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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **U.S. Ambassador Congratulates 100 Newest Mandela Washington Fellows**

The U.S. Embassy today recognized 100 young Nigerians selected to participate in the 2016 Mandela Washington Fellowship. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of the President's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and a key component of President Barack Obama's commitment to invest in the future of Africa. The White House developed this initiative in recognition of the critical and increasing role that young Africans are playing in strengthening democratic institutions, spurring economic growth, and enhancing peace and security in Africa.

Speaking at a special gathering in Abuja, U.S. Ambassador James F. Entwistle congratulated the new fellows on their competitive selection amongst 10,000 Nigerian applicants and tens of thousands of others throughout Africa.

"Our goal was to select a diverse group, both geographically and socio-economically, representing all Nigeria has to offer," said Ambassador Entwistle. "You represent the best of Nigeria's youth and the future of the country. Your selection says a lot about who you are as young leaders and the level of impact you are having on your communities as entrepreneurs, civic leaders, public servants, and champions of renewable energy," he added.

Since 2014, 86 Nigerians have participated in the Mandela Washington Fellowship. Fellows participate in an intensive, six-week program on academic excellence and leadership focused on business and entrepreneurship, civic leadership, public management, and renewable energy at U.S. colleges and universities.

Attached is a list of the 2016 fellows, including their disciplines and hosting institutions.

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*Relevant information about U.S. policies and programs in Nigeria can be found on our websites:*  
<http://nigeria.usembassy.gov> and [www.usaid.gov/ng](http://www.usaid.gov/ng)

