

Fall 2012

# WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS

*Leadership & Public Service*



## THE WHITE HOUSE

### WASHINGTON

Progress in America has been forged by men and women who chose to use their talents and ingenuity for a cause greater than themselves. Since its establishment by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, the White House Fellows Program has carried this tradition forward by giving emerging leaders an opportunity to cultivate their skills while serving our country.

A strong public sector is essential to addressing the challenges our Nation faces. Public servants have steered the course of our country and secured America's place at the forefront of innovation. To continue down this path, we will need the passion and intellect of ambitious professionals from all disciplines who are dedicated to improving the lives of their fellow Americans.

By working with public servants at the highest levels of the Executive Branch, White House Fellows acquire invaluable experience and knowledge useful in all fields. After spending a year in our Nation's capital, they gain a broader perspective and a renewed sense of urgency to tackle the great challenges of our time.

We hope you will consider applying to the White House Fellows Program and help take our country to new heights in the years to come.

 Michelle Obama



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

President and Mrs. Obama have consistently and generously supported the White House Fellowship Program over the last four years. President Obama enjoyed meeting the alumni at last year's annual conference and continues to look forward to engaging with each Class of Fellows. Each year, Mrs. Obama invites a Fellow to work closely with her on her Joining Forces Initiative. Their outreach letter on the cover provides a strong reminder of the importance of public service leadership to this country. White House Fellows' alumni and the current Class continue to provide an inspirational example of this important commitment.

It is an honor to be the Director of this prestigious program. The Commissioners and staff continue to honor its traditions and mission while building a stronger program each year. This report shares some of the highlights from the conclusion of the Class of 2011-2012 and the exciting start of the Class of 2012-2013.

**CLASS OF 2011-2012**—Last year's Fellowship year flew by and we ended with some exciting events, including a robust policy trip to New York City, a reflective Closing Ceremony, and a memorable End of Year Retreat. One unique highlight for the Class was the opportunity to meet two former Presidents, President Bill Clinton and President George W. Bush during our trip to New York City. Both Presidents talked about their fond memories of Fellows they knew while in office and enthusiastically expressed their support for the Program.



*Class of 2011-2012 with President George W. Bush and President Bill Clinton at a policy trip in NYC*

This year's Closing Ceremony welcomed friends and family to an event that celebrated the Fellows' year and provided them the opportunity to thank those who made it possible. Over 100 esteemed guests attended the event at the Army and Navy Club including family, friends, principals and mentors. Following that, the End of Year Retreat was a time for the Fellows to reflect on their incredible journey, and make plans to stay connected. Each Fellow was presented with a framed picture of the New York Times ad that highlighted their selection for the Fellowship. Three of the 2011-2012 Fellows have extended their time and continue to be valued members of their offices.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**CLASS OF 2012-2013**—The transition to the new Class started off with a successful selection weekend where 15 Fellows were chosen and began their year with an energizing orientation week at Gettysburg College. The Fellows have already met and learned from great leaders, including Cabinet Secretary Chris Lu, former Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, Secretary Ray Lahood, Secretary Steven Chu, and Secretary Janet Napolitano. The momentum continues for the Fellows as they return from their first policy trip to Canada, and look ahead to a year full of engaging speakers, eventful trips, and rewarding experiences. The Canada trip had many highlights; I encourage you to review the trip summary included in this newsletter.

**OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT**—Even as the new Class gets underway, we need to continue to recruit future Fellows. The alumni play a critical role in our outreach and selection process, and we depend on your help to ensure the quality of candidates remains competitive. We graciously thank you for your commitment and support of the Program.

As alumni, you are the Program's best ambassadors. Please continue your support of the Program by encouraging exceptional emerging leaders to apply to the White House Fellows Class of 2013-2014. The application will be open from November 1, 2012 through January 15, 2013.

