



For Immediate Release

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Eight Universities Win Funding through *100,000 Strong in the Americas*

FLORIANOPOLIS, BRAZIL, September 26, 2014: U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, Liliana Ayalde, announced eight new winners of *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund grants at Partners of the Americas' 50th Anniversary Convention, organized with the Association of Bi-National Centers of Latin America (ABLA) to convene more than 400 leaders and volunteers from the Americas in Florianopolis, Brazil.

This fourth round of grant funding was sponsored by the ExxonMobil Foundation and focused on promoting study abroad in engineering, physics, geology, and geophysics. Higher education institutions in the U.S. partnered with institutions in Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Mexico to submit the winning proposals.

President Obama's goal for *100,000 Strong in the Americas* is to reach at least 100,000 U.S. students studying, training, or researching abroad in the countries of the Western Hemisphere each year by 2020. An equal number of students from other countries in the hemisphere are likewise expected to learn and train in the United States. The initiative is aimed at enhancing hemispheric competitiveness, at increasing prosperity, and at better preparing a globally aware workforce.

Globally, a strong emphasis on education empowers communities and builds the foundation for human progress. One area of focus for the ExxonMobil Foundation is on math and science education because these subjects are — and will increasingly be — the universal languages of the global workplace and are critical tools for success in today's high-tech world.

The awards are of \$25,000 each, and will leverage commitments by these winning colleges and universities to increase student mobility and address institutional barriers that prevent students from studying abroad.

MORE

The next competition of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund is open now and sponsored by The Coca-Cola Foundation. It will focus on the fields of health and nutrition with an emphasis on programs that positively address the challenges of obesity and that highlight the importance of physical activity.

The 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund is a partnership of the U.S. Department of State, NAFSA: Association of International Educators and Partners of the Americas.

The grants were awarded to:

Winner: Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA, U.S.

Strategic Partner: Universidad Anáhuac Maya, Merida, Yucatán, Mexico

To: Create a new generation of a two-way summer study abroad programs by expanding on an existing partnership. Exchanges will focus on innovative hands-on and service learning activities. Students will use laser-based scanning instruments to produce 3D point-cloud models of selected structures, such as a millenary Mayan ruin or modern structures to control coastal erosion.

Winner: Texas A&M University- Texarkana, Texarkana, TX, U.S.

Strategic Partner: Universidad Autónoma de Bucaramanga, Bucaramanga, Colombia

To: Create a program where students from both institutions participate and develop community based environmental / energy experiential stations. Collaborating institutions will work with the community so that this will help serve as a foundation to develop similar programs.

Winner: Universidad de Colima, Colima, Mexico

Strategic Partners: University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, U.S. and

Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI, U.S.

To: Create a program focused on the area of volcanology and develop an expanded and sustainable student exchange program between collaborating institutions. The field-based learning opportunities will be increased for U.S. students and the laboratory-based ones will be increased for their Mexican counterparts.

Winner: Universidad de La Sabana, Chía, Colombia

Strategic: Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, U.S.

To: Create a Joint Faculty-Led Mobility Program in Engineering with an overall mission to increase awareness of the education and research capacity in Colombia. Obstacles to study abroad from the U.S. perspective the project expects to tackle are: safety concerns (perception vs. reality), language barriers (lack of courses offered in English in Latin American institutions), and lack of awareness of educational and research capacity in the region. From the Colombian perspective the obstacles to be overcome are: the lack of affordable mobility opportunities in the U.S., the lack of alternative ways to improve English proficiency and the lack of short-term mobility programs offering credit.

Winner: University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, U.S.

Strategic Partners: Universidad de Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico and the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) and the National Association of Universities and Institution of Higher Education (ANUEIS), Mexico

To: Create a scalable Project Based Mobility Network to include targeted industry partners focused on collaborative, project based mobility opportunities for engineering students at selected member institutions.

Winner: University of North Texas, Denton, Texas

Strategic Partners: CETYS University, Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico

To: Promote undergraduate and graduate student mobility between the U.S. and Mexico. The program will focus on STEM workforce needs that are common to both countries. The program will establish a bi-national cohesive cohort through structures focused on technical, cultural, and social learning to promote cultural competency.

Winner: University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas, U.S.

Strategic Partner: CETYS University, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico

To: Build on existing strengths at University of Texas at El Paso related to educational programs in the field of Sustainability Engineering. The partnership is to develop a study abroad program with community impact that will showcase lasting examples of local and global sustainability through student involvement in a community driven project.

Winner: University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Oklahoma, U.S.

Strategic Partner: Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas-SP, Brazil

To: Carry out an innovative model for engaging U.S. STEM students with study abroad in Brazil and to provide an introduction to energy related geology, geophysics, and Portuguese language. The program will constitute the first of a five-year initiative to deepen and broaden collaborative activities in Brazil.

Learn more about *100,000 Strong in the Americas* at www.100kstrongamericas.org.

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The mission of **Partners of the Americas** is to connect people and organizations across borders to serve and to change lives through lasting partnerships. These partnerships create opportunity, foster understanding, and solve real-life problems. Inspired by President Kennedy and founded in 1964 under the Alliance for Progress, Partners is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization with international offices in Washington, DC. Learn more at www.partners.net or via Twitter [@partnersamerica](https://twitter.com/partnersamerica).

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