

INTERNATIONAL YMCA
SERVING THE WORLD
SINCE 1911

FLU IN
MEXICO DID
NOT DETER
ICCP'S
SUMMER J-I
PARTICIPANTS

ICCP's coordination with Ana Jimenez, recruiter in Puebla, resulted in some 200 Mexicans getting their visas in spite of the US Embassy closing for a week due to H1N1. See page 6.

"We REALLY appreciate the help of your recruiter Ana down there. ICCP has great service!"

—Maine's Camp
Wyonegonic

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Web Site 2
Now Updated

SEVIS 2

Social 2
Security Cards

More 3
Americans?

D.C. Hearings 3

Culture Corner 4

Staff 4
Immunizations

Outbound 5
Programs

Inbound 6
Programs

International YMCA News

A Branch of the YMCA of Greater NY

~ News You Can Use! ~

WWW.INTERNATIONALYMCA.ORG

JUNE 2009

Spain-U.S. Chamber Partnership

Since 2005, the Spain-U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Florida has partnered with the International YMCA to provide training for young professionals from Spain at host sites in the United States.

The purpose of the Chamber of Spanish Commerce is "to build an adequate platform to promote and facilitate the commercial and economic relations between the United States and Spain." The Chamber currently has more than 500 associates from both countries and has achieved a high level of world expansion, thanks to its interaction and services, and the superb location of its headquarters in Miami.

Currently, there are thirty-nine Trainees and Interns from Spain placed in four U.S. states

through this partnership: California, Florida, Illinois and New York. Their host sites are quite varied, as evidenced by this small sampling—the Metropolitan Mu-



seum of Art in NYC, a marine laboratory in Florida, a film studio in Los Angeles and an advertising company in Chicago. The common thread for all 39 placements, however, is the J-I cultural exchange visa, sponsored by the International YMCA.

Olga Lacayo heads the International Y's review team for all

Trainee and Intern applications. She works closely with **Maria Amparo Yuste** in the Spain-U.S. Chamber of Commerce office in Miami to facilitate this partnership.

Interestingly, this connection originated with **Angel Moreton**, a former International YMCA Intern from Valladolid, Spain. Angel was with the Y's International Camp Counselor Program in NYC and then worked in Miami at EXCAL, one of the Chamber's Florida associates.

For more information about this partnership, or the Trainee & Internship program, contact

olacayo@ymcanyc.org

For Chamber info:
ayuste@spainchamber.org

Study Tour to South Africa

Join us November 28–December 12, 2009 for the first-ever YMCA Study Tour to Cape Town, South Africa! The trip will provide opportunities to meet with key Cape Town YMCA and YMCA South Africa staff and board members, and witness the amazing and inspirational work they do on a daily basis. The program also will include visits to Robben Island, the District Six museum, and more.

This trip is offered by the International YMCA, as is the previously announced Study Tour to Jerusalem, October 17-29, 2009. Both are open to Y volunteers, staff and friends of the YMCA and are led by Y professionals.

More information and the application will be available on our web site, June 26th. From the home page, go to Study Tours:

www.internationalymca.org

For more information on either trip, contact **Chad Hiu**, TOLL FREE 888/477-9622, or by email:

chiu@ymcanyc.org



Participants can now print their own insurance ID cards, print their policy information and claim forms, and access an FAQ page on their insurance coverage!

SEVIS validation is required by J-1 visa participants upon arrival at the US host site.

Employers (US host sites) need participants to have a SSN for payroll and tax purposes.

Web Site Updated for Participants—

Insurance Info Now Easy Access!

It's live!

Our web site has been updated with insurance information for all J-1 visa participants to access. Participants can print their own ID cards, print their policy information and claim forms; view information on existing claims; print a disclosure authorization form; and access an FAQ page. This greatly improves our service to our participants.

To access the insurance

information, participants simply visit our web site and click on "International YMCA Participant Information," type "PART09" when prompted for a password, and click on "insurance". To print an ID card, participants click on "Print ID Card" and follow the instructions. Participants who lose their cards can print out replacements as often as they need.

