



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **INTEREST IN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE REMAINS HIGH**

***Report shows over 30,000 high school students study abroad during the 2008-2009 academic year***

**ALEXANDRIA, VA – April 2, 2009** The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) reports that during the 2008-2009 school year nearly 28,000 international students came to the U.S. as exchange students. Additionally, over 2,000 U.S. students are spending a semester or year abroad.

Each year CSIET evaluates U.S. based youth exchange programs and produces an annual statistical report that tallies student exchanges activities for the year. The information is broken down by country for “inbound” foreign exchange students that are visiting from abroad and by which U.S. state “outbound” American teens call home. The data also provides state-by-state breakdowns of hosting numbers.

“Our member youth exchange organizations provide statistics that help gauge the interest levels of U.S. families and schools by region to host exchange students,” said John Hishmeh, executive director of CSIET. “The report also allows us to determine which countries are growing in terms of sending students to the United States.”

CSIET collects student numbers from exchange organizations voluntarily applying for listing in CSIET’s *Advisory List*, a compilation of international youth exchange programs that meet CSIET’s national standards for quality.

The 2008-2009 statistical report shows that the Midwest leads the nation in hosting inbound students, accounting for almost 40% of the national total. Along with the placement totals, the report provides rankings based on hosting totals per capita. Although Texas hosted the largest number of exchange students this year, South Dakota was the #1 hosting state per capita, followed closely by Montana.

“The data is encouraging. Americans should be proud that our youth are still actively interested in global learning,” said Hishmeh. “Despite our country’s current challenges, the U.S. remains top-of-mind for foreign exchange students looking for a meaningful educational experience.”

To read the complete report and learn more about CSIET, visit [www.csiet.org](http://www.csiet.org). If you are interested in hosting an exchange student or studying abroad, visit [www.hoststudents.org](http://www.hoststudents.org)

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*About CSIET: The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is a not-for-profit organization committed to quality international educational travel and exchange for youth at the high school level. The purpose of CSIET is to identify reputable international youth exchange programs, to provide leadership and support to the exchange and educational communities so that youth are provided with meaningful and safe international exchange experiences, and to promote the importance and educational value of international youth exchange.*