

D.M. PAYNE FELLOWSHIP

Official Newsletter of USAID Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program

WELCOME 2017 FELLOWS!



MEET THE FIFTH COHORT OF DONALD M. PAYNE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM!
La'Nita Johnson, Susana Rojas-Quico, Kathleen Kirsch, Rashida Hawa Kabba, Elaine Li, Jacqueline Rojas, and Charles Bentley (Not pictured: Hung Vo, Jesse Okwu, and Phelisha Midy)



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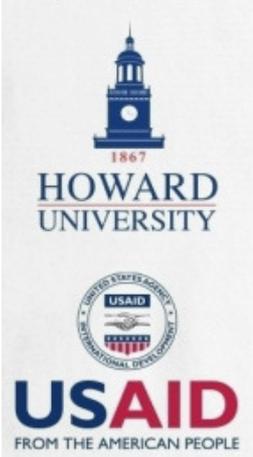
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2017 FELLOWS DC SUMMER PROGRAM - FIRST IMPRESSIONS



My first summer in DC with my 2017 Payne Fellow Cohort has been nothing short of a life-long dream! I have finally gotten a glimpse of my dream career as a Foreign Service Officer with USAID, and I am so excited to serve. One of my favorite highlights of the summer has been getting the opportunity to bond with my cohort and learn that other young adults have the same passion and vision for impacting the developing world. Everyone brings such a breadth of experience and accomplishment to the table. But what's most impactful considering everyone's remarkable background is the humility everyone carries. - La'Nita Johnson, American University



This summer was a key time for us to be on the Hill in light of the State Department/USAID restructuring and all the discussions happening around the budget for foreign assistance. Having the opportunity to attend hearings on both the House and Senate sides, in addition to having face-time with USAID officials allowed me to better understand USAID and how it functions against the backdrop of national policy. Additionally, serving in my congressman's office (Congressman Woodall GA-07), I learned I needed to listen and to "reach across the aisle" more often so that we, as a community, can build a society that is more tolerant and understanding. Finally, I am so thankful for my fellow Fellows who have continued to inspire me their selfless acts, passion, and sense of curiosity! - Elaine Li, Chicago University



My first summer as a Payne Fellow was a wonderful experience learning about the inner workings of our legislative branch and the structure of USAID. Working for two weeks in the office of Congressman Richmond, I had the unique opportunity to understand how policies are developed on the hill and attend hearings on a variety of topics. Additionally, I was thrilled to attend two weeks of Payne and USAID orientations and hear the wealth of experience and advice from Foreign Service Officers. I had a fantastic time getting to know the 2017 Payne Fellows, and I cannot wait for next summer! - Kathleen Kirsch, University of California, Berkeley

2017 FELLOWS DC SUMMER PROGRAM - FIRST IMPRESSIONS



My first summer as a Payne Fellow was a unique and exciting experience that allowed me to learn more about congressional affairs and USAID's work. One of the most insightful experiences in working with Congressman José Serrano's office was attending the House Committee on Appropriations mark-ups, a committee on which the Congressman serves. It was my first time seeing key legislation being debated on and amended by some of our country's leaders. I also attended the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations mark-up of

the Department of State Authorization Act, during which I saw the committee agree upon preserving the independence of USAID. I have to say this was a great moment on the Hill for me. Beyond the Hill experience, I have had the pleasure of bonding with and learning from the rest of the 2017 Payne Fellows cohort. Each Fellow and their respective accomplishments are a source of inspiration. - Jacqueline Rojas, Georgetown University



I worked in the office of Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, where I was lucky enough to focus on several women's empowerment projects. I worked with the organization Rights4Girls to research legislation that could be proposed to protect American girls from human trafficking and sexual abuse. Outside of my congressional internship, I visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture with a few of my peers in the Payne cohort. The museum visit was challenging; it forced me to confront America's role in one of the world's greatest stories of inequality, abuse, and resiliency. Spending a summer immersed in both historical and current examinations of human rights abuses in the United States, and the corresponding struggles for dignity and equality, ignited in me a deeper passion for my future career path: fighting for human rights for marginalized communities everywhere. - Charles Bentley, Tufts University

