



KENNEDY-LUGAR YOUTH EXCHANGE AND STUDY PROGRAM HISTORY & BRIEFING

Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (K-L YES) is a program that was established in October, 2002 and sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to provide scholarships for high school students (15-17 years) from countries with significant Muslim populations to spend up to one academic year in the U.S. The program is vital to expanding communication between the people of the United States and the partner countries in the interest of promoting mutual understanding and respect. Students live with host families, attend high school, engage in activities to learn about American society and values, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures.

During the coming academic year of 2011-2012, over 750 students will join the program from different countries including, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gaza, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel (Arab Community), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, West Bank, and Yemen.

Upon their return to their home countries, the students apply their leadership skills in their home countries. In addition, alumni groups have formed and been involved with many community service activities including clothing drives, mentoring younger children and English teaching, immunization drives, and much more.

The program can support students with disabilities and encourages their participation. Students with disabilities get the opportunity to participate in leadership-building workshops as well as are provided with appropriate information and support as needed to enhance their year in America.

BRIEFING OF K-L YES PROGRAM IN KUWAIT AND BAHRAIN:

KUWAIT –

This is the 10th cycle of the K-L YES Program in Kuwait. This year, 17 students from Kuwait completed the program successfully and returned in June 2011. The number of students that have graduated successfully from this program between year 2003 and 2011 is 91.

BAHRAIN -

This is the 6th cycle of the K-L YES Program in Bahrain. Eleven Bahraini students completed the program successfully and returned in June 2011. Nine students have been selected this year to participate in the 2011-2012 cycle of the program.

Goals of the K-L YES Program Include:

- To engage participating youth, their teachers and classmates, and community leaders in an exchange effort that will promote increased understanding and tolerance between cultures.
- To encourage the exchange of ideas, values, and experiences among young people by exposing these young scholars to leadership belief systems, civil society principles, and community service involvement.

K-L YES scholars will have the opportunity to:

- Live with an American family
- Study at a U.S. high school
- Participate in a youth leadership training program
- Experience U.S. culture and society first hand
- Improve their English
- Make new friends
- Represent their country as cultural ambassadors to help Americans learn about their country

Applicants to the K-L YES program must meet the following criteria:

- Should demonstrate a high level of academic achievement - *Minimum grade of "B" in all subjects for the past year; overall "B" average for the past three years-*
- Demonstrate flexibility and commitment to promoting cross cultural understanding
- Will be between 15 and 17 years old upon arrival in the United States
- Will be entering grade 10 or 11 in Fall of 2012
- Must achieve a score of at least 50 on the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test® (SLEP)
- Are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and were not born in the United States

K-L YES scholarships cover all major expenses, including:

- Airfare
- Room and board
- Health insurance
- Pocket money – stipend of \$125 USD per month
- Educational supplies