MISSION DRIVEN: 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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ENRICHING MINDS, ADVANCING GLOBAL SKILLS, BUILDING CAREERS, AND CONNECTING LIVES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE.
At Cultural Vistas, our mission comes first in everything we do. Each and every year, we strive to enrich minds, advance global skills, build careers, and connect the lives of thousands of American and foreign students, professionals, and emerging leaders through our international exchange programs.

For Cultural Vistas, 2014 was another banner year. The reach of our programs has never been greater. We served 5,720 individuals from the United States and more than 135 other countries, allowing them to learn new perspectives, open their minds to new possibilities and ideas, and form relationships with individuals from cultures and backgrounds other than their own.

Through these formative experiences, our participants gain the personal and professional skills and connections necessary to become leaders in their fields, helping contribute solutions to a variety of global issues facing societies today.

Simply put: our participants today are the leaders and changemakers of tomorrow. This is what drives us on a daily basis.

This past year we also achieved a number of organizational milestones. We expanded our footprint in Europe by officially opening our first international subsidiary in Berlin. We also successfully laid the groundwork to open a new Washington, D.C. office in 2015 that will increase our presence in the nation’s capital.

As I look back on our achievements and look ahead, I am extremely excited about the possibilities before us.

At Cultural Vistas, we envision a world where international experiential skill-building opportunities are a widespread means of fostering a shared understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples, values, cultures, and aspirations. This is how our work brings the world closer together.

I am grateful to all of my colleagues for the passion and commitment they bring to Cultural Vistas every day, and would like to thank all of our partners for their continued cooperation and support. Together with you, we are making our mission a reality!

Robert Fenstermacher
President & CEO
We live in a day and age where international is not an option. It is a necessity. The world is getting smaller. The major challenges we face today are increasingly complex in nature and no longer constrained by national boundaries.

Climate change. Extreme poverty and inequality. Sustainable food production. The list goes on. If we are to begin effectively addressing these and other issues of global concern, we must rethink how we prepare and train the next generation of leaders, policy makers, and scholars.

That is why every year at Cultural Vistas we invest in the futures of thousands of students and emerging and established professionals from the United States and around the world through our career-focused internships, study tours, language immersion and cultural exchange programs.

The opportunities for young people to see the world for themselves — to acquire the knowledge, skills, and overall disposition to understand, think critically, collaborate and take action on issues of global significance — are essential and will only continue to grow in importance.

We have seen firsthand how international exchange programs break down barriers and open doors that were previously shut. And we firmly believe that experiencing the world is the first step toward changing it.

That is why we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission: to enrich minds, advance global skills, build careers, and connect lives through international exchange.
When one lives overseas, meets new people, and experiences new cultures, one gains unique perspectives and understandings of experiences that cannot be obtained simply by reading about them in isolation.

Over the past five years, Cultural Vistas has facilitated this kind of inspired learning by providing exchange opportunities for nearly 25,000 students and professionals, including a record 5,720 in 2014.

Since 2010, our organization has experienced a 43 percent increase in the number of individuals it serves through its professional exchange programs and initiatives.

During this period, sustained revenue growth, with corresponding increases in budget and staff size, infrastructure, and the diversity of our programs and funding streams, has increased our capacity to fulfill our mission.

Our Staff

Cultural Vistas now has more than 80 full-time staff members across its headquarters in New York City, and regional offices in Washington, D.C., and Berlin, Germany. For many of us, it has been the impact of our own personal and professional overseas experiences that have led us to careers in international exchange.

Our team knows international exchange because we have experienced it ourselves.

86% have spent extended time living abroad in 37 different countries
83% have participated in professional exchange or study abroad programs
81% speak a second language; collectively, our staff speaks more than 20 different languages

Our Reach

Individuals from nearly 140 different countries around the world now participate in our exchange programs every year. Moreover, in 2014, organizations in all 50 states hosted an international intern or trainee through Cultural Vistas.

43%

FIVE YEAR GROWTH IN PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

80%

FIVE YEAR GROWTH IN REVENUE

$15.8

2010

$13.3

2011

$15.2

2012

$17.9

2013

$33.3

2014

$72.0

2016

86

101

121

138

136

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

86

101

121

138

136

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

COUNTRIES

INFLUENCED BY PARTICIPANTS

STAFF PHOTO PETER PLOTICA
2014 PROGRAM IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS

By the Numbers
A record 5,720 individuals – from high school and university students to emerging and established professionals representing the United States and 136 countries around the world – participated in Cultural Vistas exchange programs.

