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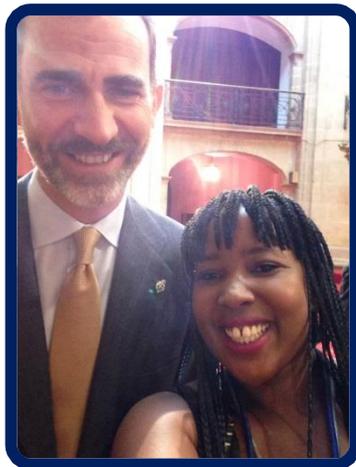
THE NEWSLETTER FOR U.S.- S.A. EXCHANGE ALUMNI

Issue 11 December 2014

Fulbright Program honored with Prince of Asturias Award

By Nomsa Mazwai

2010 Fulbright Foreign Student alumna, artist and development specialist, <http://www.nomisupasta.com/>



On October 24th, 2014, King Felipe VI of Spain honored the Fulbright Program with the 2014 Prince of Asturias Award for International Cooperation in recognition of the Program's educational and cultural exchange that has strengthened links and mutual understanding between the world's citizens. The King, who is the former Prince of Asturias, presented the award at a grand ceremony in Oviedo, Principality of Asturias, in north-west Spain. Our very own South African Fulbright alumna, Nomsa Mazwai, along with a handful of Fulbright alumni from other parts of the world, was selected to participate in the event.

Nomsa's respective "selfies" with King Felipe VI, and Queen Letizia of Spain

Fulbright Program honored with Prince of Asturias Award

“As Fulbrighters we are selected based on our leadership qualities, our academic capabilities and often, the society-changing contributions we make in the communities we serve. Community work can very often be thankless work, humbling work, difficult work, but we do it. We do it because often after we have completed our academic endeavors, we are internationalists. We have an understanding of who we are and what we can give. We are responsible and responsive.

If we are fortunate enough, before we return to our home countries, we are briefed on what we may experience when we return home. We are told that we will want to change the world, and warned that we will feel shattered if

we only manage to move mountains. I suppose the hardest thing for many of us Fulbrighters, because we are often leading, acting, and doing, is that very seldom do we have the opportunity to be celebrated.

This year, the Prince of Asturias Foundation celebrated all of us and how we are actively changing the world through the work we do independently and the work we do together. This year, the Fulbright Program was awarded the prize for international cooperation at what is really, the Spanish version of the Nobel Prize.

Five Fulbright alumni were selected to receive the award on behalf of all of you, and what a blessing it was to be selected.



Nomsa, third from left, along with other Fulbright alumni, accompanied Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan, to receive the award on behalf of the Fulbright Program



The five Fulbright alumni selected to receive the award on behalf of all program participants. From left: Russell Quiñones, United States; Sidrotun Naim, Indonesia; Nomsa Mazwai, South Africa; Shehzad Hameed Ahmed, Pakistan; and Félix González Herranz, Spain

Fulbright Program honored with Prince Asturias Award



Nomsa with fellow Fulbrighter Hameed Ahmed, from Pakistan enjoying some downtime in Spain



At the awards ceremony, from left, Assistant Secretary Evan Ryan; Nomsa Mazwai, South Africa; Shehzad Hameed Ahmed, Pakistan; Russell Quiñones, United States; Sidrotun Naim, Indonesia; and Félix González Herranz, Spain

Fulbright Program honored with Prince of Asturias Award



The Fulbright team, left, after Assistant Secretary of State Evan Ryan spoke during a press conference in Oviedo, Spain

Often, as leaders, we are the best cheerleaders, the best motivators, we get people to stand up and celebrate who they are in the spaces we touch and work in.

I arrived in Spain, one of my favorite countries in the world, having performed at Primavera Sound Festival earlier this year. Spanish people are extremely warm and welcoming, and I was looking forward to visiting the lovely Spain again. I must admit that this trip was, however, by far, and will continue to be one of my favorite life moments. Often, as leaders, we are the best cheerleaders, the best motivators, we get people to stand up and celebrate who they are in the spaces we touch and work in. However, it is not often that we are celebrated, that we are cheered for, that we are motivated. In Spain, we received the best motivation to continue to be great in the world. The Spanish people stood up and cheered for us, they celebrated Fulbright and the contribution we are making to a more collaborative world.

While in Spain, I thought back to my enrichment seminar, which was held in New Orleans, and was attended by over 100 Fulbrighters studying in the U.S. while I was there. I remember thinking to myself, in that room of Fulbrighters from all over the world, that we could indeed do anything. I remembered meeting kindred spirits and feeling like I was exactly where I needed to be.

If there is one thing that I took from my travels to Spain it was that we are all very special people. We are doing very important work, and no matter what, we should continue.

