



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Citizen Diplomacy, One Handshake at a Time





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. 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. Recent exchanges have centered on topics such as green technology and climate change, public health, government accountability, combating domestic violence, and preservation of cultural heritage.

More than 20% of our visitors reside with host families during their stay in Chicago. This is often the highlight of our visitors' time here, forging deeper connections and more meaningful cross-cultural exchange. WorldChicago also organizes dinners and social outings for our visitors to engage with the city's diverse, globally-minded citizens.

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 over ninety community partners and the U.S. Department of State Citizen Diplomacy programs, WorldChicago helps shape international relations "one handshake at a time."

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear WorldChicago Members and Friends,

Thank you for your support of WorldChicago and participation in citizen diplomacy throughout Chicago in 2016!

It was an exciting year for WorldChicago as we strengthened our partnership with the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and expanded our programs focused on technology and entrepreneurship.

We welcomed 85 Professional Fellows from 38 countries for month-long internships, doubling last year's total of 42. Over half—54 fellows from 24 countries—completed fellowships related to technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Even many of our youth programs had an entrepreneurial focus: for example, we greeted 65 African high school students and teachers from 14 countries to explore traditional and social innovation.

Not only is WorldChicago engaging with our city's technology and entrepreneurship sectors, but we are also championing human rights to ensure everyone has equal opportunities in both business and civil society. We once again hosted the program opening for the International Visitor Leadership Program's African Women's Entrepreneurship Program, which brought 37 women from 31 countries to Chicago to learn how our community promotes women in business and commerce.

While WorldChicago greeted 722 visitors from 122 countries, we rely on our members, friends, donors, and partners—who host fellows in the workplace and at home, attend our fundraisers and events, and facilitate workshops—to ensure that each visitor has a meaningful experience. Your generosity and commitment to citizen diplomacy makes our work possible.

Thank you for engaging professionally and personally with our fellows, and especially for making Chicago a warm and welcoming place. We are looking forward to working with you in 2017 to greet more diverse and unique guests, and wish you all the best in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

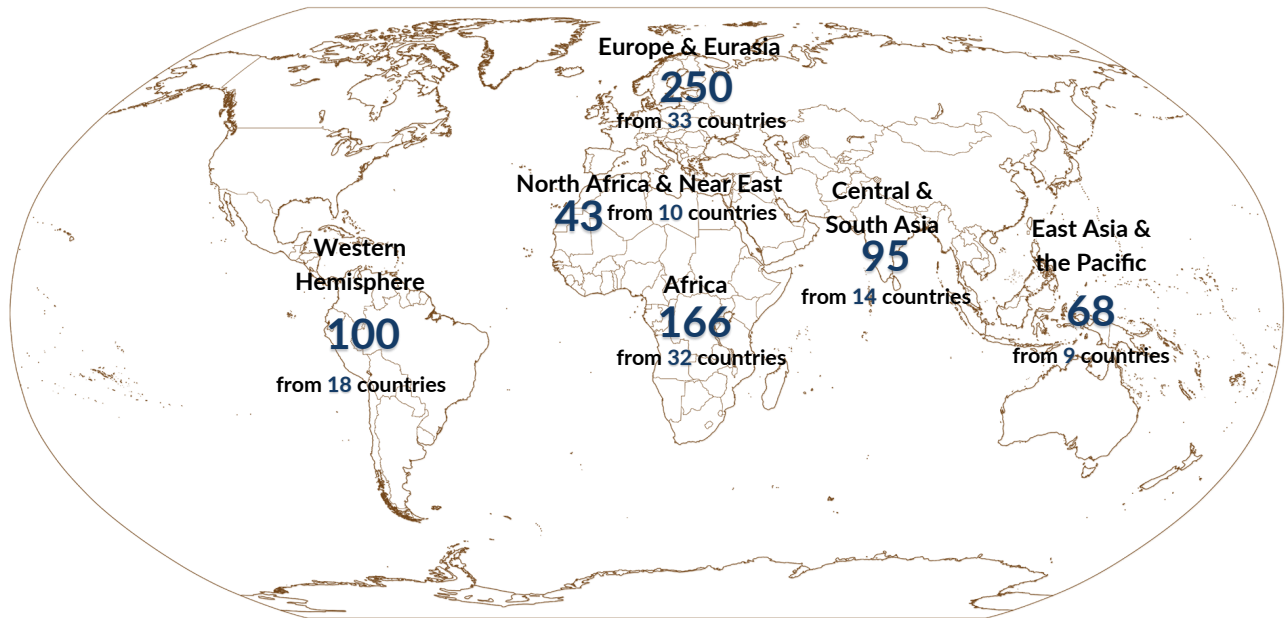
Peggy Parfenoff
President



WorldChicago President Peggy Parfenoff poses with past and present Board Chairs at the 2016 Annual Fall Fundraiser. Congratulations to Peggy for 15 years at WorldChicago serving our friends and partners, and for welcoming thousands of visitors to our beautiful city!



