

Q&A Live Transcript

Q&A Live Web Chat Celebrating International Education Week: Educational Opportunities in the United States

When: *Friday Nov 16, 2007 at 10:00 EST*

Guests:



Wesley Teter, Peter Van Buren

Moderated By: Suzanne Weinerman (Moderator)

Dear State Alumni Members:

We apologize for the unforeseen technical problems that occurred during the State Alumni Web Chat in honor of International Education Week. The guests were still able to reply to numerous questions on the topic of Higher Education in the U.S. that came in both prior to the event as well as live. The transcript is now available and is a terrific resource for all to review on State Alumni.

Description:

In honor of [International Education Week](#), the State Alumni website held a live, online discussion with [Peter Van Buren](#), Chief of the Department of State's Educational Information and Resources Branch, and [Wesley Teter](#), Regional Educational Advising Coordinator for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The online discussion took place on Friday, November 16th, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. EST (15:00-16:00 GMT).

Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Teter welcomed the opportunity to receive your questions on the topic of international education, and they enjoyed hearing your comments and opinions as alumni of U.S. educational and cultural programs. Thank you for joining us!

Study Materials

- [Opportunity-Initiative.doc](#)
- [Peter-Van-Buren-bio.doc](#)
- [Wesley-Teter-bio.doc](#)

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There are needs and opportunities for State Alumni to help raise the profile of study in the United States. *Opportunity Initiative* is just one new program from ECA that will have significant implications for non-elite students in over 20 countries. Explore how State Alumni can join the support network and benefit from collaborative outreach.

-- Conduct outreach with EducationUSA: www.educationUSA.state.gov

-- What lies ahead for your country and the U.S.? Review the new mobility data for student flows into and out of your country at: <http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/>

-- Find an Education Advising Center nearest you:
<http://www.educationusa.state.gov/centers/index.cfm?region=REACs>

-- Learn more about the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs: <http://exchanges.state.gov>

-- Learn more about International Education Week: <http://iew.state.gov>

C: *Hello State Alumni and welcome to today's web chat celebrating International Education Week! We are honored to have Peter Van Buren here in Washington, D.C., and Wesley Teter, currently in Berlin, ready to answer your questions. We will begin momentarily. Moderator*

C: *Hello everyone from Washington DC! Thank you for joining us for this chat. Peter Van Buren*

C: *Greetings, this is Wes Teter. I'm happy to be here celebrating International Education Week with everyone. I live and work in Berlin and I am responsible for the coordination of EducationUSA Europe (about 37 countries). How did everyone do on the Global IQ IEW 2007 quiz?!<http://iew.state.gov/quiz.htm> Wesley Teter*

Q: *I had an opportunity to finish one year of high school in the U.S., and that was a great experience for me. I learned a lot, and I think that studying abroad can benefit you in many ways. It's not just the knowledge that I've gained, it's also people who I met and who I learned a lot from, and things that I had to go through made me realize some things that I haven't thought about before. It helped me become more mature and independent, which are great values. It was a great experience and I'm very thankful that I got the opportunity to be participant of A-SMYLE program. I'm planning on applying to colleges in the U.S., and I'm planning on looking for scholarships similar to one I had. Being an exchange student is not always easy, but it's life-time memory and huge experience! :) Ana from Serbia*

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A: The best way to start is to contact one of our EducationUSA advisers in your country and begin exploring the options for further study in the U.S. You can find your adviser on our web page at <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/>. A good place to begin looking for scholarships is with that adviser. You can also check with the colleges that you are applying to directly, or browse a list at http://www.fundingusstudy.org/wbs/cont_edit.asp. This website, *Funding for U.S. Study Online*, has an extensive database of scholarships, fellowships and grants organized and maintained by the Institute of International Education (IIE). Funding for U.S. Study includes all types of funding programs, for all levels of post-secondary study, across the full range of academic areas. *Peter Van Buren*

