



worldchicago

CITIZEN DIPLOMACY
ONE HANDSHAKE
AT A TIME



Annual Report 2017

Citizen Diplomacy, One Handshake at a Time



“In an era of bluster and bombs, citizen diplomacy is a builder of bridges.” –
Madeline Albright, former
U.S. Secretary of State

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear WorldChicago Members and Friends,

WorldChicago is deeply thankful for our partners' and contributors' support in 2017!

Despite questions regarding the federal budget, WorldChicago's partnership with the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was only bolstered, with 669 visitors coming to Chicago via the International Visitor Leadership Program.

WorldChicago also continued upon 2016's successes in engaging Chicago's public, private and not-for-profit industries through fellowship programs, placing 58 fellows from 25 countries in local businesses and organizations. Over half of these fellows work in entrepreneurship and innovation. They served month-long fellowships in Chicago-based businesses, sharing insight and learning best practices to bring back to their start-ups and companies back home.

Additionally, we engaged international youth through student-to-student interactions. WorldChicago explored refugee and Internally Displaced People rights and services with 13 students from Iraq, shared Chicago's most prominent youth-centered programs with UK youth, and grew its own youth program—WorldChicago Youth Diplomats—to 40 participants! The Youth Diplomats met with young leaders from 10 countries, visited Washington DC on WorldChicago's inaugural *DC Diplomacy Trip*, and played a significant role in the first *Illinois Global Scholar Summit: The Power of Perspective*.

WorldChicago welcomed leaders from all around the world who spoke about, for example, advances in women's entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia, empowering women in STEM, museum management in Brazil and Luxembourg, and creating not-for-profits for children and widows in Nigeria. These speakers inspired us with their stories and provided a roadmap for creating positive change at home in Chicago.

In total, WorldChicago was honored to host 817 visitors from 137 countries in 2017. It was only with the help of our members, friends, hosts, donors, and partners, and support of our programs, events, and fundraisers, that we are able to provide life-changing experiences to our visitors and the Chicagoans with whom they interacted. Thank you for your commitment to citizen diplomacy and each one of our visitors. We look forward to providing unique and innovative personal and professional international interactions in 2018, while bringing the world together in this divisive time.

Sincerely,

Peggy Parfenoff

President

WorldChicago

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OUR MISSION & WORK

WorldChicago facilitates professional and personal interactions for international leaders during official visits to Chicago through U.S. Department of State sponsored exchange programs; enhances respect and communication through international exchanges and alliances; and promotes the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois as important centers of business and culture.

WorldChicago is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that hosts citizen diplomacy programs that connect the Chicago community with international professional and youth leaders participating in U.S. Department of State exchanges in Chicago. Founded as the Hospitality Center of Greater Chicago in 1952, then later the International Visitors Center of Chicago, we became WorldChicago in 2010.

WorldChicago visitors explore their fields of interest through meetings with our extensive network of Chicago-area citizen diplomats, who are leading voices in the public, private, nonprofit, and tech sectors. More than 20% of our visitors reside with host families during their stay in Chicago. This is often the highlight of our visitors' time in Chicago, forging deeper connections and more meaningful cross-cultural exchange.

WorldChicago is an affiliate of Global Ties U.S., a nonprofit membership association with more than fifty years of leadership in citizen diplomacy. Together with more than ninety community partner members and the U.S. Department of State Citizen Diplomacy programs, WorldChicago helps shape international relations "one handshake at a time."



2017 AT-A-GLANCE

2017 Exchange Programs

Program	Visitors
Professional Fellows Program	58
Youth Leadership Program	25
Open World	6
Youth Diplomats	40
Shanghai Fellows	6
International Visitor Leadership Program	669
Other	53
Total	857

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

In 2017, local Chicago professionals and meeting hosts volunteered 125 hours for the Youth Leadership Programs, more than 220 hours for the International Visitor Leadership Program and helped complete more than 9,000 hours of fellowships for the Professional Fellowship Programs!



