

**CSIET ANNUAL REPORT**  
**Council on Standards for International Educational Travel**  
**July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008**

**PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is a non-profit organization which establishes standards for international educational youth exchange programs, evaluates and monitors those programs that apply to CSIET, and annually publishes the *Advisory List of International Educational Travel & Exchange Programs* which provides information on those programs that are deemed to be in compliance with the CSIET standards. The *Advisory List* is annually distributed by CSIET to all U.S. high schools as a service to principals and school administrators. In addition to identifying reputable exchange programs through its evaluation and monitoring processes, CSIET promotes and advocates for the educational value and importance of international exchange for young people.

**EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMS**

In response to increased compliance oversight and regulatory enforcement activity by the U.S. Department of State (DOS), the CSIET Board voted in March of 2007 to restructure the CSIET review process. Specifically, the Board voted to officially accept the compliance audit process in lieu of the former CSIET application for listing process beginning with the 2007-08 interim listing cycle. During this transition, the audit results served as the basis of listing until a final review process was confirmed. Additionally, CSIET will no longer be evaluating and listing short-term (less than an academic semester) programs.

At the Spring 2008 meeting, the Board of Directors created an Audit Review Subcommittee to review the most-recently completed round of audits and to make recommendations for a new review system. The subcommittee was comprised of exchange program representatives and educators (including the past two CSIET Evaluation Committee Chairs).

Upon review of the subcommittee recommendations, the Board of Directors announced the new 2008-09 CSIET audit and evaluation process in the summer of 2008. The new evaluation program will utilize a comprehensive compliance audit conducted by independent certified public accountants. This procedure will involve on-site file testing of randomly selected student files. Additionally, auditors will review all relevant program materials and procedures.

With the new review process beginning in the 2008-09 cycle, CSIET's intent is to take advantage of the more thorough types of information made available by an audit-style evaluation while retaining some of the methodology employed in former evaluation cycles. CSIET staff will conduct the initial review and data compilation process to tabulate all audit results and accompanying documents to determine which audits fall below the statistical thresholds for full listing. Additionally, the review process will incorporate the "step-ladder" approach to evaluation utilized by CSIET in the past and clearly provide all criteria which must be met for listing.

CSIET will maintain much of the former appeals process by assembling an Accreditation Committee for further review and a Due Process Review Committee to conduct appeals and grant hearings for organizations whose audits fall below the statistical thresholds for full listing. The intent of this new system is to conduct a fair and transparent listing process.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF CSIET'S *ADVISORY LIST***

CSIET distributed the *2008-2009 Advisory List* to all U.S. public and private high schools towards the end of the fiscal year. Numerous sales of the *Advisory List* were made through the CSIET office and the CSIET website. CSIET received endorsements for its mission and activities from the National Federation of State High School Associations, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the American Association of School Administrators, the International Studies School Association, the National Council on the Social Studies, and the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages.

The CSIET Board of Directors chose a winning design for the cover of the *2008-2009 Advisory List* from the entries of over 150 exchange students. The panel selected a design by Ainur Derkembraeva, a Kyrgyzstani exchange student on the Future Leaders Exchange Program (FLEX) funded by the U.S. Department of State and placed by PAX: Program of Academic Exchange.

## **GRANT SUPPORT AND SPECIAL PROJECTS**

CSIET was the recipient of a generous grant of \$10,000 from the National Federation of State High School Associations. The grant was applied to the publication and distribution of the *Advisory List* to U.S. high schools. The continuation of this grant support over the years is reflective of the strong relationship that endures between the Federation and CSIET.

### **CSIET Annual Fund**

To help meet the rising costs of the annual evaluation of high school exchange programs and several new and exciting initiatives, an annual fund drive was conducted which raised over \$5,000 in unrestricted donations. All contributors, including individual Board members, were thanked for their support of CSIET's mission and activities.

