Later this month, Dartmouth College will welcome 25 of Africa’s brightest emerging business leaders and entrepreneurs for a six-week academic and leadership institute. This is the second year Dartmouth will host a cohort of “Mandela Washington Fellows.”

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of President Obama’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). The Fellowship 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 a proven record of accomplishment in promoting innovation and positive change in their organizations, institutions, or communities. The cohort of Fellows hosted by Dartmouth is part of a larger group of 500 Mandela Washington Fellows being hosted across the United States this summer. These exceptional young leaders will meet with President Obama during a Summit in Washington, D.C. Select Fellows also will receive hands-on experience through six-week placements with U.S. companies, organizations, and government agencies following the institutes.

Working closely with the Department of State’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and its implementing partner, IREX, Dartmouth has designed academic programs that will challenge, inspire, and empower these young leaders from Africa.

Some highlights of the Dartmouth 2015 Mandela Washington Fellows cohort include:

- Twenty-five individuals from 17 countries across sub-Saharan Africa;
- Several engineers focusing on sustainable, clean energy development and accessibility issues;
- Health care practitioners who are bridging entrepreneurship and health—working on issues such as community health education & outreach; environmental health; women’s health and menstruation education;
- Creative artists, including: a video game and graphic designer, architect, and painter;
- Youth education and empowerment change makers who are developing social enterprises that use sports, English language acquisition, and entrepreneurship as a way to build confidence and transferable skills with young people;
- as well as media professionals including: a journalist, CEO of a media conglomerate, and several TV and radio personalities
The Mandela Washington Fellowship at Dartmouth focuses on business and entrepreneurship — specifically, design-driven and entrepreneurship, which combines social impact and ethical practices into a cohesive, innovative business plan and execution. Academic sessions led by Thayer School of Engineering Professor, Peter Robbie and Dartmouth alumni entrepreneur, Richard Nadworny, the Institute employs a creative and comprehensive combination of traditional lectures, workshops, group-based project assignments, and community engagement. This Institute will foster personal connections to cutting-edge creative and socially responsible entrepreneurs and companies from around the world, enhance personal leadership and communication skills, and expand perspectives on the impact humans can make on the communities surrounding them.

As part of the program, Fellows also will experience the rich social and cultural life of the Upper Valley through community engagement events such as:

- Weekly service projects with LISTEN Community Services, COVER Home Repair & Re-Store, the Haven, Willing Hands, and more
- An American cultural homestay weekend with families across the Upper Valley, culminating in a shared dinner and contra dance with local musicians
- One-to-one matches of Fellows with local Peer Collaborators working in areas of shared interest
- Weekly networking nights with area entrepreneurs, social service providers, and others held at the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network’s Hanover-based Innovation Center
- Participation in a wide range of outdoor activities such as canoeing, hiking, and camping
- Weekly business site visits to some of New England’s most innovative companies such as: Ben & Jerry’s, King Arthur Flour, Seventh Generation, Simon Pearce, Artisan’s Asylum, Cambridge Innovation Center, Timberland, and many more

The YALI Business & Entrepreneurship Institute at Dartmouth is a collaboration of the following departments: The Dickey Center for International Understanding, the Rockefeller Center for Public Policy, the Tucker Foundation for Service, Spirituality, & Social Justice, the Thayer School of Engineering, the Outdoor Programs Office, and the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network (DEN).

Visit dickey.dartmouth.edu/yali for more information on the program, or contact:

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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 http://yali.state.gov and join the conversation with the hashtag #YALI2015.

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