VISITORS BY COUNTRY

Afghanistan	4	Guinea	3	Peru	5
Algeria	5	Guinea-Bissau	1	Philippines	13
Angola	1	Honduras	4	Poland	12
Argentina	4	Hungary	1	Romania	1
Armenia	1	India	13	Russia	26
Australia	2	Indonesia	9	Rwanda	3
Azerbaijan	2	Iraq	37	Saint Vincent and the Grenadine	1
Bahrain	1	Israel	1	Saint Lucia	1
Bangladesh	10	Japan	7	Saudi Arabia	25
Belarus	12	Jordan	1	Senegal	3
Belgium	8	Kazakhstan	27	Serbia	6
Benin	3	Kenya	5	Seychelles	1
Bermuda	1	Kosovo	5	Sierra Leone	1
Bolivia	4	Kuwait	2	Singapore	2
Bosnia-Herzegovina	9	Kyrgyz Republic	4	Slovakia	1
Botswana	4	Laos	2	Slovenia	9
Brazil	43	Latvia	2	Somalia	1
Bulgaria	3	Lebanon	5	South Africa	8
Burkina-Faso	4	Lesotho	1	Spain	52
Burma	2	Libya	1	Sri Lanka	8
Cambodia	2	Lithuania	3	Sudan	1
Cameroon	5	Luxembourg	4	Suriname	1
Canada	5	Macedonia	3	Swaziland	1
Central African Republic	2	Madagascar	2	Sweden	1
Chad	3	Malawi	4	Tajikistan	1
China	26	Malaysia	4	Tanzania	6
Colombia	9	Maldives	1	Thailand	2
Congo	2	Mali	4	The Bahamas	1
Costa Rica	1	Mauritania	2	The Gambia	1
Cote D'Ivoire	5	Mauritius	2	Togo	4
Croatia	7	Mexico	4	Trinidad and Tobago	1
Curacao	2	Moldova	5	Tunisia	12
Czech Republic	5	Mongolia	1	Uganda	8
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	Morocco	10	Ukraine	22
Ecuador	3	Namibia	2	United Kingdom	14
Egypt	29	Nepal	5	Uruguay	3
El Salvador	2	Netherlands	4	Uzbekistan	12
Eritrea	1	New Zealand	1	Venezuela	15
Ethiopia	1	Nicaragua	3	Zambia	3
Finland	6	Niger	2	Zimbabwe	11
France	7	Nigeria	15		
Gabon	6	Norway	1		
Georgia	5	Pakistan	12	Total Participants:	817
Ghana	6	Palestine	7	Total Countries:	137
Guatemala	3	Paraguay	1		

CITIZEN DIPLOMACY **IN ACTION**

WorldChicago relies on the generosity, openness, and synergy of the Chicagoland community to successfully implement our citizen diplomacy exchange programs. We are grateful for our professional meeting hosts, homestay hosts, and hospitality hosts. Whether providing a meeting, a home, or a meal, our hosts directly contribute to enhancing cross-cultural understanding, awareness, and tolerance in Chicago and around the world.

Meetings by the Numbers	Home Hosting by the Numbers
159 Unique Chicagoland meeting host organizations	44 Unique Chicago-area homestay hosts
188 Professional meetings with WorldChicago visitors	73 International visitors staying in homestays
400+ Hours volunteered by Chicago meeting hosts	1462 Nights spent by visitors in homestays

Professional Meeting Hosts

From judges to journalists, engineers to curators, hundreds of Chicagoland area leaders and professionals exchanged expertise and ideas with WorldChicago's international visitors in 2017.

Hospitality Hosts

For our visitors staying in hotels, often a highlight of their experience is a dinner or cultural outing with local Chicagoans. What better way to interact than over a meal or a jazz performance!

Homestay Hosts

Dozens of WorldChicago homestay hosts opened their homes to our professional and youth visitors this year. Short-term homestays ranged from one week to one month. Homestay hosts took on a special role as cultural ambassadors, providing not only a place to sleep, but also a glimpse into everyday life in Chicago and the United States.

Interested in hosting?

