



Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders: On Religious Pluralism

November 2011

Dear Participant,

Selamat! We want to extend our congratulations to you for being selected to participate in the 2012 Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders with a focus on Religious Pluralism in America. You are one of twenty outstanding students from Indonesia chosen to participate in this unique five week learning experience.

Funded by the Study of the United States Branch, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, your program is designed to include classroom work as well as direct experiences with many Americans from diverse backgrounds. The course will offer you a variety of learning opportunities including lectures, classroom discussions, field trips, volunteer service projects, cultural events, and a multi-state study tour within the USA – all designed to help you increase your understanding of American democracy and the way in which religious practice is protected and expressed in U.S. society.

Your program is taking place in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which was the first capital of the United States. It is being created by two educational organizations – the Dialogue Institute (DI) and the International Center of Contemporary Education (ICCE). The Dialogue Institute was founded in 1978 to advance inter-religious/cross-cultural understanding and scholarship through education, networking and resource development; it is related to the Department of Religion at Temple University. The ICCE, with offices in Philadelphia, Lebanon, and Jordan, runs domestic and international programs which promote cultural understanding, and tolerance for religious, ethnic and racial differences. Together we are very eager to welcome you to the United States and to offer you a wonderful learning experience based at Temple University.

There is much specific information you will need before arriving in the United States. Please consult the program website: www.rpa.jesdialogue.org, which includes all the details you will need to succeed in this program. The website covers topics such as program objectives, course requirements, the study tour, housing and meals, rules and regulations, expenses, etc. **You will want to pay special attention to the “Preparing for your trip” section. (Note: If you would like us to send you the information in this section directly via e-mail, just contact Dr. Sheetz-Willard or Dr. Zasloff – see below).** Please check the website regularly since new information will be added as we get closer to January. Likewise feel free to email us with individual concerns and questions. And of course when you arrive here we will be ready to orient you to the program, to the campus and to our city of Philadelphia. Above all we want you to feel comfortable throughout your program.

We sincerely hope that you will have an excellent experience here that will enrich your personal development as a student and a leader within your own community. Likewise we want to encourage connections amongst all of us that will be long lasting, valuable and enjoyable to everyone over the years to come.

Looking forward to meeting you and sharing memorable weeks together,

Julia Sheetz-Willard, Ph.D.
Director, Dialogue Institute
jsheetz@temple.edu

Barbara Zasloff, Ph.D.
President, International Center for Contemporary Education
barbara@icceducation.org