



# FIGHTING HUNGER BY DEVELOPING LEADERS

How Hunger Fellows  
Continue to Shape the World



“ Most profound experience of my life. Shaped my identity, transformed my network, changed my outlook on personal and professional endeavors, and reinforced my passion to create change. I tease that a 6-month policy placement, became a nearly 10 year career. ”  
—Lindsey Baker, 14th Class Emerson Alum (2007–2008)

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# INTRODUCTION

This year, the Congressional Hunger Center will recognize its 25th Anniversary. I say “recognize” rather than “celebrate” because the continued need for an organization like ours means that the problem of hunger has not yet been solved. Today, more than three quarters of a billion people worldwide, including 41 million Americans, struggle to find enough to eat.

When founded in 1993, the Congressional Hunger Center could have taken up any number of strategies toward ending hunger. Early on, our founders decided that we could make the greatest impact by training new generations of leaders to join in the movement to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad.

Whether working in direct service at a food pantry, planning a humanitarian intervention in a disaster-stricken region, or researching public policies to lift households out of poverty, the leaders touched by the Congressional Hunger Center’s signature fellowship programs would learn how to be effective change agents working for a hunger-free world. I should know, because I was one of these young leaders.

My experience as a Hunger Fellow from 1997 to 1998 exposed me to new ideas and experiences, and set me up with the tools to continue my career working for the public good, as it has for the hundreds of Hunger Fellows who have come since. Nearly 600 Hunger Fellow alums are now spread across 39 states and 20 countries, working for organizations large and small, creating change across their communities and across nations.

In the following pages, we’re proud to be able to share with you data about the impact our fellowship program has on participants and the positive social impact that our alums continue to have in the world. We’re also pleased to introduce you to some of them personally. The alums we’ve profiled here represent only a small part of the wide range of work Hunger Fellows go on to do—we wish we had space to introduce you to all of them! Nevertheless, the nine stories here are reflective of the devotion that our program participants share for the issues they work on, and the impact that the Congressional Hunger Center has made in their lives.

As we reach the quarter century mark, we’re not just taking stock of what we’ve done to train hundreds of leaders in the anti-hunger movement. We’re developing new strategies



and initiatives for engaging new populations, adapting our curriculum to share with broader audiences, and forging new partnerships—because we know that hunger is too big of a problem for any one organization to tackle alone.

All this we do in the hope that we’ll never have to mark our 50th Anniversary—that by joining with partners at all levels and in all sectors, we will have eradicated hunger around the world by 2030. We hope that you’ll join us in our goal, and we hope that the following pages give you an idea of what we mean when we say we “fight hunger by developing leaders.”

In service,

*Shannon Maynard*

**Shannon Maynard**  
Executive Director, Congressional Hunger Center  
4th Class National Hunger Fellow Alum

# HUNGER FELLOW ALUMS

In November 2017, the Congressional Hunger Center conducted an electronic survey of 580 participants in the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows and Mickey Leland International Fellows Programs from the period between August 1994 and August 2017. Based on a response rate of 66 percent, here are some findings about who the alums are, where they currently work and are located, and what kind of impact they continue to have on the world after they complete their fellowship.

## WHO ARE HUNGER FELLOW ALUMS?

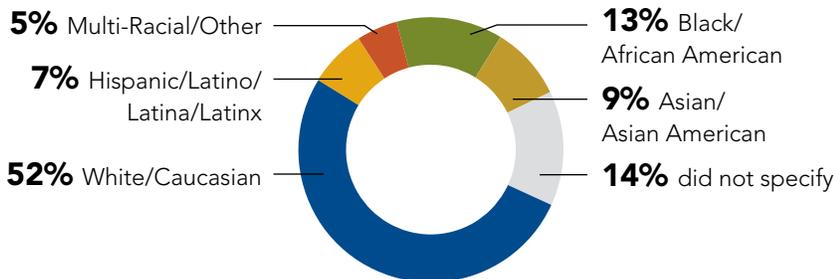
**293** out of 442 Emerson alums responded



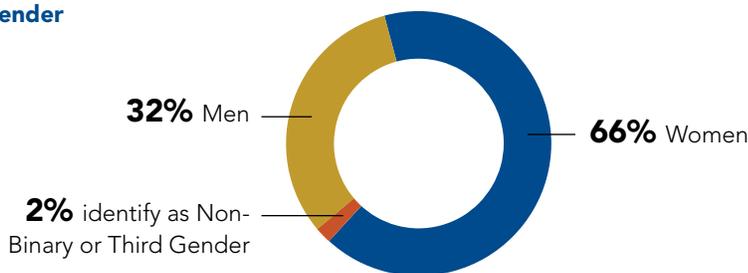
**71** out of 112 Leland alums responded



### Race/Ethnicity



### Gender



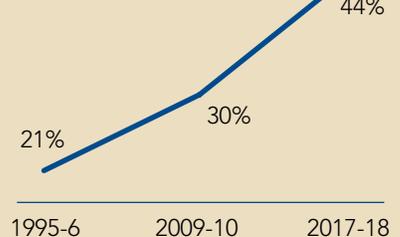
### Socioeconomics



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We believe that the problem of hunger cannot be solved without addressing the root causes, including persistent poverty and racism. We also believe that hunger cannot be eradicated without the involvement of the people most directly impacted by the issue. We are continually refining our recruitment processes to increase the number of people of color and people with lived experience of poverty and hunger who participate in our Hunger Fellows programs:

