

JOURNAL OF

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Trends Update from ELS Educational Services



NAFSA: Diverse Voices, Shared Commitment

California Lutheran Partners with ELS

Louisiana Tech Integrates International Students

# WELCOME

Dear International Educator,

It is with great pleasure that we offer the latest issue of ELS International Pathways' *Journal of International Student Recruitment*, presenting pertinent and useful news, information, and statistics relating to trends in international student recruitment. Please take a moment to subscribe, if you haven't done so already, at [InternationalStudentRecruitment.org/Subscribe](http://InternationalStudentRecruitment.org/Subscribe).

You'll notice that this issue is in an online format, which we have chosen for its ecological footprint savings and our ability to enrich the reader experience by providing links to articles we find relevant to the concerns faced by our college and university partners.

In this issue, we provide a brief history of NAFSA on its 70th anniversary and highlight two workshops at its upcoming annual conference: "Sponsored Student Programs Concerns" and "Harnessing Recruitment Growth and New Opportunities." We also discuss International Pathway Centers at the University of St. Thomas and California Lutheran University and look at how Louisiana Tech is integrating its international students.

Our *Journal of International Student Recruitment* shares the results of our collaborations and offers relevant information on how you too can become more efficient and successful in your international recruitment.

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# NAFSA: Diverse Voices, Shared Commitment

*Conference to take place May 27-June 1 in Philadelphia*

NAFSA was founded in 1948 to promote the professional development of U.S. college and university officials responsible for assisting and advising the 25,000 foreign students (compared to the approximate 1.1 million today) who had come to study in the U.S. after World War II. At its 40th anniversary in 1988, Senator J. William Fulbright was one of its conference's plenary speakers.

NAFSA's strategic objective of pursuing a U.S. international education policy received a big endorsement in 2000 when President Clinton signed a memorandum calling for the federal government to support international education. The following year, the attacks of September 11, 2001, emphasized the importance of international expertise for national security and international understanding.

As NAFSA celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, its Annual Conference continues to serve as the preeminent destination for the diverse voices of international education, where nearly 10,000 attendees participate from more than 100 countries in a shared commitment to the core

values of international education – providing a welcoming and supportive environment for the success of students and scholars. This year's theme, "Diverse Voices, Shared Commitment," emphasizes the fact that successful international engagement depends on navigating complexity by listening to multiple perspectives. It is one thing to study and/or appreciate the "other," it is another to genuinely hear their voices – voices that lead to more authentic collaboration and speak to alternative narratives, challenging old ideas and making us think about new solutions and opportunities.

The conference will take place May 27-June 1, in Philadelphia, and will feature opportunities for informational



engagement and professional development. ELS will participate in two such programs:

### **SPONSORED STUDENT PROGRAMS CONCERNS**

FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 8:30-9:30 AM

Changes in economic and political factors and increasingly negative perceptions of the U.S. have impacted the enrollment of international students. Prospective students and their families question the value of investing in a U.S. degree. Can similar trends be observed in the sponsored-student area? The current enrollment situation and projected future trends for sponsored-student programs will be discussed, and attendees will gain strategies to strengthen institutional relationships with sponsors.

ELS Language Center Director in Grand Forks at the University of North Dakota Bella Hettich will be one of the presenters. A former international student herself, and with more than 13 years of experience managing various aspects of an intensive English program on a large campus, she has taught as a college lecturer/professor in the fields of ESL, linguistics, and English. She also has worked as a Russian translator in international development agencies in the regions of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

### **HARNESSING RECRUITMENT GROWTH AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

TUESDAY, MAY 29, 1:00-2:00 PM

An expert panel from U.S. Commercial Service, Institute of International Education, English Language Services,

and Foothill-De Anza Community College District presents trends in demand for U.S. higher education and examines case studies on the best methods for developing strong partnerships to achieve campus diversity.

Panelists will share data that demonstrate trends in growth of student mobility in regions and countries not well-known for recruitment, summarize current demand and best market-entry strategies for U.S. higher education in emerging markets, and discuss case studies and methods in partnership development, to build strong and lasting recruitment efforts to address campus diversity.

Representing ELS will be Jeff Hutcheson, who now leads business development for ELS Educational Services, Inc. In this role, Jeff connects our services to clients throughout the globe in support of ELS's vision of fostering global citizenship and leadership. Jeff has 27 years of experience in international education, specifically with Intensive English Programs and U.S. higher education. For the past 15 years, Jeff has served as ELS as the senior director of U.S. operations, working with our corps of dedicated professionals in delivering ELS's quality programs and services.

