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Peace Scholarships Program Fact Sheet

The **Peace Scholarships Program** is intended to help foster a new generation of leaders in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region by developing leadership, US linkages, and academic excellence. The goal of this Program is to reach out to the youth of Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen to provide up to 68 promising students with one year of undergraduate training in the United States and leadership training, regional networking and other skill-building opportunities. The **Peace Scholarships Program**, funded by the United States Agency for International Development, will develop skills in leaders of the future who have the potential to contribute to the social and economic development of the Middle East and North Africa. Another goal of the program is to strengthen connections between citizens of the Middle East and North Africa, and the people of the United States. In 2008-09, the first year of programming, 21 students were placed in the US at five US colleges and universities. In 2009-10, 26 more were given the opportunity to study at five US colleges and universities.

The **Peace Scholarships Program** provides scholarships for one academic year of full-time, undergraduate, non-degree study in the United States. Participants in the Program are enrolled in full-time course work chosen from existing curricula at US institutions to allow them to interact with American faculty and student peers. Students are placed in clusters of four to six students per school. Leadership development training and community service/internship opportunities are provided to help build skills, understand US values, and to enable students to develop innovative approaches and solutions to meet the needs of their communities when they return home. The Experience America component of the program provides a view into American society and culture and is provided throughout their time in the US.

In addition to the activities they partake in at their host institutions, participants meet together as a group several times:

- In July, they participate in a month-long Pre-departure Orientation program in Cairo, Egypt to orient them and prepare them for their new academic and living environments. The Pre-Departure Program includes intensive English language training, leadership development and cultural orientation to the US;
- In December during the Leadership Institute, they receive project development and leadership training during their winter break in Denver;
- Prior to departing for their home countries, they participate in a Re-entry Workshop in Washington, DC where they prepare for their return home, examine more regional networking opportunities, and celebrate their achievements during a certificate ceremony in their honor.
- After they return home, the program continues with an Alumni Reunion in the region and funding opportunities to support their professional development and expand their regional network.

The **Peace Scholarships Program** covers travel, tuition, room and board, health insurance, a monthly stipend, and funding for books. Participants also have access to funding to join professional societies and obtain grants. Living in university housing, they have the opportunity to participate in campus organizations and activities. All participants will be issued US student exchange (J-1) visas by USAID for the Program and be expected to return to their home countries upon completion.

The **Peace Scholarships Program** is open to all academic fields of study. Competition for the Program is merit-based and finalists are selected on the basis of academic excellence, leadership potential, knowledge of English, and their preparedness for study in the United States.

USAID's Office of Middle East Programs in Cairo, Egypt, administers the **Peace Scholarships Program** in partnership with World Learning and the Institute of International Education.