

# **ABOUT GLOBAL TIES IOWA**



International leaders visit eastern lowa through the U.S. Department of State's short-term professional exchange program called the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and other government-supported and fee-for-service exchanges.



Global Ties Iowa arranges meetings and exchange activities with visitors' professional peers, students, and community members, organizes community experiences, and coordinates volunteers to assist with all phases of the exchange.



Local professionals and visiting leaders share their expertise with one another, while community volunteers (our citizen diplomats) greet, guide, host and give in support of international exchange. All participants gain deeper understandings of and connections with the American Midwest and the globe.

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# GLOBALTIES > lowa

is a community-based and member-driven non-profit organization that creates, supports, and sustains citizen diplomacy initiatives in eastern Iowa's Creative Corridor and beyond. We invite our community to greet, guide, host, and give with us!

#### WHAT WE DO

Global Ties Iowa coordinates people-to-people exchanges between international leaders and residents of eastern lowa.

As a member of Global Ties U.S., we collaborate with the U.S. Department of State's sponsored exchange programs, including International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), to host current and emerging international leaders who work in both public and private sectors. By programming meetings and exchange opportunities between visiting leaders and their professional peers, hosting lowa Table Dinners, and sharing unique aspects of the eastern lowa community, Global Ties lowa connects the world and the heartland.

#### **OUR MISSION**

We seek to strengthen our community's commitment to and participation in international exchanges on professional and individual levels. We believe in the inherent value of these interactions and that people-to-people exchanges contribute to the creation of a more prosperous local community

Through citizen diplomacy, we aim to develop international cooperation, foster mutual understanding across national borders, facilitate the creation of global professional networks, and contribute to the global education of area students and community residents, making eastern lowa a better place to live and work.

#### **OUR VALUES**

In our day-to-day and long-term decision-making, we seek to align our actions with our values. To do so, we ask: Is it globally- and community-focused? Is it reciprocal? We believe that these questions support our mission and move us closer to our vision

#### November 2024

#### Greetings, Citizen Diplomats!

Fiscal Year 2024 has been no ordinary year for Global Ties Iowa. Under the innovative leadership of Executive Director Amy Alice Chastain, we've given new dimensions to our tagline 'Connecting the World and the Heartland'!

We are beyond thrilled (and exhausted??) to report that FY 2024 saw a total of 34 international delegations, comprising 254 leaders and nearly 350 individuals overall, including support staffers. But, if you thought we only host international professional delegations, there is more to learn about some exciting new initiatives to further develop citizen diplomacy throughout eastern lowa:

- In March, Global Ties lowa, along with several other local organizations, presented a screening of 2023 Oscar-nominated short documentary "Stranger at the Gate." The powerful story of how human connection builds bridges resonated deeply with the full house audience, all of whom stayed after the film for a Q/A, moderated by Amy Alice, with the director and actors.
- Global Ties lowa has signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, which offers a myriad of opportunities for collaboration and, equally important, a physical presence in Cedar Rapids with a second office. Amy Alice was also invited to present powerful exchange community impact data at the Economic Summit in May which included delegations from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the United States.
- · We were incredibly honored that Global Ties lowa was chosen as one of only five organizations in the United States to host the Impact of Exchange: Stories from U.S. Exchange Alumni in August 2024. The terrace at the Czech & Slovak Museum & Library was the ideal location to display the public exhibit.
- · While most of our programs are intended for visitors coming to lowa (inbound), we've expanded participation in outbound programming. This summer many of our staff were invited to participate in an extraordinary week-long exchange entitled "Bond with Kuliang: 2024 China-U.S. Youth Festival" in Fuzhou, China. We have also had the privilege of hosting professional fellows through the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative and Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative, reciprocal programs which offer opportunities for the host professionals to travel to the home countries of their visitors.
- Global Ties lowa strengthened its commitment to focus on youth and developing new Citizen Diplomats. This summer, we hosted a group of 20 Iraqi and Kurdish young people through the Iraqi Youth Leadership Exchange Program (IYLEP). And next summer, plans are in place to host another IYLEP program and are progressing to host an in-house language and immersion program for Chinese youth. In addition, Amy Alice is the Local Coordinator with American Councils, the placement organization for the FLEX, YES, and UUTI programs.