I would also ask that you consider being part of the selection process by signing up for a reading group. Thank you again to the 2012 reading hosts: Janet Abrams, Martha Darling, Gil Omenn, Kristine Langdon, John Orrison, Teresa Schwartz, Karen Galatz, Jeff Hall, Nelson Dong, Steve Hill, and Jim Padilla. Below is a list of a few ways to support the Program:

- ◆ **Host a reading group.**
- ◆ **Volunteer as a reader.** It's a great chance for you to help shape the 2013-2014 Class as well as a fun opportunity to reconnect with friends!
- ◆ **Spread the word!** We will be sending an email with a letter from President Obama and Mrs. Obama (as seen on the front of this newsletter) beginning in mid-November. We ask that you personalize and forward the email to contacts within your network. This message is far more meaningful when it comes from a friend or colleague.
- ◆ **Direct friends and other contacts** to our website to learn more about the Program: [www.whitehouse.gov/fellows](http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows)
- ◆ **Consider mentioning the Fellowship** in your bios, interviews, or speeches.
- ◆ **Inspire interested applicants** or individuals by sharing your experience; a real life story is the most moving testimony!

Thank you in advance for all your support, we look forward to working with you.

Please contact the office if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas at (202) 395-4522 or [whitehousefellows@who.eop.gov](mailto:whitehousefellows@who.eop.gov).

Warm regards,  
Cindy Moelis, Director

## WELCOME CLASS OF 2012-2013

### **Elliot L. Ackerman, Washington, DC.**

Elliot most recently worked as the COO of Americans Elect, a non-partisan organization that helps independents run for office. Prior to this, Elliot served as a Marine Corps Officer and Officer in the Central Intelligence Agency. Elliot received an M.A.L.D. from the Fletcher School and B.A. from Tufts.

### **Archie Bates, Bessemer, AL.**

Archie is a U.S. Army Major. He has deployed to Iraq with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, taught Leadership at West Point, and served as an Executive Officer at the Pentagon. He holds a Ph.D. in Psychology from University of Maryland-College Park.

### **Ariel Grace Batungbacal, Marietta, GA.**

Ariel is a U.S. Air Force Major, and served as the Joint Staff J2/ Director of Intelligence's Deputy Executive Assistant. She served five years overseas, including deployments supporting Iraq/ Afghanistan. She earned an Executive Master's in Leadership, Georgetown University; M.A., Diplomacy, Norwich University; and a B.A., Chinese & B.A., Government, University of Maryland, College Park.

### **Dave Chokshi, Baton Rouge, LA.**

Dave is a primary care physician with interests in public health. Most recently, he practiced at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. Clinically, Dave has worked in resource-poor settings domestically and abroad; his other experience spans the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. He received his M.D. from Penn, M.Sc. from Oxford, and B.A. from Duke.

### **Chris Domencic, Export, PA.**

Chris is a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy and a U.S. Navy SEAL. During his career, he conducted special operations around the globe including six deployments in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. He is a graduate from the Naval Academy and received an M.P.P. from Princeton University.

### **Mark Hanis, Plantation, FL.**

Mark is a serial social entrepreneur. He co-founded the Organ Alliance to address the unnecessary deaths due to a shortage of transplantable organs. Previously, Mark co-founded and led United to End Genocide which empowers all sectors (public, private, non-profit) to prevent and stop mass atrocities. He earned his B.A. from Swarthmore College.

### **Bethany Rubin Henderson, Baton Rouge, LA.**

Bethany is a lawyer turned social entrepreneur. Five years ago, Bethany founded a national service corps that transforms public service-minded recent college graduates into effective local government change agents. Bethany received a J.D. from Harvard Law School and both an M.A. and B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.



*WHF 2012-2013 (from left) Archie Bates, Carolyn Snyder, Anne O'Connell and Mark Hanis*

## WELCOME CLASS OF 2012-2013

### **Candice Jones, Chicago, IL.**

Prior to the fellowship, Candice was Executive Director of the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission. She has worked as a Program Officer at the MacArthur Foundation and litigator at a Chicago firm. She holds a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis and a J.D. from New York University School of Law.

