

**PROFESSIONAL FELLOWS PROGRAM  
SPRING 2018  
PARTICIPANT BIOS**

**IKUKO ACOSTA  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY STEINHARDT SCHOOL OF CULTURE,  
EDUCATION, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**



**Ikuko Acosta** is a board certified registered art therapist and a licensed creative arts therapist who has been involved in the field of art therapy for the past 35 years as a student, therapist, educator, and now as director of the art therapy program at New York University (NYU). Her clinical expertise is with the adult psychiatric population; she worked as a staff art therapist at a county psychiatric hospital in New Jersey for 17 years. Her main research interest is to develop an aesthetically based pictorial analysis within a framework of a psychodynamic approach; she also looks at incorporating new media for therapeutic use.

As an art therapy educator, Dr. Acosta has trained several hundred students, many of whom are now practicing art therapists and art therapy educators both in the United States and internationally. She focuses on the cross-cultural application of the field of art therapy; she is also working on incorporating the internship abroad experience into the curriculum. In the past 10 years many students enrolled in the program at NYU have traveled to Tanzania, Peru, South Africa, Brazil, India, Bolivia, Ghana, Australia, Italy, and Argentina for internships. Her interest in global expansion of the field of art therapy has taken her to Iceland, Italy, Turkey, Japan, Korea, India, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, Argentina, and China.

Dr. Acosta will divide her time among the China Global Philanthropy Institute in Beijing, NYU Shanghai, and Shanghai Normal University.

**KATRINA CLEMONS  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE – USA**



**Katrina Clemons** is an intercountry social work case manager at the International Social Services (ISS-USA) in Baltimore, Maryland. She joined ISS-USA in October 2012, but her most important job is being parent to an amazing 25-year-old daughter.

Ms. Clemons has worked for several institutions in the Baltimore area providing services to those infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS, the homeless, and women and children. In addition to working at the ISS-USA, she also works part-time at a local hospital emergency room providing crisis intervention to those in mental health distress; she is on the Board of Directors of a local pre-school; and she volunteers with the American Red Cross providing services to the Armed Forces.

At ISS-USA, Ms. Clemons plays a part in the mobilization of a domestic and international network of legal and social work professionals to connect vulnerable children and families separated by international borders to the services and support they need.

Ms. Clemons holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

The opportunity to travel to Mongolia will provide Ms. Clemons with a first-hand view of similarities and differences in addressing social ills such as poverty, providing care to vulnerable children and adults, and addiction. She hopes to learn from her hosts, and to provide insight into how these systems work in America. Most importantly, she will have a chance to assess what role the International Social Service network might play in bridging service gaps and developing best practices to address needs in Mongolia.

Ms. Clemons will be hosted by the Christina Noble Children's Foundation in Ulaanbaatar.

**MARY DEWITT-DIA  
AMERICAN RED CROSS**



**Mary DeWitt-Dia** is a partnership manager for community mobilization and partnerships in the disaster cycle services department at the American Red Cross national headquarters. She supports headquarters and the chapter network with developing and implementing partnerships to improve service to communities during times of disaster. She has authored several procedures and guidance to build and manage partnerships, establishing the foundation of the program. In 2015, she received her accreditation as a partnership broker through the Partnership Brokers Association (PBA) and most recently became a PBA associate, supporting the creation of a more equitable and sustainable world through innovation, efficiency, and excellence in multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Ms. DeWitt-Dia began her career at the American Red Cross in 1994 in the information technology (IT) department writing standard operating procedures and managing the training for the IT staff that supported the biomedical services division. After seven years, she moved to the chapter corporate IT division where she wrote software requirements and managed the upgrade and implementation of IT systems. She then moved into the IT business office and managed business operations including budgeting and analysis, contract management, IT portfolio management, staffing, purchasing and writing procedures for the department. In 2007, after 13 years in IT, Mary moved to the disaster cycle services team.

She will be hosted by Plan International in Xi'an.

**JAY GILLIAM  
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN**



**Jay Gilliam** is the senior global programs officer at the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). He organizes HRC's annual Global Innovative Advocacy Summit, manages its Global Fellows program, and supports HRC's work with LGBTQ partner organizations around the world.

Prior to joining HRC, Jay served at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for nearly five years, working in the Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning; the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs; and in the Office of the Senior LGBT Coordinator. In those roles, he shared how the Agency

does its most effective work, maximizing its impact in the development space; led USAID communications and public engagement efforts on LGBT inclusive development work; and developed stories about the hard work done around the world to end extreme poverty.

Jay previously worked at the Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. and Peace Boat Japan in Tokyo.

Jay has served as vice president and communications & outreach director for GLIFAA, the employee group representing LGBT personnel, their families and their straight allies. Jay is also an active and enthusiastic member of the Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington, serving on the board of directors, as vice president of membership, and as co-chair of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion.

Jay grew up in Arlington, Texas, before leaving the Lone Star State for Amherst College in Massachusetts to get his BA in political science. He did his graduate studies on a Rotary Fellowship, earning an MA in peace studies at International Christian University in Tokyo, Japan. He is fluent in English and Japanese and speaks Spanish.

Jay will be hosted by the Zhitong Guangzhou LGBT Center in Guangzhou.