### Percentage of racially diverse enrollment



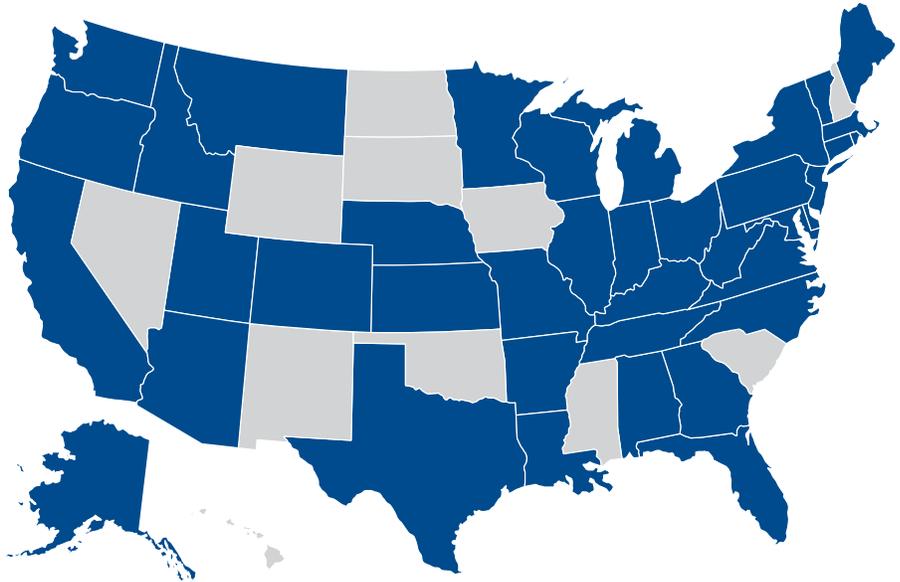
"It was an incredible opportunity to work alongside community leaders and advocates who are working to end hunger and poverty in all corners of the globe." —Andrew Fuys, 2nd Class Leland Alum (2003–2005)

## WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

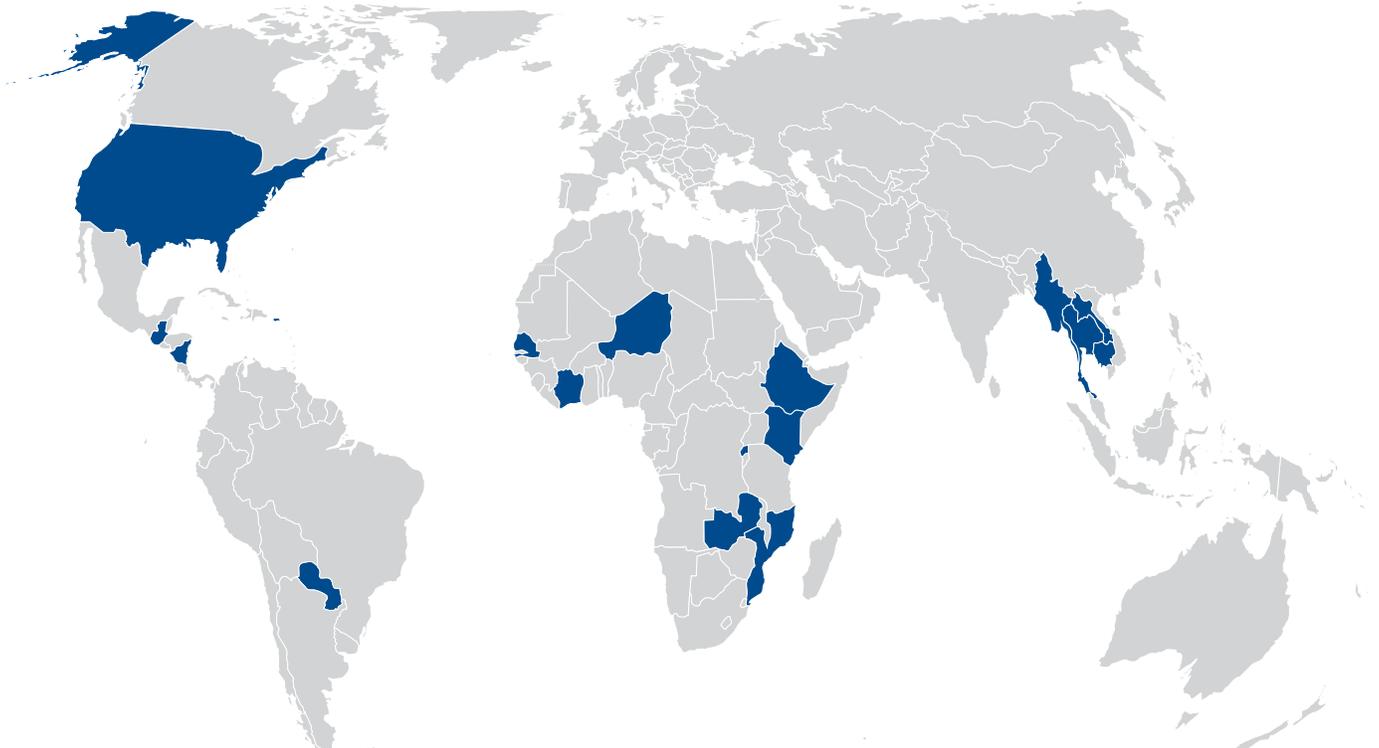
Hunger Fellow alums live in 39 states. Sixty-five alums—or about 1 in 6 respondents—currently live in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area, an indication that many fellows choose to stay in the area after the completion of the policy placement of their fellowship.

Sixteen alums of the Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellows Program are living overseas, almost all of whom work for NGOs or aid agencies in 8 countries in Africa, 4 countries in Southeast Asia, and 3 countries in South & Central America. Both the average and median rank of these 15 countries on the Global Food Security Index is 85 out of 113 (the United States is 2). They have a combined population of 436 million people—29% higher than the U.S. population—but only contribute a combined 2.67% to the world GDP—one eighth of the United States.

Alums currently reside in 39 states.



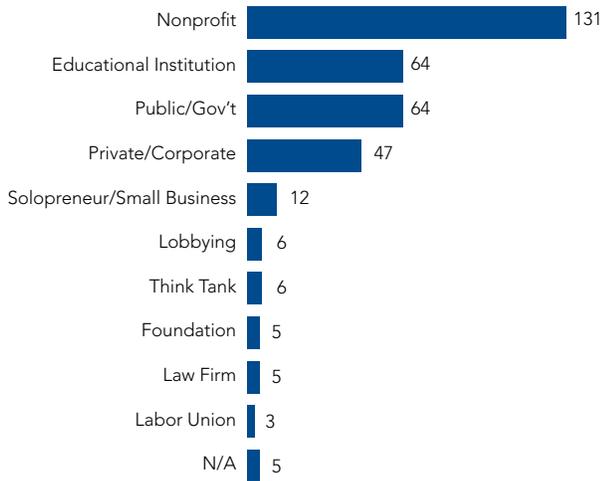
Sixteen Leland International Hunger Fellow alums reside in 15 countries outside the United States.



“The International Hunger Fellowship was an incredible learning and growth experience. It significantly built my leadership, communications and advocacy skills through the year spent in Washington D.C. working on policy issues. It also honed my project management skills through the year spent in the field assignment in Africa. I credit the Hunger Fellowship in large part with setting me off on the path I’m on now.” —Jodie Fonseca, 2nd Class Leland Alum (2003–2005)

## WHERE DO THEY WORK?

Hunger Fellow alums are *5 times more likely* to work for a non-profit organization than the baseline of the American population working in the private sector.<sup>1</sup>



Hunger Fellow alums go on to work at leading organizations and agencies fighting hunger and poverty, in the communities and at the national level, in the United States and abroad.

National Women's Law Center Fintrac  
 City of Philadelphia Princeton University D.C. Central Kitchen  
 Land O' Lakes International Development U.S. Dept. of Agriculture  
 University of Pennsylvania Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
 East Carolina University D.C. Greens Catholic Relief Services  
 FHI 360 U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development  
 Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona Mercy Corps USAID  
 UNICEF Northwestern University So Others Might Eat  
 Center on Budget & Policy Priorities University of North Carolina  
 U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Families USA  
 Feeding America Rise Against Hunger University of Chicago  
 World Bank Presbyterian Church USA Office of Public Witness  
 University of Virginia Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
 Oregon Food Bank Georgetown Center on Poverty & Inequality  
 Texas Hunger Initiative Agnes Scott College Save the Children  
 World Food Program Congressional Research Service

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We believe that to end hunger by 2030, we will need the combined effort of people working across all sectors and all levels pulling together. The approach of our Hunger Fellows programs—connecting the regional office and the headquarters, the community and the Capitol, and field and policy work—gives participants a wealth of experience and the ability to find for themselves where they can be most effective in the movement.

"My Fellowship Experience allowed me to explore root causes of poverty and see hunger as a symptom of it. It led me to focus on education, where I thought I could have greater impact."  
 —Lad Dell, 3rd Class Emerson Alum (1996–1997)

## HOW DO THEY CONTINUE TO FIGHT HUNGER?

Regardless of which industry or sector they choose to work in, fully *75% of Hunger Fellow alums go on to work for social good* after their fellowship is completed. Common impact areas include anti-hunger/anti-poverty work; health; social justice & equity; financial access/employment/markets; education; and agriculture & climate resilience.

The overwhelming majority of fellows are working in a programmatic function, with many more working in Research & Analysis, Community Outreach & Organizing, and Administration or Management.

Hunger Fellow alums are also *2.5 times more likely* to volunteer their time for a cause than the baseline American population.<sup>2</sup> What's more, 61% of respondents said they had attended at least one public meeting held by local, state, or federal government in the past year, 81% said they participated in public education or advocacy activities, and 90% reported that they donated money to a community group or organization.

### Ten most common job functions performed by alums working for social good



1. Based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program in 2012.  
 2. Based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics study "Volunteering in the United States—2015"

## HOW DID THEIR FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT AS LEADERS?

Hunger Fellow alums overwhelmingly agree that the program impacted their personal development, ability to lead with others, and create change.



