History

The Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program was established by Congress in October, 2002 in response to the events of September 11, 2001. The program is funded through the U.S. Department of State and sponsored by the Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs (ECA) to provide scholarships for high school students from countries with significant Muslim populations to spend up to one academic year in the U.S. Students live with host families, attend high school, engage in activities to learn about American society and values, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures.

Ayusa became a founding placement organization partner in 2003 for the YES Program, and has continued to provide a high-caliber program to YES students over the last 11 years. From 2003 to the present, over 5,000 students have participated in the YES Program. Ayusa has helped place over 1,000 of those YES students.

Program Goals

The goal of the YES program is to engage participating youth, their schools, and community leaders in an exchange effort to facilitate understanding and tolerance between different cultures. The YES program encourages the exchange of ideas, values, and experiences among young people by exposing these young scholars to new opportunities and ideas. They are also exposed to principles of democracy, free market economy, civil society, and community service to provide a well-rounded view of U.S. culture and values.

Program Components

Ayusa is among several partners that all work to recruit and place fantastic YES students. Ayusa and the YES program also proudly provide students with disabilities exchange opportunities.

Students are provided with enrichment activities such as the Arrival Orientation, Re-Entry Orientation, community service, civics education, and diversity training. Ayusa also closely monitors and evaluates YES students to ensure an enriching experience for both student and host family.

Active YES Countries

Albania | Bahrain | Bangladesh | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Cameroon | Egypt | Gaza | Ghana | India | Indonesia | Israel (Arab Communities) | Jordan | Kenya | Kosovo | Kuwait | Lebanon | Liberia | Malaysia | Mali | Morocco | Mozambique | Nigeria | Pakistan | Philippines | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | Senegal | Sierra Leone | South Africa | Suriname | Tanzania | Thailand | Tunisia | Turkey | West Bank | Yemen