### **Kermit Jones, South Haven, MI.**

Kermit recently finished his M.P.A., focusing on health and South Asia, at Columbia University. Prior, he was a Navy doctor with a Marine casualty evacuation squadron and worked at the World Health Organization. He earned his M.D. and J.D. from Duke University and is conversational in Hindi, Urdu, and Spanish.

### **Amen Ra Mashariki, Brooklyn, NY.**

Amen Ra was a research scientist at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory doing major research in the field of bioinformatics. Prior, he spent seven years as a lead engineer at Motorola's Secure Design Center. He holds degrees from Lincoln, Howard and Morgan State University.

### **Anne O'Connell, West Haven, CT.**

Anne is a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Coast Guard. She has commanded four ships and served as an aide-de-camp to the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard. She holds degrees from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and Harvard University.

### **Missy Ryan, Washington, DC.**

Missy is a journalist who most recently wrote about U.S. policy on Afghanistan/Pakistan for Reuters. She has reported extensively from Latin America and the Middle East, and speaks Arabic and Spanish. She received a B.A. from Georgetown University and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard University.

### **Carolyn Snyder, Bethesda, MD.**

Carolyn most recently served as the Director of Delaware's Division of Energy & Climate. Prior to state government, she worked on climate science and energy policy at academic institutions around the world. She earned a Ph.D. from Stanford, M.Phil. from Cambridge, M.Sc. from Oxford, and a B.A. from Amherst College.

### **Anand Veeravagu, Palo Alto, CA.**

Anand is a neurosurgery resident at Stanford University focused on traumatic brain injury (TBI), molecular cancer therapy, and humanitarian aid. Anand coordinated the operative TBI unit at the Palo Alto Veterans Hospital and has published over 50 neurosurgical manuscripts. Anand received his B.S. in Biomedical Engineering from Johns Hopkins University and M.D. from Stanford University.

### **Jason Washington, Texarkana, TX.**

Jason was a senior policy advisor to Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake working on education policy issues. Prior, he was a corporate attorney at Kirkland & Ellis LLP. He earned his B.S. from Morehouse College and a M.Ed. from the University of St. Thomas.

## CLOSING CEREMONY 2012

The White House Fellows Class of 2011-2012 marked the end of their Fellowship year with the third annual Closing Ceremony. John Phillips, Chair of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships, acted as the moderator for the event which began with remarks from Director, Cindy Moelis. During the ceremony, John introduced each of the 15 Fellows who took the opportunity to share brief reflections on their experiences and thank family members, alumni and staff for their support throughout the year. Closing remarks were given by John Hockenberry, Commissioner, who was refreshingly funny and reflective.

John Hockenberry has been a member of the White House Fellows Commission since his appointment by President Obama in 2009. Despite years of experience and expertise in his field he shared that he still asks himself, "*why am I here?*" During his closing remarks, John spoke about the Fellowship through the lens of that simple question. He wondered why he had been selected to be a Commissioner for the Program and what role he should play on the Commission. John then discussed the process of asking that same question – *why are you here?* - to the Fellows during the interview process and the value of being forced to answer that question early in one's life.

Since its establishment in 2009, the Closing Ceremony has been a meaningful event that has allowed family, friends, and mentors to join the Fellows in celebration of the completion of their Fellowship year. The Closing Ceremony highlights life as a White House Fellow and commends each Fellow's commitment and dedication to the Fellowship, work placements and community service, while balancing their personal lives.

### Special thanks to:

Commissioner John Phillips and his wife Linda Douglass for hosting the Welcome Reception for the White House Fellows Class of 2012-2013 at their home.

The reception was well attended and we enjoyed the company of esteemed guests including Cabinet Secretaries, White House Officials, and other non-government leaders.

The Fellows enjoyed a warm welcome and toasted to an exciting year ahead.



From Left: Missy Ryan (WHF '12-'13), John Phillips (Commissioner), Elizabeth Littlefield (OPIC)

## ORIENTATION REPORT

The official start to a new year of learning and leadership for the 2012-2013 class of White House Fellows began in late August in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Against the backdrop of the most monumental battle of the Civil War, this year's 15 Fellows took part in an intensive week of orientation that helped us prepare for the year ahead. Perhaps most importantly, we made great strides in getting to know the Program, the staff, and each other.

