Welcome

On August 5th, ten strangers from ten unique countries left their homes around the globe to congregate here in Nashville, all to pursue the dream of improving their nations’ education systems. These ten Fellows relocated to Vanderbilt to enhance their professional and leadership skills as well as to foster mutual exchange; little did they know that doing so would enrich their understanding of how communities can come together to impact both individuals and groups.

As part of our community, you have played an important role in the Fellows’ growth as they adjust to a new environment and begin their lifelong Humphrey journeys as Change Agents. The trips to grocery stores, the thoughtful discussions about teacher training, or even quick emails have made lasting impacts on each Fellow. Please know that you are making a difference in the Fellows’ lives and in how they see themselves as Change Agents — and for that, we are so grateful. Thank you from all of us!

Sincerely,
Nancy & the Humphrey team
Come with the Fellows on a Journey down Humphrey Road

Each of the fellows have left behind a family, a job, and a life that they built. Then they hopped on a plane and began their Humphrey year. It is a major transition to leave a place of comfort and journey to a different world where nothing is the same. Our Fellows have shared thoughts about what this new beginning means to them.

Hilarion Vegba, Benin

'\textit{A single bracelet doesn't jingle.}' –African proverb

We are just single bracelets here in Nashville but we jingle because we have people like you, Humphrey coordinators, Friendship Families, AmbassaDores, and supporters. We will continue to jingle more as long as you are with us. When I look back over my Humphrey year so far, I see our Friendship Families, our AmbassaDores, Amanda, Elizabeth, Nancy, and Shannon all around helping me to move forward to as I achieve my dream of helping children get a better education.

Libni Guardado, El Salvador

The Hubert Humphrey experience is like a big boat floating in the huge wild ocean. Sometimes it moves smoothly along the vast water. But at other times, it seems it will all break into small pieces. All the Humphrey Fellows are aboard, each of us with our own expectations and fears. With night a lonely darkness starts to come but all of a sudden, falling stars appear in the sky. They come down to cheer each Fellow up. The ship fills with joy, everyone smiles! Staff, Friendship Families, AmbassaDores, Supporters, Vanderbilt Students, Nashville... All of you are our stars and contribute tremendously for the Hubert Humphrey Ship to keep on and succeed!!!

Ousmane Ba, Mauritania

Cooking is a very big challenge for me. Back in my country, the kitchen is exclusively for women. My mom was a good cook. I was privileged to eat good food but never had an opportunity to cook. If cooking makes a man a good husband, I am the worse one. One of my challenges here in America is to cook for myself and others. I have found support in my fellow Fellows and in my Friendship Families. A couple weeks ago, some of us prepared lunch for Friendship Families and I had the opportunity to learn how to cook. From these experiences, I will be able to surprise my wife by cooking for her.
Humphrey Road leading me home: *Reflections of Gratitude from Alumni*

Arriving unsure and even afraid of the task ahead, but knowing the weight of their families’, schools’, and nations’ successes lies on this opportunity, the Fellows take the program and all of its components very seriously. After 10 months of living in Nashville, serving the community, building their networks, and honing their professional and leadership skills, the Fellows return to their home countries to be change agents in education and the future of their nation. Past Fellows have attributed their current success to this program and to you, our supporters.

*Soraya Faculo (Philippines 2010-11)*

Once a Humphrey Fellow, always a Humphrey Fellow... There are several things that were ingrained in me during my adventurous year in the US: a greater sense of service to society, confidence in forging and sustaining new relationships, and most importantly, a mental disposition to keep an open mind, especially when faced with difficult work situations.

I am thankful that I had opportunities to navigate a new culture and a strange place, which cultivated my physical, mental, and spiritual strength. I can never thank you enough – my mentors, Friendship Families, new-found friends, fellow Fellows, Vanderbilt University, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Humefogg, school, and other universities and organizations who selflessly opened their doors to us. My heart swells with gratitude knowing that you were all part of helping me grow to become a better me.

