

## **Report on the Global Fulbright Alumni Seminar Washington, D.C., Oct. 31, 2003**

Jane L. Anderson, CAE, Executive Director, Fulbright Association

In true Fulbright spirit, the Global Fulbright Seminar on Oct. 31 at the Fulbright Association's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference promoted friendships, elicited ideas on building the international Fulbright alumni community between conferences, and highlighted the Fulbright experiences of six diverse alumni. During a storytelling program designed by facilitator Seth Kahan to engage participants and build community both within and outside the conference, participants shared stories of their Fulbright experiences and then selected six storytellers to give their accounts to the audience of approximately 200 Fulbright alumni and friends.

### **Fulbright Stories Advance Understanding**

Again, in keeping with the meaning of the Fulbright program, three of the highlighted stories were told by Fulbright alumni to the United States (from Nigeria, Greece, and Japan) and three by U.S. Fulbright alumni (to South Africa, Sweden, and Turkey). Prof. Gabriel Babatunde of Nigeria spoke of the challenges faced in starting a new alumni association where resources are scarce. Ms. Kimberly Battle-Walters recounted her post-arrival apprehensions about doing a Fulbright in South Africa until a serendipitous encounter with Bishop Desmond Tutu. Dr. Edward Blakely described a cool reception on the part of his Swedish hosts and what it took "to become a Swede."

Mr. Louis S. Brown told about meeting, and being challenged by, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall during a Fulbright orientation program in Washington. Ms. Rita Panourgia of Greece described her arrest and imprisonment by the military regime in Greece during the 70s when she worked at the Fulbright Foundation in Athens and the sustaining power of Senator Fulbright's personal support and of the concern of the worldwide Fulbright community. Mr. Toshio Shono recounted arriving in Arizona as a young man after World War II, being welcomed into the community, and learning what he had in common with young men in the United States.

U.S. participants, including U.S. Fulbright Association Board members and chapter leaders, joined international alumni and Fulbright commission representatives from 14 countries at the 2003 Global Fulbright Seminar, which was organized as a conference plenary session. (Please see the list of international representatives at the end of this e-mail.)

Seth Kahan, an organizational community specialist who developed many of his ideas on community and workplace collaboration during his tenure at the World Bank, facilitated the session. For more information on Seth and on the JumpStart Storytelling methodology used at the program, please consult [http://sethkahan.com/Resources\\_0JumpStart.html%20](http://sethkahan.com/Resources_0JumpStart.html%20)

### **Global Fulbright Seminar Objectives**

Objectives of the 2003 Global Fulbright Seminar were 1) to build the community of participants at the conference, enhancing their ability to contribute and engage with each other; 2) to engage people in developing a strategy for building the international community outside the bounds of the conference and between conferences; and 3) to involve conferees in developing an approach for supporting the Fulbright Program.

## **Fulbright as a Transformational Experience**

In a short lecture, Seth provided an overview of his core ideas regarding community, storytelling, and collaboration. He then asked everyone to participate in JumpStart Storytelling, which gave conferees an opportunity to get to know each other. Participants formed groups of eight; each member of the small group told a story on the following topic: "Fulbright is a transformational experience. Please tell a story about a time when that transformation came to life for you, and reflect on how you would like to honor your Fulbright experience."

Groups rotated several times, so participants had an opportunity to share stories with several groups. After the final rotation, each participant placed his or her hand on the shoulder of a Fulbrighter whose story touched them profoundly. As mentioned above, participants chose the stories of the following Fulbright alumni:

Prof. Gabriel Babatunde (USA 1986), President, Fulbright Alumni Association of Nigeria (FAAN), and Professor of Animal Nutrition, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Ms. Kimberly Battle-Walters (South Africa 2002), Professor of Social Work, Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA

Dr. Edward Blakely (Sweden 1985), member, U.S. Fulbright Association Board of Directors, and Dean of the Milano Graduate School, New School University, New York City

Mr. Louis Brown (Turkey 1963), Science Teacher (ret.), Stone Mountain, GA

Ms. Rita Panourgia (USA 1955), President, Association of Fulbright Scholars in Greece

Mr. Toshio Shono (USA 1962), Secretary General, Tokyo GARIOA/Fulbright Alumni Association

## **Building our International Fulbright Alumni Community**

After hearing the stories of these six alumni, participants were asked to circulate throughout the room, introduce themselves to others, and complete the statement, "One way to build our international Fulbright alumni community is to \_\_\_\_\_."

Ideas were then recorded on newsprint. For this report, ideas have been grouped under categories, as follows:

### **Communications**

Develop an e-mail support network

Web-based outreach and information sharing

E-mail stories and online journal

Produce a magazine with alumni stories

Develop more opportunities to spread the word (Rotary, Kiwanis)

Brief Congress and the United Nations on the Fulbright Program

Present to community groups about your Fulbright experiences

Infiltrate student body

### **Conferences**

Hold international conferences

Provide a conference scholarship/grant for less represented Fulbright commissions

Hold lower cost conferences at universities

### **Fund Raising**

Endow scholarships  
Raise money for development of international associations

### **Partnerships**

Pool the resources and support of existing alumni associations to assist developing programs  
Grant financial aid to developing Fulbright associations  
Keep up the enthusiasm and involve universities

### **Programs**

Increase the number of activities for Fulbright associations and chapters/joint chapter events  
Support grassroots UN-level Fulbright Program for developing countries  
Hold a worldwide "Take a Fulbrighter to Dinner" Day  
Better organize in the USA  
Mentor as people return  
Act on a personal level  
Support returning grantees  
Provide experiences that renew the Fulbright experience, such as returning to the Fulbright host country  
Build local chapters  
Go to local Fulbright chapter meetings

### **Conference Plans for 2004**

Rita Panourgia, President of the Association of Fulbright Scholars in Greece, announced "Olympism and the Fulbright Spirit: Humanism in Action," the international conference to be sponsored by the Greek Association in Athens, October 8-10, 2004. On Nov. 2, the Board of Directors of the U.S. Fulbright Association met and endorsed holding the U.S. Association's 27<sup>th</sup> Annual conference in conjunction with the conference in Athens. A call for papers for the 2004 conference prepared by the Association of Fulbright Scholars in Greece is appended to this e-mail.

