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STUDY ABROAD BY U.S. STUDENTS ROSE IN 2009/10

WITH MORE STUDENTS GOING TO LESS TRADITIONAL DESTINATIONS

Fall 2011 snapshot survey indicates that study abroad numbers continue to increase

November 14, 2011 – Kicking-off International Education Week, the *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, released today, reports an increase in U.S. students studying abroad; 270,604 U.S. students studied abroad for credit during the academic year 2009/10, compared to 260,327 the previous year. The *Open Doors* report, released today in Washington, D.C. by Assistant Secretary Ann Stock (R) and IIE President and CEO Allan Goodman, is published annually by the Institute of International Education in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Study abroad by students enrolled in U.S. higher education has more than tripled over the past two decades. The increase shown in this year's *Open Doors* report returns to the steady rise in study abroad numbers each year since the data has been tracked, with the exception of 2008/09, when world economic conditions had caused a slight dip.

The United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France and China, remained the top host destinations. Each of these destinations hosted more U.S. students in 2009/10 than the prior year, with increases ranging from two to five percent. There has been a surge of interest in study in China in the past decade, with nearly 14,000 students studying in China in 2009/10 compared to fewer than 3,000 in 1999/00.

The report found notable increases in U.S. students going to study in many of the less traditional destinations. Fifteen of the top 25 destinations were outside of Western Europe and nineteen were countries where English is not a primary language. There was a 44 percent increase in U.S. students going to India. Israel, Brazil and New Zealand also showed large percentage gains. Substantial increases were reported in U.S. students going to Egypt.

To obtain a more current “snapshot” of whether these positive study abroad trends are continuing, IIE conducted a fall 2011 online survey in cooperation with the Forum on Education Abroad. U.S. campus respondents to the fall 2011 survey reported that study abroad numbers are continuing to rebound. More than 53 percent of the responding campuses said they had seen an increase in the number of their students studying abroad in 2010/11 compared to the previous year, including some of the campuses with the largest numbers of study abroad students.

In the fall 2011 survey, campus leaders and study abroad providers noted that they have increasingly sought affordable opportunities for their students to gain valuable international experience. *Open Doors* data for 2009/10 also showed an increase of seven percent in the number of students participating in practical work experiences as part of their study abroad, with 20,000 students now receiving academic credit at U.S. colleges and universities for internships or work abroad.

“For American students to be competitive in today’s globalized world, international experience is critically important,” said Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary (R). “Through innovative programs including Fulbright, critical language awards and the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, American students have the opportunity to study abroad.”

Allan E. Goodman, President and CEO of the Institute of International Education, said “Studying abroad enables American students to obtain first-hand experience in other countries and cultures, to prepare them as 21st century professionals and leaders in all fields. The international skills they gain are crucial to their ability to succeed in global careers and work together across borders to address important world issues. It is important that we as educators work to try to ensure that all students have the opportunity to study abroad.”

Despite the increases in the number of U.S. students studying abroad, these students still represent a small proportion of total enrollment in U.S. higher education, estimated at close to 20 million students. Just over one percent of all U.S. students enrolled in U.S. higher education at any academic level typically study abroad during any single academic year. Among students pursuing Bachelor’s degrees, about 14 percent study abroad at some point during their undergraduate programs.

While Europe continues to be by far the leading regional destination for U.S. students studying abroad, *Open Doors* reports that the number of students going to Europe increased by only two percent in 2009/10, and the European share of U.S. study abroad students has gradually declined over the past decade, from 62 percent in 1999/00, to 54 percent in 2010/11. Latin America hosted 15 percent of all Americans studying abroad, Asia hosted 12 percent, Oceania – which includes Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific Islands -- hosted five percent, and Africa hosted six percent.

The number of students who studied in Africa, Asia and the Middle East increased by more than eight percent each. This growth is fueled in part by new and sometimes more affordable program opportunities in these destinations, strategic partnerships between higher education institutions in the United States and abroad. An expansion of programs in diverse fields and short durations, often led by home-campus faculty, accommodates an increasingly diverse study abroad population.

