

## EDUCATION



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# Educating the Next Generation of Nonprofit Leaders

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**SCOTT BEALE**  
*Social Entrepreneur,  
Founder, CEO*

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On a recent Friday morning in Washington D.C., representatives from Armenia, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Mexico, South Korea, and Zimbabwe gathered around a conference table. The start of another World Bank meeting? Better: It's a bimonthly "Training Day"—a gathering of professionals from around the world who've joined [Atlas Corps](#) and committed to a year of professional service in the United States or Latin America. On that particular Friday, the topic was how to effectively utilize social media to create a public advocacy campaign. (You can imagine the three participants from Egypt had a few thoughts on the topic!)



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These Fellows, as they're officially known, have put their lives on hold in their home countries to gain a year of professional experience at organizations like Acumen, Ashoka, Grameen Foundation, Susan G. Komen, and even the U.S. Peace Corps. They're part of a network of 140 professionals from 40 countries. For the Fellows, it means exposure on a global stage. To the organizations, it means first-hand international knowledge. In addition, the long-term—12 to 18 months—term of service allows for deep learning and significant impact.

In 2006, Sergio became the first Atlas Corps Fellow. He served at [Mobilize.org](#) as the vice president of online organizing. Throughout his year in D.C., Sergio also developed his personal interests. He became an avid watcher of "The West Wing" and gave free tours of the monuments to tourists in Spanish. As a Colombian, he represented the friendly face of a country that is often negatively portrayed to the world. As an Atlas Corps Fellow, he helped establish a global community of leaders who learn from and support each other. Now Sergio advises President Santos of Colombia as the first director for innovation and social entrepreneurship.

In 2009, Danielle left D.C. to move to Bogota with Atlas Corps to serve at [Give2Colombia](#). She is a peace-building specialist who works with businesses, nonprofit and governments to support innovative human rights projects. Colombia is not as violent as people think it is, but its recent history of war taught Danielle a lot about conflict resolution. She now works at Columbia University's Peace Building program. Her efforts help break the cycle of violence in conflict-affected countries. She is a nonprofit leader and flamenco dancer who wasn't content just strutting her stuff in the U.S., so she went south to serve and grow. She's since returned having learned new moves to make the world a safer place.

In 2012, our first Fellow from Sudan, Mohammed, will complete a year of service at [Susan G. Komen](#). This doctor from war-torn Sudan offered a first-hand perspective on how to deliver breast and cervical cancer services in Africa. He wore Komen-pink with pride in the U.S. and says his plans are now "to return to Sudan to apply my medical training and leadership lessons," and "address challenges with the perspectives gained from the U.S." Mohammed is showing that it is not just "the West" that can help "the developing world," but that a doctor from Sudan can help improve women's health in the U.S. too.



Sergio, Danielle and Mohammed are examples of the ever-expanding Atlas Corps network. They prove that talent is evenly distributed in the world, but opportunity is not. They demonstrate the power of personal relationships to overcome the cultural and political barriers that try to divide us. Our Fellows prove that a devout Muslim from Pakistan and an inspired Evangelical Christian from Nigeria can not only become great friends, but also share ideas on youth leadership development to make both of their countries better.

Atlas Corps has supported 10 classes of Fellows and we want you to become a part of our community as well. If you are a college graduate who is less than 35 years old, you should apply. You can apply from any country in the world to serve in the U.S. or Colombia. For Americans, if you speak Spanish, then you can serve in our Colombia program. If you don't meet our basic requirements, you can still support our community by spreading the word. As Atlas Corps expands, we'll prove that while the challenges of the world may be overwhelming for one person to tackle, there is no challenge greater than our collective will and energy to make the world a better place.

*Photo via Atlas Corps*