A: Wow, what a perfect starting point for our discussion. Your background is what International Education Week is all about. This is a time to recognize the value of international education by learning more about other nations and cultures. I am truly impressed with students like you that studied abroad for an extended period of time during high school. In today's competitive world, your early experiences in the U.S. will serve you for a lifetime. U.S. institutions of higher education are looking for qualified applicants, just like you! Here is a great quote from the journal "EducationUSA Connections" that speaks to being competitive in your admissions and scholarship application package: "In actuality, admissions officers aim to admit unique individuals, not students who fit some standardized template" (Michael Elgarico, Associate Director of Admission at Stanford University). Michael goes on to break down our concept of the "ideal applicant". If you'd like to read the article, it's on page 3 of issue 1: <http://educationusaconnections.iienetwork.org/>. For your scholarship search, this is a helpful link: *Funding for U.S. Study Online* www.fundingusstudy.org/. Using their online databases and print resources, EducationUSA Centers can help you find an institution to fit your unique needs. Good luck! *Wesley Teter*

Q: I am the coordinator of student exchanges for the journalism department, Hong Kong Baptist University. Quite a number of students in my department are interested in going on an exchange in the United States. While we wish to establish exchange arrangements with more universities in the U.S., the students in American universities are not always keen to come to Hong Kong. This makes it not easy to establish exchange agreements.

Do you have any suggestions on how we could be more successful? And, where can students go to gather information and resources about exchanges? Thank you.

Joyce Nip

Yee Man from Hong Kong

A: Joyce, you might want to start by sorting out the concerns about why American students

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would not want to come to Hong Kong, and addressing them specifically. Hong Kong is a great place (I lived there, near Ocean Park, for a year and loved it). Some may find cost a problem, some may be concerned about transferring academic credit. If cost is a factor, Americans might want to check <http://www.studyabroadfunding.org/>, which is a funding resource that allows you to search by country or subject to find the study abroad funding information that you need. This comprehensive database of study abroad scholarships, fellowships, and grants can help make a dream of studying abroad a financial possibility.

Credit transfers need to be handled on a school-by-school basis. You might start by working with American alumni from your school, or Hong Kong students that are now studying in the U.S., to make the initial contacts.

Let us know if you identify other specific problems and we'll try to help! *Peter Van Buren*

A: Greetings Joyce, I agree that cooperation agreements are important tools for internationalization. Balanced exchange is a challenge in Europe-U.S. collaboration as well. The U.S. higher education community, including high level actors in government are working together to promote increased language learning and U.S. study abroad. I see every indication that the challenge you are facing will diminish in the coming few years.

In fact, did you see the new IIE *Open Doors* report? The following quote is striking! "U.S. student participation in study abroad has grown 150% over the past decade" <http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/>. And in 2007, China climbed to number 7 in the world for host countries of U.S. study abroad with 8,830 students and an impressive 38% increase. We also know that joint and dual degrees with international universities are likely to see rapid growth. The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) recently reported that nearly 30% of graduate schools have established joint or dual degree programs with international universities, and almost 25% plan to establish new collaborative degrees in the near future <http://www.cgsnet.org/Default.aspx?tabid=240&newsid440=54&mid=440&&>.

Here are some tools to help you tap in to this excellent market: EducationUSA and *Petersons* provide tools to help find U.S. schools that would be a good fit for Hong Kong Baptist University or other institutions: www.petersons.com/educationusa/. *NAFSA: Association of International Educators* is a global network that provides the best networking opportunities with U.S. universities via the largest higher education conference in the world, as you probably know: <http://www.nafsa.org/>. Their "Knowledge Communities for Education Abroad" would be excellent for you to find information and contacts: http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge_community_network.sec/education_abroad_1. And *IIE Network* has the best strategies for internationalization that I've seen to date: www.iienetwork.org/.

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EducationUSA's passionate country coordinator for China is Mr. Frank Mok and he'd be happy to share ideas or put you in touch with our extensive network: MokFW@state.gov.

