

J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board

Minutes of the 253rd Quarterly Meeting

**Washington, DC
December 5-6, 2011**

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The 253rd meeting of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board took place in Washington, D.C. on December 6-7, 2011.

Members in attendance at the quarterly Board meeting were: Chair Anita B. McBride, Vice Chair Shelby Lewis and Members Mark Alexander, Betty Castor, Gabriel Guerra-Mondragón, Tom Healy and Susan Ness. Members Lisa Caputo and Jean Becker participated in parts of the meeting by telephone.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Chair Anita McBride opened the FSB's 253rd quarterly meeting at the offices of the Institute for International Education (IIE). She explains that the meeting will be transcribed to have an accurate account of their public discussions and to follow up on action items. She thanks Ed Roslof, IIE Vice President for hosting the meeting. He welcomes the Board to the new IIE/CIES building and introduces the directors of CIES which runs the Fulbright Scholar program.

The Chair welcomed Robin Bradley and Donna Ives as Directors of the ECA Fulbright Offices for Africa and for North Africa and the Middle East respectively to give briefings on their respective programs.

Robin Bradley explains that the Africa program is run as a regional program of 34 countries so that with the exception of South Africa they are not any specific country budgets. Last year, her office administered a total of 325 grants to U.S. and foreign scholars. They strive to have scholars going both ways, but in some countries like Madagascar, Mauritania, Chad and Cote d'Ivoire there are no Americans right now due to security concerns.

Last year, they awarded 152 grants to visiting students, doing both Master's and PhD programs. Women represented 52% of the program. There are 22 students from Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria and Senegal teaching their languages under the Foreign Language Teaching Associate Program. U.S. universities cost-share approximately \$2 million a year.

The African Research Scholar program is the region's smallest program, awarding 32 grants last year. The field of HIV/AIDS public health is a big draw for Africans to come do research here.

The U.S. student program is another big program for the office, which received 700 applications, for next year's program of about 55 grants. They also awarded 14 English Teaching Associate grants. This is a tough program since they like to pair teachers, which is not always possible because of the small numbers.

Under the U.S. Scholar program, they awarded grants to 71 scholars. South Africa, especially Cape Town, is the biggest draw, but so are Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania and Ethiopia. She highlighted several prominent alumni from this program, including the President of Ghana John Atta Mills, Bogaletch Gebre,

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the founder of a women's association in Ethiopia and Leona Theron, a South African Supreme Court judge.

Robin Bradley outlined the challenges for Fulbright in Africa, including limited cost-sharing (a total of \$267,000 from the region) but some housing offers. Security is a concern with several programs suspended, although she hopes the Cote d'Ivoire program to start again soon. She discussed the impact of a limited budget, only able to fund 150 foreign student grants for over 2000 applications.

Turning to Fulbright in NEA, Donna Ives indicated the program is over 60 years old, with the first exchanges in Egypt in 1949. Fulbright was able to play a strong role in support of the transitions of the Arab Spring.

Fulbright is offered in 18 countries in the region, with a budget of \$21.8 million, which has more than tripled since 2001, with more than 4 million coming from host government cost-sharing. Last year, the office awarded 535 grants to both American and foreign scholars. There are four commission countries, in Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Morocco, all established with binational treaties with significant cost-sharing. These four countries account for almost half of all grants awarded in the region. In the 14 other countries, Embassies administered awards for 231 grantees, at \$11.7 million.

The largest program is the Foreign Student Program, accounting for 2/3 of the budget. 173 students from the NEA region received grants to pursue graduate study in the U.S., only 20% at the PhD level. U.S. universities cost-shared at a rate of several million dollars.

U.S. universities had 98 foreign students come teach Arabic, under Fulbright. The office manages an undergraduate program as well, for 60 students from both NEA and South Asia to pursue 1-year non-degree programs.

49% of all foreign students are women.

She highlighted the 35 scholarships for Iraqis, in the program which re-opened in 2004. In addition, they offered a short-term visiting faculty development program for 48 Iraqis last summer.