Using a valid DS number (the N000# on their DS-2019

form), they can see what the information looks like when it's printed.

Global Programs participants enter their names and dates of birth.

Have a look at the site:

www.internationalymca.org

Problems accessing "International YMCA Participant Information" can be directed to the International YMCA.

International Arrivals & SEVIS

All participants are required to confirm their arrival at their U.S. host site, whether it be a summer camp, conference center, hotel, or whatever for which the visa was granted. This is called **SEVIS validation**. The visa will be considered invalid if not validated in SEVIS.

SEVIS is the **S**tudent **E**xchange **V**isitor **I**nformation **S**ystem, created by US Homeland Security following "9-11" and is designed as a tracking system for exchange visitors.

Each J-1 visa participant has a SEVIS number and it appears on the DS-2019 form. It begins with N000.... Once at the US host site, all participants should go to the International YMCA's web site and click on the link for SEVIS validation:

www.internationalymca.org

Social Security Cards for Participants

J-1 visa participants, (Camp Counselors, Work & Travel, Trainees & Interns) should apply for a social security number (SSN). While J-1 visa participants will not receive any benefits from Social Security, all employers (US

host sites) need their participants to have a SSN for payroll and tax purposes. Participants will need one to open a bank account and, in some cases, to obtain a driver's license. The Social Security Administration (SSA) uses Homeland

Security's SEVIS system to verify legal entry into the United States. Participants MUST wait several days after arriving on site and submitting the SEVIS validation to apply for the SSN; it takes time for Homeland Security to notify the SSA.

More applications from out-of-work Americans for summer positions typically filled by young people and internationals, according to the Associated Press

International exchange programs and partnerships were promoted at recent hearings in Washington, D.C.

More Americans—Less Internationals?

Resorts and other summer businesses are seeing an increase in applications from out-of-work Americans for positions typically filled by young people and international workers, the Associated Press reported on May 1st.

All over the country, resorts and other summer businesses were getting swamped with applications from out-of-work Americans, many of them professionals. They are competing for jobs usually filled by young people and internationals — making beds, serving brunch, mowing lawns,

running concession stands and operating carnival games and amusement park rides.

“The demographics of this year's summer work force is going to change into more well-educated, semi-retired, people happy to be employed,” said **Patty Ceglio Bishoff**, director of operations for CoolWorks.com, an online board based in Gardiner, Mont., that helps people find summer jobs in scenic areas.

The AP article notes that despite this trend, “some em-

ployers said they still prefer laborers from overseas”:

“I have to force them to take a break,” said **Cindy Buziak**, owner of the Holly Beach Hotel, a bed and breakfast in Wildwood, N.J. “American kids just want to get in and get out.”

Some summer camps are experiencing lower enrollments this summer resulting in less need for staff. Less staff in general includes also hiring less international staff as camp counselors and in support staff roles, i.e., office, kitchen and maintenance.

Exchanges and Partnerships Promoted at Washington, D.C. Hearings

International exchange programs drew brief focus recently at two Senate committee hearings focused on the FY 2010 international affairs budget. Speaking before both the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, **Secretary of State Hillary Clinton** expressed the same enthusiasm for educational and cultural exchanges that she has consistently shown since taking office. At the State and Foreign Operations subcommittee hearing, Clinton said:

“We’re also expanding our partnerships beyond traditional government-to-government efforts. We’re working with women’s groups and civil society, human rights activists around the world, and we’re encouraging more people-to-people cooperation. I believe this may be one of the great new tools that we have in our diplomacy.”

She made a similar statement later in the day at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing. In both hearings, Clinton cited the newly created Virtual Student Foreign Service, introduced during her commencement address last week at New York University, a program designed to “bring together college students in the United States and our embassies abroad to work on digital and citizen diplomacy initiatives.”

At a confirmation hearing held by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, **Judith McHale** briefly outlined her vision for the role of **Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs**, calling for listening, innovation, and partnerships and emphasizing that the United States must not only “listen more and lecture less” but also learn “how other cultures listen to us.”

