Humphreys Visit Onondaga County Executive Offices

The Fellows received an up close and personal look at the inner-workings of Onondaga County government at the end of October from the Deputy County Executive and three Commissioners.

Deputy County Executive Bill Fisher welcomed the Fellows and offered an overview of how the various departments interact on a daily basis. He also discussed the process of how County Executive Joanie Mahoney creates a budget and how that reflects the County Executive’s priorities.

Chief Fiscal Officer James Rowley explained that the funds for the budget come from both sales and property taxes. Fellows were interested in how shared services, such as IT, are budgeted (he replied they are charged to individual departments). Commissioner of Human Resources, Peter Troiano, provided insights into these shared services and remarked that human resources is the largest part of the Onondaga County budget. His office also administers the NYS Civil Service exam, which is how many positions in the County (and State) offices are filled. Finally, Health Commissioner Dr. Cynthia Morrow talked about the mission of her department, stressing that its focus is on improving the health of the community, not the delivery of health care systems.

Bill Fisher also took time to note how many Maxwell alums are in the County Executive’s office, including himself.
Early in December, Grace and I invited Kenyatta and two of our student neighbors to our house for dinner and to help with our Christmas decorations. After a leisurely meal with lots of conversation, we set about decorating the Christmas tree and the rest of the house. Kenyatta pitched in while the conversation continued. His schedule had been so packed that we had not been able to spend as much time with him as we had hoped. We were delighted to learn of Kenyatta’s remarkable success in having his essays published in prestigious journals. Besides getting brought up to date with all of his contacts with the Oneida County offices, and his insights into the working of our local government, we were pleased to be able to introduce him to one of our neighbors. She is an undergraduate student from Haiti who is very interested in making contacts with organizations and government agencies in Africa in order to set up an internship. Who better than Kenyatta to give her useful points of entry into the various offices that she is interested in? It is clear that that first conversation between them will not be the last.

For Grace and me, one of the rewards of being a host family for Kenyatta is gaining the immediate knowledge and cultural insights which he brings to us, as well as the fresh perspectives he shares with us regarding our own local institutions, such as the county government and the personalities he is meeting. Perhaps, as winter finally sets in, we will get to see him more often. We hope so.
The Humphrey Fellows have begun an informal affiliate campus partnership with Onondaga Community College in Syracuse. The partnership between the Maxwell Humphrey Fellows and OCC, with a student population of over 12,000, allows for a unique, international perspective on its campus and provides a cultural exchange opportunity for the Fellows. This partnership is in its initial phase and will become more formalized in the future.

(Above) Fellows gather with Humphrey staff at the OCC International dinner. The evening was sponsored by the International Center of Syracuse and honored International Citizens of the Year. There was also a performance by a Syracuse University Korean Drum group. Jungwook Auh (2010-2011 Humphrey Fellow and current EMPA candidate) was also able to attend to share the experience with the Fellows.

Also at OCC: Humayun Tarar and Sania Battalova spoke during Onondaga Community College's International Education Week. The session was entitled “Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, Promise.” Pictured with Humayun and Sania (from left): Associate Professor Stephen Pierson, Interim Vice President of Academic Services Emmanuel Awuah, Moderator Michael Heise, OCC Honors student Bailey Donovan and Sr. Vice President and Provost Cathleen McColgin.

The Fellows met with iSchool faculty and staff over breakfast to learn about the various programs, initiatives and opportunities that exist for Fellows within the iSchool. The event was organized by Sue Corieri, Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Special Academic Initiatives for the School of Information Studies. Several of this year’s Fellows have an interest in IT policy. The breakfast was attended by iSchool faculty Ian MacInnes, Jeff Stanton, Milton Mueller and iSchool staff member Victoria Williams.
The International Music Festival was organized by the Slutzker Center for International Services of Syracuse University on November 16th and showcased a full range of artistic talent bestowed to Syracusans. These performers enthusiastically displayed their talents in singing, dancing, performing musical instruments and reciting original poetry compositions. It was a colorful evening, studded with the glittering stars of SU, belonging to all disciplines of knowledge ranging from School of Music, Engineering, Social Sciences and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. The participants were from all parts of the world including the USA, Pakistan, Turkey, South Korea, China, El Salvador, the Middle East, India, Bhutan, Cuba, Ecuador, Congo, Ghana and Ivory Coast.

In my regular line of duty, I am a government servant in Pakistan and deal with taxation issues. But I also devote time towards artistic endeavors including writing short stories and composing poetry, which is published in newspapers and journals back home in Pakistan. I decided to recite some of my original poetry at the Festival, which I wrote in my national language of Urdu. I also provided an English translation.

The event was indeed a true reflection of the multicultural environment of SU, which fosters cross-cultural learning from one another, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect for diversity, which ultimately leads to globalization of knowledge, wisdom and higher learning. When it comes to sharing good moments with peers and having 'FUN', we all have similar tastes and preferences. The multicultural, multi-disciplinary performances were followed by a sumptuous dinner, comprising of cuisines selected from various parts of the world. The successful event, with a jam-packed audience in Hendricks Chapel, reiterated the concept that music, poetry, dancing and all other faculties of 'fine arts' have no borders, they are truly universal in letter and spirit.
A stone-hearted dear 'face' is lost,  
In the mist of mystical fog,  
I've tried to locate the lost soul,  
But the foot-steps are not traceable.