2017 FELLOWS DC SUMMER PROGRAM - FIRST IMPRESSIONS



I really enjoyed my time in DC, and I especially enjoyed getting to know the other fellows over the last few weeks. One of the highlights of my first summer as a Payne Fellow was spending my two week congressional internship in the office of Congressman Payne. He got Rep. Maxine Waters and Rep. John Lewis to wave to me and the other intern from his office when they were voting in the gallery!!! - Rashida Hawa Kabba, Columbia University



I feel very fortunate to have been selected as a Payne Fellow. The orientation exceeded my expectations and reaffirmed my decision on why I was joining the USAID Foreign Service. I really enjoyed learning more about USAID as a whole, the brown bags with retired Foreign Service Officers, and the professional development workshops hosted at Howard University. I am also glad the 2017 Payne Class had orientation alongside the 2015 Payne Fellows. It

was a great preview of what to expect two years from now. Most importantly, throughout the orientation I felt I was joining the USAID Foreign Service as part of the Payne family. By the end of the orientation I knew that whatever lies ahead, I could rely on the Payne family for support. - Susana Rojas Quico, Georgetown University



2016 FELLOWS' OVERSEAS INTERNSHIPS - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE



Two graduate courses that were highly valuable to me during my internship in Port-au-Prince were econometrics and Geographic Information Systems. One of my three main projects during my USAID internship required a heavy dose of data analyses, and the in-class practice that I had working with large World Bank and Census data sets gave me an understanding of how to organize and clean excel sheets to be easily used for data visualization. When working with data, it is also critical to create graphics beyond just charts and tables, and so I was able to use my background in cartography and design to work with our GIS specialist at USAID to create maps that explained USG-supported health projects in Haiti to the government. For my second year, I plan to take courses in global health systems, epidemiology, and leadership & management to enhance my ability to lead effectively in highly volatile and diverse environments.

- Hoang Bui, Harvard University, USAID Haiti



“In graduate school, I have continued to analyze structural inequity as it relates to the environment and marginalized communities. My coursework is centered on political ecology, development, and public policy. I have tailored my coursework to analyze the human dimensions of conservation; issues of economic dependency on land, climate change mitigation and adaptation; and ecosystem management. My academic goal was to develop transferable skills that benefit my career as a Foreign Service Officer. For example, in my Science Narrative course I worked in conjunction with the Sustainable Communities Institute as the graduate student leader on an urban revitalization project in Southern Dallas. I am also interested in the role environmental development programs can play in conflict mediation and peace and

reconciliation processes. This year I will take GIS and energy system analysis courses that will better equip me for my role as an environment officer in USAID.” - Jolissa Brooks, Yale University, USAID Kosovo



Coming from a very technical engineering background, having a year of social science graduate experience helped me approach development issues with more nuance. During my internship, I had the opportunity to work on a Water Strategy for the Guatemala Mission as well as design a new Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project in the Western Highlands of Guatemala. Some of my most helpful courses during the first year of graduate school were Development Aid Theory, Water Resources Development and Management and a practicum course where I designed and implemented a clean drinking water program in a rural community in Palestine. My experience working at the Mission also helped me identify important skills that will be required for my career at USAID. I plan on taking courses in Design,

Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Econometric Impact Evaluation to build on what I learned at the Guatemala Mission this summer. - Maria Medina Castellanos, Tufts University, USAID Guatemala

2016 FELLOWS' OVERSEAS INTERNSHIPS - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE



Studying Conflict Management and International Economics at SAIS is preparing me to advance USAID's mission as a Foreign Service Officer. I was able to use the invaluable theoretical knowledge and analytical tools while working in the Democracy and Governance (DG) Office in Rwanda. The DG office has a diverse portfolio where I was able to provide research analysis for various laws and the role of civil society. My coursework prepared me to step into the role of activity manager for three separate projects where the majority of my responsibilities were monitoring implementation and understanding the complex and sensitive environment that the DG office works in. Because of this experience, I am excited to expand my understanding of project design, monitoring and evaluation, and analytical skills during my final year of graduate school. - Ellexis Chapman, John Hopkins, USAID Rwanda