None of these efforts would be possible without the incredible team spirit and ever-enthusiastic Global Ties Iowa staff and interns! They bring infectious passion, perspectives, dedication, and hard work. We bid several team members goodbye and congratulatory wishes this summer and have happily welcomed an equally talented new group, including new translation interns.

We are proud to report that our Board of Directors is now more representative of our eastern lowa community, commemorative of the strides we have taken to expanding outside of Iowa City. We continue to work toward expanded board engagement in operational support and expanded sponsorships/partnerships. Do let us know how to leverage your skills and connections as well in these efforts.

It is the incredible warmth and energy that our volunteers and professional resources offer our visitors that truly personalizes eastern lowa to the world. Our deepest thanks to everyone who made this a year of incredible connection. Please continue to be part of this important work. Greet, guide, host, and give - we do make a world of difference.

Liz Bergeron, Board President

Amy Alice Chastain, Executive Director

# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



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**Board Member** 



Thank you to our Board of Directors for the work they do! Interested in getting involved with any of Global Ties Iowa's task forces or in administrative support? Let us know at connect@globaltiesiowa.org. We continue to expand our leadership to include new talents and insights.

# 2024 BY THE NUMBERS



Above: A member of the "Cooperation on Infrastructure for the Indo-Pacific" delegation answers an audience question while participating in a panel session with the University of Iowa Political Science Department.

2024 was an impactful year for our local community. Through professional meetings, Iowa Table Dinners, and interactions with volunteers, our international visitors felt the warmth of eastern lowa.

In addition to the numbers listed below, we accomplished one of our major goals: expanding outside of Iowa City. We opened a second office in Cedar Rapids, IA and held meetings in numerous eastern Iowa cities, including Decorah, Kalona, McGregor, and the Quad Cities.

international programs

1432 lodging nights in the community

51 Iowa Table **Dinners** 

students engaged

316 professional peers engaged

eastern Iowa

hours

\$828,643.28+ of total economic impact

# TREASURER'S REPORT

As Treasurer for Global Ties Iowa, I'm pleased to provide an overview of our financial performance for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024. The organization achieved a total income of \$298,150, with our primary revenue source coming from Global Ties U.S. funding, which contributed \$198,285 (or 66% of our total revenue). This substantial funding not only demonstrates the strength of our relationship with our core funding partner but also highlights the growth in support from the Community Partnership Grant (CPG), which has been pivotal in enabling our organization to expand its programs and reach.

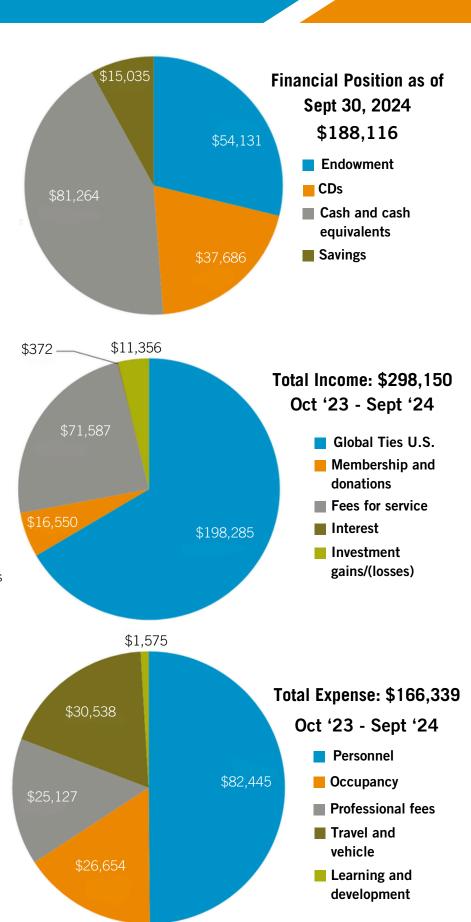
In addition to CPG funding, we saw incremental revenue from our Fee-for-Service programs, which generated \$71,587, representing approximately 24% of our income. These programs have become an essential part of our strategy, providing a steady stream of revenue while offering valuable services to our community. Moreover, membership and donations contributed \$16,550, while interest and investment activities added a modest but valuable \$11,728, supporting our auxiliary revenue streams.

