



Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF)

2010 International Youth Leadership and Interfaith Conference Better Understanding for a Better World

April 21-25, 2010
Baltimore, Maryland



What: 2010 Better Understanding for a Better World Conference
When: April 21-25, 2010
Where: The Westin Baltimore Washington Airport Hotel (*tbc*)
Who: Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF) www.cecf-net.org

Co-Sponsor:

- Muslim Community Center www.mccmd.org

Participating Institutions:

- American Visionary Art Museum www.avam.org
- Muslim Community Center www.mccmd.org
- Saints Philip and James Catholic Church <http://www.geocities.com/stspanjd/>
- Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah Hebrew Congregation <http://www.synagoguecenter.org/> (*tbc*)
- United States Institute of Peace www.usip.org (*tbc*)

CECF has been conducting annual youth leadership and interfaith conferences in Baltimore, MD & Orlando, FL since 2006 for American high school students and international exchange students studying in the U.S. under the auspices of the Department of State's exchange programs.

Overview:

Youth are the hope of each nation, and the future of the world's civilization is soon to rest in their hands. The most pressing issue they face today is how to view the "Other." The threat of terrorism has brought with it a lot of fear, prejudice, hatred and suspicion of the "Other", which we aim to transcend.

Participants and Selection:

American high school students will be required to have a letter of recommendation from one of their teachers. International exchange students are selected by their host organizations and represent the following programs sponsored by the Department of State: Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), Youth Exchange and Study (YES), Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX), American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) and others.

Conference Mission:

- Facilitate mutual understanding and appreciation between students from diverse regional, economic, social, religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- Learn about and discuss the practice of religion and faith in a pluralistic society with the objective of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, and an awareness of common values.
- Introduce various aspects of leadership, including those involving business and entrepreneurship.
- Forge ties of friendship between American high school students and students from around the world.

While the focus of the conference is principally on Judaism, Christianity and Islam, participation is open to all faiths, as well as those who may not be active in a particular faith tradition.

Follow up after the Conference:

Students will be encouraged to maintain contact with each other and make a presentation in their schools or communities on the issues discussed during the conference.

Brief Conference Outline:

- **Wednesday, April 21 (Arrival, Ice Breaking Games and Orientation)**
 - Arrival - Students should plan to arrive between 3:00 – 6:00 PM.
 - 1. Pizza Social
 - 2. Ice Breaking Activities
 - 3. Orientation

 - **Thursday, April 22 (Diversity & Cultural Understanding at the American Visionary Art Museum)**
 - 1. Main address “**The World Today: The Family of Adam and Eve,**” elaborating on the need for “**Crossing the Divide.**” Discussion on the importance of developing an atmosphere of belonging, as well as cultural understanding and sensitivity, which leads to success on a variety of levels including personal, leadership, social, educational, and business to mention a few
 - 2. Presentation by Baltimore City Police Department’s Community Relations Officer
 - 3. Student Presentations
 - 4. Interactive Discussion about “**The Reality of Our World Today: How Ignorance and Stereotypes Cause Conflict and Failure**”
 - 5. Breakout sessions, group discussions identifying problems facing the youth of today and ideas /activities for better cooperation on a personal, local and global level
 - 6. Tour of the exhibit at the **American Visionary Art Museum** by the **Director, Rebecca Alban Hoffberger** www.avam.org

 - **Friday, April 23 (Interfaith and Panel Discussion)**
 - 1. Visits to a church in Baltimore, **Saints Philip and James Catholic Church**, a synagogue in Baltimore, **Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah Hebrew Congregation**, and a mosque in Silver Spring, **Muslim Community Center**. Students will gain first-hand experience of the similarities and differences within the house of Abraham
 - 2. Panel discussion (main hall of MCC)
 - 3. Dinner at Shaheen Restaurant
 - 4. Group recreational time at the Inner Harbor, including “**Riding the Ducks**” tour of Baltimore.
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- **Saturday, April 24 (Leadership – Becoming a “Global Citizen”)**
 1. Workshop conducted by the **United States Institute of Peace - Building Cross-Cultural Interaction Skills** (*tbc*)
 2. **Leadership Characteristics “Identify Yours”**
 3. Visit to the **National Aquarium in Baltimore & Dolphin Show** www.aqua.org
 4. Banquet and Certificates Ceremony. Keynote Speaker will focus on **“The Potential for Youth in a Globalized World.”** Local government representatives, religious leaders and community activists may attend.

- **Sunday, April 25 (Wrap Up & Departure)**
 1. Farewell Discussion on **“How Can the Youth of Today Move Into Positions of Leadership?”**
This also includes reflections and reactions to the entire program.
Departure - Students should try to schedule their departing flights between 11:30 am – 2:00 PM.

Conference price of \$500.00 includes:

- Registration
- Lodging at the *The Westin Baltimore Washington Airport Hotel* – 4 nights
- 3 meals daily
- **Banquet on Saturday, April 24th**
- Admission to the American Visionary Art Museum
- Ride the Ducks Baltimore Tour
- Admission to the National Aquarium and Dolphin Show
- Ground transportation throughout the conference, including transportation from BWI Airport to the hotel on Wednesday (4/21) and back to the BWI Airport on Sunday (4/25)

For more information or to register, please contact us:

cecf1@aol.com

410-944-6077