In isiXhosa, my mother tongue, there is a saying that says *Ntinga Ntaka Ndini*. It simply means, fly bird. To you, Fulbright alumni, I want to remind you that you were born to fly, the King of Spain assured me that you are indeed a bird, so *Ntinga Ntaka Ndini!*

If any of you reading this know me personally, you know that I am passionate about life, passionate about people, passionate about the world and the contribution I can make while on this planet. From all the Fulbrighters I have had the opportunity to meet, this is the one thing I think we all have in common.

What an honor to have received this award on all of our behalf. Thank you for continuing to be you, continuing to make your mark on this planet. This is only one of many accolades we have received as Fulbrighters and will continue to receive well into the foreseeable future.

We are first human beings, citizens of the world. We owe our being, to the soil, to the land. But how we are, how we live is, by being, with beings. We come in different shades, different colors, different flavors, different tongues, but we are all Fulbrighters. I hope you enjoy looking at the pictures I took on this incredible journey, one that all of you made possible.”

Fulbright Program honored by Prince Asturias Awards



Prince of Asturias Awards, Nomsa's bright smile between the shoulders of the King and Queen

See the video documentary done by Fulbright España about the Fulbright experience during the Prince of Asturias Awards in October; meet the Fulbrighters who accepted the award with ECA Assistant Secretary Evan Ryan, and see behind the scenes footage of their journey! [Watch it here.](#)

About the Prince of Asturias Awards

The Prince of Asturias Award for International Cooperation:

This award is bestowed on those whose scientific, technical, cultural, social and humanitarian work “constitutes an outstanding contribution at the international level.”

Other nominees hailed from nations around the world, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Ireland, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Portugal, United Kingdom, and Spain.

Each of the Prince of Asturias Awards, which date back to 1981, comprises a diploma, a Joan Miró sculpture representing and symbolizing the Awards, an insignia bearing the Foundation's coat of arms, and a cash prize of 50,000 euros.

In Their Own Words: Discovering the Religious Landscape of the U.S.

By Georgia Du Plessis

2014 Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI) alumna, currently a lecturer at the University of the Free State (UFS) and a PhD candidate in Religion and Law at the University of Antwerp, Belgium



SUSI 2014 cohort, Georgia is on the far left

Sometimes it is better to think that one is wise and be ignorant of one's ignorance. On the other hand, it will be a life of poverty and emptiness if the opportunity to learn is not taken with both hands. My first realization during the six week SUSI (Study of the U.S. Institutes – religious pluralism) program was how ignorance of others and their religions impoverished my life.

A diverse religious group of seventeen embarked on a six-week discovery of various religious institutions (Sikh, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Catholic, Evangelical, Latter-Day Saints and Presbyterian). We considered and learned about their involvement in charity, political, economic, and social concerns. The relationship between these religious institutions and the secular world was at the

forefront. We were also taught how these religious groups interacted with each other in a plural United States of America. The religious history of Native American, Latin American and African American minorities in the U.S. were investigated as well as their continuous fight towards recognition and against inequality.

Sometimes it is better to think that one is wise and be ignorant of one's ignorance. On the other hand, it will be a life of poverty and emptiness if the opportunity to learn is not taken with both hands.

In Their Own Words: Discovering the Religious Landscape of the U.S.

Our first four weeks were spent at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Every morning included a 200 meter walk to the beach and excellent weather, pristine cuisine (bountifully) awaiting us, and most stimulating and exciting lectures. In the fifth week we visited Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Atlanta and Washington D.C. The religious histories and cultures of each of these cities were studied and numerous fruitful trips taken to investigate them.

The seventeen participants are now my friends and also a vital network for future research. Participants came from countries including, New Zealand, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Malawi, Sudan, Indonesia, Russia and several others. Such diversity has been an enriching experience, one that will never be forgotten.

Who will be the next to go? Apply!

To learn more about the SUSI Programs, [click here](#).



Georgia's view while in her program

"Such diversity has been an enriching experience, one that will never be forgotten."

Alumni Making the News

Humphrey Program alumna, Dr. Magteld Smith, receives Golden Key International Honour Society Award



Dr. Magteld Smith, left, receiving her award

In 2012, Dr. Magteld Smith was the first person, in the history of program, with congenital deafness to be awarded the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship from the U.S. Department of State.

In August 2014, Magteld received the prestigious Golden Key International Honour Society Award. Golden Key is the world's largest collegiate honour society. Membership into the Society is by invitation only and applies to the top 15% of college and university sophomores, juniors and seniors, as well as top-performing graduate students in all fields of study, based solely on their academic achievements.

As an international honour society with more than 400 chapters at colleges and universities around the world, Golden Key is committed to a high standard of scholastic

achievement, and an ethos of integrity, innovation, respect, collaboration and diversity.