Overall, this revenue diversification positions Global Ties Iowa with a healthy financial foundation. The organization has maintained a strong balance sheet and robust cash position, ensuring financial flexibility as we enter the new fiscal year. This stability allows us to continue investing in our programs, exploring new service opportunities, and strengthening our community impact.

As we look forward to the coming year, we are optimistic about sustaining our financial health and further enhancing our offerings. We remain committed to effective financial stewardship and are excited about the continued growth opportunities for Global Ties Iowa. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to our mission.





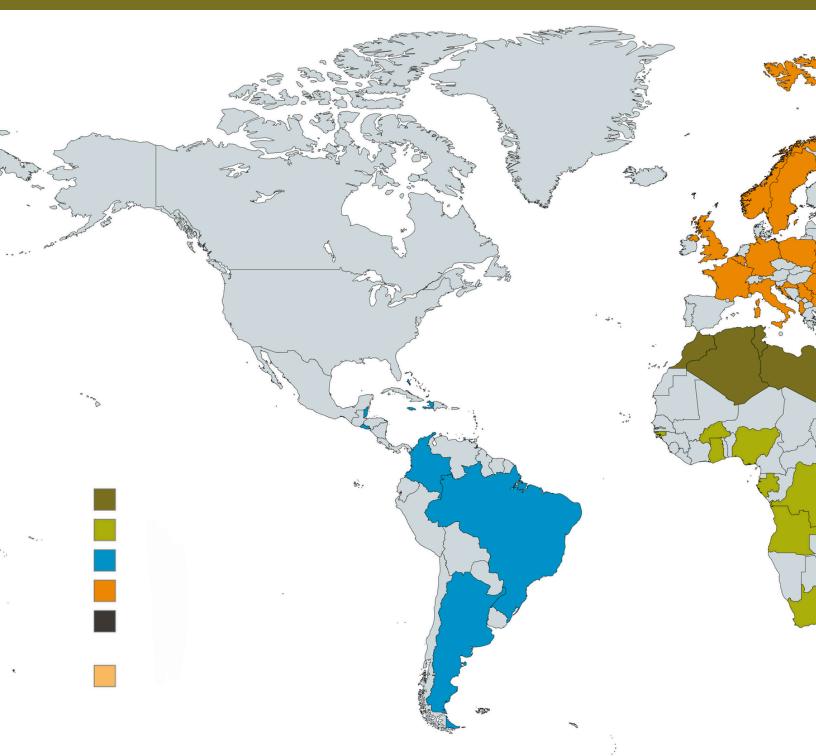


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Benin
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Cape Verde
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Cameroon
China
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Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cyprus
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Fiji
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Guinea-Bissau
Haiti
India

