

INTERNATIONAL
YMCA
SERVING THE
WORLD SINCE 1911

TO OUR MANY
CUSTOMERS,
PARTICIPANTS,
AND FRIENDS:

THANK YOU
FOR BEING
WITH US IN
2009!

WE LOOK
FORWARD TO
SERVING YOU
IN 2010.

HAPPY NEW
YEAR!

Bonne Année

Feliz Año Nuevo

Felice Anno Nuovo

Gott Nytt År

Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun

Z Novym Rokom

Prost Neujahr

Gelukkige Nuwejaar

Sawatdee Pi Mai

Which language?

See p. 5

**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:**

Executive 2
Director's
Message

The Y and SC 2

Register w/
ICCP-2010 3

Return Staff 3

Trainees 3
Interns

Youth 4
Ambassadors

Strong Kids 4

Reflections 5

International Y News

International YMCA ~ A Branch of the YMCA of Greater New York

WWW.INTERNATIONALYMCA.ORG

DECEMBER 2009



Proposed Changes Threaten J-1 Visas

If implemented, changes to the General Provisions of the J-1 visa program proposed by the U.S. Department of State will be of great consequence to the exchange community. As a sponsor of J-1 visa programs for summer camp counselors, Work & Travel (support staff for kitchens, maintenance and offices), Trainees and Interns, the International YMCA responded actively and encouraged others to do the same.



The State Department proposes critical changes in the recruiting process. Under the proposed new rule, no U.S. sponsoring organization would be able to issue a form DS-2019, required by all applicants for a J-1 visa, until camp placements in the U.S. are confirmed. At present, sponsors like the International YMCA who provide camps with international counselors and support staff start that annual process by screening and selecting appropriate applicants who have the necessary skills and meet all the program's eligibility criteria. The DS-2019

The Department of State authorizes the International YMCA to sponsor J-1 visas

forms are then issued and a large number of these candidates receive visas before final confirmation of their U.S. camp placement. This long-standing and successful approach has two significant advantages: it allows camps a reliable and predictable cadre of international counselors by creating a pool of qualified candidates with visas in hand; it also helps our embassies overseas by spreading their heavy workload over a much longer period of time. Camp counselor candidates currently can begin visa interviews in January, a relatively slow time at most of our consulates. If the new provision is enacted, the majority of candidates will be forced to apply in spring and summer, the busiest consular seasons, when they will be competing for appointments with foreign students, tourists, and other exchange visitor applicants. Some camps will refrain from hiring international staff because of the inherent unreliability of this process.

The other provision causing concern requires all U.S. employers of J-1 participants to have a Dun & Bradstreet number. The International YMCA fully supports a system for vetting host sites to make sure that program participants are being placed in safe and the most appropriate environment but requiring the use of Dun & Bradstreet Reports is not the right system as it would add enormously to the cost of participation in the J-1 visa program (\$65.00 per report per partner and per host site). It is believed that some camps will refrain from hiring international staff because of the inherent unreliability of this process.

The International YMCA was quick to contact its constituency of U.S. camps, conference centers and other host sites, as well as its current and former participants, friends and others, with a plea and contact information to register objections and concerns to the proposed changes. We thank the many who responded. Now, the exchange community awaits a decision.

Please: Take a few minutes to register your opposition to the proposed changes:

<http://capwiz.com/alliance-change/issues/alert/?alertid=14286001&PROCESS=Take+Action>

From the Executive Director



Sandy Mitchell
Executive Director
International YMCA

*“May 2010
bring us closer
to the more
peaceful world
we desire.”*

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the International YMCA, let me extend warmest wishes to all for the holidays and for the coming year. As we approach the end of 2009 – a year that brought considerable challenges and a year with many positive outcomes – I want to thank all who have helped make these good outcomes possible.

This newsletter highlights a number of accomplishments of the year. First and foremost, though, all should be proud of the quality of the programs offered by the International YMCA. We were able, among other things, to grow the outbound programs and ensure that all programs operated at the highest professional level. The commitment of our overseas recruiters, host communities around the world, our camps and job sites in the U.S., our staff and volunteers every-

where, and our donors, all contributed to make this possible.

Our donors gave generously, even in this difficult economic climate, to provide scholarship support to those who otherwise would not have been able to participate in our programs. In particular, I thank the New York Community Trust, the Countess Moira Charitable Foundation and the hundreds of individuals, companies and organizations that contributed to the International YMCA's Strong Kids Campaign. I also thank the Board and the entire staff of the International YMCA for their incredible commitment and tireless work this year.