[Contact Sr. Program Manager Brian Peckrill about 2018 opportunities!](#)

DIPLOMACY AT WORK

Sofia Sherezada Salas Santiago – Mexico City Co-Founder & CEO, Puercomonte

For Mexico City youth, there are few effective means to generate interest in Mexican culture and heritage in an educational and fun manner. Through this enduring challenge emerged my solution: Puercomonte. Puercomonte gives children and adults the opportunity to discover Mexican culture through playful experiences that encourage personal growth and family living. During my time in Chicago, I learned that the United States is a multicultural society and, with over 36 million Mexican-Americans, a prime market for Puercomonte. Through my fellowship, I learned more about my industry and started partnerships with museums and stores with the aim of selling toys and games in Chicago 2018, helping to educate and inspire positive images of Mexico on both sides of the border.



Brian Peckrill – Lviv, Ukraine Sr. Programs Manager, WorldChicago

While developing and implementing programming for both high schoolers and young professionals, I always wonder about the impact of these programs in the visitors' home countries. I finally got my answer by going to Lviv, Ukraine to implement intercultural communications training with a former Chicago delegate, Taras Repytskyi. As part of the US-Ukraine Civics Leadership Academy, I exposed Ukrainian high school- and college-aged students to Hofstede's intercultural dynamics and challenged them to dissect intercultural interactions using this tool. In an all-too-common dynamic, the teacher became the student, as I left Ukraine having learned much about Ukrainian culture and history. It was a truly unforgettable experience.

Rok Matjaz – Hoce, Slovenia Co-Owner, MVM & Co-Owner, 4FUN

I have been professionally involved in graphics since 1993. That is when I created my first website. I am a co-owner of MVM and 4FUN d.o.o., where I work as a Head of App development. I have been involved in entrepreneurship all my life. I grew up in an entrepreneurial family, so I came to know this line of business at a very young age. However, I knew to take my business to the next level, I needed to integrate new practices into my work. It is hard to leave your home and family for a long period of time, but I was focused on the bigger picture. An opportunity like this rarely knocks on your door and you have to grab it with both hands. As an entrepreneur from a small country like Slovenia, it was a great way for me to see how the "big guys are doing things." I went with an open mind to learn as much as I could from this experience and after my first week here, I knew I made the right decision.



DIPLMACY AT HOME



Intercultural Parenting—Hosting an International Delegate for Dinner

“Bienvenido a nuestra casa,” I greeted our visitors at the door. We started in Spanish (so proud to see our son communicating in another language), but soon shifted to English. My idea of helping them, making connections in Chicago soon shifted as well. Their program in Chicago was already very tightly crafted with meetings and agendas set. The delegates were selected by US embassy in Colombia, based on their solid record of success and achievement. Jose, for example, had been tasked by the Ministry of Education for Colombia to oversee schools and education in his hometown. Carlos supervises 25 educational institutions with over 35,000 students and 2,000 teachers in a government project to build peace and transform post-conflict Colombian society.

As they talked about their great work, I realized how little I knew about Columbia and how my image was frozen in 1992. Pablo Escobar died in 1993. The drug cartels had not had a stronghold on the country in years. Time to listen more and learn! Somewhere between dinner, dessert, and a glass of wine or two, we all realized that if it were left up to individual people to connect one on one...the whole world would get along.

Politics and professional ambitions out of the way, we sat down to dinner as a completely social event. Ange revealed that she was getting married in December, “but I don’t have a dress yet.”

“I just got a dress at WINGS resale shop for our 30th wedding anniversary celebration! It was only \$50 and they help women who are victims of domestic violence. Do you want to see my dress?” And we (a middle-aged women from the Midwest US and a recent college grad from Bogotá) jumped up and down and screamed like girls, leaving the boys at the dinner table to go and try on dresses. Ange and I made plans to meet again on Saturday to go back to WINGS, hoping by magic there would be the perfect dress. And, I kid you not...someone had dropped off a brand new, never been worn, designer dress only one day ago. It made us both stop breathing and cry when she walked out of the dressing room. It was so beautiful.

