

Heart to Heart Anatolia *(Gönülden Gönüle Anadolu)*



Introducing scholarship awardees



Murat Alandagli

Murat Alandagli (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee 2014-2015, Ankara, Turkey and Morgantown WV*) received awards from H2HA in 2014 and in 2015 and has completed several ESL (English as a Second Language) courses in Morgantown by participating in the IEP (Intensive English Program) at West Virginia University. One of our Board members, Perihan Celik, has made arrangements for Murat Alandagli to come to West Virginia University as a visiting scholar. Murat was hosted by the CIP (Council of International Program). He worked as an intern in the Royce Watts Museum to conduct research on history of Coal Mining in West Virginia. This unique experience has helped him tremendously in passing the University Ph.D Entrance Examinations in Turkey to pursue his graduate study in the area of Anatolian History. Currently Murat is a doctorate student at Hacettepe University in Ankara, and as an assistant he's teaching courses at a different university in Turkey. As of January 2020, Murat has completed all his course requirements and examinations for his Ph.D. studies. Currently he is working on his dissertation on the topic of "Changes in the Settlement Order in the Ottoman Rum Province (A Survey of Historical Geography in Alaca, Mecitözü and Almus Examples from 1455 to 1927)" Prior to that some of his papers were published (1992).



Murat (front row, 2nd from the right) with friends and colleagues from CIP and IEP at Celik's residence, in Morgantown WV



Gulay Yakaboylu

Gülay Cesur Yakaboylu (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee 2014-2015, Ankara, Turkey and Morgantown WV*) Gulay was awarded a scholarship to pay her tuition at West Virginia University (WVU) for some ESL courses. However due to some unforeseen circumstances Gülay was not able to obtain a Teaching Assistantship (TA) position, and still waiting (working in the meantime) for an opportunity to pursue her graduate study. She is currently taking some courses outside the University which are transferable to WVU, to reduce tuition expenses.



Gulay with her husband Gunes Yakaboylu



Cagil Deniz Arslan

Cagil Deniz Arslan (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee 2015-2016, Chicago, IL*). Deniz obtained his MD degree at Ankara University School of Medicine, later on moved to USA to complete internal medicine training at Stroger Hospital of Cook County, Chicago, IL while also working as clinical research volunteer at Rush University Hospital, Chicago, IL. He currently works at the Nephrology Department of Stanford University Hospital. His family originates from eastern provinces of Sivas and Tunceli. He is an avid reader for Anatolia's rich history and archeology starting from antiquity. He is also member of UNESCO World Heritage Center and Antiquities Coalition .



Deniz at Stanford University, 2020



Ogun Yurdakul

**Ogun Yurdakul (H2HA/GGA Scholarship Awardee, 2017;
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, IL)**

Ogun Yurdakul has a B.S. degree (2016) in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from Bogazici University (Bosporus University) Istanbul. Ogun Yurdakul was awarded H2HA scholarship while he was pursuing his graduate studies at University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign, Illinois, in the field Electrical and Computer Science specializing in Power systems. Ogun graduated successfully from Univ. Illinois in May 2018 with a Master of Science and joined Berlin Technical University, Germany for his Ph.D. study in the same field specializing in Distributed Artificial Intelligence applied to Renewable Power and Energy Systems.



**Ogun at the University of
Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Campus, 2017**



Mehmet Aygun

Mehmet Aygun (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee, 2016-2017, West Virginia University*). Mehmet Aygun was born in Istanbul. After completing elementary, middle and high school education, he moved to Izmir and started studying in Mechanical Engineering Department at Dokuz Eylul University (Izmir) He earned his bachelor degree (BS), and decided to continue his education abroad, in USA. This adventure has culminated in earning a Master of Science (MS) degree in Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at West Virginia University, WV. After working a few years for Light House Designs Inc. in NY City, he started working as an engineer for One Ten Group, Inc. in New York City. In his free times, he loves playing “*baglama*” (a traditional Turkish folk instrument). He says “*baglama* is my best friend” to express how strongly he is bounded to each other.” In a typical weekend, you can find him playing *baglama* and singing Turkish folk songs with his friends.



Mehmet playing his beloved Baglama (Saz, Long necked Lute)



Filiz Kazan

Filiz Kazan (H2HA Scholarship Awardee, 2017, West Virginia University, Morgantown WV). Filiz has roots in Anatolia; her parents are originally from a small village, Asarcik of Hafik in Sivas. Filiz was born in Turhal where her grandparents (on mother's side) lived, but grew-up in Istanbul where her grandparents (on father's side) moved as part of the wave of immigration from Anatolian villages to big cities like Istanbul. Filiz earned her B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering Department at Celal Bayar University in Manisa, Turkey. After working for a couple of years in Turkey, and later in Chicago (USA) to save money for her graduate study, she applied to West Virginia University and got acceptance to start her graduate study as of January 2017. H2HA/GGA founding members Ismail and Perihan Celik have helped to facilitate Filiz to join WVU and eventual settlement in Morgantown WV. She is currently pursuing her PhD study in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at West Virginia University, Morgantown WV.



