



**IIE WEST COAST CENTER**  
**and the SAN FRANCISCO CONSULAR CORPS**

Spring Newsletter 2008

**Educational exchange** is one of the most **powerful** tools to promote understanding and respect among nations. When you support **IIE** you give present and future generations around the **world** the opportunity to learn about each other's culture, social and economic systems; you enable students, scholars and professionals to **study, teach and conduct research outside their own country**; and most importantly you make your own personal contribution to building goodwill and to making friends for the United States. **The San Francisco Consular Corps and IIE West Coast** have developed a special and mutually rewarding relationship because they are linked by a **common goal**: to share what is known by one part of the human family with another and to **make this world a safer place**.

**Thank you to all the past and current San Francisco Consul Generals and Honorary Consul Generals who have been such important and generous supporters of IIE West Coast Center.**

## A letter from Abderahman Salaheldin - CG of Egypt

### **Ambassador Abderahman Salaheldin - Consul General of Egypt and Dean of the Consular Corps - Working Together: IIE West Coast Center and the San Francisco Consular Corps.**

My first introduction to IIE in California was through a kind invitation from its director Karin Eisele for me to speak with board members, trustees, and staff about my country. I also listened to what they do to promote closer educational relations between the people of the United States and those of other countries. Many of my colleagues, the consul generals and honorary consuls representing more than seventy countries in San Francisco, have received similar invitations. We all turned into strong supporters and active advocates of IIE.

We have come to appreciate how IIE not only administers the well known Fulbright International educational exchange program, but also runs more than 200 other education or exchange programs sponsored by US government agencies and other organizations, corporations and foundations. More than 18,000 men and women from 175 nations participate in IIE programs each year. When in San Francisco, they would be connected to their respective consular missions by IIE's very able and energetic liaison with the consular corps, Ms. Grazia Bennett.

Many of my colleagues and I were offered the chance to co-host events with IIE about several aspects of its educational programs in our countries. Others have helped connecting IIE to appropriate partners back home in order to start programs helping to educate the future generations. We all made good use of IIE "**Open Doors**" report, a unique source that identifies emerging trends in international academic mobility through collecting and analyzing data about the changes in flows of international students to the US and American students abroad.

IIE also helps US policy makers address the factors affecting foreign students in the United States and American students studying abroad. Recently, Dr. Allan E. Goodman, IIE President and CEO, testified in front of the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Research and Science Education about "Status of Visas and Other Policies for Foreign Students and Scholars in the United States".

IIE works with 900 US colleges and universities to sustain and expand the flows of talented international students who continue to see America as the destination of choice for their overseas training. IIE also strives to expand opportunities for Americans to study in other countries to gain international perspectives and global experience. I am especially interested in IIE programs to help fund US students learning Arabic and about Islam through studying in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Many Egyptian universities are running resourceful educational programs intended for foreign students to teach them about our language, culture and history.

I can not think of a better tool to promote peace among nations in the future other than international educational exchanges. IIE is a US educational and cultural exchange landmark that should receive our unanimous support and gratitude.

### **Interview with Honorable Schuette - CG of Germany**

#### **A Conversation with Rolf E. Schuette, Consul General of Germany about the Importance of International Education:**

Rolf E. Schuette studied German and Russian Philology and Political Science at Goettingen University/Germany, Ohio University/USA and the Bologna Center of Johns Hopkins University in Italy. He joined the German Foreign Service in 1981 and served in different functions in the Foreign office in Bonn and Berlin as well as in the German Embassies in Moscow, Tel Aviv, Rome and in the German Mission to the UN in New York. He spent a sabbatical year as a Visiting Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, the American Jewish Committee in New York and the Institute of International Studies in Berkeley. He has shared his insights with Grazia Bennett, IIE Development Director, about the importance of international education.

**At age 22 you came to the USA as a Fulbright student. How did that experience impact your life?**

I would most likely not be sitting in front of you now because that first year in the US helped me a lot to enter the Foreign Service. I knew very little about American universities then. But I knew that I wanted to go to one of the American cosmopolitan cities. When my advisor told me that I was going to spend my year as a Fulbright student at Ohio University I felt miserable at first. But I discovered that not only is it a good university, but also it gave me the opportunity to see a very real and important part of America. And I began to love this country.

**The German government has always been an active supporter of international education and student exchange. There are a great many German students studying abroad. What are the reasons?**

American students often look at studying abroad as a vacation. It is considered a luxury with little value because it supposedly does not have tangible benefits. I think that to be exposed to a foreign culture is always a good investment. It's the experience that counts, not the credits you earn. America is a very large country and thus a more inward-looking society. Europeans, and Germans in particular, are forced to be more international, not least for geographical and economic reasons. The German economy was globalized before the word "globalization" even hit the international scene. Furthermore, after WW II. it was important for Germany to interact with democracies around the world after the years of a "closed society" during the Nazi period.

**Which changes do you see in international education with the emergence of economic powers like China and India?**

The emergence of economic powers like China and India is a fact. However, Europe is still the by far most important trade and investment partner for the USA. I am afraid that resources for the promotion

of international education will be guided too much by the hype surrounding the new emerging economies and not by this reality. This may create an imbalance.

**Please share a word of advice with American students based on your life experience.**

Go abroad as an investment in your whole life. Do not be too concerned by fear of wasting time by delaying the beginning of your work life. Financial constraints may not be so insurmountable either when you look at all the scholarships available, like the ones offered by the DAAD, the German Academic Exchange Service, which sometimes go unclaimed. Also consider the fact that in a country like Germany there is virtually no tuition. Living and studying abroad allows you to look at yourself with more objectivity. The USA is the most important and influential power in the world, but a good understanding of different economic, social, cultural, political systems may be beneficial for anyone who wants to avoid costly miscalculations.

Abderahman Salahedin, CG of Egypt and Are-Jostein Norheim, CG of Norway