My eyes have no sparkle, but endless wait,  
For the road to his home has vanished in rain,  
And all trees on the road-side have fallen,  
Amidst wind, storm and heavy downpour.

I wish to erase him from memories,  
To be able to smile again,  
My best friend, loneliness, plays me a song,  
It is a 'Symphony of Sorrow'.
Above: Margaret Lane introduces 2009-2010 Humphrey Fellow alum Nimrod Goren, from Israel, who spoke to the Fellows about how to make the most of their Humphrey year. He travelled back to Maxwell after a conference in NYC. Besides talking to the Humphreys, he met with the Civic Education Leadership Fellows to discuss perceptions of Israel among Arabs and Muslims and was a lunchtime speaker hosted by the Middle East Studies Program in the Moynihan Institute. It was great to see Nimrod once again and we all wish him continued success with the think tank he founded, “Mitvim- the Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies.”

Humphrey Alum Nimrod Goren Visits Maxwell

Phone Myint Win Speaks at Model UN Conference to High School Students

Left: Phone Myint Win meets with regional high school students during the 29th Annual Central New York Model United Nations Conference at Syracuse University in January. He discussed “Civil Society in Myanmar: Emerged or Discovered?” After his talk, the students participated in a question and answer session, which helped inform the students’ efforts during the Model U.N. conference.
Behind the Scenes at Public Broadcasting’s WCNY and “The Ivory Tower Half Hour”

The Fellows had an opportunity in November to watch behind-the-scenes of a taping of “Ivy Tower Half Hour” at WCNY, the Public Broadcasting affiliate for the Central New York area. “Ivy Tower” is hosted by the former dean of the Newhouse School at Syracuse University and panelists include faculty from five area colleges and universities. Prior to the taping, Producer/Director Amy Manley offered a tour of the TV and FM radio station, perspective on the unique position public broadcasting has in the U.S. as well as offering suggestions for working with the media. Fellows were then ushered inside WCNY’s Studio A, where they watched the recording of the “Ivy Tower Half Hour.” After the taping, panelists spoke with the fellows about how the show’s content is generated every week and the First Amendment impacts the program. Fellows left the station having not only learned about WCNY’s unique role in education and information distribution, but also something about the character of nonprofit organizations in the Central New York region.

MaxCNY: Learning about Community Geography

Above: Fellows pose with the “Ivrians” after a November taping of “The Ivory Tower Half Hour” at WCNY. Panelists that week included (from left): Lisa Dolak (Syracuse University), Bob Greene (Cazenovia College), Tara Ross (Onondaga Community College), Bob Spitzer (SUNY Cortland), and host David Rubin (Syracuse University).

Humphrey Fellows and other Maxwell alumni attended a December MaxCNY lunchtime lecture entitled, “Syracuse Community Geography: Putting Public Scholarship on the Map” by Professor Jonnell A. Robinson of the Geography Department at Maxwell. The event also provided an opportunity for alumni to meet the Fellows and learn how they can become involved in the Humphrey program as host families. Among the attendees were Helen Dewey and Dan Kelly who have each been prior Humphrey host families.
**International Potluck Dinner at the Kogut's**

*By Barry Kogut  
Humphrey host family*

My wife Kathy and I invited the Humphrey Fellows class and their hosts to our home in DeWitt on Sunday, December 4 for a potluck supper featuring the food from the Fellows’ native lands. It was a great time for sharing and experiencing a range of tastes and smells. There was the gaiety that is found with any other large family and the comfort that one feels when enjoying the companionship of close friends. We were blessed by unseasonably warm weather and lots of sunshine as folks gathered for the feast. There was a tension of anticipation as several of the Fellows maneuvered around the stove and microwave to prepare their offerings. As the cooks labored, the children were occupied with the basket full of large Legos that have retained their charm from their earlier assignment of amusing our own children as they grew up. Then it was time to eat and as hosts, Kathy and I were given the honor of making our food selections first. As you can see, this was a difficult assignment as all the food on the table looked great.

Then came time for honoring our two Fellows who were celebrating their birthdays – Kristine and Brahmanand. Their cake was adorned with candles and after making their wishes, the flames were extinguished. Kristine was then given the task of cutting up the cake in just the right portions to ensure that everyone gathered had a piece. Kristine handled this awesome responsibility quite well. So what did I learn from the feast?

1. A potluck supper of native foods should be a Fellows tradition going forward. The opportunity to taste the food from a native cook is one of the many reasons why Kathy and I so enjoy our role as hosts;
2. The Fellows have a talent in the kitchen and we were honored to have them share that talent with us;
3. Good food and good friends are the perfect mix in any country at any time;
4. We are fortunate to have this year’s Fellows visit with us this school year. We look forward to further strengthening our ties and continuing to learn from each other in the course of future gatherings.