A nice example of collaborative efforts to promote international education: the IIE Outreach center in Oaxaca, Mexico recently received funding support from the Office of Alumni Affairs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs section to run a series of four workshops throughout southern Mexico to promote U.S. educational opportunities as a development tool among underserved populations and bring together indigenous community leaders and NGOs with State Alumni, Foreign Service Officers and the U.S. Diplomatic Mission. The Outreach Coordinator in Oaxaca (who is a former Fulbrighter) promotes USG-sponsored programs, including English language teacher training, Fulbright scholarships and EducationUSA advising.

IIE Mexico will be expanding this model to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala this year through the annual ECA grant for IIE advising. Contact your local Public Affairs Section or EducationUSA partner for more collaborative opportunities. *Wesley Teter*

C: *In addition, the "Chronicle of Higher Education" is the No. 1 source of news, information, and jobs for college and university faculty members and administrators. The State Alumni team is happy to be able to provide this magazine free of charge to our users! In <https://alumni.state.gov>, go to "Online Resources" and click on "Online Research Center." Then, toggle the Gale "PowerSearch Plus" search engine. Do an advanced publication search for "Chronicle of Higher Education" and you will find all back issues. This magazine may be a useful source of information for you!*

(You can find this and more than 20,000 additional titles in our Online Research Center filled with books, magazines, newspapers, and full-text journals.) Moderator

Q: I am interested in statistics and data on U.S.-Ukraine exchanges 1991-2007. Where can I find an overview of publications devoted to general impact of U.S.-Ukraine educational and cultural exchange programs? Svitlana Buko (Ukraine), FLEX 97
Svitlana from Ukraine

A: Tough question, thanks Svitlana. Here are some data to get you started on U.S.-Ukraine international student mobility:

1990/91 U.S.S.R. -- 1,210
1991/92 U.S.S.R. -- 2,019
1991/92 Ukraine -- 3
1992/93 Ukraine -- 125

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1993/94 Ukraine – 313
1994/95 – 792
1995/96 – 1,215
1996/97 – 1,305
1997/98 – 1,402
1998/99 – 1,582
2000 – 1,673
2001 – 1,909
2002 – 2,195
2003 – 2,070
2004 – 2,004 (a -3.2% decline)
2005 – 1,831 (-8.6%)
2006 – 1,805 (-1.4%)
2007 – 1,692 (-6.3)

These data were taken individually from pdf documents of IIE's *Open Doors*. The CD is a pricey but offers excellent analysis and is an authoritative snapshot of U.S. student and scholar mobility, <http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/> (*Open Doors: 1948-2004 CD-ROM*). This CD-Rom includes every issue of the Open Doors report published from 1948-2004.

I am not aware of any publications devoted to the impact of U.S.-Ukraine educational programs. State Alumni subscribes to "The Chronicle of Higher Education" and my knowledgeable colleague, Mr. Bram Caplan will surely be able to assist us further: Bram Caplan, Regional Educational Advising Coordinator (REAC), tel: 7 (495) 777-6533, e-mail: caplan@useic.ru. He is in Moldova today, I believe. *Wesley Teter*

Q: Dear Mr. Peter Van Buren,

After having visited the www.educationUSA.state.gov site I've read many useful tips on receiving a visa or saving money when applying for college. However, in the Opportunity Initiative document attached, far greater goals were stated, for instance, help with up-front costs. I would like to ask you what "real" help is available, for example, how much financial aid can be allocated to every foreign student, if any, under this Initiative?

Thank you very much for your response. *Igor from Ukraine*

A: Opportunity grants provide up to US\$10,000 for the costs of applying to U.S. schools, costs such as TOEFL fees, courier fees, visa fees and the like. Check with your EducationUSA adviser for all the details, and to apply. These grants are for application costs; financial aid to actually attend school would come from the school itself, typically offered after you are

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accepted. There may be other scholarships also available -- again, the best way to begin is with your adviser at EducationUSA. If you are not working with us, find the advising center nearest you at <http://educationusa.state.gov>! *Peter Van Buren*

Q: Nearly five decades after independence, my country is in search for adequately trained human resources. Our educational system is still training and preparing people in old fashioned occupational qualifications which do not fit today's social and economic development requirements. In a number of key sectors, we continue to resort to foreign technical assistance.

In this context, the educational opportunities offered by the U.S. Government are more than welcome. However, due certainly to our language barrier, the quota among the junior professional staff in our countries to access those opportunities is very minor. Many talented people who carry out relevant projects dare not try the competition, because of the language obstacle.

Do you foresee any possibilities of extending the opportunities to those with no English background? What is your Government strategy in trying to do outreach to more non-English speaking populations for involvement in U.S. Educational and Cultural opportunities?
Karim from Mali

A: The Office of English Language Programs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs offers English teacher training and support to Malian teachers in order to make the opportunities you speak of available to more Malians. In one example of this support, every summer the Regional English Language Officer (RELO) based in Dakar travels to a different region in Mali in order to work with English teachers there. Also, through the English Language Specialist program the RELO invites some of the top experts in the field of EFL/ESL to run workshops in Mali. David Bohkle was a Specialist this past summer running the 3rd Annual American Center Summer Institute. *Peter Van Buren*

C: *This next question comes from Bangladesh. Lazina Sharmin is an alumna of the "Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCEP)" that is implemented by Relief International, with major funding support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. She is a teacher and has invited some of her students and colleagues to submit questions to our guests. Moderator*

Q: Hello, I am Sohidul from Siraj Uddin Saker Vidyaniketan, Dhaka, Bangladesh. I am happy to participate here. My question is: what type of education is available in your country? Technical/General/Multimedia? *Lazina from Bangladesh*

A: Greetings Sohidul, and thanks for a great question. The United States has a diverse range of

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schools and programs. There are over 4,300 higher education institutions. We have highly specialized and technical programs like the one at the California Institute of Technology. "CalTech" is the academic home of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory! We also have a unique approach to higher learning called "liberal arts". Liberal arts is a shortened form of the term "liberal arts and sciences," and the liberal arts philosophy is a unique feature of the U.S. higher education system. U.S. undergraduate education is based on this concept, which believes in providing a well-rounded academic education that develops the student's verbal, written, and reasoning skills. You'll find a range of degree programs and one is bound to fit your needs. EducationUSA is here to help. www.educationUSA.state.gov. *Wesley Teter*

Q: Hello Mr. Peter Van Buren and Mr. Wesley Teter,

Thank you very much for talking to us.

In September 2005 I was invited to participate in the Palestinian Teacher Exchange, an official exchange program of the government of the United States. I participated in workshops given at UCLA on the integration of computer technologies into education. The course was extremely fantastic.

My question is: What is the recent importance of cultural exchange programs for the United States in particular, and the international community in general?

Thanking You,
Anwar AL-Mohtaseb
Hebron - West Bank

Anwar from West Bank

A: You've probably seen the good VOA report (<http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-13-voa61.cfm> and text below), with Under Secretary Karen Hughes' quote on the importance of exchanges:

"I believe that America's international educational and exchange programs have proven to be our single most-effective public diplomacy tool of the last 50 years," said Hughes. "These programs also have the potential to change the world, because more than 130 world leaders have participated in America's international exchange programs, including the current president of France, the current prime minister of Britain, and the new president of Turkey."
Peter Van Buren

A: Looking at U.S. universities, there is a competitive advantage to being a global and

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welcoming institution. If an institution is competitive, they win the privilege to train the best and brightest students from around the world. Whether students go on to become effective community or national leaders (or launch the next Google of the world), their university alma mater benefits as well. Below is a list of the top 10 host institutions for international students in the U.S. These institutions host the most international students and have some of the more competitive applicant pools in the country, if not the world:

1 University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA -- 7,115 international students

2 Columbia University, New York, NY -- 5,937

3 New York University, NY -- 5,827

4 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL -- 5,685

5 Purdue University Main Campus, West Lafayette, IN -- 5,581

6 University of Michigan -Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor, MI -- 5,429

7 University of Texas at Austin -- 5,303

8 University of California -Los Angeles, CA -- 4,704

9 Harvard University, Cambridge, MA -- 4,514

10 Boston University, Boston, MA -- 4,484

10 University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA -- 4,484

This is a quantitative list, not a rank of quality. Institutions that host international students are well positioned to foster mutual understanding and respect between people, cultures, and nations, as Peter mentioned. *Wesley Teter*

