



2015-2016 White House Fellows Orientation in Gettysburg, PA

On the way to the White House Fellows' orientation trip to Gettysburg, I was a bit skeptical. While I recognized the value this destination afforded us to unplug from our busy lives awaiting us back in the city, I didn't yet appreciate the connections between the historic battle site and its relevance for our fellowship year ahead.

Arriving to town we were greeted with such hospitality. A lunch was hosted in our honor at the home of Dr. Janet Riggs, the President of Gettysburg College. That afternoon was spent with Susan Eisenhower on her family farm recalling stories from her childhood with her grandparents. Through her memories we learned about another side of President Eisenhower. He knew when to follow the First Lady's lead, as demonstrated by the vivid pink décor of their home.

Much of our second day in Gettysburg was spent on the battlefields, with Professor Christian Keller of the U.S. Army War College. Standing upon Little Round Top, we peered over the summit and conversed about how Commander Chamberlain's actions became a defining moment in the Union's ability to win the war.

This, and other critical decision points during the battle were further explored on the third day of orientation with Ambassador Lawrence Taylor and William Rosenbach during a seminar called *The Gettysburg Leadership Experience*. In our discussion, we deconstructed perceptions of the term "followership", recognizing the overlapping traits of good leaders and followers. Much to my surprise, they are not mutually exclusive. As we examined in General John Buford's decision to take high ground and the implications it had for the Union Army,



The 2015-2016 class at the Gettysburg College Challenge Course.

leadership is the ability to transition between the two.

We concluded the week at the Challenge Course back at Gettysburg College. As a group, we got the chance to put into practice several of the key followership characteristics from the day before: adaptability, communication and trust. All are absolutely required when scaling a 50-foot floating ladder in teams of three.

In addition to the very practical leadership lessons that will prove to be invaluable to us over the next year, our orientation served a greater purpose in relationship building. Our time together during the fellowship forums and an impromptu birthday party at the hotel formed the beginnings of a solid foundation we will have as a class. I left amazed by how our individual journeys have purposely led us to the White House Fellowship and undoubtedly, Gettysburg all made sense.

BY SEPTEMBER HARGROVE
National Economic Council

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Commissioners, Alumni, Fellows and Friends,

We are thrilled to welcome the 2015-2016 class of White House Fellows and launch their official fellowship year. The class is made up of a dynamic group of individuals who are from all around the country and represent a range of professions, including military, business, law, medicine, and local government. This year's placements are equally diverse, and we are happy to have the Fellows working at agencies and offices ranging from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of the Treasury. On behalf of the entire program, I want to extend a special thank you to placement principals and everyone who participated in the placement process. We sincerely appreciate your support and look forward to working with you this year.

For the last 7 years, each new class of Fellows has had the great fortune of participating in our Orientation Week at Gettysburg College in conjunction with the Eisenhower Institute. As September Hargrove, a member of the current class, outlined in the opening article, Gettysburg provided the perfect setting for the Fellows to get to know one another and to kick off their study of leadership. We would like to thank Gettysburg College President Dr. Janet Riggs, Provost Christopher Zappe and the entire team for their hospitality. We would also like to thank the Eisenhower Institute, notably Susan Eisenhower, Jeffrey Blavatt, and Megan Sewak-Whildin, for their incredible partnership and the behind the scenes tour of the Eisenhower Farm.

In October, the White House Fellows program will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the first class of Fellows in 1965. The White House Fellows Foundation and Association (WHFFA) will close out a year of celebration by hosting a special edition of its annual Leadership Conference. The conference will be a wonderful opportunity for the Fellows family to come together in celebration of this remarkable program and the impact Fellows have had on the country.

After the conference, an important member of the Fellowship family, Jack LeCuyer, will be retiring from his role as the Executive Director of the WHFFA. I invite you to read a special letter from Jack, included in this newsletter. We sincerely appreciate Jack's enduring commitment to the Fellowship and are heartened to know that his support will continue.

Finally, fall brings a new season of recruiting for the program and we need your help! In November 2015, we will open the application and we hope you will encourage the exceptional leaders in your lives to apply. We ask everyone to get involved—whether you choose to host an outreach event, promote the program on social media, or introduce us to potential recruiting partners.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the program. We look forward to working with you in the weeks ahead.