We hope to see you at the conference. ELS will be at booth #2031.

## Flying High with Rija

*“Don’t worry about being afraid of your English skills.”*

We spoke with Rija Fanantenana Andriamboavonjy, from Madagascar, who took English for Academic Purposes and is now an aviation major at Louisiana Tech University. He rates his ELS experience as good, saying, “ELS helped me a lot to improve my English skills and to get ready for the university.” He’s also very satisfied with Fan Education, which helped him through all the processes of admission and visa.

“Louisiana Tech University is a good school for my dream of being a pilot. It’s also a really good cost. It’s easy to make

friends, and you can join organizations or fraternities to have fun. I like the aviation classes,” Rija said.

For students back home considering studying in the U.S., Rija gives this advice: “Don’t worry about being afraid of your English skills, because ELS can help you with that.”

We won’t be afraid to fly with Rija one day, confident in his mastery of both aviation and English.





# University of St. Thomas

## *Pathways: The Next Stage in Strategic Internationalization at the University of St. Thomas*

Currently ranked #115 nationally by *U.S. News & World Report*, the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota transformed itself over the last decade from a high-quality, though relatively small, regional private liberal arts college to the largest private university in Minnesota. Now nationally- and internationally-known and home to nearly 10,000 students, St. Thomas offers a wide range of highly attractive academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Building on its 20-year experience as a host institution for the ELS Language Center in St. Paul, the University of St. Thomas and ELS recently announced the signing of a collaborative agreement to develop an undergraduate pathway program set to open in 2019.

### **A TRUE PARTNERSHIP**

“The 20-year partnership between ELS and the University of St. Thomas has proven that we share the same commitment to providing international students with education of the highest quality and standards. This new pathway program

brings together a nationally ranked university, and ELS’s more than 55-year history and impeccable reputation within the U.S. higher education sector,” said ELS Executive Vice President Alexandra (Sasha) Zilovic, “We are thrilled to be working side-by-side with the University of St. Thomas to offer this outstanding new program, and help students achieve their academic goals.”

“The pathway only works when both sides are really on one side. Functionally that means we think of ELS as part of the University of St. Thomas and they see us as part of ELS. Not ‘us’ and ‘them’, just us,” said Associate Vice



Provost for Global Learning and Strategy at the University of St. Thomas Dr. Timothy Lewis.

### A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO INTERNATIONALIZATION

Long a national leader in short-term study abroad programs, St. Thomas wished to expand its already-diverse, albeit graduate-heavy international student population of more than 500 students from 60 countries. But, aggressive growth without ensuring quality and building in the appropriate support structures is counterproductive in the long run. “The staff at St. Thomas clearly understand that broadening the admissions funnel – and then providing the extra, intentional support mechanisms and ESL framework needed for student success in a pathway program – is the best way to achieve considerable growth beyond the traditional IEP model in today’s highly competitive global international student marketplace,” said Director of University Partnerships for ELS Ben Iverson.

Indeed, the university views their new undergraduate pathway program as an opportunity to transform campus. “Successful internationalization on campus requires a diversity of students we just can’t get on our own. But that diversity fundamentally changes the classroom, the

curriculum, our pedagogy, and our relevance in a complex, interconnected world,” said Dr. Lewis.

Students will earn a full year’s worth of undergraduate credits in core areas, while being fully supported with ESL coursework and ongoing orientation and acculturation activities. “The undergraduate pathway program will lead students to any of St. Thomas’ more than 80 undergraduate majors, though we expect lots of interest in St. Thomas’ excellent business, science and engineering programs,” said Director of Pathway Operations for ELS Lisa Smoker. “St. Thomas’ location in a vibrant area between downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul and extensive established network of internship opportunities is very attractive for international students as well.”

“The faculty and staff at St. Thomas are friendly and welcoming for international students and so willing to do whatever it takes to make this new pathway program – and, ultimately, the new students in it – successful. We couldn’t ask for better partners than the folks at the University of St. Thomas as we jointly open ELS’s first undergraduate pathway program,” said Ms. Smoker.

