On October 28th, six outstanding international scholars from Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, and Japan traveled to Washington, D.C., in the middle of a growing storm to participate in the second class of CSPC International Fellows.

As the new Director of the Fellows programs, I was as excited to commence the fall leadership conference as any of the students. During our conference, the federal government was closed for two days due to Hurricane Sandy. I am thankful to the Fellows for their patience, for their willingness to adapt to changing schedules, and for the work they achieved.

Unfortunately, our visits to the Organization of American States and Council on Foreign Relations and our State Department visits were all cancelled. In their place, we conducted vigorous roundtable discussions about public policy. Beginning with the influence of governments during natural disaster events, the discussion progressed with the students sharing their perspectives and engaging others. Without anyone noticing, eight hours had passed.

The insights of the International Fellows were certainly not diminished by any language barrier. Henry Kissinger quotes were sagely applied to contemporary political questions such as European integration and nuclear nonproliferation. Rule of law and a free press were systemic features most desired by many of the Fellows for their own countries. Of particular note were discussions about public confidence in the national governments of the respective Fellows; each Fellow recognized the continuing need for America’s leadership on the world stage.

On Tuesday, the visits the six Fellows were scheduled to make to the Chinese and Japanese Embassies as well as a Pentagon tour were cancelled. Instead, we toured the national monuments and discussed American history. Particular attention was dedicated to war monuments and the recently created Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument.
On Wednesday, we met with the Austrian Ambassador, Hans Peter Manz. He and Philipp Marxgut, Director & Attaché for Science and Technology, discussed European politics and the application of technology in diplomacy. Their candid remarks were thought provoking.

Reuniting that afternoon, the Fellows headed to the Canadian American Business Council to meet with its Director, Scotty Greenwood. He discussed Canada’s natural resource management, and Alex Ognibene of Canada offered a first-hand account of Canadian economic policies. After touring to the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery’s Presidential portraits, the Fellows completed their pre-conference schedule with a private “haunted” history walking tour on Halloween within sight of the White House.

Outside of meetings, the Fellows developed their 15-page original research papers. Sharing her knowledge of European nuclear power, Lore Hayek of Austria helped Rodrigo Morais-Chaves of Brazil explore the history of American influence in nuclear policy around the world. Meicheng Wang of China and Alex Ognibene talked about various interpretations of the US pivot to Asia. All predicted in an informal survey that America’s prominent role in global issues would continue.

The first three days, preceding the general conference, were intellectually intense, busy schedules. I wish to thank Toyota International for its support of the two Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda Fellows and the Dr. Scholl Foundation for its support of our four Fellows from Austria, Brazil, Canada, and China.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS PROGRAM PLEASE CONTACT:

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FELLOWS PROGRAM BLOG: www.presidentialfellows.wordpress.com
On November 1st, just days before the Presidential election, the Center welcomed the 2012-2013 Presidential Fellows class to Washington, DC, for the Fall Leadership Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Crystal City. Overcoming the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, sixty-two students from colleges and universities around the country and six International Fellows from universities in Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, and Japan began the conference with a welcome lunch introducing the program.

After lunch, the conference kicked off with an engaging address from Daniel Runde, who directs the Project on Prosperity and Development at CSIS. He provided candid, pragmatic advice to the Fellows as he recounted the progression of his career, and the unexpected challenges he met along the way. Runde also offered excellent insights on the intersection of development and foreign policy. The students seemed drawn to his experience in the development field and left the talk with a better understanding of its role in international affairs.

Later that afternoon, the Fellows divided into six issue groups to discuss their research paper outlines with peers and alumni counselors.

The final papers that the Fellows will submit to the Center in May will be the culmination of many months of researching, writing, editing, and consulting with their on-campus faculty advisors, professional mentors provided by the Center, and their peers at the Fall and Spring Conferences. The top three papers will receive awards at the Center’s Annual Awards Dinner in the spring, and the top twenty papers will be published in our annual anthology *The Fellows Review*, in the summer.

Following a break, Jon Clifton, Deputy Director of the renowned Gallup Poll and Senior Fellow at Baylor University’s Institute for Studies of Religion, led a lively discussion of how the information revolution can assess public will around the world. He was optimistic that the metrics of well-being may soon influence policy makers. After his speech, Mr. Clifton took questions from the Fellows about changes in the polling process as a result of the information revolution.
On Thursday evening, the Center hosted a special dinner, film, and discussion on leadership in economic policy making and in the private sector. The Fellows watched *Inside Job*, a 2010 Academy Award winning documentary about Oscar and Emmy-nominated documentary. The film examines Wall Street failures that stimulated the ‘Great Recession.’ A robust discussion followed afterwards in which students respectfully debated the merits of the film’s arguments.

On Friday morning the Fellows headed across the Potomac River to the Supreme Court to meet with Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. During her address, Justice O’Connor reflected on the arc of her career, and the obstacles she faced on her path to becoming the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court in 1981. She also encouraged the Fellows that in pursuing a career that they should follow their interests and prepare themselves to make a contribution to society. Justice O’Connor also fielded questions from Fellows on the nature of “swing-votes” and of her role as the first female justice to serve on the Supreme Court.

Dr. Exum discussed the role of social media in public affairs, with particular focus on the Middle East and the Arab Spring. While acknowledging the importance of technology and social media, he discussed its many pitfalls as a factor in public and international affairs. He also emphasized the point at which online political movements enter the physical world to affect change.

After the meetings, the Fellows adjourned for lunch with their mentors, professionals who are paired with Fellows to advise them on their paper and on potential career paths.

A new addition to the program was the Civic Engagement Panel. Four speakers were selected to represent young experts working for or alongside the federal government. Moderated by Director Andy Steele, the lively discussion sought to elicit the panelists’ thoughts about the state of leadership in the nation’s capital. There was general agreement that past failures provide us new opportunities to aggressively shape our national future for the better.

Lastly, rising early on Saturday morning, the Fellows listened to Secretary Dan Glickman speak about the tenor of national politics. A former Congressman, Secretary of Agriculture in the Clinton Administration, and Chairman and CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America, Secretary Glickman now works with the Bipartisan Policy Center as a Senior Fellow. Secretary Glickman’s insights in the psyche of American voters and their
elected leaders were illuminating and left the students with a lot to think about regarding a potential future in public service. We are very grateful that Hurricane Sandy’s aftermath did not prevent his travel from New York City.

Before heading back to their respective colleges and universities, the Fellows gathered in their peer groups one final time to discuss plans for the further development of their papers. On February 1st the Fellows will turn in first drafts of their papers to be judged for the Marron, Moffett, and Kilmarx Awards that are given out at the Center’s Annual Awards Dinner during the Spring Conference.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Fellows as they develop their research papers, and we have already begun to plan for the Spring 2013 leadership conference.

The Center is grateful for the generous support of the donors that make the Presidential Fellows Program possible.

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“THE SPEAKERS’ PRESENTATIONS WERE PHENOMENAL. THEIR LARGE AND VARIED BODIES OF EXPERIENCE RELATED WIDELY TO FELLOWS ON MANY DIFFERENT PATHS”
-CSPC PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS SURVEY

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ENDOWED FELLOWSHIPS

The Andrew Barth Fellowship at
Columbia University

The John C. Whitehead Fellowship at
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The R. Gordon Hoxie Fellowship at
Long Island University

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