



## Navigating a Business in Uncertain Times

### Transcript for Leaders Inspiring Communities During Challenging Times

*Speakers*      ■ Marie Royce, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

### Session Transcript

Hello everyone! I'm Marie Royce, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

I am delighted to welcome you to the first-ever virtual exchange supporting this year's Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders.

Congratulations on your recent selection as finalists and alternates for this Fellowship! You were chosen from a competitive group of more than 35,000 applicants, and you'll soon join an impressive group of over 4,000 Fellowship Alumni.

You have each demonstrated exceptional leadership skills, and a strong commitment to your communities, your countries, and to the continent of Africa.

When U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo most recently visited the continent, he said that he was "struck by Africa's entrepreneurial energy" and the promise of the growing youth population.

I hope that you will use your energy to increase your knowledge, develop your leadership skills, and broaden your network through this virtual program.

It's a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas, pose questions, and engage experts in your field.

During these challenging times, I am inspired by the work of Fellowship Alumni to address needs in their communities.

For example, a 2016 Alumnus from Ghana named Dr. Laud Anthony Basing, recently led a team of scientists to develop a Rapid Diagnostic Test for COVID-19.

Dr. Basing credits his Fellowship experience and expanded professional network as key components in reaching the full potential of his business and work.

As President Trump has said, "We hope to extend our economic partnerships with countries who are committed to self-reliance and to fostering opportunities for job creation in both Africa and the United States."





Dr. Basing's work is a great example of how these exchange programs contribute to advancements on both continents.

As we celebrate another year of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, and the tenth anniversary of the Young African Leaders Initiative, we encourage you and our outstanding U.S. academic partners to keep up the great work.

Stay inspired and stay connected!