

2022



Interactive Version



INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF THE CAPITAL REGION

Annual Report

CONNECTING THE CAPITAL REGION TO THE WORLD

ABOUT US

The International Center of the Capital Region is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization that hosts international exchange programs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State, the Congressional Office for International Leadership, and other organizations to promote global exchange and citizen diplomacy. Through these programs, we showcase NY's Capital Region as a destination of choice for innovation in business, education, and public policy. The ICCR also organizes international speaker programs, cultural dinners, networking events, and youth programs to engage the diverse community of NY's Capital Region.

Our mission is to connect the Capital Region to the world through people to people connections. By facilitating professional development of visiting delegations, residents of our local communities are connected to a worldwide network of leaders. The exchange experiences provide Capital Region residents the opportunity becoming local, national, and international changemakers.



The ICCR is pleased to acknowledge that this Annual Report is funded in part by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.



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MISSION

We connect NY's Capital Region to the world through citizen diplomacy.

VISION

We believe in the power of personal experiences in fostering cultural understanding and engagement in international affairs.

WHAT WE DO

- Serve as citizen ambassadors for professional and cultural exchanges
- Promote the diverse people, rich history, and unique assets of the Capital Region
- Educate and facilitate public dialogue for cultural diversity, economic development, human rights, and peace
- Develop long standing mutually beneficial relationships among people regions of the world





I have long believed that peaceful relations between nations requires understanding and mutual respect between individuals.

- Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th President of the USA

Letter

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

The past few years were challenging for the ICCR like many organizations throughout our community and all over the world. We had to innovate not only to survive, but to fulfill our mission during the on-going pandemic. In 2021, we moved our headquarters to the campus of the Hudson Valley Community College, forging a long-term partnership. With an unwavering commitment to international exchange, the ICCR not only survived, we have thrived.

We found ways to continue to fulfill our mission throughout the pandemic with virtual exchanges rather than in-person. As travel opened up, we were thrilled to welcome in-person delegates from all over the world. In 2022, the ICCR has engaged more than 100 international delegates and fellows from over 20 nations, connecting

global leaders with their counterparts here in the Capital Region. We also launched the first annual Achievement Awards to honor immigrants in the Capital Region.

We are grateful to the U.S. Department of State, Global Ties U.S., and our national program partners in Washington, D.C. for continuing their support for international exchange. Locally, the Board, professional resources, hospitality and cultural hosts, program interns, and staff work together to make the exchange experiences successful.

We appreciate our sponsors and donors, and members for their valuable contributions to promoting peace and prosperity here at home and abroad.

Sincerely,

Michael O'Brien
Board President

Jennifer Zhao
Executive Director



ECONOMIC IMPACT

ELEVATING NY'S CAPITAL REGION

When international delegations visit the Capital Region, they boost the local economy by staying in hotels, utilize local transportation, and enjoying restaurants and cultural activities such as museums and tours, as well as shopping in local stores.

They get to experience the best of what the Capital Region has to offer first-hand, and brings back wonderful memories to share with their friends at home. The delegates' understanding and appreciation for NY's Capital Region opens doors for future collaborations and tourism.

CAPITAL REGION WELCOME GUIDE



See Inside!

BY THE NUMBERS

195

Hotel Room Nights

615

Restaurant meals

99

Cultural Activity Visits

~\$105K

Estimated economic impact

STAFF AND BOARD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



PRESIDENT

Michael O'Brien

FORMER REPRESENTATIVE OF
ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL



VICE PRESIDENT

Fred Erlich

FORMER CEO AND
FOUNDER OF LIVING
RESOURCES



TREASURER

Bob Tangorre

FORMER CFO OF NYS TAX AND
FINANCE DEPARTMENT



SECRETARY

Gary McCann

SALES EXECUTIVE
MARSHALL & STERLING



Caroline Bobick

LOBBYIST, NY STATE
SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION



Dr. Jay Deitchman

GLOBAL INITIATIVES
COORDINATOR, HVCC



Gary Eichenbaum

ATTORNEY, NEW YORK STATE
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Christine Guerin

SENIOR PRODUCT DEVELOPER
ORVIS CORPORATION



Lilly Miaw

PRESIDENT
SPECTRA-PROBE, LLC



Fred Ricard

PHOTOGRAPHER,
RICARD PHOTOGRAPHY



Jennifer Richard

ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, LIVING RESOURCES



Camerine Robinson

PRESIDENT AND CEO
VQUEST CONSULTING



Jeff Saran

FINANCIAL ADVISOR
SUNMARK



Mike Yevoli

REGIONAL DIRECTOR, EMPIRE
STATE DEVELOPMENT

STAFF



Jennifer Zhao

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Holly McKenna

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

INTERNS

Prizma Adhikari
Jenny Diaz
Mikaela Cortese

Connor Greco
Fiona Hernandez
Katherine McCrackin

Bria Robinson
Arabella Ryan
Sabrina Salam
Kate Sullivan

SPEAKERS AND SUPPORTERS

Dazmat Ahmad
Leah Akinleye
Elizabeth Arden
Samantha Baltzersen
Kathryn Bamberger
Hon. Phil Barrett & Dr. Li Zhang
Alicia Barinas
Dr. Becky Bernhardt
Shoshanah Bewlay
Virginia Brady
State Sen. Neil Breslin
Anita Briggs
Phyllis Budka
Stephen Butera
Deb Campbell
Paul Cardettino
Elise Chan
Dr. Alan Chartock
Dr. Lorenda D. Chisolm
Mary Claypool
Daniel J. Clayton
Marcia Cognetta
Dr. Debra Colette
Jane Coppola
Rabbi Matthew Cutler
Tawana Davis
Kimberly Desantis
Janeen DiGiuseppi
Joseph Dragone
Mark Eagan