International Visitors in the United States
In 2014, international students and professionals from 136 different countries participated in Cultural Vistas exchange programs in the United States.

Exchange Programs for Americans Abroad
In 2014, U.S. students and professionals participated in Cultural Vistas exchange programs programs in 25 countries around the world.

By the Numbers

- **5,720** individuals participated in exchange programs.
- **136** countries represented.
- **15-60** years age range.
- **165 days** average program length.
- **5,270** average age.
- **31%** female, **69%** male.

**TOP 3 REGIONS REPRESENTED BY PARTICIPANTS**
- **37%** Europe
- **31%** North & Central America
- **25%** Asia

**TOP 3 REGIONS REPRESENTED BY PARTICIPANTS**
- **24.4%** Canada
- **16.3%** Germany
- **7.8%** Singapore

**TOP 3 DESTINATION COUNTRIES**
- **61.5%** Germany
- **6.7%** Malaysia
- **5.2%** France

**TOP 3 FIELDS OF STUDY**
- **Business**
- **Computer Science**
- **Engineering**

**AVERAGE PROGRAM LENGTH**
- **5.5 months**
- **5.2 months**
Quality & Affordable Programs for Americans Abroad

If today’s youth do not have the opportunity to experience the world outside the United States, where will the next generation of American leaders come from?

We know that cost remains the most significant barrier preventing more Americans from reaping the benefits of international experiences. As the demand for a globally-competent workforce continues to increase, Cultural Vistas remains committed to delivering high-quality and affordable programs for a diverse range of Americans.

Here’s how we are delivering on that commitment:

For the past three years, we have provided 29 U.S. university students with full funding to live and intern abroad for eight weeks as part of the Cultural Vistas Fellowship. In 2015, this fellowship program for individuals traditionally underrepresented in international exchange will send 12 students to Argentina, Germany, and India for internships focused on entrepreneurship.

In 2014, more than 85% of U.S.-based participants in our programs received paid internships, received full or partial funding, or were awarded scholarships through Cultural Vistas to support their international experiences.

• More than half of the 334 students and professionals participating in Cultural Vistas programs outside the United States received full funding to support their experiences.

• Our scholarship fund plays a vital role in developing diverse and globally competent young American professionals and future leaders.

• In 2014, $52,000 in scholarship support was provided to 40 Americans pursuing low or unpaid internships overseas, bringing the total to nearly $180,000 to support such programs since 2011.

• All individuals who participated in unpaid international internships who applied for funding through the Cultural Vistas Scholarship Fund received scholarship stipends.

2014 PROGRAM IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS

334 PARTICIPANTS OUTBOUND

THE CULTURAL VISTAS SCHOLARSHIP FUND ALLOWED ELIZABETH HAYES (PICTURED LEFT) TO SPEND HER SUMMER INTERNSING AT EXPEDOSCI IN BERLIN AS PART OF OUR SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN GERMANY. HERE, SHE ENJOYS THE VIEW OF THE BRANDENBURG GATE FROM OUR BERLIN OFFICE ALONG WITH CULTURAL VISTAS FELLOWS COURTNEY BILLEN AND CATHY CHOW.

PHOTO: SOPHIE HAMACHER

THE GLOBAL NATURE OF CAREERS IN THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS FIELDS WAS THE FOCUS OF OUR SECOND ANNUAL STEM LAUNCH STUDY TOUR IN THE SPRING OF 2014. THIS TWO-WEEK PROGRAM, FOUNDED BY THE HALLE FOUNDATION, SENT 20 SPELMAN AND MOREHOUSE COLLEGE STUDENTS AND FACULTY TO BERLIN AND MUNICH TO EXPLORE A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE ON STEM OPPORTUNITIES. PHOTO: KATJA KURZ

MARINA ZABOWSKI SPENT THREE MONTHS INTERNSING AT AGENCIA PROCÓRDOBA IN CóRDOBA ON THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN ARGENTINA WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF A STIPEND FROM THE CULTURAL VISTAS SCHOLARSHIP FUND. MARINA’S INTERNSHIP ENABLED HER TO IMPROVE HER SPANISH AND GAIN NEW INSIGHT INTO HOW GOODS ARE TRANSPORTED ACROSS THE GLOBE.