*Above:* Hosts Kathy and Barry Kogut celebrate with the “birthday boy and girl”, Brahmanand and Kristine, at December’s potluck dinner at the Kogut’s home.

*Below: Hazim and Dooa unveil their Iraqi dish; fantastic cuisine was in abundance!*
Kenyatta authors chapter on youth and social change

Kenyatta Mwawashe’s work was recently published as a chapter in Participatory Learning and Action. The article, “Youth as drivers of accountability: Conducting a youth social audit” details a revolutionary method where youth leaders in Kenya developed a process of conducting an audit of accountability and transparency in Kenya’s government. The youths’ efforts, which resulted in varied findings, processes and action plans, was in response to large sums of money being lost or unaccounted for in 23 separate constituencies. In his work, Kenyatta not only tells the story of ongoing social change, but highlights some of the obstacles to progress, benefits of the process and lessons learned as a result of the social audit. Kenyatta will soon be publishing his own book on youth and civil leadership, “Breaking the Chains of Marginalization: An account of youth struggles on public budgeting processes in Kenya” is slated to be published in June 2012 by the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Stockholm, Sweden.

Maxwell Humphrey Fellow Alumni Updates

Nampoina Rabenasolo from Madagascar is now Nampoina from South Africa! He and his family moved in January to Pretoria so that Nam can continue his studies at a Bible college full-time. He wishes the current Fellows best wishes on a continued mild winter. Last year’s Fellows received enough winter for two years!

Mutriba Latypova is a Deputy Director for the Tajikistan Safe Drinking Water Project, a USAID project. It is implemented by Menendez England and Associates. She is also a consultant to a youth project in Tajikistan, developing a civic education course for teens.

Joseph Abass Bangura sends regards from Sierra Leone where he manages a group of companies, A Call to Business Group. The organization is involved with microfinance, management and development consulting, printing and publishing. Joe also created a motivational program on national television entitled, “Life-by-Design”, teaching young people how to bring their dreams to reality. (Pictured Right): Daughter Hadassah- a Syracuse University fan already! (Pictured Above): An advertisement for Joe’s motivational television program, one of the highest rated shows in town.
Elena’s Scrapbook of her Humphrey Year… so far!

Clockwise from top left: The ladies of Humphrey; enjoying a café during GLF; impressive-looking group in front of the White House; Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at the Carrier Dome; State Department Reception during GLF, on the Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial.
Hearty congratulations to **Sam and Comfort Cole** on the birth of their daughter, Becky, on January 2, 2012. All are doing well. Sam is busy with his work at the National Elections Commission in Liberia as Director of Civic and Voter Education. He was responsible for the planning and execution of programs to educate Liberians about the 2011 National Referendum and general elections. He also supervises the recruitment and training of civil society organizations that help in civic and voter education services across the country. He appeared on radio and television on a regular basis to explain the electoral process. He occasionally speaks to student community groups about democratic governance at the U.S. Embassy near Monrovia. He states, “because of my Humphrey experience in public diplomacy, during the crucial days of the general elections the Board of Commission decided that I was the only one allowed to speak on all technical issues arising from the electoral process.” He is highly regarded at the Commission as the only national election expert at the organization.

**Roxana Silva** was one of five new members appointed in November 2011 to the National Electoral Council (CNE Consejo Nacional Electoral) in Ecuador. She was appointed by the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control (CPCCS, Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social). The CNE is in charge of organizing and conducting the general elections of 2012. Her term is for six years. Congratulations, Roxana! (thanks to current Humphrey Fellow from Ecuador, Elena Mar- chan, for translating an Ecuadorian media article about Roxana’s accomplishment!)

**Roxana reflects on her Humphrey Fellowship experience and its impact:**

In 2009-2010, I was a Humphrey Fellow at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Different classes and presentations such as Managerial Leadership in the Public Sector, Interest-Based Negotiation, Leader as Change Agent, Managerial Leadership for Social Changes, New Media in the Public Sector, Human Development and Perceived Levels of Corruption and Civic Engagement helped me gain additional knowledge and empowerment to reach my professional and personal goals. Digital Media: a Global Wave Bringing Fundamental Changes gave me details in order to use information and technologies in real-time, participatory, interactive, social, and collaborative situations.

When I came back to my country, I had some ideas to implement in the Ecuadorian society, such as increasing political rights and to promoting civic engagement. I combined the knowledge that I received at Syracuse University with that from other universities, institutions and organizations in the USA such as University of Maryland, George Washington University, ProLiteracy, Focus, Digital Democracy and more will all help me to contribute in the political process in order to strengthen the Ecuadorian Democracy. In July 2011, I decided to participate in the public contest to elect members at National Electoral System. At the moment, I work at Electoral System, and I am a national authority in this area.

Hubert Humphrey Fellows are leaders around the world with the perspective to be positive and change situations. I am proud to be the first Ecuadorian woman as a Hubert Humphrey Fellow in Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.