

Note to editors:

Briefing - November 17, 2008 - 9:30 a.m.

National Press Club - Washington DC

Please RSVP

Open Doors 2008: International Students in the United States

Contact:

Deborah Gardner

halstead@halsteadpr.com

212/734-2190

Sharon Witherell

switherell@iie.org

212/984-5380

Data Tables for Open Doors 2008 International Students: Click here >>

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE NOVEMBER 17, 2008

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON U.S. CAMPUSES AT ALL-TIME HIGH

Total foreign student numbers up 7%; New enrollments up 10%

Top three sending countries post double-digit increases

India up 13%, China up 20%, South Korea up 11%

USC is top host university; California is top host state; NYC is top host city;

Business and Management is top field of study

WASHINGTON D.C., November 17, 2008 -- The number of international students at colleges and universities in the United States increased by 7% to a record high of 623,805 in the 2007/08 academic year, according to the *Open Doors* report published annually by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This 2007/08 growth builds on a 3% increase reported for 2006/07, and the total number now exceeds by 6% the previous all-time high of 586,323 reported in 2002/03. Open Doors data show an even stronger increase in the number of "new" international students, those enrolled for the first time at a U.S. college or university in fall 2007. New international student enrollments rose by 10%, following on increases of 10% and 8% for the previous two years.

According to the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Goli Ameri, "In today's competitive international environment, the increase in enrollments noted in this year's Open Doors data demonstrates again that the U.S. remains the premier destination for international students."

“ U.S. higher education is unparalleled in its vitality, quality, and diversity. The U.S. government joins the U.S. higher education community in a commitment to welcome international students to the United States. As someone who graduated from an American university as an international student, I have experienced America's welcome personally and can testify that America's universities not only accept and welcome international students warmly, but transform their lives.”

United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said about education that "its transformative power, making certain that each and every individual can achieve whatever they can and become who they were really meant to be, is what makes for the richness of America." Over the past year, in order to help students in other countries gain access to an American education, the Department of State has expanded support for educational advising around the world at EducationUSA advising centers where international students and their families can obtain information about the broad range of educational opportunities offered by U.S. colleges and universities. In addition, the Department of State has improved outreach efforts in key international markets including China, Vietnam, India, and Brazil, and is supporting after-school English language classes for underserved high school students in many countries to prepare future generations of international students to pursue educational opportunities in the United States.

According to Allan E. Goodman, President and CEO of the Institute of International Education, "The steady increase in the number of international students in the United States reflects actions taken by the U.S. government and many individual colleges and universities to ensure that international students know they are welcome here, and that we appreciate how they contribute to the intellectual and cultural environment on campus and in the wider community. Furthering academic exchange – in both directions – is one of the best investments that we can make to strengthen U.S. higher education and research activities and foster cross-border collaboration on shared global problems such as fighting disease, protecting the environment, and countering terrorism.”

Open Doors 2008 reports increases in foreign student enrollments from eight of the ten leading places of origin, and 16 of the top 20, with double-digit increases from the top three countries. India remains the leading sending place of origin for the seventh consecutive year, increasing by 13% to 94,563, following an increase of 10% the previous year. China was again the second leading sender, showing an increase of 20% for a total of 81,127 students in the United States. Students from third place South Korea increased 11% to 69,124. There was a continued drop in numbers of students from Japan, the fourth leading sender, down by 4% to 33,974, declining for the third consecutive year. Canada, the only non-Asian country in the top five, saw a 3% increase to 29,051 students in the United States. Taiwan dropped from #5 to #6, with a very slight decrease (less than 1%) in the total number of students, to 29,001. The number of students from Mexico, the seventh leading sender, increased by 7% this year, to 14,837.

Consistent with continued investment in scholarships by the Saudi Arabian government through a program launched in 2005, Saudi Arabian student enrollments in the United States jumped 25% to 9,873, bringing Saudi Arabia back into the top 10 (at #9) for the first time since 1982/83. Vietnamese students on U.S. campuses also showed a huge percentage increase this past year, moving from #20 to #13, with an increase of 45% to 8,769 students, on top of a 31% increase the previous year. Also noteworthy is a 15% increase in enrollments from Nepal (#11, with 8,936 students), following a 28% increase the previous year. Students from Indonesia (#16) increased by 5% to 7,692, after declining from a peak of more than 13,000 a decade ago. Nigeria (#20, up 5% to 6,222) replaced Kenya as the only African country in the top 20 leading places of origin, while enrollments from Kenya dropped 8% to 5,838 in 2007/08.

Accounting for 61% of total international student population, Asia remains the region sending the most

students to the United States, with a 10% increase this year. The total number of students from Southeast Asia increased by 11.5%, led by Vietnam's dramatic growth and additional increases from the Philippines (12%) and Singapore (7%). The number of students from East Asia increased by 9.5%, with a 7% increase from Hong Kong and a 13% increase from Mongolia, supplementing the record highs from China and South Korea. Driven by the large increase in students coming from India, the total number of students from South & Central Asia increased by 12%, despite small declines in the number of students from Pakistan (down 1%) and Bangladesh (down 4%). The number of students from Oceania increased 16%, due to strong increases from both Australia (10%) and New Zealand (17%).

Due in large part by the strong increase in students from Saudi Arabia, *Open Doors* reports that enrollments from the Middle East increased by 11% in 2007/08. Significant percentage increases (from a lower base number of students) were also seen from Oman, Iraq, and Qatar. There were declines in the number of students from several countries in the region, including Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, and Yemen.