The week kicked off in Washington on August 27<sup>th</sup>, where new Fellows renewed connections made during the application process and placement week. We held initial discussions about the Fellowship with Nancy Killefer, a McKinsey partner and former Treasury official. We then met with contacts from our placement agencies and began the process of getting officially on board at our new job sites.

The following morning, a caravan of carpools delivered Fellows, along with Director Cindy Moelis and Associate Director for Education Sophie Kim, to the picturesque campus of Gettysburg College, where we were generously hosted for our orientation activities. (Special thanks to the Eisenhower Institute!)

What a week. In addition to the hours we spent brainstorming about speakers, trips, and guiding principles, we took part in a number of activities that challenged our notions about how to approach this unique year.

One of the week's highlights was interacting with Susan Eisenhower, granddaughter of former President Dwight Eisenhower. Ms. Eisenhower, a well-known Russia expert who is a chair at the Eisenhower Institute, addressed a luncheon hosted by Gettysburg College President Janet Morgan Riggs. At the luncheon, Fellows were able to meet Gettysburg faculty and the current undergraduate Eisenhower Fellows, who reminded us that a commitment to public service comes at all stages of life and career.

Ms. Eisenhower then gave us a tour of President Eisenhower's farm on the outskirts of Gettysburg. It was a privilege to hear recollections from her childhood there, connecting the most private and public of worlds – including for example her observation of a visit to the farm by the U.S. Cold War adversary, former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

We were also lucky enough to receive a tour of the battlefields surrounding the town of Gettysburg from retired Colonel John F. "Jef" Troxell, a professor at the U.S. Army War College. It was an opportunity not only to flesh out our understanding of this pivotal Civil War battle but also reflect on the progress the United States has made since that conflict.

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*White House Fellows Class of 2012-2013 meet Ms. Susan Eisenhower in Gettysburg, PA*

## ORIENTATION REPORT

Fellows ended the week confronting a different sort of challenge - taking part in a ropes course offered by the staff of Gettysburg College.

But the true high point for many of us was the series of presentations about each Fellow's life and background. The Fellows' Forums shared not only a brief biography but an intimate narrative of each person's challenges, triumphs and struggles. Many of us were surprised by the extent of personal details that we heard – and shared – with the rest of the class. It was a transformational moment for us all.

We'd like to thank the White House Fellows staff – Cindy, Sophie, Pandoria, Fatimeh, Dylan and Brittany – for their hospitality and hard work that made the week so enriching. We look forward to the year ahead!

- Missy Ryan, White House Fellow 2012-2013



*White House Fellows Class of 2012-2013 on the battlefield at Gettysburg with Col. Troxell*



### Special thanks to:

Susan Eisenhower, Jeffrey Blavatt, and the Eisenhower Institute for hosting the Class of 2012-2013 orientation in Gettysburg, PA

### Congratulations to the recipients of the White House Fellows Alumni Association Leadership Awards 2012:

#### ***Susan Eisenhower***

The Valenti Friends of the White House Fellows Award, which is given to someone who while not a White House Fellow, has helped strengthen the Program and sustain the values that have defined it for 47 years.

#### ***John A. De Luca (WHF 1965-66)***

The 2012 John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award, given for a lifetime of achievement and dedication to public service.

#### ***Robert L. Reffkin (WHF 2005-06)***

The inaugural IMPACT Award, given for remarkable achievement and public service in the 10-15 years after their Fellowship year.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE—GIVING BACK TO OUR VETERANS

The White House Fellows Service Committee was proud to be given the opportunity to spearhead the Fellowship's long tradition of community service for the 2012-2013 class. As we met at Gettysburg and spoke with our fellow colleagues, we gathered ideas on possible service projects, learned each others preferences, and got to work! We felt an important priority of the Service Committee this year would be to leverage the vast pool of talent and experiences brought to this class for the purpose of maximizing our service experience and our impact.

