



The 2022-23 Cohort: Where Are They Now?

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The 2022-23 CCI cohort returned home just 4 months ago in May 2023. Already, the cohort is making a difference in their communities and working towards achieving their dreams. Continue reading to find out what the cohort has accomplished in only a few months.

Adem Bislimi (Kosovo, College of DuPage, Media) has started a 6-month internship with OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) in Kosovo. The non-profit OSCE plays a key role in supporting the development of diverse media in Kosovo and runs activities in the areas of human rights, democratization, and public safety.

Albinota Krasniqi (Kosovo, College of DuPage, Media) has completed his bachelor's degree in journalism. In November, he will receive his diploma from the University of Pristina. He is currently working with a digital marketing agency as a social media manager.

Ibrahim Coulibaly (Côte d'Ivoire, Sinclair Community College, Media) recently returned from being a camp instructor at the International University of Grand Bassam (IUGB). IUGB is located in Grand Bassam, a city not far from Abidjan, and it is an American university. He was in charge of the media club and taught two English classes at this camp. He also recently got his English trainer certificate and digital marketing certificate. He hopes to obtain a master's or PhD in English.

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He is now an English language coach and looks forward to developing peoples' English listening and speaking skills.

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Ibrahim receiving his certificate

Ishika Singh (India, Kirkwood Community College, Public Safety) was invited by the U.S. Embassy in Kolkata to share how the CCI Program impacted her and provided her with opportunities to grow in her technical skill development, leadership, and public speaking skills. In an Instagram reel posted by the U.S. Consulate of Kolkata, Ishika describes how opportunities she created for herself permitted her to enhance her time management skills and build relations.

Ismayil Malikov (Azerbaijan, College of DuPage, Media) gave an interview for a Kyrgyz television station. He was invited as a speaker to talk about non-formal education and visual learning to educational policy makers and school directors in Shusha and Karabakh. Some journalists from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and China TV stations were also there doing reports about Karabakh.

Jonas Gabriel Ramos da Silva Ataliba (Brazil, Fox Valley Technical College, Engineering) is currently working in the first mobile laboratory for artwork analysis in Latin America developing scientific instrumentation. He is also an undergraduate mechanical engineering student at the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio de Janeiro, and he is a volunteer at AIESEC (International Association of Students in Economics and Commercial Sciences). When he attended FVTC, one of Jonas' instructors saw his eagerness to learn about additive manufacturing and introduced him to 3D printing. After returning home and convincing his research coordinator to buy 3D printers, his lab now has two, which they use for research projects. Jonas has already traveled thousands of kilometers with his team to put some of their developed equipment

to work. Their goal is to support museums and curators all over the country while developing nuclear cutting-edge technology and techniques. Jonas has also presented his CCI experience to at least 300 hundred high school students under the state and federal educational system. He has proposed, organized, and presented the first international fair at his university and helped students to ease their apprehension about exchange programs. Upon returning home, Jonas has also started a new role at AIESEC, now as a Customer Experience of Incoming Global Volunteer with the goal of coordinating the experience of volunteers all over the world that come to Brazil to support Brazilian NGOs on their projects. With regards to his next endeavors, Jonas said, “I really do not know what the future holds for me; I am trying to focus on daily improvements and commitment to develop my community step-by-step. I hope everyone born in the same social class that I was, can one day experience the great feelings and achievements that I did. I am already happy to be able to share my life story with so many people and have the opportunity to make even a small impact in their lives.”



Jonas working on a painting with his research mentor

Karla Nicole Barrera (Colombia, Northampton Community College, Early Childhood Education) is working on her community impact project. She has received two national awards and has been working on two projects. The first project called Edu-K is a non-profit, which she is working on with a fellow Colombian participant, who she met in the program. Edu-K seeks to generate initiatives to mitigate the impact of different social problems in Colombia and worldwide. They are at the early stages of the project and plan to start free language courses for low-income people, donations of clothing, food, and school supplies for underserved communities, initiatives for recycling and reusing solid waste, leadership talks, and cultural exchange. The second project is called “Miss Karla to Learn” in which Karla seeks to make use of social networks among other

virtual platforms to promote quality education, focused mainly on teaching English and Spanish as foreign languages. This idea arose from the community impact project that she carried out during CCI called “A musical adventure” which was precisely related to the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language through playful and innovative pedagogical activities using art, music, and recycling.



Kgotsofalo Tala (South Africa, Kirkwood Community College, Business Administration) is sharing his skills in creating successful resumes with his local community by meeting one-on-one with young professionals to review their resume and help them format to include key phrases and words to find positions in their chosen fields.

Lorenni Suero Francisco (Dominican Republic, Northern Virginia Community College – Alexandria, Information Technology) is working hard to beat plastic pollution in her home country. She is currently volunteering to collect and separate plastic on local beaches and is creating awareness about plastic pollution for those around her. She is also motivating young people in her community to volunteer with the goal of reducing plastic pollution in the Dominican Republic and advocating for zero plastic. Lorenni is motivated to volunteer because of her appreciation of the natural beauty of her country. She is motivating friends, colleagues and acquaintances and is tackling this issue head-on as someone who recognizes that there needs to be a solution to this global issue.



