



PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. EMBASSY CELEBRATES 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAMS

Kigali, Rwanda — On Wednesday, March 17, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Peter H. Vrooman hosted a virtual celebration to mark the 75th anniversary of the prestigious U.S. government sponsored Fulbright Program and to showcase the scholarship program's positive impact on individuals, institutions, and communities in Rwanda, the United States, and around the world.

"The Fulbright Program is one of my favorite public diplomacy exchange programs," said Ambassador Vrooman during the program. "It's one of the most prestigious exchanges, but it is also the one that enables people to have the really important time in-country connecting with people and being able to develop real scholarship and understanding between our countries."

The Fulbright Program in Rwanda began with one engineering student in 1964. Since that time, more than 200 Rwandan students have earned a Masters or other graduate degree at dozens of world-class U.S. universities, helping to strengthen the binational relationship and forging lasting connections between the people of Rwanda and the United States.

"I personally believe that the Fulbright Program is one of the most important and beneficial programs for scholars in Rwanda, in the United States, and globally," said Dr. Eugene Mutimura, who was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Washington University in St. Louis in 2007.

More than 100 Fulbright alumni and prospective applicants participated in Wednesday's virtual event, including Dr. Eugene Mutimura, the Executive Secretary of the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) and former Minister of Education, and Dr. Patrick Ndimubanzi, the Executive Secretary of Rwanda Human Resources for Health (HRH) and the former Rwandan State Minister in charge of Public Health and Primary Health Care. Also in attendance were former U.S. Fulbright Students, Scholars, and English Teaching Assistants who had traveled to Rwanda over the years.

"All in all, [the Fulbright Program] has been extraordinary for me," said Dr. Patrick Ndimubanzi, who was a Fulbright Foreign Student at the University of Oklahoma from 2007 – 2009. "More than anything else, it's about the people that you meet, the friends that you make, and the realization that we are just one human kind globally."

The 75th anniversary ceremony was followed by a panel discussion featuring two recently-returned Fulbright alumni, Dr. Chrisian Ntizimira and Ms. Pamela Umutesi, who shared their experiences with prospective applicants before the March 31 Fulbright Foreign Student Program application deadline. Full details about the 2022-23 application process are available at: <https://rw.usembassy.gov/fulbright-foreign-student-2022-23>.

Founded in 1946, the Fulbright Program now operates in 160 countries and has provided over 400,000 people from all backgrounds -- including recent graduates, teachers, scientists and researchers, artists, and more -- an opportunity to advance knowledge across communities and improve lives around the globe.

Please visit www.fulbright75.org for information about the celebration around the world.

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The United States Embassy in Kigali, Rwanda houses the U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Rwanda, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Defense Attaché Office, and President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).