

SPRING 2011

# WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS

*Leadership & Public Service*



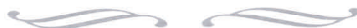
*In the face of impossible odds, people who love their country can change it.  
~President Barack Obama*



The 2011-2012 Class of White House Fellows meet with President Obama on February 7, 2011.

*White House Fellows —*

*All of you inspire me, and let me know that  
America will be in good hands with the next generation  
of leaders.*



## UPDATE ON 2010-2011 WHITE HOUSE FELLOWSHIP

The Class of 2010-2011 has proudly upheld the important traditions and values of the White House Fellowship. Whether meeting with President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, or visiting military officers on the USS Truman, the group has been engaged and actively learning about public service leadership.

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, Commissioners came to DC to participate in an engaging and productive Midyear Meeting.

Chair John Phillips began the day with opening welcome remarks. Director Cindy Moelis provided a summary of the Class of 2009 and a progress report on the Class of 2010.



*Commissioners listen to Austan Goolsbee speak at lunch.*

Austan Goolsbee, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors met with both the Commissioners and Fellows over lunch. Chairman Goolsbee supplemented his insights about our economic growth, how we compare with China's economy and the continuing disparity between economic and job growth with entertaining stories.

Commissioners then met with the current class of Fellows and asked them a range of questions. The Fellows talked about their placements and observations about the year. Nearly every Fellow mentioned cohesiveness of this Class and thanked the Commissioners for not only selecting them, but their fellow

Fellows.

The Fellows Q&A was followed with a productive discussion about Selection and Outreach focusing on how to improve the marketing of the program. In addition, Commissioners discussed the bigger vision of the program and this administration's dedication to public service.

In the afternoon, Commissioners went to the Supreme Court to meet with Justice Breyer. They got the true DC experience as they sat in gridlock traffic due to a protest taking place in front of the Supreme Court. Everyone walked several blocks to the Court and made their way through the sea of protestors. Justice Breyer provided a tour and met with the group for an hour in the Court Chamber where he spoke candidly about the role of the Court and his decision process.



*Commissioners meet with Justice Breyer at the Supreme Court.*

The busy day ended with Commissioners and Fellows heading over to John Phillips' home for a cocktail reception and dinner.

In this newsletter, you will have the opportunity to learn more about this year's education program. Fellows have highlighted their year-long commitment to community service, placement experiences, and their domestic policy trips.

It has been an extremely educational and exciting year, but we still have more to come. This spring, the Fellows will have an opportunity to meet with the First Lady and will travel to China. Thank you to all of our alumni for supporting our efforts throughout the Selection process. Special thanks to Kurt Campbell, Nelson Dong, and Burn Leoffke for helping us plan the international trip.

## PLACEMENT REPORT



*Tom Fisher talks with Sec. Sebelius.*

My placement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) continues to be stellar. The Secretary and her staff offer to include me in every aspect of the Department's operations and policy mechanisms. I have weekly meetings with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to touch base on my projects, reflect on recent events and explore areas where I can be useful. This close mentorship continues to be the highlight of my year. This quarter, I accompanied the Secretary to hearings in the Senate Finance Committee, House Ways and Means Committee and House Energy and Commerce Committee. The opportunity to participate in the preparation for the hearings and then observe testimony has sharpened my understanding of the intersection of policy and politics.

My work this quarter has been split between participating in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and shaping the HHS Health Disparities Strategic Action Plan.

Despite the active efforts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act through court challenges and legislation, work on its implementation has continued. I participated in the formation of the Accountable Care Organization regulation. This new strategy for aligning payment incentives with cost, quality and access goals is now in the clearance process. I am preparing to work on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, National Patient Safety Guidelines. This effort will create strategies to improve health care quality and limit harm to patients.

Recently, the majority of my time has been used to facilitate the HHS Health Disparities Strategic Action Plan. In this process, I helped coordinate the Department's agencies to the actions needed to effectively address racial and ethnic health disparities across the country. The Plan is nearing completion and will be announced shortly. It will include transformational activities that represent the hard work of every staff and operating division across this 80,000 person department. We expect this effort to narrow health and health care disparities using novel strategies.

This quarter, I've been exposed to leadership and operations that have changed my perspective of how the government functions. I have identified mentors in various agencies that I intend to remain in contact with for the duration of my career. I deeply appreciate the opportunities and privileges I've been afforded through the Fellowship.