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> CSIET Annual Meeting in Alexandria, Virginia was the largest meeting to date. Many CSIET members commented on the value of the information presented by the diverse range of speakers. Board Chair John Lewis officially opened the conference with the gathering of the Membership Council on Friday, October 24, 2007, at which time reports were made and new Board members were elected.

With over 185 participants, the meeting attracted the highest attendance in recent years. Annual Meeting revenue was up \$20,000 over the previous year's total. With 15 exhibitors and an increase in the number of individual sponsorships, this meeting was one the most profitable meetings conducted by CSIET.

The meeting was very well received by membership, with particular praise for sessions on CSIET's Compliance Audit Process and outreach efforts. The luncheon keynote address was delivered by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Alina Romanowski. The closing keynote address by Ruth Fitts from Meridian International provided an inspiring message on how to bring the world into American classrooms. Additional presenters included representatives from the U.S. Department of State's J-Visa Office; youth exchange participants on the YES program, and the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange.

## **ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT**

CSIET annually collects student numbers from youth exchange organizations applying for listing in the *Advisory List*. The 2007/08 Annual Statistics Report was completed in January and published on the CSIET website. The report provides a comprehensive data collection based on the student placement numbers provided in the applications received on November 21, 2007. This year, the report includes U.S. State and individual country rankings, graphs, and multi-year comparisons based on data collected in the past five program cycles. The annual CSIET Statistical Report has become widely accepted and used as *the* resource for youth exchange programming numbers for high school student exchange with the United States.

## SCHOOL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

### **CSIET Global Classroom Awards**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Global Classroom Awards (GCA) program was launched in 2007 with a purpose of recognizing schools that actively support international youth exchange. For the first cycle, 91 nominations were received. From these, three winning schools were chosen: C.D. Hylton High School (VA), The Metropolitan Learning Center (CT), and Skaneateles High School (NY). The awards were presented by John Doty during the Friday Luncheon at the National School Conference on International Youth Exchange. These schools showed evidence of their creativity, enthusiasm and dedication in welcoming exchange students while encouraging their local students to study abroad. Each school has created a unique climate of support for exchange students through their desire to promote school-wide feelings of inclusiveness and global curiosity. The winning schools each received a \$500 scholarship for one of their students to study abroad or equivalent funds to be put toward increasing school-wide international awareness. Below you will find excerpts from each of their nominated essays.

#### ***Skaneateles High School- Skaneateles, NY***

*“And there are the thousands of moments that come from living together day-by-day. The countries the students come from become more than far-off places on a map of the world for SHS students: they become places that house the people they love. Thailand is where Deer and Pop live. Venezuela is home to Andres. Italy is home to Alberto. These are friends who sang together in chorus; studied and laughed together in study hall, and held hands together as they jumped into Skaneateles Lake on graduation day.”*

#### ***C.D. Hylton High School- Woodbridge, VA***

*“C.D. Hylton High School, located in Woodbridge, Virginia, offers a specialty program in international studies and languages (CISL) which attracts students from across Prince William County. The goal of Hylton’s CISL program is to foster global awareness for its students and community through a wide variety of academic and co-curricular activities. Each year Hylton’s administration, faculty, parents and students work together to provide a welcoming atmosphere for foreign exchange students and to promote participation in study abroad programs.”*

#### ***Metropolitan Learning Center Interdistrict Magnet School for Global and International Studies- Bloomfield, CT***

*“In addition to virtual global experiences, the MLC prides itself on strong connections with international exchange programs that send students abroad and bring international students to the MLC. As of November 2007, 109 of 681 students at the MLC have participated in international exchange experiences in some way. As a Title One school serving economically disadvantaged students, the MLC actively seeks out grants and relies heavily on other funding sources to provide every student with the opportunity for international travel: a crucial component to the educational experience of all students at the MLC.”*

### **2008 National School Conference on International Youth Exchange**

The Inaugural National School Conference on International Youth Exchange was held in Indianapolis, Indiana. This event was co-sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. With over 150 participants, the attendance surpassed original expectations. Forty percent of the attendees were educators and school personnel. With 13 exhibitors and four sponsors, this meeting was an impressive first-year endeavor.