*Salamat*. Thank you.

*Roseline Sherman (Liberia 2012-13)*

I am from a large and close family of nine siblings so it was scary coming to the States to live by myself. However, I found the people in Nashville to be truly caring, loving, supportive, and understanding. My fear of being alone was dispelled by the great people around me: Friendship Families, AmbassaDores, professors, advisors, the Humphrey director and team, students on campus, my professional affiliation host, and other fellows.

To these people I will forever be grateful. They made my life meaningful. I learned a lot and now I am a new person. A new life began for me from the day I met them. The Humphrey program has awakened in me the drive to be proactive in taking initiative and being part of processes to transform people’s lives.

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*News of alum Davry Jean’s passing has saddened us. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Davry’s family, friends, and community. Davry Jean was a Humphrey Fellow from Côte d’Ivoire during the 2011-2012 year.*
Humphrey Road into the community: Supporter Spotlight

Friendship Families

Susan & Lew Sharp are a first-year Friendship Family (FF) that became involved with the program as a way to give back after being welcomed in many other countries while on mission trips. In being a FF, she has found her personal journey coming together with her Fellow’s journey. We admire Susan for her gracious support, but she contends that she has “benefited so much more than she has given.” (Photo L-R: Susan Sharp, Libni Guardado, and FF, Martha Chapman)

Mohamed Rafi’s involvement with the Humphrey program began as a landlord-tenant relationship and has blossomed into an honorary Friendship Family for Siradj, Hilario, and Farhan. Rafi, who is a researcher here from India, has gone out of his way to include them on shopping trips and to be with them on their journey. He continually says that, “You guys rock!” and believes the program thoroughly supports Fellows on their journey.

Humphrey AmbassaDores

Ryan Selvaggio “My time with Team Geeta (the name that we gave to our group of 5, including Fellow Geeta, Lin Chang, Kalyn Rabuse, & Alexis Stokes) has been one of excitement, knowledge, and personal growth. Every two or three weeks, the five of us take time to come together for a meal, activity, and stimulating discussions that challenge me personally and professionally. We grow closer every single meeting as friends and members of this world community.”
Humphrey Road into the community: **Supporter Spotlight**

**Our Professional Partners**

*Oasis Center* offers safety and support to city’s most vulnerable youth. Just as we view Humphrey Fellows as change agents, Oasis sees young people as stakeholders in their own future and, through their 21 programs, equips youth to address some of the most salient problems in the Nashville community. CEO Tom Ward’s heart as a leader and Oasis’ mission have inspired Fellows to impact plans that empower disconnected youth in their own countries.

*Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health (VIGH)* promotes new international partnerships involving the Vanderbilt community. Our site visit to VIGH helps Fellows to see the interconnectedness of education and health, both around the world and in Nashville.

**On-campus supporters**

*Brian Heuser* is a professor at Peabody and has served as an Advisor to Humphrey Fellows for four years. In September, he invited the Fellows as guest presenters in a course he teaches to doctoral students, who are educational leaders like our Fellows. The Fellows shared about educational challenges they face in their countries and had lively discussions afterward.

Thank You to our Fall site visit hosts!

Hillwood High School
MNPS Professional Development Center
MNPS Reading Clinic
Nashville Chamber of Commerce
Oasis Center
STEM Prep Academy
Susan Gray School
VIGH
Volunteer State Community College
YMCA – Assets Edge
Humphrey Happenings

Pumpkin Carving at Peabody

Libni’s presentation at Peabody on education in El Salvador and Ousmane’s presentation at Vanderbilt about helping girls to stay in school in Mauritania

Dragon Boat Races on the Cumberland River with the support of POPGE, Peabody International Affairs and PGSA.
Hillwood High School site visit to the Academies with Academies Coach Trip Nicholson, Caroline Dolive from IIE and LaRita Hagar, with the Department of State.

Thank you from the bottom of our Humphrey Hearts!