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**60**  
YEARS | Because of my  
**EISENHOWER FELLOWSHIP...**



### **SHAHID MAHMUD, 2001 PAKISTAN**

Chief Executive Officer, Interactive Group of Companies

“We called ourselves the Millennium Fellows,” Mahmud says of his “class” of 2001 Multi Nation Program Fellows. “We all came (on the program) with varied professional backgrounds and cultures, but we all wanted to live in a peaceful world by respecting each other’s cultures, religions and political beliefs. We all had a singular concern for humanity at heart.” At the end of his program, Mahmud was selected as a McCabe Fellow, one of EF’s named fellowships, for one who is considered to be a public-spirited businessperson.



A few months after the 2001 Fellows returned to their respective countries, the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. transpired. “The world became a different place,” commented Mahmud. But his outlook did not waver. “My experiences as a Fellow continued to give me hope. By then, I had set two clear goals for myself: I needed to learn more about my country and I had to strive to solve pressing issues of society.”

Upon his return from the fellowship, Mahmud went on to get a Master's degree in Defense & Strategic Studies from National Defense College (NDC) in Islamabad. He graduated as the first ever private sector student from the institution in its history. His commandant wrote in his report; “I salute his spirit of sustained hard work and a high degree of commitment to the security of Pakistan. He will be an asset for any field of activity he chooses to contribute to”. Mahmud’s contributions toward national security by developing networks and systems were instrumental in saving a colossal numbers of lives after a devastating earthquake and floods.

Mahmud’s participation towards charitable organizations cannot be overlooked. He is active in several philanthropic activities, working with youth-oriented and community service projects, such as Buraq Planetary Society (of which he is founder and chairman), TRUCE (of which is a member of the board of directors) and the Indus Hospital (run by fellow Pakistani Eisenhower Fellow Dr. Abdul Bari Khan (2004)). Mahmud is currently the Information Communications Technologies Co-Chair of National University of Science and Technology, Corporate Advisory Council, as well as on the board of directors of Askari Bank. Mahmud is currently the chairman and CEO for the Interactive Group, operating in Pakistan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Malaysia. He has provided the vision and leadership that spurred the company to make tremendous strides in telecommunications and the IT industry in a very short span of time. He has set his group’s ultimate vision to be “solving pressing issues of society”.

“My Eisenhower Fellowship and graduation from NDC changed my career from being a technology man to being a more involved person in the socioeconomic development of our country”, Mahmud says. He concludes that his experience with EF was certainly a life-altering one, not only professionally, but personally as well. “What I took away from my time as an Eisenhower Fellow is a sense of responsibility. I gained a desire to do more for Pakistan and humanity at large in my humble way. I gained a passion to strive towards doing things that could lead to world harmony, while keeping in mind the sensitivity of all concerned. This is something I may have never learned had I not been a Fellow”.

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