

## Law School's Azerbaijan alliance showcased in Baku

July 13, 2015 8:45 AM Linda P. Campbell  
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Robert F. Cekuta, U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan, left, presents a Tulane LLM diploma to Baku State University professor Nishat Rahimov, center, assisted by university rector Abel Maharramov, during a program centered on the schools' unique maritime and energy law partnership that took place in April. (Photo from Nishat Rahimov)

Not every [Tulane Law School](#) graduate gets a diploma presented on national television. Two graduates received that star treatment in Azerbaijan as part of a conference showcasing Tulane Law's maritime and energy law partnership in the

Caspian Sea region.

The graduates were Zumrud Musaeva and Nishat Rahimov, who now directs Baku State University's LLM program in energy and maritime law. The program graduated its first group of five students this spring.

Through the Caspian Regional Initiative launched in 2012, Tulane has helped Azerbaijan's leading university build its new LLM program in maritime and energy law by training Azerbaijani faculty, students and legal professionals in those fields, as well as in environmental law.

Each year, Tulane law faculty members teach intensive short courses in Baku, and Baku State University sends faculty members to Tulane for LLM study.

Tulane's Caspian initiative was sparked by a request from the U.S. State Department, which tapped Tulane Law School because of its leading expertise in maritime, energy and environmental law.

"Something that has become apparent again and again around the world is how central rule of law ? for example, equality before the law or the sense that courts will operate fairly ? is for attracting investment, fostering entrepreneurship and ensuring economic growth," said Robert F. Cekuta, U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan.

The academic exchange with Baku State "will help ensure Azerbaijan remains competitive in the marketplace of ideas, as well as in the market for oil, gas and energy services," he said.

Professor Martin Davies, director of the [Tulane Maritime Law Center](#), taught an introductory course in maritime law for Baku's newest group of LLM students in May.

Tulane's Caspian involvement ? supported by the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative, Chevron and ExxonMobil ? is a key component in expanding the law school's energy law program. Baku State officials said they hope to send two students to Tulane for LLM study beginning in August 2015.

The collaboration between Tulane and Baku State University is "a great example of how the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United States can work together

on issues.&#x201d;&mdash; Robert F. Cekuta, U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan