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BUSH LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM NAMES 2009 FELLOWS

Saint Paul, Minn. (April 15, 2009)—When the first four Bush Leadership Fellows were named in 1965, it was a step toward supporting founder Archibald Bush's conviction that if his foundation gave smart people with good ideas support toward self-improvement, they would grow as leaders and have a positive impact on their communities. Forty-four years and more than 1,300 leadership fellows later, the Bush Foundation announces 18 new fellows who have a breadth of experience, motivation and goals.

These fellows will use their grants to learn how to improve their communities in a variety of ways—shaping local food systems, addressing mental health and education access among immigrant and refugee populations, engaging low-achievement and disengaged learners, assisting tribal nations in managing natural resources and reducing child abuse, advocating for corporate responsibility, joining museum exhibits with technology, preparing for baby boomers' retirement, improving health care access for Native people, diversifying higher education administration, advancing mentoring strategies and leading the news media through unprecedented turmoil.

The 2009 fellowships will support full-time academic or self-designed study in a range of fields including public health nutrition, environmental policy, educational leadership, public affairs, history, public administration, marriage and family therapy, museum studies, business administration and reading research. The fellows include a chef, an attorney, a businessman, a museum exhibition manager, a journalist, educators, school and nonprofit administrators, and health care workers.

Specific information about each fellow follows; individual photos of the fellows can be viewed at www.bushfound.org.

In North Dakota

Anita B. Frederick, Saint John—Frederick is the interim director of institutional effectiveness at Turtle Mountain Community College, where she was involved in creating a plan that dramatically improved student retention at the College. With her fellowship, she will complete a Ph.D. in educational leadership at the University of North Dakota; her goal is to develop sound research on how financial aid can improve student retention rates. Frederick is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and has lived on the reservation her entire life.

In South Dakota

Kellee A. Hollenbeck, Mobridge—When Hollenbeck was an RN working in the emergency room that serves the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation (her husband is an enrolled member of the tribe), she witnessed the effects of lack of insurance and health care access on vulnerable and poor Native people. Her goal is to improve health care for Native American women and children by delivering a more holistic approach to health care. Hollenbeck will pursue a family nurse practitioner master's degree with a concentration in rural health care at the University of Mary.

Patrice H. Kunesh, Vermillion—Kunesh is associate professor of law at the University of South Dakota and director of the University's Institute of American Indian Studies. The daughter of a Hunkpapa Lakota from the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, Kunesh dedicated herself early in life to improving the lives of Indian children and reservation families. With her fellowship, she will pursue a master's degree in public administration at Harvard University. Kunesh plans to work with tribal communities to develop culturally relevant systems that reduce child abuse.

Frankee L. White Dress, Pine Ridge—White Dress has a passion for education that has followed her through careers as a kindergarten teacher and Head Start Director to her current position of school reform coordinator for the Pine Ridge School (located on the reservation where she grew up). She is establishing a small tutoring center in the community that will soon also include a homework center. With her fellowship, White Dress will obtain a doctorate in educational leadership from Montana State University. Then she will return to her community and expand the center to provide culturally appropriate learning experiences for all ages.

In Minnesota

Jennifer E. Breen, Minneapolis—Breen is a passionate chef who expresses her reverence for the earth and its creatures through cooking. She foresees a coalition of local food organizations that can promote a nutritional, sustainable local food system and influence local/national food policy. In order to participate as a leader in this coalition, she will complete a master's degree in public health nutrition at the University of Minnesota and pursue self-study with experts in the field. In addition to working as a caterer, Breen is an educator at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

Mike Bucsko, Shoreview—A journalist for more than 20 years, Bucsko believes a creative approach can resolve labor disputes and maintain union solidarity in a time of great uncertainty for the future of the news media industry. He is the executive officer of the Minnesota Newspaper Guild Typographical Union, CWA Local 37002. Bucsko plans to attend the Harvard Trade Union Program, a union management training course, to improve his organizational and strategic skills.

Farhiya M. Farah, Minneapolis—Farah fled the civil war in her homeland of Somalia and has since been inspired to work to improve conditions for immigrants and refugees, particularly Somalis. She will use her fellowship to pursue a Ph.D. in environmental policy at the University of Minnesota. Farah hopes to bridge the gap between the Somali community and the institutions that serve them.

Joellen M. Gonder-Spacek, Wayzata—In her role as executive director of the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, Gonder-Spacek knows how powerful mentoring can be in the life of a student. She hopes to bring mentoring services to more students across Minnesota. She will pursue a master's degree in public affairs at the University of Minnesota and conduct site visits to other successful mentoring organizations.

Anab A. Gulaid, Blaine—At the insistence of her mother, Gulaid pursued a bachelor's degree in environmental health even though that was unique in her Somali refugee community. In 2003, she created Eftin, a nonprofit dedicated to enriching the lives of immigrant and refugee families through outreach, advocacy, education and resources. Gulaid hopes to continue her service to this community by pursuing a master's degree in public affairs at the University of Minnesota.

