

Kartik Sameer Madiraju
Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation
2014 Grantee

Personal Statement

As part of a one-year fellowship in conflict resolution with the non-profit Insight Collaborative, I conducted a three-month training and research project in the Pacific island nation of Palau, from December 2013 to March 2014. This project afforded me the opportunity to understand the complexities of environmental disputes, climate change negotiations, and environmental policy in the context of nations facing dramatic climate change impacts, as well as in the context of a nation that has had a tumultuous political and cultural history. This opportunity has taught me invaluable lessons about how to qualify my approach to environmental protection by the needs and features of the communities I am serving; the importance of building the capacity of local professionals to effect organic, positive change in their home countries; and that no environmental protection effort is impossible to cross-apply to other settings.

Were it not for the timely and generous support of the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation (JJCF), this project would not have been possible. In retrospect, witnessing the positive impact this project has had on environmental protection efforts in Palau, and most importantly, being aware that my work will be continued and spearheaded by local organizations, is such a rewarding experience that I owe to the financial support of the JJCF. I am humbled to have been selected for grant support, and I thank the JJCF for this opportunity to conduct work in a field I am so passionate about. I wholeheartedly encourage aspiring professionals in the field of public service to seek out the advice and support of the JJCF.