The Culture Corner—What is culture?



The anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, defines culture as a “historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols...by means of which people can communicate, perpetuate and develop their own knowledge about and attitudes towards life.”

In the U.S., there are so many things we take for granted, things we learned when we were so young that they now seem ‘natural’— even though they are, in fact, patterns of learned behavior.

In the U.S., we take many things for granted For example, the ‘natural’ way to eat (using a fork and knife), to sleep (in a bed), the appropriate distance to stand from someone when talking to them, and so on, and so on. In fact, only eating is natural; eating with a fork and knife, or with chopsticks, is cultural. Sleeping is natural, but sleeping on a bed is cultural. Belching is natural, yet in American culture we unnaturally restrain ourselves from doing so because it is considered impolite.

What is cultural is completely taken for granted within a given culture, so much so that it appears natural. This is why, when we meet someone from another culture, we often immediately perceive them as ‘impolite’ or perhaps ‘too polite’, as a bit strange, and perhaps as not too bright, since

they don’t know they should be standing further away from you when they talk to you! However, when the shoe is on the other foot, and an American is the ‘odd one out’ when visiting another culture, then he/she will undergo culture shock, the terrifying realization that millions of people in another country can live perfectly happily without being familiar with, much less taking for granted, the values, traditions, customs and beliefs that you hold dear!

It’s a two-way street when different cultures meet. Tolerance, patience and understanding are required by both parties if there is to be mutual respect and acceptance. As a U.S. host site for J-1 visa (cultural exchange!) participants, there is a responsibility to have this awareness and sensitivity and to ensure that it permeates throughout the organization.

FOR PERSONAL CONTACT WITH STAFF, USE THE INTERNATIONAL YMCA ’S TOLL FREE NUMBER: 888/477-9622

International Staff Immunizations

The International YMCA annually brings about 8000 internationals to the U.S. on J-1 visa-sponsored programs to work at a variety of host sites—camps, conference centers, restaurants, hotels and resorts. While having internationals and working with them is a rewarding experience, there are some challenges and one has to do with immunizations.

It is imperative to communicate the required health and immunization information as per the U.S. host site’s state Department of Health for any state requirements. For ex-

ample, Massachusetts is very specific with regard to regulations while other states are not. An obvious one for all, perhaps, would be a tetanus shot.



For most countries, there are no visa requirements for immunizations

Any requirements should be communicated to the staff before arrival in the U.S. It is usually easier to get necessary immunization at home than once here on site.

Summer camps, and the ACA (American Camp Association), require a health exam and health record be provided as part of the staff application process. The International Y recommends the same for Trainees, Interns, and Work-Travel participants. The best risk management is ensuring that everyone is protected through proper immunization.



Global Teens Program Update

This summer, 135 teens will participate in the International YMCA's **Global Teens** program, traveling to eight different countries. Global Teens is the Y's youth development program with a special emphasis on service learning and the development of leadership skills and cultural competence. The teens will be challenged, by their adult leader and the international experience, to develop a stronger sense of self-confidence, independence and cooperation, as well as to deepen their appreciation for the diversity and interdependence of the world's people. Their destinations and the focus of this summer's experiences are as follows: **Peru** — Youth Work; **Colombia** — Environment ; **Thailand (two trips)**— Human Rights/Children's Rights; **Italy** — Living "Green"; **Brazil** — Healthy Living; **Chile** — Indigenous Rights; **Oklahoma (U.S.)** — Diabetes Prevention.

These teens did not wait until the summer to get involved! Here are highlights of their Spring activities:

The **Global Teens Peru Group** worked to restore single room occupancies at the Harlem Branch YMCA by plastering and repainting the residences for the residents. This is very similar to what their Peruvian service project will involve working on the infrastructure of a medical facility. The teens benefited from the teamwork involved and the appreciation received from the residents, while the residents benefited from physical improvements to their living areas.