## ABOUT INTERNATIONAL PATHWAY PROGRAMS

The International Pathway programs prepare international students for academic study by allowing them to take English courses and core requirement courses simultaneously within their first year – enabling them to reach the level of English proficiency for normal admissions while pursuing the degree program of their choice. ELS has launched the International Pathway program at both the undergraduate level at the University of St. Thomas, and the graduate level at California Lutheran University.



# California Lutheran University

*“Quality is extremely important.”*

California Lutheran University, which enjoys an 11-year partnership with ELS and hosts students from some 45 countries, will soon launch a new Graduate Pathway program, the first of its kind at the university, and the first in California, according to MBA Program Director Dr. Sumantra Sengupta.

In the traditional model currently offered, students enroll at CLU’s on-campus ELS program in preparation for matriculation into university programs once they have completed Level 112 of the English for Academic Purposes program. By contrast, students who enroll in the new Graduate Pathway Center will be able to begin the MBA program earlier, simultaneously attending MBA courses with domestic students while continuing to improve their English language skills with ELS.

“This is the major attraction of a pathway: students begin their degree program sooner, saving them time and money,” said ELS Director of University Partnerships Ben Iverson. “Their parents take comfort in the fact that they’re already ‘in’ the degree program, not just studying English with a hope that they’ll eventually get in. But, an additional benefit that students and parents don’t always realize is that our pathway

model provides very intentional campus integration and support structures beyond what an average student entering the degree program might expect. This extra level of support sets pathway students up to succeed.”

A new location in Woodland Hills, home to many small and midsize companies, offering opportunities for mentorships and entrepreneur/executive interaction, will house the program.

In setting up this program, Dr. Sengupta brings his business acumen to the table. Before joining California Lutheran less than two years ago, he enjoyed a 25-year career with Ernst & Young, specializing in turnarounds, including that of a \$1 billion agricultural firm in Abu Dhabi. He believes in running the MBA program as any other business endeavor and evaluates business partners accordingly. He asks them: “Do we think in similar ways and share the mind-set in our



approach to recruiting students? While the numbers are important, quality is extremely important.”

He wants to make sure students are prepared for the program, once enrolled. During onboarding, he explains that it’s important to hand hold students through counseling with a student advisor to establish a two-year plan, asking them where they want to be in five or 10 years, and advising them in course selection accordingly. Faculty members report warning signs that indicate where extra help may be needed.

Domestic students and professors need to understand the benefits of having international students in their classes. Cultural training is provided to new instructors, who are chosen for having a global mindset.

The International Programs Office, dedicated to providing social support and immigration advisement for the well-being of international students who attend California Lutheran, offers immigration advice, workshops, and social activities for international students. It also serves as an educational resource for students, faculty, and staff. Programs and activities encourage international and American students to interact to provide an enriched campus community for all.

Finally, while it may appear to be a cliché, it must be a win-win partnership, where  $1 + 1 = 3$ , in a healthy relationship, which is not competitive, keeping the financial needs of stakeholders with the need for quality education in balance. Dedicated staff members maintain daily contact with the ELS staff to ensure that their international students succeed. At the end of the evaluation, California Lutheran has found the right partner in ELS, which has a nearly 60-year history of successful partnerships with universities and delivers high-quality ESL instruction.

“Developing new pathway programs with strategic university partners is the natural next extension in our history of helping both universities and students achieve their goals,” said Mr. Iverson.

Dr. Sengupta believes that being “first to market” with the new Graduate Pathway program will make California Lutheran’s MBA program, already proud of its 10,000 alumni, an even more attractive choice for international graduate students, going forward.



# Kindai University

*Students experience a deeper immersion into American culture*

Kindai University in Osaka, Japan, established its Faculty of International Studies in 2016 with the goal of educating and developing students to become globally minded members of society. To help students achieve these goals, Kindai has partnered with ELS and its host institution university partners to provide an academic year program in the U.S. during students' first year of study. In 2016/17, 475 students enrolled at 27 partner universities and ELS centers. In the 2017/18 academic year, there are currently 487 Kindai students enrolled at 31 partner universities and ELS centers.

In order to improve students' language skills prior to arrival, ELS offers language instruction on the Kindai campus during the first semester of their freshman year, employing teachers recruited from other ELS Centers in the U.S. Upon arrival in the U.S., students begin the English for Academic Purposes program at the Center located on the host university campus with which Kindai has partnered. After 16 weeks of study at ELS, if students have achieved the required proficiency, they are provided the opportunity to enroll either concurrently while continuing study at ELS, or as full-time students.

