

YOUTH AMBASSADORS MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA



The Youth Ambassadors (YA) Middle East and North Africa (NEA) Programs provides a full scholarship opportunity for U.S. students who have demonstrated initiative in their communities and who want to expand their knowledge by engaging in experiential learning activities and workshops alongside visiting Iraqi or Algerian youth during a U.S. exchange program. This program will enhance their understanding of civic engagement, leadership, project planning, and intercultural communication.

What U.S. Students Gain from YA-NEA

**Domestic Travel | Leadership Training | Cultural Discovery | Community Building
Volunteer Development | Networking Opportunities**

Since their founding, YA-NEA Programs have brought together over 2,200 young leaders together to develop leadership and peacebuilding skills, foster relationships among youth from different backgrounds, promote mutual understanding between the people of Iraq, Algeria and the U.S., and develop community action projects. During the program, participants will engage in virtual and in-person experiential learning activities and workshops that will further guide their knowledge of civic engagement and intercultural communication across the different program components. In-person exchange activities will take place in South Hadley, MA, Raleigh, NC, or Pensacola, FL and Washington D.C.



Virtual Program Dates: May 11-June 21, 2026 | In-Person Program Dates: July 3-23, 2026

Application Deadline: January 30, 2026

[Click here to apply!](#) | youthambassadors@worldlearning.org



Youth Ambassadors is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and implemented by World Learning.

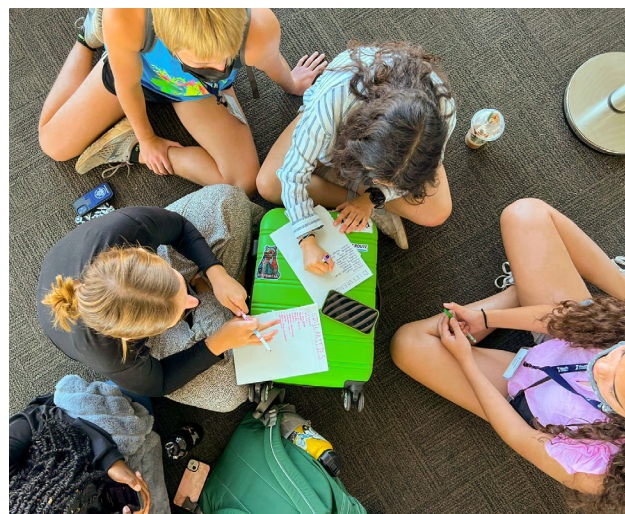


ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Be at least 15 years old but not more than 17 years old at the time of the July 1, 2026;
- Have completed at least one year of high school before the start of the program in July 2026 and must have one year of high school remaining following their return home;
- Have a high school graduation year of 2027 or later;
- Have permission from either a parent or legal guardian to participate in the exchange program in the United States;
- Have citizenship and current residency in the United States;
- Have not participated nor traveled on an ECA-funded program within one academic year; and
- Not be related to an ECA Youth Programs Division staff member nor an employee of an organization responsible for implementing Youth Ambassadors or YA-NEA 2026.

"Since coming back, my view of problems in my community has shifted from that of a bystander to more so of a just critic and an active change-maker. The program has had a lasting, positive impact on how I plan to serve my community."

– 2023 Program Alum



BENEFITS OF DOMESTIC EXCHANGE

- Admittance to the U.S. Department of State Exchange Alumni Network;
- Additional scholarship opportunities;
- International connections, both personal and professional for the future;
- A unique home stay experience in a different city;
- Soft skill development through experiential learning and workshops.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Youth Ambassadors includes a five-week virtual course, a three-week in-person U.S domestic exchange during summer 2026, and a five month follow-on period where participants implement a project in their home communities. Participants will also engage in a virtual pre-travel segment. This five-week segment will allow participants to begin the cultural sharing and connection building that make the Youth Ambassadors program truly special. After the exchange, participants will come together for a virtual reunion and celebration with their cohort.



Scan for more details!