PHOTO: MARINA ZABOWSKI

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, CULTURAL VISTAS HAS INTRODUCED MORE THAN 40 U.S. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND SEVERAL TEACHERS TO THE PEOPLE, CULTURES, AND ECOCOLOGIES OF SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA THROUGH THE AMERICAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM. THIS U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE-FUNDED PROGRAM FOCUSED ON THE TWO NATIONS’ APPROACHES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH VIRTUAL EXERCISES AND A THREE-WEEK STUDY TOUR. PHOTO: KATE HOOF

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PHOTO: MARINA ZABOWSKI
In 2014, Cultural Vistas successfully completed its third year as an implementing partner for the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), a professional exchange program with a 75-plus year history that builds mutual understanding through short-term U.S. visits for current and emerging world leaders.

In June, five emerging leaders from Azerbaijan participated in an IVLP project exploring efforts to promote civil society through new media. During their visit to Oklahoma, the group had the opportunity to volunteer alongside Congressman Jim Bridenstine (R-OK) and help provide meals for struggling families in the Tulsa community. Photo: Bob Lieser

In January, Cultural Vistas welcomed 23 NGO officials from 22 countries for a project exploring how their U.S. counterparts recruit volunteers, raise funds, and advance their missions. Photo: Vicky Anzmann

Visitors from Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe explore conservation efforts on the Eastern Shore of Virginia as part of their IVLP Project on Sustainable Agriculture. Photo: Richard Bobo

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Over the course of the year, our staff arranged 35 projects for 275 international visitors representing 95 different countries. Since becoming an IVLP National Program Agency in 2011, Cultural Vistas has arranged programming for more than 650 international visitors.

As one of seven IVLP National Program Agencies, Cultural Vistas is responsible for arranging professional and cultural itineraries across America that reflect the interests of each international visitor. Through the combination of meetings, site visits, and focused cultural events, IVLP promotes a deeper understanding of the political, social, economic, and cultural diversity of the United States, a thorough exposure to a range of responsible viewpoints, and the opportunity to develop meaningful professional relationships.

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Visitors from Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe explore conservation efforts on the Eastern Shore of Virginia as part of their IVLP Project on Sustainable Agriculture. Photo: Richard Bobo

Cultural Vistas was honored to get to know Australian comedian, journalist, and activist Stella Young during her three-week IVLP project on disability rights and advocacy in the summer of 2014. We were deeply saddened to learn of her passing in December.

Stella left an indelible mark on the world through her endeavors and her fiery spirit, and will be greatly missed.
2014 PROGRAM IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS

Experiencing America

Cultural Vistas’ exchange programs provide avenues for thousands of dynamic and passionate individuals from around the world to come to the United States every year to advance their skills, grow as individuals, and learn about our country and way of life.

Opportunities for international visitors to meet Americans on common ground and authentically engage in all aspects of U.S. culture, both personal and professional, often leave an enduring impact. This not only promotes bilateral relations, but it brings our world closer together.

In 2014, Cultural Vistas hosted more than 75 educational, professional, and cultural events and activities across the United States serving more than 2,500 individuals.

Included among those activities was the unique cross-cultural tradition of having our J-1 international interns and trainees visit American classrooms to lead exercises and discussions about their home cultures as part of International Education Week (IEW). In 2014, our exchange participants visited elementary and middle school classrooms in New York, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

“In the globally-interdependent world that we live in, I think it’s really important for the children to be aware of cultures outside of their own. We’ve been doing this for three years and every year the kids just love it.”

Stephanie Crist, a third-grade teacher at PS 254 in Queens, N.Y.

“IT WAS A REALLY AWESOME EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY! I ENJOYED TALKING TO STUDENTS AND EXCHANGING AMERICAN AND KOREAN CULTURE,” SAID YEONJOO OH, ONE OF SEVERAL SOUTH KOREAN SCHOLARS AND PARTICIPANTS IN OUR IDEA WEST PROGRAM TO JOIN THE IEW FESTIVITIES.

