



A New Professionalism



**SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL STUDIES
& HUBERT H. HUMPHREY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR: A NEW PROFESSIONALISM

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Bish Sanyal

One goal of the Humphrey/SPURS Program is to strengthen the leadership skills of mid-career Fellows who come to MIT from all over the world for one academic year. The Fellows are selected on the basis of their professional accomplishments as well as the promise that soon after they return to their home countries they are likely to serve as leaders in developing and implementing innovative urban and regional policies. As administrators of the program, it is our job to nurture the Fellows' leadership instincts and professional abilities. We try to fulfill this responsibility by creating the right setting for personal and professional reflection. We also encourage critical analyses of all conventional ideas regarding urban and regional development.

At MIT we have been engaged in such learning efforts for nearly 50 years, starting in the mid-1960s when many social norms—both personal and professional—were first subjected to critical scrutiny. The SPURS/Humphrey Program at MIT has evolved over the

years as we continue to ask the critical question: What type of leadership and professionalism is necessary for our times as global interdependence intensifies, creating new opportunities for collective problem solving, yet simultaneously deepening uncertainties regarding the efficacy of conventional public policies for urban and regional development?

Today, the effectiveness of the conventional institutions created to foster urban and regional development—particularly in the public sector—is increasingly being questioned as cities and regions struggle with severe fiscal problems that public sector institutions seem unable to solve. Distrust of government is on the rise worldwide, and this negative sentiment has evoked widespread skepticism about conventional professional expertise: whether such expertise is truly rigorous and autonomous; whether such expertise is useful for addressing the complexities and uncertainties of our times; and whether experts of the old kind have been ethical in following professional codes of conduct or have been malleable to pressure from politically and economically powerful groups who put special interests over the public good. This has led many to question any theory of economic or political development that argues that professional expertise is necessary for addressing developmental problems. This, in turn, has raised other fundamental questions about what constitutes good leadership and what forms of expertise, judgment, and styles of engagement distinguish the new professionals from their predecessors.

There is no definitive answer to such questions. What we do know is that some elements of the conventional model of professional leadership need to be

revised. For example, in the old, orthodox model, professional leaders were expected to have a comprehensive and holistic view of problems. Based on such a holistic view, they were to propose an integrated set of interventions to develop cities, regions, and nations. The logic underlying this comprehensive approach was convincing at first glance. After all, since problems are created by a set of interconnected factors, they can only be fully solved by a set of integrated interventions that address all aspects of such problems. Yet, this logic has not proven useful in problem solving. Why? Because comprehending any problem in its totality—particularly such complex problems as those that have intensified with deepening global interconnectedness—is very difficult, if not impossible. A comprehensive view requires a thorough understanding of the entire system, which is not a set of static relationships but one constantly evolving for a variety of reasons. No professional can fully comprehend, let alone control such a system. True, this did not deter some professional leaders from proposing a set of integrated strategies for urban and regional development; but, such integrated approaches have been very difficult to implement, provoking both bureaucratic and political resistance and frustrating the leaders who, in desperation, often abandoned democratic principles in favor of more authoritarian approaches to enforce policies. And, as is well known, authoritarian approaches are not sustainable in the long run. Even in the short run there are usually many inadvertent side effects of arrogant public policies. Such side effects invariably undermine the key objectives of the policies, creating new problems rather than solving old ones.

A second feature of conventional leadership that needs revision is its reliance on orthodox prescriptions for economic problem solving. These prescriptions usually begin with monetary, fiscal, and trade policies designed to increase exports and foreign direct investments and to reduce budget deficits, inflation, and costs of various regulations that hinder private investments. Not all such prescriptions are wrong; after all, every nation needs to curb inflationary pressures, increase exports, and live within its means. What is of debatable value, however, is the way such policies are packaged together under the broad title of "trade liberalization and structural adjustment," and the surety with which such policies are prescribed and implemented—sometimes with the support of international financial institutions and multinational banks. This surety of purpose is not restricted to macroeconomic policies only; it also affects the way professional planners address micro, urban issues as cities face growing unemployment, housing shortages, higher food prices, and a simultaneous reduction in various public services.

Underlying all such policies is a conventional model of economic growth—how cities and nations must grow by increasing exports, and how such growth requires policies that encourage domestic as well as international investments. Let me reemphasize: the export-led model of economic growth is not all wrong. What is at issue here is the totalizing narrative of this approach, its surety of purpose and methodological arrogance even in the face of complex realities that indicate that the key assumptions underlying the orthodox model do not hold true in all circumstances. There needs to be a new type of professionalism that can transcend the conceptual tyranny of such orthodox "theories" in all domains—ranging from macro-economics to urban and rural development—and build on anomalies, outliers, and outright reverse causalities to craft heterodox solutions to the variety of problems cities and regions are currently grappling to address.

The third difference between old and new professionalism is that in the new mode, professionals implicitly acknowledge that past solutions are unlikely to work in the new circumstances of deepening global connection and increasing uncertainty. In the new mode, professionals do not assume either the stability of the status quo or the usefulness of conventional theories. Instead, the new mode calls for continuous learning based on careful evaluation of all efforts, and policy innovations that emerge from understanding mistakes, unanticipated consequences of past policies, and a self-imposed criticality of mind that is very different from the old sense of professional pride in codified knowledge and formalized expertise.

The humility with which the new professionals try to understand and address problems rests on a radically different notion of what it would take for cities, regions—and, for that matter, even nations—to develop. Whereas earlier theories depended upon the competitiveness of cities and regions, the new approach calls for cooperation—cities and regions crafting policies in consultation with other. Why so? For one, the increasing levels of uncertainty cities and regions now face can only be reduced through cooperation, not more competition.

This is not to say that cities and regions need no longer worry about competitive advantage; it is simply to acknowledge that the kinds of problems cities and regions are currently trying to address require more than competitive instincts. Take the issue of sustainability, for example. Every aspect of city and regional planning—from land use to transportation, housing, and natural resources—requires cities and regions to join forces in the face of fluctuating and unpredictable economic conditions. And to cooperate, cities and regions need to be humble about their capabilities; they need to be led by a new type of professional who understands what is at stake, how limited is our ability to forecast and control, and most importantly, how interlinked are the destinies of our cities, regions, and nations.

Cultivating a new professionalism appropriate for our times is an intellectual as well as institutional challenge for the SPURS/Humphrey Program at MIT. True, we have considerable experience addressing similar challenges, built up over nearly 50 years, but old practices left unexamined under new circumstances can hinder institutional innovation. Therefore, we need your advice and suggestions: How should we modify the learning and living experience we offer at MIT for the SPURS/Humphrey Fellows? What would be the most effective way to cultivate a new type of professional leader at a time when old notions of professionalism and leadership seem too orthodox and obsolete? When you have a moment, please, send me a note at sanyal@mit.edu.

I wish you a wonderful year ahead and look forward to hearing from you.