For Americans going to the region, Fulbright received over 600 applications, over half for the new English Teaching Assistant Program. They are having trouble finding placement for the large volume, only in 5 countries. 2/3 of the Fulbright students are studying Arabic. She said they are seeing fewer applications for the U.S. Scholar Program, perhaps due to the economic situation in the U.S.

For Arab Spring countries, the Office is looking forward to re-opening the student program. They hope to run one of the new Public Policy Programs in Tunisia next fall. In Libya, they have doubled the number of grants. They recently received over 1600 applications for the student program, in a 2-week period, following a successful YouTube recruitment video! In Egypt, the program is already at an all-time high, but she hopes to increase the number of undergraduate grants next year.

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The primary challenge in the region is security. Outside of the commission countries, there is not enough cost-sharing.

Opening up to questions from the Board, Anita McBride asked why the program in Cote d'Ivoire was closed when she knew they participated in the Public Policy Research Program. Robin Bradley explained the schools were closed in country, while the Public Policy Fellows worked at the Ministries.

Anita McBride was very impressed with the Iraqis who came to Washington last summer under the Short-term Visiting Scholar Program and commended Mississippi State University for hosting a large number of visiting scholars. She indicated that former President of MSU, Peter McPherson, a head of USAID during the Reagan administration, had traveled to Iraq to help re-build higher education there. She wanted to know if the recruitment of junior Iraqis would replace the very impressive senior scholars she had met. Donna Ives said that from evaluations of the Iraqis, they felt it best to focus on the needs of junior scholars, who wouldn't speak if there were more senior scholars present.

Vice Chair Shelby Lewis voiced her pleasure at hearing that a southern university, Mississippi State was selected. She asked how many of the American grantees could not complete their programs for security reasons. Robin Bradley said there were only a few, two in Cote d'Ivoire and two in Madagascar. They do not have problems with African students here, except for the occasional health issue. Donna Ives said there were none this year in NEA. Shelby Lewis wanted to know what happens if a candidate drops out. Are alternates selected? Donna Ives and Robin Bradley said it was seldom offered to another candidate, but there are exceptions. They offered to move the Americans pulling out of Niger a couple of years ago to another country.

Board member Betty Castor asked about programs for faculty at African universities who had not completed their dissertations as a possible source for future Fulbright programs. Robin Bradley indicated they could look into.

Board member Tom Healy was interested in getting a link to the Libyan YouTube video mentioned, and more broadly in what worked in their recruitment efforts. Donna Ives pointed to the experience of the Egyptian Commission Director being able to offer specific university placements as a way to increase applications. Robin Bradley discussed recruitment efforts at the African Studies Association and the TESOL conferences. Both said CIES does the recruitment for the program.

Board member Ambassador Guerra-Mondragón asked why there are not more commissions in Africa, and specifically the experience of the commission in South Africa. Robin Bradley said that commissions were very expensive. If they had to direct \$2-3 million for a commission out of a total budget of \$15 million, it would reduce the number of grants they could offer. Other countries could not come up with cost-sharing. That was the experience with the South African commission. She also indicated that there were problems of nepotism in the selection of grants.

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Donna Ives said that the same reasons limited the number of commissions in NEA. She indicated the Iraqi government had provided cost-sharing, but ended this year. She commended the four country commissions in NEA for their support for Fulbrighters. Other countries have the wealth but not the commitment to Fulbright. Saudi Arabia has their own scholarship program, which funds about 21,000 students in the U.S.

Shelby Lewis suggested that more outreach be conducted to countries without commissions to describe the benefits. Countries without commissions may be disadvantaged. Robin Bradley said Cameroun was interested, until they learned of an expected funding commitment from their side. The same was true with Nigeria. Dr. Lewis said she hears interest from people from countries all the time. Robin Bradley offered to speak to her and get names to talk to about the issue.

Betty Castor asked how posts coordinate with universities in country. Robin Bradley indicated posts have a network of universities and their leadership they interact with.

The Board then watched the Libya YouTube recruiting video.