According to the Dean of Faculty of International Studies Virgil Craig, "We are about to complete the second year of our program and have seen very positive results. Our students have returned to Japan with very good language skills, a deeper understanding and acceptance of cultural differences, and a level of maturity seen in older students. At the same time, we believe they have had a strong impact on promoting Japanese business and culture."

"The Kindai program may be the largest program of its type in the United States, but increasingly other Japanese universities are developing gap year programs," said ELS's Senior Director of Recruitment and Partner Support Mari Aral. Faced with a declining population, Japanese people increasingly understand the value of developing a global view of the world, and academic-year programs such as the one provided by Kindai allow students to experience a deeper immersion into American culture. Some Japanese universities limit their program to partnership with U.S. colleges and universities with which they have articulation agreements. "ELS's nationwide network of language centers and college and university partnerships lends itself to universities interested in sending larger cohorts of students," says Aral.

In partnership with other Japanese universities, ELS is currently working on developing such programs with American four-year universities and community colleges.



*“Our students have returned to Japan with very good language skills, a deeper understanding and acceptance of cultural differences ...”*



Kindai University, a prestigious institution of higher learning located in the Kinki area of western Japan that includes the major industrial city of Osaka, was established in 1949 as Kinki University (but changed its name in 2016) from the merger of a technical college and a science and engineering university. It is one of the biggest universities in western Japan, with 13 faculties, 11 graduate schools and over 30,000 students. The school seeks to build its international reputation and become the top private university in western Japan, expanding admission of exchange students. It made the news by opening two restaurants in Tokyo and Osaka that serve Pacific Bluefin tuna, which the school helped farm-raise.

Source: *The Wall Street Journal*

# 2017 Open Doors® Report

## *International Students in the United States*

International students contributed more than \$39 billion to the U.S. economy in 2016. Students from around the world who study in the U.S. also contribute to America’s scientific and technical research and bring international perspectives into U.S. classrooms.

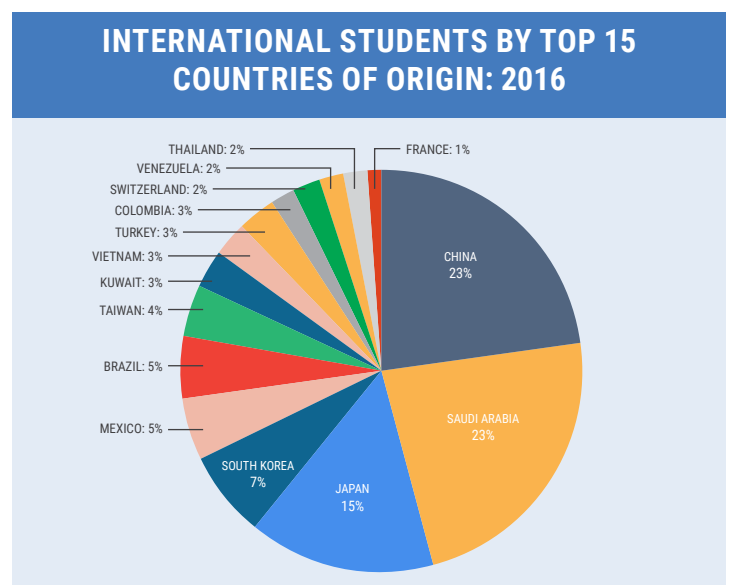
Enrollment of international students in U.S. higher education increased by 3.4 percent to 1,078,822 students in 2016/17, with almost 35,000 more students than the prior year. This marks the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that Open Doors reported expansion in the total number of international students in U.S. higher education and 85 percent more international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities than a decade ago.

International students represent just over 5 percent of the more than 20 million students enrolled in U.S. higher education, up from three to 4 percent earlier in the decade. This increase is due to both the growing numbers of international students and small declines in the number of

American students enrolled in U.S. higher education since its peak in 2012/13.

The largest growth was in the number of students from India, primarily at the graduate level and in optional practical training (OPT). China remains the top sending country, with almost twice the number of students in the U.S. as India, but India’s rate of growth outpaced China’s.

Students from China and India now represent approximately 50 percent of the total enrollment of international students in the U.S. Despite a decrease of 3.8 percent, South Korea moved up to the third leading place of origin.