Miriam Duchess Harris, Vadnais Heights—Harris strives to be a change agent in higher education by diversifying curriculum, faculty and students. She will complete a law degree at William Mitchell College of Law and plans to open a center at a law school to serve women leaving prison that focuses on the many challenges they will face. Harris is associate professor of American studies at Macalester College.

Shvonne L. Johnson, Columbia Heights—Johnson is the multicultural outreach coordinator at the College of St. Catherine. She foresees a future where education students who are studying to be K-12 teachers have a stronger understanding of how historical oppression can play a significant role in their own students' achievement, particularly for low-achieving students of color. Johnson will attend Howard University to pursue a master's degree in history, specializing in the African diaspora.

Jess O. Luce, Minneapolis—A year-long stint as a VISTA volunteer working with elderly tenants at risk of losing their housing focused Luce on the issues that will arise in the very near future as baby boomers retire. He hopes to lead the conversation about how communities and governmental services must adjust. Luce will pursue a master's degree in public administration with a concentration in aging issues at Syracuse University. Currently, he is the director of organizing and civic engagement for Child Care WORKS.

Johara A. Mohammed, Brooklyn Park—Mohammed is an Oromo Muslim woman from Ethiopia. Because of her work as an interpreter for the Center of Victims of Torture and as an elder in the broader Oromo community, she appreciates how mental health services can help those who have experienced violence. Mohammed will complete a master's degree in marriage and family therapy at Adler Graduate School and study at the Center for Spirituality and Health at the University of Minnesota. In addition to reaching out to the African community about the importance of mental health treatment, she hopes to find ways to integrate traditional ideas about healing with Western practices.

Michael J. Mouw, Minneapolis—As the multimedia director in the exhibitions department of the Minnesota Historical Society, Mouw has been involved in creating immersive, media-driven exhibits at more than 20 historical sites and museums in Minnesota. Such exhibits build on research that immersive media is a powerful tool in helping patrons remember what they've experienced. Mouw will pursue a master's degree in museum studies at Johns Hopkins University, which launched a new program in 2008 focused specifically on the use of media and technology in museum practice.

Heather A. Schoonover, Minneapolis—Schoonover has learned about the importance of strong local food systems by living in a Mexican village and by organizing small farmers markets in an urban setting. She will obtain an MBA from the University of Washington to position herself as a leader to work for food systems that strengthen local economies, improve public health and enhance the environment. Schoonover is a senior program associate at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.

Robert G. Strand, Minneapolis—Strand, a senior market planner with Boston Scientific and former Fulbright Scholar to Norway, has traveled extensively across Norway, Sweden and Denmark researching corporate responsibility. He was impressed with the approach of the Scandinavian businesses he visited, which viewed economic, environmental and social interests as mutually beneficial, not competing interests. Strand hopes to build bridges between business in Scandinavia and Minnesota so that this approach to corporate responsibility can flourish here. He will pursue a Ph.D. at the Copenhagen Business School's Center for Corporate Social Responsibility.

Jody L. TallBear, Minneapolis—Native tribes in Minnesota and the Dakotas have the opportunity to develop their considerable energy resources (such as wind power). TallBear plans to stand by them as an advocate for the inclusion of tribal interests in renewable energy policy and projects. She will embark on a self-directed study of federal policies and regulation governing renewable energy development as well as the capacity of Indian country to develop renewable energy as a vehicle to strengthen and diversify tribal economies. TallBear will graduate from Hamline University School of Law in May 2009.

Scott M. Voss, Apple Valley—As a reading specialist at Apple Valley High School, Voss works passionately to engage his students in learning to love reading. He has created new strategies and partnerships with other teachers across his school that have allowed many formerly disengaged students to advance one year's reading growth in just 13 weeks. In order to continue to develop strategies that reach students who do not read well, Voss will pursue a Ph.D. in reading research at the University of Minnesota.

The [Bush Leadership Fellows Program](#) is dedicated to the development of leadership skills in people with high potential and was initiated by one of the original executives of the 3M Corporation, Archibald G. Bush, who in 1953 created the Bush Foundation with his wife Edyth. In addition to the Leadership Fellows Program, the Bush Foundation provides fellowships to artists and physicians.

*With a mission to improve the quality of life in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, the **Bush Foundation** strives to be a catalyst to shape vibrant communities by investing in courageous and effective leadership that significantly strengthens and improves the well-being of the region's people. In 2009, the Foundation launched [Goals for a Decade](#)—to develop courageous leaders and engage entire communities in solving problems, to support the self-determination of Native nations and to increase educational achievement. Learn more at www.bushfoundation.org.*

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