The **Chile Group** worked with some of their peers from Children for Children International at the Hudson River Park's Pier 46 in NYC. This organization focuses on social and global issues, and creates leadership opportunities for engaged youth through community service. The Global Teens assembled materials for use in interactive, educational workshops for youth.

One of the two **Thailand Groups** held a teen dance/party fundraiser at the West Side YMCA to benefit their summer work at the Thailand YMCA in Chiangmai and provide awareness of immigration and child welfare issues in Chiangmai. The other group held an Open Mic & Youth Performance at the Chinatown YMCA to promote self-empowerment, awareness of global human rights and provide fun in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, while raising funds to make their summer trip possible.

The **Oklahoma Group** volunteered at a Native American festival in Upper Manhattan's Inwood Hill Park. "The Drums Along the Hudson Festival" is Manhattan's only open air Pow-Wow and is a celebratory gathering of Native Americans, including exhibitions of world dance and drumming traditions, as well as Native American crafts and international cuisines. It combined the celebration of Native American heritage, culture and art with the diversity of New York City, keeping with the Global Teens group's underlying theme of environmental appreciation and education.

To incorporate their theme of freedom of expression into a fun-filled activity where parents and children can bond, the **South Korea Group** decorated t-shirts at the International YMCA in NYC. When in S. Korea this summer, they will promote the same theme through a different service project. They held this activity locally to advocate the power of freedom of expression in their local community also.

Two programs were held at the South Shore YMCA by the **Brazil Group** . Healthy snack foods were prepared and a timed fitness obstacle course was designed in the gymnasium.

The **Colombia Group** did a variety of farm tasks such as composting, bark mulching, weeding, planting, painting, beekeeping and cleanup at the East New York Farms in Brooklyn, a community-run farm that fosters health awareness, community development and environmental awareness.

There is no question that these teens are ready to travel this summer and continue their good work! These trips are made possible by grant support from the **NY Community Trust** and donations to the **Strong Kids Campaign**. For more information, contact **Chad Hiu**, Director of Teen & Outbound Programs at the International YMCA: chiu@ymcany.org



Donations to the Y's Strong Kids Campaign help fund youth programs like Global Teens, making them affordable. To make a contribution, please click here: <https://ycom.ymcany.org/netdata/takedon.mac/pledgeform?inpBrn=85>

Global Teen participants (l-r)
Cynthia, Tannia,
Dahjanay, Pamela, Aaron, Kinnasia, Javy





International Y Inbound Programs Update

Programs Overview

Summer/Winter Work & Travel Program gives university students from around the world the opportunity to experience living and working in the U.S. during their official school break.



Intern & Trainee Programs provide practical career training to emerging professionals from around the world.



Camp Counselor Program (ICCP) gives young adults from around the world the opportunity to work in a camp in the U.S. during the summer.



New Work & Holiday Exchange Program provides opportunities for current Australian university students and recent graduates to experience working and living in the United States for up to 12 months.

Flu Challenge Met

The ICCP staff worked diligently and effectively to prevent the possible negative impact of the H1N1 epidemic on the summer camp program, involving some 200 camp participants from Mexico whose camp placements had been arranged. As a result of the U.S.

Embassy in Mexico City closing for a whole week, the visa application processing was back-logged. Great coordination between **Rayda Marquez** in ICCP's NYC office and **Ana Jimenez**, recruiter in Puebla, resulted in the 200 Mexicans getting their visas in spite of the US Embassy closing. Being proactive in communicating with the camps, participants and overseas partners and putting in place measures to show the camps they have nothing to fear, ICCP managed to escape the height of the panic with very minimal loss of business – only 2 camps cancelled the placements of 2 Mexican participants!

Safeguards put in place included having all Mexican participants undergo a medical examination days prior to their departure to the USA to make sure they are not infected by the virus. The camps also take the temperature of the participants as they arrive at camp. All parties were informed of the steps to take to prevent contracting the virus and to keep healthy overall.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ANY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YMCA'S INBOUND PROGRAMS, CALL TOLL FREE 888/477-9622



Sumita Bhowmik Slevin—Staff Profile

Sumita Bhowmik Slevin is the International YMCA's receptionist and Administrative Assistant. She is the "voice" of the International Y when calls are received at the NYC 5 West 63rd Street office, and the front desk contact who greets all visitors to the International YMCA.

