About the Humphrey Fellowship Program

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program was initiated in 1978 to honor Hubert H. Humphrey, the late senator and vice president, and his lifelong commitment to international cooperation and public service.

The program brings accomplished young and midcareer professionals from designated developing nations and emerging democracies to the United States for a year of professional development and related academic study and cultural exchange. The people-to-people approach to international understanding provides a basis for lasting ties between U.S. citizens and their professional counterparts in other countries. It also strengthens the global exchange of knowledge and experience essential to a sustainable world.

Humphrey Fellows have demonstrated leadership skills and a record of public service and have had little or no previous travel experience in the United States. Their selection to the program is based on their potential for leadership and their commitment to public service.

More than 4,000 men and women have been honored as Humphrey Fellows since the program began. About 200 Fellowships are awarded annually.

The English Language Program

The Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute has hosted the Humphrey Fellowship Long-term English Language Program for the past six years.

The intensive 20-week program assists in increasing Fellows’ English language proficiency and understanding of American culture. It also emphasizes leadership skills and intercultural development. The program features extensive, meaningful exposure to both the Virginia Tech and Blacksburg communities.

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2014 Fellows

Mohammed Abdulqader Alshuwaiter
Yemen
Mr. Alshuwaiter is a researcher for the Ministry of Justice in Yemen. He provides recommendations for development and reform of the legislative system. He will study law and human rights at American University.

Murat Erçin
Turkey
Mr. Erçin is a planning expert for the Tigris Development Agency. He coordinates projects focused on the development of economic and social affairs, specializing in rural development and the evaluation of natural resources. He will study agriculture and rural development at Cornell University.

Lila Devi Ojha
Nepal
Ms. Ojha is editor-in-chief/publisher of Byapar Weekly. The business weekly is aimed at educating the Nepalese people on the economic development needs of the country and promoting national and international linkages. She will study communications/journalism at Arizona State University.

Marcela Sánchez-Buitrago
Colombia
Ms. Sánchez-Buitrago is the executive director of Colombia Diversa. The nonprofit organization promotes and defends the rights of the LGBTI community in Colombia. She will study law and human rights at the University of Minnesota Law School.

Gulmira Shakiralieva
Kyrgyzstan
Ms. Shakiralieva is the national advocacy advisor for PF “SOS Children’s Villages Kyrgyzstan.” She organizes advocacy activities in child protection, works with orphans and children without parental care, and works with government and NGOs to lobby for child rights. She will study law and human rights at American University.

San Thida
Myanmar
Ms. Thida is assistant director of the budget department in the country’s Ministry of Finance. She leads a government reform effort for the ministry. She will work with issues of decentralization and transparency during the transitional period in Myanmar. She will study public policy analysis and public administration at Syracuse University.

Yves Martial Bitama Ada
Cameroon
Mr. Bitama Ada is an agriculture and agro-industry analyst for Cabinet Elesyst. He advises businesses in the agricultural sector and oversees relationships with banks, microfinance companies, and other stakeholders. He will study agriculture and rural development at Cornell University.

Seguibyam Joachim Kientga
Burkina Faso
Mr. Kientga is the chief tax inspector for the North Region in the Ministry of Economy. Leading teams of tax inspectors and controllers, he is responsible for ensuring compliance with tax laws and preventing tax evasion. He will study public policy analysis and public administration at Michigan State University.

Jean-Marie Bukuru
Burundi
Mr. Bukuru is head of land planning and land development for the Ministry of Water, Environment, and Land Planning. He is in charge of land inventory, mapping, land planning and development, sustainable land management, and geographic information systems in the province of Rutana. He will study agriculture and rural development at Cornell University.

Innocent Nukuri
Burundi
Dr. Nukuri is public health coordinator for Foundation TPO Burundi. He coordinates a team that facilitates the implementation of performance-based financing by international NGOs and regulates and controls the quality of the health care system. He will study public health policy and management at Emory University.

Kelly Alcilene Cardozo
Brazil
Ms. Cardozo is the pedagogical coordinator for the Institute for the Study of Sustainable Development. She coordinates projects focused on the development of cultural and social entrepreneurship, educational heritage, and environmental education. She will study educational administration and planning and policy at Vanderbilt University.

Seymur Erçin
Turkey
Mr. Erçin is a planning expert for the Tigris Development Agency. He coordinates projects focused on the development of economic and social affairs, specializing in rural development and the evaluation of natural resources. He will study agriculture and rural development at Cornell University.

Hussein Salahedine El Hajj
Lebanon
Mr. El Hajj is a captain in Lebanon’s Internal Security Forces. He hopes to help his country address issues in human trafficking. He will study trafficking in persons policy and prevention at the University of Minnesota Law School.

Murat Erçin
Turkey
Mr. Erçin is a planning expert for the Tigris Development Agency. He coordinates projects focused on the development of economic and social affairs, specializing in rural development and the evaluation of natural resources. He will study agriculture and rural development at Cornell University.

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