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by Gabriel I.H. Williams

Washington, D.C. - July 31, 2018: The Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States, on July 30, 2018, hosted a welcome event for 18 Liberian Fellows taking part in the 2018 Mandela Washington Fellowship, which is the flagship program of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI).

The YALI Fellows, who were completing the academic

component of their program at various colleges and universities in the United States, were in Washington from July 30 – August 1, 2018, for the 5th annual Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit, under the theme: “Living Mandela’s Legacy.”

Welcoming the YALI Fellow at the Embassy of the Republic of Liberia, Ambassador Lois C. Brutus indicated that the positive endeavors of the 18 Fellows from Liberia indicate that Liberia’s future is bright, considering that the future of the country lies in the hands of the young people.

Ambassador Brutus urged the Fellows that as they go out into the world, they should remember that humility in life, coupled with a good education, will take them a long way.

“As you go through life, be yourself, and remember that the biggest fulfillment in life is to help people and make a difference in their lives,” she said.

Ambassador Brutus indicated that when the Fellows return home following the completion of their program, they should use their experiences to help improve others, especially those who are less fortunate.

Introducing themselves individually, each of the Fellows briefly explained their academic, professional and other civic activities, and how the YALI Fellowship has broadened their knowledge.



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The leader of the Liberian YALI Fellows, Ms. Ruth N. Gbatoe, who studied at Indiana University in Civic Leadership, emphasized the gratitude of the Fellows for the opportunity afforded them through the fellowship to aspire toward greater accomplishments.

As part of their activities, The YALI Fellows engage in academic and leadership institutes, meet with U.S. federal, state, and local government officials, participate in community service, visit organizations to gain professional development, and make friendships and professional contacts with Americans.

In 2018, the Fellowship will provide up to 700 outstanding young leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa, which includes Liberia, with the opportunity to hone their skills at a U.S. higher education institution with support for professional development after they return to their home country.

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