Indonesia Iran Iraq Israel Italy Jamaica Japan Jordan Kazakhstan Kenya



Kuwait Kyrgyz Republic Laos Lebanon Lesotho

Libya Madagascar Malawi Malaysia Maldives

Morocco Namibia Nepal New Zealand

Nigeria Norway Papua New Guinea

Philippines Poland

Romania

Rwanda Saudi Arabia Scotland

Sierra Leone Senegal Serbia

Singapore South Africa Sri Lanka

Sweden

Syria

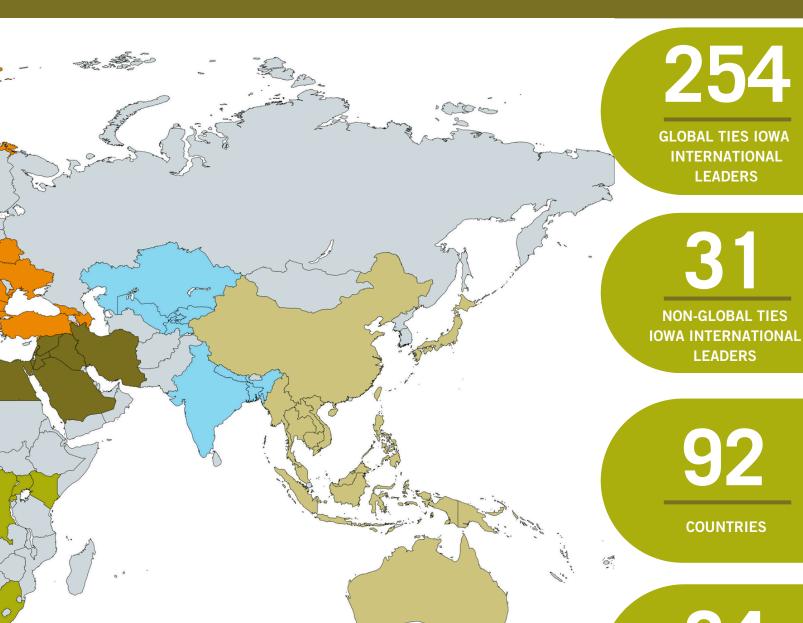
Taiwan Tajikistan

Tanzania Thailand

Trinidad and Tobago

Tunisia Uganda Ukraine Uzbekistan Vietnam Zimbabwe

**GLOBAL TIES IOWA PROGRAMS** 





Thank you to our community for filling out the Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study. Because of your participation, we received valuable information about the impact our work has on our local volunteers and professional resources. Here are some statistics that demonstrate the impact in our community.

of volunteers say their colleagues have learned about other countries and cultures

92%

of volunteers learned about the country of international visitors

of volunteers have improved their ability to differentiate between similar countries

of volunteers are likely to consider different perspectives

73%

of volunteers have a deeper and stronger understanding of U.S. foreign policy

of volunteers are better able to discuss personal differences from an informed perspectiv<u>e</u>

76%

of volunteers have greater pride in their local community

88%

of volunteers learned more about international affairs and issues



A main communications task at Global Ties Iowa is reflecting on community impact. Below are three highlights from this fiscal year. All featured interviews and stories can be found on the Global Ties Iowa website. We encourage you to regularly read the blog posts to learn more about our delegations, organizational activities, and community spotlights.

# 1

#### How Working with Global Ties Iowa Shaped My Career: A Retrospective

Former Communications Coordinator, Abby Fowler, reflects on her work at Global Ties Iowa and what the organization offered her — namely the opportunity to make a profound impact on a non-profit organization. Abby's work also helped her in being accepted for a Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) in Japan. Through CLS, she was given a special hiring authority for federal jobs, which made her eligible to apply for a social media manager position at the Department of State.



### **Guinea-Bissau Leaders Experience NCAA Action at Iowa's Carver-Hawkeye Arena!**

From March 23rd to 26th, we had the pleasure of hosting four international leaders from Guinea-Bissau for the program "Public Universities' Administration in the U.S." Thanks to the generosity of Terry Johnson, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer from the University of Iowa Office of Finance, the group had the exciting opportunity to attend the sold-out University of Iowa Women's Basketball NCAA Tournament game at the Carver-Hawkeye Arena and watch Caitlin Clark's last home game at Iowa.



#### Gonzalo Diaz: Bringing Iowa City to Argentina's Classrooms

Gonzalo Diaz is an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumnus from Argentina who traveled to eastern lowa in March 2023. We followed up with Gonzalo this year to interview him about how his IVLP experience impacts his life at home. Now back in Argentina, Gonzalo incorporates his experiences from Iowa City into his classroom. For example, he shows his students pictures of Iowa City's street art. He hopes to maintain his relationships with the people he met in Iowa via Zoom and other online communication methods.



