

## Edmund S. Muskie Fellow Kamil Valiyev LLM '06

KAMIL VALIYEV LLM '06 GREW UP IN THE CITY OF BAKU IN THE COUNTRY OF AZERBAIJAN, A FORMER SOVIET REPUBLIC. A nation with a Turkic majority and a large Muslim population, Azerbaijan is a blend of cultures. Located in southwestern Asia, it borders the Caspian Sea, between Iran and Russia, with a small European portion north of the Caucasus range. Azerbaijan was briefly independent from 1918 to 1920, and later regained its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It is becoming increasingly important in world politics and the world economy because of its rich oil resources and its extensive 370-mile border with Iran.

Valiyev, age 24, has spent the past year at Pierce Law studying intellectual property in the Masters of Laws (LLM) program, and teaching Americans about his native Azerbaijan.

A 2005 recipient of a prestigious fellowship from the Edmund S. Muskie Freedom Support Act/ Graduate Fellowship Program, Valiyev is one of 16 students selected from Azerbaijan to be given the opportunity to pursue graduate studies in the United States. The Muskie Fellowship Program, established in 1992, promotes "supporting democracy and economic development in Eurasia and provides opportunities for outstanding young professionals to study at the master's degree level in the United States."

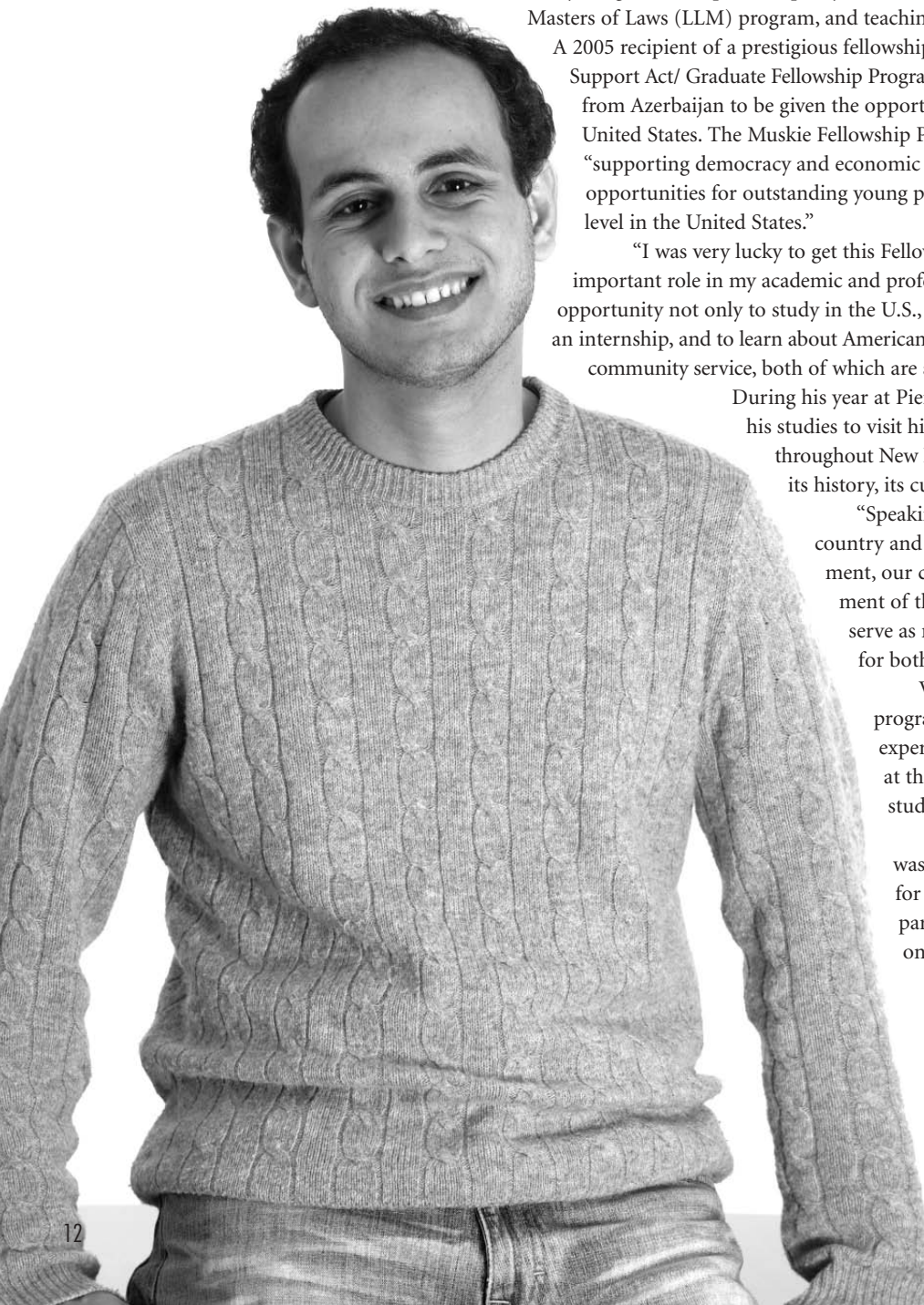
"I was very lucky to get this Fellowship," says Valiyev. "It has played an important role in my academic and professional development. I have had an opportunity not only to study in the U.S., but to gain practical experience by doing an internship, and to learn about American society, its culture and values by doing community service, both of which are a requirement of the Fellowship."