One of the service opportunities on the top of our list for the month of September was to give back to the service members and their families who have given so much to our country over the past 11 years of war. We thought of no better way to do this than to provide direct service to those armed service members receiving treatment for injuries and illnesses at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, the White House Fellows class held a cookout at one of the rehabilitation centers for injured military personnel and their families at Walter Reed. Each Fellow pitched in to cover the cost of hamburgers, hot dogs, and vegetarian food and enjoyed an evening of discussion and relaxation with military service members or family members who decided to come out for a meal. The Fellows and their "customers," were even treated to an impromptu outdoor guitar performance by a musician who happened to be in the area!

During this event, the Fellows received much more than they gave. In addition to gaining the satisfaction of knowing they were providing great food to a community that has given so much to keep our country safe, they also got to learn firsthand about some of the trials and difficulties families face while caring for their injured loved ones. Some of the family members had given up jobs or other responsibilities to provide as much full time support and care to their loved ones as possible. They told us that they were appreciative of even this small reprieve during these challenging times.

As an added bonus, the Fellows were also provided the opportunity by the great Wounded Warrior staff to return to Walter Reed in December for a tour of the National Intrepid Center of Excellence, where service members receive first class care for their injuries, as well as a tour of the Traumatic Brain Injury Center.

- Kermit Jones, White House Fellow 2012-2013



*WHF Kermit Jones grills hotdogs and hamburgers for the Wounded Warriors barbeque*

## A VISIT TO CANADA—OUR NORTHERN NEIGHBOR

We owe a great deal of gratitude to the U.S. Ambassador to Canada, David Jacobson and his staff. Our first policy trip to Ottawa and Montreal, Canada was inspirational and educational. While there, we had an opportunity to engage in a wide variety of activities ranging from visiting a daycare center to learn about how the government supports low income families to meeting with high level business executives. Prior to leaving for Canada, our group had the honor of meeting with the Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Gary Doer, to learn about Canada-U.S. relations. Below is a list of highlights; each meeting and excursion provided educational and cultural enrichment.

### **While in Ottawa we had the opportunity to...**

- Take a private tour of the National Gallery of Canada with Marc Mayer, Director
- Receive a country team briefing with Ambassador David Jacobson, U.S. Ambassador to Canada
- Be briefed by all U.S. Consuls General in Canada
- Attend a reception at Ambassador Jacobson's Home with Mission Canada Principal Officers, Canadian Consul Generals, and Action Canada Fellows
- Meet with Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and tour the Canadian Supreme Court
- Meet with Governor General David Johnston and take a private tour of the Governor General's residence
- Tour Parliament with U.S. Consuls General
- Observe a Question Period in Parliament and then speak with Foreign Minister John Baird Attend a reception at the Canadian War Museum and receive a special tour of the War of 1812 Exhibit from the Director of the museum
- Hike Pink Lake Trail, Gatineau Park with a guide
- Participate in a health roundtable with esteemed guests; including Dr. Jeff Turnbull, Chief of Staff, Ottawa Hospital & immediate past President, Canadian Medical Association
- Dine with Ambassador David Jacobson and his wife, Julie



*White House Fellows 2012-2013 after a tour of the Cirque du Soleil training facility in Montreal*

### **While in Montreal we had the opportunity to...**

- Attend a roundtable on U.S.-Canada Relations with academics, hosted by McGill University and moderated by Christopher Manfredi, Dean of the Faculty of Arts with distinguished members of the faculty in attendance
- Take a tour of Centre de la Petite Enfance (CPE) Day Care Center and discuss Quebec's Universal Daycare System
- Meet with Thierry Vandal, CEO and President of HydroQuebec, to discuss energy policy
- Meet with Andre Desmarais of Power Corporation and tour the corporate headquarters
- Tour the Cirque du Soleil training facility
- Speak with Vice Presidents John Paul Macdonald and David Slack and tour Bombardier headquarters and factory line (world's largest manufacturer of planes and trains)
- Meet with Group President Gene Colabatistto and tour CAE aviation factory line and flight simulators

## CLASS OF 2011-2012—WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### 2011-2012 Fellows Updates

#### **Lindsay Barenz**

Lindsay is working on a tech startup in New York City. The business aggregates the what, when and where for sports, art, music, and theater events in an online and mobile social network, which allows users to create personalized event calendars.