Anita McBride asked Ed Roslof of IIE/CIES his views on the decline in applications among U.S. Scholars. He indicated that applications had dropped to 1800 from 2200 about three years ago. This year the number is up to about 2500, with enormous increases in applications to China, India, Russia and Indonesia. Some countries are “hot” in terms of scholar interest, but other regions have been down. Scholars are concerned about security, but this year applications to Japan have jumped (once a crisis passes.) He offered to come back to the board with a more detailed presentation in the future.

The Chair then moved to the closed session of the meeting.

The Chair Anita McBride called the public session to order. She expressed appreciation to Mark Brzezinski and Gary Edson who were both stepping down as members of the Board.

She announced the results of the Board with Tom Healy as the new Chair and Susan Ness as the new Vice Chair. She expressed her sense of honor for having the opportunity to serve as Chair and her appreciation to Vice Chair Shelby Lewis for her service. Board member Lisa Caputo thanked Anita McBride for her service and willingness to continue to serve and to Shelby Lewis who as a former Fulbrighter gave the Board a deep knowledge base. .

FSB Vice Chair Dr. Shelby Lewis gave the report on the By-Laws Committee. She also thanked Anita McBride and expressed congratulations to the new chair and Vice Chair.

There were three items the By-Laws Committee looked at: board size, board meetings and Fulbright binational commissions. The committee looked at various issues related to review of applications. Rather than change the requirement for two members to review each application, the committee

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recommended an increase in member from 12 to 14. This has to be referred to the State Department since it looks like this number will have to be changed by Congress.

The committee also recommended extending the length of Board meetings by 2-3 hours to give adequate time for full discussion of issues.

She presented the committee's view that binational commissions gave certain countries an advantage in the Fulbright program. The committee requested the Department of State to assist the board in examining the causes, impact and possible strategies for addressing the imbalance between nations with and without commissions. Betty Castor added that the last time the by-laws were updated was in the year 2000, such as the required quorum of 7 members. Perhaps even a nominating committee could be included.

Mark Alexander thought that maybe more than two additional members would be required, perhaps doubling the size. Susan Ness clarified that the board was set at 12 by legislation, and that in this political climate any change will be hard to enact, thereby not relieving the burden on members. Betty Castor liked the idea of additional members from the vantage point of adding diversity.

Anita McBride supported the idea of extending the length of board meetings. She says that in all the conversations about commissions the response is the same regarding cost. She wondered what the barriers were to commissions besides cost. Members discussed the issue of corruption in past experiences with commissions.

FSB member Tom Healy then provided the report on the Legislative-Public Affairs Committee. The committee has had a number of meetings on the two sides of this committee. FSB staff member Catherine Stearns is developing a strategic communications plan and Acting Assistant Secretary for ECA Adam Erelis is the point person for legislative efforts. Tom Healy spoke of the two main congressional committees (appropriations in the House and Senate) dealing with Fulbright and said there is a lot of enthusiasm for Fulbright there but indicated it would be a difficult budget year. He cited the difference between advocacy and lobbying, which is not allowed.

Anita McBride opened the meeting up to Suzanne Weinerman and David Levin from ECA to discuss alumni relations. She also welcomed Stan Harsha to the staff of the FSB.

Suzanne Weinerman indicated that 40-50,000 people participate in State Department exchange programs every year, with over 1 million alumni across all programs. The office was set up in 2004 to support overseas Embassies in reaching out to their alumni. The office currently has a budget of \$4 million, up from \$1 million in 2009. Alumni outreach became a critical area in the Public Diplomacy strategic framework.

The office has created an archive to record alumni contact information with close to 700,000 records now. Over 350 current and former heads of state have gone on USG exchanges, and 52 Nobel Laureates are

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alumni. The database breaks down in several different ways to make it easy to identify different categories.

State alumni enter their information voluntarily and get access to listings of grant opportunities, articles, job openings. It is a networking resource. Board members can register as “guests”. The office has provided training to Embassy staff, and they hold alumni enrichment conferences. Out of one of these conferences alumni in Europe formed a European Leaders Network.

