



Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF)

2011 Better Understanding for a Better World

April 6 - 10, 2011

Baltimore, Maryland

Co-Sponsor: Muslim Community Center



- What:** 2011 Better Understanding for a Better World Conference
When: April 6 - 10, 2011
Where: The Sheraton Baltimore Washington Airport Hotel
Who: CECF (<http://www.cecf-net.org/>) and the following participating institutions:
- Muslim Community Center
 - Cathedral of the Incarnation
 - Oseh Shalom (*tbc*)

CECF is offering its fourth annual conference in Baltimore, MD to American high school students and ECA grant 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.

Better Understanding for a Better World began in 2006 with an annual conference in Orlando, FL. In 2008, CECF expanded this unique opportunity and included an annual conference in Baltimore, MD. After two more thriving years of BUBW Conferences in both Orlando and Baltimore, CECF expanded once more to include an annual BUBW Conference in San Diego, CA in 2010. These conferences were developed to bring together American high school students of diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds with international exchange students currently studying in the U.S. They have been tremendously successful and each year the students benefit in ways that are truly impressive.

Conference Mission:

- Facilitate mutual understanding and appreciation between students from diverse regional, economic, social, religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Discuss stereotypes about the "other" and their impact
- 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.

Participants and Selection:

American and International high school students are expected to attend. International exchange students will 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. Exchange students will be nominated by their exchange organizations and American students will be nominated by a staff member of their respective high schools or community /youth group leader.

Brief Conference Outline:

Wednesday, April 6: (Arrival, Pizza Social, Ice Breaking Games and Orientation)

- **Arrival - Students are requested to arrive between 3:00 – 6:00 PM.**

Thursday, April 7: (Diversity & Cultural Understanding)

- Main address and Interactive Discussion about **“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, sensitivity and respect, which leads to success on a variety of levels including personal, leadership, social, educational, and business to mention a few
- Breakout sessions, group discussions identifying problems facing the youth of today and ideas /activities for better cooperation on a personal, local and global level
- Student Country Presentations, by students who represent various continents and share an informative short power point presentation
- Dinner and Group recreational time

Friday, April 8: (Interfaith Visits and Panel Discussion)

- Visits to a church, synagogue, and mosque. Students will gain first-hand experience of the similarities and differences within the house of Abraham
- Panel discussion

Saturday, April 9: (Team Building and Leadership – Becoming a “Global Citizen”)

- **Team Building Workshop & Obstacle Course** (tbc)
- Banquet and Certificates Ceremony. Keynote Speaker will focus on **“How Can the Youth of Today Move into Positions of Leadership?”**

Sunday, April 10: (Wrap Up & Departure)

- **Departure - Students are requested to schedule their departing flights between 10:30 am – 2:00 PM.**

Conference price of \$525.00 includes:

- Registration/Participation in Conference
- Lodging at the **Sheraton Baltimore Washington Airport Hotel** – 4 nights
- 3 meals daily
- Conference Session at the **Sheraton BWI Hotel** on April 5th
- Admission to the **Team Building Workshop & Obstacle Course** on April 9th (tbc)
- **Banquet and Certificates Ceremony** on Saturday, April 9th
- Ground transportation throughout the conference, including transportation from the **BWI Airport** to the hotel on Wednesday (4/6) and back to the **BWI Airport** on Sunday (4/10)

For more information or to register, please contact us @ cecf1@aol.com or call 410-944-6077