Dr. Erin Elkins
Fred Erlich
Dr. Bassey Essien
Hon. Patricia Fahy
Florenca Feleder
Sarah Fiess
Ross Garmil
Elaine Garrett
Prof. Peter Gemellaro
Thomas Giglio
Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand
Tony Glazer
Debby Goedeke
Dr. Sanjay Goel
Bo Goliber
Ryan Greenberg
Brian Gregoire
Dr. Christopher Guzda
Dr. Alicia Harlow
Dr. Hesham Hassan
Dr. Sonya Hauser
Scott Heller
Darian Henry
Prof. Kevin Hickey
Kristin Hinton
Corey Hovak
Patty Hyland
Rahul Jain
Dr. John Janikas
Omayra De Jesus

Andrew Joyce
Polly Karis
Prof. Bob Katz
Dr. Kathleen A. Kelly
Dr. Glenda B. Kelman
Prof. Tyler Kessel
Akbar Khan
Mayor Ron Kim
Sara Kobilka
Prof. Rey Koslowski
Kaira Kristbergs
Barbara LaMarche
State Rep. Mike Lawler
Binglin Li
Mark & Terri Little
Sheena Louglin
Judge Peter Lynch
Kimberly Matthews
Hon. Dan McCoy
Hon. John McDonald
Prof. Hamish McMillan
Dr. Juan Andres Melendez
Nony Melia
Lilly & Chibao Miaw
Cameron S. Mitchell
Summer Crockett Moore
Aaron Moore
Chris Moore
Dr. Gayle Morse
Stephen Motto

Kevin Murphy
Nur Akmar Naim
Oleg Nechyporuk
Mike and Diane O'Brien
Kristin O'Neill
Hon. Michelle Ostrellich &
Howard Schlossberg
Dr. Chang Sup Park
Dr. Denis Pauté
Will Pedigo
Rosemarie Perez-Jaquith
Dorothy Persico
Prof. Carmine Pesca
Prof. Robert Philip
Ian Pickus
Casey Quinlan
Catherine Rafferty
Mizanur Rahman
Dr. Roger Ramsamy
Wei Qin
Dr. Katrin Ramsey
Dina Refki
Prof. Barbara Reynolds
Jennifer Richard
Kathryne Rohde
Dan Round
Dr. Tammy Schillinger
State Rep. Collin Schmidt
Casey Seiler
Lt. Kim Shappy

Mayor Kathy Sheehan
Dr. Ivan Shvachuk
Mikhaela Singleton
David Soares
Lt. Maris Soldner
Kim Sparkman
Elizabeth Stack
Rachel Stead
Howie Stoller
Sandra Strock
Bhawin Suchak
Congressman Paul Tonko
Rob Vanderlan
Sara VanDusen
Keith Wagner
Judge Elizabeth Walsh
Jessa Waterhouse
Dr. Jacqueline Weaver
Barbara Weiler
Brian Williams
Matthew Wing
State Rep. Carrie Woerner
Ron Xiong
Benita Zahn

GRANTORS & PARTNERS

American Councils

FHI 360

Meridian International Center

**Congressional Office for
International Leadership
(COIL)**

GlobalTies U.S.

Stevens Initiative

Cultural Vistas

Graduate School USA

**U.S. Department of State Bureau
of Educational & Cultural Affairs,
Office of International Visitors**

CRDF Global

Hudson Valley Community College

World Affairs Councils of America

**Institute for International
Education**

World Learning

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

AIM Services
Albany City Court
Albany County District Attorney's Office
Albany County Sheriff's Office
Albany Film Commission
Albany Medical Center
Capital Region BOCES
Capital Region STEM Hub
Capital Region Workforce Development Board
Choice Films Inc.
College of St. Rose
Committee for Open Government
Cornell University
Development Board
Discover Albany
Ellis Hospital
FBI Albany Field Office
Hudson Valley Community College
Living Resources
New York State Comptroller's Office
New York STEAM Girls Collaborative
North Colonie Central Schools

NY State Department of Education
NY State Department of Health
NY State Police Academy
NY State Supreme Court
NY State Troopers
NYS Network for Youth Success
Rensselaer County Family Court
Research Center
Russell Sage College
Schenectady School District
Schenevus School District
St. Peter's Hospital
STEM High School at HVCC
SUNY Albany
Tech Valley High School
Times Union
UAlbany Atmospheric Sciences
Wagner Farms
WAMC Northeast Public Radio
WMHT Public Media
WTEN New 10 ABC
Youth FX