Highlights:

The United Kingdom remained the most popular destination, with a total of 32,683 (a 4 percent increase). Italy is second, (increasing 2 percent to 27,940), followed by #3 Spain (25,411, up 5 percent), #4 France (17,161, up 2 percent), and #5 China (13,910, up 2 percent). Other destinations in the top 25 were: #6 Australia (9,962, down 11 percent), #7 Germany (8,551, up 3 percent), #8 Mexico (7,157, down 2 percent), #9 Ireland (6,798, down less than 1 percent), #10 Costa Rica (6,262, down 2 percent), #11 Japan (6,166, up 7 percent), #12 Argentina (4,835, up 3 percent), #13 South Africa (4,313, up 4 percent), #14 India (3,884, up 44 percent and moving up from #21 the prior year), #15 Greece (3,700, up 2 percent), #16 Czech Republic (3,409, down 7 percent), #17 Israel (3,146, up 61 percent), #18 Chile (3,115, down 11 percent), #19 New Zealand (3,113 up 12 percent), #20 Brazil (3,099 up 12 percent), #21 Ecuador (2,960, up 4 percent), #22 Austria (2,701, down 5 percent), #23 Netherlands (2,369, up 2 percent), #24 Peru (2,316 up 7 percent), and #25 Denmark (2,228, down less than 1 percent).

New York University remained the leading sending institution, reporting that it gave academic credit for study abroad to 4,156 of its students. It was followed by Michigan State University (2,589), University of Southern California (2,500), University of California – Los Angeles (2,363), University of Texas – Austin (2,284), University of Washington (2,226), Penn State – University Park (2,212), Indiana University – Bloomington (2,190), University of Minnesota – Twin Cities (2,181), and University of Wisconsin – Madison (2,169). *Open Doors 2011* reports that 58 U.S. campuses, primarily large research institutions, awarded academic credit for study abroad last year to 1,000 or more of their students.

While large institutions dominate in terms of absolute numbers of their students going abroad, many smaller institutions send a higher proportion of their students abroad. *Open Doors 2011* data on study abroad participation rates show that 24 institutions reported sending more than 70 percent of their students abroad at some point during their undergraduate careers. These institutions are (in alphabetical order): Arcadia University, Austin College, Carleton College, Centre College, Colorado College, DePauw University, Earlham College, Elon University, Goucher College, Hamline University, Hanover College, Kalamazoo College, Lee University, Lewis and Clark College, Loyola University Maryland, Luther College, Oberlin College, Pepperdine University, Saint Olaf College, Taylor University, University of Dallas, University of San Diego, Wartburg College, and Wofford College.

According to *Open Doors 2011*, the leading fields of study for Americans studying abroad are the social sciences (22 percent of those studying abroad), business and management (21 percent), humanities (12 percent), fine or applied arts (8 percent), physical/life sciences (8 percent), foreign languages (6 percent), health sciences (5 percent), education (4 percent), engineering (4 percent), math/computer science (2 percent) and agriculture (1 percent).

The study abroad data in *Open Doors 2011* reflect study conducted abroad in academic year 2009/10 (including summer 2010). Campus administrators responding to the *Open Doors* survey provide data on the number of study abroad students to whom they have awarded credit after completion of study abroad, so the data provided to IIE in academic year 2010/11 was for study abroad that took place in 2009/10 and is the most recent available.

IIE provides a web-based resource, www.StudyAbroadFunding.org, to help students find scholarships and grants to help support their overseas studies. An interactive website, IIE Passport (www.iiepassport.org), helps students find the study abroad program that best fits their academic needs. IIE Passport contains more than 9,500 study abroad and learning travel opportunities worldwide for participants of all ages, searchable by country, field of study, language, academic level, world area, city, organization, duration, and type of program. The program listings are also published in IIE's annual *IIE Passport Study Abroad Directories*, available from www.iiebooks.org. These regional IIE Passport directories now include content provided by Lonely Planet on living, traveling and studying in the region.

In addition, the IIE Network offers resources and an online community for international educators (www.iie.org/membership), with a "Best Practices" section featuring Study Abroad and other internationalization programs that have won IIE's Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education.

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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 the early 1970s. The census is based on a survey of approximately 3,000 accredited U.S. institutions which host international students. **Open Doors** also reports on surveys on international scholars at U.S. universities; international students enrolled in pre-academic Intensive English Programs; and on U.S. students studying abroad (since 1985). A full press kit and further details on the **Open Doors 2011** surveys and their findings can be accessed on www.iie.org/opendoors, and the full 120 page report can be ordered for \$64.95 from IIE Books at www.iiebooks.org.*

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 (<http://educationusa.state.gov/>) 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.