Q: How does a program help a participant know more of world cultures when the interaction is solely with Americans? Well, it helped me to closely get to know 10 participants from 10 different countries and so my perspective of the world changed phenomenally. But does this happen to Fulbright Exchange participants always? *VALSA from India*

Thank you for your comments, Valsa. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is proud to offer program opportunities that bring individuals from all over the world to the United States. Some of our academic programs, such as the "Study of the U.S. Institutes" for example

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(<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/amstudy/>), bring together participants from various countries to study a specific topic in a classroom setting at a university. Program participants interact with American students on campus, but also have the great opportunity to get to know their peers from so many other backgrounds and countries. The Fulbright program, which you refer to, often brings students and scholars to study at a university, and it is up to the individual to make friends and get to know their peers.

A: More and more universities are increasing the diversity of their student body as more students choose to come to the U.S. for higher education. International student offices at U.S. universities are a good resource to meet both international students and American students interested in international affairs. *Peter Van Buren*

Q: Do you have any projects for exchange programs in Albania? Thank you! *Florian from Albania*

Yes, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs does indeed have various exchange programs with Albania. The Fulbright, Humphrey and Junior Faculty Development programs are just a few. To find out more information about what specific programs exist, and which programs may suit your interests and your qualifications, visit the U.S. Embassy's website at: http://tirana.usembassy.gov/education_exchange.html. You may also want to contact the Embassy's Public Affairs Section directly. I also encourage you to learn more about the various programs administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by visiting <http://exchanges.state.gov/>. U.S. universities offer additional scholarships and study opportunities for Albanian students. Our EducationUSA Adviser, Ms. Linda Meniku from American Councils will be able to address specific options related to your area of interest (acie_albania@yahoo.com). Actually, during the summer, Linda teaches Albanian at a university in Arizona and that is a sure sign of institutional interest in Albania more broadly. Send her an email and 'cc' me, I work for Albania and would like to hear what you decide (reac@fulbright.de). Financial assistance is a big component of an exchange program. Here is another site that will help in your search: <http://educationusa.state.gov/finaid.htm>.

Other: *International Research and Exchanges Board; Educational and Cultural Interactions Inc.*; and *Organizational for Cultural Exchange Among Nations* all have some affiliation with Albania and could be brought up in a discussion with an EducationUSA Adviser or researched online. My directory is from 2005, so it will be important to research further. Good luck and keep in touch with EducationUSA. *Wesley Teter*

Q: Please define "International Education." There is a popular misconception that study in a Western country is what is meant by "International Education." *VALSA from India*

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A: International means "international," a global perspective. While we work for the United States, and our focus in this forum is speaking about the advantages of an American education for international students, our office also works with Americans heading abroad for their own international experience.

Among other things, we work with Gilman Scholarships for Americans, which emphasize a broad range of destinations, including less traditional locations in the developing world. Our goal is truly one of global scope, and we would encourage every student to think globally, and not in terms of just East or West. *Peter Van Buren*

Q: There's almost no chance for European students to pursue undergrad studies in the U.S. I think I do really well in school, but I am not an elite student. So why should I come to the U.S. if a) it's so much more expensive, b) there is no financial aid available (well that little bit is reserved for elite students), and c) I can get my bachelors degree in Germany in 3 years ???

I spent a year with AFS in the U.S. and I really enjoyed it; I'd really like to study in the U.S. --- but the reasons above make it totally unreasonable to study in the U.S. *Jan from Czech Republic*

A: While study in the U.S. may not be for everyone Jan, we believe there are good reasons to consider the U.S. as your destination. Here are some:

Why should you choose United States

Of the 1.2 million students pursuing postsecondary education outside their home countries, more than one-third choose to study in the United States. Why do so many students from all over the world choose U.S. colleges and universities? What does the United States have to offer you? Here are just a few of the reasons why more than 500,001 international students from around the world are furthering their education in the United States:

Quality

U.S. colleges are known worldwide for the quality of their facilities, resources, and faculty. Accreditation systems ensure that institutions continue to maintain these standards.