-Tom Fisher, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## FELLOWSHIP REPORT

There is probably a pretty short list of people who would describe their job using the statement: "I can't believe they are paying me for this!" I think that short list just got about 13 names longer. To date, this Fellowship year has been incredible and continues to impress each of us on a daily basis. We each have had enriching experiences through our placements, but the greatest benefit by far has been spending time with the "Fellows Family." From Gettysburg, to Seattle, to Cape Canaveral - with a baseball game and theater performances thrown in - we have really begun to gel as a class.

It's hard to pinpoint a single highlight of the first six months. Each of the committees is truly has worked tirelessly to make this Fellowship as memorable as possible. The Speaker Committee continues to bring us the best speakers and the community service committee has planned monthly projects.

In addition to our speakers and community service, the Trips Committee is hard at work planning for our upcoming trip to China after successfully putting together an amazing adventure in Seattle. Our Social Committee has launched a series of policy discussions that allow us to get together after hours to discuss timely topics and world events, and we continue to carve out time for fun social events for the Fellows and our families. Finally, our class couldn't have found a better Historian than Holly Harrison! Wherever we go, whatever we do, Holly is there with a camera (*and possibly a recording device*) documenting our experience together!

This is truly a year that we will never forget, and we're all looking forward to even greater adventures in our remaining months together!



Erica Jeffries, EPA



## SEATTLE TRIP REPORT

*The Class of 2010-2011 chose Seattle, Washington as their first Domestic policy trip. We visited from November 9 through November 13, 2010. Seattle was chosen for its high tech business environment, the port security issues, and environmental focus.*

*Special thanks to the alumni for helping make it such a memorable trip: Nelson Dong, Steve Hill, Chuck Hirsch, John McCay, Lieutenant Travis Mathesonwho, Stefanie Sanford,, and Rajeev Venkayya.*

*Below we have included a sample of highlights from the Fellows' Trip Reports.*

“Seattle is an incredibly progressive city. It’s on the cutting edge of almost every industry and continuing to lead the way in various major industries like technology, green infrastructure and housing, cancer research, and philanthropy. One thing that struck me throughout the trip was the thread of connectivity that weaves its way through economic classes and international borders and housing communities and artisan boathouses.”

“What struck me most about the trip was the theme of innovation that seemed to pervade each of the places we visited and the spirit of adventure that appeared to drive many of those with whom we met....it was also true in lesser known institutions like the Port of Seattle with its move towards greener operations and the Hutchinson Cancer Center in its research on the link between infections and cancer. I came away from the trip impressed by what was a nexus of private, public and nonprofit excellence that in many ways is helping to shape the economy and culture, not only of the region, but also of our country and the world.”

“The Suquamish Tribe was a powerful visit as it allowed me to see and hear how federal, local and tribal communities work together through the eyes of members of the Native American community...The Suquamish Tribe reminded me that my view of the world is merely a product of my exposure level and that in order to truly be a successful leader at the US Federal Government level, I must diligently begin to understand the history of the Native American community and why the Tribal communities have structured their local governmental systems in its current form.”

“My prose cannot do justice to the artistic genius that is Dave Chihuly’s boathouse and glassblowing studio, but if you’re ever in Seattle, go there, it’s awesome. Bonus points for swimming in the pool or riding the 1914 Indian motorcycle.”

“As we walked through the technological wonderment featured in the “Home of the Future”, we were confronted with some of the moral and ethical questions such technological innovations raise: Who should be able to know where you are or what you are doing inside your own home? How much should a computer system or application be programmed to “profile” a user and generate information tailored to their existing interests or opinions?”

“The most valuable experience from the perspective of our work in the First Lady’s office took place on Veterans Day, which was spent at a Washington State Veterans Administration nursing home and halfway house for homeless veterans. The opportunity to view efforts to alleviate homelessness among veterans at the local level .”