Bish Sanyal is a recipient of the 2011 MacVicar Faculty Fellows' award, one of the Institute's highest awards given for excellence in undergraduate teaching. This award is given to those individuals who have made a sustained contribution to the education of undergraduates.

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Countries represented by the 2010-2011 Fellows



Professors Alan Altshuler and Frederick Salvucci speaking at the American Planning Seminar.

American Planning Seminars

This fall, for the second year, the SPURS Program offered an American planning series designed to expose Fellows to the institutional, social, financial, and political environment of urban planning in the United States. Seminar topics included: urban planning from the perspective of a local public official; downtown revitalization and redevelopment; the city-state-national relationship; public participation; and land-use regulations and property

rights. Speakers who presented their work hailed from town planning and development offices, nonprofit organizations, and private firms. Noted speakers were Stuart Dash, director of community planning for the city of Cambridge; James Barnes, director of community development for the city of Lawrence; Maggie Super Church, project manager at Lawrence Community Works; Larry Bluestone, president of the Bluestone Planning Group; Daphne Poli-

tis, principal, Community Circle, Greater Boston Area; Elizabeth Clay, deputy director of Opportunity Nation and former director of Grassroots Governance in the office of Massachusetts Gov. Deval L. Patrick; Robert P. Mitchell, special assistant for Planning Initiatives, Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development; Greg McGregor, founding partner, McGregor & Associates; and Edith Netter of Edith Netter and Associates.

Professional Site Visits

This fall the Fellows made four professional site visits to planning institutions and organizations. The first was to the Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC). Former Humphrey Fellow Manuel Delgado, who is now a CDC board member, invited the Fellows to learn about how the nonprofit community organization works. The work of Fenway CDC was interesting to many of the Fellows because it is different from the centralized planning prominent in many other countries. Fenway CDC has been an active supporter and provider of professional affiliations for the Fellows, and we look forward to continuing the partnership this year.

Professor Ralph Gakenheimer organized the second professional visit—to the Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Six MAPC staff members spoke to the Fellows about the council's work as a regional planner. The Fellows were impressed by the organization, which maintains a large-scale transportation, land use, and social policy plan for Greater Boston. Once again, MAPC has offered to host Fellows for their professional affiliation. Last year, MAPC host-

ed five Fellows, and we are pleased to be continuing this strong partnership.

The third professional visit took place while the Fellows were in Washington D.C. for the Global Leadership Forum. Emil Rodriguez and the SPURS staff, including Professor Gakenheimer, coordinated a visit to Arlington, VA, to learn about the city's recent successes in Transit Oriented Development. The Fellows were very well received by city staffers, and the visit included a walking tour of the Rosslyn-Balston Corridor, a newly developed area recognized as an area of "smart growth." The Fellows returned to MIT raving about the experience.

The last of this fall's professional site visits was to Lawrence, MA, in December. Arranged in cooperation with Polina Bakhtiarov and Jeffery Juarez of the MIT@Lawrence Program, the Fellows visited the office of Mayor William Lantigua and met jointly with GroundWorks Lawrence and CommunityWorks Lawrence. Mayor Lantigua and the Fellows engaged in a lively debate about the difficult issues the city faces in the post-industrial economy as well as the mayor's priorities

of attracting business and reconstructing the economic infrastructure. The mayor enthusiastically welcomed the Fellows to keep in touch about their interests in planning and advocated for them to bring their skills back to Lawrence.

The Fellows then joined a group meeting of GroundWorks Lawrence, Lawrence CommunityWorks, and the city's Director of Economic Development, Patrick Blanchette. The two community organizations have long-standing ties with DUSP as well as ongoing projects dealing with home ownership, affordable housing, environmental reclamation, and transportation planning. Many of the Fellows expressed interest in working with the groups, and we have started to connect the professional interests of Fellows with the work done by the two organizations.

SPURS was lucky to have four such enriching visits to local professional organizations this fall. In the spring, we look forward to two more—to the Metropolitan Boston Transportation Authority and to the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

Learning about community development at Fenway Community Development Corporation visit.



Listening to Mayor Lantigua's development objectives for the City of Lawrence.



Visiting Arlington's transportation system in Virginia.



Professional Development News

Leadership and Negotiation

The SPURS Program recognizes that developing leadership skills is essential to the professional success of the Fellows. This fall we organized four sessions on leadership and negotiation to provide Fellows with skills that will be useful to them in the workplace. Professor Lawrence Susskind, a renowned expert in negotiation, led two seminars on consensus building and negotiation. For these two sessions, which introduced and promoted the idea of unbiased mediation, we invited the Humphrey Fellows from Boston University to attend. During the first session, Professor Susskind elaborated on an alternative approach to democratic decision-making—consensus building. The Fellows were intrigued by his insightful presentation about the problems of traditional American democracy, as well as why and how a "consensus-building approach" to public decision-making can produce fairer, more stable, wiser, and more efficient results. Professor Susskind started the second

session by outlining the critical role the mediator plays during consensus building among different interest groups, and he offered tips on how to identify such a person from the outset. Professor Susskind's provocative and leading-edge proposals about the process of mediating disputes inspired rich discussions and lively debate.

For the second set of leadership sessions, SPURS recruited Marni Johnson, a corporate consultant working on cultural diversity and gender. Ms. Johnson led two inspiring and interactive sessions raising the ideas of implicit bias, cultural misinterpretation, and gender inequity in the workplace. These two sessions underscored the ways that cultural norms influence perception of and interaction with other people. The diverse cultures in the room made these sessions very fruitful as the Fellows exchanged perspectives about how culture and diversity impact and inform their professional practice.



Negotiation Workshop with Prof. Lawrence Susskind.



Leadership Workshop with consultant Marni Johnson.

Connecting with Others

Harvard Loeb/SPURS Fellows Collaborations

This is the seventh year of the Harvard Loeb/SPURS joint seminars, with each group taking turns hosting events. Both the Harvard Loeb Program and SPURS/Humphrey Program are one-year initiatives for mid-career professionals interested in the built environment. The major difference is that Loeb Fellows are mostly from the United States, while SPURS/Humphrey Fellows come from developing countries. The objective of organizing joint seminars is to provide a formal platform for the two groups to meet, exchange ideas on selected themes, and to extend their personal and professional connections.

On November 31, 2010, at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, the SPURS Fellows joined the Loeb Fellows for a talk by Professor Susan Fainstein about her newly published book *The Just City*. Widely regarded as a leading figure in the field of urban planning, Professor Fainstein focuses her teaching and research on the politics and economics of urban redevelopment, tourism, comparative urban and social policy, planning theory, and issues of gender and planning. Her thesis of the "just city" is a product of her conceptual work over the past 20 years as well as empirical work on urban development projects in New York, London, and Amsterdam.

The Fellows were asked to consider a number of questions, including: what can planners and policy-makers do to support the issue of equity in their positions; what is the best way to explain and evaluate planning outcomes; and what principles should guide plan formulation and implementation? She argued that neither democracy nor di-

versity necessarily produces an equitable city. Professor Fainstein's presentation was built upon profound theoretical foundations intertwined with vivid case study images, and the Fellows found it fascinating. Although Professor Fainstein's research was conducted in developed countries, the notion of promoting equity will definitely remain with the Fellows when they return to their countries.