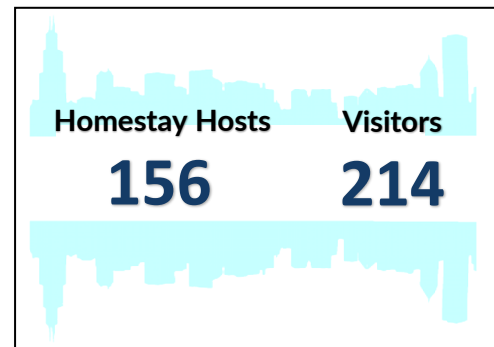
Visitors by Region



2016 Exchange Programs

Program	Visitors
Professional Fellows Program	85
Youth Leadership Program	108
Community Connections	10
Open World	6
Shanghai Management Fellows	5
Fee-for-Service	60
International Visitor Leadership Program	429
Total	703

Homestay Statistics



Most Common Exchange Topics



Volunteer Statistics

In 2016, local Chicago professionals and meeting hosts volunteered **196 hours** for the Youth Leadership Programs, more than **600 hours** for the International Visitor Leadership Program and helped complete more than **51,000 hours** of fellowships for the Professional Fellowship Programs!

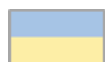
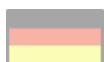
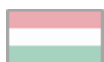


Visitors by Country

Afghanistan	13	Gambia	2	Oman	1
Algeria	7	Georgia	1	Pakistan	11
Angola	5	Germany	21	Palestine	1
Argentina	3	Ghana	19	Peru	9
Armenia	7	Greece	9	Philippines	3
Australia	2	Guatemala	14	Poland	5
Austria	2	Guinea	3	Russia	34
Azerbaijan	1	Honduras	1	Rwanda	5
Bangladesh	4	Hungary	2	Saudi Arabia	2
Barbados	1	India	17	Senegal	2
Belarus	10	Indonesia	11	Serbia	9
Belgium	7	Iran	26	Sierra Leone	6
Benin	3	Iraq	13	Slovenia	8
Bolivia	1	Israel	8	Somalia	1
Bosnia-Herzegovina	9	Italy	2	South Africa	4
Brazil	8	Jamaica	13	Spain	41
Bulgaria	3	Japan	7	Sri Lanka	1
Burkina-Faso	3	Jordan	2	Sudan	3
Burma	2	Kazakhstan	14	Suriname	1
Burundi	2	Kenya	3	Swaziland	2
Cambodia	1	Kosovo	3	Sweden	1
Cameroon	7	Korea (South)	1	Tajikistan	1
Canada	7	Lebanon	1	Tanzania	5
Central African Republic	1	Lesotho	1	Thailand	3
Chad	6	Liberia	13	Togo	6
Chile	1	Macedonia	1	Tunisia	5
China	35	Madagascar	6	Turkey	5
Colombia	1	Malawi	3	Uganda	7
Comoros	1	Malaysia	4	Ukraine	13
Congo	2	Mali	2	United Kingdom	17
Cote D'Ivoire	5	Malta	1	United States	3*
Croatia	7	Mauritania	1	Uzbekistan	5
Cuba	10	Mauritius	5	Venezuela	1
Cyprus	1	Mexico	2	Vietnam	2
Czech Republic	2	Moldova	2	Zambia	4
Denmark	2	Morocco	5	Zimbabwe	4
Ecuador	1	Namibia	1		
Egypt	11	Netherlands	2	Total Participants:	703
El Salvador	1	New Zealand	1	Total Countries:	122
Eritrea	1	Nicaragua	1		
Ethiopia	2	Niger	2		
France	8	Nigeria	16		
Gabon	2	Norway	2		

*Includes U.S. students from outside of Chicago who participated in the Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program

Top 10 Countries





Nurturing an Environment of Innovation at Home and Abroad



For the third consecutive year, tech innovation and entrepreneurship-themed citizen diplomacy exchange programs constituted WorldChicago’s top program theme. These programs have endowed our visitors with a network of world leaders in innovation, while providing new and unique perspectives to Chicago professionals.

WorldChicago welcomed 23 visitors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia as part of the U.S. Department of State’s Professional Fellows Program. In May and October, these fellows embarked on four-week tech innovation and entrepreneurship fellowships at tech companies, government agencies, NGOs, and technology incubators across the Chicagoland area. They also participated in professional development, attending Edison Talks at Chicago Ideas Week and the Chicago Innovation Awards; and visiting 1871, Tech Nexus, and the Garage. Similarly, in October, WorldChicago received 14 fellows from 12 Latin American and

Caribbean countries as part of the Department of State’s inaugural Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative. Young social and traditional entrepreneurs were paired with Chicago organizations and attended entrepreneurship development sessions as part of a four-week fellowship.