With more than 2 million members, including honorary members such as Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel and Bill Clinton, Golden Key carries an esteemed legacy of achievement. Members are a community with a linkage to widely respected individuals and ideals – all part of the continuum of excellence.

Dr. Magteld Smith is a medical-social researcher at the department of Otorhinolaryngology at the University of the Free State. She is currently working on the medical-social model of the World Health Organization – the International

Alumni Making the News

Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) – conducting research into all topics which impact and relate to deafness and implantable devices. In 2005, Magteld obtained a Master’s degree in Development Studies within the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences followed by a Master’s degree in Governance and Political Transformation in the Faculty of Humanities in 2007; followed by a PhD in 2013, all from the University of the Free State (UFS). She has become the first deaf South African to obtain two Master’s degrees and a PhD; she may yet be the first globally as well.

In June, Magteld gave a podium and an e-poster presentation at the 13th International Conference on Cochlear Implants and Other Implantable Auditory Technologies in Munich, Germany. Subsequently, at the end of July, she conducted a podium presentation at the 5th International Conference of the Coalition for Global Hearing Health held in Oxford, United Kingdom. She continued to conduct her research at the Royal National Ear, Nose and Throat hospital of the University College London in the United Kingdom.

We congratulate Magteld on being selected for this prestigious prize and on her many achievements! Well done!

Mission South Africa: What We’ve Been Up to

Alumni reconnect in Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein

In October and November, the U.S. Embassy facilitated Alumni Indabas (the Zulu word for gatherings) in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape and Bloemfontein, Free State Province respectively. These two Indabas were the 4th and 5th convened in South Africa over the past three years, and

provided an opportunity for the U.S. Embassy to reconnect with alumni in these provinces. Alumni had, for the first time in some instances, the opportunity to meet each other and develop partnerships around shared experiences.



Port Elizabeth alumni are all smiles!

Mission South Africa: What We've Been Up to



Free State alumni share a laugh!

Alumni from a wide range of exchange programs and dates joined the Indabas, from 1978 Fulbright Visiting Scholar program participants, to recently returned Mandela Washington Fellows, International Visitor Leadership, and Study of the U.S. Institutes alumni. Ambassador Gaspard and Consul General Christopher Rowan delivered remarks at the respective Indabas; highlighting health and trade-

related partnership successes, among other things, and fielding questions regarding social entrepreneurship, the U.S. political landscape, and recent mid-term elections.

Both Indabas reinvigorated ties between the U.S. Embassy and our amazing pool of alumni in these provinces and created new networks among participants to leverage the alumni platform to confront challenges.

If you participated in the Port Elizabeth Indaba and would like to view our photo album, [click here](#).

If you participated in the Bloemfontein Indaba and would like to view our photo album, [click here](#).

Mission South Africa: What We've Been Up to

Durban Consul General Speaks out on Educating and Supporting the Girl Child and Engages with alumni-led NGOs



Consul General Frances Chisholm together with young girls from Cato Manor who attended the International Day of a Girl Child in at Cato Manor Community Library.

In October, Consul General Frances Chisholm lent support and engaged with participants at three events commemorating International Day of the Girl Child. In support of the KwaZulu-Natal Youth Empowerment Program, led by 2011 International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumna, Malusi Mazibuko, she attended an event with about 30 young girls at the Cato Manor Library in Durban. After watching performances by the Program's drama club and young musicians, she spoke of her own experiences as a young girl, and the narrow range of career opportunities open to girls in her own early childhood. But, she noted, as is the case in South Africa today, times were rapidly changing and a world of opportunities was beginning to open up for girls. The Consul General emboldened the girls to seize these new opportunities, surround themselves by supportive peers and mentors, work with determination to turn their dreams into reality, and, importantly, build up their resilience.

Drawing on the theme of self-improvement, Cato Manor Library Staff used the gathering to launch a "Reading Marathon," and called on the older girls to mentor younger ones in reading.

The next day, Consul General Chisholm traveled to KwaMashu Township, where she met with two dozen 3rd year students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Howard College for an intense discussion about career and family decisions facing first-generation university-educated young women in Durban. A local non-governmental organization (NGO), Youth in Action, under the leadership of yet another high-energy 2013 IVLP alumna, Robert Ndlela, facilitated a focus group session that centered on how to make dreams come true, how to meet the challenges of breaking into the workforce, and, again, how to brace oneself for life's ups and downs by building resilience.

Mission South Africa: What We've Been Up to



Consul General Frances Chisholm together with University of KwaZulu Natal students attended International Day of a Girl Child in KwaMashu.