PHOTO: SARAH BASHAW

IN APRIL, EIGHT OF OUR NEW YORK-BASED J-1 INTERNS FROM COLOMBIA, CANADA, GERMANY, AND PHILIPPINES TOLD THEIR STORIES OF GAINING PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES AND SHARING THEIR HOME CULTURES WITH AMERICANS TO AN AUDIENCE OF INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS AT THE NEW YORK FOREIGN PRESS CENTER.

PHOTO: LISA SCHUNK

HOME HOSPITALITY IS A VITAL PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM EXPERIENCE. HERE, AN AMERICAN FAMILY WELCOMES A GROUP OF EUROPEAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LEADERS INTO THEIR HOME TO SHARE A MEAL AND CONVERSATION.

PHOTO: RICHARD BOBO

AS PART OF A SERIES OF REGIONAL OFFERINGS OUR TRAIN USA TEAM PROVIDES ITS PARTICIPANTS, 34 INTERNS AND TRAINEES REPRESENTING NINE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, JOINED OUR STAFF IN SEPTEMBER FOR AN EXCURSION TO ANGELO ISLAND IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY TO LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE "ELLIS ISLAND OF THE WEST.”

PHOTO: CULTURAL VISTAS

GIVING BACK IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF AMERICAN CULTURE, AND THAT, VOLUNTEERING IS A MAINSTAY IN OUR EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. PICTURED HERE, VERONICA TESTA, OUR TRAIN USA PARTICIPANT FROM ARGENTINA, VOLUNTEERS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY IN MIAMI.

PHOTO: VERONICA TESTA
Today, practically anyone with an Internet connection anywhere in the world can share their point of view. With old boundaries removed, new opportunities abound to amplify the impact of exchange programs through the use of technology. In October 2014, Cultural Vistas did just this, together with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Reykjavik, administering a three-month long virtual exchange for 10 leading environmental NGO professionals from Iceland. This represented the first primarily web-based exchange in the 75 year history of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP).

The project, conducted primarily by utilizing video conferencing and a private online portal, promoted sustainable environmental practices in the Arctic by encouraging the use of scientific information and strategic messaging to inform and mobilize the public, while also investing in strategies for partnership building, organizing, and multimedia engagement in the NGO sector.

During a time when our society is confronted with many environmental challenges, we are proud that neither budgets nor geography curtailed efforts that will help us become better stewards of our natural resources.

Embassy Initiatives

Over the course of 2014, Cultural Vistas designed and implemented several short-term U.S. Embassy-funded exchanges, ranging from a teacher exchange to promote collaboration between U.S. and U.K. schools to a pair of workshops in India bringing together American and Indian university representatives to discuss best practices in developing university partnerships.

In January, Cultural Vistas administered EdTech Ireland: Games, Apps & STEM Education, a two-week exchange on behalf of the U.S. Embassy in Dublin and the U.S Consulate in Belfast, that connected 10 Irish professionals with government and educational institutions, game and app developers, tech start-ups, and NGOs to hear different perspectives on the role of technology in creating a skilled workforce.

The need for higher education institutions in the U.S. and India to work together more effectively was the focus of Education for Exchange, two one-day workshops sponsored by the U.S. Consulate in Chennai in March 2014 that were facilitated by Cultural Vistas staff.

In April, Cultural Vistas administered the Young U.K. Muslim Leaders Exchange Program, an initiative sponsored by the Embassy of the United States in London that brought 11 Muslim student leaders from the United Kingdom to the States to examine how community organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies are cultivating leadership.

Fostering the Next Generation of Female Japanese Leaders

As a part of the TOMODACHI MetLife Women’s Leadership Program, Cultural Vistas hosted a group of 25 Japanese university students for an eight-day visit showcasing examples of business, education, and entrepreneurship in the United States, focusing primarily on how women achieve success in the modern economy.

While in the United States, Japanese and Cultural Vistas staff mentors accompanied the students to meetings and visits with representatives of various business, education, government, and women’s leadership groups in Washington, D.C. and New York.