The number of students from the fourth leading host, Saudi Arabia, decreased by 14.2 percent to 52,608 from its previous high of more than 61,000, largely due to changes in the Saudi government scholarship program, now approaching its 14th year. The largest drop was among students from Brazil, who declined 32.4 percent to 13,089 students. This decrease can be attributed to the conclusion of the Brazil government's Scientific Mobility Program, which previously sponsored many Brazilian students' U.S. studies.

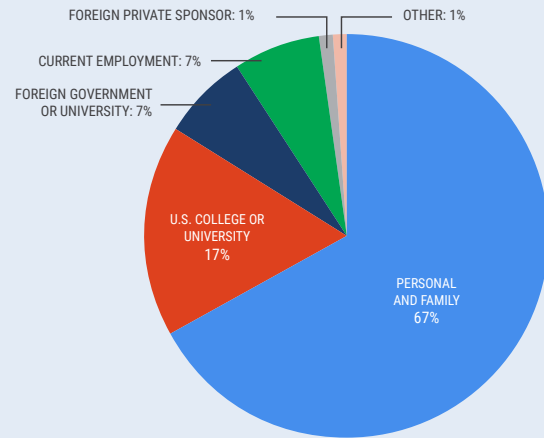
The growth in international students coming to the U.S. for higher education has a significant positive impact on the economy. International students contributed more than \$39 billion to the U.S. economy in 2016, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce—a large increase over the previous year's total of \$35 billion. The 2017 *Open Doors Report* says that about two-thirds of all international students receive the majority of their funds from sources outside of the U.S., including personal and family sources as well as assistance from their home country governments or universities.

Students from around the world who study in the U.S. also contribute to America's scientific and technical research and bring international perspectives into U.S. classrooms, helping prepare American students for global careers, and often lead to longer-term business relationships and economic benefits.

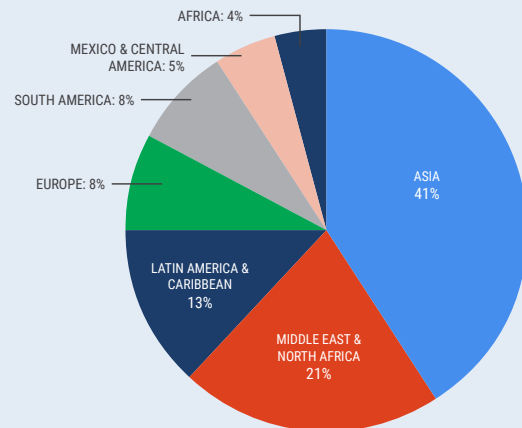
New York City is the top metropolitan area for international students, followed by Los Angeles, Boston, and Chicago. Dallas surpassed San Francisco as the fifth leading metropolitan area.

Source: Institute of International Education (IIE)

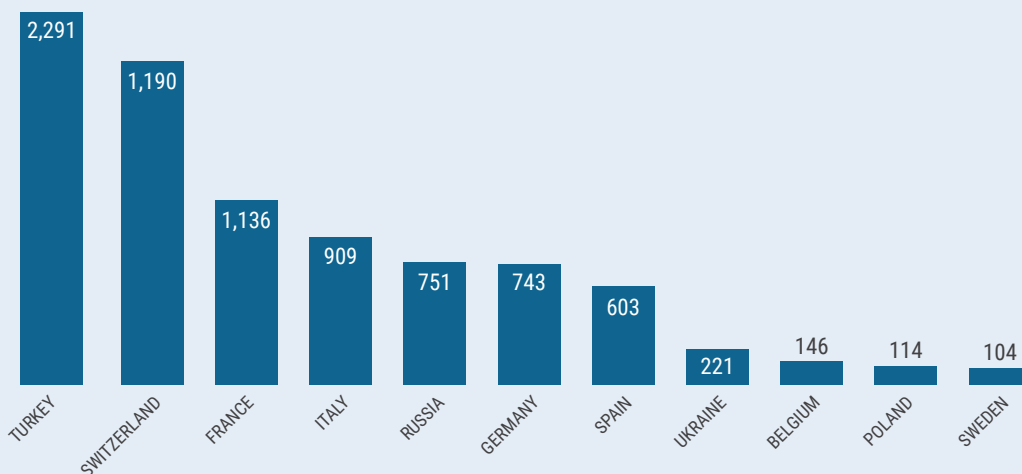
## FUNDING SOURCES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: 2015/2016



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY REGION OF ORIGIN: 2016



## STUDENTS FROM EUROPE 2016 (COUNTRIES REPRESENTING 100+ STUDENTS)





# Louisiana Tech and ELS Prepare Students for Success

*“Empathy is the key difference in giving international students a positive experience.”*

Louisiana Tech University works very hard to recruit internationally. Its approximate 13,000 students hail from 47 states and 64 countries on its Ruston campus. Located about an hour from Shreveport, LA, the Louisiana Tech campus is hardly a place that comes to mind as a hub of internationalism. How does the school maximize the potential of these students?