*The Fellows visit the Boeing Company.*



*The Fellows tour the Chihuly Boathouse.*



*The Fellows spend Veterans Day at the Washington Veterans Home.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATE



*The Fellows pack meals at Food and Friends.*

The 2010-2011 Class of White House Fellows expressed a strong desire to participate in community service activities throughout our Fellowship year. Since September, we have organized an average of one service event per month, engaging with a wide variety of communities and organizations in the process. In particular, our activities have included: working in the Food and Friends kitchen packing food and preparing it for delivery to residents throughout the Washington, DC metro area (October); participating in a Legacy of Service KaBOOM! playground build in northeast Washington, DC (October); visiting Building 9 for Veterans and a Nursing Home for Veterans in Washington State (during our first domestic policy trip) where we shared a meal with homeless veterans and served ice cream to elderly and disabled veterans (November); helping Marine Corps personnel at Bolling Air Force

Base load toys onto trucks for delivery through their Toys for Tots program (November); volunteering with City Year at Kramer Middle School in Washington DC to help paint and clean up the school to encourage civic pride among the students on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January); and participating in a panel discussion with the Young Professionals in Foreign Policy group, where we met with approximately 25 members of the organization to talk about pursuing careers in foreign policy and reflect on experiences in the White House Fellows Program (March).

We will continue to plan for a combination of events that include opportunities for spouses, children, and friends to participate. We will be participating in a mentoring session with disadvantaged youth participating in the Urban Alliance Foundation Internship Program in Washington, DC (March). We also plan to participate in community service projects focused on environmental stewardship (April), possibly as part of an Earth Day commemoration.

- R. Erich Caulfield, Kubby Rashid, Rachel Thornton

## USS TRUMAN/NASA TRIP REPORT

February proved to be a very busy month for the Fellows! They began the month with a trip to USS Truman. The visit on the aircraft carrier was an experience no one will forget. The trip began with an exciting flight and landing on the carrier. Once on board, Fellows received a tour and witnessed pilots taking-off and landing (Top Gun style). In addition, the Fellows had the opportunity to have dinner with leadership on the USS Truman and eat breakfast with enlisted sailors.

The Fellows ended the month with a visit to Cape Canaveral for the historic final launch of space shuttle Discovery on February 24, 2011. During the trip the Fellows toured the Kennedy Space Center, Air Force Base, and watched the launch of the Discovery. We would like to thank Administrator Charles Bolden for arranging such a wonderful trip. The Fellows had a great time!



*Fellows watch flight operations on the flight deck of the USS Truman..*

## COCKTAIL RECEPTION



The White House Fellows Office and the Class of 2010-2011

Invite you to join us for a cocktail reception

Friday, May 6, 2011

5:00-6:30pm

The White House Fellows Office

## EDUCATION EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

Senator Maria Cantwell, Washington	Secretary Elaine Chao, Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, Heritage Foundation
National Archives	
Administrator Rajiv Shah, US Agency for International Development	Mr. Austan Goolsbee, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers
Mr. Larry Tribe, Harvard Law School	Carrier Visit, USS Truman
Secretary Stephen Chu, Department of Energy	Ms. Melody Barnes, Director of the Domestic Policy Council
This Week with Christiane Amanpour Tappings	
General Colin Powell, Former Secretary of State	Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, Department of Health and Human Services
Secretary Ken Salazar, Department of the Interior	
Ms. Cokie Roberts, Journalist	President Barack Obama
Senator Tim Wirth, Colorado	Secretary Janet Napolitano, Department of Homeland Security
Mr. Karl Rove, Senior Advisor and Deputy Chief of Staff to President George W. Bush	Secretary Madeleine Albright, Former Secretary of State
Mr. Fred Hochberg, Director of the Export-Import Bank	NASA Discovery Launch
Mr. Bob Woodward, Journalist	Vice President Joe Biden
Supreme Court of the United States	Secret Service Training Center
Administrator Lisa Jackson, Environmental Protection Agency	Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advisor and Assistant to the President for Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs
State Arrival Ceremony-President Hu Jintao, People's Republic of China	
Situation Room	Governor Tim Kaine, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee
Central Intelligence Agency	
Mr. Leon Panetta, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency	Secretary Ray LaHood, Department of Transportation
Honorable Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice of the United States	Mr. Rashad Hussain, U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)
Mr. Jeff Zients, Chief Performance Officer, Office of Management and Budget	



## ALUMNI WEEKEND

On October 23rd, WHF alumni flocked to Washington, DC for the White House Fellows Foundation and Association Annual Leadership Conference. The theme for this year was “Governing in the New Media Age” and the conference featured a variety of captivating speakers. Current Fellows and alumni heard from Justice Sotomayor, Secretary Sebelius, Secretary LaHood, General James Jones, and General Colin Powell—just to name a few.

The alumni also hosted a reception welcoming the current class into the White House Fellows family. Everyone had the opportunity to stop by the newly renovated Fellows office for an Open House Reception before heading to the Legacy of Leadership dinner where Samuel H. Howard was honored with the John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award.

