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PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Department of State Honors Grace Ihejiamazu of Nigeria as State Alumni Member of the Month

The U.S. Department of State selected Grace Ihejiamazu as September's State Alumni Member of the Month in recognition of her dedication to developing Nigeria's next generation of leaders. Ihejiamazu participated in the 2010 [Study of the United States Institute for Student Leaders](#) (SUSI) Program on the theme of Social Entrepreneurship. She has since applied these entrepreneurial concepts in Nigeria by founding an after-school youth program.

Ihejiamazu's SUSI experience allowed her to examine how business techniques and entrepreneurial skills can be used to address social issues. Motivated by this knowledge and following her passion to help young people, Ihejiamazu returned to Nigeria and launched [Raising Young and Productive Entrepreneurs](#) (RYPE). This after-school youth development program offers skills trainings, internship placements, volunteer activities, and a peer mentoring club to educate, engage, and empower Nigerian youth to become leaders and entrepreneurs. Since its inception in 2011, RYPE's has reached more than 150 Nigerian youth.

As a young social entrepreneur, Ihejiamazu has already won considerable national and international recognition. In 2010, Ihejiamazu was recognized by [SIFE Nigeria](#), for her Outstanding Contribution towards a Better Society. In 2011, she was named one of Google's 12 Brightest Young Minds in the World and was invited to attend Google's prestigious event, [Zeitgeist Minds 2011](#). Also in 2011, Grace won a grant from the Young African Women Leaders Forum Small Grants Program in support of her RYPE initiative. Most recently, she was one of 60 young people selected from more than 2000 applications to attend the British Council's [Global Changemakers](#) event.

Each month, the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs' Alumni Affairs Division, which supports alumni as they build on their exchange experiences, recognizes one outstanding alumnus or alumna. Throughout September, Grace Ihejiamazu will be recognized on the [State Alumni website](#), ECA's official website for the more than one million Department-sponsored exchange alumni worldwide.

For more information visit the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' website at <http://exchanges.state.gov/alumni/alumnus.html>.

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