Louisiana Tech knows how important it is to make international students feel welcomed. The goal of its International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is to empower international students to realize their goals academically, socially, and professionally. According to Director of International Student and Scholar Services Jay Ligon, providing customer service that exceeds expectations is the most important ingredient to success. He notes that the concept of “customer service” is often foreign in some academic circles, yet is critically linked to student retention, a goal embraced by all.

Reviewing data on retention and asking: “What do students want? What pressures are they facing from their professors, peers, and, particularly for Chinese students, from their parents?” may seem like the purview of a Madison Avenue agency, but when acted upon, can transform the student experience.

Setting realistic expectations is also important. The example of an international engineering student who was able to follow her professor’s lectures comfortably, but due to Southern accents and language barriers, had difficulty participating in group projects and discussions with lab



partners, comes to mind. In counseling, she learned that this communication struggle is a necessary hurdle to overcome for her and her lab partners. In today's economy, especially in tech companies, they will need to engage with international project teams to achieve success in the workplace. Some generous Louisiana Tech graduates, now working at a Fortune 500 company, donated to Louisiana Tech's endowment, in part to benefit international engineering students, realizing that a successful workforce in Louisiana will need to interact with international teams, and that international students provide many locals with their first international encounters.

Louisiana Tech understands that there may be a common misconception that all ELS students automatically matriculate to their host university, especially since many are conditional-admissions. This unfortunately is not the case, so an ISSS team member engages regularly throughout the ELS session. And in the interest of full disclosure, Ligon is a former ELS director, so he shares both the ELS and university perspectives.

To increase matriculation rates, the ISSS team has arranged walk-throughs of graduate labs, showing ELS students equipment they will be working with and introducing them to graduate assistants and professors with whom they will potentially be interacting. It is also possible to participate in a unique certificate program developed between ELS and Louisiana Tech to allow a partial audit of a university class for one ELS session to better understand the academic and social experience.

"Empathy is the key difference," Ligon emphasizes, "in giving giving international students a positive experience."

He also encourages educators to take advantage of FAM (familiarization) tours, citing the experiences of Vice President for Student Advancement Dr. James M. King, and Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Richard Crawford, who shared a trip to China that made them more aware of international students' needs.

Given Louisiana Tech's track record, with overall freshman enrollment up 16.9 percent since 2013, and this year's ELS matriculation growing from six countries to 11, the university's empathetic efforts are paying rich dividends.



# Africa (Still) Rising

Throughout 2017, ELS continued to invest in student recruitment from the continent of Africa. While the focus pre-2017 had very much been on Francophone West Africa, 2017 saw a more expansionist approach. For example, ELS organized exploratory visits to Rwanda and Madagascar in East Africa in 2017, and just recently, in March 2018, held its first recruitment events in Central Africa, with visits to the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, the last 12 months have seen the first serious attempt to develop business from Anglophone Africa.

## THE ELS AGENT NETWORK

In addition to in-country recruitment visits, ELS has invested significant time and resources in building and developing its network of agent partners across Africa, adding new agent partners in 10 countries.

The rapid development of Madagascar as a new market highlights one very important point when it comes to marketing in Africa—that a trustworthy, dynamic, and loyal agent partner in-country continues to play a key role in student recruitment. Any statistical analysis of Madagascar would raise questions as to whether there was a sufficient market in the country. However, having the right agent on the ground has meant that all three recruitment trips to date have introduced ELS to good numbers of qualified

candidates and, with the ongoing support of that agent, ELS is now seeing a steady stream of Malagasy students into its Centers and then on into partner colleges and universities.

In addition to the important role that agents play in student recruitment, regular reviews of visa issuance rates from sub-Saharan Africa also show greater success if students have applied via a trusted agent than if they handle the visa application themselves.