At the end of the program, the 25 participants delivered presentations about ideas developed over the course of the eight-day visit for projects they would implement with the micro-grant to enhance opportunities for women in their own communities.
PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

TRAIN USA AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Cultural Vistas’ Train USA J-1 exchange programs bring motivated students and professionals to the United States to make meaningful contributions in the workplace, obtain the skills needed to build successful careers, and learn about our country – creating an invaluable exchange of ideas, expertise, and connections that provide benefits to all those involved.

In 2014, Cultural Vistas collaborated with a researcher at Columbia University to launch a survey to assess the effectiveness and impact of its J-1 intern and trainee programs. This survey includes data from more than 1,500 participants and 960 respondents representing J-1 host companies.

**PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION**
- 94% improved their knowledge of American business practices
- 96% learned specific job skills they will be able to use in their careers
- 98% would like to return to the United States for another training program

**TOP SKILLS LEARNED**
- Communication
- Technical
- Social
- Cultural
- Workflow
- Male 73%
- Female 27%

On average, 98% of host company representatives reported that the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program has benefited their company, and that they will likely stay in touch with participants after the end of the program.

**HOST BENEFITS**
- Created a more dynamic and international workplace
- Encouraged innovation and new modes of thinking that resulted in more comprehensive solutions
- Enhanced business functions and/or productivity of American staff with a valuable global perspective

California and New York represent the two largest receiving states. Train USA exchanges spanned 44 different states, plus the District of Columbia, Guam, Saipan, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Canada and Germany represent the two largest sending countries. France, India, China, Japan, Italy, and Mexico were the next highest, combining to account for more than 25% of our exchange visitors.

Train USA intern and trainee exchanges can range in length from three weeks to 18 months. In 2014, our average program length was 173 days.

A group of 3 J-1 interns at Mozilla — representing Brazil, Portugal, Morocco, Finland, India, Ireland, and Britain — attend a San Francisco Giants game together.

German trainee Elisabeth Fugmann examines and conserves a more than 2,000-year-old Egyptian coffin during her internship at the ICA-ART Conservation Lab in Cleveland, Ohio.

Ambre Bouillant of Paris, France, spent six months in the United States on the Train USA program, interning at Schlumberger in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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<th>States</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>New York</th>
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<td>Top Skills</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant Satisfaction</td>
<td>94%</td>
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| AMBER BUIILLANT OF PARIS, FRANCE, SPENT SIX MONTHS IN THE UNITED STATES ON THE TRAIN USA PROGRAM, INTERNSING AT SCHLUMBERGER IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS |
| CALIFORNIA AND NEW YORK REPRESENT THE TWO LARGEST RECEIVING STATES. TRAIN USA EXCHANGES SPANNED 44 DIFFERENT STATES, PLUS THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GUAM, SAIPAN, AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS. |
| CANADA AND GERMANY REPRESENT THE TWO LARGEST SENDING COUNTRIES. FRANCE, INDIA, CHINA, JAPAN, ITALY, AND MEXICO WERE THE NEXT HIGHEST, COMBINING TO ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 25% OF OUR EXCHANGE VISITORS. |
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**Host Benefits**
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- Encouraged innovation and new modes of thinking that resulted in more comprehensive solutions
- Enhanced business functions and/or productivity of American staff with a valuable global perspective
Strengthening Ties That Unite Us

For 60-plus years, Cultural Vistas has used career exploration to facilitate meaningful connections between Americans and the international community. When young and emerging leaders live overseas, meet new people, and experience new cultures, they gain unique perspectives and understanding of societies different from their own. The personal relationships and life-lasting impressions that exchange programs elicit pave the way toward better partnerships and stronger alliances around the world.

For this reason, exchange programs remain an essential part of American public diplomacy.

“The Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship Program, along with the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange and Congressional Study Group on Germany, which also are celebrating their 30th anniversaries, are the crown jewels of German-American exchange programs, which the German government strongly supports.”

Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Deputy Chief of Mission at the German Embassy in Washington

“I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to learn so much about Germany, to meet so many interesting people and expand my networks and make the transition to public service. Whenever I look back at my career and think about milestones or turning points, I always come back to this year.” Julianne Smith, Bosch XIII

A Cornerstone of the U.S.-German Relationship

In 2014, three successful decades of transatlantic exchanges were recognized as the Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship and Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals (CBYX) came up on their 30th anniversaries. Cultural Vistas has served as the U.S. representative for both programs since their inception.