Read more about Deanna Shoss’s WorldChicago hospitality hosting experience on her blog, *Intercultural Talk*, at interculturaltalk.org



This is my fifth year as a WorldChicago host. I greatly value the experience of hosting a guest through WorldChicago as it brings a part of the world I've yet to visit into my home for a month. It's never dull. While my guests don't always have Appendectomies (though this did happen in 2017), they provide unique experiences every time. More than anything, I have the opportunity to share my city, while learning about their homes.
Mary MacKinnon, Chicago Homestay Host

PROFESSIONAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

WorldChicago is honored to be a facilitator of the U.S. Department of State's Professional Fellows Program. This unique educational/economic development program brings emerging international leaders to the U.S. to participate in four-week fellowships with state and local governments, nonprofits, private companies, and universities.

By experiencing organizational best practices and networking with their Chicago-based industry contemporaries, these individuals are primed to bring about positive change in their home countries.

One unique feature of the Professional Fellows Program is that it is a two-way exchange. Meaning, Chicago-based host organizations have the opportunity to send a supervising staff to the fellow's home country to implement a joint project.

To ensure our fellows experience American life firsthand, WorldChicago places our fellows in homestays throughout the Chicagoland area. Many homestay hosts have created lifelong friendships and have traveled overseas for an impromptu reunion, or to attend a fellow's wedding.

WorldChicago cannot implement the Professional Fellows Program without a strong commitment from the community, namely professional and homestay hosts for the role they play in providing intercultural interactions for the people of Chicago and the world.

Thank you to all our hosts who made this programming possible!

Fellows Home Countries, 2017

Argentina • Azerbaijan • Bosnia and Herzegovina • Cambodia • Colombia • Croatia • Curacao • Ecuador • Egypt • El Salvador • Honduras • Indonesia • Laos • Malaysia • Mexico • Nicaragua • Peru • Philippines • Russia • Singapore • Slovenia • Tunisia • Ukraine • Venezuela

"In Chicago, one can feel the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit in the air."

- Jelena Dumicic, Senior Associate – International Affairs Sector, Croatian Chamber of Economy

Reflections from a Host | Hosting an International Fellow

I have had the honor of hosting three fellows so far through the WorldChicago/U.S. Department of State Professional Fellows Program. This program has been an invaluable opportunity to gain a global cultural and business perspective both for me and for members of the 2112 community. We have hosted fellows from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Russia over the past 2 years, receiving feedback on branding/design, growth strategy, project management, and web development. I am happy to say I have built long-lasting friendships through the program as well. I am looking forward to participating in the reciprocal program in Bosnia-Herzegovina this April as well.

Scott Fetters | Chicago, Illinois | 2112

A special thanks to our host organizations:

Chicago Beyond • Chinese Mutual Aid Association • Catholic Charities • Kurth Lampe • The Indo-American Center • Cook County Treasurer • Upwardly Global • NAVS • Chicago Public Schools • Metropolitan Planning Council • City of Chicago Board of Ethics • SkyTech Security • YWCA • Illinois North District Court • Step Up & Sullivan High School • Loyola University • Lime Red Studios • Columbia College • Conic Group • Sociality Inc. • UIC Great Cities Institute • Imagen Marketing Solutions • Chicago Toy & Game • Amazing Edibles Gourmet Catering • Shirley Ryan Abilities Group • Learning Dimensions • 3Degrees Consulting • Beyond Uptake • WeSolv • Sente Foundry • Start-Up Port • Greater Southwest Development Corporation • The Garage at Northwestern University • Northwestern University—INVO • Peoples Choice Hospital • Ms. Tech • Smart Grid Cluster • Kendall College Business Incubator • TheSocReports • Center for REALTOR Technology • Second Shift • Project Tech Teens • DePaul University School for New Learning • City of Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology • CoLabs • The Arts and Business Council • Chatto Skin and Hair Care • 2112 • mHub • DePaul University Coleman Entrepreneurship Center • ThinkCERCA • Clean Energy Trust

PROFESSIONAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

2017 Entrepreneurship Programs	Participants
Meridian Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLA)	12
American Councils Russian Business Leaders	4
WorldChicago Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fellows	24
American Councils Professional Fellows Program	14
HANDS Along the Nile Professional Fellows Program	4
Total	58



Reflections from a Fellow | Doing Business in Chicago

From the moment we stepped out of the airport, it was clear to everyone that US was something else entirely. The first thing one notices is the size of things. An average American wouldn't even notice it, but from the Balkan perspective – the cars, the roads, the cities – all huge, and the same goes for business. Unparalleled when it comes to market size, there is always someone, somewhere interested in what you have to say or sell.