Following the talk, SPURS and Loeb Fellows gathered together for dinner and conversation with their respective program coordinators. We look forward to hosting the Loeb Fellows at MIT in the spring.

SPURS & DUSP Connections

This year's Fellows have been especially active in classes and activities in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP). Many Fellows have found ways to incorporate their interests into the department beyond the classroom.

Emil Rodriguez was elected by his peers to be SPURS' representative on the DUSP Student Council (DSC). He has been enthusiastic about getting Fellows involved in DSC activities. In the fall Emil and the DSC arranged a research interest "speed dating" night that brought master's students, PhD candidates, and Fellows together for an informal and fun evening of introductions. A number of Fellows participated and had a fantastic time getting to know the students in the department as well as exploring common research interests.



Loeb/SPURS get-together with speaker Prof. Susan Fainstein.



Emil Rodriguez with DUSP Student Council representatives.



Fellows participating in the MIT International Development Fair.

Mediating Values-based and Identity-based Disputes

By Lawrence Susskind, Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning, MIT; Visiting Professor of Law, Harvard; Chief Knowledge Officer, CBI

The Frank Sander Lecture at the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Meeting of the American Bar Association (San Francisco, April 8, 2010)



Lawrence Susskind

The labor mediators in the room can explain how and why the United States has a dispute resolution system, mandated by law, for resolving collective bargaining disputes. When the public interest is threatened by a strike, the parties can be urged to come to the mediation table. There are other professionals in the room who can explain how and why commercial disputes are mediated or arbitrated—usually because specific contract provisions mandate such action. Today, no one is surprised if a labor dispute or a commercial dispute goes to mediation. The parties and their lawyers know these systems work. And, no one doubts that appropriately trained neutrals will be available—regardless of how many strikes we might have or how many commercial disputes need attention. And, the enforceability of mediated agreements in such cases is well established.

There are other arenas, some less well understood by the public, in which mediation is an option. In small claims courts all across the country, private parties use mediation to resolve tenant-landlord, neighbor-to-neighbor and other two party civil disputes. At the federal and state levels, when new regulations have to be issued, federal and state agencies have the option of initiating negotiated rule-making under the relevant federal and state Administrative Procedure Acts. Professional neutrals, selected by the agency with the regulation-writing responsibility, bring the right parties to the table and assist in generating a draft of the required regulations. Again, appropri-

ately trained neutrals are available to assist. The status of such negotiated agreements—whether in small claims court or in the federal regulatory arena—is circumscribed in law or in the relevant codes.

Why is it we expect these four kinds of dispute resolution processes to “work?” Why are we confident that adding a mediation step will produce beneficial results? Presumably, we wouldn’t advocate mediation if it didn’t generate agreements that satisfy the parties, cost less, take less time, and enhance working relationships. But, why exactly do we think mediation helps? It is not magic. There is a logic to our efforts. I think that logic goes like this: (1) for the most part, disputants know what they want (that is, they know their interests), they have analyzed what is most likely to happen if no agreement is reached; that is, they know their BATNAs, and they want to do better than that; (2) even if they sometimes exaggerate their claims during the give-and-take of negotiation (making demands far in excess of their BATNAs) or hiring agents to do that for them—they are eager to see what can be worked out without extending a strike, proceeding with litigation, waiting for a judge to rule or engaging in a full-blown political battle; (3) after some huffing and puffing they usually discover whether there is a zone of possible agreement (somewhere between their BATNAs or what negotiation analysts call their Reservation Values) and if there is, they can usually craft an agreement and are willing to be bound by it; (4) the mediator can be counted on to help the parties clarify their interests, explore mutually beneficial trades, generate a written agreement, encourage the parties to be reasonable, and serve as a witness to what has been worked out. The LOGIC of mediation rests on three assumptions: (1) the parties know their interests; (2) when interests are in conflict, ingenious ways can be found to reframe, bundle, fractionate, or otherwise trade bits and pieces of what the parties want to produce workable agreements; and (3) the parties (and/or their lawyers) will be logical, if not reasonable; that is, they won’t turn down agreements that are better for them than no agreement.

The question I want to address today is

whether the same logic of mediation applies when we are talking about disputes that involve deeply held values or beliefs (not just interests) and when identities (not just interests) are at stake. For the past several years, with colleagues at the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, I have been trying to answer this question. I want to share with you my findings thus far. (You can read more by googling the Clearinghouse at the Program on Negotiation—www.pon.harvard.edu/clearinghouse—and downloading a paper entitled “Teaching About the Mediation of Values-based and Identity-based Disputes.”)

Let me start with three quick illustrations. These are stories based on real cases that have been prepared as role play simulations available through the PON Clearinghouse. They deal with disagreements over incorporating the issue of homosexuality into a public elementary school curriculum; a diversity campaign in a corporate workplace that pressed employees to be respectful of homosexual co-workers; and a dispute over a gay rights celebration in a public park and a city’s efforts to ensure freedom of expression to those who wanted to protest the celebration. These three conflicts provide a useful basis for distinguishing between the usual logic of mediation and a somewhat different logic that I think might be more relevant when values and identity rather than interests are at the heart of public and private disputes.

The three cases I’m about to tell you about were not actually mediated, although I think they could have been. The participants, and especially their lawyers and the judges in the courts in which these cases were filed, did not think mediation could help. If you play the “games” based on these cases, you’ll see otherwise.

The first dispute is between a public school system and two parents over classroom discussion and the distribution of materials depicting same-sex couples. It also explores the role of attorneys representing clients in negotiations involving deeply held values and beliefs. The family wants the school principal to notify them ahead of time whenever homosexuality, same-sex marriage or families headed

by same-sex couples might be discussed in class. They want their children to be excused from such discussions. The school principal has denied their request.

The family has filed a lawsuit against the school district in state court asserting their parent rights to have their children excused when parts of the curriculum conflict with their religious beliefs. The judge in the state trial court resolved the legal question in favor of the school district, holding that parents do NOT have a right to restrict what a public school may teach their children. The simulation begins at the point at which the family has filed an appeal of the lower court’s decision. Prior to oral argument, the appellate court has urged the parties to try mediation (in the game, that is, not in real life!)

The second dispute focuses on a disagreement between an employee and a large, privately-held software company called MacroB. In this situation, the employee was a senior project manager stationed at the company headquarters in California. A dispute arose when the company launched a diversity campaign featuring a series of posters, including one that read “I’m gay and I work at MacroB.” The posters were placed in highly visible locations in the workplace, including one on the exterior wall of the employee’s cubicle. This person is devoutly religious and from a faith tradition that believes that homosexuality is sinful. In response, the employee posted several Bible verses on the inside wall of their cubicle including quotations condemning homosexuality and predicting dire outcomes for anyone engaging in homosexual acts. When asked by management to remove the Bible verses, the employee refused. The issue moved up the ranks. The employee was given

a week off with pay to reconsider. While they were away from the office, MacroB removed the Bible verses. Upon returning, the employee reposted all the Bible passages and refused to remove them. In the game, at the urging of a legal professional known to both sides, the company and the employee agreed to meet with a mediator (again, this is what happens in the simulation, not in real life).