Over the past 30 years, more than 22,000 young people from the United States and Germany have had the opportunity to spend one year in each other’s respective countries — studying, working, and experiencing everyday life — through CBYX, which is jointly funded by the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag.

By extension, these numbers amplify the reach of exchanges to:

• 22,000 host families
• 130,000 school classrooms where a CBYX student has been seated
• 150,000 company personnel who have known and interacted with a young professional

With 500-plus distinguished alumni, the Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship Program has played a critical role in fostering a community of U.S. leaders who have first-hand experience in the political, economic, and cultural environment of Germany and the European Union.

Prominent Bosch Fellowship alumni include:

• Denis McDonough, Chief of Staff to President Obama
• Adam Posen, President, Peterson Institute for International Economics
• Sandra Peterson, Group Worldwide Chairman of Johnson & Johnson
**2014 PROGRAM IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS**

**During his training as a software developer in New York City, Javier Ricardo took the opportunity to visit multiple local elementary schools to speak to students about his home country of Argentina as part of Cultural Vistas’ International Education Week activities. Through the relationships formed with those schools, Javier was able to integrate the time he spent with these students and teachers into the research for his thesis on educational software. Photo: Javier Ricardo**

"Back in Argentina, I included many of this data in my written project. I showed how some problems were similar in both countries and I demonstrated how software engineering can help to solve them. All this allowed me to finally obtain my software engineer degree."

Javier Ricardo, Train USA participant from Argentina

**2014 PROGRAM IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS**

**With a desire to learn more about for-purpose design and how to create change through her work, Jenai Kavarana came to New York City to train with Organize, a nonprofit dedicated to solving the organ donation crisis. Photo: Peter Plotica**

"During my internship here, I am learning so much about the issue and how I can take these principles back to India to improve the organ donation situation over there. This internship is so much more than a design internship. I am learning how startups function and grow, I am learning how to make business decisions, I am learning how to strategize and position the company – skills I could not have learned this quickly anywhere else."

Jenai Kavarana, Train USA participant from India

**Cultural Vistas Fellow Esther Chan spent the summer of 2014 interning at Big Red Button, a media social enterprise in Singapore. Six months later, Esther returned to Singapore to spend her Spring 2015 semester interning again at the company. Photo: Esther Chan**

"I never thought that I would be creating videos or working in a media social enterprise. My major is visual media and social change, but in a more theoretical perspective. The summer opened the doors for more focused opportunities. I am now on a path to becoming a producer and video editor in the media realm of social change."

Esther Chan, Cultural Vistas Fellow in Singapore

**JaeHyuk "Jake" Lim came to the United States on the Korea West Program with a very specific goal: to build the foundation for establishing a career in sports. By the end of his seven-month athletic communications internship at Binghamton University, the fruits of Jake’s labor emerged in the form of a touching video project highlighting the commitment and sacrifices made by Division I student-athletes and the importance of family support. Photo: Binghamton Athletics**

"Our first experience with the Korea WEST program went so well and it was rewarding to see how much Solbyol, our first intern, blossomed here. Now Jake has embraced his opportunity and his energy and expertise have been phenomenal."

John Hartrick, Associate Director of Athletics at Binghamton University

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"I never thought that I would be creating videos or working in a media social enterprise. My major is visual media and social change, but in a more theoretical perspective. The summer opened the doors for more focused opportunities. I am now on a path to becoming a producer and video editor in the media realm of social change."

Esther Chan, Cultural Vistas Fellow in Singapore

**With a desire to learn more about for-purpose design and how to create change through her work, Jenai Kavarana came to New York City to train with Organize, a nonprofit dedicated to solving the organ donation crisis. Photo: Peter Plotica**

"During my internship here, I am learning so much about the issue and how I can take these principles back to India to improve the organ donation situation over there. This internship is so much more than a design internship. I am learning how startups function and grow, I am learning how to make business decisions, I am learning how to strategize and position the company – skills I could not have learned this quickly anywhere else."

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**During his traineeship as a software developer in New York City, Javier Ricardo took the opportunity to visit multiple local elementary schools to speak to students about his home country of Argentina as part of Cultural Vistas’ International Education Week activities. Through the relationships formed with those schools, Javier was able to integrate the time he spent with these students and teachers into the research for his thesis on educational software. Photo: Javier Ricardo**

"Back in Argentina, I included many of this data in my written project. I showed how some problems were similar in both countries and I demonstrated how software engineering can help to solve them. All this allowed me to finally obtain my software engineer degree."

