



Parkes Philanthropy Consultant Bio



Name **Sectors**

Athena Lao Nonprofit

Role **Specialties**

Consultant International education, fundraising,
international development

Education

M.S.Ed. in International Educational
Development from the
University of Pennsylvania, B.A. in
Classics from Harvard University

Professional Experience

Athena serves as Senior Program Officer for Fulbright South and Central Asia at the Institute of International Education, where she manages and negotiates a \$20 million budget for Fulbright Foreign Student exchange programs with Department of State and Fulbright Commissions. Previously, she founded the BEST Foundation, a civic education nonprofit in Bulgaria now serving 1,000+ high school students.

Achievements

Athena has crowdfunded \$40,000 over 3 years for high school students to attend international competitions and has co-written a successful grant proposal for \$25,000 USD from the US Department of State. She raised \$100,000 USD in individual and government sourced funding and built fundraising infrastructure for a Bulgarian nonprofit.

Affiliations

Athena serves as the Vice President at the Harvard Asian American Alumni Alliance.

Awards and Recognitions

Athena has been named as a Fulbright Fellow, Coca-Cola Scholar, and a Gates Millennium Scholar.

Passion for Social Impact

Athena is dedicated to providing educational opportunity through equitable access.

Personal Interests

Running, traveling, reading, Bulgarian and Latin dance