In the third dispute, two private organizations and a city got into a dispute over the speech rights that would or wouldn’t be guaranteed in conjunction with a permit for a festival on city property. A local advocacy organization that supports the city’s sizeable lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community has organized a day-long, family-oriented event called the Outfest to celebrate National Coming Out Day and to affirm LGBT identity. In addition to drawing large, supportive crowds, the event attracts members of the public who opposed the message of the Festival and LGBT lifestyles in general. One group called Salvation Now! is a nationwide network of grassroots religious and social campaigners seeking to bring their religious message directly to those they consider to be living sinful lifestyles. Local Salvation Now! organizers were a regular and increasingly visible presence at the annual Outfest. In the past, they have arrived at the Outfest, megaphones at the ready, broadcasting messages that many at the Festival found offensive and hateful. The organizers of the event had readied a human buffer of numerous volunteers prepared to shield the crowd from the protesters. The volunteers carried massive signs to block the signs of the protesters. They blew whistles to drown out the megaphones. As tensions mounted, the police arrested several Sal-

vation Now! members for refusing to follow police instructions and disturbing the peace. Although these criminal charges were eventually dropped, the confrontation damped the festival atmosphere and attracted unfavorable media attention to the city and the Outfest. The following year, fearing escalation as well as legal liability and court challenges, the city requested a meeting with all parties and their lawyers to talk about possible ground rules before they agree to grant a new permit. (At least, that’s what happens in the simulation. There was no effort made to mediate in the real life story.)

Why weren’t these cases actually sent to mediation? Probably because almost everyone involved presumed that no resolution was possible. The fights were about fundamental value questions and presumably neither side would be willing to soften its demands. Feelings of anger, aggression and hurt abounded. Each side assumed they were in the right and that the others had acted inappropriately. The parties in each case felt there was a great deal at stake. Indeed, in several of these disputes, national organizations quickly appeared to offer free legal services up to and including representation “all the way to the Supreme Court.” So, symbolic issues took on great importance.

To the courts involved, and presumably to the parties as well, there did not appear to be any way to resolve these disputes except to let the courts decide which principles would reign supreme: Do parents have the right to tell the public school what it can or can not teach their children? Yes or no? Does a private company have the right to impose a diversity code that forces its employees to refrain from expressing deeply held religious views that might be



hurtful to others? Yes or no? Does a city have the authority to impose restrictions on free speech (especially what some consider to be hate speech) in public spaces? Yes or no? And, several of the partisans in these battles didn't just want to settle these specific cases, they wanted to set highly visible national precedents.

Let me describe the four ways in which I believe mediation might have been useful in these cases and in other disputes like them. The logic to which I appeal in each case is what is most important. I think the logics are relevant regardless of the facts of each case. The question for you to consider is whether, as dispute resolution professionals, these alternative logics fit with your sense of your role and your responsibilities.

1. Consider interests and values separately: That is, try to separate a values-based or identity-based dispute into a more traditional interest-based segment and then help the parties deal with that portion of the dispute in the "normal" way. Maybe it will make it possible for them to take on the values-based portion at a later time.

2. Facilitate dialogue and offer opportunities for deeper mutual understanding and relationship building. Instead of aiming to resolve the dispute, help the parties understand and respect the views of their opponents and, most of all, help them avoid demonization. Again, maybe this will create a different climate in which something approaching more traditional settlement will be possible at a later time.

3. Appeal to overarching values: That is, reframe such disputes by appealing to values that the parties might share rather than focusing on the conflicts that precipitated the dispute. By referencing universal values—for example, equal rights, freedom or non-violence—a mediator may be able to help the parties find common ground. Recognizing common values can open lines of communication, build trust and otherwise improve relations. They may also be a springboard to inventing ways of living and working together more effectively. So, this is an approach to seeking settlement, but it attempts to work around the value differences.

4. Confront value difference directly: Help the parties confront their differences in a controlled fashion and help them explore and question each other's values with the goal of possibly altering beliefs. Success in implementing this approach will result in at least one of the parties making a change in his or her values and or self-perceptions. There have been occasions, although they are limited in number,

when groups with diametrically opposed values and identities have, through the therapeutic effects of truth-telling, cast aside generations of hatred or mistrust and moved into the long slow process of reconciliation. One need only look at all the many divided countries and cultures around the world (like South Africa and Northern Ireland) to see that transformation and reconciliation are possible.

Let me say a bit more about each of these approaches:

Let me use the school case to illustrate why it might be valuable to separate the portions of a dispute concerning interests and values. While the case was making its way through the courts, the children involved became victims. The children of the family that brought the lawsuit became the targets of bullying on the playground and the family was socially ostracized. Might it have been possible to address these aspects of the dispute while allowing the larger policy question to be addressed in some other way? Mediation, in this case, could have been used to resolve a portion of the dispute that dealt with both shared and conflicting interests.

Mediation can be used to try to alter relationships among disputants while not resolving their underlying value dispute. In the workplace case, it is hard to believe that the parties could not find a way of de-escalating the conflict and accommodating opposing views. One of my students suggested, since the underlying disagreement was about corporate pressure to ensure diversity, that the company add still another posters saying something like "I believe in traditional Christian values and I work at MacroB." The issue of learning how to help employees with radically different social values live together was never addressed in the actual case. Mediation could have offered this possibility.

Reframing a dispute in terms of overarching values the parties might share is a form of resolution, although it requires a restatement of the problem the parties are being asked to solve. In our efforts to imagine what mediation of the Outfest case might have come up with, my students imagined a face-to-face meeting involving the festival organizers, the Salvation Now! leadership—both their lawyers—and the city government. My students played out what a mediated discussion aimed at generating jointly agreed upon guidelines that would please both the Outfest organizers and the protestors might look like. In several mock versions of the mediation, we were able to formulate a local ordinance that would increase the odds of accommodating both

sides and meeting the city's concerns.

Mediators aren't therapists, but it does take a kind of therapeutic engagement to help parties confront others with diametrically opposed and deeply-held values and beliefs. On the other hand, it may be a mistake to assume that values are immutable. People may think they know what they believe in a general way, but there appears to be more room that we first imagined when it comes time figure out how their beliefs will be applied in a specific situation. It may be correct to assume that people engaged in value or identity-based disputes won't agree to compromise, but other forms of accommodation and reconciliation are still possible. I think that the dispute resolution community has given far too little thought to the logic of reconciliation. When we think about the divided societies that have managed to build workable peace after decades or even generations of bloodshed, we have to be encouraged.