During his year at Pierce Law, Valiyev has taken time away from his studies to visit high school history and geography classes throughout New Hampshire to tell students about Azerbaijan, its history, its culture and its future.

"Speaking with American students about my native country and introducing them to our form of government, our cultural diversity, and economy is a requirement of the Fellowship," says Valiyev. "I am proud to serve as my country's ambassador. It is a win-win for both countries."

Valiyev's enrollment in Pierce Law's graduate program does not represent his first educational experience in America. In 2001, Valiyev studied at the University of Oregon in Eugene where he studied political science as an exchange student.

While at the University of Oregon, Valiyev was honored with a "Rising Star" award in 2002 for his service to the community, as an active participant in on-campus events and working on the election campaign of State Senator



Susan Castillo. Valiyev also visited geography classes in local schools, sharing his knowledge of Azerbaijan. He completed his LLB in 2004 from Baku State University.

“I spent a year at the Ministry of Commerce and Information Technology working on intellectual property rights and information technology,” says Valiyev. “My work there focused on regulatory and policymaking issues in the field of intellectual property and dispute resolution.”

This summer, Valiyev is interning at Silverberg, Goldman and Bikoff, LLP in Washington, DC. After completion of his internship, Valiyev plans to return to his family in Baku and continue his work at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. His younger brother, Ali, is currently in military service and his sister, Dilara, is in middle school. His parents are both employed, his father Zakir in business and his mother, Elmira, is an economist working for a state enterprise.

“I have made a lot of friends here, not only from the U.S., but also from all around the world—all made possible by Pierce Law’s small size and the valuable efforts of the staff to create a warm and friendly atmosphere,” says Valiyev.

## Facts About Azerbaijan



**Terrain:** large, flat

**Elevation Extremes:** lowest point: Caspian Sea, 28 m; highest point: Bazarduzu Dagi, 4,485 m

**Natural resources:** petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, nonferrous metals, alumina

### GOVERNMENT

**Capital:** Baku (Baki); population, 2 million

**Independence:** August 30, 1991 (from Soviet Union)

**National holiday:** founding of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, May 28, 1918

**Constitution:** adopted November 12, 1995

**Legal system:** based on civil law system

### POPULATION AND RELIGIONS

**Population:** 7,961,619 (July 2006 est.)

**Ethnic groups:** Azeri 90.6%, Dagestani 2.2%, Russian 1.8%, Armenian 1.5%, other 3.9% (1999 census)

**Religions:** Muslim 93.4%, Russian Orthodox 2.5%, Armenian Orthodox 2.3%

**Languages:** Azerbaijani (Azeri) 89%, Russian 3%, Armenian 2%

### GEOGRAPHY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**Geographic coordinates:** 40 30 N, 47 30 E

**Area:** Total: 86,600 sq km; Land: 86,100 sq km; Water: 500 sq km

**Area comparative:** slightly smaller than Maine

**Climate:** dry, semi-arid steppe

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:** chief of state: President Ilham Aliyev (since October 31, 2003); head of government: Prime Minister Artur Rasizade (since November 4, 2003); First Deputy Prime Minister Abbas Abbasov (since November 10, 2003); Cabinet: Council of Ministers appointed by the president and confirmed by the National Assembly

**Elections:** president elected by popular vote to a five-year term; election last held October 2003 (next to be held October 2008); prime minister and first deputy prime ministers appointed by the president and confirmed by the National Assembly

**Legislative branch:** unicameral National Assembly or Milli Mejlis; 125 seats, members elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms