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From Kenya to the United States to Nepal

2018 Peace Fellows will promote multiculturalism and social change

[Michelle Nyaga](#) is facing some exciting life changes after accepting a 2018 peace fellowship with The Advocacy Project (AP).



Bound for Nepal: Lindsey (left) from NYU and Michelle from Columbia.

Two years ago, Michelle was working for the Nairobi county government in Kenya. She then enrolled in a Masters program at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University. Three weeks ago Michelle decided to spend her summer working as a Peace Fellow in western Nepal, where she will help Backward Society Education (BASE) to free girls from domestic servitude. Somewhat reassured after a week of training at Georgetown University, Michelle nonetheless understands

that an adventure awaits: “All of my experience so far has been in Africa. I want to work on the same issues in another part of the world,” she said.

AP has deployed 305 graduate students to volunteer with community-based partners since 2003, and this year's cohort (top photo) underscores AP's commitment to promoting multicultural ties in a divided world. Fellows have come from 46 nations, including Syria, Saudi Arabia and Belarus.



Team Africa: Colleen is heading to Kenya, Alex to Zimbabwe, and Chris to Uganda.

Michelle herself follows [Chantal Uwizera](#) originally from Rwanda (and American University) who worked at BASE in 2011. Chantal teamed up with [Maelanny Purwaningrum](#) from Indonesia, a student at Oslo University. Both Fellows were greeted with curiosity and affection in Nepal and Michelle is ready for more of the same.

Four other Fellows this year are from outside the US. [Marcela de Campos](#) (UMD - University of Maryland) and [Teresa Perosa](#) (SIPA) are both from Brazil. Marcela will help the AEPD in Vietnam to support families affected by Agent Orange. Teresa will be hosted by the Collateral Repair Project in Jordan, where she will work with refugee women from wars in the Middle East.

[Lara Cerosky](#) (Sciences Po), a German/French national, will work on child labor in the brick kilns of Nepal with CONCERN. [Caroline Armstrong Hall](#)

(Fletcher School at Tufts) is Dutch/American and will help CAED in western Nepal to campaign against the practice of menstrual banishment known as *chhaupadi*.



Multiculturalism in action: 2011 Peace Fellows [Corey](#) from Canada (second from left), Chantal (born in Rwanda), and Maelanny from Indonesia served in Nepal.

The five remaining Fellows, all American students, will also take on tough issues. [Lindsey Killett](#) (New York University) will help Care Women Nepal to organize a pro-lapse camp in Nepal. [Chris Markomanolakis](#) (UMD) will help the GDPU to install an accessible toilet at the Awach school in Uganda.

[Colleen Denny](#) will help CPI Kenya to manage *Heifers for Peace*, an innovative program that buys cows for families on both sides of a tribal conflict in northern Kenya. [Komal Thakkar](#) (Fletcher School, Tufts University) will help wives of the disappeared in Bardiya to sell Tiger Bags under the auspices of NEFAD. [Alex Kotowski](#) (SIPA) will help the Women Advocacy Project in Zimbabwe to lobby against child marriage.

As in past years all ten Fellows are accomplished professionals and will offer their hosts a range of technical services. We invite you to [visit their pages](#), follow their blogs and check out their photos.



[Cynthia \(Nepal, 2017\)](#), an Argentinian national, trains in M and E while [Josh \(Uganda, 2015\)](#) approves.

Last week's training was a reminder that an AP fellowship can change lives. Six former Fellows gave presentations and all credited AP with having given them a passion for social justice and helped their careers. [Josh Levy](#), a successful businessman in Miami, described his time as a Fellow in Uganda - where he raised \$4,500 for an accessible toilet - as "the experience of a life-time."

AP is proud of our past Fellows and we were heartened by a recent email from Maelanny, who preceded Michelle to BASE in 2011 (photo above). Maelanny recently accepted a position with the Red Cross in northern

Nigeria and she writes: "AP has been very instrumental in shaping my career path and I will never thank you enough for that!"

- Meet our 2018 Fellows [here](#)
- Learn more about their programs [here](#)
- Check out the [blogs of past Fellows](#)
- See how the fellowship experience [can change lives](#)
- Click here for [facts about past fellows](#).

Drafted by Iain Guest iain@advocacynet.org

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