#### International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)

Thanks to the hard work of our programming staff, interns, and volunteers, this was another successful year for international exchange! While these delegations visit many cities during their stay in the U.S., we are often their only hosts in the Midwest. Time and time again, we hear from our international leaders how much eastern lowa exceeds their expectations. These outstanding reviews would not be possible without the kindness and dedication of our volunteers. We are proud to bring international connections to the heartland!



Leaders representing 22 countries take pictures after meeting with Johnson County Attorney Rachel Zimmermann Smith for a program about the U.S. Judicial System.



Kyrgyz leaders meet with young adults from University of Iowa student organizations.



A Ukrainian international leader visits the Community of Artists and Veterans studio.



Leaders from France visit the University of Iowa's main power plant for a program about strengthening cooperation at the subnational level.



A delegation from Kazakhstan is greeted by a volunteer upon their arrival to eastern lowa.



Leaders from France chat with our office staff and community members at a Sip and Socialize at the Green House.



Leaders from Guinea-Bissau point out their home country on a globe at Kirkwood Community College while in eastern lowa for the program entitled "Public University Administration in the US."



A delegate from China golfs during a free afternoon in Iowa City.



Leaders from Jordan answer questions while meeting with a University of Iowa student organization.



Executive Director Amy Alice Chastain visits the NewBo City Market in Cedar Rapids, IA with an entrepreneur from Gabon.



Mkay, a student volunteer at Cornell College, hosts an lowa Table Dinner for a Georgian delegation.



Leaders from Kyrgyz Republic meet with Prof. Nicholas Martini from the University of Iowa Political Science Department to discuss youth and civic engagement.



I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for the warm welcome I received during my time in Iowa City. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to learn about elections and about the similarities and connections between Iowa City and Jordan.

Samar Mohd Ibrahiem Tarawneh, Head of Woman Empowerment Unit Amman, Jordan



lowa was one of my favorite cities of the program. It was wonderful to meet so many intellectual people in the city. I also loved the research you undertake in lowa and to have a better understanding of agricultural sector in the U.S."

Lorena Esmeralda Guarnizo Bonilla, CEA Colombia Corporate Affairs Manager Bogota, Colombia



Leaders representing 13 countries for a program entitled "Building Resilient and Diverse Supply Chains" volunteer for Table to Table in Iowa City.



Leaders from Gabon present gifts to their Iowa Table Dinner hosts after sharing a meal.



Two delegates, part of the multi-regional project focused on "Global Economic Cooperation," pose during a holiday celebration.



(L-R) Global Ties Iowa student staff Anna O'Connor, Zach Hemmen, and Brenda Gao eat with four delegates representing New Zealand, India, Japan, and the Maldives at Aspen Leaf Frozen Yogurt after hosting an Iowa Table Dinner. The delegates were part of the project "Cooperation on Infrastructure for the Indo-Pacific."



Nick Hartmann and his daughter volunteer to greet a Georgian delegation at the airport.



Leaders from Gabon present gifts to their Iowa Table Dinner hosts after sharing a meal



#### MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWS

In collaboration with the University of Iowa Tippie College of Business, it was a pleasure to host the Mandela Washington Fellows for another summer! This group of accomplished leaders came from across Sub-Saharan Africa to study business, serve the community, and participate in cultural activities. Thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers who spent their time meeting, hosting, guiding, and driving them around eastern lowa!

# **IRAQI YOUTH LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

#### **Overview**

From July 9 to 22, Global Ties Iowa had the incredible opportunity to host a delegation of 20 Iraqi and Kurdish young people in eastern lowa as part of the Iraqi Youth Leadership Exchange Program (IYLEP). As most of the staff at Global Ties Iowa are students, this was a unique experience to interact with international visitors who were close in age. Each day, at least one student intern or volunteer accompanied the students throughout every part of their program.



#### Global Ties Iowa Reflections

Staff reflections on IYLEP revealed how this experience was transformative. Peyton Pangburn, our summer Development Intern, said, "They loved every second in lowa, and we loved to have them!" Though it was sad to see the group depart from eastern lowa, it was extremely impactful to be involved with exchanges outside of IVLP and we look forward to our continued work with IYLEP programs for summers to come.