The Tech and Entrepreneurship Fellowship allowed for a small glimpse into how everyday business is run and what is happening in the entrepreneurial community. Again, the difference between the US and the Balkans is inconceivable. The number of incubators and accelerators for Chicago entrepreneurs is immense.

Competition in Chicago is high, and it drives innovation and change. People are more open to discussing ideas and issues. They share the experiences, good or bad, and there is an endless list of meet-ups and events that one can go to everyday. Back home, things do not go so smoothly. Often, the perception of an entrepreneur is much different than in Chicago. In the US, it is empowering and inspiring to be an entrepreneur (a profession highly respected) while at home, entrepreneurs are often perceived as people who is losing time with extravagant ideas; they are not really respected until they make it big.

We Fellows strongly believe that change in our region is possible and imminent. The experiences we gathered will help us pave the way for those changes. Chicago wasn't always known as the innovation and entrepreneurship city of the US. Our impression is that it is slowly but safely on its way to surpass even Silicon Valley. Therefore, we can conclude all is possible; it just requires determined individuals ready to start the change.

Admir Tuzović, Marko Sladić and Jelena Dumičić | Bosna & Hercegovina, Slovenia, Croatia

YOUTH LEADERS IN DIPLOMACY

Youth Leadership Programs and Youth Diplomats

WorldChicago is proud to be a facilitator of the U.S. Department of State's Youth Leadership Programs. In 2017, WorldChicago welcomed 25 young delegates from two continents to Chicago to engage with civic responsibility, immigrant rights, and volunteerism.

In late July, WorldChicago hosted 13 high school students and two mentors from Iraq. Participants explored Chicago's services for refugee youth by visiting Catholic Charities and RefugeeOne. Participants also explored services for undocumented Chicago students with visits to the Logan Square Neighborhood Association and Chicago Run.

In addition to our Youth Leadership Programs, WorldChicago continued its work on the Youth Diplomats program, growing the program to 40 Chicagoland high school students: double its enrolment in its second year. Youth Diplomats explored various careers abroad, learned about different current global challenges, developed global skillsets through workshops, and met with international delegations from three continents. Youth Diplomats visited Washington DC where they met with diplomats and learned how diplomacy is facilitated on a federal level. Youth Diplomats also helped to facilitate the Inaugural Illinois Global Scholar Summit at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Bringing together about 100 students from across the Chicagoland area, participants explored intercultural understanding through a variety of hands-on workshops and current events.

The Youth Diplomats program is made possible through a generous grant from the Julian Grace Foundation. Thank you for your support.

Through work with the Youth Leadership Program and Youth Diplomats, WorldChicago is committed to providing our youth—both in Chicago and across the world—the skills and knowledge necessary to bring about positive change and encourage an open-minded, tolerant citizenry, leaving the world in good hands.

2017 Youth Programs	Participants
Iraq Youth Leadership Exchange Program	13
UK-US Youth Dialogue Programme	12
WorldChicago Youth Diplomats	40
Total	65



PERSPECTIVE | Visit Chicago as a Student

I came to Chicago as part of the UK-US Youth Dialogue Programme (YDP), a youth development programme that works in partnership with WorldChicago. The programme allowed me to immerse myself into US culture. One of the biggest ways that it has influenced me was through living with a family in Chicago. They showed me the wonders that exist in Chicago, from their beautiful home to experiencing a variety of different foods I'd never tried before! The homestay experience truly became a home away from home for me. Chicago is an amazing city but has huge income disparity. Visiting the Peace Corner Youth Center highlighted this to me and had a huge impact on me. The experiences I've had through my time in Chicago has given me the confidence to change my plans for university and I now hope to develop a career where I can contribute to positive change for those in society that are unable to do so themselves.

Joseph Howes, UK-US Youth Dialogue Programme 2017

YOUTH LEADERS IN DIPLOMACY

The Illinois Global Scholar Summit

On October 28, 2017, WorldChicago partnered with Illinois Global Scholar and The Chicago Council on Global Affairs to host the inaugural Illinois Global Scholar Summit.

