

Multi Nation Program



Dr. Sheyla Blumen | Lima, PERU

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Dr. Blumen is recognized as one of the preeminent scholars in the field of gifted education, both in Peru and throughout South America. Through her teaching, research, publishing, and speaking she has advanced the practice of creativity and talent development among children, youth, and adults. Among her numerous accomplishments, Dr. Blumen has developed testing and educational materials to foster creativity in schools, universities, and organizations, and to promote academic excellence and competitiveness. During her fellowship, she examined curriculum and learning strategies; education models that bring

together schools, entrepreneurs, and policy makers; best practicing in fundraising; and collaborative relationships with U.S. institutions.

Dr. Blumen began her fellowship in New Orleans attending Annual Meetings for the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. During the sessions she had the opportunity to connect with former colleagues and network with leaders in gifted education who provided her with many insights into educational policies in the U.S. While Dr. Blumen was in New Orleans, attendees learned that the Javits Gifted & Talented Students Education Act had been defunded for 2011, thereby eliminating the sole federal program focused on meeting the needs of gifted students. In the days following this disappointing announcement, and throughout her fellowship, she was amazed to observe the subsequent efforts of individuals and groups invested in gifted education to replace the funding.

In Iowa City, IA, Dr. Blumen spent a day meeting with individuals at the University of Iowa's International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. The visit provided her with valuable insights into the politics surrounding education, and led to her having a meeting at the office of Senator Charles Grassley, who is recognized as a leading advocate for talented and gifted children. Dr. Blumen also met with the United Way of East Central Iowa, where she was impressed to learn about the extent of their work, and the details of their fundraising process.

In Boston, Dr. Blumen had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Howard Gardner to discuss the GoodWork Project – a study of work she found excellent, engaging, and ethical. Dr. Gardner also provided Dr. Blumen with insights on leadership, and invited her to present a proposal about comparable "Good Works" being done in Peru. Another highlight in Boston was her meeting at The Achievement Network. Dr. Blumen was very impressed by the organization's excellent model, and plans to work with them on a pilot study to determine if their model can be implemented in Peru.

Dr. Blumen will use her fellowship to influence the direction of education policy in Peru, and will participate in international professional events to share her experiences. She will pursue cooperative research on loneliness and biogenetic behavior with the University of Chicago, and will launch a joint training program in neuropsychology applied to education with Drexel University and Catholic University of Peru. Furthermore, she plans to advocate for, design, and implement "Gifted Latino," an entrepreneurship mentoring program in math and the sciences targeting promising, underprivileged youth, with the support of Eisenhower Fellows from Brazil, Israel and Spain. And finally, Dr. Blumen will restructure the *Revista de Psicología* website to increase its international visibility.

Leaders bettering the world around them.