



This past April, I had the incredible honor of attending the HERlead Ambassador Workshop about nonprofit leadership. Those few days spent in DC were extremely valuable, and the other Fellows and I walked away with tangible and concrete ways to move our projects forward. I was a 2016 HERlead Fellow and attended the Global Delegation in 2016 and HERlead Ambassador Forum in 2018. I also received HERlead Grants in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Out of all of these amazing experiences, the HERlead Ambassador Workshop was definitely my favorite for a few reasons.

The workshop was specifically focus on areas that I needed help with and the one-on-one time I got with the trainers and with the HERlead and Vital Voices staffs were invaluable. I absolutely loved the HERlead Forum, but there were so many people there that it was definitely harder to get specific help regarding my project. However, at the Ambassador Workshop, there were only a few Fellows there at a time, and we had the privilege of being mentored by incredible trainers and HERlead and Vital Voices staff. The other Fellows and I all had similar needs, and after the speakers/trainers were done with their sessions, we had such a small group that we could ask very specific, pointed questions, and the trainers were incredibly helpful in answering them. Moreover, the small group size made it so that we had the time to ask questions and get them answered in the moment, instead of feeling like there wasn't enough time for everyone to ask the questions they had.



I have really enjoyed receiving support for my project through the HERlead network and now through this specific opportunity regarding nonprofit leadership. My project focuses on bringing together high school and college students of different religious backgrounds to dialogue events, in order to promote interreligious understanding in the upstate South Carolina area. I want to expand my project to make it replicable in other states and in schools and universities across the country, and learning about how to mobilize volunteers, how to put together a nonprofit board, and how to monitor and evaluate the progress of my organization are all examples of vital skills that I would never have had the opportunity to learn about otherwise. Attending the Ambassador Workshop truly helped me get my questions answered so that I could move my project forward - beyond just the scope of my city. My next steps are to create a starter kit for my project so that students can easily create chapters in their own cities; secondly, I will be assembling a diverse and driven group of leaders to create a nonprofit board that can help set the vision for my project. After this workshop, I went home with organized worksheets, links, Power Points, and advice that will help me set and achieve goals for expanding my project as a nonprofit, and with a clear vision as to what I wanted. Before coming in, I felt confused, anxious, and lost, and when I left the Ambassador Workshop, I felt confident, prepared and ready to be a leader in my community.

Why is it important to you that I had this amazing experience with HERlead? For one, I think it's important that everyone uses these opportunities to help them move their projects forward. When other Ambassador Workshops are offered in the future about different topics, I highly encourage everyone to apply. If you're feeling confused, lost, or unsure what your next steps should be and the topic of the Ambassador Workshop is relevant to your project, then I really encourage you to apply. These are truly unique opportunities to move your projects forward with professional and specific guidance in a one-on-one setting.

Additionally, I would encourage everyone to use the HERlead network to help you create positive change in your communities or to simply help you grow as a female leader. I was reminded by attending this workshop that the HERlead network is an excellent opportunity for all of us to grow as leaders. Everyone in the HERlead network truly wants to see us succeed as leaders, and whenever we feel lost, unsure, or simply need a word of encouragement, the HERlead network is there for us. While we may not all physically be around each other all the time, we are all privileged to be able to communicate on social media or via email, phone or text, and this is something that we should all capitalize upon in order to help each other grow as young female leaders.

As always, thank you to the amazing HERlead network for guiding me and providing constant support, and I wish everyone luck with their studies, projects and summer plans!

- Roann, HERlead Ambassador 2019