The holiday season is often considered a season of hope – hope for a world of peace and hope for a bright future for our children and loved ones. Hope for a better world is not

just for one season, however. It is, in fact, something we work for every day as we expose children, teens, adults, campers and co-workers to the value of understanding and learning from other cultures. All our many friends, who have helped provide young people with these incredible intercultural learning experiences through the International Y, and all of our participants who have shared so much of themselves and broadened their world view by engaging with and learning from others across cultures, are part of this movement that translates hope into opportunity. For this we extend our most sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks.

Happy holidays to all. May 2010 indeed bring us closer to the more peaceful world we desire.

Sandy

The YMCA and Springfield College

Harry Rock (front, center),
director of YMCA Relations,
hosted NYC Y teens at
Springfield College (MA)



Teens from the International Y's Leaders Club and the Vanderbilt Y (NYC) spent a day in November at Springfield College (MA) to learn about the college and to look at the Y as a possible career choice for them.

The YMCA and Springfield College share a unique history, heritage, and partnership, which date back to the establishment of the College, then known as the School for Christian Workers in 1885. By 1890, the name and focus of the school changed to the International YMCA Training School, which eventually evolved into Springfield College as it is known today. Over the years, hundreds of YMCA professionals and volunteers have graduated from Springfield College to go on and influence their communities through the work of their local YMCAs. For more information:

<http://www.spfldcol.edu/homepage/dept.nsf/ymca>



Sites Register Now for 2010

Camps, conference centers and other U.S. host sites should login to their accounts and register now for 2010 to take advantage of viewing online applications for summer staff with the International Camp Counselor Program (ICCP).

Simply go to www.ymcadirect.org and scroll to the Employers' link and register as a **Previous Customer**.

- ⇒ **NO FEE INCREASES FOR 2010!**
- ⇒ **Preferred YMCA rate**
- ⇒ **Counselors, Program Specialists, Support Staff (office, kitchen, maintenance)**
- ⇒ **World-wide cultural diversity from 70+ countries**
- ⇒ **Expanded application information describing applicants' skills & experience**
- ⇒ **Continued great customer service & support**



*International Camp
Counselor Program*

ICCP—Bringing the World to Camps & Building Global Citizens Since 1959

For assistance and questions, contact Account Representatives TOLL FREE: 888/477-9622

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



Returning Staff & Direct Placements

To get last summer's best staff back in 2010, or to bring an international you know or who has been referred to you from another country to camp this coming summer, just go to www.ymcadirect.org, Camps go to the **Employers'** section; staff wanting to return go to **Participants'** section; both click on the link for Returning Staff/Direct Placement.

The online process is easy and efficient and is offered at a fee that is unbeatable! **ONLY \$350** if submitted and paid by December 31st and **ONLY \$380** as of January 1st.

And, there are **NO ADDITIONAL FEES** to the participant or the camp!

For more information or assistance, contact **Judy Gomez**: ygoomez@ymcanyc.org or call her TOLL FREE 888/477-9622.



Trainees & Interns

The International YMCA's Trainee & Intern programs offer opportunities to U.S. companies, businesses, camps, conference centers and other employers, to provide skill training and new knowledge to internationals with education and work experience in their field abroad. Former ICCP participants interested should contact their camp.

The host site writes a training plan (TP) to be followed. A Trainee's program can be for a maximum of eighteen months, Interns for up to twelve. Trainees must have a post-secondary degree and at least one year of work experience in the field of their degree and both must match the proposed TP. Without a degree, five years of work experience related to the TP is required. Interns do not need the work experience as they are current undergraduates or will have graduated within 12 months of the U.S. start date.

More information, application requirements, approved fields, etc., are on the web site:

www.internationalymca.org/TraingAndInternships/Home.shtml

NEW: Youth Ambassador Program



The Youth Ambassadors Program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State to enable high school students, educators and youth leaders from Latin America to experience the United States first-hand and to broaden their understanding of U.S. culture, education and society. Through thematic, three-week community stays and service projects in various parts of the U. S., the program is designed to help prepare these participants in youth leadership development, civic education and community service, and promote mutual understanding between the people of the Americas.

Through the International YMCA, Colombia and Mexico will send 2 groups each of public high school students and youth leaders to visit the United States, one group in 2010 and one in 2011. They will participate in this intensive cultural immersion experience related to the theme of 'grassroots democracy' and civic engagement. The Colombia program has a secondary theme of 'substance abuse prevention' and the Mexico program has a secondary theme of 'violence prevention/reduction'. All programs will provide opportunities for participants to interact with American youth and educators and to experience life in a host family.