Choice

The U.S. education system is unrivalled worldwide in the choice it offers of types of institutions, academic and social environments, entry requirements, degree programs, and subjects in which you can specialize. [Check out information about the various programs being offered by the U.S. Universities.](#)

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Value

As an investment in your future, a U.S. degree offers excellent value for the money. A wide range of tuition fees and living costs, plus some financial help from colleges, have made study in the United States affordable for thousands of students before you.

Flexibility

One of the most distinctive features of U.S. universities and colleges is the flexibility in choice of courses within a college or university, but more importantly there is also the option for students to move between one institution and another. Completing the first two years of a degree at one institution, usually a community college, and then moving to another, is very common.

**Academic
Excellence**

The United States has one of the world's finest university systems, with outstanding programs in virtually all fields. At the undergraduate level, excellent programs exist in traditional disciplines as well as in professional fields. At the graduate level, students often have the opportunity to work directly with some of the finest minds in the world. U.S. degrees are recognized throughout the world for their excellence.

**Variety of
Educational
Opportunities**

The higher education system in the United States has something for everyone. Some U.S. colleges and universities stress broad educational principles; others stress practical, employment-related skills; and still others specialize in technical fields, the arts, or social sciences. As a result, if you are looking for an institution where you can study a particular field - no matter how unusual or specific - you can usually find several from which to choose in the U.S.

**Cutting-Edge
Technology**

U.S. universities pride themselves on being at the forefront of technology and educational techniques, and in making available to their students the best possible equipment and resources. Even if your field does not directly involve science or engineering, you will become skilled in using the latest technology to obtain and process information. You will find ways to stay connected with people in

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your field all over the world.

**Opportunity
for Research,
Teaching Experience,
and Practical Training**

If you are a graduate student, you may be able to gain valuable experience in research or teaching while you help to finance your education. This practical component of your education will prove useful in your future career and may give you insights into your field that would not be possible through course study alone. International students are some of the most valued researchers and teachers in U.S. universities because they bring new skill and ideas to the classroom and laboratory. Many graduate programs in the United States offer training that enables students to become teaching or research assistants.

**Support Services
for International
Students**

At most institutions, services from the international student office help students from abroad to live and learn in their new environment. From orientation programs at the beginning of your degree program to assistance with resumes as you get ready to graduate, you will find people at the university and in the community who are interested in your success.

Campus Life

U.S. universities provide a rich variety of academic, cultural, and athletic activities that add new dimensions to your educational experience and help you make new friends.

Global Education

Experience in an international setting is a marketable commodity. Your long-term career prospects can be enhanced by an experience that develops self-confidence, independence, and cross-cultural skills - attributes that are in high demand with employers worldwide.

Source: If You Want To Study In The United States

- Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs - U.S. Department of State

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Q: Dear Professors and Administrators,

How are you all doing? My name is Marwan Abdin; Egyptian MEPI of the year 2006. I have a B.A. degree in English Literature, a professionally translated diploma, as well as a degree in Human Rights and International Law. I was wondering if there are any full-package scholarship opportunities in U.S. institutions to do an M.A. degree in Political Science and International relations, because I'm still a fresh middle class graduate and paying for M.A. fees in the U.S. is a luxury that is only available to either the landed gentry in Egypt or the children of corporate businessmen. :) My grades are (As) in almost all of my diplomas and degrees. In addition, my score in International TOEFL is a 110 out of 120.

So if you could please offer any advice or references to such scholarship opportunities, kindly do share them.

Thanks a lot in advance.

Best regards,

Marwan from Egypt

A: Scholarships and financial aid are typically awarded by schools themselves after a student has been accepted. I suggest you contact the nearest EducationUSA adviser to begin exploring options about furthering your study in the U.S.! *Peter Van Buren*

Q: Hello!