### **Additional Idea Exchange**

At an informal luncheon gathering of some international representatives and U.S. Association board members and chapter leaders, discussion centered on the conference in Greece, regional networks, and host assistance information sharing. U.S. Fulbright Association Board Member Alison Gardy, who organized the gathering, recorded the following concerns:

#### **Common Concerns Worldwide:**

During the luncheon introductions, international Fulbright alumni described a wide array of alumni activities but also identified common concerns across the globe, such as:

- a) mobilizing volunteers to do alumni tasks
- b) attracting members from different age groups (usually younger members, but in the case of the German alumni association, older members)
- c) encouraging a greater percentage of alumni association members to be more actively involved in activities
- d) building alumni association membership

### **More Web Ideas**

On Sunday, Nov. 2, at a session on U.S. association chapter development, which included a roundtable discussion on chapter web pages on the U.S. Association's web site, led by Marshall Ellis, director of membership development, the following ideas were offered:

- 1) Use the Fulbright Association's online event calendar to post international events (Please send your event information to Marshal at [marshall.ellis@fulbright.org](mailto:marshall.ellis@fulbright.org) for posting.)
- 2) Compile a list of all Fulbright listservs with information on what they post, their audience, and how to subscribe and put it on the U.S. Association web site
- 3) Create a listserv for webmasters who are responsible for Fulbright alumni or other Fulbright web sites

## **International Participants**

### **BELGIUM**

Dr. Eliane Van Stichel, International Secretary, Belgian Fulbright Alumni Association, and Head of Languages of the International School of Brussels

### **BRAZIL**

Dr. Marco Antonio da Rocha, Executive Director, Fulbright Commission in Brazil

Dr. Marcos Mauricio Toba, Fulbright alumnus

### **FRANCE**

Mrs. Michele Van de Roer, President, France Fulbright Association

### **GERMANY**

Dr. Uwe Koch, Treasurer, Fulbright Alumni e.V. (Germany)

### **GREECE**

Mrs. Rita Panourgia, President, Association of Fulbright Scholars in Greece

### **ISRAEL**

Ms. Inas Mohammad Abu Shilbayih, Fulbright alumna

### **JAPAN**

Mrs. Michiko Shimada, Vice Chairwoman, Hospitality Committee, Tokyo GARIOA/Fulbright Alumni Association

Mr. Toshio Shono, Secretary General, Tokyo GARIOA/Fulbright Alumni Association

### **KOREA**

Dr. Jeehyun Lee, Treasurer, Korean Fulbright Alumni Association, and Associate Professor, Konkuk University, Seoul

Dr. Suk-Koo Rhee, Associate Professor, Yonsei University, South Korea

### **MOROCCO**

Dr. Wail Benjelloun, President, Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchanges

Ms. Imane Mrini, United Nations Fulbright Fellow, Fulbright Student Grantee from Morocco

Mr. Adnane Hessissen, Fulbright Student Grantee from Morocco to Northwestern University

### **NIGERIA**

Prof. Gabriel Babatunde, President, Fulbright Alumni Association of Nigeria

### **SERBIA & MONTENEGRO**

Dr. Dejan Eric, Vice President, Fulbright Alumni Association of Yugoslavia

### **SPAIN**

Mr. Gil Carbajal, Board Member, Asociacion J. William Fulbright (Spain)

### **UKRAINE**

Dr. Antonina Kolodii, Fulbright-Kennan Visiting Scholar from Ukraine to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and 1994 Fulbright alumna to the USA

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

Dr. Anna Tilley, Chair of the British Fulbright Scholars Association

# Call for Papers

Fulbright International Interdisciplinary Conference-Athens 2004

Olympism and the Fulbright Spirit:

“Humanism in Action”

Athens, October 8-10, 2004

In light of the Olympic Games of the third millennium and the current economic, political and cultural reconfigurations of the world, the need to rethink the philosophical and political meaning of humanism becomes more imperative than ever before. This need converges with the responsibility of the Fulbright program, as a cultural and educational institution founded on the concept of humanism, to reweigh its role and articulate its new vision in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Thus standing before a world rapidly changing into a matrix of hitherto unimaginable associations but also conflicts, the Association of Fulbright Scholars in Greece is organizing a post-Olympic Conference to be held in October of the year 2004, in Athens, and is inviting papers and artistic projects that will address the current theoretical, philosophical and political debates about the subject of humanism within the global community, in a variety of disciplines and fields. This conference will create the opportunity for a committed re-examination of the concept of humanism and a contemplative articulation of the new perspectives that the Fulbright spirit should set for itself.

**Closing date for proposals is March 12, 2004.**

Please send a one page proposal (350 words) and a brief (100 words) biographical note to:

Dr. Anastasia Papconstantinou  
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Fax: 3 210 7226510

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