There are close to 350 independent alumni associations around the world. The office also can provide programming funds for Embassies public affairs sections, including a recently established Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund. They received over 700 project ideas and were able to fund 38 different projects. They are also funding alumni coordinator positions in Embassies. They also started a State Alumni Facebook page.

She gave various examples of specific projects in different countries, including formation of peace clubs in Cote d’Ivoire after the violence in elections. In Egypt, with 7000 alumni, the coordinator held over 20 events in less than a year. The office created the State Alumni Member of the Month, and she highlighted a member from Mexico who created a consumer advocacy group.

The office works closely with the U.S. Fulbright Association and wants to do better outreach to American alumni. In response to a question by Tom Healy, she indicated that associations can run effectively for several years but due to turnover and politics, associations lose their energy. She indicated Embassy staff can help support associations through these periods. About a third of all State alumni are Fulbright alumni.

David Levin spoke about outreach to American Fulbright alumni, a population of about 100,000 belonging to State Alumni. The U.S. Fulbright Association has been in place since 1977. ECA gave the association a 15-month grant to examine several features of their organization, including broadening their representation and revitalizing chapters. They will be holding meetings, developing training materials and toolkits on the Fulbright program to promote the brand accurately. They will have a small grants competition and an outreach campaign to find “lost alumni” and to broaden diversity. There will be quarterly meetings, working closely with ECA and with the contracting organizations. David Levin invited the board to become involved as well. First meetings could be in Chicago and Atlanta in about 6 months.

He referred to a campaign to find “lost alumni” in the 1990s (pre-Internet) with Joseph Heller as spokesperson.

Suzanne Weinerman spoke about the alumni programs to mark the 70th anniversary of the International Visitor program last year which invited 63 alumni back for a three-week tour of the country.

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Wednesday, December 7, 2011

Chair Anita McBride opened the session and expressed appreciation to the American Pharmacists Association (APA) for hosting the meeting. The APA's Chief Operating Officer Elizabeth Keyes greeted the Board and gave brief background remarks on the newly renovated facility they share with the Department of State and the APA's mission and history.

The Chair then asked Alexis Dionne to describe the two U.S. flags which were flown over the Capitol building as gifts of appreciation to former Board members Jan O'Neill and Johnny Johnson.

The Chair moved to approve the minutes from the September 2011 meeting; the Board approved by voice vote.

Acting Assistant Secretary Adam Ereli opened his presentation noting the passing of Roz Swenson, the Director of the Office of Academic Exchange Programs. He thanks Anita McBride and Shelby Lewis for their service and indicated that he was working to get other Board vacancies filled.

Adam Ereli outlined the status of the two budget years, explaining that the government is still on a continuing resolution for the current year (2012) and that the Bureau has put forward to the Administration its requested numbers for the next year (2013). He was not optimistic that in either year, the Fulbright budget would reach the mark for last year (2011) which was \$598 million.

He highlighted several new Fulbright programs which link academic exchanges with public policy. These include the Fulbright Public Policy Fellowship, the Fulbright NEXUS program for collaborative as well as the regional enrichment seminars for foreign grantees in the U.S. Over 1200 students from 120 countries participated in these seminars. He cited several projects which Fulbright alumni underscoring the civic activism our grantees demonstrate.

He laid out three trends/issues the Board is currently facing. First is the daily business of processing applications. He is committed to finding ways to make this process more manageable and more efficient for Board members.

Second, is the growing demand for new Fulbright programs, resulting from policy initiatives. This means an increase in the workload for the Board. Finally, he indicated the need to make a case publicly and legislatively for Fulbright. To do that, Fulbright needs to make its case that it is relevant (from a policy perspective), is diverse (not just reaching elite audiences), and shows a real impact. We also need to make the case for its cost-effectiveness, especially in leveraging funds in our partner host countries.

He acknowledged the Board's efforts to conduct outreach during their travel, to look at new forms for processing applications and expanding membership on the Board.

Vice Chair Dr. Shelby Lewis pointed to a previous partnership which CIES (a Fulbright contracting organization) had with the United Negro College Fund as a way of broadening access and increasing

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applications. She also discussed an outreach program she participated in with the Friends of Tanzania group and the Ambassador to Tanzania earlier in the fall, near Denver.