I want to study medical sciences in the U.S. (probably near my former host family in Texas), and I want to know if this is possible and if there's a cheap way?

Thanks a lot for helping:)

Kathrin from Germany

A: Yes, it is certainly possible for international students to study medicine in the U.S. I hope you mean inexpensive, though! I sent a message to advisers in Europe on July 18th with a thorough list of U.S. medical schools that accept international students (this list is available worldwide via EducationUSA, www.educationUSA.state.gov too). Contact your local EducationUSA center and ask about a message from the Coordinator, "List of Medical Schools in the U.S. Accepting Internationals." You can start by clicking on our new portal to find a center

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and a helpful handout on medical education in the U.S. Viel Glück! www.educationUSA.de

“Medical Education in the United States”
<http://www.educationusa.de/fileadmin/files/infoSheets/medical.pdf>

Wesley Teter

Q: Hi Mr. Van Buren and Wesley,

I am Sajeda, Education Officer, Relief International Bangladesh. I visited the U.S. under the GCEP exchange in July 2007 as a Chaperone. The exchange was focused on youth leadership and civic empowerment.

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/students/programs/linc.htm>

My question is: Will the Bangladeshi students who already visited the U.S. under the LINC (“Linking Individuals, Knowledge, and Culture”) program on their GCEP exchange receive any special favor if they want to go to the U.S. for Higher Education? *Lazina from Bangladesh*

A: Greetings Sajeda (and I believe Eather Newaz had a similar question), thank you both for joining us today. It is difficult to predict if a particular U.S. admissions officer would favor you because of your LINC experience. My best guess would be yes, this will strengthen your application package. U.S. admissions officials often assess piles of applications and are tasked to choose the few individuals that fit the community of their school. Let’s see how Stanford might view your question: “Academics are the primary focal point of assessment, with an emphasis placed on students’ previous academic rigor of their prior studies.” According to that quote, you’re well on your way! “EducationUSA Connections” is for educational advisers but *issue 1* may help: <http://educationusaconnections.iienetwork.org/>.

Most importantly, I suggest you visit your local EducationUSA center and explore the diverse range of options. Here is a link about post-graduate opportunities in the United States (and “Find a School” is at the top, in green): <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/graduate.htm>.

Enjoy!
Wesley Teter

Q: Hi, I am Samreen Fatima, lecturer in the university of Sindh Jamshoro. I know and applied to many universities in the United States as a visiting scholar but they asked me to get enrolled as a regular student and to submit TOEFL or GRE scores. I don’t understand what the need is to submit these scores for a short term visiting scholar. We students from developing countries find

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Editor’s Note: State Alumni moderators retain editorial control over Live Online discussions and choose the most relevant questions for guests; guests can decline to answer questions.

Disclaimer: The views expressed by guests do not necessarily represent U.S. government policy.

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it difficult to pay a high fee for TOEFL or GRE and it is difficult procedure. Why can't these universities test us on arrival there? Most of the professors are not responding to e-mail queries. There should be facilitation for bringing children and at least one family member to support our studies there. The education, at least for (U.S.G.) alumni must be made convenient by providing them concession for their family members and for the requirements of TOEFL score submission. It would increase the admissions in United States. *Samreen from Pakistan*

A: Each school sets its own criteria for admission, including the need for standardized tests such as the GRE. In part, these tests are designed to ensure that the student can participate in the academic programs, that s/he has the proper academic background and the right level of English. This allows the student to enjoy a rich experience at school, and to share his/her own knowledge with others at the school. It would be very cumbersome and expensive to administer these tests only after a student has traveled all the way to the U.S., only to find out s/he may not be qualified. *Peter Van Buren*

Q: Hi Wesley & Peter,

I am Eather Newaz, Education Coordinator, Relief International; Bangladesh Country Office. I did a Masters in General History and now I am doing one more Masters Course in Development Studies and I hope it will help me to further my career in the Development Sector.