Finally, when I imagine applying the logic of reconciliation to the health care town halls held last summer or the current debates about climate change, immigration or abortion, I see new possibilities. Imagine something along the lines of the Negotiated Rulemaking process we now take for granted. A neutral selected by a joint committee of Congress (perhaps in conjunction with the Executive Branch) would engage in one or more of the mediated approaches I have described this morning. This would take place within a given time frame with the help of a team of mediators. It might be televised or streamed live on the web. This could happen at the national level or at state or local levels. The mediation would seek to achieve one or more of the four outcomes I have described: (1) separate interests and values and try to generate agreement on the interest-based portion of the dispute; (2) facilitate dialogue in the hope of achieving deeper mutual understanding and productive working relationships, (3) appeal to overarching values and find some accommodation; and (4) confront value differences directly and seek reconciliation. The results in each case might not look or feel like a more traditional settlement. However, in the way that the results of a negotiated rulemaking constitute a proposal that the agency with the relevant statutory authority can use as a basis for the rule it must formally issue, a little progress on values-based and identity-based disputes may be all we should hope to achieve.

Imagine that prior to Congressional deliberations on legislation, or prior to issuing executive orders, a mediated negotiation were to take place. A preliminary conflict

assessment would be required to bring a manageable number of appropriate stakeholder group representatives to the table. The kind of deliberative poll that Jim Fishkin at Stanford advocates might be used to bind these ad hoc representatives to the views of their constituencies, at least at the outset. I firmly believe that these views are malleable, especially in response to an organized effort to promote reconciliation.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Mediation can, in fact, be helpful when parties are engaged in what are primarily values-based or identity-based disputes. I don't think the usual problem-solving logic of mediation, however, necessarily applies. There are other logics that can, in fact, be helpful.

2. These alternative approaches to mediation need to be institutionalized so people don't spend all their time worrying about how to proceed. We need legislation to spell out how this might work—a parallel to the National Labor Relations Act or the Negotiated Rulemaking Act. Formal experimentation ought to precede the development of such legislation—just as we did with Negotiated Rulemaking.

3. Mediators may have to learn some new ways of working, and we may have to develop a roster of mediators qualified to take on these types of disputes so the parties don't waste their time trying to find appropriately-skilled help.

4. Judges will surely need to be educated about these alternative mediation logics. We've got to convince the courts that something short of comprehensive and traditional notions of settlement may be the most desirable outcome in certain kinds of value-based and identity-based disputes.

5. It is important that our profession establishes a working group to dig into this question and decide what posture it wants to take on the question of mediating values-based and identity-based disputes.

6. Finally, it would help if the research community would document the logics of various dialogue groups that have been working on reconciliation for a long time, like Justice Circles that focus on restitution rather than retribution. Many thanks for listening. And, my thanks to many of you in the audience whose work on peace-making, reconciliation, and dialogue has given us so much to build on.

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Fellows' Cultural Celebrations

SPURS commemorated the Fellows' diverse cultural celebrations throughout the year. The first was held soon after the arrival of the Fellows in August, just as Ramadan came to a close. In early September, SPURS hosted an Eid evening celebration at which Zaynab Abaas, Mahbooba Haidary, and Fatima Nkairi gave presentations about the importance of Eid in their home countries. Fellows and staff shared a special halal meal and toasted Eid with sweets and delicacies.

Soon after, our Chinese contingent—Fan Tu, Hong Zhang, and SPURS staff member Xin Li—organized a dinner to celebrate the Chinese mid-autumn festival, a holiday similar to Thanksgiving in the United States. Fan prepared a full table of Chinese dishes for the entire group, and Hong shared an interesting video about the history and culture of the festival. The Fellows left with a feeling of family togetherness.

The Fellows from Latin America—Christian Asinelli, Emil Rodriguez and Paula Moreno—have been proactive as well. One evening in October, these fellows organized a dinner "fiesta" complete with decorations, Latin food, and music. It was a lovely and informal evening that allowed the Fellows to get to know each other better while appreciating the Latin way of life!



Xin Li, Hong Zhang, and Fan Tu demonstrating the art of using the chopsticks at the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival.



Dinner "fiesta" with Latin American Fellows.

Fall Retreat – Falmouth, MA

Each fall at the beginning of the school year, SPURS Fellows, staff, and DUSP International Development Group (IDG) faculty go on a weekend retreat. The retreat has become an important part of building friendships, getting to know the skills and interests of the Fellows, and enhancing the relationship between faculty and SPURS Fellows. For the second year in a row, the retreat was held at Sea Crest Beach Resort in Falmouth, MA.

A number of important things happened during this year's retreat. One was that most IDG faculty came and talked to the Fellows about their professional and research interests. In addition, as always, SPURS Professors Cherie Abbanat and Ralph Gakenheimer were involved with the fall retreat throughout the weekend.

One important tradition is the dinner discussions. This year the discussions centered around religion and the media, coming on the heels of the outrage generated by the proposed Ground Zero mosque. At each table, Fellows, faculty, and SPURS staff traded ideas about religion in their respective countries, which generated a wealth of diverse perspectives on the state, the media, and religion in society.

A third important part of the retreat was a series of presentations by four Fellows. Sopheap, Emil, Slawek, and Tomek each gave short talks about their home countries—Cambodia, Dominican Republic, and Poland respectively. Sopheap spoke passionately about his work with Habitat for Humanity in Cambodia, sharing stories about the vital work performed. Emil prepared a number of videos about the Dominican Republic and explained how tourism imagery misrepresents his country. Lastly, Slawek and Tomek led an interactive game of 20 questions about Polish history, culture, and society. For example, did you know that Chicago has the greatest concentration of Poles in the United States?

The retreat also provided plenty of free time and late-night dancing so the Fellows could relax and get to know each other. During the day, some of the Fellows, staff, and faculty went on a hike through the cranberry bogs, while others played soccer. Several went swimming in the ocean and a few walked down the beaches. Luckily, the weather cooperated, and there were beautiful fall sunsets over Buzzard's Bay every evening. This year's retreat was among SPURS' best.



Tour of the Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth, MA.



Active listening during the Falmouth retreat.



Walking tour of the cranberry farm in Falmouth.



Bish Sanyal welcoming Fellows at the retreat.



Fellows discussing religion and the media.



Fellows at the Seacrest Resort beach in Falmouth.

Writing and Communication News

Writing Experiences and Challenges

By Cherie Miot Abbanat, Lecturer in Communications

Over the last four years, MIT's SPURS/Humphrey program has focused attention on enhancing communication skills. We believe that understanding how communication flows in the US, and specifically at MIT, can help our Fellows better understand the culture, expectations, and intricacies of the written and spoken word.

As such, MIT Fellows are asked to work on writing and communication skills starting in June, before they arrive, while they are here in residence at MIT, and throughout the year. We ask for writing samples in June in order to help us craft a set of writing workshops throughout the year for the Fellows. Writing themes include: sentence-level and paragraph-level writing, American policy memos, cover letters, and resumes. In addition, we ask each Fellow to keep a weekly writing journal about their experiences at MIT and in the US. Here is a brief outline of the subjects that we attempt to touch on by the end of the year:

1. Writing Assessment – June, July and August: In June, each Fellow was asked to write a paper comparing his/her country to the United States. Using these comparative analyses, we were able to assess each Fellow's writing ability in terms of strengths and challenges. Each essay gave us a first data point to use in terms of assessing progress in written communication.