Enrollment increases were reported by host institutions across the United States with most states reporting increases in international student enrollments in 2007/08, according to *Open Doors 2008*. Colleges and universities in California hosted the largest number of foreign students with 84,800, up 9%, followed by New York with 69,844, up 6%, and Texas with 51,824, up 6%. The New York City metropolitan area continues to be the leading city for international students, with 54,861 enrolled in area schools, up 6%. The Los Angeles metropolitan area is second most popular with 38,825 international students, up 8%.

For the seventh consecutive year, *Open Doors* reports that the University of Southern California hosted the largest number of international students, this year reporting 7,189. New York University moved from third to second place with 6,404 international students, and Columbia University, now in third place, hosted 6,297 international students. Rounding out the top five 2007/08 host institutions are University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (5,933 students) and Purdue University (5,772 students). *Open Doors* reports that 153 U.S. campuses each hosted more than 1,000 students. (For the lists of top host institutions, see www.opendoors.iienetwork.org.)

Business & Management remains the most popular field of study for international students in the United States, increasing 7% and comprising 20% percent of the total, followed by Engineering with an 8% increase and comprising 17% of the total. Agriculture is the field of study showing the largest percentage increase (from a smaller base number), up 20% from the prior year. Also continuing to increase is Intensive English, showing a gain of 15%.

International students contribute over \$15.5 billion to the U.S. economy, through their expenditures on tuition and living expenses. U.S. higher education is one of the country's largest service sector exports, as international students provide revenue to the U.S. economy and individual host states for living expenses, including room and board, books and supplies, transportation, health insurance, support for accompanying family members, and other miscellaneous items. *Open Doors 2008* reports that 62% of all international students receive the majority of their funds from personal and family sources. When other sources of foreign funding are included, such as assistance from their home country governments or universities, 67% of all international students' primary funding comes from sources outside of the United States.

###

Highlights from *Open Doors 2008*:

Note: Extensive data tables are available on IIE's website at www.opendoors.iienetwork.org.

India is the leading place of origin for international students in the United States with 94,563 in 2007/08 (an increase of 13% from the previous year), followed by #2 China (81,127, up 20%) #3 South Korea (69,124, up 11%), #4 Japan (33,974, down 4%), #5 Canada (29,051, up 3%), #6 Taiwan (29,001, down less than 1%), #7 Mexico (14,837, up 7%), #8 Turkey (12,030, up 5%), #9 Saudi Arabia (9,873, up 25%), #10 Thailand (9,004, up 1%), #11 Nepal (8,936, up 15%), #12 Germany (8,907, up 3%), #13 Vietnam (8,769, up 45%), #14 United Kingdom (8,367, down less than 1%), #15 Hong Kong (8,286, up 7%) #16 Indonesia (7,692, up 5%), #17 Brazil (7,578, up 6%), #18 France (7,050, up 5%), #19 Colombia (6,662, down 1%), and #20 Nigeria (6,222, up 5%). (For further details on the trends in recent years from each of these leading places of origin, go to the Open Doors website and click on "Country Sheets").

The top ten most popular fields of study for international students in the United States in 2007/08 were Business and Management (20% of total), Engineering (17%) and Physical and Life Sciences (9%), Social Sciences (9%), Mathematics and Computer Science (8%), Fine & Applied Arts (6%), Health Professions (5%), Intensive English Language (5%), Education (3%), Humanities (3%), and Agriculture (2%). Undeclared majors are excluded from the rankings of top fields of study.

For the seventh year in a row, the University of Southern California is the leading host institution with 7,189 international students. New York University hosts the second highest number of foreign students (6,404). Other campuses in the top 10 are: Columbia University (6,297), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (5,933), Purdue University (5,772), University of Michigan – Ann Arbor (5,748), University of California – Los Angeles (5,557), University of Texas – Austin (5,550), Harvard University (4,948), Boston University (4,789), and University of Pennsylvania (4,610).

California remains the leading host state for international students (84,800, up 9%), followed by New York (69,844, up 6%), Texas (51,824, up 6%), Massachusetts (31,817, up 11%), Illinois (28,804, up 12.5%), Florida (26,739, down 0.5%), Pennsylvania (26,090, up 12.5%), Michigan (22,857, up 8%), Ohio (19,343, up 4%), and Indiana (15,548, up 8%). 17 of the top 20 leading host states experienced increases in total international students, with Washington (21.5%) and Virginia (13%) showing the largest percentage increases. (For breakdowns by state, including leading host institutions and leading fields of study and places of origin for foreign students studying in each state, go to the Open Doors website and click on "State Sheets").

###

The Open Doors report is published by the Institute of International Education, the leading not-for-profit educational and cultural exchange organization in the United States. IIE has conducted an annual statistical survey of the international students in the United States since 1949, and with support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since the early 1970s. The census is based on a survey of approximately 3,000 accredited U.S. institutions. Open Doors also reports on surveys on international scholars at U.S. universities; international students enrolled in pre-academic Intensive English Programs; and on U.S. students studying abroad (since 1985). A full press kit and further details on the Open Doors 2008 surveys and their findings can be accessed on www.opendoors.iienetwork.org, and the full 104 page report can be ordered for \$59.95 from IIE Books at www.iiebooks.org.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State manages a wide range of academic, professional, and cultural exchanges that include approximately 40,000 participants annually, with the goal of increasing mutual understanding and respect between the people of the United

States and the people of other countries. ECA manages the EducationUSA network of advising offices (<http://educationusa.state.gov/>) for students around the world who wish to study in the United States. For more information on the Department of State's educational and cultural exchange activities, visit www.exchanges.state.gov.

Open Doors 2008 International Student Data Tables: Click here >>