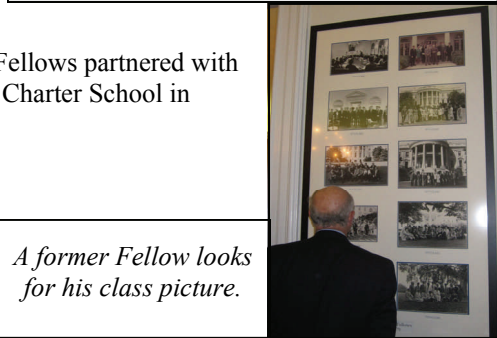
The eventful weekend ended with a community service project. The Fellows partnered with KaBoom! to help build a new playground at Hyde Leadership Public Charter School in Washington, DC.



*The current class of WHF and WHF Alumni participate in Legacy of Service Day.*



*Jeff Zients, Deputy Director of Management, talks to Bill Gallagher and Adam Taylor.*



*A former Fellow looks for his class picture.*

## READING GROUPS



*Alumni read applications in the Fellows Office at 712 Jackson Place.*

*The LA reading group poses for a picture after reading applications.*



**Thank You to All the Alumni That Read  
2011-2012 White House Fellows  
Applications!**

**Throughout the month of February, Reading Groups were held in:**

Washington DC	San Francisco, CA	Ann Arbor, MI
New York, NY	Fort Worth, TX	Boston, MA
Los Angeles, CA	Seattle, WA	Denver, CO

**Special Thanks to All of Our Reading Group Hosts:**

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Janet Abrams     | Joan Abrahamson |
| Teresa Schwartz  | Wally Baer      |
| Michael Levett   | Ajay Amlani     |
| Kristine Langdon | Martha Darling  |
| John Orrison     | Gil Omenn       |
| Nelson Dong      | Maggie Belknap  |
| Steve Hill       | Kimberly Till   |
| Gail Klapper     |                 |

*Right, Former Director Jackie Blumenthal and current Director Cindy Moelis participate in the Washington DC reading group.*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **WELCOME BACK PANDORIA!**

We are pleased to welcome Pandoria Nobles Jones back to the White House Fellows Office! As a former Fellow once remarked, Pandoria is the one constant staff members at 712 Jackson Place so it is good to have her familiar face back. Thank you to everyone who sent Pandoria well wishes during her recovery.

### **WHF SPRING 2011 INTERNS**

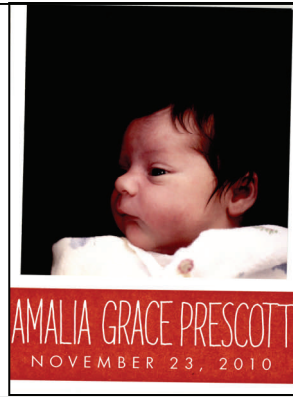
Jennifer Bruns began working at the Defense Information Systems Agency while pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Economics from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Since graduating in 1999, Jen has held various positions within the Agency and was most recently a Project Manager. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Information Technology Management from Webster University in St. Louis. She lives in Swansea, a suburb of St. Louis, with her husband Bill.

Paige Epstein graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Human Development and Family Studies and a minor in Political Science. This spring she began a Master's program in Political Science through the Civic Leadership Program at the University of Illinois. She has a select interest in educational policy, and plans to apply to Teach for America before culminating her formal education by applying to law school. In her free time she enjoys running, reading, and playing tennis.



**Left, WHF Interns Jennifer Bruns and Paige Epstein.**

**Congratulations to Jeff Prescott (WHF '10-11) and his wife, Susie Jakes, on the birth of their daughter, Amalia Grace Prescott!**



## ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS PROGRAM

The White House Fellows Program is a non-partisan program that offers exceptional young leaders firsthand experience working at the highest levels of the Federal government.

### **Fellowship Selection Criteria:**

- A record of remarkable professional achievement early in one's career.
- Evidence of strong leadership skills and the potential for further growth.
- A demonstrated commitment to public service.
- The knowledge and skills necessary to contribute successfully at the highest levels of the Federal government.

For more information, please visit our webpage at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows>.

### **The President's Commission on White House Fellowships**

Phone: 202-395-4522 Fax: 202-395-6179

*Please send any comments, submissions or other newsletter-related communication to [WhiteHouseFellows@nho.eop.gov](mailto:WhiteHouseFellows@nho.eop.gov)*