PERSPECTIVE | A Board Member

“I was blown away by the energy in Sarajevo. The optimism, the drive to move forward, the talent, [and] the dedication of all of the entrepreneurs we met gave a glimmer of what might be possible for the future.”

Elif Oker reflecting on the WorldChicago trip to Southeastern Europe

In the spirit of cultural and reciprocal exchange, five Chicagoland organizations who hosted tech and entrepreneurship fellows traveled to Ljubljana, Slovenia in March; and eight Board of Directors and six more fellowship hosts traveled to Southeastern Europe with

WorldChicago in September. The fall delegates participated in the Sarajevo Tech Summit, and fellows met with their host organizations to implement a project in each fellow’s home community.

WorldChicago further promoted tech innovation through the Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program. In April, we facilitated a five-day exchange on sustainable urban growth and development for three Indonesian city planners. Our guests explored innovative uses of technology in urban planning through meetings with the City of Chicago Environment and Sustainability Office, City Digital, and City of Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology.

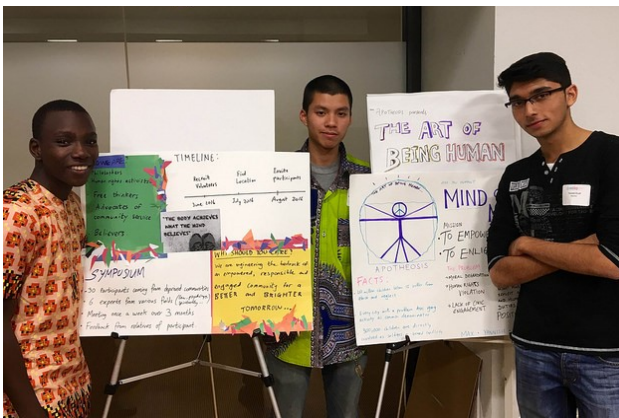
PERSPECTIVE | A Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fellow

“Chicago today...leads in business innovation and in the amount of investments, even before Silicon Valley! We can all learn from it and implement it in our environment.”

Peter Bruner, Slovenia, Fall 2016 Professional Fellow

We feel privileged to facilitate networking and professional development opportunities, which benefit Chicago’s innovation sectors and serve as a boon to emerging markets worldwide. We are proud to celebrate the progress made in 2016, and look forward to 2017 and the entrepreneurs who will find inspiration in Chicago.

Entrepreneurship Programs	Participants
Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLA)	14
Russian Business Leaders	9
Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI)	8
Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fellows	23
African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP)	37
Pan-African Youth Leaders	58
Total	149



A Day in the Life of a Tech Fellow

By Ante Vekic, Croatia



This week was jam packed with highlights, but one of them *trumps* them all: the presidential elections. It influenced our workday routine. It was the first time I experienced the reality of the United States' political climate, and it was eye-opening.

Directly following the election, not much work was done. Fortunately, earlier in the week I managed to get some work done. I did most of my part related to [redesigning LimeRed Studio's, my fellowship host organization's, website]. I sketched the looks of several different pages, helped with some of the frontend tweaking, and prepared template files to be used after I leave. It turned out it was too optimistic to expect for a website to be done in two weeks, but we came close to finishing it, and I pledged to help from back home.

I also worked on Impact X Lab's online toolkit. My organization back home is a leader of the social entrepreneurship support network in Croatia, and this type of work could be an excellent tool for us to crowdsource solutions to help us not only shape a more favorable environment for the development of social enterprises in Croatia, but also to tackle social issues we are trying to solve through our projects. That's why I consider it as an important outcome of my fellowship, and something that can benefit my organization, our users, LimeRed, and their stakeholders.

Outside of my fellowship, my homestay host Karen took me to her polling place early in the morning to see the elections first-hand. In the evening, I was invited to an elections party. With a group of 20, I watched voting results in live-time. Everyone was very surprised with the results, and it seems that no one expected that things would turn out as they did. That night I waited for results, and went to sleep after President-Elect Trump's victory speech. To see such a historic election was a profound experience and, given the unexpected decision, taught all of us fellows much about the U.S. election process.



WorldChicago Makes Promoting Women’s Equality a Priority



As the Department of State continues its efforts to advocate for women’s equality as a fundamental human right, WorldChicago has been privileged to implement diverse and specialized programming aimed at empowering women and promoting global development. In 2016, WorldChicago’s events and programs focused on aiding women with technical knowhow and networking opportunities needed to succeed in a globalizing world.

For over 15 years, WorldChicago has co-presented an annual celebration of International Women’s Day with the International Trade Club of Chicago and the Union League Club of Chicago. March 8 has become a day of commemoration of the struggles faced by women around the world in the name of equality, justice, peace, and development. Event attendees heard Sheila Watt-Cloutier, one of the world’s most recognized environmental and human rights advocates, speak of the progress women have made and the strides that must be taken to achieve gender parity.

