

the
Frank Karel Fellowship
in Public Interest Communications

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For Immediate Release

2016 Class of Karel Fellows Largest Yet, from Seven colleges and Universities

Fellowship Engages Minority and First-Generation College Students as Public Interest Communicators in National Non-Profit Organizations

[Washington, DC] — **April 29**, 2016 – Emerging from an applicant pool of 43 students from 19 colleges and universities, the Frank Karel Fellowship announced today that nine minority and first-generation students will assist national nonprofits with public interest communications support in this fifth and largest year of the Fellowship. The Fellows will work out of Washington, D.C. offices this coming summer.

This year's group comes to D.C. from seven different schools, several of which have never been represented in the program. The Karel Fellowship honors and advances the legacy of Frank Karel, who established, led and nurtured the field of strategic communications in philanthropy during his 30 years as chief communications officer for the Robert Wood Johnson and Rockefeller Foundations. Among Karel's strong beliefs was that racial and ethnic minorities were underrepresented in the public interest communications field and that foundations and other public interest organizations needed to be proactive in recruiting and nurturing broader participation and leadership in local, national and global advocacy.

Over the last five years, the Karel Fellowship has provided a hands-on, experiential summer program that inspires undergraduate students by exposing them to professional experiences as social change communicators. This Fellowship is especially focused on translating personal passion for a more just world into communication skills that elicit social change. Fellows — gain hands-on experience through working under the guidance of a communications mentor at leading local, national and global nonprofits in the Greater Washington, DC area.

During the 2016 summer, Fellows will work on individualized communications projects at their respective assigned organizations:

Jeanette Alcaraz joins the Fellowship from the University of Arizona. After graduating from Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona, Jeanette began at the University of Arizona where she currently studies Business Management. Jeanette is also one of two Jack Kent Cooke scholars in the 2016 Karel cohort. Jeanette will be working with [GreenLatinos](#). GreenLatinos is a national nonprofit that develops and advocates for policies addressing national, regional and local environmental, natural resource and conservation issues that significantly affect the health and welfare of the Latino community.

Adrian Cibran is one of two Fellows joining the cohort from the University of Florida. Majoring in Public Relations, Adrian has already immersed himself in the world of public interest communications in a variety of ways, including his work as a volunteer for the *frank* conference. He also participated in the *frank* Street Store, which ran a strategic campaign to provide donated clothes to homeless men and women in

Gainesville. This summer, Adrian will be working with [Amnesty International USA](#). Currently the world's largest grassroots human rights organization, Amnesty International unites people from all over the world using research, action and advocacy. For more than 50 years, it has offered hope to neglected populations, and has campaigned with innovation and determination for justice.

Karen Franco joins the Fellowship from Princeton University. Karen is a Politics major who demonstrates a commitment to equal opportunity on campus and beyond. In addition to several volunteer experiences prior to her time at Princeton, she now teaches English classes to recently arrived immigrants in nearby Trenton, New Jersey. Karen will spend the summer at [the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#). Long-time friend of the Karel Fellowship, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids will host a Karel Fellow for the fifth time in 2016. The Campaign works to save lives by advocating for public policies that prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit and protect everyone from secondhand smoke.

Luisa Guaracao also joins the Fellowship from the University of Florida. Majoring in Public Relations, Luisa is a published writer, devoted student and already has experience in the nonprofit sector. This summer will be quite the change from last summer when Luisa directed a two-week summer camp for more than 70 Guatemalan migrant children hosted by an organization called SALT. She will spend this summer interning at [DC Vote](#). One of three returning hosts in 2016, DC Vote is a national citizen engagement and advocacy organization that fights for full and equal representation for DC residents. DC Vote works to secure local budget control, eliminate oversight of DC's local laws, and ultimately achieve full democratic equality in the US House of Representatives and the US Senate.

Sean Mock comes to the Fellowship from Macalester University in Minneapolis, MN. Sean is a Political Science major, who has interned with Senator Fount Hawj in the Minnesota state legislature and with Fair Trade USA. He's also involved in the Emerging Scholars Program at Macalester, which pairs first year students of color and first generation college students with student mentors. Sean will spend his Karel Fellowship with [the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) (CBPP). The CBPP returns to host again in 2016 and is a nonpartisan research and policy institute that pursues federal and state policies designed to both reduce poverty and inequality and to restore fiscal responsibility in equitable and effective ways.

Emmanuel Oyalabu attends Franklin & Marshall College and has taken a keen interest in the field of medicine, and more broadly, the care and services available to underrepresented populations. He is majoring in public health while also participating in several on-campus programs including I.M.P.A.C.T., through which he serves as a "Big Brother", helping to steer local youth to productive life paths. This summer, Emmanuel will work with [World Wildlife Fund](#) (WWF). First time host, WWF is a global organization, working to conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on earth. In D.C., WWF collaborates with the U.S. Congress and administration to further conservation through legislative and regulatory approaches.

Jacquelin Salg also joins the Fellowship from Franklin & Marshall College. She is an American Studies major described by her faculty sponsor as "curious, and passionate about using her education and talents to improve the lives of others." She is an active volunteer, particularly with efforts concerning access to food – a perfect fit for Martha's Table, where she will spend her summer ([Martha's Table](#)). For decades, Martha's Table has provided an array of services to Washington, D.C. residents and their families. What began in 1979 as a safe place for neighborhood children to eat and learn after school has blossomed into an organization that offers access to food, education and opportunity for children and families.

Kimberly Sanford comes to the Karel Fellowship from Harvard University. In addition to majoring in the studies of Women, Gender and Sexuality, Kimberly serves as a full-time mentor for the Crimson Summer Academy, which hosts low-income Boston students as they navigate college admissions. Kimberly is also a Jack Kent Cooke scholar. This summer, she will be interning with the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#) (NRDC). NRDC works to safeguard the earth – its people, its plant and animals, and the natural system on which all life depends. NRDC strives to ensure the rights of all people to the air, the water, and the wild.

Gislene Tasayco joins the Karel fellowship after earning her Associate's Degree in Political Science from Montgomery College. Beyond the classroom, Gislene co-founded an organization called SHIFT, which pushes an inclusive approach to more accurately represent all of the voices of the feminist movement. She will be paired with the [Polaris Project](#). A leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery, Polaris systemically disrupts the human trafficking networks that rob human beings of their lives and their freedom. Its comprehensive model helps survivors restore their freedom, prevents more victims, and leverages data and technology to pursue traffickers wherever they operate.

Andy Burness, chair of the Karel Fellowship advisory committee, spoke enthusiastically about this class of Fellows: "These students are what our country and our planet would wish for in our dreams. They are talented, passionate, hard-working and eager to learn. We are particularly thrilled that they have chosen to devote their energies to the public interest communications field, as this evolving profession needs more diverse change-agents committed to social justice in our communities, our nation and the world."

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