The International Student Journey in the United States and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis

A Presentation to the International Student House Board
Wednesday, April 16th, 2014
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Why the research matters...

Fast Facts:

• 819,644 --number of international students in the U.S. in 2012/2013

• 87,100 –number of international students in the Netherlands in 2012/2013

• Over $24 billion--the amount foreign student populations contributed to the U.S economy in 2012/2013

*IIE Open Doors Report 2013*
Key Qualitative Findings:
International Student Journey

Information and Housing
- Word of mouth, in person interactions preferred method of communication

Sense of welcome and community bonding
- Time abroad viewed positively
- Engagement through volunteerism

Programming
- High satisfaction with programming
- Desire for variety
- Increase interactions with board members

Employment
- High interest in long term employment in U.S.
- Career development resources and events

Alumni Relations
“...any way I can help”
“...in all possible ways. I love the ISH”
- 89% of respondents want to stay connected
- 76% prefer to stay in contact via e-mail
- Social media: Facebook and LinkedIn
Key Findings: Quantitative

Institutional Bonding

- 89% of respondents from International Student House (ISH) say that they would like to remain in contact with the institution.

Q: Are you interested in staying connected with your host institution (ISH) after the program?

Yes 48 89%
No 6 11%
Key Findings: Quantitative

Housing

- 74% of The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) and 87% of ISH respondents said that their housing situation “influenced their experience in the host country”
- ISH as a best practice for The Netherlands’ housing challenge

Q: Do you believe your housing situation has influenced your experience in the host country?

Yes: 47  87%
No:   7   13%
Key Findings: Quantitative

Welcome and Community Bonding

- Home Hospitality: 61% of respondents hadn’t experienced home hospitality during their time at ISH, and 80% said they thought it would enhance their experience.

Q: Have you had the opportunity to experience home hospitality?

- Yes: 21 39%
- No: 33 61%

Q: Do you think this would enhance your time abroad?

- Yes: 43 80%
- No: 11 20%
Key Findings: Quantitative

Retention and Employment

- 70% of ISH respondents expressed a desire to stay in their host countries and find employment.

Q: Do you have an interest in finding employment in your host country after completing your program?

Yes 38 70%
No 16 30%
Methodology

Mixed Method Approach

• Quantitative
  o Student/Resident Surveys (n=88; 54 ISH and 34 THUAS)

• Qualitative
  o Alumni focus group
  o Individual administrative, resident, and alumni interviews for both clients
Recommendations: ISH

Orientation, Information, Housing

- Formalize a peer-to-peer orientation by creating welcome committee of staff and residents
- Welcome letter, orientation packet, map of city, etc.

Sense of welcome and community bonding

- Build partnerships with schools, institutions, and businesses
- Formalize a buddy program (desire to interact with more Americans; “Americans in the house do not count”)
- Home hospitality program

Programming

- Invite community and business leaders to speak on various topics like volunteerism and career development opportunities
- Offer participant-driven dialogue sessions on various topics pertaining to intercultural communication and cultural understanding
Recommendations: ISH

Alumni: (Building the Network)
• Create an internship position to help staff develop and monitor the alumni network and social media presence
• Establish an official alumni e-newsletter to be sent out monthly
• Use a combination of email and social networks to keep in touch with alumni: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram

Engaging Alumni
• Identify chapter leaders to coordinate country-specific alumni activities and events (based on nationality)
• Host happy hour and networking events (in the House)
• Leave the house open for alumni guest dinner with current residents
• Provide alumni outreach for donors (after 5+ years)
Recommendations: ISH

Employment

- Continue offering career development workshops on topics such as resume and cover letter writing, DC networking and job searching, and the nature of professionalism

- Diversify guest speakers by including more representatives from STEM fields alongside those involved in politics, economics, and business

- Create searchable detailed alumni database by region or country on ISH website (name, field, organization, mentorship areas)
Q & A

We thank you for your attentiveness and welcome your questions!

A special thanks to: Cynthia Bunton, Bill Crocker, Larry Dunham, Robert Gertz, Kathryn Horlick, Sherry Mueller, Tom O’Coin, Jennifer Simpson, Jackie van Marle, Kimberley Brewster, Willem Post and The Hague University of Applied Sciences