Warm regards,

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The 2015-2016 class of White House Fellows with Dr. Christian Keller of the U.S. Army War College on the battlefield in Gettysburg.

Meet the 2015-2016 Class!

Spencer Abbot (U.S. Dept. of State), Yorktown, VA, is a Commander in the United States Navy. He recently served as Commanding Officer of Strike-Fighter Squadron 27, an FA-18E Super Hornet squadron in Atsugi, Japan. He holds a Master's and Ph.D. in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Teeb Al-Samarrai (U.S. Dept. of Energy), Oakland, CA, is a physician and epidemiologist who served as Deputy Health Officer and Tuberculosis Controller at the Santa Clara County Public Health Department in California. Her work focused on immigrant and refugee health issues, particularly tuberculosis and hepatitis B.

Andrew "Andy" Anderson (Office of the First Lady), Douglas, WY, is a Major in the U.S. Air Force. He recently served as the program director for a classified Department of Defense system that supported operations of highest national priority.

Alexander Billioux (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services), Greenville, SC, is an internist focused on primary care and improving health care delivery globally. He served as Assistant Chief of the Osler Medical Service at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he trained and mentored more than 140 internal medicine residents while treating patients in East Baltimore.

Sara Bleich (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture), Baltimore, MD, worked as an Associate Professor of Health Policy and Management at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She was responsible for leading research teams, speaking nationally and internationally, teaching, and advising students.

Major Naomi Dennis (U.S. Dept. of Education), Houston, TX, is an attorney in the United States Air Force specializing in military justice. She was recently selected to serve on the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals.

Shereef Elnahal (U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs), Baltimore, MD, is taking a leave from residency in Radiation Oncology at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He has authored over a dozen publications on health care quality, operations management, and patient safety.

September Hargrove (National Economic Council), New Orleans, LA, served as Chief Operating Officer of the PowerMoves.NOLA Initiative at the New Orleans Startup Fund, where she led a national effort to address the lack of racial diversity in tech entrepreneurship and provide access to venture capital for high-growth entrepreneurs of color.

Corey Harrison (U.S. Dept. of Defense), Browns Mills, NJ, was the Corporate Strategy Executive at iCIMS, a leading talent acquisition software company. At iCIMS, Corey drove the development and execution of corporate strategy and evaluated merger and acquisition opportunities.

La'Shanda Holmes (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), Fayetteville, NC, is a Lieutenant in the U.S. Coast Guard and is the Coast Guard's first African-American female helicopter pilot. After growing up in the foster care system, she put herself through college, became a pilot, and amassed over 1,500 flight hours conducting search and rescue, counter drug, and law enforcement missions.

Rayden Llano (Office of Management and Budget), Miami, FL, was program director of health policy and economics at LSE Enterprise, where he worked with public institutions on health policy issues and conducted healthcare research. Previously, he worked with the Clinton Health Access Initiative in Rwanda and the World Health Organization in Asia.

Jennifer Macdonald (U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security), St. Cloud, MN, is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and a Family Medicine physician at UCLA. She served in dual roles as a musician and volunteer medical provider while deployed, and on return, engaged in efforts to ameliorate veteran homelessness and improve care for the underserved.

Erik Malmstrom (Office of The United States Trade Representative), West Hartford, CT, was a Business Development Manager at Cargill, Inc. responsible for sourcing and managing agriculture-focused investment opportunities across Africa. Previously, he served as an Army infantry officer in Afghanistan and co-founded CrossBoundary, a frontier market investment advisory firm.

Rei Onishi (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development), Sacramento, CA, was a Deputy Attorney General in the California Department of Justice. He was responsible for defending the constitutionality of California's laws, and helped craft and implement the legal strategy to defend California's 2012 public pension reforms.

Maxeme Tuchman (U.S. Dept. of Treasury), Miami, FL, served as the Executive Director of Teach For America Miami-Dade and was responsible for overseeing daily regional operations for 26 staff members and cultivating \$6M of private and public support in service of over 500 current teachers and alums.

Kamillah Wood (U.S. Dept. of Transportation), Buffalo, NY, served as the Associate Medical Director of Mobile Health Programs at Children's National Health System, providing comprehensive medical care to underserved children in the Anacostia region of Washington, DC.

