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> [Press Releases \(Other\)](#) > [2006](#) > [July](#)

Media Note

Office of the Spokesman

Washington, DC

July 25, 2006

President Bush Announces Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program

President George W. Bush, in a joint press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki today, announced a new program for the rising generation of young Iraqis, who represent the future leadership of the developing democratic nation. The program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, will serve two hundred male and female students from all regions and sectors of Iraqi society. Beginning summer 2007, the initiative will bring high school and university students to the United States for two innovative programs designed to promote mutual understanding, leadership development, educational transformation, and democratic ideals.

The Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program for high school students will bring one hundred Iraqi young people, ages 15-18, to the United States for four weeks to participate in two-week period of home stays, a civic education workshop in Washington, D.C., and a week at a camp or other site. The students will participate in activities focused on leadership development, conflict resolution and structured interaction with American youth. The workshop will include briefings, simulations, and discussions on citizen participation and the fundamentals of democratic government.

The Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program for undergraduate students will bring one hundred young Iraqi men and women at the university level (recent high school graduates and those completing their first and second years of university), ages 18-20, to participate in six-week summer programs on five U.S. university campuses. The program will be specially designed to enhance leadership skills, develop an understanding of U.S. institutions and provide a stimulating educational experience centered on subjects such as science, math, media, entrepreneurship and public policy. The campus programs will include cultural enrichment activities and will engage American student peers as co-learners with the Iraqi students.

U.S. Department of State exchange programs, administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, are committed to empowering the future generation of leaders and establishing long-lasting ties between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. For further information, please contact Nicole Deaner, 202-203-7613 or Catherine Stearns, 202-203-5107.

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 [BACK TO TOP](#)



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