	David Seidman*	Lary Walker
Susan Heller-Zeisler	Manju Kumari	Ada Levy Olins	Ivan Selesnick	Zhi-Yong Wang
Edith Hemaspaandra	Meena Kumari	James O'Neil	Engin Serpersu	Dale Webster
Lane Hemaspaandra	Peggy Kuo	Aare Onton	Irina Shevelenko*	Kathleen Weil-Garris
Harry Hertz	Eric Kurlander*	Dietrich Orlow	Jean'ne Shreeve	Brandt
LaVerne D. Hess*	David Landau	Ilonka Oszvald*	Jacob Sider Jost*	John Simon Werner
Henry Hess*	Kristine Larson	William Ott	Theo Siegrist*	Kelly Joan Whitmer*
Ulrich Hewer*	Abraham Lenhoff	Karl Otto Jr.*	Larry Arnold Silver	David Williams
Robert Hickey	Allen Liu*	Russell Pack	Ralph Simmons	Rod Anthony Wing
Donna Lynne	Yvonne Losch	Jeffrey Peck*	Niall Slater	Horst Henning Winter
Hoffmeister	Robert Loudon	Roy Paul Planalp*	Fred Hines Smith*	Christoph Winter
Gregory Hoke*	Stephen Mackwell	Samuel Powell*	Christopher Somerville*	Christiane Wobus
Norbert Holtkamp	Julius Maneth	Ralf Prigl*	Timothy Doak Steele	Joe Wong
Narayan Hosmane	Rudolph Marcus	Peter Pulay	Holly Stein	Jianzhong Wu
Stefan Hutsching	Seth Marder*	Kaliappa Raganathan*	Herbert Steiner	Tadeusz Wysocki*
Robert Hutchings	Christina Markert	Talat Shahnaz Rahman	Lauren Stokes	Ronald Yeung
Anatoli Ivanov	James Markham	Ronald Raines		
Peter Jacobs	Steven Martinson	Lindsay Read Feinberg		

*Denotes individuals who made multiple contributions in 2024

Zanner and Amian from page 4

AFAvH: Looking ahead to 2026, what are your key priorities?

Markus Zanner: Our immediate focus is the Global Minds Initiative Germany. We see great potential to reach a large number of researchers through our expanded programs, and we are looking forward to welcoming them to our network. We want to publicize the Humboldt Network and highlight its impact on science, politics, and society—for the people of Germany, Europe, and the world. In

times of global crisis, this mission is more important than ever.

AFAvH: What is your message to researchers in the United States and the US Humboldt Network?

Markus Zanner: Science and research are by nature collaborative endeavors that transcend national boundaries. We believe that it is in everyone's interest when science and scholarship thrive in the United States because the whole worldwide academic community benefits from it. As a funding organization, our

mission is to create a worldwide network of excellent researchers, based on trust. Our alumni know that we live up to our motto "Once a Humboldtian, always a Humboldtian." They can always apply for one of our alumni sponsorship options—for example, renewed research stays in Germany of up to three months. For all other scientists and scholars, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has attractive and flexible sponsorship options. Germany is a fantastic place to do cutting-edge research. We welcome all excellent researchers from the United States. 🌐

COMING UP IN 2026

American Friends of AvH will attend the following meetings in 2026.

European Career Fair

Boston, MA | February 26–March 1, 2026

American Physical Society Meeting

Denver, CO | March 16–20, 2026

EU Open House Day at the German Embassy

Washington, DC | May 9, 2026

**American Society for Microbiology
Annual Meeting**

Washington DC | June 4–8, 2026

GAIN Annual Conference

San Francisco, CA | August 21–23, 2026

American Chemical Society Meeting

Chicago, IL | August 23–27, 2026

Society for Neuroscience Meeting

Washington, DC | November 14–18, 2026

American Geophysical Union Annual Meeting

San Francisco, CA | December 7–11, 2026