

# Osgood Center for international studies

The Osgood Center for International Studies has just completed a successful, challenging and inspiring International Leadership Conference (ILC). This year's program could not have been successful without the grant of \$3,000 from the Rotary eClub of the Southwest USA. The Osgood Center ultimately had twenty-four Nigerians, Liberians, and Ghanaians register for the program. Through a series of visa misfortunes, illnesses and mis-communications, only around 1/3 that number actually participated. However, the persons who did attend vow to correct the issues and bring back the 15 or 16 who did not get visa interviews until too late to make flight arrangements to come. Thus, the Center has declared that the ILC 2012 will last through July, 2012, when the remainder of the group can make it physically to DC.

The persons who did come in January, four of whom paid no program fee thanks to RECSWUSA, stayed in contact with their colleagues. Two them, one from Ghana and one from Liberia, participated remotely in the work shop sessions. Throughout this document, you will meet some of the Rotary-supported participants. First, below is Eunice Aasamoah, from Ghana, who attended Salem College and came to the US via a Rotary Exchange program.



Eunice had this to say about the ILC:

*Participating in the Osgood Center's Leadership conference is the best decision I ever made. Meeting professionals who work in different fields puts everything into perspective. The sessions that the Osgood Center provides to participants are very dynamic ranging from Brookings Institution to the Woodrow Wilson Center, not forgetting the vast array of speakers. The leadership conference has provided me with a lot of networking opportunities... Shelly does a wonderful job of putting together the conference making sure it is on different topics and appeals to almost everyone. I am very glad I was given the opportunity to partake in the conference and all of this will not have been possible without the support of Rotary. Thank you to Osgood and Rotary!*

Here is the daily schedule (<http://osgoodcenter.org/ILCSchedule.pdf> ) but to demonstrate Eunice's points the ILC program included, among others, site visits to the US Institute of Peace (USIP), the Department of State, the Pentagon, and Congress and the participants met with the Chiefs of Staff of a congressional office and the USIP plus the Director of UN Affairs at the State Department. These "mentors" discussed the challenges and issues facing their institutions in difficult times, the leaders who inspired them, their own leadership journey, and insights on how to organize and sustain large staffs over time. The participants cited Paul Hughes of USIP as the most inspiring. Paul is a retired Army colonel who served in Iraq immediately after the US invasion in 2003. He was in place to accept the resignation of the Iraqi military when the Coalition Provisional Authority disbanded the Iraqi military, leaving angry and destitute soldiers with caches of weapons to provide for themselves. One week later the insurgency began and the US stayed in Iraq for nine more years. Paul Hughes retired from the Army, understood war plans without solid peace plans were useless, and thus joined the US Institute of Peace. He rose to Chief of Staff and he now vows to build a group of peace professionals who are as well trained, as committed, and as effective as US soldiers.



USIP



Paul Hughes

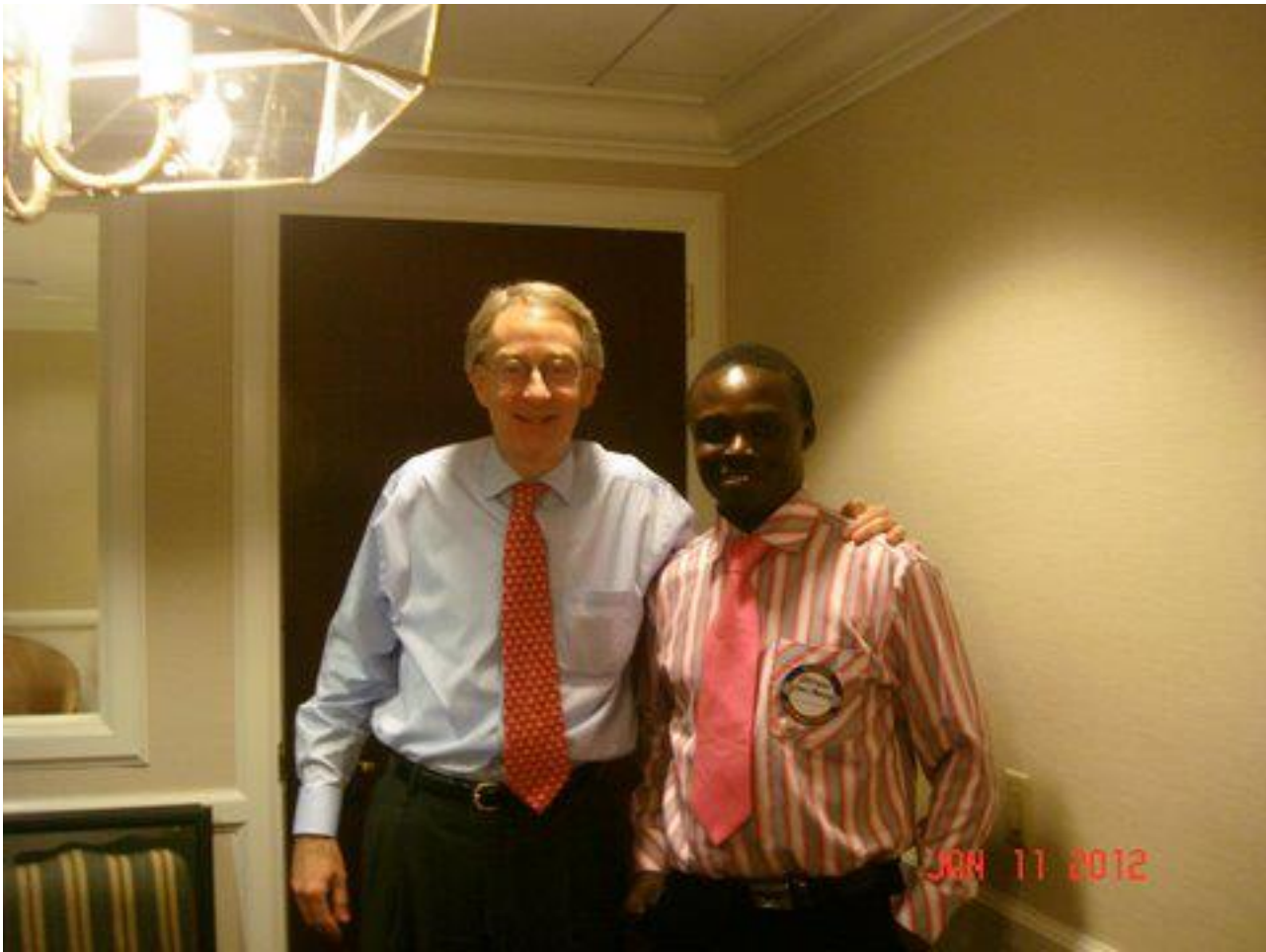
Meet Hawa Saysor Jabateh (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-aTgyppsE> )