Special Feature: A Labor of Love



What do you say after working for more than 19 years on a labor of love? After 30 years as an Army officer, I was ready to commit my energies to another endeavor I thought important – alumni support of the White House Fellows program. So, in 1996, I signed on as the first staff of the White House Fellows Foundation and the White House Fellows Association.

What was initially a way station on my road to a second career turned out to be a long-term commitment to the White House Fellows program. I took my inspiration from a deeply personal meeting with our founder, John Gardner, following our first gala in 1999. At the meeting, John challenged me to help create a Fellows Community of Mutual Support to scale what he had done, which was to personally mentor nearly every White House Fellow.

Since then, I have watched as successive classes have gone on to meet John's challenge to commit to a lifetime of public service. I have been truly astounded at the range of careers and public service activities Fellows have engaged in and led. They are truly keepers of the flame!

I am inspired by the composition, work ethic and clear future focus of our hard-working Boards of Directors. After more than 90 Board meetings, 20 Leadership Conferences, 13 regional meetings, 6 international trips, and countless reading weekends and outreach sessions, and working together with other Fellows on a number of focused initiatives, together, we have moved the needle forward in achieving John Gardner's hopes for the White House Fellows Community.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Executive Director of this incredible

organization we call the White House Fellows Foundation and Association (WHFFA). I leave with a tremendous sense of accomplishment of having helped to create a financially sound Fellows Community of Mutual Support with all of its many aspects. The friendships I have made through my association with the WHFFA leave me with a glow of satisfaction and sense of camaraderie that will stay with me in coming years. Beyond my classmates, I have had the good fortune to personally know many Fellows and loyal friends of the program over the years. Your enthusiasm and generosity in commitments of time, treasure and talent in support of the nation's premier leadership development program are extraordinary. You have my deepest thanks, admiration and respect.

Once the White House Fellow Program finds a place in our hearts, it tends to live there forever—once a Fellow, always a Fellow—just as John Gardner would have wanted it. I am a loyal, lifetime dues member of the WHFFA and will be there in strong support of all that the Board of Directors and your new Executive Director, David Moore, endeavor to do as the WHFFA launches into the next 50 years and the White House Fellows program continues to provide leaders for our nation.

BY JACK LECUYER
*White House Fellows Foundation
and Association*



Jack LeCuyer meets with President Carter.

Recruit the 52nd Class of Fellows!



DO YOU KNOW A FUTURE WHITE HOUSE FELLOW?

It's not too soon to think about the next selection cycle! Alumni and friends of the program are our best ambassadors and there are many ways to support our recruitment and selection efforts.

HOST AN OUTREACH EVENT — If you'd like to host an outreach event, please let us know how we can best support you. We also welcome any suggestions on outreach and recruitment opportunities through your professional and social networks.

SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA — Consider sharing information about the White House Fellows program and the application process on social media platforms you may participate in, or even email listservs.

ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT — Hosting or attending an application reading group can be a nice opportunity for regional alumni to reconnect, or for classes to host a mini reunion. We are always looking for regional diversity among our reading groups, so we hope you'll consider serving as a host! We also hope you'll volunteer to read applications during the series of reading groups we will coordinate throughout the country and at the White House Fellows office in Washington, DC. Finally, if your professional bios do not already note your affiliation with the White House Fellows program, we hope you will consider highlighting your connection. We have found that references like these are extremely helpful in expanding our reach to broader audiences.

If you have any suggestions and/or are interested in participating in any of the above, please feel free to contact our Special Assistant to the Director, Andy McGavern, at amcgavern@whf.eop.gov.

BAY AREA OUTREACH EVENT

We are pleased to announce that members of the Bay Area alumni community and the President's Commission on White House Fellowships are hosting an in-person outreach event on **November 5, 2015** in the evening (time and location TBD). For more information, please email whitehousefellows@whf.eop.gov. We hope you will share this information with your networks!



About the WHF Program

The White House Fellows program is a non-partisan program that offers exceptional young leaders firsthand experience working at the highest levels of the Federal government.

For more information, please visit:
www.whitehouse.gov/fellows

Please send any comments, submissions or other newsletter related communication to:

whitehousefellows@who.eop.gov