Board member Mark Alexander reiterated the need to link the program's cost-effectiveness with its impact. He asked how best Board members might spend their limited time. Adam Ereli thought the best way would be to add on Fulbright business in the course of the Board's member regular work or travel. Anita McBride gave examples of activities she conducted at her home institution, American University, to raise the profile of the program there.

Board member Ambassador Guerra-Mondragón asked how members could link to Bureau efforts to promote diversity during the recruitment cycle, asking for technical specifics such as timing for recruitment and application deadlines. Michelle Johnson, the Acting Director for Academic Exchanges explained the special diversity outreach plan which the Bureau pursues and offered to provide the Board with its reporting on the issue of diversity. Marianne Craven, Acting ECA Deputy Assistant Secretary, pointed to the Alumni Ambassadors program which organizes mentors among former Fulbrighters.

Ambassador Guerra-Mondragón also raised several points concerning application reviews. First, he was surprised at different application forms used for different programs and different regions. Second, he underlined the importance of this application review by Board members as not just a rubber stamp.

Board member Betty Castor referred to Fulbright as "the gold brand" and cited her experience at the University of South Florida in reaching out to new audiences outside of the usual universities.

Board member Tom Healy asked about a calendar of upcoming events so that members could plan their travel more strategically around upcoming events.

Dr. Lewis indicated the need to ensure that foreign Fulbrighters are placed beyond the east and west coasts. Their presence on underserved campuses is important to raise the program's profile and encourage applications.

Marianne Craven then gave her report on ECA's academic programs, with 8,800 participants in all the different Fulbright programs, representing 165 countries and 139 academic fields. Over 800 U.S. institutions participated. Applications from U.S. participants are up this year to 9,731 and are being processed through 130 different screening committees. The popular English teaching program this year saw 727 English teaching assistants travel to 75 countries. This was an important program for the diversity focus.

On the foreign programs, 3800 foreign students received Fulbright grants. Fulbright supported 440 foreign language teachers coming to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. She also highlighted a collaborative Fulbright program with the Fogarty Center of the National Institute of Health which saw its first four grantees in public health travel to southern Africa.

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Under the Scholar program, 2, 229 U.S. and foreign scholars participated. Marianne Craven described the innovative NEXUS program in Mexico which focused on priority areas of science, technology and innovation and indicated the program would be expanded to Colombia and Canada this coming year. She highlighted the importance of the Fulbright enrichment programs, citing specifically an orientation program for Pakistani Fulbrighters in Austin this year. Next year, the focus for enrichment programs will be on the U.S. elections.

Tom Healy asked for more information about the enrichment programs so Board members could attend and participate.

To brief the Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy Ann Stock, Board members discussed their travel. Ambassador Guerra-Mondragón discussed his participation in the NEXUS roll-out event in Mexico and found the attendees were highly enthused and focused on ensuring there would be continued follow-up. Anita McBride discussed her participation in the NEXUS program in Argentina.

Ann Stock was impressed by participants setting up their own network as a way to continue their interaction. From her experience, every government wants more international education collaboration, especially with the U.S. India, for example, will need to train over 1 million faculty by the year 2020.

Betty Castor described her participation in an event at the University of South Florida event to raise awareness there. Ann Stock noted how important foreign students were for individual states in the U.S., with 723,000 foreign students bringing \$21.3 billion to the U.S. economy. She referred to the annual publication produced by IIE of Open Doors which documents international educational statistics.

Shelby Lewis discussed her participation in events in Atlanta and Denver, including an interview with Global Atlanta, and a presentation at the Atlanta council of International Affairs. She joined the Tanzanian Ambassador to the U.S. on a trip to Denver to speak at the Colorado School of Mines. She was scheduled to travel to Senegal to forge links between universities there and HBCU institutions.