Hawa is a Health Official in Liberia. While in the ILC she highlights meeting Rayond Gilpin, Director of Sustainable Economies at USIP and attending a Brookings Institution panel discussion on African priorities ([http://www.brookings.edu/events/2012/0111\\_africa\\_2012.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/events/2012/0111_africa_2012.aspx)). While at Brookings, she also met Catherine Powell, who serves on Secretary Clinton's Policy Planning staff, and then later met the staff at the UN Foundation that coordinates the global Nothing But Nets Program (Hawa works on malaria control in Liberia), I think it is most fantastic to see how Hawa's face lights up when she mentions her visit to the DC Rotary Club (below).



At the DC club, Hawa and the other participants met a US Trade Commissioner, a judge, an IRS official, a YMCA official, a realtor, and especially Sheldon Ray of Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. Sheldon is a twenty-four year Rotarian, Member of the Board of the Osgood Center, and an expert on wealth management (he manages the DC Rotary Investment Fund). After the Club meeting we repaired to Sheldon's office where he discussed personal wealth management with the participants, but mostly he discussed Rotary, service above self, and the many local and global community service projects he supports. He noted that the Osgood Center's commitments to education, international service, peace and development were in fact Rotary commitments. The participants were intrigued by Rotary Ambassadorial and Peace Scholarships, international service projects, and the fellowship of weekly meetings. They all hope to join Rotary as soon as they can.



Sheldon Ray and Stephen Ose-Bonsu, Ghana (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCZeR5r1C9w>)

Meet Stephen Ose-Bonsu, a stand out participant in the ILC. He is a young community and business leader in Ghana. He reported on a daily basis the lessons we discussed at the ILC, especially the work shops with me, back to his main contact in Ghana. He will organize the next group to come because the core group was unable to attend since their visa appointment was set to late for the group to attend (Stephen already had a six month US visa). Stephen wants to join the RECSWUSA, if possible.

The highlight of the program for me were the frequent opportunities I had to conduct leadership workshops with the participants. I was a professor for thirty-eight years, but the last eight of those years, I also directed the Austin College Leadership Institute and led or participated on the International Service committee for the Rotary Club of Grayson County, Texas. I was also sponsor of the Austin College Rotaract Club. Through community service, local mentors, guest lectures, and work shops (example, our "Leading Lights and Rising Stars" Program brought community leaders and high schools students together to learn from one another), I have developed leadership lessons and insights that I share with participants. It is amazing what people can learn from one another as they share stories of successes, challenges, short falls and visions. At the end of the ILC, we all knew a great deal more about Ghana, Liberia,

West Texas, and Washington, DC. African, American, and international politics were more clear but not more simple. . We knew that failure happens but we can grow from it. We knew that leaders must also follow, that empathy is worth more than sympathy, that mentors are gold, that leaders are both born *and* made, that advancing the group trumps advancement of the individual, and that helping others is the ultimate leadership act.

Winnifred Arthur of Ghana, Editor of her college newspaper in Berea, KY, said it best:

*The Osgood Center's Leadership Conference has been a truly inspiring and eye-opening experience. Most of all, I was grateful to see someone leading by example and showing us what someone can do when they're passionate about their job.*

She is at the far right and I am at the far left:



I will allow Afua Sargong (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbA0V4qZjP0&context=C3b70cf1AD0EgsToPDskLtuK-M0KZ3KQksJ8p1WDU4>) of Ghana, above third from the right, the last word. She demonstrates how we learned from one another and she thanks Rotary eClub of the Southwest USA for its support. On behalf of the Osgood Center for International Studies, I thank you for the support and I thank you for helping us build bridges to Africa. We know that we are now permanently connected.



The ILC at the US Department of State with Director of UN Affairs, Mark Desjardins (center).