Gathering over 95 high school students and local teachers from across Northern Illinois, participants explored intercultural understanding and international affairs through the conference theme — *The Power of Perspective*. Using experience as a vehicle for understanding, participants took part in spoken-word workshops and mask-making activities to greater understand the delicate balance between identity and peace-building.

WorldChicago invited Professional Fellows from three continents to provide international insight and professional expertise. As the day continued and students broke into groups based on their international interests, fellows led conversations on controversial and complex topics — such as climate change, islamophobia, and gun-violence — and were able to both speak from a place of knowledge, and first-hand experience. Walter Payton Preparatory High School student Taylor Kass '18, the president of Payton's Global Action Club, was in attendance. Said Kass, "It was great to hear people from so many different backgrounds talking about the issues that affect us all."



WorldChicago is excited to continue to play a major role in the Illinois Global Scholar Summit and to partner with Illinois Global Scholar on projects that internationalize and inform Illinois youth. Thank you Farmer's Insurance for your generous contribution to the Illinois Global Scholar Summit!

Expected Youth Programs for 2018: Iraq, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and U.K



Reflections from a Youth Diplomat

Nearly 3 years ago, I met with my fellow Youth Diplomats for the first time in a small meeting space within the Chicago Cultural Center. Little did I know that these new comrades and our mentors would open my eyes to exciting opportunities both within the city and around the world. I've created close friendships with Iraqi students during their visit that will last for years to come, corresponded with business leaders from Southeastern Europe after they returned home, and connected with State Department officials about potential employment opportunities in the future. But perhaps the greatest gift I could have received from the Youth Diplomats program was finding my passion. After meeting with Syrian Refugees and discussing how the religious side of their lives often crossed over to the secular part and vice versa, I knew that I wanted to study Interfaith Dialogue and its effect countries worldwide. WorldChicago has brought so much into my life, and I cannot express my gratitude enough!

Isabelle Picciotti, Youth Diplomats, 2016-2017

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program. Current and emerging leaders from around the world participate in this program to visit the United States and meet with their professional counterparts in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. These short-term visits allow nearly 5,000 delegates each year to experience our country firsthand and cultivate lasting relationships with their American counterparts. Since the IVLP's launch in 1940, more than 200,000 international visitors have come to the United States on the program, including over 500 current or former Chiefs of State or Heads of Government.

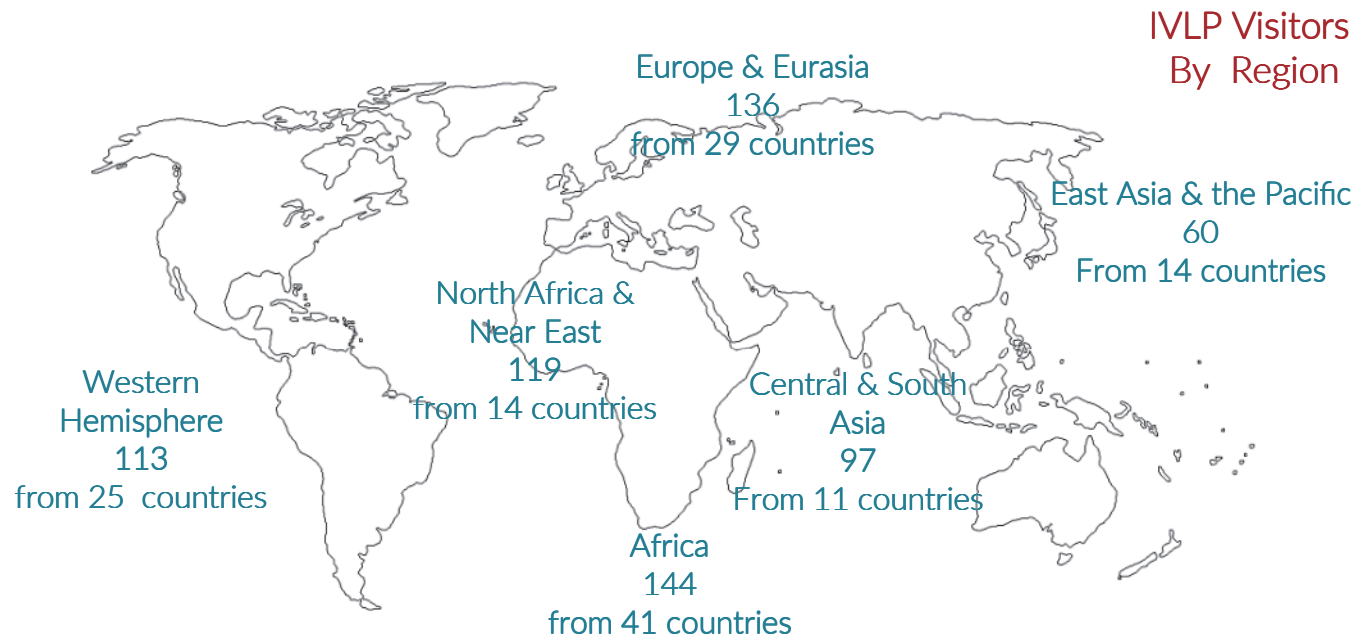
During each program, participants engage in professional meetings, public speaking opportunities, cultural excursions, and volunteer activities that reflect the participants' professional

