



President's Message

An Inspiring Host: Salzburg Global Seminar

This month brought back to me one of the great joys of serving in the Cumulus Executive Board: the opportunity to “break bread” and hold intensive working sessions in person again with my fellow board members, a group of academic leaders from around the world deeply committed to the stewardship of our association.

After eighteen months of the uneventful surroundings of our digital square grids, we could not have convened in a more inspiring environment, both literally and figuratively. Most of our board traveled to Salzburg, where we were hosted by Cumulus partner, the [Salzburg Global Seminar](#), in their storied 18th-century site and seminar facilities, Schloss Leopoldskron. Once the lovingly restored home of the theater impresario and Salzburg Music Festival founder Max Reinhardt, the magnificent property and grounds became part of the Salzburg Global Seminar in 1947 – a time deeply scarred by the ravages and horrors of World War Two. As an independent non-profit institution, Salzburg Global Seminar started with the courage and “dare to dream” audacity of three university students: two Americans and an Austrian. Determined not to see the atrocities of the war ever occur again, they came together. They raised a seed fund to acquire a dilapidated palace in the outskirts of Salzburg, turning the place into an academic summer camp of sorts, one to gather beyond disparate ideologies to seek common ground and pursue a “Marshall Plan for the Mind.” All of these years later, their vision has evolved into a globally connected organization with a legacy of programs, coalitions, and a network of Global Fellows committed to bridging cultures and shifting the terms of debate to incite action for a better future.

As a Fellow, it was a privilege to facilitate the introduction of this institution to colleagues. I am grateful to the Salzburg Global Seminar leadership team for their warm welcome and for engaging in dialogue to activate our formal partnership. Stay tuned. The Secretariat will share more about opportunities ahead that we are looking to shape across many of our initiatives.

On my plane ride home to New York after the board meeting and great visits with members and Cumulus partners in Barcelona, I had some time to pour over a few of the publications from the Salzburg Global Seminar library. I leave you with a quote on leadership, a subject I teach to my graduate students at Parsons, from the 2017 Inaugural Salzburg Lecture delivered by [Thulisile Nomkhosi Madonsela](#), Professor Law Faculty Trust Chair in Social Justice, University of Stellenbosch, and former Public Protector of South Africa:

“Progress at all levels requires the kind of leadership behind the Salzburg story. We need leadership that focuses on the glimmers of light amidst darkness. We need leadership that leverages those sparks of light and turns despair into hope, and light into darkness.”

Here's to leveraging those sparks of light around us!

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