University of Illinois to Host Civic Leadership Program for 25 Young African Leaders

The Department of African American Studies (DAAS), in collaboration with Illinois International’s Global Education and Training (GET), is proud to announce that it has been selected to host a “Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders.” Beginning on June 17 Illinois will welcome 25 of Africa’s brightest emerging leaders from the fields of education, public service, civil society, and community organization to name a few for a six-week academic and leadership institute in Civic Leadership. Illinois is one of only four Institutions selected to host two programs (the other in Public Management hosted by the Center for African Studies) and the only new school in the 2016 cycle awarded two programs. The Civic Leadership Institute is made possible with generous support from the Beckman Institute, Center for African Studies, College of Business, College of Engineering, LAS Dean’s Office, and the Provost’s Office.

The Mandela Washington Fellowship, the flagship program of President Obama’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), empowers young African leaders through academic coursework, leadership training, mentoring, networking, professional opportunities, and support for activities in their communities. Fellows are young leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa who have established records of accomplishment in promoting innovation and positive change in their organizations, institutions, communities, and countries. The cohort of Fellows hosted by Illinois will be part of a larger group of 1,000 Mandela Washington Fellows hosted at institutions across the United States this summer. These exceptional young leaders will meet with President Obama at a Town Hall during the Presidential Summit in Washington, D.C.; select Fellows will also spend six weeks in professional development training with U.S. non-governmental organizations, private companies, and government agencies.

Working closely with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational Affairs and its implementing partner, IREX, the Department of African American Studies (http://www.afro.illinois.edu/) designed academic programs that will challenge, inspire, and empower these inspiring young leaders from Africa. DAAS will also collaborate with the Cline Center for Democracy (http://www.clinecenter.illinois.edu/) to offer a program that focuses on issues of community development, democratic governance, civic education, peacebuilding, restorative justice, communications, and issues of differently-abled rights. While in residence on the Illinois campus fellows will immerse themselves in the culture and community of Urbana-Champaign, engaging in intensive academic study, professional training, hands on community service work, and cultural activities.
For more information about the program, or to become involved as a “peer collaborator,” please contact either one of the following:

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The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders is a U.S. government program that is supported in its implementation by IREX. For more information about the Mandela Washington Fellowship, visit MandelaWashingtonFellowship.state.gov and join the conversation with #YALI2016.