Since 2010, WorldChicago has also had the privilege of hosting the opening of the African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program. In

September, 37 women from 31 countries convened in Chicago to discover how Chicago organizations promote and support women’s economic development around the world. Delegates met with small business owners and artisans, and participated in workshops focused on business development and action planning. The program culminated in an artisanal goods showcase, where delegates sold their merchandise directly to Chicago residents.

PERSPECTIVE | An International Visitor

“Being with the amazing 37 women entrepreneurs from across Africa for three weeks was transformational and inspiring. Interacting with the American entrepreneurs gave us insights to other ways of doing business. My network has grown and we are equipped to succeed.”

Ngabaghila Chatata, Malawi, African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program Delegate

Additionally, in March, we hosted five Polish leaders from the national and EU armed forces for three days of workshops and meetings focused on Women in Foreign Affairs and International Security. The delegation shared

their visions and strategies for further integrating the armed forces with local and federal government officials, and with the League of Women Voters.

In July, we welcomed seven Japanese managers in the manufacturing sector to explore women’s empowerment strategies. While in Chicago, the delegation met with the Chicago chapter of the Women in Manufacturing Organization; the Women’s Business Development Center; and the Association of Women in the Metal Industries. They rounded out their time in Chicago by speaking with the public about their experiences and insights into women’s working rights at one of our Coffee Conversations.

On a local level, WorldChicago Youth Diplomats met with the Chicago-based organization GirlForward in July, where they learned of the linguistic, cultural, and structural barriers facing refugee girls and how education and leadership opportunities can create strong, independent, and resourceful women.



“...Equally important, we have to support women entrepreneurs... Africa’s success depends on including women in all aspects of society. Countries simply cannot afford to exclude half of their population. Programs like AWEF are making a major impact supporting women entrepreneurs. We need to maintain this focus and look for ways to expand it together.”



Women-Centric Programming by the Numbers

92 visitors from **40** countries experienced women-focused programming

41 unique workshops scheduled around women-centric programming

280 hours planned around women-focused programming

On the Power of Women

By Wara Fabiani, Bolivia, Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative Fellow

Women’s potential to enhance our economies is something that we have to encourage. The world needs more women in leadership roles where they can develop their careers completely. Being part of the YLAI program was a blessing for me because I challenged my projects and myself to a new level. I had the opportunity to work and live in Chicago, a beautiful city that gave me great experiences and amazing friends, and taught me a lot about business and social entrepreneurship. I was able to work with an organization that encourages young women to be leaders and to have a healthy life by playing sports. They gave me the inspiration to keep on going with my projects, and to make them real. I learned that there are several ways to share leadership skills, and opened my mind to new solutions, methodologies, and strategies. More than ever, I am convinced that through education and leadership in women, we can work to have a better world. By giving women access to education, we are changing the lives of future generations, and avoiding poverty for them.





The U.S. Department of State's Professional Fellows Program brings emerging international leaders to the U.S. to participate in three- to four-week fellowships with state and local governments, policy nonprofits, private companies, and universities.

Through exposure to organizational procedures and research and networking, our international young leaders learn best practices that can be brought home and implemented to produce positive change.

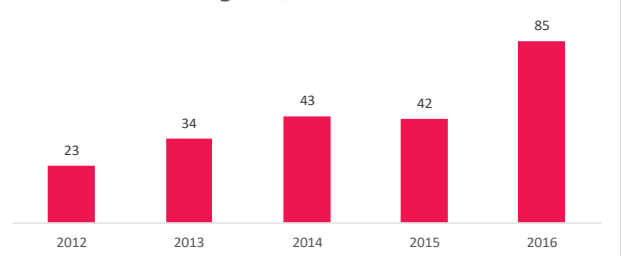
Most fellows live in homestays throughout Chicagoland and experience American home life firsthand. Thus, beyond gaining industry knowledge, they build lifelong personal and professional friendships.

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.

Fellows' Home Countries, 2016

- Argentina • Armenia • Austria • Azerbaijan • Barbados • Bolivia • Bosnia and Herzegovina • Brazil • Bulgaria • Cambodia • Colombia • Croatia • Ecuador • Egypt • El Salvador • France • Germany • Guatemala • Hungary • India • Indonesia • Jamaica • Macedonia • Malaysia • Mexico • Moldova • Morocco • Nicaragua • Pakistan • Peru • Philippines • Russia • Slovenia • Tunisia • Turkey • Ukraine • United Kingdom • Vietnam

Delegates, Professional Fellows Program, 2012-2016



Reflections from a Fellow

By David Chak, Malaysia

It was a very historic time to be in Chicago. Professionally, I experienced how charter schools continue to thrive under budget cuts, and never compromise on learning. In fact, I saw an increase in tenacity and perseverance to improve continuously and provide students with a better learning experience.

