

# News Release

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Board of Governors for Higher Education  
Department of Higher Education  
State of Connecticut



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## *Connecticut Welcomes International Educators*

HARTFORD, Oct. 27 — Connecticut will host a group of overseas educational advisors on its public and independent college and university campuses, from October 30 through November 5.

Representing the nations of Cyprus, Ghana, India, Paraguay, Russia, and Saudi Arabia, these advisors will visit the Department of Higher Education, Manchester Community College, the University of Connecticut, the University of Hartford, Wesleyan University and Yale University.

Posted at U. S. Embassy Public Affairs Offices, Fulbright Commissions, foreign universities and bi-national centers around the world, overseas educational advisors help students from other countries learn about higher education in the U.S. The U.S. Department of State estimates that it affiliates with about 500 overseas advising centers in the EducationUSA network worldwide.

Connecticut seeks to inform the overseas educational advisors about its offerings in higher education. In exchange, state and campus leaders hope to learn about the issues facing foreign students seeking to study and conduct research in the state.

“While Connecticut enjoys a global reputation for outstanding higher education institutions, the presence of international students and scholars on our campuses remains essential to the vitality of our colleges,” said Valerie Lewis, Commissioner of Higher Education.

“Such a presence helps our students, the future leaders of America, develop a balanced world view and experience greater diversity in our classrooms while contributing to our economy and national balance of trade,” said Ms. Lewis.

The Council of Graduate Schools recently surveyed 126 colleges and universities, and found an 18 percent decrease in the admission of graduate students from abroad this fall compared with the fall of 2003. According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, a weekly higher education trade publication, about half of the international students in the U.S. are enrolled in graduate programs.

Connecticut had an enrollment of 7,050 international students both in undergraduate and graduate programs in Fall 2003, reflecting a four percent drop from the Fall 2002 enrollment of 7,338. The NAFSA: Association of International Educators reports that the net contribution to Connecticut’s economy by foreign students and their families was \$167,806,000 in 2002-03. This is a 10 percent decrease from the 2000-2001 contribution of \$187,508,000.

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Supported by federal funds from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U. S. Department of State under the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961, and administered by the College Board, this U.S.-based training program will provide an opportunity for overseas educational advisors to meet officials of agencies involved in international education in Washington; meet college and university faculty, students and administrators in various states; and attend an international education conference.

Monica Weeks, Assistant Director for the Office of International Students and Scholars at Yale University, submitted the proposal to host this group to the College Board and was selected to serve as Host Cluster Coordinator for Connecticut.

“The campus visit program will be more than just a tour of area institutions. Advisors will discuss the admissions process with campus officials, sample orientation and other programs available to international students and scholars, and meet faculty, students and staff to learn about current trends and practices on American campuses,” reports Ms. Weeks.

“The establishment of strong relationships with this group of advisors will help to ensure the continued flow of students and scholars to Connecticut. These relationships are crucial as we globalize our campuses. We want to send the message to potential visitors that academic institutions and the U. S. Department of State, through this training program, are committed to fostering international exchange.”

Enthusiasm from the participating overseas advisors abound.

“I’m really looking forward to the program!” Revy Payiata, the advisor from Cyprus tells Ms. Weeks. Svetlana Demashova from Russia wants to “build contacts between ... Russian Far East universities and the Connecticut [colleagues].” Ana Maria Merlo, from Paraguay, is hoping to “...be exposed to as many different schools as possible.”

International educators from around the state as well as Wesleyan students from the represented regions of the world will be invited to hear the overseas advisors give presentations on their home countries’ educational systems, policies, and academic training needs at the Connecticut NAFSA meeting on Wednesday, November 3, 2004 at 12:00 PM, at Wesleyan University.

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