I would like to get an idea from you about the higher (post-graduate) education system of the U.S. What types of basic qualifications are needed for higher study in the U.S.? *Lazina from Bangladesh*

A: Though each school sets its own admission policies, you can get a general idea of the requirements for undergraduates and graduates from our web page. Please take a look at: <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/index.htm> *Peter Van Buren*

Q: Good Morning.

I have promoted the OI program in my EducationUSA center. It has been perceived very positively. Some of my advisees are just in the middle of their careers and cannot apply now. How many more years do you anticipate to have this program available? *Martha from Colombia*

A: Our funding arrives, as for all of the Government, in yearly allocations. That said, the OI program has been very successful and we anticipate continued funding well into the future. Colombia has not yet nominated its first OI candidate, so please get the program off to a great

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start Martha! *Peter Van Buren*

Q: I truly believe that U.S. educational and cultural exchange programs create a multi-level impact for Ukraine. Firstly, leaders of international non-governmental organizations (i.e IREX, ACCELS, Internews) , who implement technical assistance projects in developing counties such as Ukraine, are directly responsible for positive development and value transfer to locals with the long-term goal of further democratic mentality change in the country.

Secondly, ECA alumni in turn, serve as new culture and value communicators, as representatives of global international development doctrine. Alumni as new Ukrainian "change agents" serve as values adapters of developed democracies, contributing to formation of positive social and economic reform climate of Ukraine. *Svitlana from Ukraine*

A: Alumni around the world have been sharing their exchange experiences in various capacities. Some are utilizing the network of their alumni associations to benefit their communities and serve as mentors, fundraisers, and volunteers. You can find a lot of stories like these all over the State Alumni website or by contacting your local EducationUSA center – <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/centers/>. Alumni also help promote their programs by assisting to recruit potential applicants. Fulbright alumni in Hungary, for example, participated in a “Fulbright Alumni Road Show,” and visited various universities in the country last year. They were able to discuss with interested applicants that campus life and university education benefit from a diverse student body. Students and faculty in attendance were encouraged to ask questions not only about the Fulbright program, but about any other aspect of American society, culture, foreign policy, or other related topic that they were interested in. In this way, alumni are able to provide firsthand accounts from their experiences to people who are curious about opportunities in the U.S. Take a look at the State Alumni news story about this project by clicking on this link: <https://alumni.state.gov/news2/alumni-news/alumni-news-articles/fulbright-alumni-roadshow-tours-hungary> *Wesley Teter*

C: *This next question is from Azra, who contacted our webmaster directly:*
Moderator

Q: What is your opinion on the higher education reform in Europe following the Bologna Declaration, and to compare it with the American higher education system if possible. Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. Azra Jaganjac, PhD, Fulbright Alumna 2002/03 University of Sarajevo
Faculty of Science, Department of Chemistry

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A: Prof. Dr. Jaganjac, you touched on one of my favorite topics. The Bologna process is a non-binding agreement to create the European Higher Education Area by 2010, as you know. This is already having an impact around the world. According to an adviser of mine in the European Commission, Mr. Peter van der Hijden, the reforms will allow universities in Europe to become more attractive destinations and more reliable partners for universities in the U.S. and elsewhere. I do agree with him and see evidence of increasing interest in “Transatlantic Degrees” at both graduate and undergraduate level. The Department of Education and European Commission are funding a newly revised program, Atlantis: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/fipseec/index.html>. This program helps EU27 countries and the U.S. to establish and deepen their cooperation and student exchange agreements. I did the “Stage” in Brussels in the Directorate General for Education and Culture before joining EducationUSA, in fact. I encourage U.S. universities to inform themselves about the benefits of the European Credit Transfer System and the Diploma Supplement. These two tools in particular will ensure transparency of credentials and help improve student mobility and cooperation between Europe and the United States. *Wesley Teter*

C: *I want to thank our guests for their time today! We have been experiencing a number of technical difficulties, and we apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. We will be posting the transcript very soon to share with State Alumni.* *Moderator*

C: Thanks everyone, it was a pleasure. Keep in touch with EducationUSA.
Wesley Teter

C: Thanks to everyone worldwide who joined us today. Best wishes to all, Peter
Peter Van Buren