**94%** of alums would “agree” or “strongly agree” that their program impacted their *personal development*.



**89%** of alums would “agree” or “strongly agree” that their program impacted their *ability to create change*.



**91%** of alums would “agree” or “strongly agree” that their program impacted their *ability to lead with others*.



**96%** of alums would “strongly recommend” or “probably recommend” their fellowship program to others.

“The Emerson Hunger Fellowship has been the most formative experience I have had thus far in my career. I have learned invaluable lessons in leadership, teamwork and coalition building.” —Julia Kortrey, 21st Class Emerson Alum (2014–2015)

“The Leland fellowship was an amazing opportunity to develop personally and professionally. This experience has really shaped my thinking on issues related to poverty and hunger—and continues to do so.” —Quinn Bernier, 6th class Leland Alum (2011–2013)

“It helped me to decide that public policy was the best career route for me.” —Sabrina Hamm, 18th Class Emerson Alum (2011–2012)

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

All of our programs are designed to develop leadership skills in line with the CHC Leadership Capabilities model. The three core capabilities fall into three distinct, but interrelated categories. After successful completion of one of CHC’s programs, Hunger Fellows should be able to:

#### Develop Self

- ▶ Self-aware
- ▶ Has a personal theory of change
- ▶ Goal-oriented
- ▶ Resourceful and resilient
- ▶ Active learner

#### Lead With Others

- ▶ Builds community
- ▶ Communicates effectively
- ▶ Strives to amplify voices directly impacted by hunger and poverty

#### Create Change

- ▶ Has vision
- ▶ Thinks critically and systemically
- ▶ Inspires others to action

To learn more about our leadership capabilities model, visit: [www.hungercenter.org/leadership](http://www.hungercenter.org/leadership)

▶ Now that we’ve seen an overview of our network of Hunger Fellow alums and the work they’re doing, let’s get to know just a few of them. ▶

# LIZ CLASEN-KELLY

*Executive Director, Men's Shelter of Charlotte*

*7th Class Emerson National Hunger Fellow (2000–2001)*

Liz Clasen-Kelly believes that ending hunger and homelessness will require everyone to recognize the full humanity of people who are experiencing these issues. As the executive director of the Men's Shelter of Charlotte in Charlotte, N.C., she seeks out ways to connect the greater community with the population her organization supports. One successful initiative has been a weekly program where shelter guests join with housing-secure Charlotteans for a morning exercise program.

The Men's Shelter of Charlotte is one of the largest emergency shelters in the Southeast. About 380 guests sleep at one of its two campuses, depending on the weather and time of year. "Our goal is to walk with them into a housing option," Liz explains. On average, one guest moves out of the shelter into housing every day, and three quarters of former guests are still in stable housing after two years.

"I've always thought it was a very interesting mission, developing leaders," says Liz, when reflecting on her time as a Hunger Fellow. While she agrees the work that fellows perform at their sites is very important—the youth community gardening initiative at the South Plains Food Bank in Lubbock, Texas, that she helped to start during her fellowship nearly 18 years ago still operates today—she recalls a number of experiences as a

fellow that were important lessons on how she could make a change in the world.

"I really appreciated the combination of policy and hands-on work," she recalls, "and it's one of the things that has really marked my leadership. I have a great love for frontline service, but I also have this drive to connect this frontline service to systems change. The Hunger Fellowship was the first program that gave me the lens to say, these are two things to hold in balance. I really appreciate that exposure to the two—it gave me a sense that it would be possible to combine these things in the world."

When asked about the achievement she's most proud of since her time as a fellow, she lists her role in bringing the "Housing First" framework to Charlotte. Housing First is an approach to homelessness that prioritizes finding homes for people first, and then tackling other barriers once the stability of housing has been achieved.

"By virtue of being human, we're all born ready for housing," Liz explains—"it's just a question of what supports you need to be successful in it. Just a decade ago it was quite radical, and now it's a common approach across several agencies in the city."

“ I have a great love for frontline service, but I also have this drive to connect this frontline service to systems change. The Hunger Fellowship was the first program that gave me the lens to say, these are two things to hold in balance. ”



# CARA BRUMFIELD

*Senior Policy Analyst, Economic Security and Opportunity Initiative,  
Georgetown Center on Poverty and Social Inequality  
17th Class Emerson National Hunger Fellow (2010–2011)*

**C**ara Brumfield recently joined the Economic Security and Opportunity Initiative at Georgetown’s Center on Poverty and Social Inequality as a Senior Policy Analyst. She will work on a wide range of issues in support of Center’s mission to expand economic inclusion.

Previously, Cara was the U.S. Policy and Research Manager at 1,000 Days, the leading nonprofit organization advocating for mothers’ and young children’s nutrition. She led her organization’s research around Federal nutrition programs like WIC and SNAP. In 2016, she co-authored the report “The First 1,000 Days: Nourishing America’s Future,” which highlighted 10 high-level policy imperatives to improve maternal and child health in the United States. For her follow-up report, “Listening to America’s Mothers,” Cara traveled the country, speaking with mothers about the barriers they face in ensuring proper nutrition for their young children.

“My time as a fellow helped me understand the value of creating space for the voices of people with lived experiences with poverty—including my own,” Cara said. “As anti-hunger and anti-poverty advocates, we can sit in our offices all day long, and try to think of what people need—it’s kind of backward that we don’t go out and ask them. It should be what guides our organizational strategy and what guides our policy advocacy.”

After her fellowship, Cara continued her studies at American University, earning a Master’s of Public Policy, but it wasn’t always easy. “One of the biggest lessons that I carry with me today is that I belong,” she reflects. “I grew up on the receiving end of the programs that I’m advocating for now, and I was really struggling with what that shift meant for me when I got to the Fellowship.”

But Cara quickly found support and community within her cohort of fellows. “The supportive relationships I had with my co-fellows really helped me to become who I am, and those friendships are even stronger today.”

Cara also cites the Hunger Fellowship’s dual focus on field and policy work as a key strength. “A lot of young people who are entering the anti-poverty world or the anti-hunger world are torn about whether they want to take a community-based approach or a systems-based approach or both—that was something I was definitely thinking a lot about when I became a fellow.”

Cara credits her experience working both in Boston and in Washington as giving her vital perspective. “The time I spent as a fellow made me a stronger advocate. That really impacted who I am and the way I think about solving problems of poverty and hunger. Even though I’m at a national advocacy organization now, I’m constantly thinking about how I can support and empower the work that’s happening in communities.

“The fellowship was a turning point in my life. And it means a lot to me to be able to stay involved with the community.”

Currently based in D.C., Cara remains connected to the Congressional Hunger Center by serving as a volunteer trainer for new classes of Emerson Hunger Fellows. “Every single time I get a chance to meet with them I’m inspired,” she says. She sees herself as part of a community that is working hard to make hunger a priority for policymakers. “Hunger Fellows are infiltrating the advocacy world in D.C. and changing the status quo of how these organizations are doing their work. They’re creating a different type of future of advocacy in D.C., and I think that is what’s going to shake things up, change things enough to build political will enough to end hunger.”

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# MICHAEL JOHNSON

*Political Affairs Officer, UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali  
1st Class Leland International Hunger Fellow (2001–2003)*

**A**s of 2018, the UN Peacekeeping mission in Mali is the most dangerous peacekeeping assignment in the world. This is where Michael Johnson has worked since 2014, when he came to Bamako as a political affairs officer, monitoring the peace process and reporting back on developments to headquarters in New York, including to members of the Security Council.

In 2015, Michael expanded his role to the regional level and relocated to the extreme north Saharan region of the country, the source of the Tuareg rebellion in 2012. “It’s a lot of talking to people, gathering analysis, and providing that to leadership to inform decision-making,” he says. “Lots of political analysis, synthesizing information, and messaging on the political situation there.”

As an alum of the Leland International Hunger Fellows Program, Michael sees a direct link between his work as part of the UN peacekeeping mission and food insecurity in the region. “Part of the grievances of the Tuareg community, which have led to four rebellions since independence, have been food insecurity and the government’s response, or according to them, lack thereof, to address food security issues in northern Mali,” he explains. “When people explain to you their socioeconomic situation, they point out the lack of access to food and water points, the drying up of certain water points, the damage of crops due to certain pests, et cetera.”

When he thinks about what he gained from his time as a Leland Hunger Fellow, Michael points immediately to his experience in program management. “Prior to coming into the fellowship, I was studying at American University in the graduate program, so I was getting basic foundations on international development and food security issues,” he says, but not the

crucial direct program experience in an international development context.

His two-year placement with IFAD during the fellowship changed that. “I was able to get those practical, hands-on program foundations, to understand the program cycles within international development organizations,” he says. “That experience at the Global Mechanism translated to the year I spent at the policy level with IFAD at the North American liaison office, whereby I was able to partner with private foundations, such as Rockefeller Brothers Fund, to insert interventions concerning land degradation and combatting desertification into the programmatic cycles of those private foundations, and they started to focus more on drylands issues and the global programs that were responding to it.”

Michael’s time as a Leland Hunger Fellow also gave him a framework for evaluating his own effectiveness in his work, though he admits evaluating success at a peacekeeping mission is very different than a development program. “The program gave me a foundation on looking at how to develop the indicators, how to look at results—a results-based management approach that I carried forward from my fellowship experience,” he says. “So that was a little bit more visible, versus where I’m at now, where it’s a lot more political; a lot of my work is drawn out, and it’s various interests, and parties renege on agreements and going back to the drawing table, et cetera.”

Hard to measure or not, Michael’s work has been making a difference in Africa for nearly a decade. He’s particularly proud of his work as part of the UNDP recovery program in South Sudan, where he helped to mobilize resources from donor partners and coordinated stabilization activities in the country. “I kind of achieved something there,” he says, “that hopefully has made a difference.”

“The program gave me a foundation on looking at how to develop the indicators, how to look at results—a results-based management approach that I carried forward from my fellowship experience.”



# AMANDA WAGNER

*Program Manager, Nutrition and Physical Activity, City of Philadelphia Dept. of Health  
12th Class Emerson National Hunger Fellow (2005–2006)*

Originally from the Philadelphia area, Amanda Wagner has centered her entire career, aside from her time as an Emerson National Hunger Fellow in Tucson, Arizona and policy placement in D.C., in southeast Pennsylvania. She currently works for the Health Department of the City of Philadelphia, managing healthy food and physical activity initiatives. She works to increase access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods, and to ensure that everyday, joyful physical activity is easily accessible in every neighborhood.

At the Department's Division of Chronic Disease Prevention (also known as Get Healthy Philly), Amanda and her colleagues are trying to lower chronic disease rates by focusing on equity and reducing health disparities within the city. To do this, they consider community partnerships and how to fill gaps in services, support, and access while applying a social justice lens to every aspect of their work. She takes a public health approach to food insecurity, considering the social determinants of health, such as institutional racism and homophobia that have caused communities to have very different opportunities and health outcomes.

"[We are] thinking about poverty, economics, racism, and the social and economic factors that affect people's health and in turn affect their ability to have food," Amanda says. "We see fighting hunger as a way to improve people's health and then thinking about how food is a lens to all these other pieces and how we can have a holistic approach to health and wellness, and not just the absence of illness."

Amanda became interested in city planning during her policy placement as a Hunger Fellow and says her time at her policy site really solidified the idea of food in relation to the community,

as well as the role of city planning in food access. She says that when she was a fellow, she was exposed to "new conversations and connections between anti-hunger, community food security, and urban planning. That's when I was first starting to think about planning as a field and the next steps." Soon after her fellowship, she went on to obtain a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

Amanda has also been involved in the food equity sphere through the Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council. Currently, she serves as co-chair where she collaborates with other community stakeholders such as leaders of anti-hunger and anti-poverty nonprofits, as well as others who work for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and the City Planning Commission to create policy recommendations surrounding regional food systems for the city of Philadelphia. In her time there, Amanda and her colleagues from all over Philadelphia urged the city to utilize their purchasing power in the roughly 20 million meals that they provide each year to improve the quality of food they are distributing. This push resulted in an executive order from the health department for the city to work towards procuring foods that are sustainably sourced and produced with fair labor.

"I don't think I would be in the role that I am now if I didn't do the fellowship, and part of that is because of better understanding how food fits into the policy sphere." Amanda says one key takeaway from her time as a Hunger Fellow was that the only way to end hunger decisively is by building political will. Through her policy placement in D.C., she was able to see how other organizations are tackling these issues. She has taken the knowledge and skills she gained from her time as a fellow to return to her home state and give back to the community.

“ [We are] thinking about poverty, economics, racism, and the social and economic factors that affect people's health and in turn affect their ability to have food. We see fighting hunger as a way to improve people's health and then thinking about how food is a lens to all these other pieces and how we can have a holistic approach to health and wellness, and not just the absence of illness. ”



# JESSICA LUNA

*Lead Program Analyst, SNAP Program Development Division, USDA-FNS  
17th Class Emerson National Hunger Fellow (2010–2011)*

Jessica Luna has long had an interest in the USDA's SNAP program, writing her senior thesis at Harvard on "Food Stamp Users and the Alternative Food Movement." Now she's an analyst working for SNAP at the USDA Food & Nutrition Service's national office. "I'm really fortunate to be working here," she says, "because I have always wanted to work at and understand the SNAP program at the place where it's shaped and changed."

Jessica's portfolio includes liaising with states to ensure consistent administration of SNAP, as well as oversight of demonstration projects to improve service or reach specific underserved populations. She also works on a project to modernize eligibility systems across the states, ensuring recipients are enrolled and receive benefits in a timely manner.

"I think it's really important that we have people who are passionate about SNAP (or any Federal government program) in government," says Jessica, "who want to make government more effective and efficient, who have an understanding of the program, a passion for the law, and want to make sure that our regulations make sense—and that we're helping the people who have to implement them to do it in the most effective way possible, to ultimately serve the people who are going to benefit from that program."

Jessica's work on SNAP has taken several forms since her time as a Hunger Fellow, starting as an outreach advocate with the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), and continuing as a research associate with the Urban Institute. "Being here (at USDA) I've been able to see a different perspective than when

I was an advocate or researcher," she says, "because there's so much you don't see when you're outside of government of what actually goes on inside government as far as shaping policy, and I had always wondered what that looks like. I feel like I could be most effective if I knew all sides' positions on the issues, and could use that knowledge to inform policy solutions or support new initiatives."

One of Jessica's main takeaways from the Emerson National Hunger Fellows program was related to finding her place in the world of anti-hunger work, despite not always feeling like she belonged. "The intentionality around our work mentality, understanding our unique roles and what we can learn (as fellows in a field or policy site) has stuck with me...the fellowship helped me think about how you can navigate and operate in these privileged spaces and use your knowledge and experiences for good."

She also appreciates the role of the Emerson program in forming professional networks and career development. "Helping you make connections you couldn't otherwise; support to attend conferences or trainings that otherwise wouldn't be financially accessible to us; giving marginalized communities that kind of access is really valuable."

Based in Washington, D.C., Jessica is excited to maintain ties with the Emerson Hunger Fellows program, offering support to successive classes of fellows. "I really appreciate the anti-racist lens that the Hunger Center's work continues to take as it moves forward," she says. "I find that really powerful and unique, and I don't know any other programs out there doing this kind of work."

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# ADAM NORIKANE

*Deputy Chief of USAID's Office of Economic Growth and Integration, Nairobi, Kenya  
4th Class Leland International Hunger Fellow (2007–2009)*

On the wall of Adam Norikane's office are two group awards for meritorious service in humanitarian crises. The first is for his role on a team that worked to combat the drought and ensuing famine in Somalia in 2010-2011, which cost a quarter of a million lives. The second is for his work on the Somali drought of 2016. "I wanted to do everything in my power to avoid another famine," he says of the second experience. "I worked with some amazing people who were really passionate and motivated, not just in USAID but in the development community. We were facing a situation worse than 2010, and yet we've managed, so far, to prevent famine, through early warning and a well-coordinated response."

"When I feel bleak about the global situation, I take some measure of comfort in knowing that things could be a lot worse if we didn't do what we did," he says.

Teamwork and bringing together wide-ranging expertise to tackle overwhelming problems is Adam's stock-in-trade as the Deputy Chief of USAID's Office of Economic Growth and Integration in Nairobi, Kenya. He oversees Kenya's investments in water and sanitation as well as USAID's resilience portfolio, which focuses on an integrated approach to helping impoverished people break the cycle of poverty, even in the face of recurrent crises.

"The real solutions to hunger are not photograph-worthy," Adam says. "They won't be a striking picture of a malnourished child receiving emergency food. Instead, we're trying to strengthen a family's ability to keep food on the table even in

the most trying of times. Our resilience investments focus on complementing our food assistance by building household assets so they'll be able to weather shocks and come out on the other end with healthy children and the ability to start afresh. It is definitely not as glamorous, but so much more significant for these people."

"The program here in Kenya is the flagship resilience program we have for USAID globally, and it's also very much in line with the Administrator's goal of ending the need for foreign assistance and promoting countries' self-reliance. Personally," he adds, "it seems like a very logical, intelligent way to do business."

It's also a perspective he was introduced to during his time as a Leland International Hunger Fellow. Adam recalls being exposed to the root causes of hunger in ways that informed his career path as he's moved between emergency food assistance and more long-term international development.

The fellowship introduced him to a range of perspectives: "Getting exposure to Washington, our elected officials, think tanks and advocacy organizations—all organizations I wouldn't have had much interaction with—was invaluable. And having them come and give briefs—the opportunity to sit down and get schooled by experts on a lot of these issues—has been crucial to refining my understanding and my approach to tackling hunger."

"The Leland Fellows Program is like a 'farm-to-fork' exposure to foreign aid that most folks don't necessarily get before they're thrown into the mix."

“The Leland Fellows Program is like a “farm-to-fork” exposure to foreign aid that most folks don’t necessarily get before they’re thrown into the mix.”



# EILEEN HYDE

*Director, Hunger and Healthy Eating, Walmart Foundation  
15th Class Emerson Hunger Fellow (2008–2009)*

**N**ot long ago, Eileen Hyde was in the Los Angeles airport when she found her flight to China was delayed, and she would have to spend the night. She texted a friend from her Emerson National Hunger Fellowship class who lived in L.A. to see if she was in town, and learned that she was also at the airport waiting on a flight to Chicago. The two met and caught up in person. “I still stay connected to many people in my class,” Eileen says. “The network has always been there to support one another. Knowing we have that connection has been really powerful and special.”

Eileen was flying to China for her work as Director of Hunger and Healthy Eating with the Walmart Foundation, where she develops strategy and leads a grant portfolio focused on food system issues and interventions to increase access to safe, affordable, and healthy food in the United States and certain global markets. This includes Walmart and the Walmart Foundation’s goal of providing 4 billion meals to families in need and nutrition education to 4 million people by 2020, and strategic initiatives to address food waste and loss in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. as well as efforts to improve food safety in China. In the U.S., she works with anti-hunger and nutrition-focused nonprofits of all sizes, from established national organizations to promising solutions emerging at the community level. She also works with groups, such as the National League of Cities or the National Recreation and Parks Association, which are engaging their stakeholders to increase access to Federal meal programs and promote healthy eating.

Her approach of connecting the local with the national and working across sectors is a crucial lesson she took from her time as a Hunger Fellow, and one that she uses every day in her current work. “The fellowship was a huge influence in my development, hands down,” she says. “Being exposed to the different stakeholders and approaches across the antipoverty and food access community was really valuable.”

She also values the systems-level thinking she developed during her time as a fellow. “That definitely is something I use daily on my job, and its one reason why I’m at the Walmart Foundation.” When investigating solutions to issues of hunger and healthy eating, food waste, and food safety, her role is to consider what parts of the system have broken down, and what role philanthropy can play in addressing these system failures. At the same time, Walmart takes a shared value approach to many of these same issues. At Walmart shared value means using the business to help solve social problems, not only because it’s the responsible thing to do—but because it maximizes business value.

Since her time as a fellow, Eileen has worked in government and at nonprofits; for her, the choice to move to the corporate world was natural. “I believe you need all local and global players; you need multiple sectors—government, corporate, and civil society—to play a role in ending hunger. They’re all key levers for change. I think we need strong and good actors in all areas. All people have a role to play in moving this work forward.”

“The fellowship was a huge influence in my development, hands down. Being exposed to the different stakeholders and approaches across the antipoverty and food access community was really valuable.”



# DAVID BLOUNT

*Research Analyst, Urban Institute*

*21st Class Emerson National Hunger Fellow (2014–2015)*

**A**s a Research Analyst at Urban Institute, David Blount spends his days gathering data and evaluating workforce development programs aimed at strengthening pathways out of poverty. “Through the research, we’re trying to understand the factors that either alleviate or perpetuate poverty, while informing solutions intended to make a change.”

One of his current projects has him partnering with a major corporate foundation to review their \$250 million grant-making portfolio in the area of workforce development. His research has taken him to Chicago, New York, and Texas, investigating best practices from community-based organizations who work with people facing significant barriers to employment: people with criminal records, young mothers, and people with a history of chronic unemployment or homelessness.

“We work with organizations, governments, and foundations that are trying to figure out what is the right way to fund and support initiatives and efforts to address poverty,” he explains.

“We try to have a very intentional conversation about our history in this country when it comes to race and poverty and equity, and how certain systems are structured in a way where even if you’re funding helpful programs, you still may not be addressing the root causes of poverty. Our goal is to build the evidence that guides decision-makers to not just address the

symptoms of poverty and inequity but address their root causes head-on.”

Working with youth has long been one of David’s passions, starting when he became a mentor through a youth ministry he took part in during high school. While he was placed at Urban Institute as an Emerson National Hunger Fellow, he worked with teenagers who lived in public housing to determine what kinds of food security interventions would have the most traction in their communities. He has also been a schoolteacher in Baltimore, Maryland, and a City Year Corps Member in Chicago, Illinois.

David especially values his time as an Emerson National Hunger Fellow for the confidence it gave him in his ability to lead. “Personally, it was the affirmation and validation that I needed for my own voice,” he says. “I’m a person of color who never fully saw myself as a leader in the way that I am now in D.C... Knowing that my voice is valuable, and that I do have something to contribute...that was a huge realization for me that came out of my fellowship experience.”

“I think a lot of places could use spaces like CHC creates, where we can be intentional about truth-telling, intentional about the real lived experiences people go through, and being able to bridge across race, gender, and rural/urban perspectives. I think there’s a secret sauce to that, and that we need to make sure it gets slathered everywhere.”

“ I never fully felt myself to be a leader in the way that I am now in D.C... Knowing that my voice is valuable, and that I do have something to contribute...that was a huge realization for me that came out of my fellowship experience. ”



# CARMEN JAQUEZ

*Senior Advisor for Livestock, Mercy Corps*

*4th Class Leland International Hunger Fellow (2007–2009)*

Carmen Jaquez entered the Leland International Hunger Fellows Program with a good amount of international experience: she had spent four years working in Uganda, including time as a Peace Corps volunteer. Afterward, she returned to the United States to pursue a Master's in Economics, but she wasn't finished with work in Africa. "I wanted to get back overseas," she says, "but looking at a lot of opportunities, I knew I wasn't comfortable saying 'I'm an expert.' I wanted more experience, but also to work around people who were experts in the field."

Her time as a Leland Hunger Fellow was formative. "I had a lot of field experience, but I was still grappling with the complexity of the issues," she recounts. Her placement sent her to work with Land O' Lakes International Development in Nairobi, Kenya. "I was in a regional office. I worked with a lot of programs, and by the end of the fellowship, I was like, 'I got this, I'm okay. I can do this.' It was a huge turning point in my career."

Specifically, Carmen appreciates the unique role that Hunger Fellows play within their host organizations: "The understanding is that you're learning—as opposed to being a full-time staff member who can be pulled in many directions. Fellows have an opportunity to look at a topic broadly or narrowly."

She also valued the diversity of expertise in her fellowship class. "I have a science background," she explains. "I didn't know much about the social sciences or health and nutrition." Working with other fellows who also focused on rural populations was helpful for exposure to different approaches to the problem of hunger—to treat the problem holistically, and to evaluate the strengths of different organizations and strategies.

"Within the fellowship, there was a lot of sharing, discussions—I liked listening to what people were doing, and then thinking through, 'What does that mean for the work that I'm doing?'"

Thinking through different approaches is key to her work now as part of Mercy Corps' technical support unit. As Senior Advisor for Livestock, her role is collecting and sharing knowledge about the cross-cutting issues that affect Mercy Corps' programs around the world. Understanding the local context is crucial to her work: economics, market systems, gender dynamics, and other cultural factors need to be thought through for a successful implementation. "I often remind people there's a system we need to be respectful of to improve the design of whatever you're designing," she says.

“By the end of the fellowship, I was like, “I got this, I’m okay. I can do this.” It was a huge turning point in my career.”



# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**A**t the Congressional Hunger Center, we believe that by developing leaders, we can train a new generation to be change agents in the fight against hunger. We do this through our two fellowship programs:

## THE BILL EMERSON NATIONAL HUNGER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Founded in 1994, the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows Program, named after the late Rep. Bill Emerson (R-MO), is a one-year fellowship that connects passionate, exceptional emerging leaders with organizations fighting hunger and poverty at local, state, and national levels.

For the first half of their year of service, Emerson Fellows partner with community-based organizations across the country, doing hands-on work designing and implementing local

solutions to hunger. Fellows then come to Washington, D.C. to build on their experience by working with advocates, think tanks, and agencies that shape federal anti-hunger policy.

From improving outreach and community engagement to designing new programs, from policy research and analysis to communications strategies, Hunger Fellows expand what anti-hunger partners can achieve. Many initiatives started by Hunger Fellows continue long after their service year is finished.

Since its inaugural year in 1994, Emerson National Hunger Fellows have strengthened the programs and capacity of 165 organizations in 46 U.S. states and territories



## THE MICKEY LELAND INTERNATIONAL HUNGER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Founded in 2001, the Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellows Program, named after the late Rep. Mickey Leland (D-TX), is a two-year fellowship that trains emerging leaders in the fight to end hunger around the world. The program combines professional development through field and policy work and leadership development training.

Leland Fellows develop and strengthen skills while actively working to build food and nutrition security. During the field year, fellows work at a programmatic level to support food

and nutrition security interventions in Asia, Africa and Latin America. During the policy year, fellows apply their knowledge and experience to the design of sound development policy.

CHC places fellows with organizations that make a difference both on the ground and at the policy level. Leland Fellows gain and strengthen technical skills while bringing additional capacity to their host organizations. This added capacity enables these organizations to do more or try something new.

Since its inaugural year in 2001, Leland International Hunger Fellows have strengthened the programs and capacity of 57 organizations in 40 Countries



Both programs include a comprehensive training curriculum based around CHC's Leadership Capabilities Model. Fellows leave the program with the knowledge and skills to find and lasting solutions to food insecurity at home and abroad.



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