

THE CITIZEN DIPLOMAT

Winter 2018

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WHAT'S NEW AT CIVIC?

Wow! We've been busy! We hosted over 100 visitors from 29 countries between June and December. Turn the page to read about upcoming events and other CIVIC news, such as the Mandela Washington Fellows, new CIVIC interns, a CIVIC member profile, and more!



Our visitors came from:

Germany, Croatia, Estonia, Italy, Republic of Kosovo, Spain, Turkey, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Moldova, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, United Kingdom, Korea, Uzbekistan, Malaysia, Azerbaijan, and the Kyrgyz Republic.

Thank you to the CIVIC Volunteers who helped with these programs:

Christy Weitz, Jane McMullen, Ken Royar, Jeanne Stoakes, Tom Bray, Madison Hunke, Paula Sanan, Jane Murphy, Rachel Napoli, Suzanne Kirchner, Barbara Stein, Jennifer Blair, Robert Blair, Gay Blair, Joni Jones, Mark Brookfield, Michael Connel, Steve Weber, Nancy Weber, Jason Napoli, Dan Milller, Virginia Miller, Bruce Tarwater, Omar Sanan, Ruth Bradley, Betty Batterman, Ivana Kolmasova, Ondrej Santolik, Linda Westphal, Don Kirchner, Newman Abuissa, Janice Weiner, Peg Bouska, Gayle Bray, Karin Franklin, Amy Chastain, Liz Bergeron, Alan Bergeron, Alissa Meggitt, Lori Ziegenhorn, Doug Hansel, Harry Olmstead, Matt Drabek, Jayne Finch, Steve Merkel-Hess, Victor Marz, Mick Weitz, Pam Terrill, Leo Lim, Zinnia Lim, Jennifer Blair, Bob Kirby, Ken Atkinson, Ed Williams, Amanda Potterfield, Jackie Curnick, Dave Tiffany, Concepcion Piragine, Jennifer Miller, Suijit Singh, Lyle Muller, Joseph Dobrian, Elena Osinskaya, Catherine Cashner, Adam Carros, Zack Kucharski, Jonathan Sabin and the CIVIC staff.

Visit Profile:

Library Sciences October 6th-9th

In October, five librarians from Mongolia visited eastern Iowa to learn the best practices in managing library collections and examine how libraries serve diverse and multicultural populations through community engagement. Their meetings in Iowa included:

- Iowa City Book Festival
- University of Iowa Libraries
- School of Library Sciences and Information Science
- Kalona Public Library
- Solon Public Library
- Hoover Presidential Library and Museum
- Iowa City Public Library

At the University of Iowa Libraries, the group was shown a 19th century printing block tablet. The delegation was able to translate the old Mongolian script to modern Mongolian script, which was then translated to English. It was an exciting moment for UI staff and visitors.



Delegation with UI librarians and the 19th century tablet

"My overall experience in Iowa City was absolutely excellent...I am very grateful to all the volunteers and would like to thank CIVIC for the perfect organization of the program. You are brilliant!" -Narmin Aslanbayova, Azerbaijan

Member Profile:



Steve Merkel-Hess

Steve Merkel-Hess has been a valued CIVIC member for several years.

What do you enjoy about engaging with CIVIC?

Meeting these visitors from all over the world. Some have become Facebook friends. I've taken some shopping. I've stayed in contact with some. Some want to come to UI for grad school and they are in contact with how I can be helpful, even if it's not much help. Every visit makes me realize how fortunate in multiple ways I am to be an American, and yet makes me jealous of all the international experience of many of the visitors.

What visit has been your favorite and why?

The arts group from last year - from Bolivia, Vietnam, etc. They were interested in everything, as creative artists usually are. When we visited some of the places the musicians in the group jammed. One of them gave me a copy of his professionally produced music CD.

Another one of my favorite visits was the recent Vietnam group. I drove them all day, including visits to the Kalona Hen House and the SuperNatural Dairy. And a lunch at an Amish farm at noon. I've lived in Iowa City for 40 years and never visited an Amish farm.



Big Events:

MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP 2018

June 20th - July 29th

This summer, in collaboration with the UI Tippie College of Business, John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center, and Institute for International Business, CIVIC helped to host the 3rd cadre of Mandela Washington Fellows. Over a period of two days, CIVIC volunteers braved tornado warnings and epic thunderstorms to give the arriving fellows a cheery, bright welcome at the airport! CIVIC organized a Meet & Greet to welcome the fellows to the community and a Graduation Ceremony to congratulate them on the successful completion of their program. In between, CIVIC introduced the fellows to representatives from city government, took them to Kalona for sightseeing and lunch at an Amish farm, watched the Kernels play baseball, learned about Herbert Hoover at the museum and historic site, and took a field trip to Cedar Rapids to visit the African American museum, the Islamic Center, and the Mother Mosque. We worked with local partners at the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council, Table to Table, Systems Unlimited, Grow Johnson County, the Global Food Project, the North Liberty Community Food Pantry, and the City of Iowa City to arrange for five different service experiences for each fellow. Gay and Jennifer Blair, Barb Stein and Joni Jones, Jane Murphy and Mark Brookfield, Omer and Paula Sanan, and Don and Suzanne Kirchner all hosted home hospitality dinners! We hope to host the 2019 fellows again this summer!



Save the Dates:

4th Annual Celebration of Citizen Diplomacy Dinner

Tuesday, April 16th
6:00-9:00 pm
hotelVetro
Iowa City, IA

Join us to recognize the 2018 Citizen Diplomat Award Recipients with keynote address on civil discourse today by Award-winning ABC News correspondent and UI alumna Lana Zak.



2019 Annual Membership Meeting & Potluck Dinner

Monday, February 25th
5:30-8:00 pm
Coralville Public Library

Join us for an international feast, review of the past year, volunteer recognition, board elections, and the cheerful company of other globally-minded citizens!

Anatomy of a CIVIC Visit

Part II: Proposals

Once an National Program Agency (NPA) has invited CIVIC to submit a proposal, CIVIC bases its proposal on the Department of State's program objectives. We craft a proposal around two broad aspects: professional meetings and potential points of cultural exchange.

CIVIC's proposals begin by outlining clearly and concisely why a visit to eastern Iowa will offer the international visitors an experience they can't get elsewhere. The research we conduct and the knowledge of our board, members, and staff play a key role in helping us frame this "hook" convincingly.

CIVIC staff review past programs to identify relevant previously used professional resources and researches potential new ones. The range of resources always includes professional meetings with individuals and/or organizations from both the public and private sectors, and also ideally incorporate appropriate public/private partnerships.

In selecting resources to include, we look for opportunities that are unique to eastern Iowa—what do we have to offer that the other community-based members across the nation do not? This is one area where we can always use the help of our members. If you see an interesting initiative, business, or organization featured in the news, we'd love to have you share the item with us! Furthermore, members with areas of interest or expertise are encouraged to provide their input.

Points of cultural exchange are equally important. Here again, the most effective proposals contain a combination of what might be considered Iowa's traditional heritage (e.g., a visit to a family farm), but also something distinct. Recent cultural exchanges have included outings with Hawkeye Diplomats, an initiative designed to institutionalize exchanges with UI students, and the Hawkeye homecoming football game. In the end, what makes CIVIC stand apart is our stellar reputation as a location where volunteers escort our visitors and open their homes by providing hospitality dinners.

CIVIC receives Community Foundation of Johnson County grant!

Given the increasing budgetary uncertainty of federal and state appropriations, the CIVIC board has taken steps to ensure that eastern Iowans will be building global ties locally for years to come. CIVIC applied for, and received, a \$6,236.50 CFJC grant to support a new "Ensuring the Future of Citizen Diplomacy" endowment building campaign. Now we need to grow it! Over the next ten years, we're aiming for \$350,000, which would secure the organization's future for the next generation of citizen diplomats. A special thanks to the Community Foundation and the Angerer Family Fund, which made the gift possible.

Can you help us kick off our endowment campaign? If we raise \$1000 by January 31, 2019, an anonymous donor will contribute another \$1000.



Meet Our New Interns!



EMILIE WILSON COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Journalism & Communications

Emilie Wilson is a second-year undergraduate student at the University of Iowa. She is from Waukee, Iowa, and is double majoring in journalism and communications and minoring in psychology. In her free time, Emilie enjoys reading, cooking, traveling, and spending time with friends and family. In the future she plans to pursue a career in Public Relations.



MARIA KUIPER COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

Journalism & Communications

Maria Kuiper is a second-year undergraduate student at the University of Iowa studying Journalism/Mass Communications and Arabic with a certificate in Human Rights. She loves traveling, meeting new people, and writing. In the future, Maria plans to work in a news room as a correspondent or an investigative journalist. She ultimately wants to work in the Middle East.

CIVIC Endowment Fund

Matching endowment gift – your CIVIC gift can have twice the impact

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous CIVIC donor, gifts to the CIVIC Endowment Fund will be matched up to \$1,000 total. CIVIC's Endowment Fund was created in 2016, during our 30th anniversary year, to set aside funds to sustain the organization in an uncertain future. Donating to the Endowment Fund is a statement of belief in the long-term benefits of citizen diplomacy. The Community Foundation of Johnson County houses the Endowment Fund, and donations may be eligible for the Endow Iowa State Tax Credit.

Get Social with CIVIC!

CIVIC is now hosting casual opportunities to meet with our international delegations. Rather than a full meet-and-greet meal, these events allow you to stop by as you are able, with no obligation to cook! Events are announced to members via email as they are planned. Please join us for one of these opportunities:

Sip & Socialize – join the delegation for a beverage at a local restaurant or bar

Coffee & Conversation - get to know the delegates over a cup of coffee or a pastry at a local coffee shop

Dine & Discover - meet delegates for lunch or dinner at a local eatery

"It was so interesting to observe Iowa City! We received a warming welcome and the volunteers helped us learn so much information. Excellent!"

-Huy Cam Tat, Vietnam

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