



United States Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Washington, DC 20522

www.state.gov

May 25, 2012

Ms. Tara DePorte

Executive Director and Founder, The Human Impacts Institute
312 South 3rd St., #7
New York, New York 11211

Dear Ms. DePorte:

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State created the Professional Fellows Program to provide targeted professional development and support to young leaders from around the world. While at The Human Impacts Institute, Alicia Maria Jimenez Elizondo and Carolina Reyes Rivero had the opportunity to not only gain insights into how American institutions address complex economic, environmental, political, and social challenges but also to experience first-hand how public and private resources interface for the community good. Thanks to you and your organization Alicia and Carolina have returned home with concrete tools to promote positive change in their work environment and community.

The Professional Fellows Program is one of many professional exchange programs funded by the Department of State to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. In 2011, more than 50,000 foreign and American participants took part in these exchange programs which not only serve to strengthen the relationship between peoples and countries, but also contribute to creating "a peaceful and more fruitful life for people throughout the world" as the U.S. Congress articulated in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256 (the Fulbright-Hays Act).

The Professional Fellows Program continues to expand and improve because of the engagement of institutions like yours and your willingness to share your professional expertise and personal involvement with these young leaders. In a speech on civil society, Secretary Clinton remarked that "societies move forward when the citizens that make up these groups are empowered to transform common interests into common actions that serve the common good." On behalf of the U.S. Department of State I would like to personally thank you for your efforts toward serving the common good and making the ties between the United States and countries around the world stronger and more enduring.

Sincerely,

Mary Deane Connors
Director, Office of Citizen Exchanges
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State