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A Decade Advancing U.S.-Russian Relations

The Alfa Fellowship Program, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014, has provided more than 100 American and British young professionals with direct experience in the modern business, public policy, and cultural environments of Russia. Beginning in 2015, the program will expand to include three German participants.

“Even in times when our governments may have their differences, exchange programs such as the Alfa Fellowship Program are critical to enhancing understanding between our two countries and to continuing dialogue on a whole host of issues. In fact, now is the time when more exchanges are needed.”

Ambassador John Beyrle, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia and Bulgaria

Five Years Advancing U.S.-Korean Relations

Since 2009, Cultural Vistas has provided more than 700 South Korean scholars the opportunity to hone their English skills, complete professional internships, and experience America through the Korea WEST (Work, English Study, Travel) program, a joint initiative of the United States and the Republic of Korea.

“Just like myself before I participated in the Korea WEST program, there are still many Korean youth wanting to know what America is truly like. With my American experience, now I can help them better understand America without prejudices.”

Junghun “Jacob” Lee, Korea WEST intern with the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Fifteen Emerging Leaders, 10 from the U.S. and five from the U.K., began their fellowship year in Moscow in 2014, taking part in work placements with prominent organizations such as CNN, Human Rights Watch,National Geographic, and The Washington Post.

In November, nearly 100 Alfa fellows, alumni, and friends gathered in Washington, D.C. to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of this distinguished Russian exchange program. Photo: Rui Barbosa

Cultural Vistas’ staff maintains close relationships with its Korea West participants, strengthened by in-person meetings, orientations in Seoul and the United States, and various cultural activities and outings, including a professional lecture series that debuted in 2014.

Photo: David Alfaro

Angela Bae, Cultural Vistas’ Korea West director, joined more than 300 alumni in Seoul to celebrate the program’s impact on its fifth anniversary. Photo: Angela Bae

OJSC Alfa-Bank is incorporated, focused and based in Russia, and is not affiliated with U.S.-based Alfa Insurance.
Sharing Ideas and Forming Lasting Connections

Over the course of 2014, more than 650 members of our exchange community came together to share ideas, network, and contribute to a meaningful dialogue on issues of global interest at a series of gatherings and special events hosted by Cultural Vistas across the United States in Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, New York, Portland, San Diego, Washington, D.C., and overseas in Berlin.

Uniting Citizen Diplomats One Handshake at a Time

Connecting lives is central to Cultural Vistas’ mission, as well as the cornerstone of citizen diplomacy. In January, more than 70 international visitors and American alumni of Cultural Vistas exchange programs convened in the nation’s capital for an evening highlighting the important role exchange programs and individuals can have in shaping foreign relations.

Exploring #WhyGlobal Experiences Matter

In May, exchange participants from 10 different countries joined Cultural Vistas’ Board of Directors, staff, alumni, host families, and partners in New York City for an evening of networking and celebrating the transformative value of global experiences.

Building a Cultural Vistas #CommEUnity

One of Cultural Vistas’ main endeavors in opening a Berlin office was not only to serve its program participants in a more hands-on way, but also to reach out to and engage its vast network of alumni living and working throughout Europe.

In July, Cultural Vistas celebrated the opening of its first international office by bringing together European alumni of its J-1 programs together with current American students living and interning in Germany to connect with each other and share ideas on the theme of building an alumni community in Europe, all while enjoying a great view of the Brandenburg Gate.

Discussing Global Trends and Possible Futures

In November, Cultural Vistas hosted a discussion focused on possible futures as outlined in the National Intelligence Council’s Global Trends 2030 report and how exchange programs can help address these developments.

More than 100 guests attended the talk led by Christopher Kojm, an alumnus of the Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship and chairman of the NIC when the report was produced in 2012, and Dr. Steven Sokol, President and CEO of the American Council on Germany, himself a Fulbright alumnus.