#### **Albert Cho**

Albert has extended his time at the State Department, serving as senior advisor to Deputy Secretary Thomas Nides.

#### **Kisha Davis**

Kisha will be joining the Casey Health Institute (CHI) as the Director of Community Health and Outreach in Gaithersburg, MD. CHI is a brand new primary care medical practice that focuses on bringing holistic integrative health care to the community.

#### **Felice Gorordo**

Felice was asked to extend his Fellowship with the White House Office of Public Engagement & Intergovernmental Affairs and currently spearheads the White House Business Council's competitiveness series, organizing industry leaders sector-by-sector focused on spurring job creation and promoting America's long-term economic competitiveness. His wife Bianca and daughter Catalina are doing well. They are also expecting another addition to the Gorordo family, due in April 2013. They are all very excited.

#### **Theodore R. Johnson, III**

Ted is stationed at the Pentagon where he works for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). In this capacity, he serves as a cyber policy liaison to the White House/NSS and the interagency process. Since the Fellowship year concluded, Ted has also begun writing opinion pieces and his articles have been accepted for publication at Politico, The Hill, and The News and Observer.

#### **Rodney Lewis**

Rod was recently promoted to Colonel in the Air Force and he has begun work directly for the DoD Combatant Commander, United States Transportation Command working as the Chief, Legislative/Interagency Affairs. He will remain in Washington, DC in this capacity.

#### **Clay Pell**

Clay is now serving as Director for Strategic Planning on the National Security Staff at the White House. He is also recently engaged.

#### **Jaron Wharton**

Jaron is stationed at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina and is assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division.

#### **Tony Woods**

Tony joined President Obama's reelection campaign as a deputy field director in Iowa following the White House Fellowship. He'll return to Washington, DC in November.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Staff Updates

Fatimeh Shamseddine officially joined the staff in September as Special Assistant to the Director after serving as a White House Intern last spring. Fatimeh previously worked as an organizational & business development consultant for the Center for Global Understanding. She holds an M.A. in International Commerce and Policy from George Mason University.

Dylan Boivin and Brittany Lattisaw are our wonderful fall White House Interns. Dylan graduated from Mount Holyoke College this past May, where she studied Russian Language and Literature, and International Relations with a focus on political and Presidential rhetoric. Brittany graduated from Haverford College in May 2009 with a degree in History, and most recently she worked at The National Academy for State Health Policy.

### Outreach and Application Reading

**Get Involved with Outreach.** We need your help to identify and encourage emerging leaders to apply to the White House Fellowship Class of 2013-2014.

**Please Consider Hosting a Reading Group.** Reading groups take place during the month of February. We'd like to see more faces take charge this time around—sign up today! You could also volunteer as a reader, it's a great chance for you to help shape the 2013-2014 class as well as a fun opportunity to re-connect with friends!

Contact Fatimeh Shamseddine to learn more at 202-395-7297 or [fshamseddine@whf.eop.gov](mailto:fshamseddine@whf.eop.gov)

### Apply To Be A White House Fellow or Spread the Word!

As the nation's most prestigious program for leadership and public service, the Fellowship offers exceptional emerging leaders the opportunity to spend one year working at the highest levels of the government learning from national leaders.

Fellows bring their talent and energy to work on the current issues facing our nation and in return receive invaluable knowledge about the inner workings of the government.

**Applications are open November 1, 2012—January 15, 2013.**

#### Fellowship Selection Criteria:

- A record of remarkable professional achievement early in one's career
- Evidence of leadership skills and potential for growth
- A demonstrated commitment to public service
- The knowledge and skills necessary to contribute successfully at the highest levels of the Federal government, and the ability to work as part of a team

**To learn more about the White House Fellows Program including how to apply, please visit [www.whitehouse.gov/fellows](http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows)**

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

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