During my first year at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, I broadened my academic focus in the environmental field to better prepare myself for managing programs in USAID. I completed courses on forest operations, food politics, and environmental economics, and undertook an independent research project in Brazil exploring labor rights for informal workers. This summer, at the USAID Mission of the Dominican

Republic, I was challenged to utilize my knowledge about water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions and assess their portfolio of projects while offering recommendations for future programs. The most rewarding aspect of my internship was visiting the aqueduct water intake points of two water delivery programs. Witnessing the intense landscapes that communities navigate to install piping to receive water at their homes emphasized the necessity of this work, and inspired me to intensify my focus in WASH policy during my second year of study. - Brittany Thomas, Yale University, USAID Dominican Republic

2016 FELLOWS' OVERSEAS INTERNSHIPS - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE



During my first year of graduate school the majority of my courses involved drafting proposals, designing research projects and giving presentations. Working in teams was a major component of my courses which enabled me to strengthen my interpersonal and communication skills. It was most important to learn how to work closely with individuals from diverse backgrounds and with varying personalities. The skills I gained in school were definitely pivotal during my summer internship at USAID Uganda Mission. I was able to successfully integrate and complete tasks assigned to me. I learned that more than 50 percent of work that is produced in the Mission is done through collaborative effort; therefore, it was imperative for me to build working relationships and show my ability to provide meaningful contribution to the team. As I begin my final year of graduate school, I plan to continue taking classes that involve teamwork which I believe will allow me to harness my technical strengths and give me the confidence to effectively communicate my ideas. I also plan on engaging in activities that will enable me to improve my leadership and negotiating skills. - Suegatha Kai-Rennie, Boston University, USAID Uganda



Serving as a Fellow with USAID Guatemala has been a wonderful experience. I aimed to work with a USAID mission that had a diverse Democracy and Governance portfolio, and one that was also engaged in food security work, so Guatemala was a fantastic fit. Within the Democracy and Governance portfolio, I worked on projects related to governance, migration, human rights, citizen security, and rule of law. I also played a lead role in collecting, presenting, and synthesizing evidence on an Inter-Agency effort to design next Guatemala's Food Security Strategy 2018-2023. This allowed me to engage with technical experts on nutrition, agriculture, trade, and humanitarian food assistance (Food For Peace), as well as work with USDA, State Department, MCC, USGS, and PeaceCorps. As a Payne Fellow, I was able to meet the Ambassador and learn from the USAID Mission Director and Deputy Director, meet Human Rights Ombudspersons from seven Latin American countries, and visit several project sites that support returned migrants and survivors of human trafficking. As I am studying crisis, disaster, and development at Columbia University, this USAID Guatemala fellowship has refined my interests and allowed me to plan for future coursework in risk, resilience, and food security in my second year of graduate school. I'm also excited to take what I've learned at this mission into my future Foreign Service career. -Stephanie Ullrich, Columbia University, USAID Guatemala

2015 FELLOWS - PAYNE PROGRAM GRADUATES



Some of my fondest Payne Fellowship experiences include interning on Capitol Hill the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The opportunity was applicable to understanding how Congress appropriates USAID funding. I additionally used the experience to help me select my classes in graduate school. Some of my courses were Budgeting and Financial Management for the Public Sector, Global Food Systems and a Global Health class. - Keisha Herbert, Columbia University, Program/Project Development Officer.