2. Email/Letter Writing Intricacies – September. Email can be hard to under-

stand. It is a linear form of communication that often lacks the gentleness that face-to-face communication can bring. At the same time, what you put in writing an email can say a lot about you professionally. We addressed the intricacies of email communication including writing structure, tone, and style.

3. Tools to Improve Writing – September/October/November Workshops. In these workshops we focused on sentence level writing, paragraph level writing, and different forms of communication. Sentences and paragraphs are short and easy to work with in a workshop setting.

In addition, transitional words are always a source of confusion and we covered these as well. As we advanced in our understanding of paragraphs, we tackled the idea of paragraph flow and developing and supporting a single idea in a paragraph, and then moved on to writing professional affiliation letters.

4. Tools to Improve Speaking Skills – Spring Workshops. Having focused on writing in the fall, we will work on oral presentation skills for the spring. How do you present yourself to an audience? What do you look like, sound like? Do your body movements help or hinder your presentation. Fellows will review speeches in text and then watch real speakers present. We will talk about what works well/what doesn't work with each presenter. We will also get a chance to talk about how

speeches feel written on the page versus how they come across to an audience once delivered – the written vs. spoken word experience.

5. The Journal Experience – Continuous. Throughout their time at MIT, our Fellows are required to keep a journal of their weekly thoughts and impressions. We use these journals as a way of monitoring their weekly progress. In their journals, Fellows receive detailed comments on their writing structure and English grammar, as well as comments that are meant to encourage them to continue to work on their writing. Here are just a few of the subjects our Fellows wrote about this past semester: New York vs. Boston—a comparison of the two cities; the pace of life at MIT—too fast, and not enough time to relax; prioritizing events, work, and leisure; and learning from other SPURS Fellows—about countries, language, etc.

In past years, ideas seemed to flow freely in the journals, which served as a place to write less formal or more personal ideas. This year our Fellows are taking as many as four classes, and as a result, the journals have become less of a priority. To relieve some stress from our Fellows, we decided to make the journals optional for the spring. Fellows will continue to travel over the upcoming break and perhaps continue to write in their journals. We are hoping for many more insights, observations, and realizations as a result of their journeys...

English as a Second Language (ESL) Class

By Kate Barker, ESL Instructor

This year, a new workshop designed specifically for the Humphrey Fellows was introduced. After receiving the results of the English Evaluation Test, administered by MIT's English Language Program, it became clear that a significant number of Fellows would benefit from an English class tailored to their specific needs. While Fellows had previously taken English classes, additional learning opportunities were requested.

The goal of the class was to develop competence and confidence in listening and speaking and to meet the objectives of the Humphrey Program by

teaching about the customs, culture, and society of the United States, and by allowing Fellows to share information about their own societies and cultures.

Fellows practiced their English skills by listening to audio clips, student reports, and short videos. Guided by a textbook, the Fellows participated in small group discussions to practice grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. During one class, the Fellows predicted each other's fortunes using the future perfect tense and were thrilled by the promise to become grandparents, senators, and presidents of their countries someday!

The class did more than accomplish its objectives; it also provided a safe haven – a community where it was acceptable to make mistakes, ask questions, and to explore the cultural puzzles that emerged each week outside of class. The Fellows expressed their frustration with understanding lectures and the fast-paced conversations of native speakers; as well as their fear of being misunderstood.

The Fellows gained confidence speaking with their American peers. Returning

Cont'd on page 14

A Conversation Among Fellows

This semester, a lively conversation emerged among the group via email. The following conversation started with an email from Humphrey Fellow Eva Balasova of the Slovak Republic, who wanted to tell a story about the political history of her country, which affected her greatly.

From: Eva Balasova, Slovakia

I would like to let you know that the 17th of November is a very important date for us in the former Czechoslovakia. On November 17, 1989,



our so called "Velvet Revolution" was started in Prague by a student demonstration, which was organized to celebrate International Student's Day.

What started as a peaceful demonstration turned into a political event, and when the police arrived to stop the event, they used brutal force. No one was killed, but many students were injured and for us it was something unbelievable. In Bratislava, we learned about the incidence from two sources. One was the Austrian TV, which was regularly watched by many people in Bratislava. The other source was by private phone calls. I received one from my friend in Prague sometime around midnight. He told me that students in Prague decided to go on strike by coming to school but not following the class schedules.

The next day we did the same thing in Bratislava. At our university, we met in the auditorium and we started making posters, which were later distributed around the city. During that time copy machines were not available, so we had to write everything by hand and we were making carbon copies. All communications were made in person and via handwritten posters.

During the day of the protest the city was changing, and everywhere you could feel that something was going on in the city. There was tension in the air, but we knew we had to continue with the protest. We were not able to foresee what would be the reaction of the police. In the evening there was a demonstration both in Prague and in Bratislava and various groups of people participated (not only students). I remember we went there with my father and we were seriously considering how to dress up so that we could easily run away if necessary. That day all universities were already on strike and people were assembled at the theater. The National Theater served as a venue for demonstration and the first important speech was held there.

Since that day, demonstrations continued every evening and thousands of people participated. It was extremely cold, and snowing, but we stood there for hours knowing that we could not turn back. We knew that if we gave up, the consequences would be very bad. Surprisingly, political changes went on very fast. On December 10, for example, we were already able to cross the borders with Austria. Each of us was there to cut the fences, and we today still have a piece of it at home.

Dear friends, don't worry, I am not going to describe the whole revolution, but as I started I could not stop. I had not realized that it is still so strong for me. I must say that those were incredible times, and people were extremely connected. Emotions were very strong; people were helping each other, laughing and crying together. That time we believed we would love each other forever. The hope for a new life in a free country was everywhere. At that time I thought we would never forget those days, but today many young people do not even know what happened on November 17, 1989.

One final remark—I realized I was not clear enough. This revolution was not about the division of Czechoslovakia. It was about the transition from a totalitarian political system to a democratic one, and the transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy.

Czechoslovakia was divided three years later only by politicians without any public involvement, but the public in general was not in favor of this step. Independent Slovakia was established on January 1, 1993.

Responses from Fellows

Fan Tu, China

Thank you for such a good article! I can understand your feelings. The strong, emotional feelings from the heart, whenever it is, can be the hope for a country, a nation.



Zaynab Abaas, Iraq

Many countries suffered from the same situation but with thousands of victims. As you may know from some sources, what was happening in my country was that Saddam had taken young people and students from their universities or houses and buried them alive without



any prior notice or reason. No one knew where or why they have been taken. They disappeared just like melting salt in water.

