



***Embassy of the United States of America***  
*Port Louis, Mauritius*  
PRESS RELEASE

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**Councillors Tawheen Choomka and Karen Foo Kune to participate in IVLP program “Young African Leaders: Newly Elected Officials”**

**Port Louis, February 21, 2014:** The U.S. Embassy Port Louis has nominated Tawheen Choomka and Karen Foo Kune for an IVLP program on the theme of “*Young African Leaders: Newly Elected Officials*”, beginning on February 24 and ending on March 14, 2014 in the U.S.

This project, tailored for officials who have been elected to local, regional or national office in the past 12 months, will explore the responsibilities of elected officials at the federal, state and local levels. Practical topics will include voter education and registration; fundraising; citizen outreach and messaging; and professional staffing. Participants will examine how elections are organized and run. Transparency and accountability will be explored throughout the program. The group will learn how politicians employ the media, including social media, as well as how citizens use these tools to hold politicians accountable. The project will include discussions at academic institutions that have strong public policy programs and visits to state legislatures to observe discussions of key issues in local politics. Meetings with elected municipal officials will allow participants to observe the decentralized nature of the U.S. political system. The project will include meetings with a variety of leaders, including those representing business, non-governmental organizations and other individuals who influence local decision-making including the media.

Member of the Labor Party, elected to Port Louis City Council in December 2012, Tawheen Choomka is a young lawyer and Part-time lecturer at the University of Mauritius for Law Professional Vocational Course. She was called to the Mauritian Bar at the age of 22 in January 2011 as Barrister-at-Law. Member of the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM), elected to the Beau-Bassin/Rose Hill City Council, Karen Foo Kune, is well-know former athlete. She participated in various competitions both on national, regional and international level and received numerous awards as a badminton player. She is also the Founder and President of “Badminton Pou Zenfan, an organization focusing on the social integration of Children through sports and education.

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The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program. It seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other nations through carefully designed short-term visits to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders. International Visitors are current or emerging leaders in government, politics, the media, education, the arts, business and other key fields. Over 4,000 International Visitors come to the United States from all over the world each year.

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