In reflecting on the past two years as a member of the 2015 Payne cohort, the challenge of selecting a few fond memories, for me, has opened the doors to a slew of memories of the incredible highlights we've experienced at each juncture in our journeys. The Payne Fellowship has been organized in such a manner that every past experience informs a future challenge. Hence we have had the privilege of academic enrichment through our graduate training, while expanding our practical and technical skills sets while at Mission's and on the Hill. Throughout our Payne tenure we have had access to an incredible network of innovators and leaders in development as well. One of my greatest pleasures as a Payne fellow has been getting to go through this experience with the brilliant 2015 Payne cohort of kind, inspiring and supportive future leaders. I look forward to what the future has in store for all of us as we begin our Foreign Service careers and I do not doubt that we will continue to be each other's champions. - Berhan Hagos, Columbia University, Population/Health/Nutrition (PHN) Officer.



During the 2015 orientation, I had the opportunity to learn more about USAID and build a strong foundation with my cohort. Given this knowledge paired with one year of graduate school, my overseas internship at USAID/Tanzania began to contextualize much of what I'd learned. Exploring the health portfolio and gaining understanding via field visits made it a fantastic professional and personal experience. Furthermore, having my 2015 cohort as a support system has and continues to be one of the most special aspects of this fellowship. - Lea Claye, Tulane University, Population/Health/Nutrition (PHN) Officer.

2015 FELLOWS - PAYNE PROGRAM GRADUATES



The Payne Fellowship has opened so many doors for me, and has helped me readily connect one opportunity to the next. One particularly meaningful experience for me was my overseas internship at the Uganda Mission working on the Geo-Focusing component of their 2017-2021 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and on the development of a youth-driven open source community mapping initiative. I had the opportunity to connect with content and context-area experts both at the Global Development Lab and E3's Urban Team, which enabled me to follow up the summer with an internship at the Lab's GeoCenter supporting the Remote Sensing and Open Mapping programs. And now I am a full-fledged C3 Environment Officer based in E3's Office of Land and Urban (LU). It is truly a blessing to have been able to connect so many dots, become part of the amazing

Payne Fellowship family, and land where I am today. - Jeanne Choquehuanca, University of Maryland, College Park, Program/Project Development Officer.



Graduate school was a journey of hardships and triumphs where I learned how to be a purposeful public health practitioner. Even though I was in my own little world in the Bay Area, my connection with the 2015 Payne Fellows was never too far away. My fondest reflections of my Payne Fellowship experience as a graduate student were the moments when we would all conference call to simply catch up. It was in these moments where I realized that even though we were scattered throughout the corners of the U.S., our P5 bond was never challenged. REUNION

and FAMILY are the two words that came to my mind on July 24th, when P5 was once again together and this time around, embarking on a new journey as USAID Foreign Service Officers. I could not have asked for a better group of individuals to share this experience with. #P5 #blessed #smallBUTmighty - Marvin Crespín-Gamez, University of California, Berkley, Population/Health/Nutrition (PHN) Officer.

CLOSING REMARKS

The Payne Fellowship has completed its sixth year! It is a tremendous accomplishment and testament to the value of the program. I am honored to have seen the program's growth from three 2013 Payne Fellows, to our largest cohort class of ten 2017 Payne Fellows. Currently there are twenty-two Payne Fellows, five of which have successfully completed the program and have been sworn into the United States Agency for International Development's Foreign Service. It has been a privilege to serve as Program Manager, and it has been such a pleasure to work with USAID in preparing



outstanding young people to become outstanding Foreign Service Officers and future global leaders. A special thanks to everyone whose time and effort contributed to the continued success of this program. The continued support has made this past year a complete success!

- Cynthia Valentine, Program Manager

THANK YOU!

A Big Thank You to all who helped make the 2017 Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program possible!

Speakers & Work shop Facilitators: Monica Bautista , Megan Hill , Carl Rahmaan, Constance Hope , Atim George, Jodi Kay Wade, Ronald Carlson, Jose Garzon, Linda D. Whitlock -Brown, Dennis Vega, Daniel Bailey, Nicholas Basse, Palak Shah, Gelila Sebhatu, Maria Detherage, Neomi Rice, Timothy Burnside.

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