Sessions and speakers were very well received by attendees, with particular praise for sessions on best practices, national education policy, and athletic eligibility. A video welcome message was prepared by U.S. Senator Richard Lugar. The keynote address from Ambassador Kenton Keith, Dr. Suellen Reed, and presentations by exchange students and host parents were extremely well-received. Additional presenters included representatives from the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Education, the Indiana Department of Education, state and national high school athletic associations, and several high schools and exchange programs.

The conference was promoted by the Indiana Dept. of Education’s media office which generated a mention in the Indianapolis Star newspaper. Also, the Mayor of Indianapolis, Greg Ballard, issued a formal proclamation recognizing the School Conference along with two other conferences going on the same week. He declared that week a, “Citywide celebration of cultures: converging and connecting the worlds of music, social studies and international exchange to benefit students and communities.”

*2009 National School Conference, Hartford, CT* – Planning is underway for the 2009 Conference with the dates set for February 27-28, 2009. CSIET will be co-sponsoring the event with the Connecticut Department of Education and the Capital Region Education Council in Hartford.

### **New On-line School Resource Launched**

CSIET created a new on-line resource for identifying and referencing state and local education policies relative to international youth exchange. The database grid also includes links to state athletic and activities associations' athletic eligibility requirements for exchange students. We expect that this collection of information will serve as a method of state and local comparison as well as a reservoir of ideas for those developing their own policies and legislation. Additionally, this new resource is intended to support youth exchange program efforts in local communities to work more effectively with school counterparts. The column for district and school policies will be growing considerably as more information is gathered from member schools. By collecting these policies in one centralized location, youth exchange program managers will be able to more easily access and reference school enrollment policies for exchange students.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

### **Hosting Capacity Outreach Campaign**

Over the past several years, CSIET and U.S. Department of State officials have been discussing the possibility of funding an outreach campaign to increase U.S. hosting capacities (both with schools and families). CSIET has provided research and position papers along with several outreach plans for their consideration. At the end of the reporting period, the U.S. State Department announced plans to fund CSIET's hosting capacity outreach efforts at \$200,000 starting in September 2008.

### **New CSIET Website**

Working with members of CSIET's Public Outreach Working Group, the CSIET website is being redesigned with an expected re-launch in November, 2008. Through this website redesign, CSIET hopes to educate and engage the general public on the advantages and benefits of hosting international students and sending American students abroad, while also supporting the needs of CSIET members. Additionally, this site will provide clarity to issues related to youth exchange programs, such as standards, safety and the need for host families. The new website will also highlight success stories that demonstrate the positive aspects of exchange. Overall, CSIET hopes to enhance the community's ability to tell the story of youth exchange more effectively.

### **Interactive Hosting Webpage**

In June, CSIET launched a new web resource for schools, students and families interested in youth exchange programs. The CSIET database of youth exchange programs can now be accessed by visiting [www.CSIET.org](http://www.CSIET.org) and clicking the "Let's Get Started" button. This project was coordinated by the CSIET Public Outreach Working Group as a means of promoting international youth exchange. This new resource will encourage more American families and schools to host foreign exchange students and more American high school students to study abroad.

Interested families and volunteers can find programs that work in their U.S. state -- prospective students can review programs based on their country of interest. Schools can find program partners that provide study abroad programs for their students or bring international students to local communities.

In the first two months of operation, 2,149 hits and 5,942 data queries have been counted.

## **INTERNAL OPERATIONS**

### **Budget**

The 2008 fiscal year budget closed with a surplus of over a \$82,000, bringing CSIET reserve funds up to approximately \$170,000.00 (up from \$13,000 five years ago).

Respectfully submitted,



John M. Doty

Chair

Board of Directors

Council on Standards for International Educational Travel