Sopheap Phim, Cambodia

Thank you so much for sharing the history of the "Velvet Revolution." I cannot imagine what you, students, and other people have achieved. It is all because everyone had the common goal of freedom to speak out, and finally people succeeded in overcoming the political tension.



Emil Rodriguez Garabot, Dominican Republic

Eva, you affected me deep inside with the last part. It made me think a lot about collective youth leadership today. All oppressive systems have one thing in common: they are based on the premise that by erasing and starting over from scratch you can build a stronger configuration without weaknesses of the past. It has never been easier for oppressive systems to impose themselves than today; we are suffering a kind of collective amnesia.



Maybe '68 was a "Twinkie bourgeois utopia"—based on how that generation became middle-aged yuppies in the '80s in France, Italy, and a big part of the U.S. But the kids then at least had dreams, visions, and hopes for something different as a group. In Latin America, 1968 was also an important year for social movements on spatial and land injustices. Today the consumption of isolating devices creates the illusion of togetherness in a new spatial logic where you cannot feel, hold, or embrace other persons' bodies. That huge TV we have in the suburbs, where we can watch the news and participate in wars while eating a pepperoni pizza on the sofa, keeps you away from suffering because you can always change the channel. And of course, urban sprawl is the largest scale manifestation of this oppressive systems' triumph. The oppressive systems easily understood that power is not on one given person or group but in every single space. [Maybe you unconsciously became an architect to preserve that hope of the 1980s, so that every time you go to city hall, or to a client to present a proposal for a better place in your city, you are metaphorically dancing and laughing with your friends.]

Don't worry about the legacy of your generation; there is still room for hope. You brought your daughter to experience it in first person this year at MIT. It is true she might not remember she was here and what she did, but she will be completely capable to explain her oblivion in a correct fluid English.

Thanks for sharing you moving story, Eva.

Fuad Jafarli, Azerbaijan

I know this history because it's our common history. Although I live far from Slovakia, I remember those days. The collapse of a socialist system not only indicated an ideological change, but also its impacts widely spread throughout our lives. How can we forget a courageous person like Václav Havel who brought democracy and independence to all socialist camps? I would like to congratulate you and your country for the demolition of this wild system. Besides, November 17, 1989 was also a significant day for the Azerbaijani people. In 1988, one million people gathered in Azadliq (Independence) Square in Baku and asked for independence from the former Soviet Union. This demonstration continued until January 20, 1990, when the Soviet army intervened in Baku and killed 131 people in one night. We won our independence in 1989 for our battle with the communist system. Let us remember also the heroes of those days—thanks to them Azerbaijan was opened to the world.



Slawomir Ledwon and Tomasz Rozwadowski, Poland

As we are all talking about the various ways to freedom, we have a strong feeling to say something deeply rooted in our hearts. It makes us think about the time when these changes were driving Europe to unite and become truly democratic. We are proud that we had a chance to take part in these historic moments.



In 1956, and then in the '70s and '80s, many Polish workers died on the streets of our country. They were killed by tanks, whose soldiers even though wearing Pol-

ish uniforms, were speaking Russian. The breakthrough was made in our hometown of Gdansk in 1989. Later on, the Berlin Wall was torn down and Hungary became a republic, then the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia came and others followed.

Here in the US, we were pleased to find that our fight for freedom has a long tradition. Statues of Tadeusz Kosciuszko in Washington, DC, and Kazimierz Pulaski being "the father of American cavalry" and a national hero in the US are just some of the examples.

We are grateful for the chance to share these feelings with other Fellows, wishing that our countries would become a better place to live, especially those that are facing the difficult times of transition right now.

Paula Moreno Zapata, Colombia

I also hope that the next generation will have the possibility to have more peace, respect, and socially effective equality. Two days ago I had a discussion with President Uribe, my former boss, and a group of students and professors on how to keep building a better Colombia that was more peaceful, inclusive, and socially aware. We had a very insightful dialogue, thinking back on what we did, did not, and will do. In the end, it seemed that we never fully realized the power we had to change people's lives and the history we were making at that moment. I fully see this power that I have realized for myself in this group. I deeply believe that it is so important to be aware of the great fights we had and we are capable of having—not only in our own countries to solve conflicts and fight poverty, but also in these so-called "developed" countries that maybe also are helpless to reduce the level of ignorance and subtle superiority. It is good to know that each of us has been making a way for changes and is looking forward with joy to seeing how much good we will try to make in the future. I am really interested in seeing how we build communities not by rigid parameters but particularly by sharing life and sensitivity. That is what we will remember of each other in the following years.



Mahbooba Haidary, Afghanistan

Thank you for sharing and writing about your historic events from the past decades. I am happy that it has ended in your country, and at least today you have the result of your sacrifice. I cannot express how bad the situation was in my

country during the 9-year Soviet War in Afghanistan. Two million Afghans died between 1979 and 1989. Five to 10 million Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran, and another 2 million Afghans were displaced within the country. In the 1980s, half of all refugees in the world were Afghans. Today, war continues in Afghanistan but in different ways. Indeed, war is not much different than yesterday but during that time we had the Soviet Union with 13 republics, and today we have troops from 42 countries of the world. The number of civilian victims, direct and indirect, from 2006 to present was estimated to be about 8,991 to 28,583 Afghans. The situation was very complicated and nobody knew what was going on. Although 42 countries claim that they were helping us, it seemed to us that no one actually helped. The foreign forces came to fight the Taliban in an even more destructive way. How can they be favored? On May 2007 our people protested in front of the international community, asking "what is up?" "why, although you people are here, don't we have enough security" and "what are you doing?" As a result the international forces killed hundreds of people. I feel that people are getting tired of hearing stories about war from Afghanistan. I don't want to say anymore, but I wish our war ends soon. May this coming decade, the new generation tell about our history as you people tell about your country.



Response to Mahbooba: Eva Balasova, Slovakia

When I read your words, I was nearly ashamed that we are free. I must admit that it is unclear to me what is going on in Afghanistan. There is some news on our TV, but it is very brief and without a wider perspective. As far as I know, there are also around 300 Slovak soldiers in Afghanistan and they are specialized on search and liquidation of unexploded ammunition. I hope that at least this activity is of some help to Afghan people.



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Residential Scholarships

Each year, Ashdown House, a graduate student community, offers two resident scholar positions to the SPURS Program. This year, Humphrey Fellows Fatima Nkairi from Morocco and Christian Asinelli from Argentina are serving as the liaison scholars to bring international culture to the Ashdown community. In fall 2010, Christian offered Ashdown a view of the history of Argentina society and civil rights by showing the 2009 Academy Award-winning crime thriller *El Secreto de sus Ojos* (The Secret in their Eyes). Later, he also presented the 1985 Academy Award-winning drama *La Historia Oficial* (The Official Story). His presentations led to an engaging discussion of issues related to civil wars and human rights in other countries.

In October, Fatima organized a Moroccan dessert coffee-hour event, revealing her native culture through a variety of authentic Moroccan treats—including ghriaba, fakkas, and kaab ghoulal. These well-known desserts are usually prepared for ceremonies and parties. The event was well attended by Ashdown residents and the Fellows who came to discover the Moroccan culture. Delighted with the popularity of the event, Fatima plans to organize two more events in the spring semester. One will be a “Cherry Pie Society” dinner, dur-



Ashdown housemaster Terry Orlando with residential scholar Christian Asinelli, Fellow Emil Rodriguez and residential scholar Fatima Nkairi.

ing which residents and Fellows will meet to observe Morocco’s Imilchil Marriage Festival, which is celebrated at the end of every summer. The other will explore important holidays in different countries.

International House for Global Leadership (iHouse)

This year’s resident scholar at iHouse is Fuad Jafarli, a Humphrey Fellow from Azerbaijan. iHouse is a living-learning community consisting of 17 undergraduate students passionate about problem-solving in developing countries. On November 10, 2010, the Fellows had a lively conversation with these students over a

dinner meeting designed to build intellectual bridges between the two groups. With their rich international development experience, the Fellows are great resources for the students as they shape their international projects. The meeting began with brief introductions of each person’s background and research interest. Based on this information, participants formed small groups and continued a deeper conversation on how the Fellows could help students with their future endeavors. This dinner, which is a part of a series of SPURS-iHouse exchange events, has become a tradition of the SPURS Program, creating an opportunity for the Fellows to contribute to MIT’s undergraduate community.



iHouse residential scholar Fuad Jafarli (6th from right) with iHouse undergraduate students and Fellows.

ESL Class cont’d from page 11

from the week in Washington DC, they described the confidence they felt speaking with others and joked about how everyone at the conference knew one of the MIT Fellows because of his outgoing personality. They credited their improved language skills to the weeks spent in the workshop.

In addition to learning skills for the academics of MIT, one Fellow gained the confidence and vocabulary necessary to get the haircut he wanted. Our discussion about overdressed and underdressed, dressing down and dressing up, led to laughter as

words got tangled and someone accidentally said undressed. The class helped another Fellow decide exactly what to wear for a formal occasion. When studying the finance unit, one Fellow was relieved learning he could use a debit card instead of carrying around hundreds of dollars.

The Fellows shared information about their own cultures. Using the Chinese zodiac, students learned from each other about Asian practices and beliefs. While trying out new vocabulary, the Fellows discussed whether their zodiac animal

matched their personalities. During another session, the Fellows considered the social and religious implications of organ donation. These discussions and more have opened new perspectives.

Believing there is more development to come, we look forward to continuing this ESL workshop in the spring. The community of our classroom will be a foundation that Fellows will build on as they return to their countries, continuing the pursuit of cultural knowledge and English acquisition.

Humphrey Fellow Sopheap Phim leads group of MIT students and faculty to Cambodia during January break

From Cambodia to the United States and back again. In January, Humphrey Fellow Sopheap Phim helped to lead a group of interdisciplinary MIT students to Cambodia for a trip to investigate locally-appropriate technologies for school renovation. Stemming from his engagement in an MIT class,

Sopheap was invited by Professor Reinhart Goethert to build stronger linkages between the group and Cambodians on the ground. Phim, who works for Habitat for Humanity, connected the MIT group with local institutions and communities on this trip which also combined MIT undergradu-

ates, graduates and professors. Sopheap and SPURS are excited that this is the beginning of a long term partnership between MIT, Habitat for Humanity Cambodia and the Cambodian Ministry of Education. This is just the beginning of many exchanges between Cambodia and the United States!



Sopheap Phim (left) with MIT students and faculty during their trip to Cambodia.

Alumni News

Morimoto Akinori, Japan (SPURS 1997-1998), wrote to say that he is an associate professor at the Utsunomiya University, Japan. His current interest is the relationship between land use and transportation systems from an energy conservation and environmental perspective. Recently, the modal shares of public transport and nonmotorized transport are declining due to the progress of motorization and urban sprawl in Japan. Email: morimoto@cc.utsunomiya-u.ac.jp.

Ananda M. Bhattarai, Nepal (Humphrey 2002-2003), has written a book titled *Protection of Himalayan Biodiversity*. According to Ananda, this work started during his stay at MIT. Ananda is a judge at the Court of Appeal, Nepal. Email: anandamohan77@hotmail.com.

Three Fellows visited MIT to attend conferences in the Boston area. **Washington Bonfim, Brazil** (SPURS 1997-98) was at Harvard to attend a weeklong leadership course. For the last five years, Washington has been Secretary of Education in his hometown, Teresina, Piaui. He also coordinated the political campaign of the former mayor of Piaui. Email: wasbonfim@gmail.com. **Juan David Rodriguez, Colombia** (SPURS 2007-2008), was at MIT to attend a conference. **Musa Gulkaya, Turkey** (Humphrey 2006-2007), visited

Boston to make preliminary unofficial contacts with government officials and MIT faculty on projects related to alternative renewable energy. Musa is section chief of the Export Promotion Center of Turkey. Email: musag08@gmail.com.

Zaklina Gligorijevic, Serbia and Montenegro (Humphrey 2003-2004), emailed to say that she has completed the Belgrade General Plan 2021 Revision and is working on the City of Belgrade Development Strategy. She is an active member of the managing board of the Association of Belgrade Architects and the executive board of the Section of Urbanists in Serbian Chamber of Engineers. Her team translated Jan Ghel’s book *Life between Buildings*. Email: ngligorijevic@sbb.rs

Greg Gong, China (SPURS 1996-1997), is working for the Economic Commission for Africa as the Chief of Economics Statistics and National Accounts Section at the African Centre for Statistics in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Email: gxxgphd@gmail.com.

Nadya Araujo Guimaraes, Brazil (SPURS 1993-1994), launched two books in Brazil in 2009: *Desemprego, uma construção social: São Paulo, Paris, Tokyo* (Unemployment, a Social Construction: São Paulo, Paris, Tokyo) and *À procura de trabalho: Instituições do mercado e*

redes (Looking for Work: Labor Market Institutions and Social Networks). Nadya is a professor of Sociology at the University of São Paulo. Email: nadya@usp.br

Alexandru Jalba, Moldova (Humphrey 2003-2004), is program/service manager for Tektornix Communications. He specializes in information technology services and has trained on several software implementation and IT service management projects. Email: ajalba@gmail.com.

Since leaving MIT, **Godfrey Kisekka, Uganda** (Humphrey 2008-2009), has written several articles in the Daily Monitor newspaper on the state of urban planning and transportation in Uganda. Godfrey is the town manager/town clerk of Wakiso Town, Kampala, Uganda. Email: gbkisekka@yahoo.com.au.

Juan Pablo Ortega, Colombia (Humphrey 2007-2008), wrote to say that he is an advisor in the planning of a new innovation center in Medellín, Colombia. This center was created by the mayor’s office to support new technology and knowledge-based business. The vision is to turn Medellín into a leading business and innovation city in Latin America. He is also a founding member of the board of the MIT Enterprise Forum Colombia, the first in Latin America.

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