



Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF)

2015 Better Understanding for a Better World

February 11-15, 2015

Orlando, Florida

Co-Sponsor: Al Bir Islamic Association



- What:** 2015 Better Understanding for a Better World
When: February 11 - 15, 2015
Where: The Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida
Who: CECF (<http://cecf-net.org/>) and the following participating institutions:
- Al Bir Islamic Association (<http://www.albircenter.org/>)
 - Congregation Ohev Shalom (<http://www.ohevshalom.org/>)
 - Northland, A Church Distributed (<http://www.northlandchurch.net/>)

CECF is offering its 22nd annual conference in Orlando, FL to American high school students and ECA grant exchange students studying in the U.S. under the auspices of the State Department's exchange programs. Additionally, we would like to give a special welcome to private students coming from Surabaya and other cities in Indonesia.

Overview:

Better Understanding for a Better World (BUBW) 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 give American high school students and international exchange students currently studying in the U.S. the opportunity to meet students of diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds. They have been tremendously successful each year and the students benefit in ways that are truly impressive.

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", people who are different from you. CECF aims to transcend the fear of the "other" through multicultural and interfaith dialogue and mutual respect and understanding.

Conference Vision / Mission / Objectives:

- 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 students of all faiths, as well as those who may not be active in any particular faith tradition.

Follow up after the Conference:

Students will be encouraged to maintain contact with each other and make a presentation at their schools or at their community centers on the issues discussed throughout the conference.

American and Exchange Student Participants and Selection:

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

Indonesian Student Participation

In 2015, CECF looks forward to welcoming students from various schools in Indonesia. These students will be selected by their schools based on their academic achievements and ability to engage in dialogue and discussion in English.

Brief Conference Outline:

Wednesday, February 11: (Arrival, Dinner Social, Ice Breaking Games and Orientation)

- **Students should plan to arrive between 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm.**

Thursday, February 12: (Diversity & Cultural Understanding and Leadership)

- 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
- Workshop on “**Leadership and the Importance of Youth Involvement**”
- **Millennium Cultures**, an experiential program conducted by Walt Disney World Resort staff: Discover, explore, and learn to recognize how various aspects of culture are impacted by changes in technology, commerce, communication, and people
- **Recreational Break** in Disney’s Epcot Theme Park
- **Breakout sessions and group discussions** identifying problems facing the youth of today and ideas /activities for better cooperation on a personal, local and global level

Friday, February 13: (Interfaith Visits and Panel Discussion)

- **Visit local places of worship** like a mosque, synagogue, and church. Students will experience firsthand similarities and differences within the house of Abraham.
- The visits will be followed by a **panel discussion with the religious leaders** involved in the day’s program.
- **Evening recreational time** in one of Disney’s Theme Parks

Saturday, February 14: (Rejoicing as One)

- **Free-time** in one of Disney’s Theme Parks
- **Banquet, Student Presentations and Certificate Ceremony** in the evening with a focus on “**The American Experience: Learning about Each Other and Respecting Our Cultural Differences.**”

Sunday, February 15: (Wrap Up & Departure)

- **Students should try to schedule their departing flights between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.**

Conference Price includes:

- Registration/Participation in Conference
- Lodging at a **Walt Disney World All Star Movie Resort** – 4 nights
<http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/wdw/resorts/resortLanding?id=AllStarSportsResortLandingPage>
- 3 meals daily
- Admission to **The Walt Disney World Theme Parks** - <http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/>
- Participation in the **Walt Disney World Youth Education Series Program, Millennium Cultures** on 2/12 - www.YouthEducationSeries.com
- **Interfaith Program** participation on Friday, 2/13
- **Banquet & Certificates Ceremony** on Saturday, 2/14
- Transportation during the program, including from the **Orlando International Airport (MCO)** on Wednesday (2/11) to the hotel and back to the **Orlando International Airport (MCO)** on Sunday (2/15)

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