Filiz on graduation day finishing her Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering



Ozkan Karabulut

Ozkan Karabulut (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee, 2019, Harvard University, Cambridge MA*). Ozkan has earned his B.A. Degree in History from Middle East technical University, Ankara, and a M.A. in Social Sciences from Sabanci University, Istanbul. He is currently a Ph.D. student at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA in the Department of History and Middle Eastern Studies. Ozkan is the youngest son of the five children of a farmer family from a small village in Erzinca. Since there was no school in their village he had to study at a boarding school. Throughout his education, Ozkan was an excellent student always on the top tier of his classes. He has a deep appreciation of voluntary charity work rooted to his participation on many projects through ILKYAR (a national aid organization for elementary schools). Ozkan maintains his connections to Anatolian culture by playing the national instrument Baglama (the long necked lute) among other cultural and social activities.



Ozkan Karabulut in Harvard University Library



Pinar Cerrahoglu

Pinar Cerrahoglu (H2HA Scholarship Awardee, 2019-2020, University of Delaware, Newark, DE). Pinar is originally from Istanbul, but she lived in different parts of Turkey. Her life in diverse neighborhoods of Turkey taught her to accept and respect differences from a very early age and always have a humanistic outlook on life. Although Pinar has a bachelor's degree on English Translation and Interpretation, her deep love for the space and her yearning to know its mysteries made her to go back to school to study astrophysics. Currently, she is studying Physics and Astronomy at University of Delaware. She has taken on undergraduate research on the Magnetic Fields of the Massive Stars and has participated in the ROCKSAT-C 2020&2021 which is a NASA program that annually launches student experiments on a "sounding rocket".

These days, in her free time, Pinar does mosaics and designs her own jewelry. She loves taking long walks, and enjoys swimming. She is also very interested in Turkish mythology and one day she hopes to publish her own stories and fairy tales. She resides in Delaware, with her beloved feline companion, Dobby, and hopes to continue her postgraduate studies for a Ph.D. in the field of Astronomy.

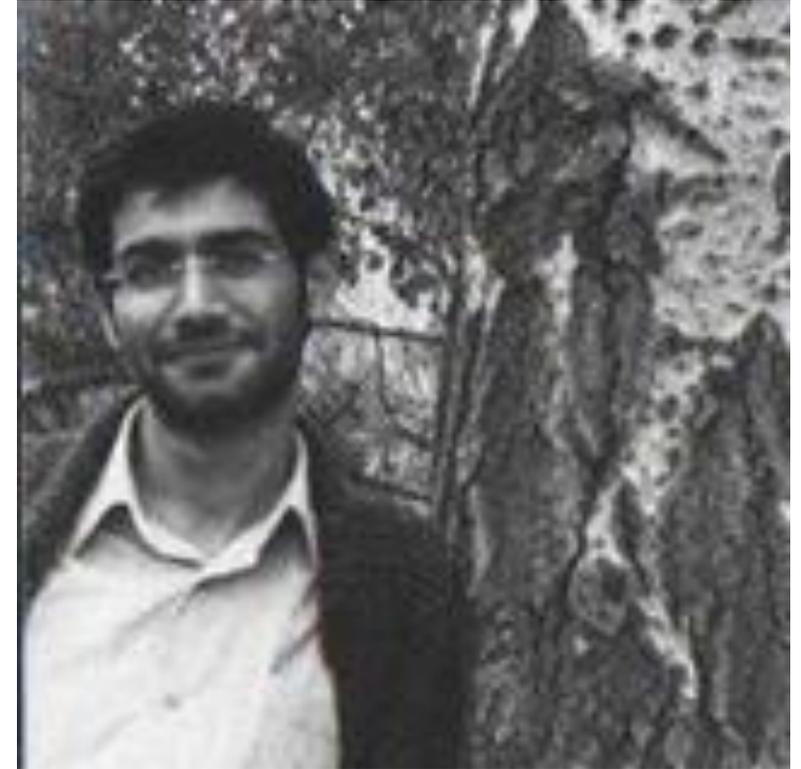


Pinar uses her apartment partially as a lab for experiments due to Covid-19 pandemic.



Mustafa Kemal Emil

Mustafa Kemal Emil (*H2HA Scholarship Awardee, 2019-2020, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI*). Mustafa Kemal Emil was born in Sarikamis – a small town of Kars- Turkey, in 1983 as the youngest child of five siblings. After completing elementary, middle school education in Sarikamis, Mustafa's family migrated to Ankara (the capital city of Turkey) to receive better treatment for his aging father's health issues. Mustafa received his B.S. degree in 2007 and M.S. degree in 2011 in Mining Engineering from Middle East Technical University (METU) with a Minor degree in Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems. In 2012, Mustafa came to Kalamazoo, MI where he continues his graduate education. He is currently a PhD candidate and lab manager at Geological and Environmental Sciences Department in Western Michigan University. Mustafa Emil already has more than 45 technical publications with more than 250 citations. He combines traditional scientific methods with data from Earth Observation Satellites to better understand and monitor environmental problems facing the planet. In his free times, Mustafa likes making mix-media sculptures, doing outdoor activities and playing Turkish traditional instrument Baglama.



Mustafa Kemal Emil