As part of its ongoing commitment to building a network of reliable agent partners, ELS organized a familiarization (FAM) tour for five African agents in September 2017. During one intensive week, representatives from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Senegal, and Madagascar visited seven universities and community colleges in Ohio, Indiana, Louisiana, and California. Already the fruits of that trip are becoming clear: applications from the participating agents have increased 80 percent in six months.

So, while investing in broadening the network of agent partners, significant investment is also going into the ongoing training of that agent network to ensure that both ELS and its partner institutions are properly and faithfully represented to potential candidates and their parents. The consequence of this investment has led to ELS welcoming students from 30 of the 54 African nations in 2017.

## ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

Why does ELS expend resources on student recruitment activities in Anglophone Africa? From regular dialogue with many university partners, Anglophone countries are often at the forefront of their thinking when considering





opportunities to recruit students from Africa. With much recruitment activity focused on Francophone Africa, it made logistical sense to look at Ghana as a sandbox for considering ways of recruiting students for direct admission into priority partner institutions.

## RECRUITMENT TOOLS

As ELS continues to invest in Africa, we seek new ways of raising awareness of the opportunities to study affordably in the U.S. Spotty Internet coverage means that webinars are not currently effective in the majority of African markets, Skype can be inconsistent, and many students review their e-mails infrequently. As a result, WhatsApp plays an increasingly important role in reaching out to students and their parents, addressing any concerns and talking them through the application process. Students from sub-Saharan Africa are much more likely to respond in a timely manner to a WhatsApp message than to an e-mail.

However, it is important to stress that face-to-face marketing in sub-Saharan Africa is still the best way to build trust. With much of the potential from sub-Saharan Africa being at the undergraduate level, high school visits remain an inexpensive and effective way to get the message out about your institution.

With this in mind, ELS embarked on its most ambitious recruitment tour thus far, organizing six fairs in four countries (Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire) over nine days in December, with the assistance of local agent partners and supported by the attendance of six college and university partners. In addition, a program of school visits

was organized in Benin, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire, where a number of interested students were introduced to officials at the American embassy, with the help of EducationUSA.

However, reaching out to parents is important, especially for directing their questions to a representative of an institution, rather than leaving them to read the minutiae of a website or prospectus. A parents' evening in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire was organized, where participating institutions were introduced in an informal manner to a group of approximately 80 carefully selected parents.

Of course, it is important to state that a boots-on-the-ground recruitment strategy is only successful if the institution being represented has the right price-point and study offerings. Universities with relatively high tuition fees at the undergraduate level may want to consider robust scholarship opportunities based on academic merit, in order to bring the overall cost of a year of study to as close to \$25,000 as possible.

The next recruitment tour is tentatively scheduled for January 2019. Any partner institution potentially interested in participating in the tour, or which is simply interested in exploring recruitment opportunities from sub-Saharan Africa in general, is encouraged to contact Simon Gooch at [sgooch@els.edu](mailto:sgooch@els.edu).



# India Dispatch

The high-tech industry continues to generate constant hopes of a gold rush resurgence, propelling the higher education aspirations of Indians, as they seek to join the league of Bloomberg billionaires for a slice of the fortune. However, their perceptions of a less welcoming climate, and increased visa scrutiny for foreign nationals in the U.S., are restrictive for enrollments to universities, especially for those with lower brand recognition.

According to recent U.S. Department of State data, there was a 28 percent decline in F-1 visas issued in 2017 compared to the previous year. While global ranking of the university could be one factor that helps students make destination choices, restrictive U.S. policies may be another factor for this decline.

## U.S. POLICIES

Recent constraints posed by the current administration on H-1B visa issuance is a concern to some students who believe, “the visa restrictions will hit career dreams of a large number of Indians.”<sup>1</sup> In February 2018, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced new policies for H-1B petitioners, requiring more detailed documentation to ensure the legitimacy of such petitions. The USCIS requires that a preponderance of evidence be provided to prove that:

1. The beneficiary is assigned specific work in a specialty occupation with more details required on the nature of the work assignment;
2. The petition should be supported by a Labor Condition Application (LCA) corresponding to that occupation;
3. The H-1B visa will be granted only for the duration of the specific assignment.

Previously, petitions were less detailed and granted for a period of three years with an extension of another three years almost guaranteed. Moreover, on March 20, 2018, when USCIS temporarily suspended premium processing of H-1B visa petitions that allow applicants to fast track the process, from the usual three to six months to 15 days, for

an additional fee of \$1,225, Indian technology companies and their employees were sent into a state of gloom.