interests and support the citizen diplomacy goals of the United States.

In 2017, WorldChicago hosted 669 IVLP delegates on 81 different programs. Professional programming in Chicago allowed delegates to make important connections with key Chicago governmental, nonprofit, and private sector representatives. Many of the 2017 Chicago program focused on topics such as entrepreneurship, countering violent extremism, transparency and accountability, the global economy, higher education, journalism, and youth engagement. Chicago welcomed the most IVLP delegates in 2017 from Brazil, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and China, and Nigeria.

WorldChicago is proud to support and facilitate these ongoing cultural and professional exchanges to foster mutual

understanding between the United States and other nations and to connect Chicagoans with their global counterparts. We look forward to continuing this vital programming in 2018. Thank you to all the individuals and organizations that volunteered their time to meet with our international visitors during the busy year. Thank you also to the Chicagoland area residents who opened their homes to host dinners for the delegates, for contributing to the success of each program and the mission of citizen diplomacy.



INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

IVLP OVER THE YEARS



Engage | Coffee Conversation Series and Other IVLP Events

One of the ways Chicagoans can engage with IVLP delegates is through WorldChicago's Coffee Conversation Series. These informal events allow Chicagoans and international visitors to discuss relevant topics, such as freedom of the press around the world, youth engagement strategies, women's empowerment, and refugee rights. In 2017, visitors from Nigeria, Brazil, Luxemburg, and other countries participated in Coffee Conversations to speak with Chicagoans about engaging African diasporas, grassroots activism, modernizing community engagement in museums, and other topics.

Additionally, WorldChicago hosted the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program Showcase in July, allowing Chicagoans to interact one on one with 27 distinguished international visitors and see samples of or purchase their products. In October, WorldChicago partner with IMC Financial Markets in the Willis Tower to host the #HiddenNoMore: Empowering Women in STEM Reception. This networking event featured discussions about women's empowerment with IVLP participants from 27 different countries. Thank you Sofitel and IMC Financial Markets for helping to make these events so successful.

EVENTS

FUNDRAISERS

International Women's Day

On May 8, WorldChicago gathered over 180 Chicagoans at the Union League Club of Chicago to celebrate the contributions women have made in international relations and international development, and to advancing the social, and economic values of Chicago.

The event commenced with an international fair showcasing local organizations, businesses, companies, associations, and entrepreneurs focused on international women's affairs. Representatives shared how their organization advances access and opportunity for women, while providing a platform for Chicago's female leaders to network. The showcase was following by the Keynote speaker's message, Iram Shah. Ms. Shah, a Senior Executive at Schneider Electric, spoke about collective impact of all women supporting one another. She cited the Sonia Shah Organization which engages, educates and empowers the under privileged girls and women in Pakistan and US to promote peace, economic stability and social progress.

A special thanks to Kennicott Brothers who coordinated donations from 25 local florists.

