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The Finn Is In

Furman University

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Alexander Stubb '93 became his country's prime minister in June. A member of the country's ruling conservative party, Stubb won his party's leadership and will oversee the nation's five-party coalition. He succeeds Jyrki Katainen, who stepped down to pursue one of the European Union's top jobs.

Stubb was minister for foreign affairs of Finland from 2008 to 2011 and a member of the European parliament from 2004 to 2008. He is often described as a fiscal conservative but social liberal, and has advocated for Finland to become a part of NATO.

a controversial stance given Russia's opposition toward any Scandinavian country aligning itself with NATO (Finland shares a nearly 800-mile border with the country). Arriving at Furman on a golf scholarship, Stubb left with a degree in political science and was awarded the Bradshaw-Feaster Medal for General Excellence as the top male graduate in the class.

In addition to earning a PhD in international politics from the London School of Economics, he has a master's degree in political science from the College of Europe, Bruges, and a diploma on French language and society from the Sorbonne in Paris.

He has also earned a reputation as a sportsman who enjoys competing in triathlons.

"Furman was a game-changer in my life. I came in with a small golf scholarship and came out an enthusiastic political scientist."

— ALEXANDER STUBB '93

Lavery, who brought me to Furman: to Professor Brent Nelsen for introducing me to the European Union; and to Professor Ty Tessitore for planting a seed of philosophy in my brain.

"I always speak warmly of Furman, and always with a heavy Southern accent. I owe a lot to Furman for what I am today."