

Every Citizen a Diplomat.



U.S. CENTER FOR CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

The United States Center
for Citizen Diplomacy
promotes opportunity for
all Americans to be citizen
diplomats and affirms the
indispensable value of citizen
involvement in international
relations.

Adopted in February of 2007

“If only people will get together, then so eventually will nations.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower

Spotlight on Citizen Diplomacy

In March of 2004, 33 national leaders from international exchange organizations — including the business and academic communities — convened in Racine, Wisconsin, with the expressed intent of pursuing strategies to strengthen America’s commitment to citizen diplomacy.

From that meeting emerged a national campaign of state and local summits on citizen diplomacy, culminating in a national summit in Washington, D.C., July of 2006. The Coalition for Citizen Diplomacy, representing more than 120 U.S. organizations, was formed to implement this campaign. This movement underscored the importance of positive and sustainable engagement of Americans in a host of international exchange and educational initiatives through innovative public and private partnerships.

At the same time emerged the need to turn a nationwide spotlight on the importance and value of citizen diplomacy.

As a result, the only center of its kind in the nation — the U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy — was formed as a strategic focal point for citizen diplomacy. Launched in July of 2006, the Center is headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa.

Why is ‘citizen diplomacy’ so important now?

In an era of increasing globalization, more and more people develop their most lasting impressions through face-to-face, personal encounters, when people visit the United States or when Americans travel abroad. In this context, the ‘citizen diplomat’ is a powerful force in defining the United States to the rest of the world.

- ▶ Numerous polls and studies document that anti-American sentiment around the globe is dangerously high and has grown to unprecedented levels.
- ▶ We need to dramatically increase our capacity to reach out to the rest of the world to foster common interests and values.
- ▶ America is falling behind in the race for engagement with the world, international competitiveness, and global education excellence.

In spite of these serious concerns, the United States spends 1/10 of 1% of its budget on foreign affairs and only 1% of that on the single most important facet of U.S. foreign policy — citizen diplomacy.

This pattern of neglect must be turned around to support global engagement at all levels of society in the United States.

“As society becomes more complicated and the world more intertwined, the United States has a profound national interest in facilitating citizens outside of government to interact and communicate on a people-to-people basis with individuals of all walks of life around the globe.”

“It is not only the right, but the responsibility of every American to be a citizen diplomat, of the highest quality, for our communities and our country.” Harriet Mayor Fulbright | President, J. William and Harriet Fulbright Center

Center Agenda

In the next decade, to increase fourfold the number of Americans actively involved as citizen diplomats to more than two million — the U. S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy is:

- › Managing a national database and interactive web site of U.S. citizen diplomacy activities and programs throughout the country and world;
- › Conducting research on the impact of citizen diplomacy;
- › Providing education and training to increase effective leadership capacity to conduct citizen diplomacy programs for all ages and levels of experience;
- › Increasing private and public sector support for citizen diplomacy by expanding alliances with business, foundations, local and state governments, civic organizations of all types and the U.S. government;
- › Strengthening and expanding available, time-tested programs and developing targeted, pilot programs and initiatives to address emerging needs;
- › Encouraging pre-K-to-12 schools across the United States to increase international content in their curricula to equip students with skills that they need to become future leaders in a global world;
- › Convening National Summits and special recognition projects on Citizen Diplomacy; and
- › Consulting with Congress, the U.S. Department of State and to work with and support those countries throughout the world seeking to establish or expand their own capacity to conduct citizen diplomacy.

The United States Center for Citizen Diplomacy is a 501(c)3 organization. It relies on financial support from individuals, foundations, and other support from both the public and private sectors.

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