Spring Diplomacy Luncheon

On May 25, WorldChicago gathered over 200 Chicago business and nonprofit leaders at the University Club for our annual Spring Diplomacy Luncheon. Featured speakers included Scott Stewart, Founder of Project Tech Teens, and former Ambassador to the Netherlands, Fay Hartog Levin. Mr. Stewart spoke about how international exchange has shaped his career trajectory, and Ambassador Levin on the varied roles of an Ambassador and why they are still a crucial component of U.S. Diplomacy.

Special thanks to the WorldChicago Marketing Committee chaired by Board Member Linda Cushman

Fall Cultural Fundraiser

WorldChicago's annual fall cultural fundraiser and cocktail reception, held on November 7, took a playful approach to citizen diplomacy. Highlighting toys and games from around the world, guests experienced global cultures through playful experiences.

Chicagoans shared conversation and cocktails with emerging leaders from Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Croatia, Slovenia, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Ukraine. In addition to games, attendees also had the opportunity to bid on silent auction items highlighting global culture.

Special thanks to WorldChicago Marketing and Fundraising Committee Members George Drost, Linda Cushman, Lydia Lazar, Ed Mazur, Neal Ball, Donna Lindquist, Brian Caffarelli, Laura Granara, Cathy Lieberman, Kristyna Pellouchoud Driehaus, Brigitte Ozzello, Peggy Parfenoff, Karen Brown and Zoey Wallace



OTHER PROGRAMMING

Shanghai Fellowship Program

In partnership with the Shanghai Economic Management College and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the Shanghai Municipal Government, WorldChicago hosted the Shanghai Economic Manager Fellowship Program for its seventh consecutive year. Six professionals from Shanghai arrived in Chicago in October to complete two month on-site fellowships and exchange best practices with local Chicago organizations in their industry. Fellows had additional opportunities for professional development outside of their fellowships as well.

In this vein, WorldChicago would like to thank this year's fellowship hosts for creating a welcoming environment through their sharing of knowledge and best practices: the Chinese Mutual Aid Association, MBG Consulting, Inc., Zhou Agency, Skill Scout, and the Chicago Department of Aviation



Open World

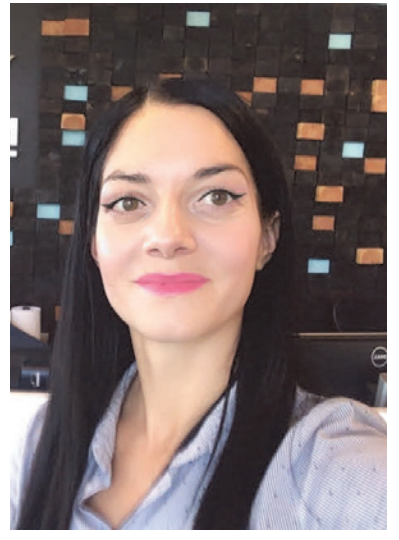
In July 2017, WorldChicago the Library of Congress Open World Leadership Program, a legislative branch agency that supports Congressional outreach for Members of Congress and conducts exchanges that establish lasting professional relationships between emerging leaders and their U.S. counterparts in democratic institutions.

WorldChicago created a professional program for six members of the Ukraine Parliament. The meetings introduced the Open World mission to our public officials. Meeting with General David Harris, Illinois House of Representatives, Sarah Pratt, State of Illinois Attorney Public Access Counselor, Margo Markopoulos, Director of the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment, Godfrey Angara, International Programs Officer, Illinois Office of Trade and Investment and Kevin Lampe, President of Kurth Lampe, the delegates were exposed to how the public and private sector work together for civil understanding and transparency.

The delegates admired the city of Chicago, the vast cultural diversity, as well as the architecture, finding the people of Chicago helpful and friendly. They admired the cultural institutions and the night life.

Thank you to the City of Chicago for supporting WorldChicago's Open World Leadership Program.

PHOTOS FROM OUR YEAR



PHOTOS FROM OUR YEAR



OUR PEOPLE

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*If a man be **gracious and courteous to strangers**, it shows he is a **citizen of the world**, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but **a continent that joins** them.*

Francis Bacon
(1561-1626)