

English Access Microscholarship Program

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OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS



The English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) provides a foundation of English language skills to talented 13-20 year-olds from economically disadvantaged sectors through at least 360 hours of after school classes and intensive sessions over two years. The Access Program also gives participants the opportunity to gain an appreciation for U.S. culture and democratic values, build personal development skills, and participate in community service initiatives through hands-on enhancement activities. The program is a high profile, public diplomacy initiative that provides participating U.S. embassies an opportunity to tangibly demonstrate our country's dedication to education and mutual understanding. The Access Program is a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program and is among the Office of English Language Programs' suite of core initiatives.

Access students reap significant benefits from the program, as improved English language skills:

- Open a window to a broader world of ideas and opportunities
- Increase academic opportunities for higher-level education
- Allow students to better contribute to the socio-economic success of their families and communities
- Improve chances of qualification for U.S. Government-sponsored and other exchange programs
- Enhance employment prospects

HISTORY

The Access Program's growth has been exponential. While the program initially began as an initiative to reach youth in countries with significant Muslim populations, it has since evolved to include students from diverse regions worldwide.

- **2003:** The first cohort of 17 Access students attended class in Casablanca, Morocco following the May, 2003 Casablanca bombings
- **2004:** The program officially launched with approximately **3,500 students from 39 countries**
- **2010:** Over 18,500 students participated in more than 80 countries
- **2013:** **Over 100,000 students in more than 80 countries** have participated in the program

ALUMNI

The lack of English language skills has historically been an obstacle for otherwise deserving students who aspire to participate in other U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs. The Access Program helps overcome this obstacle and makes these other exchange programs more inclusive.

Access Program graduates have gone on to participate in U.S. Government-sponsored programs including:

- The Kennedy-Lugar Youth and Exchange Study (YES) Program
- The Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX)
- Youth Leadership Programs such as the Benjamin Franklin Summer Institutes

Access alumni have also:

- Received scholarships to colleges and universities
- Participated in mentorship programs with current Access students
- Taken leadership roles within their communities