#### **Staff Quotes**

"I miss all of them and I know that they will change the world for the better with their experiences."

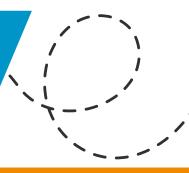
- Berkley Barnett, Program Intern

"It was heartening to see how impactful their time in Iowa was and I know the lessons they learned here will last them a lifetime."

- Anna Peach, Program Coordinator



# YOUNG TRANSATLANTIC INNOVATION LEADERS INITIATIVE



# 4----

# YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS INITIATIVE



The Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI), sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), empowers young, emerging entrepreneurs from Europe by placing them in U.S. organizations for full-time fellowships in fields such as social entrepreneurship, innovation, private business, and start-up development.

The Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Professional Fellows Program (YSEALI PFP), sponsored by the ECA, broadens the professional experience of young, emerging leaders from Southeast Asia through fellowship experiences in the following areas: civic engagement; innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic empowerment; and society and governance.

From April to May 2024, we hosted YSEALI PFP participants Thu Trang Pham and Nicole Yap. In September, we welcomed the following YSEALI PFP and YTILI fellows: Shafira Rizki Aulia, Apols Garmay, Redis Bala, Danielle du Plooy, and Kifayat Talibzada.



Redis Bala Albania YTILI



Daniëlle du Plooy Scotland YTILI



Kifayat Talibzada Azerbaijan YTILI



Thu Trang Pham Vietnam YSEALI PFP



Nicole Yap Singapore YSEALL PEP



Shafira Rizki Aulia Indonesia YSEALI PFP



Apols Garmay Philippines YSEALI PFP

We would like to thank the following community members for serving as hosts for YSEALI PFP and YTILI participants: Dr. Kit Ford with Argrow's House, Melissa Bates with LSF Medical Solutions, Andre Wright with Wright House of Fashion, Simeon Talley with Dream City, Jessica Fogarty with Field to Family, and Alex Taylor serving as hub mentor for YTILI.

# Impact of Exchange STORIES FROM U.S. EXCHANGE ALUMNI

From August 9 – September 10, Global Ties Iowa was honored to host the Impact of Exchange: Stories from U.S. Exchange Alumni in Cedar Rapids, IA on the grounds of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in the historic Czech Village neighborhood. The opportunity to host this exhibit proved instrumental in helping Global Ties Iowa expand our reach throughout eastern Iowa.

The Impact of Exchange: Stories from U.S. Exchange Alumni is a traveling, open-air photography exhibit that combines public art with storytelling. The exhibit was comprised of six large photo-vinyl cubes that feature the photography and stories of 38 U.S. citizen Exchange Alumni taken during their time abroad. The exhibit, with its striking images representing experiences around the world, serves to communicate the opportunities available to everyone in our community, especially young people. The Impact of Exchange exhibit illustrates the transformative power of exchange programs for U.S. citizen Exchange Alumni, fostering both personal and professional development while forging meaningful connections across borders.

We would especially like to thank the following for their contributions to the success of the exhibit:

- Andre Wright of the Wright House of Fashion
- Diplomat in Residence Sara Veldhuizen Stealy
- · Christopher Merrill, Cate Dicharry, Santiago Giralt, Olena Huseinova, Peter Zavada, and the Fall Residency writers of the International Writing Program
- Karen Wachsmuth from University of Iowa International Programs
- Dawn Wood, Whitney Uzomah, and Elizabeth O'Brien from Kirkwood Community College Office of Global Learning
- Dalibor Mikulas and Ron Detweiler from the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
- Peter Gerlach from the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council
- Madelina Young-Smith Director of the Office of Alumni Affairs, U.S. Department of State
- Andrew Kelleher, a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholar, 2024
- Peyton Pangburn, Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, 2024-2025
- The countless volunteers and staff members of Global Ties U.S., U.S. Department of State Office of Alumni Affairs, Photoville, Global Ties Iowa, and the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