Born and educated in New Delhi, India, Sumita came to the U.S. in 2001 and became a U.S. citizen in 2007. She has been at the International Y since 2001, starting with the



Sumita Bhowmik Slevin
International YMCA Receptionist

ELESAIR program (English Language & Employment Services for Adult Immigrants & Refugees) as a Student Counselor, and moved to the Reception Desk in in 2006.

She says, "What I love about the job is the diversity of the people I work with. People from all walks of life bring in interesting cultural thoughts and dreams of experiencing life in the United States."

Sumita is married and lives in New York City.





INTERNATIONAL YMCA
serving the world since 1911

OUR PROGRAMS

**ICCP—Summer camp counselors,
and support staff**

- **Trainees & Interns**
- **Summer/Winter Work & Travel**
 - **Global Teens**
 - **Go Global**
 - **United Nations**
 - **Study Tours**



NEW DS-160 Online Form

A new DS-160 Online, Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, will eventually replace current nonimmigrant application forms DS-156, 157, 158.

The new DS-160 Online, Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, will eventually replace current nonimmigrant application forms DS-156, 157, 158, and other related forms, such as DS-156E, 156K, and 156V. The roll-out of the new DS-160 will be gradual. Therefore, not all U.S. Embassies and Consulates will be required to use the form at the same time. U.S. Embassies and Consulates currently using the new form DS-160 are the following: CANADA: Vancouver and Montreal only; IRELAND: Dublin, Libya: Tripoli; MEXICO: Nuevo Laredo, Ciudad Juarez, Matamoros and Monterrey only and HONG KONG S.A.R. Nonimmigrant visa applicants will need to review [U.S. Embassy website](#) how-to-apply instructions for more details, as well as the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for using DS-160 Online.

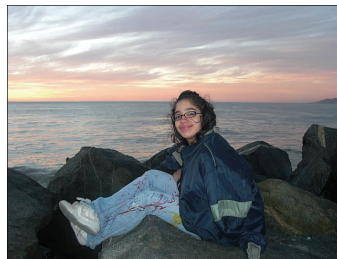
travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms_1342.html - 23k

www.internationalymca.org

Youth Volunteer Recognized Three “Super-Heroes”

Karla Osorio was recognized recently at the YMCA of Greater NY’s General Assembly as the International Y’s Youth Volunteer of the Year.

She traveled to Chile with Global Teens during the summer of 2008 and serves as Treasurer for the International Leaders Club, a group of 40-50 teens from all five boroughs of New York City, and has planned and executed two fundraisers to benefit other teens looking to have the kind of global experience she had last summer. **John Cruz**, International Y Leaders’ Club advisor, described Karla as consistent and dependable in



Karla Osorio
Youth Volunteer of the Year

accomplishing any project, duty or task she undertakes, and says she serves as a role model and respected leader, setting high standards for many of her peers and the group. *“Congratulations & thank you, Karla!”*

Using a “super heroes” theme, the YMCA of Greater NY honored three International Y staff for their 2008 job performance, and as role models: **Shane Lavin** (l), **Dianne Carty** (c) and **Chad Hiu** (r). Shane joined the staff in January 2008 as Program Coordinator and Executive Assistant and is now Manager of Fund Development & Special Projects. Dianne, with the International Y for six years, is Program Coordinator for Summer Work & Travel programs, serving 5000+ participants annually. Chad, Director of Teen & Outbound Programs, has been a Y staff member for 7 years (and Y volunteer prior to that), coming from the YMCA of Honolulu to the International YMCA in July 2007. *“Congratulations to All!”*



“Educational and cultural exchanges, where we take people from other lands, bring them here, let them go to our schools, let them participate in activities with our families and with our communities... it is a long-term investment in a better future..”

—Secretary of State Colin Powell