Seeing a school run on limited resources without compromising on the quality of education gave me the confidence, skills, and knowledge I need to get my own school up and running in the future. As someone who plans to open a school in Malaysia for the underprivileged community, this was invaluable.

Outside of work, I was fortunate to witness the Cubs' historic victory, which remains one of my favorite memories from my time in Chicago. Sitting in a downtown bar with other fellows, watching the game anxiously, celebrating the result, and singing the Cubs song is something I will never forget in my lifetime.

I was also lucky enough to witness American democracy. I was excited as citizens lined up outside city halls and libraries to vote for the nation's future. I also observed the anxiety and adulation as results emerged. Regardless of the result, election night in Chicago is an unforgettable memory.

I could not have asked for a better experience than to work in Chicago, and be hosted by WorldChicago.



Reflections from the Field | Host

Organization

By Karin Scott, Program Director of Allowance for Good, who hosted a professional fellow and participated in the Professional Fellows Program's outbound exchange to Ukraine in October of 2016



During one of my presentations at a secondary school in Lviv, I was asked the question, "What differences do you see between Ukrainians and Americans?" This question took me by surprise, but I had been thinking about this subconsciously throughout my trip.

"I think we actually have more similarities than differences," I stated. I spoke about how both Americans and Ukrainians are interested in the same goals - creating inclusive, positive, and innovative societies that best benefit their citizens.

Olga, one of the program managers at Society Initiatives Institute (ICI), had heard my presentation and had her own thoughts about that question. "We operate in these social activist circles, but in every country, there are people who do not share our values. People who are close-minded and don't believe what we believe."

Her comments shifted me towards reality. It is true that each nation has a diverse population. However, I think that further supports my statement that we are more similar than different. We are countries full of individuals. The world is full of individual people - not numbers, statistics, facts, or victims.

The persistence, passion, and energy of ICI is palpable. I have no doubts that they have and will continue to improve Lviv, but there is no doubt that this will come with frustration and obstacles. Such is the life of social activists trying to make positive changes, whether it be in the United States or Ukraine.

I am so thankful to Allowance for Good, Society Initiatives Institute, and WorldChicago for their support of this program and enhancing both my professional and personal growth.

2016 Host Organizations

A&A Ballet • ACCESS Community Health Network • Allowance for Good • Anixter Center • Apna Ghar • Barrel Maker Printing • Blind Services Association • Bunker Labs • The Cara Program • Catapult Chicago • Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Division • Center for Tax and Budget Accountability • Chicago City Council Asian American Caucus • Chicago Hearing Society • Chicago Humanities Festival • Chicago Votes • City of Chicago Department of Finance • City of Chicago Department of Law • CoLabs • Cook County Department of Economics • Cook County Sustainability Officer • Cook County Treasurer's Office • Datascope Analytics, LLC • Dan Goff, Mentor • DePaul University College of Computing and Digital Media • Devon Bank • DV X Labs • Easter Seals of Metropolitan Chicago • Envision Unlimited/Rose Center • E-Rive/Green Wheels USA • Evaluate Energy • The Field Museum Keller Science Action Center • Forefront • Friends of the Park • Future Founders • Georama • Girls in the Game • Good City • Heartland Health Outreach • Howard Area Community Center • I.C. Stars • Imagen Marketing Consultants • Industrial Council of Near West Chicago • Jascula Terman Strategic Communications • Juvenile Justice Initiative • The Law Project • LEEP Forward • LiftUpLift • Lime Red Studio • Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities • Metropolitan Planning Council • Ms. Tech • National Association of Realtors Center for REALTOR Technology • National Pasteurized Eggs, Inc. • Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship • Office of State Representative Elaine Nekritz • Perspectives Charter School • Plant Chicago • SDI Solutions • Project Tech Teens • Public Allies • Rosati's Franchising, Inc. • SDI Solutions • Sente Advisory • Smart Chicago Collaborative • Starfish Learning Center • TapCloud • University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy Center for Economic Policy • University of Chicago Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation • University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute • University of Illinois at Chicago Office of International Affairs • University of Illinois at Chicago Office of Technology Management • The Windish Agency • Women Tech Founders • World Business Chicago • YWCA Metropolitan Chicago • Zee Group • 2112 Chicago • 270 Strategies • 826CHI



The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is the U.S. Department of State’s premier exchange program, which facilitates connections between professional foreign leaders in a variety of fields and their American counterparts through short-term visits to the United States. Since the IVLP’s launch in 1940, more than 200,000 international visitors have come to the U.S. on the program, including over 335 current or former Chiefs of State or Heads of Government.