Lorenni beating plastic pollution

Luisa Tapasco (Colombia, Northampton Community College, Early Childhood Education) received a scholarship from Harvard University for a program called Aspire Leaders. Since participating in the CCI program, she has implemented a program called United Transforming Lives. The project aims to empower youth in underserved populations. She presented the project to Colombo Americano, a binational center in Colombia that works with Education USA. She has also created a program called Global Leadership Talks, which gives visibility to international leaders and provides leadership workshops funded through nonprofits. Regarding the CCI program she says, “Thank you so much for making this dream possible and this new version of myself a women empowered of herself who is empowering more people to go ahead in life and achieve their dreams.”



Luisa presenting United Transforming Lives

Maysaroh Thoirun Nisa (Indonesia, Houston Community College, Media) secured a fully funded scholarship as a representative for the Cetta Virtual Society, allowing her to attend the ASARASA Indonesia Program in East Nusa Tenggara. ASARASA is a not-for-profit organization (NFPO) that focuses on community development. ASARASA combines an ecotourism approach with community service techniques to create sustainable solutions to existing environmental problems. The program's main goals are to increase environmental awareness among the community, develop and improve the skills of local communities, and promote sustainable actions that focus on maintaining the environment and protecting biodiversity. Maysaroh was also honored with the West Java Province's Jabar Future Leaders Scholarship, which will aid her in completing her undergraduate degree and developing leadership skills. Finally, Maysaroh is volunteering for Bantu Teman Indonesia, a humanitarian organization dedicated to assisting those in dire need. She hopes to pave the way for a brighter and more inclusive future for all.

Moise Gato (Cote D'Ivoire, Northampton Community College, Early Childhood Education) and **Emmanuel Bogue** (Cote D'Ivoire, Sinclair Community College, Media) both participated in separate events to discuss the CCI Program and the application process. **Moise** was invited as a guest speaker on August 30th. The Department of English at Université Félix Houphouët Boigny in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire organized the conference, bringing together several alumni of UK Government and U.S. Department of State Exchange Programs. As a speaker, Moise discussed the pillars of the program, eligibility criteria, and steps for applying. More than 400 undergraduate students attended the meeting. On August 24th, **Emmanuel** participated in a panel hosted by the ICSF (International Christian Students Fellowship). He said, "It was a great exchange session where participants came up with tips and techniques to better fill out their CCIP

American Cultural Exchange Fellowship forms.” Moise and Emmanuel are both active alumni members in their community.



Emmanuel at a cultural exchange panel hosted by ICSF

Mpho Sekati (South Africa, Kirkwood Community College, Agriculture) is on a mission to revolutionize farming practices for small-scale farmers across Africa through the power of 3D printing. He has been dedicating many hours to designing and creating 3D-printed farming implements that are not only cost-effective but also tailored to the unique needs of African farmers. Mpho’s dream is to see farmers all over Africa equipped with tools that empower them to increase their productivity and yield. He is collaborating with local farmers to craft innovative and beneficial farming solutions. From precision planting tools to efficient irrigation gadgets, his 3D-printed implements aim to optimize farming processes while minimizing environmental impact.



Mpho is revolutionizing farming practices in his community

Rafaella Costa (Brazil, Northern Virginia Community College – Annandale, Information Technology) is working as a data analyst for an agricultural technology company called Cromai. The company provides solutions with artificial intelligence to identify plagues on crops and reduce the use of herbicides. She is also a part-time vehicular connectivity researcher at Ford Motor Company.

Rynalde Silva Serejo (Brazil, Mesa Community College, Information Technology) is working on an app called Tasks. According to Rynalde, Project Tasks is aimed at making tasks simple and useful for users who are tired of the complexity of modern “to do” apps, full of features that most people won’t even use. The project is in the early stages of development.

Right after completing the CCI Program, **Said Muhammad Asoev** (Tajikistan, College of DuPage, Media) was accepted into a fully funded documentary film school in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The school lasted through the month of June, and he collaborated with other central Asian filmmakers on projects. A month after this

program ended, he was accepted into another fully funded summer school in the field of political science in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan by OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Academy. The program occurred throughout the month of August, and while there, he worked on his Instagram blog, where he talks about funded study abroad programs. He currently has over 80,000 followers! Saidmuhammad was then accepted into a third exchange program in Indonesia, where he is currently studying, learning about language, art, and culture.

Sitti Rusdi (Indonesia, Northern Virginia Community College – Annandale, Media) has experienced many life changes and opportunities since returning home. Not even a week after her return, she became involved in a project called “Before 1770”, a documentary that delves into the historical connection between Aboriginal People and the Macassan. Lyud worked as a translator, and the movie is set to be released later this year. She also received multiple job offers and decided to work as a freelance contributor with a well-regarded travel company, VIFA Holiday. In addition to her professional successes, Lyud also got married! After getting married, she began working as a social media specialist for one of the largest English course providers in the country, EF Indonesia. Furthermore, she has passionately promoted the CCI program on several campuses in her city, Makassar, South Sulawesi. Speaking about her CCI journey, Lyud said, “The CCI program has been a pivotal turning point in my life, equipping me with skills, experiences, and connections that have paved the way for exciting opportunities and personal growth. As I continue to progress on my path, I carry with me the invaluable lessons and experiences from this program, shaping my future endeavors in a meaningful way.”



lyud presenting at a university event

Written by Holly Calhoun, Alumni Relations and Communication

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