

Agenda

From Virtual to In-person – Using your Virtual Exchange Skills to Study Abroad November 21, 2019

12:00pm Opening Remarks and Presentation

Kyle Kastler, Program Associate, Stevens Initiative, [@StevensInit](#)

12:15pm Panel Discussion

Leslie A. Bozeman, Ph.D., Director of Curriculum Internationalization, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), [@ellebozeman](#), [@iupuiglobal](#), [@iupui](#)

Kyle Kastler, Program Associate, Stevens Initiative, [@StevensInit](#)

Michele Peters, Branch Chief, Youth Programs, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, [@ECAatState](#)

Melissa Tolentino, Program Officer - Fulbright Programs, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, [@ECAatState](#), [@FulbrightPrgrm](#)

12:40pm Participant Q&A

Panelist Bios

Leslie A. Bozeman is Director of Curriculum Internationalization at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. In this role, she works to facilitate campus level strategic initiatives pertaining to curriculum internationalization and global learning; increase faculty, staff, and administrator understanding of those concepts; and provide guidance on how to assess student learning outcomes in intercultural and global learning. Her experience over the past 25 years includes student development, faculty development, graduate academic affairs, campus internationalization, community engagement, international development, intercultural communication, study abroad implementation, and teaching Pk-16. Leslie earned a master's degree in teaching from American University and a doctorate in higher education administration, with a concentration in international higher education, from Boston College.



Kyle Kastler is a Program Associate, where he oversees alumni engagement for participants and awardees of Stevens Initiative programs. In his role, Kyle provides support to both awardee organizations and individual participants to leverage their virtual exchange experience into future opportunities. Previously, he contributed to the field of international exchange by working on in-person youth exchange programs funded by the U.S. Department of State. Kyle joins the Initiative after completing a Master's Program in International Education Policy at the University of Maryland, College Park where he researched and wrote about practitioner perceptions of virtual exchange. Kyle, originally from Kansas, is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, a Critical Language Scholarship Recipient, and holds a B.A. in Spanish and Political Science from Missouri Southern State University.

Michele Peters oversees the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) and National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) programs. She's worked at the State Department since 2002. During that time she has been a special advisor in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA); ran International Education Week in coordination with the Department of Education; developed and managed professional, teacher, youth and other exchange programs; and has served for short-term assignments at the US Embassies in Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan. She has also been a long-time volunteer with an international youth exchange NGO, serving in the Board, developing outbound outreach capacity, recruiting host families, managing volunteers, supporting international students and host families, and building capacity of and private sector partnerships for an exchange program in South Africa. Michele's passion for exchange started when she was a high school exchange student in Venezuela. She also studied for a semester in London as an undergraduate.

Melissa Tolentino is a Program Officer for the Fulbright Programs in the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. As part of the Fulbright Outreach team, Melissa oversees the Fulbright Program's communications strategy from social media to brand management. Before joining the Bureau, Melissa served as the director of community outreach & strategic communications at the Japan-America Society of Washington DC, a grassroots organization promoting Japanese culture in the United States, and was a cultural affairs intern at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. She received her BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MA in International Culture & Communication Studies from Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan.

Join the Conversation! **@StevensInit #worldclassconnection**

The Stevens Initiative is an international effort to build global competence for young people in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa by growing and enhancing the field of virtual exchange: online, international, and collaborative learning.

Resource: Using your Virtual Exchange Skills to Study Abroad

Skills Developed During Virtual Exchange

- **Hard skills** including technology, entrepreneurship, sustainability, dialogue, coding, and other technical skills.
- **Soft skills** including cross-cultural communication, teamwork, flexibility, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.

Why do these skills matter for study abroad?

You can use these skills to 1) create a more **competitive application** for any study abroad program and 2) be a **successful participant** of an in-person exchange. How?

- On your application, use your virtual exchange experience:
 1. To show how you ALREADY developed skills and how you will use them AGAIN on your program.
 2. As an example of your curiosity and interest in different places and people.
 3. As an example of your ability to communicate and connect with someone from another culture.
- During your program, use the skills from your virtual exchange:
 1. To meet common challenges like working through misunderstandings, frustrations, or differences.
 2. To communicate with your host community members and make friends.
 3. To describe your exchange experience with your family, friends, and other home community members.

How can you find a study abroad program?

- **Research your options.** Use the internet, read about different programs, take notes about eligibility and application deadlines. Find a program that meets your goals. Start by checking out the programs below.
- **Use your resources.** Talk to your friends, teachers, school administrators, and your virtual exchange program contacts. They can help point you in the right direction.
- **Be proactive in your approach.** If you attend a university with a Study Abroad or Education Abroad office, make an appointment. During an appointment, a professional can discuss your options regarding program types, scholarships, and other important aspects of study abroad.

Sponsored Programs from the Department of State*

Programs for Secondary School Students

- **Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program** (MENA based alumni)
- **Youth Leadership Programs** (MENA based alumni)
- **YES Abroad Program** (US based alumni)
- **National Strategic Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y)** (US based alumni)

Programs for University Students & Scholars

- **Fulbright Program** (both US and MENA based alumni)
- **Gilman Program** (US based alumni)
- **Critical Language Scholarship Program** (US based alumni)
- **Studies of the US Institutes (SUSI)** (MENA based alumni)

*These programs are competitive and have specific eligibility requirements. Read the program descriptions carefully.