These policies are less likely to have the same effect on STEM students who embark on their future careers on an F-1 visa. These students receive up to one year of CPT visa to pursue off-campus work before they graduate and up to three years of off-campus employment authorization after they graduate. While the U.S. issues 65,000 H-1B visas under the general quota, an additional 20,000 visas are available for individuals who have an advanced degree from U.S. universities, thereby increasing the prospects for F-1 students with the appropriate theoretical knowledge and technical skills to pursue employment in the U.S.

Zero tolerance policy of the USCIS in issuing H-1B visas may be much more a constraint on information technology companies based in India because the H-1B visas fueled the growth of these companies for more than a decade. However, it is an opportunity for F-1 students to equip themselves with the right skills early in their career to pursue their American dream. That said, ELS will continue to service this segment through our various direct recruitment and Language Center offerings.

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Times*, April 2, 2018.

# ELS History And Mission

At ELS, our mission is to enable international student mobility by creating pathways that help talented scholars apply to, attend, succeed, and graduate from the finest institutions worldwide, thus multiplying the creativity, knowledge, and understanding that improves quality of life for all. ELS partners with U.S. higher education institutions to provide comprehensive services that raise awareness about their diversity, programs, and value, while providing a variety of options to our partners, some of which are available at little or no cost.

ELS students pursue a complete range of English and test-preparation programs while benefitting from conditional acceptance to U.S. institutions. Our programs blend academic, practical, and cultural language skills. ELS offers a superior learning environment and tools, including a comprehensive instruction system, unique curriculum, customized and up-to-date texts, and branded language-learning software. We set and achieve established, integral core competency goals and optional skills-enhancement enrichment for each student.

## ELS reaches prospective students through a multitude of platforms, including:

- ELS.edu in 14 languages, UniversitySearch.com in 20 languages
- Advertising, social media, recommendations of family and friends
- Worldwide network of 50+ ELS Language Centers, including Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, Panama, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S.
- Qualified study-abroad student counselors in 111 countries and 620 student fairs reaching more than 222,000 students in 25 countries
- Offices located in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the U.K., the U.S., and Vietnam

ELS creates international visibility for its university partners. Each year, ELS distributes customized, partner-approved promotional catalogues in 20 languages to showcase partner institutions. ELS also publishes the annual print *University Guide* (for the U.S. and Canada), with detailed information on more than 600 partner universities.

## FOUR WAYS ELS HELPS:

1. International Pathway programs—joint programs to help students enroll
2. Language Centers on campuses
3. Recruitment partnerships
4. Conditional admission

## ELS University Partner Services are able to:

- Recruit qualified international students for conditional admission / university acceptance
- Promote via ELS's 2,300 international recruitment offices and ELS Authorized Counseling Agents in 111 countries
- Promote via ELS's core marketing avenues, including websites, brochures, and bulletins; distribute catalogs throughout agent offices, student fairs, and at ELS Centers worldwide
- Provide sales/counseling support in ELS offices located in China, Russia, Taiwan, Turkey, and Vietnam; organize recruitment tours, student fairs, and agent meetings for partner institutions

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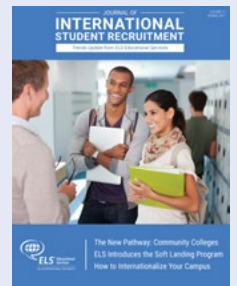
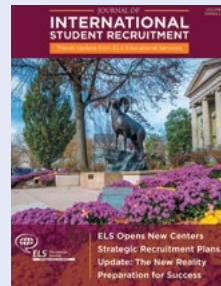
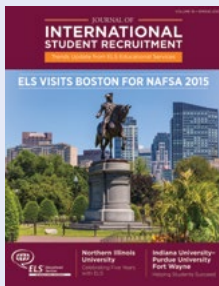
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ELS has a global reach with a local impact when it comes to international student recruitment. An industry leader, ELS not only provides intensive English language education, but holistically prepares students for success at colleges and universities worldwide. We offer comprehensive recruitment solutions like an International Pathway Center as part of your university, ELS intensive English programs on campus, a global recruitment services alliance, and much more. We have a dedicated team of industry experts who work with universities on customized internationalization and recruitment strategies to deliver qualified students positioned for success.

For further information on how ELS can help with your international student recruitment, visit [InternationalStudentRecruitment.org](http://InternationalStudentRecruitment.org).

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