The three-week international exchanges will take place between January 2010 and December 2011, with each group involving 14 high school students and 2 adult participants. The first group from Mexico is slated to travel to the U.S. during the summer of 2010, and the group from Colombia is to travel to the U.S. November—December 2010.

The program includes: (a) recruitment, selection and orientation of the participants from Colombia and Mexico to the United States; (b) hosting the participants from Colombia and Mexico in American host families and group settings in New York, Washington, D.C. and other host communities of the United States. They will engage in teen-to-teen interaction, community service-learning projects, and activities geared to expose participants to American culture and the democratic values and institutions key to the history, culture and society of the United States.

To assist in the effective facilitation of this program, the International YMCA will be working with the Mexican Federation of YMCAs and the ACJ (YMCA) de Colombia in Bogota on the recruitment, training, orientation and follow-on elements of the program. Additionally, the International YMCA will work with YMCAs in the United States to facilitate the hosting portion of the program.

The program is open to Colombian and Mexican high school students aged 15-18 from families of limited economic means who are outstanding students, have demonstrated leadership qualities and an interest in improving their local communities, have some knowledge of English and have never been to the United States. Adult participants will be teachers, school administrators and/or community leaders who work with youth, and will service as participants as well as chaperones.

The International YMCA brings almost 100 years of proven experience in the management, facilitation and operation of international educational and cultural exchange programs. It is our desire to help bridge barriers of prejudice, stereotypes, culture and geography as we aim to foster peace and tolerance amongst young people from around the world. For more information, contact **Chad Hiu**: chiu@ymcanyc.org



STRONG KIDS CAMPAIGN —Please consider a year-end gift!



Winston Churchill once said:

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Your contribution to the International YMCA's **Strong Kids Campaign** keeps on giving— it supports current International Y programs like Go Global, Global Teens, and the International Camp Counselor Program (ICCP), but our participants in those programs benefit from these experiences throughout their lifetime. Your gift can have a significant and beneficial impact on the lives of others. When you think of your year-end contributions, please remember our Strong Kids Campaign. Thank you.

<https://ycom.ymcanyc.org/netdata/takedown.mac/pledgeform?inpBrn=85>





INTERNATIONAL YMCA
serving the world since 1911

OUR PROGRAMS

- **ICCP—Summer camp counselors, support staff, Trainees & Interns**
- **Summer/Winter Work & Travel**
 - **Global Teens**
 - **Go Global**
 - **United Nations**
 - **Study Tours**
 - **Youth Ambassadors**

From Page 1 —Which language?

- Bonne Année — French**
- Feliz Año Nuevo — Spanish**
- Felice Anno Nuovo — Italian**
- Gott Nytt År — Swedish**
- Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun — Turkish**
- Z Novym Rokom — Ukraine**
- Prost Neujahr — German**



Call TOLL FREE  **888/477-9622**



Reflections on 2009



The International YMCA looks back on 2009 with pride at its many successes and accomplishments. Here are some highlights:

- Recruited 4632 international participants from 70 countries for three major programs: ICCP, Work & Travel, Trainees & Interns
- Served 1000+ US host sites
- Celebrated ICCP's 50th anniversary, having started in 1959
- Raised close to \$100,000 in scholarship donations to provide opportunities for deserving young people to participate in Go Global, Global Teens, and the International Camp Counselor Program
- Sent 107 Global Teens and 18 group leaders to 7 countries, plus the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma
- Placed 15 Go Global participants in nine countries
- Maintained very competitive fees for services in a difficult economy
- Received a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State to implement the Youth Ambassadors Program with Colombia & Mexico in 2010 and 2011
- Saw the International YMCA Leaders Club roster grow to 55 teen members
- Provided an international, educational, capacity-building & networking experience to 13 professionals and volunteers on the Study Tour to South Africa
- Gave 12 students from City College of NY a 3-week study abroad experience in northern Thailand, focusing on the work of the Chiangmai YMCA with NGOs.
- Benefited from, and are grateful for, the many contributions of our 30 student volunteers and university work-study students
- Provided countless opportunities for personal growth, expanded perspective, new learning, greater understanding, acceptance of cultural diversity, and new friendships, while developing global citizens through our programs!

We are excited about the coming New Year. It will include building on the accomplishments of 2009 while developing a new and improved web site, and continuing to offer meaningful international program opportunities to U.S. host sites at no fee increases.

“Thank you” to all for your support and participation.