On the actual International Day of the Girl Child, October 11th, the Consul General underlined the U.S. government's commitment to the education of the girl child in the Q&A session after the Durban premiere of the documentary film "Girl Rising." The U.S.-produced film is at the heart of Girl Rising's campaign "Educate Girls & Change the World". Sponsored at a major Durban cinema complex, the

premiere was hosted by local NGO, Taking Islam to the People (TIP). The audience was predominantly Muslim school girls and KwaZulu-Natal girl-child activists and advocates. A number of participants lingered to request more information about opportunities to engage the Consulate General on this important issue.

Alumni Website Tab



To further enhance your access to our newsletter and other resources, we recently launched a tab on the U.S. Embassy website for alumni. Feel free to peruse it and bookmark it so that you can keep abreast of relevant alumni-related news, developments, and multimedia posts. Check it out at: <http://southafrica.usembassy.gov/alumni.html>

Upcoming Opportunities

Fortune/U.S. Department of State Global Women's Mentoring Program

Applications open now until January 4th, 2015



The window is now open for applications for the 2015 Fortune/U.S. Department of State Global Women's Mentoring Program. This fantastic program pairs emerging women business leaders from around the world with female executives from the Fortune Most Powerful Women Summit. The 2015 program includes a four-day orientation and leadership and skills training component (Tuesday, April 28 – Friday, May 1) in Washington, D.C., a two-week mentorship assignment (Monday, May 4 – Friday, May 15), and a two-day communications training and debriefing (Monday, May 18 – Tuesday, May 19) in New York City. Each participant will have the opportunity to shadow senior executives in their mentoring company and engage in activities specifically designed by the company to meet the needs and interests of the participant.

Who should apply? We are looking for emerging women business leaders with good English skills who are within the 25-43 age range, and who can articulate what she hopes to gain from participating in the mentoring program. Applicants are available on the U.S. Embassy website (in the section on professional exchanges) and are due to FortuneSA@state.gov by January 4th, 2015. Thanks for helping to spread the word!

TechWomen Program

Applications Open December 15th, 2014



TechWomen is a U.S. Department of State program empowers, connects, and supports the next generation of women leaders in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) from Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East by providing them the access and opportunity needed to advance their careers, pursue their dreams, and inspire women and girls in their communities.



Through mentorship and exchange, TechWomen strengthens participants' professional capacity, increases mutual understanding between key networks of professionals, and expands girls' interest in STEM careers by exposing them to female role models. For more information on the TechWomen Program and instructions on how to apply, see: <http://www.techwomen.org/>

Upcoming Opportunities

Emerging Global Leaders Initiative (EGLI) Atlas Corps Fellowships

Applications accepted on a rolling basis year round

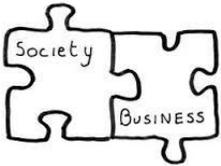


The U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce a special opportunity for emerging civil society leaders to participate in a 6-18 month professional fellowship in the United States. All Fellows will be placed at a leading social change organization in the United States. Individuals in the nonprofit/NGO sectors with two or more years of experience, a college degree and English proficiency are encouraged to apply. Atlas Corps has supported over 300 emerging leaders from over 60 different countries and seeks candidates to apply as soon as possible for their next class of Fellows.

To apply and to find out more information, please visit: <http://apply.atlascorps.org>

Upcoming Massive Open Online Courses

Upcoming Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs):



New Models of Business in Society – [click here](#)

Start Date: Online, at your own pace

University of Virginia

In this course we will be discussing the emergence of a new story about business. This new story locates business within a societal framework. Almost every business creates or destroys value for customers, suppliers, employees, communities and society, in addition to shareholders and other financiers. A number of new models of business can be built on this idea such as corporate responsibility, philanthropy, shared value and sustainability. Profits and stakeholder value go together, and this course explains how. The final session explores the idea of how to become a stakeholder entrepreneur and create a business that makes money and makes the world a better place.



Essentials of Entrepreneurship: Thinking & Action – [click here](#)

Start Date: April 6th, 2015

University of California, Irving

Success in business can be greatly enhanced with an understanding of key entrepreneurial characteristics and competencies solutions. This interactive course provides potential entrepreneurs with the knowledge of succeeding in an entrepreneurial opportunity. Topics include: how creativity, opportunity and feasibility are best evaluated; business strategies for new businesses; importance of a business plan; achieving success in a new business. At the end of the course students will have the skills and confidence to evaluate starting a business, in addition to becoming more enterprising in how they approach their roles should they decide to work in organizations.

New Alumni On The Block

Join me in welcoming the latest cohort of English Access Micro-Scholarship alumni who graduated from their program in November!

Consul General Frances Chisolm presents an Access graduate with her certificate in Umlazi, Durban



Consul General Christopher Rowan with the 2014 Johannesburg graduates

Do you have news and updates to share with us? We would love to celebrate them and include them in our next *Alumni Connex* Newsletter. Email Alumni Coordinator, Jaclyn Burger, at alumnisouthafrica@state.gov



"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right."

Oprah Winfrey