Tom Healy described his upcoming travel to India and Nepal where he will be hosted by a former Fulbrighter who owns a trekking company. He had been to London and Rome, where he met with Fulbrighters who underscored the importance of connecting to a network as part of the program. Ann Stock pointed out the Fulbright program in India has tripled in size in the last three years. The U.S.-India Education Foundation is connected to the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative. She found in her meetings with Fulbrighters in India that “we cannot underestimate the power of Fulbright, especially now.” Tom Healy announced that Ambassador Susan Rice has agreed to host an event for arts Fulbrighters living in New York. Ann Stock thought New York would be a great venue for a Board meeting.

Susan Ness described her recent travel to Bern where the Ambassador hosted a reception for Fulbrighters. She indicated there was competition for other scholarships through the Swiss consortium that works on Fulbright and applications to Fulbright had dropped by 50% this year.

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Anita McBride discussed a recent videoconference she had done through the Council on Foreign relations with Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma. She had asked the Nobel Peace Prize winner about possible Fulbright connects in the future, on the same day that Secretary Clinton was in Burma. Anita McBride thanked ECA staff for supporting the roll out of the Public Policy Fellowship at American University. Ann Stock had not heard yet of the Secretary's discussions in Burma but assumed that higher education was probably discussed. She recounted the experience in Libya where 1700 people applied for Fulbrights this year, after the program had been closed for years.

In her formal remarks, Ann Stock thanked the Board and noted the departure of members Gary Edson and Mark Brzezinski who since his arrival as Ambassador to Sweden became the first Ambassador to visit the Commission, in its 60 year history. She also thanked Anita McBride and Shelby Lewis for their service as Chair and Vice Chair. She thanked the Board members for their time and effort in reviewing applications. As programs continue to grow, as in India, this will make the Board's work even more important.

Ann Stock remembered the contributions Roz Swenson had made to the program, describing her creativity and entrepreneurship in overseeing these programs spanning a 41 year career. She cited specifically the English teaching program and strategic dialogues with major countries as her initiative.

The Acting Under Secretary reviewed program in the five major countries with whom the U.S. had strategic dialogues: India, Indonesia, Russia, China and Brazil.

-- In India, Secretary Clinton hosted the first-ever higher education summit with India, which included a number of Fulbrighters.

-- In Indonesia, the goal is to double a program which this year has 300 scholars participating. The two Presidents committed \$165 million over the next 5 years to meet that target.

-- In China, 158,000 students are already coming to the U.S. to study. In her meetings with the Chinese State Councilor, Secretary Clinton announced a Fulbright Distinguished Chair at one of the universities and agreed to pilot a Fulbright master's program and to increase the community college and vocational education programs. The Chinese want more American students to come there.

-- In Russia, ECA launched science and technology Fulbright awards, and sponsored the first summer school program in nanotechnology.

-- In Brazil, President Dilma Rousseff, an ECA exchange alumna, has established a program called Science without Borders and will sponsor up to 75,000 students to study abroad, half of whom will come to the U.S.

Ann Stock called Fulbright the foundation for the U.S. Government's public diplomacy, linking our people with their counterparts across the world. Fulbright is leading the way in countries undergoing the

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Arab Spring, with new grants in Tunisia re-established in just a few days after the program had been closed down for a few years. She underscored the importance of the new Public Policy Program, in countries in each geographic region.

She announced that President Obama had nominated Tara Sonenshine as the new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy. She is going through the Senate confirmation process, and when confirmed, Ann Stock will return as Assistant Secretary for ECA. She concluded by recommending that a grant be named in Roz Swenson's memory.

Ambassador Guerra-Mondragón asked how the Board might help the appointment of additional Board members. Ann Stock thought phone calls or a jointly signed letter would be helpful.

After a photograph with Ann Stock, the Board members heard from Catherine Stearns on the development of a strategic communications plan. She discussed how the Board might expand beyond traditional public outreach and embark on using social media, including Twitter and Facebook. She indicated expanding the Board's Web presence, including video introductions of Board members. Anita McBride unveiled the cover design for the next annual report, chosen from over 80 submissions from Fulbrighters.

The Board members then indicated by paper tally their preferences for the next Board meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting.