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****EMBARGOED - FOR RELEASE NOVEMBER 12, 2012 12:01 a.m. EDT****

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**INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES ARE AT ALL-TIME HIGH
STRENGTHENING ECONOMIES AND SOCIETIES AROUND THE WORLD**

November 12, 2012 – The 2012 *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, released today, finds that the number of international students at colleges and universities in the United States increased by six percent to a record high of 764,495 in the 2011/12 academic year, while U.S. students studying abroad increased by one percent. This year, international exchanges in all 50 states contributed \$22.7 billion to the U.S. economy. International education creates a positive economic and social impact for communities in the United States and around the world.

Findings of the *Open Doors* report, published annually by the Institute of International Education in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, will be the subject of a briefing in Washington, D.C. on November 13, led by Assistant Secretary of State Ann Stock and IIE President and CEO Allan E. Goodman.

“Today’s youth are tomorrow’s leaders,” said Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. “International education creates strong, lasting relationships between the U.S. and emerging leaders worldwide. Students return home with new perspectives and a global skill set that will allow them to build more prosperous, stable societies.”

“Academic and intellectual exchange fuels innovation and prepares the next generation for global citizenship,” IIE’s Dr. Goodman said. “Today’s students will become future business and government leaders whose international experience will equip them to build a prosperous and more peaceful world.”

The International Education Week briefing will examine key trends in detail, with a discussion of how economic factors and education policies affect global student mobility. (Fast facts, mobility data from selected countries and each U.S. state, and executive summaries of the Open Doors 2012 findings will be available at www.iie.org/opendoors on November 12. Media may request early access to the information through the Open Doors website, but all information is strictly embargoed until 12:01 EDT on November 12, 2012.)

International Students in the US

The strong increase in international student enrollments shows the continued conviction of international students (and parents) that a U.S. degree is a sound investment in their future careers, a finding reinforced by results of recent IIE surveys of students overseas considering studying outside their own countries. This 2011/12 data marks the sixth consecutive year that *Open Doors* reported expansion in the total number of international students in U.S. higher education; there are 31 percent more international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities than there were a decade ago. A similar increase in the number of “new” international students, those enrolling for the first time at a U.S. college or university in fall 2012, indicates that this growth trend is continuing. New enrollments in 2011 were up seven percent from the prior year. Despite this strong growth, international students still constitute less than four percent of total U.S. higher education enrollment.

The growth is largely driven by strong increases in the number of students from China, particularly at the undergraduate level. Chinese student enrollments increased by 23 percent in total and by 31 percent at the undergraduate level. Large increases in undergraduate students from Saudi Arabia, funded by Saudi government scholarships, also help explain why international undergraduates studying in the United States now outnumber international graduate students, for the first time in 12 years.

Economic and Social Impact:

The continued growth in international students coming to the U.S. for higher education has a significant positive economic impact on the United States. International students contribute more than \$22.7 billion to the U.S. economy, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. *Open Doors 2012* reports that more than 70 percent of all international students receive the majority of their funds from sources outside of the United States, including personal and family sources as well as assistance from their home country governments or universities. Students from around the world who study in the United States also contribute to America's scientific and technical research and bring international perspectives into U.S. classrooms, helping prepare American undergraduates for global careers, and often lead to longer-term business relationships and economic benefits.

Host States and Campuses:

This increased international presence has been felt across the United States, with the top 20 host universities and nine of the top ten host states with more international students than in the prior year. California hosted more than 100,000 international students for the first time this year, followed by New York, Texas, Massachusetts and Illinois. Among the top 10 destinations, Pennsylvania, Florida and Indiana had the largest percent increases, with the international student population in each state growing by close to 10 percent. At the institutional level, the University of Southern California has the greatest number of international students, followed by University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, New York University, Purdue University and Columbia University. New York City remains the top metropolitan area for international students.

Places of Origin:

There were increases in the number of students from 12 of the top 25 places of origin, including Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, and Vietnam. At the same time, numbers declined from several major sending countries, including India (down four percent), South Korea, (down one percent), and Japan (down six percent). The factors driving these declines may include global and home country economic factors, growing higher education opportunities at home, and stronger employment opportunities at home after graduation.

U.S. Students Studying Abroad

In the 2010/11 academic year, 273,996 American students studied abroad for academic credit, an increase of one percent--an all-time high. U.S. students studying abroad increased in 17 of the top 25 destination countries. Five percent more students studied in China and 12 percent more students studied in India than in the prior year. *Open Doors 2012* reports that the United Kingdom remains the leading destination for American students, followed by Italy, Spain, France and China – which remained the fifth largest host destination for the fifth year. There were significant increases in the number of Americans studying in several “non-traditional” destinations outside Europe: Brazil, China, Costa Rica, India, and South Korea. More Americans also studied in some of the European destinations, with nine percent more studying in Italy, and smaller increases in study abroad to Austria, Germany, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom. Based on the steady increase in *Open Doors* numbers, American students have continually shown that they remain interested in getting international experience. Many campus leaders remain committed to ensuring that large numbers of their students have an international experience before graduating, and *Open Doors* reported that 33 campuses had study abroad participation rates of more than 70 percent of their student body.

Study abroad by American students has more than tripled over the past two decades, and *Open Doors* reported a steady rise in U.S. study abroad over several decades. Study abroad numbers rose significantly in 2009/10 with a four percent increase and are continuing to grow. However, American students studying abroad still represent a small proportion of total enrollment in U.S. higher education. About 14 percent of American students receiving Bachelor’s degrees this past year have studied abroad at some point during their undergraduate programs, while only one percent of U.S. students are studying abroad during a single academic year (273,996 out of the more than 20 million students enrolled in U.S. higher education).

Students going to Japan dropped 33 percent (with programs disrupted by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami), and a 42 percent decrease in U.S. students studying in Mexico coupled with smaller declines in students studying in six of the top 25 host countries, kept the total study abroad number from showing a more robust increase in 2010/11. Early feedback from leading U.S. study abroad programs suggests that growth has picked up again.

In an effort to increase study abroad to strategic priority countries, in Fiscal Year 2012 the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs awarded ten grants to expand capacity of American institutions to send U.S. students abroad and the capacity of host institutions overseas to receive them. According to IIE's Center for International Partnerships, U.S. colleges and universities are increasingly looking to form innovative partnerships with campuses abroad to enable more of their students to study in one another's countries, and to encourage collaboration among faculty and researchers. They are developing new study abroad programs, with strategic links to the institutions' international goals and curriculum.

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*The **Open Doors** Report is published by the Institute of International Education, the leading not-for-profit educational and cultural exchange organization in the United States. IIE has conducted an annual statistical survey of the international students in the United States since 1919, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972. **Open Doors** also reports on numbers of international scholars at U.S. universities; international students enrolled in pre-academic Intensive English Programs; and on U.S. students studying abroad. A full press kit and further details on the **Open Doors 2012** surveys and their findings is on the [Open Doors website](#), and the full 120 page report can be ordered for \$69.95 from [IIE Books](#).*

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State leads a wide range of academic, professional, and cultural exchanges that include approximately 40,000 participants annually, including the Fulbright Fellowships and Scholarships and the International Visitor Leadership Program, with the goal of increasing mutual understanding and respect between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. ECA sponsors the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarships for U.S. undergraduates with financial need, administered by IIE, and also manages the [EducationUSA](#) network of advising offices, providing information to students around the world who wish to study in the United States. For more information on the Department of State's educational and cultural exchange activities, visit www.exchanges.state.gov.