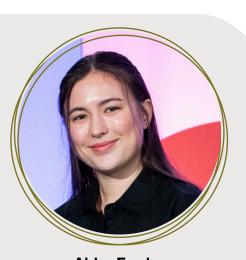


# GLOBAL TIES IOWA EMERGING LEADERS

#### WHAT IS THE EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM?

The Emerging Leaders Program engages young professionals from across the nationwide Global Ties Network to launch their careers in international affairs, public diplomacy, and international exchange. The program is comprised of a series of training courses and events, a mentorship program with Emerging Leader alumni, and service projects aimed at introducing local communities to career opportunities and connections in the fields of public diplomacy and international exchange.

Participants are engaged in a year-long program. Throughout the year, Emerging Leaders network with professionals in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in support of career development.



**Abby Fowler** 2023 - 2024



Anna Peach 2024 - 2025

#### WHO ARE OUR EMERGING LEADERS?

Abby Fowler was a member of the 2024 Global Ties U.S. Emerging Leaders Program. She graduated from the University of lowa with degrees in International Studies with a business focus and Japanese Language and Literature, as well as a Museum Studies certificate. Abby also earned a Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) to study in Japan, was a 2024 CLS Alumni Ambassador, and represented the Japanese and International Studies departments as a World Language Ambassador.

Thanks to the experiences and opportunities kicked off by her time at Global Ties Iowa, Abby has gained employment as a Public Affairs Specialist at the Department of State's Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation.

Anna Peach is a member of the 2025 Global Ties U.S. Emerging Leaders Program. She graduated from the University of Iowa, majoring in Global Health Studies with a certificate in Sustainability. While at lowa, she was a member of the Sustainability Presidential Charter Committee and was an ICRU Research Fellow. Anna also volunteered in the Food Pantry at Iowa and at the Patient's Library at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Thanks to her role at Global Ties Iowa, Anna grew as a professional and gained communication and problem-solving skills that are valuable to her long-term career goals. Anna now works for AmeriCorps in Oregon.

# IMPACT AWARDS The state of the

The Global Ties U.S. IVLP Impact Awards recognize alumni of the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program for their high achievements. This year, we are excited to announce the visitors to eastern Iowa who earned IVLP Impact Awards:

- Irena Xhafa (Albania)
- Désiré Habonimana (Burundi)
- Coralia Susana Vasquez Salazar (Colombia)
- Antigoni Komodiki (Cyprus)
- Kelvin Odonkor (Ghana)
- Lilach Krakauer (Israel)

- Eva Vittoria Cammerino (Italy)
- Munkhtuya Amgalan (Mongolia)
- Osazee Isonarae (Nigeria)
- Sage Semafara (Rwanda)
- Melissa Li-A-Young (Suriname)
- Zayneb Dhieb (Tunisia)

The IVLP Impact Award recipients were in the United States for a variety of program topics, including Global Economic Cooperation, Entrepreneurship: Startups, American Language, and much more!

To earn the awards, IVLP alumni propose projects related to the theme of their IVLP experience. Some project titles from our alumni include: "Integrity Chronicles - Empowering Albanian Institutions and Society Against Corruption through Storytelling," "Building Rural English Teachers' Capacity to Incorporate Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom," and "Awareness-raising among Fishermen in the Fight Against Cholera."











# **STAFF & INTERNS**



**Amy Alice Chastain Executive Director** 



Leila Assadi Communications Coordinator



Anna O'Connor Program Coordinator



**Abbey Welden Executive Fellow for** Development



Brenda Gao Communications and Social Media Fellow



Zach Hemmen Program Fellow



Jason Ly Translation Intern



Ani Jilavyan Translation Intern

Thank you to our amazing staff for their hard work and dedication this year! Special thanks to Cadence Barker, Berkley Barnett, Abby Fowler, Peyton Pangburn, Anna Peach, and Bailey Shafer who departed during the year.



Greet. Guide. Host. Give.

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