



NeXXt Scholars Program Doubles Participation in 2013

Media Note

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The U.S. Department of State's Office of the Science & Technology Adviser to the Secretary (E/STAS) is proud to report that participation in the NeXXt Scholars Program has more than doubled as it begins the second year. In its inaugural year, 24 women—12 International NeXXt Scholars and 12 American NeXXt Scholars—joined the program at 8 U.S. women's colleges (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/10/199153.htm>). This fall, 52 newly incoming young women have joined the program at 12 women's colleges including Barnard College, Bryn Mawr College, Chatham University, College of Saint Elizabeth, Cottey College, Douglass Residential College of Rutgers University, Mount Holyoke College, Saint Mary's College, Smith College, St. Catherine University, Wellesley College, and Wesleyan College. In this year's class, the program has 26 new International NeXXt Scholars from Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The objective of the NeXXt Scholars Program is to provide young women from 47 countries with Muslim-majority populations and their American counterparts studying at 38 U.S. women's colleges with opportunities for professional development; mentoring in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); networking; internship support; and career advancement workshops. The double X in the program's title represents the X chromosomes of women. Launched in 2009 by then Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton with seed funding from USAID's Office of Science & Technology, the NeXXt Scholars Program is a partnership between the U.S. Department of State and the New York Academy of Sciences (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/01/180291.htm>).

International NeXXt Scholars are matched with college-selected American NeXXt Scholars so the pair can explore the program together. Further, NeXXt Scholars are individually matched to female STEM mentors who provide expert guidance, advice, and exposure to STEM careers. Scholars are also granted five-year memberships to the New York Academy of Sciences to expand their network and provide career support. Through participation in the program, NeXXt Scholars supplement their college education with leadership, internship, and research opportunities that will build crucial skills and confidence, enabling these young women to become the world's 'NeXXt' STEM leaders, problem-solvers, and innovators.

In addition to the above features, NeXXt Scholars have the opportunity to gather at least annually with other participants in the program and representatives from the STEM community. This spring, the first class of NeXXt Scholars met at Barnard College in New York City for introductions, professional development, and networking training. While at the conference, the Scholars also discussed careers with female scientists at Rockefeller University and then had a reception with high-level country representatives at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations.

Educating women in STEM is crucial as this promotes the values of science—meritocracy, transparency, and data-driven decision-making. Success in the STEM fields requires hands-on, inquiry-based learning as well as laboratory and research experiences that are available in the United States. Ensuring that women have the necessary skills and education to play a role in addressing global challenges and developing emerging market economies represents a win-win for all.

For more information about the NeXXt Scholars Program, please email NeXXtScholars@state.gov or visit www.state.gov/e/stas/nexxt/.

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