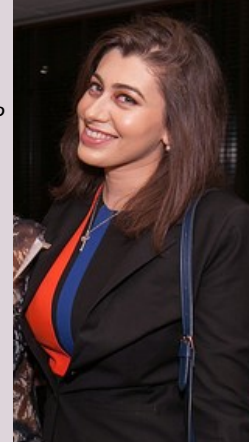
For each program, participants engage in professional appointments to explore a specific theme important to their countries or region(s). In 2016, WorldChicago hosted 429 IVLP delegates on 50 programs. Programming in Chicago allowed delegates to make important connections with key Chicago government, nonprofit, and private sector personnel. The most frequent program topics we hosted included Journalism, Environmental Conservation and Sustainability, and Fighting Corruption.

WorldChicago is proud to support and facilitate these ongoing cultural and professional exchanges that foster stronger ties between Chicagoans and the world, and looks forward to continuing this vital programming in 2017. We thank all the organizations that volunteered their time to meet with our International Visitors, as well as all the Chicago households that opened their homes to host dinners for the guests, for ensuring each visit was successful and true to the mission of citizen diplomacy.



Insights from a Visitor

By Annum Haider, 2014 IVLP Alumna, Pakistan



I visited the U.S. with a handful of other attorneys and judges as part of a program on “Modern Judicial Practices” – excited, eager and befuddled all at the same time. I travelled across five states, reveling in the grandeur of the architecture in Washington D.C; learning about the American Revolution and the historic foundations of Williamsburg, Virginia (all while dressed in a period piece!); marveling at the landscape in North Carolina; enjoying southern hospitality at its finest in Oklahoma; and falling in love with a city whose politicians are as unpredictable as its weather, and a city I now call home— Chicago.

During this trip, I made multiple connections—those which unbeknownst to me, would prove to be extremely valuable in the long run. I met with judges, lawyers, senators, philanthropists and members of the law enforcement and the FBI. The judicial program itself was engaging, succinct, and provided me with the unique opportunity to apply my legal knowledge and skills in a foreign environment. Each meeting introduced me to a new aspect of the American Legal System and encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone in my understanding of the law. It also enabled me to share and compare aspects of the legal system in Pakistan and provide a more holistic view of my country to our hosts and sponsors.





2016 IVLP Programs

Afghanistan: Youth Engagement
Africa: Governmental Accountability
Africa: U.S. Judicial System
Africa: Women's Entrepreneurship Program
Algeria: Financial Markets
Armenia: Combating Human Trafficking
Belgium: Countering Violent Extremism
Brazil: Young Political Leaders
Canada: Countering Violent Extremism
China: Environmental Issues in the U.S.
China: Intellectual Property Rights
China: Marine Litter Cooperation
China: School Sports
China: Think Tanks
Europe: Agriculture
France: Current Issues in the U.S.
Germany: Treasury Policy
Ghana: Young Political Party Leaders
Greece: Accessible Tourism
India: Foreign Policy Journalists
India: Young Political Leaders
Indonesia: Islamic Scholars Exchange
Indonesia: Sustainable Cities
Israel: Municipal Leaders
Jamaica: Trafficking in Persons
Japan: Women in Manufacturing
Kazakhstan: Media Legislation
Kosovo: Countering Corruption
Liberia: Election Preparation
Multi-Regional: Civic Engagement
Multi-Regional: Developing Strong Cities
Multi-Regional: Disability Rights
Multi-Regional: State and Local Governments
Near East and Asia: Regional Health Challenges
Nigeria: Financial Journalism
Pakistan: Career Services
Peru: Cultural Management
Poland: Women in International Security
Russia: Agricultural Journalism
Russia: Burn Prevention
Russia: Supporting Netizens
Russia: Understanding Public Opinion
Serbia: Combating Money Laundering
Serbia: Fighting Corruption
South Central Asia: Towards a Safer and More Secure World
Ukraine: International Adoption
Uzbekistan: Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act

Hospitality Hosting

By Carol Rappel

Having been associated with WorldChicago for over 12 years, my husband and I have hosted visitors for dinner numerous times. Every experience is unique and always rewarding.

Our last hosting experience was different from many of our previous experiences. I hosted the Farewell Dinner for the Iraqi Young Leadership Exchange Program, a group of young high school Iraqi students and the families with whom they had been living for about two weeks. The host families arrived first and I had the chance to speak with them and hear about the excitement and challenges the whole family had faced as the guests settled in. The families also enjoyed getting to know each other and sharing stories. When the students arrived, there was lots of hugging and laughing. You can't imagine the excitement, energy, and affection these young people displayed for each other and their families.

After eating, impromptu tributes started with each student getting up to express their gratitude and boast of having the best family of all. At the end of the night, the students and families left for their last night at their Chicago homes. It was truly moving to see how the young visitors bonded with their temporary siblings and parents. I have so much admiration for those host families, many of whom have done this several different times. Each family felt it is a tremendous learning experience for their own children. We know that their warmth and generosity makes a huge impression on our young guests and their attitudes toward our country.





