

Name: Francesca Raoelison

Travel Location: San Francisco, CA

Dates of Travel: Aug 4th - Aug 10th 2

- **Provide a brief (50 or so words) description of your fellowship project?** With funding this summer from the Edward Guiliano Fellowship, I attended the Institute for Social Emotional Learning in San Francisco, where I met with educators and mentors who are guiding me develop my social innovation program in hopes to break the cycle of emotional abuse in my country Madagascar. When children can put words into emotions, this is critical not only in developing what we call 'emotional intelligence' but what it does is help them know what they are feeling when they feel it. Combined with tools to help them communicate their emotions and boundaries respectfully, this program aims to train the next generation to speak in healthier ways and to empower them to stand up for themselves.
- **What did you set out hoping to achieve?** I was hoping to get more content on Social Emotional Learning and have their support on helping me create a program to break the cycle of emotional abuse for my country.
- **What did you learn from the experiences of your fellowship?** Not only did I get valuable content but I got the opportunity to dive and reflect on how this transformative program works my own life! I learn so many tools that i am adding on my emotional regulation toolbox. I learned that daily "check-in" on your feeling as well as daily gratitude and appreciation are a must add to my routine. I learned about new emotions I've never heard about and the concept of Emotional Thermometer was a thing! "I-message" is a tool that I love. It is a communication tool to express feelings in a respectful way. Here is the model: I feel ... (emotions) when ... because ...It is also a way to set boundaries during confrontation and that's something I've struggled a lot with. I've been teaching those tools and practicing it with my family since then and it does work! It deescalate things very quickly. Meditation and journaling have never been part of my routine as well, and since I came back from California, I journal and meditate every day, which allows me to be more in touch with what's going on inside but also outside of me. It allows me to live in the present and that's where happiness is found. I've been sharing

what I've learned with friends and family as I go before I use it on a bigger scale. This fellowship has been such a fulfilling experience as it aligns with personal growth - which I really value and it does perfectly fit with ultimate goal which is to spread SEL in schools in my country.

- **How has this experience impacted your personal learning and growth?** All the attendees were teachers, Deans or Counselors and not only was i the only student but I also was the younger one of the program, however, I felt so comfortable and part of the cohort. Through the different activities, I got the validation that SEL is a must have and a skill to foster for every children. It amazed me to see that all the activities, originally designed for kids, perfectly fit adults as well. I strongly believe that SEL is an universal set of skills to learn and it is a game changer for our next generation. I also enjoyed my stay in CA, as I got to sightsee and experience the wonderful people and food under a very nice weather for the very first time.
- **Moving forward, will what you've learned during your Guiliano Fellowship impact your future engagement with this topic?** Absolutely. This was a great step for me to develop my program based on Social Emotional Learning. I'll keep in touch with my mentors as they help me craft my program for my country. I've integrated what I've learned there on my daily routine as well.
- **What advice would you give to future Guiliano Global fellows?** Be like a sponge and take in as much as possible. This is an amazing opportunity, not only to learn more about your passion but also to get out of your comfort zone. Embrace every moment of it!