2015 ANNUAL REPORT
Citizen Diplomacy, One Handshake at a Time
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WorldChicago is a nonprofit organization that fosters citizen diplomacy and global understanding through people-to-people exchanges and events.

Our mission is to:

- Facilitate professional and personal interactions for international leaders during official visits to Chicago
- Enhance respect and communication through international exchanges and alliances
- Promote the City of Chicago and State of Illinois as important centers of business and culture.

Founded as the International Visitors Center of Chicago in 1952, WorldChicago connects the Chicago community with international professionals, experts, and youth participating in U.S. Department of State and other federal exchange programs in Chicago.

WorldChicago offers Chicago-area citizens opportunities to forge partnerships with these emerging leaders, who explore their fields of interest and expertise through meetings with Chicago’s leading voices in the public, private, nonprofit, and tech sectors.

Our international visitors participate in volunteer activities that help enhance and improve the Chicago community and engage with Chicago's diverse, globally-minded citizens through a variety of cultural events. More than 20% of our visitors also reside with host families during their stay in Chicago, providing a full immersion cross-cultural exchange experience.

WorldChicago is an affiliate of Global Ties U.S., a nonprofit membership association with more than fifty years of leadership in citizen diplomacy. Together with more than 90 community partner members and the U.S. Department of State, WorldChicago helps shape international relations “one handshake at a time.”

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“An reminder that conflict isn’t just moving pieces around on a chessboard.”
— HOMEHOST HOST

ABOVE: Peggy Parfenoff (second from right) at a WorldChicago Coffee Conversation event with delegates in the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program Women in STEM project.
For the second straight year, entrepreneurship and innovation was a central theme among WorldChicago’s citizen diplomacy exchange programs.

In July, we hosted the African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP) for 40 women business owners from 34 countries across the continent. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, AWEP engages African women entrepreneurs to promote business growth, increase trade, create better business environments, and empower other African women business owners. The program opened with an inspirational keynote speech from Amy Hilliard, CEO of Fashion Fair. Delegates then branched out around the city to meet with local experts in textiles, fashion, interiors, cosmetics, and agricultural products.

In November, WorldChicago welcomed 70 leading global entrepreneurs and business officials from 62 countries around the world for a U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program on “Entrepreneurship as the Engine of Prosperity.” The three-week U.S. exchange opened in Chicago with a rousing keynote speech from Troy Henikoff of Techstars Chicago. Then to gain greater insights into the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Chicago, delegates met with local leaders from the organizations around the city such as the Chicago Department of Technology and Innovation, the Greater Pilsen Economic Development Council, Women Tech Founders, and many more. This year WorldChicago also launched a U.S. Department of State Professional Fellows Program with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia focused on tech innovation and entrepreneurship. In May and October, WorldChicago hosted 19 entrepreneurial leaders, with plans to host 40 more over the next two years.

“It seems the more you fail the more you succeed”

“What I’ve learned through the program is that failure is acceptable in the tech world, and it happens so often that it almost seems that the more you fail the more you succeed,” observed Tanja from Bosnia. “Optimism is also something that I’ve learned about, and the power of technology is powered up by people who use and benefit from it.” Mersed, another fellow from Bosnia noted, “It was great to see a culture here of open transparency in sharing and collaboration of ideas.”

Several Chicago fellowship hosts have since had the opportunity to participate in reciprocal exchanges to explore the tech ecosystems in Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia, growing the impact of the program even more.

Looking forward to tomorrow’s leaders, WorldChicago once again hosted an entrepreneurship exchange for students in the Pan-Africa Youth Leadership Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Fifty-seven young leaders from 14 countries across sub-Saharan Africa learned how they could make an impact on their communities using principles of entrepreneurship.

WorldChicago is honored to play a role in the State Department’s efforts to support entrepreneurship around the world, while also promoting the great city of Chicago as a hub for innovation.
Welcoming the World to Chicago

In 2015, WorldChicago hosted 691 international emerging leaders from 140 countries around the world for exchange programs ranging in length from two days to two months. Learn a little more about our visitors!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Republic</td>
<td>Hong Kong, S.A.R.</td>
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<td>Mauritius</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 10 Countries

1. Spain*  
2. China  
3. Germany  
4. Morocco  
5. Russia  
6. Pakistan  
7. United Kingdom  
8. Belarus  
9. Guatemala  
10. Iraq

*WorldChicago was happy host two special programs from the government of Spain
2015 Visitors by Region

Program Name         | Programs | Visitors |
---------------------|----------|----------|
1. International Visitor Leadership Program | 72       | 459      |
2. Youth Leadership Program | 5        | 81       |
3. Professional Fellows Program | 7        | 42       |
4. Community Connections | 1        | 9        |
5. Open World Leadership | 1        | 6        |
6. Other Programs | 8        | 94       |
**TOTALS** | **94** | **691** |

Top 10 Program Themes

1. Entrepreneurship
2. Governance, Policy, Politics
3. Journalism & Media
4. Law
5. Trade & Investment
6. Education
7. Civic Engagement
8. Arts & Culture
9. Environment
10. Crime & Security

Top Meeting Host: City of Chicago

WorldChicago extends a special thank you to the City of Chicago — 61 officials from 26 city departments hosted meetings with 264 visitors from 114 countries this year, showing that Chicago is truly a global city!

Average Program Length: 8 DAYS

Longest Program: 58 DAYS

Shanghai Management Fellows

“These women were truly inspiring and touched the hearts of everyone who participated.”

— PROFESSIONAL MEETING HOST

Read more stories from our hosts and visitors at worldchicago.org/your-stories
Citizen Diplomacy in Action

WorldChicago relies on the generosity, openness, and collegiality of the Chicagoland community to successfully implement our citizen diplomacy exchange programs. We are grateful for and thankful to our professional meeting hosts, homestay hosts, and hospitality hosts – whether providing a meeting, a home, or a meal, our hosts contribute directly to enhancing cross-cultural understanding, awareness, and tolerance in Chicago and around the world.

Professional Meeting Hosts

From judges to journalists, engineers to curators, hundreds of Chicago-area leaders and professionals exchanged expertise and ideas with WorldChicago’s international visitors in 2015.

In one such meeting, South Central Asia Interfaith Leaders (pictured below) visiting Chicago through the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program met with Commissioner Mona Noriega (center) and staff of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations to discuss the role of local government in protecting citizens from discrimination and CCHR’s efforts to bring people from different ethnic and religious groups together through educational programming.

Meetings by the Numbers

- 324 Unique Chicago-area meeting host organizations
- 504 Professional meetings with WorldChicago visitors
- 866 Chicago professionals who met with our visitors
- 3,519 Hours volunteered by Chicago meeting hosts
- 11 Elected officials who met with international visitors

Hospitality Hosts

For our visitors staying in hotels, often a highlight of their exchange is a dinner or cultural outing with local Chicagoans. What better way to interact than over a meal or a jazz performance?

Hospitality by the Numbers

- 51 Dinners hosted for WorldChicago visitors
- 38 Unique Chicago-area hospitality hosts
- 216 WorldChicago visitors hosted

2015 Hospitality Hosts

- Chicago Sister Cities International Casablanca Committee
- Mary Rob Clarke
- Anne & Rob DeBock
- Samantha & Tom Dekoven
- Margaret & David Douglas
- Karen Egerer & Richard Johnson
- Shanti Elliott
- Susan Estell
- Dan Goff & Samira Nazem
- Bonnie & Michael Hagan
- Kera Halvorson & Jon Rosenzweig
- Claire & Ryan Kettelkamp
- Aditya Khanna
- Dana Koll
- Stephen Kornie
- Catherine Leyser
- Megan Mozina & Patrick Laux
- Janet Murphy
- Isobel Neal & Julie Stagliano
- Maren Nelson & David Lawrie
- Mary Owen
- Rudy Pamintuan
- Carol & John Rappel
- Jim Riedel & Beth Ledvora-Riedel
- Margaret & Laurence Rohter
- Jessica & Steve Sarowitz
- Mary Schuller
- Sabine Schuller
- Debbie & Alan Shepard
- Jessica Smith Soto & Juan Lopez
- Deborah Soehligh
- Marilyn Susman
- Hao Tan
- J Tang
- Todd Wells & Virginia Pace
- Russell & Christine Zanca
- Richard Ziegler & Paula Tironi
- Constantine Zografopoulos

Photo courtesy Chicago Commission on Human Relations
Homestay Hosts

Dozens of WorldChicago homestay hosts opened their homes to our international professional and youth visitors this year. Short-term homestays ranged from one week to one month. Homestay hosts took on a special role as cultural ambassadors, providing not just a place to sleep, but a glimpse into everyday life in Chicago and the U.S.

Home Hosting by the Numbers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Unique Chicago-area homestay hosts</td>
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<td>22%</td>
<td>International visitors staying in homestays</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Unique zipcodes of homestay hosts</td>
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<td>60625</td>
<td>Zipcode with the most homestay hosts</td>
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<tr>
<td>2,578</td>
<td>Nights spent by visitors in homestays</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2015 Homestay Hosts

- Jack & Sarah Ailey
- Barbara Anderson
- Magdalena Arguelles & Charles Kiser
- Katie Aune
- Sandra Barnett-White & James White
- Barry & Colleen Berk
- Karen Brown
- Keli Campbell & Jeffery Rhodes
- Lainey Canevaro & Kevin Weinstein
- Jocelyn & Les Carter
- Mary Case
- Craig & Mireille Cernek
- Larry Cherry
- Josh & Bridget Collier
- Susan Comstock & Marc Rolfe
- Mary Ann & Dale Cooper
- Marquita Cunningham
- Lourdes & James Danaher
- Anne & Rob DeBock
- Barb & Dwight Decker
- Samantha & Tom DeKoven
- Kathy Doherty
- Jesus Fabian & Esther Perez
- Kristin Fancalszki & Jeff Schmelz
- Catherine Francis & Ryan Hart
- Terri Friel
- Aaron & Jackie Gelb
- Bob Gienko
- Dave Gifford
- Marilyn Gilreath-Golub & Kenneth Golub
- Samantha Godden-Chmielowicz & Scott Chmielowicz
- Josue Gomez & Stacie Bell
- Robin Graham
- Larry Grisolano
- Janet Austen Henderson
- Jane Heron
- Kevin Hogan
- Meghan Hoover & Dan Spaulding
- Wells & Christine Hutchinson
- Rosemary Ihejirika
- Bob & Barb Jasion
- Kimberly Jones
- Diane & Tom Judge
- Mary Mac Kinnon
- Roland Kulla
- Josh Lamb & Angela Tang
- Elizabeth & Matt Latimer
- Severine & Nicholas Leclercq
- Anne Linehan
- Susie & Eddie Linker
- Kristina & Carlos Lowenstein
- Cedric & Michele McCay
- Ann McKenzie & John Wischnewsky
- Amanda McLeary
- Pat & Dave Meyer
- Ellie Moore
- Debbi Nick
- Angela & Dana O’Banion
- Osei Omoike
- Iliana Perea
- Dakota Prosch & Fernando Regueiro
- David Reithoffer
- Darby Resha
- Marisela & Rafael Reyes
- Alex & Jennifer Rifman
- Lorraine Schmall
- Marnie & Keith Schwartz
- Lisa & Steven Shamarock
- Barbara Shaw & Carmen Aguilar
- Joe & Erin Shea
- Amy Silvetti
- Abby & Howard Simon
- Deborah Soehlig
- Tejas & Priti Soni
- Carol Southard
- Connie Speake
- Kevin & Tracy Stanciel
- Linda Stolz
- Laurel Stratford
- Alma Tirado
- Andrea Versenyl & David Keown
- Jennifer Viets
- Todd Wells & Virginia Pace
- Lucy Wojdyla
- Barbara Wolf

“We love hosting, especially because of what our son gains from meeting people from all over the world — he’s learning bits of language, trying different foods, and developing a world view all in the comfort of his living room!”
— Homestay Host
Engaging Chicago in Citizen Diplomacy

Each year WorldChicago hosts hundreds of international leaders, educators, scientists, architects, economists, students, and more from 100+ countries, providing a unique insider’s perspective on global affairs and issues in locales near and far. Our outreach events and activities offer one-of-a-kind opportunities for our local community to join the global conversation right here in Chicago.

2015 Events

Many of WorldChicago’s 2015 events reflected the theme of global entrepreneurship and innovation prevalent in our exchanges, and engaged the local tech community in our mission of citizen diplomacy. The first event in our 2015 Coffee Conversations Series featured a panel discussion on Women in STEM with leading scientists, engineers, and researchers from Botswana, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, and Poland. Our annual Young Professionals International Careers Night was held at coworking space OFFSITE, while leading digital tech incubator 1871 hosted WorldChicago’s Annual Fall Fundraiser, Invitation to Innovate.

Like our international visitors, our events also explored perspectives on other global issues. WorldChicago celebrated International Women’s Day with a distinguished panel of leaders discussing immigration, empowerment, and economics. Our Spring Diplomacy Luncheon featured curator Deborah Bekken of The Field Museum sharing a behind-the-scenes look at the international cooperation necessary to mount their new permanent exhibition, the Cyrus Tang Hall of China.

Outreach by the Numbers

| 15 | WorldChicago citizen diplomacy events in 2015 |
| 1,029 | Local, national, and international attendees at WorldChicago citizen diplomacy events |
| 5,500+ | Subscribers to WorldChicago e-newsletter |
| 59% | Increase in Twitter followers |
| 36% | Increase in Facebook likes |

Get Involved!

WorldChicago receives about 60% of our funding through U.S. Department of State program grants and contracts. The remaining 40% is achieved through membership, event proceeds, in-kind donations, and sponsorships. Your support helps us close this funding gap and create more opportunities to bring the world to Chicago, and Chicago to the world.

Visit www.worldchicago.org/get-involved to learn how you can get involved today.
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