YOUTH PROGRAMS

In 2016, WorldChicago hosted six U.S. Department of State Youth Leadership Programs, bringing 107 international students from 23 countries to Chicago to discover entrepreneurship, diversity, and civic responsibility.

In the spring, WorldChicago welcomed consecutive Pan-African youth programs, which brought 45 students from nine English-speaking African nations. These students explored Chicago’s entrepreneurial spirit by meeting with Scott Stewart of Project Tech Teens to learn how technology and social media could be used to grow social enterprises. They also developed action plans and intercultural skills through a workshop with intercultural trainer Malii Brown; explored Chicago’s rich history; and visited U.S. high schools.

In late July, WorldChicago additionally hosted 12 high school students and one college mentor from Iraq. Students visited Facebook’s Chicago headquarters to learn how social change organizations use Facebook ads to connect with their beneficiaries, and volunteered at the Greater Chicago Food Bank with our Youth Diplomats.

In addition to our Youth Leadership Programs, WorldChicago was excited to launch the inaugural cohort of the Youth Diplomats program, which brings 20 Chicagoland high school students together every month to explore international relations and the concept of global citizenship. 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. Given the pilot’s success, the program will be scaling up from 20 to 40 students in 2017. The Youth Diplomats program is made possible through a generous grant from the Julian Grace Foundation, which we thank for its invaluable support.

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



Program	Delegates
Pan-Africa Youth Leadership Program I	25
Emerging Young Leaders Award	5
Pan-Africa Youth Leadership Program II	20
Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program	13
Pan-Africa Youth Leadership Program III	20
UK-US Youth Dialogue	14
Summer Leadership Program for Cuban Youth	10
Youth Diplomats	20
Total	127



From a Host Family

By Dova Weinberger

When we applied to be a youth homestay host, I had never heard of WorldChicago. We had hosted international teens before and, when I first started the process, I assumed it would be a similar experience. Hanging out, showing them the sights, etc. Once we met the coordinator and learned a little more about the program, I knew it would be a different experience altogether. This was a group of young adults who wanted to make a difference. These teens chose to step out of their comfort zone for the sake of making their world a better place. This group was given such an amazing opportunity and, as a host family who was able to get to know them – so were we. Every night when we sat down for dinner, our world was made a little bit bigger by their experiences of the day. It wasn't just about seeing the sights in Chicago, it was about who they spoke to and their stories.

During their short stay, Dillon and Junaid became part of the family. The kids loved spending time with them and my husband and I loved hearing about their plans for the future. There is no better inspiration for young kids than to see young adults with clear goals. I was so proud of Dillon and Junaid and what they had accomplished during their stay and what they had planned for their return home. As our whole family watched and listened to them at the last night's presentation, I was one proud Mama.

The Weinberger family hosted two students from the United Kingdom.



From a Delegate

By Sara Fatah, Iraq, 2016 Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program Delegate

This summer I was luckily accepted to an exchange program, called Iraqi Young Leader Exchange Program, which was for high-schoolers from Iraq to spend 30 days in the United States. Two weeks of these thirty days included a homestay and real-life city experience. My host city was Chicago, Illinois. I didn't know much about Chicago before going there, so I did my research and found out it was a big city, and having had no experience with homestays, big cities, and a different culture, it was a pretty nerve-racking situation. But fortunately WorldChicago, the [hosting] organization, provided us with all things needed for the two weeks, such as phones, train passes, and on top of all, some of the best host families. Speaking from my experiences, my host family was the best! We got to have some very great conversations, watched cool movies, exchanged thoughts and cultures, and learned great lessons from one another. I and a fellow student lived with a very lovely couple, Chris and Holly, who were inexplicably amazing. Thanks to WorldChicago, in my two weeks, I got to live a life completely different from my normal life, and experienced fun, educational, and eye-opening activities in the safest manner possible.

Sara Fatah is from Sulaymaniyah, a small city in northern Iraq.



Open World

The Open World program is a U.S. Legislative Branch initiative that aims to illustrate the importance of legislative functions in creating and sustaining democracies to rising leaders in Eurasian countries. Participants engage with U.S. governing systems at the federal, state, and local levels and interact with their American counterparts, members of Congress, and Congressional staff. From October 21 to 29, WorldChicago hosted five attorneys from Kazakhstan on an Open World program exploring civil rule of law. The group met with a variety of legal organizations in the nonprofit, government, and university sectors, including the American Bar Association, the ACLU of Illinois, the Chicago Board of Ethics, the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, and the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. They also met with Congressional staff at the Offices of Senator Dick Durbin, Senator Mark Kirk, Representative Bob Dold, and Representative Jan Schakowsky.

Community Connections

Community Connections is a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) program intended to support post-Soviet countries’ transitions to more democratic and free market-oriented societies. In August 2016, WorldChicago hosted 10 urban planners from Belarus. The group explored a variety of themes around building thriving communities, including Approaches to Supporting Self-Sufficient Neighborhoods; Transportation; and the Importance of Design in Connecting Local Community. Site visits and meetings were arranged with local organizations such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Active Transportation Alliance, Family Resource Center on Disabilities, and SRAM Cycling Fund.



Shanghai Manager 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. Five professionals from Shanghai arrived in Chicago in October to complete two-month onsite 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, Blue Vista Capital Management, Tusk Strategies, the Chicago Association of Realtors, and the City of Chicago Department of Aviation.







FUNDRAISERS



SPRING DIPLOMACY LUNCHEON

On May 4, WorldChicago gathered over 200 Chicago business and nonprofit leaders at the University Club for our annual Spring Diplomacy Luncheon.

Featured speakers included Kurt Haunfelner, Vice President of Exhibits at the Museum of Science and Industry, and Andrew Obendorf, Senior Designer at Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill LLP who spoke about *futureHome 2050...A Vision of What's to Come*.

Mr. Haunfelner and Mr. Obendorf provided guests with a sneak peek into the creation of upcoming *futureHome 2050* exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry that gave guests a taste of what life will be like in the year 2050.

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

AN EVENING OF CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

WorldChicago's annual fall cultural fundraiser and cocktail reception, held on November 2, focused on celebrating the importance of citizen diplomacy.

Guests gathered to celebrate global cultures with international visitors, hosts, members, and volunteers.

Chicagoans mixed and mingled with emerging leaders from Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Croatia, Slovenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Malaysia, Moldova,

Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, and Vietnam.

Attendees also participated in an interactive game and had the opportunity to bid on silent auction items highlighting global culture.

Special thanks to WorldChicago Board Member Cathy Lieberman and Board Chair Gabrielle Buckley.





CITIZEN DIPLOMACY EVENTS



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On March 8, WorldChicago co-hosted the 15th Chicago Celebrates International Women's Day with International Trade Club of Chicago and the Union League Club of Chicago. Chicagoans were invited to commemorate women's social, political, and economic achievements while focusing on the areas that required further action.

The event opened with an international fair showcasing local organizations, businesses, companies, associations, and entrepreneurs focused on international women's affairs. A luncheon followed, featuring keynote speaker Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Environmental and Human Rights Advocate who's topic was *Reaching Out: How the Arctic Connects Us All*.

Katie Kennicott of Kennicott Brothers Company delivered brief remarks on Women in Global Floriculture.

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

COFFEE CONVERSATIONS

WorldChicago's Coffee Conversations series provides another platform our members, partners, and professional hosts to connect with international visitors through dialogue around a variety of topics.

2016 Coffee Conversations featured guests from India, Poland, Japan, the UK, Belarus, Italy, and Kazakhstan, who reflected on the similarities and differences between their countries and the U.S. in areas ranging from Democracy and Politics to Empowering Women in Manufacturing. Additionally, in November, WorldChicago partnered with the Fulbright Alumni Association to host a conversation on the increasingly important topic of Cyber Security and Public Safety.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

WorldChicago's Young Professionals group provides opportunities for globally-minded young leaders to engage with professionals from around the world, exchanging expertise and expanding their local and international networks. Programming in 2016 began with our annual Trivia Night, where attendees put their international knowledge to the test at The Globe Pub while meeting other young professionals.

Then in July, members enjoyed the summer weather at Millennium Park's Concert in the Park featuring Nigerian singer King Sunny Ade and Chicago Afro-soul singer Ugochi.

The following month saw WorldChicago's annual Careers Night event: Thomas Kuczmariski of Kuczmariski Innovation, Tara Magner of MacArthur Foundation, and Steve Berlin of the City of Chicago Board of Ethics shared their experiences of having careers in the international sphere.

The Young Professionals ended the year with their 1st Annual Fundraiser in October, where young professionals mingled with international Professional Fellows at the Fireplace Inn before attending Second City's *Fool Me Twice, Déjà Vu* show.

ANNUAL MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY

On December 6, WorldChicago members gathered for the organization's Annual Meeting, where they enjoyed a presentation on WorldChicago's 2016 experience and received a glimpse into upcoming programs in 2017. Per tradition, the meeting was followed by the Holiday Party, which was hosted by board member Michelle Kristula-Green at her home. Enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, attendees celebrated WorldChicago's successes and looked forward to another fruitful year.





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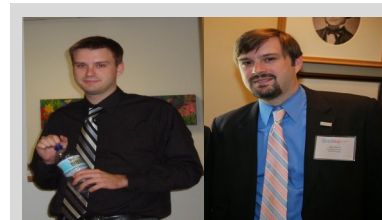
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Congratulations to John Baum for 10 years at WorldChicago, and best of luck back home in Cleveland!



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