

BUSH FOUNDATION SELECTS 21 LEADERSHIP FELLOWS FOR 2006

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Thirteen Twin Cities-area residents, four Greater Minnesota residents, two North Dakotans, a South Dakotan and a Wisconsin resident are among the 21 individuals to receive Bush Leadership Fellowships for 2006. The fellowships support full-time study in academic or self-designed educational programs. The program's goal is to help individuals at mid-career prepare for greater leadership responsibilities and enhanced contributions to their communities.

Individual photos of the fellows can be viewed on the leadership fellows page at www.bushfoundation.org.

The fellowships will support study in a wide range of fields, including immigration policy, history and law; Native American language preservation; public affairs; education; dispute resolution; social justice ministry; "smart" home technology for dementia patients; social work and organizational leadership. The 2006 fellows include arts and nonprofits administrators, K-12 and college educators, public employees, a corporate vice president and a foundation program officer.

In addition to the Leadership Fellows Program, the Bush Foundation provides fellowships to artists and physicians. The Foundation also makes grants to nonprofit organizations in Minnesota and the Dakotas that work in the areas of arts and humanities, ecological health, education, and health and human services. The Foundation was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife, Edyth. It supports the work of leaders and organizations to improve their communities and provides opportunities for those who lack them.

In the Twin Cities and suburbs:

- **Yvonne L. Barrett, St. Paul**—Barrett is executive director of Ain Dah Yung Center (Our Home), which provides a broad range of culturally relevant social services to American Indian youth and their families. She plans to become a fluent Anishinabe speaker through structured academic coursework and self-directed study with Native-speaking elders. On the completion of her fellowship, she hopes "to use language acquisition and cultural learning as a form of strengthening family systems" among Native youth.
- **Eyenga M. Bokamba, Minneapolis**—Bokamba dreams that kids will want to be in school because it speaks to their true selves. A language arts high school teacher in

the Hopkins school district, she plans to “create an avenue for leadership development and challenge my school and community to include these young leaders in decision-making.” Bokamba will pursue a master’s degree in arts education at Harvard.

- **Marisol Chiclana-Ayala, St. Paul**—When Chiclana-Ayala immigrated from Puerto Rico to Minnesota in 1994, she barely spoke English and had no job. Now she dreams of creating a culturally sensitive “home” to ease the transition of Latino immigrants by providing information about housing, food, jobs, medical attention, schools, and legal and social services in one location. Chiclana-Ayala plans to obtain a master’s degree in public affairs at the University of Minnesota. She is a diversity specialist with Ramsey County.
- **Julie M. Henderson, St. Paul**—Henderson believes her greatest work achievement thus far is teaching students to read and write because “no one can take that away from them.” She is the assessment and testing supervisor with the Minnesota Department of Education. Henderson will complete her doctoral degree in education at Hamline University and pursue an education specialist degree in educational leadership at the University of St. Thomas.
- **Kazoua S. Kong-Thao, St. Paul**—As an equal opportunity consultant/ affirmative action officer for the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Kong-Thao was part of the delegation that traveled in 2004 to the Wat Tham Krabok refugee camp in Thailand. Born in Laos, she had been a refugee for a short time before coming to the United States in 1976. Kong-Thao, who is vice chair of the Saint Paul Board of Education, will study public affairs at the University of Minnesota and receive a master’s degree. She hopes to run for public office again or direct a state agency so she may advocate for the rights of many disadvantaged groups.
- **Joi D. Lewis, St. Paul**—Lewis is the dean of multicultural life at Macalester College and takes as her goal the reform of those higher education policies in the United States and South Africa that descend from Jim Crow laws and apartheid. After she completes an Ed.D. degree in higher education management at the University of Pennsylvania, Lewis will study higher education policies through an internship at the Spencer Foundation in Chicago.
- **Mark Lindberg, Minneapolis**—Lindberg believes the work of immigrant integration is extremely important to the future of our nation. A senior program officer with the Otto Bremer Foundation, Lindberg intends to study immigration policy, history and law through a self-directed program. He hopes to launch an immigrant coalition in the future and run for public office.
- **Ananda S. Liyanapathirana, Woodbury**—When the December 2004 tsunami hit Southeast Asian, Liyanapathirana (a native of Sri Lanka) was inspired to help rebuild his country while fostering a connection between it and his new home in the U.S. He will pursue a master’s degree in public affairs at the University of Minnesota with the dream of creating and strengthening the educational ties between the two

countries. Liyanapathirana is a senior systems analyst for the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