### HEATHER MCCANN GROUNDWORK LAWRENCE



**Heather McMann** is executive director of Groundwork Lawrence (GWL), a non-profit that is “*changing places, changing lives*” in Greater Lawrence, Massachusetts. GWL engages the whole community – residents, youth, nonprofits, government and businesses – in the planning and realization of projects and programs. With this collaborative approach, GWL ensures that all stakeholders are invested in the outcomes, key to stable neighborhoods and sustainable change. By focusing on four program areas – environmental and open space improvements, fresh food access, youth and adult education and employment initiatives, and community programming and events – GWL creates the building blocks of a healthy, strong community and empowers residents to improve their quality of life.

Under Heather’s leadership, GWL has quadrupled in size and its impact has been recognized locally and nationally, including receiving the 2014 Nonprofit of the Year designation by Enterprise Bank, being named a Social Innovator by Root Cause, and receiving the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Peter R. Lee Healthy Communities Awards.

Ms. McMann has spent over 20 years in the nonprofit sector building community and individual assets; she has a range of experience in nonprofit management, focusing on preparing organizations for growth.

Heather received her MBA from Brandeis University and her BA from Smith College. She is a senior fellow with the Institute for Nonprofit Practice and serves as a board member of Groundwork USA, the Massachusetts Public Health Association, and the Lawrence Partnership. She is also a commissioner with the Essex National Heritage Area and the Essex County Commission on the Status of Women. In 2010 Heather was honored to be selected as one of the YWCA of Greater Lawrence’s Tribute to Women awardees.

Heather will be hosted by Save the Children in Kunming.

**MARGARET NYGREN**  
**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**



**Margaret A. Nygren** is the executive director & CEO of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). Appointed in 2010, Dr. Nygren is responsible for executive direction, leadership, and management of operations of the organization. She oversees the core functions of education, publications, public policy, and member services. In addition, she serves on a number of national advisory and scientific committees and frequently speaks at regional, national, and international conferences and events.

Prior to joining AAIDD, Dr. Nygren held two progressively responsible positions at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), concluding her service to the organization as the associate executive director for program development. She secured substantial federal grant and contract funds and directed multiple federally-funded research, technical assistance, training, and dissemination projects for more than 100 major research universities engaged in academic and service activities in the field of intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities.

Dr. Nygren was previously a fellow in the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in Baltimore; director of the Center on Aging and Disabilities at the Lieutenant Joseph P. Kennedy Institute in Washington, D.C.; and director of family support services and director of mental retardation services at Kit Clark Senior Services in Boston.

Dr. Nygren earned a doctorate of education in organizational leadership from Nova Southeastern University, an MA in clinical psychology from West Virginia University, and a BA in psychology from Beloit College.

Maggie will be hosted by the Mongolian State University of Education in Ulaanbaatar.

**JESSICA RISTICH**  
**SAINT FRANCIS COMMUNITY SERVICES**



**Jessica Ristich** graduated from Wichita State University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in social work. She completed her social work practicum with the Kansas Department for Social and Rehabilitation Services, learning about child abuse and neglect investigations. Since her graduation she has worked for St. Francis Community Services, a faith based non-profit organization. Jessica was a reintegration social worker for six years, working to reunite families whose children were placed in foster care by the courts due to abuse and neglect allegations. Jessica developed case plans, wrote court reports, supervised family visits and ensured that families had appropriate services to facilitate successful reintegration. Jessica also worked to achieve adoption or other forms of permanency for children who could not return home.

Jessica is currently the placement supervisor; her team ensures that children in the custody of the state of Kansas have placement in foster homes or residential facilities while their parents work at assigned case plan tasks to ensure reintegration. Jessica is passionate about working with victims of human trafficking, developing relationships with the agencies that help serve children in foster care, and implementing new processes and procedures to ensure on-going safety assessments of foster care placements.

Jessica will be hosted by World Vision in Kunming.

**JILL SCHEIBLER**  
**MAKE STUDIO ART PROGRAM, INC.**



**Jill Scheibler** is a community psychologist and art therapist based in Baltimore, Maryland. She is passionate about creating and sustaining inclusive practices and spaces that benefit marginalized communities. Jill cofounded and is the program director of Make Studio, a community-based arts nonprofit centered on the strengths and visions of artists who have historically been typed as “outsiders.” Founded in 2010 with the mission of providing multi-modal arts programming to individuals with disabilities, Make Studio aims to put art and abilities to work throughout Baltimore and beyond to create more inclusive communities for all.

Jill also works as a senior research analyst with Carson Research Consulting (CRC), where she oversees all qualitative research design and analysis on CRC’s projects. She has conducted program evaluation work with nonprofit programs, city and county agencies, and for federal programs.

Jill received her M.A. in art therapy from The George Washington University, and, her Ph.D. in human services psychology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where she continues to teach and consult on research projects. Her academic and applied research has covered a wide range of disciplines and topics, including nonprofit/NGO organizational functioning, health disparities, women’s and immigrant communities, youth development, community mental health and well-being, developmental disabilities, and the social impacts of arts programming.

As an art therapist Jill has worked in the areas of substance abuse, acute mental health, and special education. She is the current president of the Baltimore Area Evaluators and treasurer of the Maryland Art Therapy Association.

Jill will be hosted by World of Art Brut Culture in Shanghai.



The Professional Fellows Program is funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and managed by the National Committee on United States-China Relations.



