



## Educational Exchanges

Bosnia and Herzegovina - USA

Youth Leadership Program

for Students and Teachers

**A program of the U.S. Department of State and the Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Sarajevo**

**Administered in the United States by Willamette University, Salem, Oregon**

Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Secondary school students and teachers from **Banja Luka, Bihac, and Siroki Brijeg** are invited to apply for participation in the eleventh Youth Leadership Program for Bosnia and Herzegovina, with an integrated Teacher Professional Development Program. Students and teachers will participate in the Civic Leadership Institute, a highly interactive set of courses taught by Willamette University professors. Through engagement in the activities of U.S. high schools, local NGOs, and the Oregon state courts, students and teachers will better understand civic participation and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a diverse democracy. Throughout the program students will learn debate as a tool for advocacy and leadership.

This is a six-month program with 3 distinctive training segments: A pre-departure orientation in Sarajevo, a four-week program that will offer 18 students and 3 teachers the opportunity to explore the principles of leadership and community activism in the United States, and a four-month period during which participants conduct a project in their hometowns. The program will be intensive, academic, and highly interactive. **The program sponsors seek energetic applicants who are ready to develop their skills in order to be effective leaders in their schools and communities. Students and teachers will be expected to participate in all aspects of the program and implement follow-on projects in their hometowns.**

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The goals of this program are to enhance the understanding of democratic processes and human rights, build understanding between fellow participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, empower youth to have a voice in the debates shaping the future of their communities, and to provide the skills and contacts for youth to conduct projects in their own cities.

**PHASE I: Pre-Departure Orientation:** The Office of Public Affairs of the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo and Project Coordinator Elizabeth Garland from Willamette University will conduct a pre-departure orientation for students and educators about one month before their departure for the United States. Topics addressed during the orientation include an explanation of the goals of the program and the expectations and responsibilities of educators and students, information about the program activities, American culture and customs, the U.S. system of government, economic structure, society, the media, concepts of civil society, public and community service, and information on the logistical arrangements.

**PHASE II: U.S.-Based Program:** On the campus of Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, students and teachers explore what it means to be an active citizen in a democracy through debate and academics as well as extracurricular activities. Participants then embark on a cultural trip to Washington, DC. Program activities include:

Civic Leadership Institute at Willamette University

A series of courses taught by Willamette University faculty. Topics include:

- Exploring democracy and civic engagement
- Case studies in civic engagement
- Debate in a democratic society

In addition to the courses listed above, teachers will participate in professional development sessions. The Institute will culminate in a public speech and debate festival.

Hands-on cultural enrichment activities in Oregon

- Home stays with local families
- Outings in Salem, Portland, and other parts of Oregon to sites with cultural, historic, and/or natural importance

- Visits to local high school classes on government, history, social studies, and other relevant topics
- Community service project with a local NGO
- Extra-curricular activities with U.S. peers

Educational and cultural visit to Washington, DC

- Visits with area high school students
- Tours of monuments, centers of government, museums, and other sites of cultural interest

**PHASE III:** Follow-on projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Participants return to Bosnia and Herzegovina with plans to apply the knowledge gained from the program directly to their communities. While the students were in the United States, the Youth Leadership Program emphasized the importance of initiating community-based projects and introduced them to the follow-on project guidelines and opportunities. Participants will work with at least one of their peers to develop and implement a community service project. The Youth Leadership Program Staff from Willamette University will stay in frequent contact with the students and teachers to offer assistance with training experiences, difficulties, and questions about their projects. Finally, two Youth Leadership Program staff members will return to Bosnia and Herzegovina for follow-on consultations with the participants to focus on lessons learned, discuss the projects, view the progress participants have made, and offer any insight and advice that may be helpful. The staff members from Willamette University will travel to each of the cities of Bihac, Siroki Brijeg, and Banja Luka, meeting with all of the participants and visiting their schools.

### **What else do I need to know?**

The United States Government, in conjunction with its private partners, will pay for ground transportation to and from Sarajevo, international transportation to and from the United States, orientations, program fees and administration, site visits and seminars, lodging and meals, some cultural activities, educational materials, accident and sickness insurance, and a modest amount of pocket money. Participants will stay with volunteer host families. Participants are responsible for expenses related to the application process (copying, mailing, photographs, etc.), passport fees, and spending money for souvenirs, telephone calls, and other personal items in the United States.

Participants will travel to the United States on J-1 exchange visitor visas provided through this program. By accepting this visa, participants will be subject to a two-year home residency requirement, meaning they must

return to and live in Bosnia-Herzegovina for a total of two years before they would be eligible for an immigrant or temporary worker U.S. visa. This does not restrict other types of visas, however, so this would not prevent you from being able to apply for a student visa to attend university, for example.

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

Student applicants must:

- Be at least 15 years old and not more than 18 years old by April 1, 2010
- Have a high school graduation year of 2011 or later
- Possess good English skills
- Obtain permission from both parents and school to participate in the entire U.S. program

Adult applicants must:

- Be active in working with youth in either a high school or community setting
- Be willing and able to meet periodically with selected students from all schools in their city during the academic year 2009-2010 to support their follow-up work
- Possess good English skills

### **What are the criteria for selection?**

Students will be evaluated on the following characteristics:

- A demonstrated interest in and commitment to volunteer and participate in civic activities
- Leadership potential
- Good social and communication skills
- Good academic performance
- Proficiency in English
- The desire and ability to implement projects that benefit the applicant's school and community

Adult applicants will be evaluated on the following factors:

- Demonstrated history of supporting youth activities
- Strong record in teaching and/or youth programs

- Demonstrated leadership
- Proficiency in English
- Commitment to working with youth after the project to help them implement projects

### **How do I apply?**

Complete an application form and submit it to the Office of Public Affairs of the American Embassy in Sarajevo by November 27, 2009. Take special care in answering the essay questions.

### **JUST FOR TEACHERS:**

- **Adults: either two letters of recommendation from senior teachers or school officials or one from a senior teacher or school official and one from a community leader who knows your experience in working with teenagers.**

The Office of Public Affairs will contact the applicants selected for interviews based on the criteria above, as demonstrated in the application. Individual and small group interviews will take place in each of the participating cities in December 2009, January and February 2010.

The list of 21 finalists will be announced on or about February 15, 2010.

### **And after that...?**

The selected participants will receive orientation materials in the weeks prior to the start of the program to help prepare them for the Program and their trip to the United States.

The project coordinator from Willamette University, Elizabeth Garland, will be visiting Bosnia-Herzegovina in March 2010 to begin Phase 1: A pre-departure orientation and training sessions with both students and teachers as the beginning of this Leadership program. Participants and their families will have an opportunity to meet her and discuss the project.

On March 26, 2010, participants will travel to the United States for Phase 2, and will return on April 25, 2010.

After their return to BiH and through the summer, participants will be responsible for completing Phase 3 of the program: Conducting a leadership project in their communities. Staff of Willamette University and the U.S. Embassy will present certificates to the participants upon the completion of their projects.

Thank you for your interest in the program and good luck with your applications!