- **Steven Newcom, Brooklyn Park**—Citing such past intersections of religion and social justice as the civil rights, anti-war and anti-apartheid movements, Newcom sees an opportunity for social justice ministry to become a core ministerial function. He will study and advance social justice ministry through a self-directed study program. Newcom is executive director of the Headwaters Foundation for Justice.
- **Sharon I. Radd, Minneapolis**—As part of her work as dean of students at Central Middle School, Radd facilitates staff development discussions about racism among its predominantly white teaching staff. In that and other settings, she strives to facilitate “transformational moments in which others with privilege in public education recognize how the system benefits them and disadvantages others.” Radd will complete a doctoral degree in educational leadership at the University of St. Thomas.
- **Diane L. Sprague, Minneapolis**—As director of Lifetime Home Project, Sprague is interested in helping people who need or will need to modify their homes or lifestyles due to physical or mental disabilities. She will study the application of “smart” home sensing and the emerging field of design/modification assistance in Alzheimer’s and related dementia fields through a self-directed study program. She hopes to bring the full array of emerging telehealth technologies to people’s homes, allowing them to live longer, independently and safely.
- **Leslie Walking Elk, Minnetonka**—Walking Elk, who is Oglala Lakota/Oneida, grew up on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. As director of the Teen Indian Parents Program for the Division of Indian Work for the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, she is passionate about educating young Natives about sexuality, sex, and reproductive rights and responsibilities. She will obtain a master’s degree in organizational leadership at the College of St. Catherine.
- **Darlene R. Walser, Minneapolis**—A vice president with the community management firm of McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc., Walser has overseen that firm’s work on Heritage Park, a \$250 million mixed-income public housing development in Minneapolis. She says she wants “to create new models of community development that transform the lives of people living in our poorest communities.” Toward that end, she will attend the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in pursuit of a master’s degree in public administration.

In Greater Minnesota:

- **Henry J. Flocken, Cass Lake**—As former principal of Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig (a K-12 school in Cass Lake), Flocken believes it’s important to develop visionary Native leadership programs steeped in language and culture for tomorrow’s civic and spiritual leaders. In order to influence Indian education in this direction, he will

pursue a doctorate in education at the University of Minnesota and obtain his superintendent licensure. Currently, Flocken is adjunct faculty for Indian studies at Bemidji State University.

- **Lynda Sue A. Lawson, Duluth**—“The land is the lifeblood of its people and we are all caretakers of the land.” As the rural planning director for the Center for Rural Planning, Lawson leads communities through participatory, democratic processes to resolve land-use conflicts and to build their capacity to make decisions in their best interests. She plans a self-directed study program aimed at studying and strengthening her skills in alternative community dispute resolution.
- **Kimberly A. Reid, Rochester**—Reid, who is the implementation associate for Rochester Public Schools, comes from a family of educators and feels the best part of her job is the relationships she develops with her students. She will attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison in pursuit of a doctoral degree in teacher education; ultimately, she would like to teach at the university level and “take a leadership role in the development of Minnesota’s future teachers.”
- **Sean M. Virnig, Northfield**—Born deaf into a deaf family, Virnig is dedicated “to the continuing betterment of deaf children” in Minnesota and across the country. He will complete a Ph.D. in educational policy and administration at the University of Minnesota. Virnig is the director of education for the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf.

In North Dakota:

- **Kristi K. Loberg, Fargo**—Loberg’s belief that “to impact meaningful change in a community you need to know the place well and take time to really listen to the needs of people” has led her to live and practice her skills in eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota, near where she grew up. She will complete a doctoral degree at North Dakota State University; she is the social work program director for Concordia College.
- **Denis G. Montplaisir, Mandan**—Montplaisir is the manager for program development and training for Charles Hall Youth Services, which provides group home foster care for more than 100 at-risk youth each year. Throughout his career he’s been instrumental in developing experiential learning programs that reach troubled youth. He seeks to improve his ability to continue serving youth in this way by obtaining a master’s degree in experiential education at Minnesota State University-Mankato.

In South Dakota:

- **Linda L. Anderson, Rapid City**—As executive director of the Rapid City Arts Council, Anderson sees every day how investment in the arts strengthens communities. She will undertake a self-directed study program aimed at understanding community arts development so she can “empower arts organizations

and artists to be active participants” in city planning efforts, economic development and creating funding streams that sustain their work.

In Wisconsin:

- **Kristina M. Thompson, Luck**—Thompson works for the Burnett County Department of Health and Human Services as the supervisor for the children and families unit. In that role, she strives to improve the welfare of Native children in a culturally sensitive manner. She will obtain a master’s degree in social work at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Her eventual goal is to create training that fosters cooperation and understanding between tribal and county social workers.

The Bush Foundation is a private grantmaking organization fostering vibrant communities and vital leadership. Established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife, Edyth, the Foundation supports organizations in the areas of arts and culture, health and human services, education and ecological health in a region that includes Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. Its individual fellowship programs in the arts, medicine and leadership are open to candidates from Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and northwestern Wisconsin. The Bush Foundation also supports fully accredited tribal colleges and private historically black colleges and universities throughout the United States.