Watch the Discussion: culturalvistas.org/globaltrends
“Especially abroad, your boss and coworkers are not going to hover over you and make sure you’re constantly occupied. You must take initiative, be brave, and ask to learn more and be given increasingly difficult assignments. I remember my first days on the job, when I used to read over the comprehensive international sales reports my colleagues created because I was bored. Now I’m the one creating them.”

Katie Denton, 2014 Summer Internship Program in Spain

“Whereas in the United States I was only allowed to observe the doctors’ interactions with the patients, here the doctors go out of their way to include me and make me be part of the process. They truly have welcomed me with open arms. I have never felt so welcome in a place, let alone a hospital.

I have learned a lot about the language and the culture, but I have learned the most about kindness. The doctors’ approach to their patients, coworkers, superiors, and life in general is all rooted in kindness. They are respected but not revered. The doctors take time to address the hundreds of people that knock on the doctors’ lounge with questions. They address each patient as a unique person; they hold their patients’ hands and tell jokes. It is a completely different approach to healthcare and I love it!”

Quinci Paine, 2014 Internship Program in Argentina

Sandra Decius is one such example. The IAESTE exchange program put Sandra in a position to learn new languages, develop her career, and most importantly, fulfill her dreams.

The California native headed for Europe in 1986 driven by a desire to become fluent in German. She accomplished that and then some, parlaying an internship in Eindhoven into a successful and fulfilling career today in Munich, where she calls home today.

This past year, Sandra reconnected with us to pay it forward with a generous gift to Cultural Vistas Europe.

In 2014, her gift allowed Cultural Vistas to award three scholarships totaling 5,000 Euros to U.S. students pursuing internships in Argentina, Spain, and Bosnia & Herzegovina. For each student, this marked their first time traveling abroad.

“Experiencing different cultures and seeing things from a new perspective is so important, especially for Americans,” said Decius. “The challenges we face today are increasingly global and to be a critical thinker and leader, you have to get out from your own bubble.”

Sandra Decius is currently a Press Officer and Marketing Communications Manager at Nokia Siemens Networks in Munich. Read more about how IAESTE impacted Sandra’s life at: culturalvistas.org/decius

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As a mission-driven nonprofit, Cultural Vistas is steadfast in its commitment to fiscal responsibility. We continuously strive to keep administrative costs associated with the operation of our organization as low as possible, while investing in endeavors that fulfill our mission.

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2014, Cultural Vistas spent 87% of its budget on mission-based programs and services, and only 13% administrative and support services.

Cultural Vistas has accumulated Scholarship Funds in excess of $1.3 million to support Americans participating in its international internship opportunities. As of December 31, 2014, the permanently endowed portions of the Scholarship Funds total $633,645, the Board of Directors has also designated $688,603 of our net assets specifically for the purpose of supporting international exchange opportunities.

Where Did It Come From?

Cultural Vistas derived approximately 49% of its revenue from program service fees, and 51% from individual, corporate, and government direct support of specific exchange program-related expenses.

Where Did It Go?

The vast majority of that revenue directly funds its mission-focused programs and services. For every dollar spent in 2014, 87 cents went directly toward program-related expenses.
“My experience abroad has determined my future trajectory for a career in architecture, as I now know I want to engage in international sustainable architecture. The fellowship has opened many doors for me, and I feel that I am well-prepared to take on any challenge now.”

Denise Blankenberger, Cultural Vistas Fellow in Singapore

**INVEST IN OUR MISSION**

Few experiences can rival that of immersing in the everyday life and language of another country and culture.

At Cultural Vistas, we firmly believe the global learning opportunities we provide are empowering the current and future generations of global leaders, policy makers, and scholars to impact and shape communities around the world.

As we continue our journey, we invite you to join our efforts to develop and create new opportunities for people to inquire, learn, experience, and understand the interconnected world we live in. Every gift you give, no matter how large or small, helps us to carry on our work to bring the world closer together.

Invest in our mission today by making a tax-deductible contribution at: culturalvistas.org/donate
“It might sound like a cliché, but this internship really was a life-changing experience. This was the first time I worked in a professional environment. I learned so much about myself that I otherwise wouldn’t be able to.

I thought I knew my limits, but now I see they’re much higher than I imagined. The possibilities seem endless.”

Miloš Šolak (FRONT COVER), of Bosnia and Herzegovina, served as a multimedia intern with Cultural Vistas in the fall of 2014.