103

Citizen
Diplomats
Involved

44

Local
Organizations
Engaged

LIST OF COUNTRIES



Belize
Cameroon
Chad
Egypt
Gabon
India
Indonesia
Israel
Kazakhstan

Lesotho
Libya
Moldova
Morocco
Namibia
Nigeria
Pakistan
People's Republic of China
Poland

Senegal
Somalia
South Africa
South Korea
Togo
Ukraine
Uruguay
Zimbabwe



26 | Countries

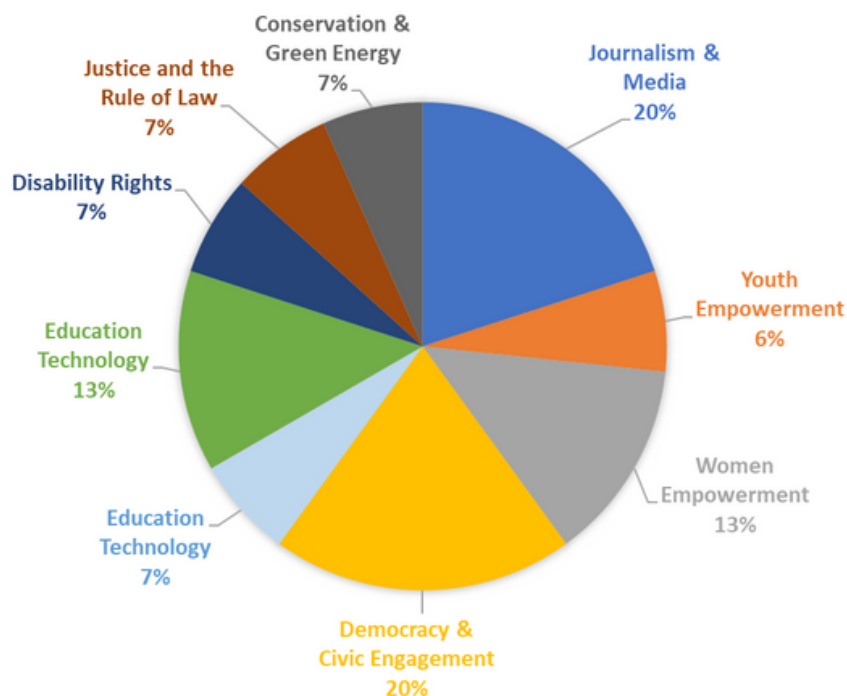


114 | International
Participants

THE INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (IVLP)

The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) is the U.S. Department of State's flagship international exchange program. In 2021, we moved to virtual programming to continue dialogue with international leaders and elevate the Albany area's status as a global destination.

As we returned to in-person programming in 2022, numerous local leaders including journalists, educators, activists, and government officials shared their work and stories with a global audience through the IVLP.



FILM AND TELEVISION EXPERTS - *Senegal*



In October 2021, we hosted a virtual exchange with Senegal filmmakers with our local non-profit YouthFx. In April of 2022, our visitors were able to travel to Albany, and met with local filmmakers including YouthFx, HVCC's media department, the Albany film commission, and WMHT Public Media.

Senegal is often referred to as the birth place of African cinema. Other than Albany, they also visited Los Angeles and New York City during their trip in the U.S.



EMPOWERING MUSLIM WOMEN AS PEACEMAKERS AND CHANGE AGENTS - *Indonesia*

We partnered with the Vermont Council on World Affairs to connect Indonesian women leaders with women from Albany and Vermont to discuss women's organization and activism.

One of our Indonesia participants, Adriany Badrah, director of Celebes Institute and a lecturer at Tadulako University's. She won the IVLP impact award in 2022 for her informational film and community discussion to counter the spread of violent extremism.



The IVLP had an impact on increasing my self-capacity. I was able to meet with women across a variety of professions, political, economic, social and cultural life, the IVLP has provided an opportunity to expand the network for mutual support and collaboration.

- Adriany Badrah

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY - *Egypt*



In August of 2022, we hosted educators and administrators from Egypt who met with educators in the Capital Region to discuss implementing new technology and current trends in education.

The group visited various educational institutions including, a rural school district in Schenectady, NY, the NY State Department of Education, Capital Region BOCES, and Hudson Valley Community College, SUNY Albany, and SUNY Oneonta.

OPEN WORLD PROGRAM



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP

The Open World program, sponsored by the Congressional Office for International Leadership, is one of the most effective U.S. exchange programs for countries of the post-Soviet era. The program enables current and future leaders to meaningfully engage and interact with Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and professional counterparts, as well as American host families and volunteers. The Open World program aims to establish lasting professional relationships between leaders of Open World countries and Americans dedicated to showcasing U.S. values and democratic institutions.



ER Doctors from Ukraine

As Ukraine embroiled in a war after an invasion from Russia, massive casualties have occurred straining Ukraine's healthcare infrastructure. The delegates met with political leaders, hospital staff, and medical training facilities. This program connected Ukraine and American medical professionals who provided support and knowledge in a time of war.



Language Teachers from Poland

As a result of the war in Ukraine, more than a million refugee families and children have fled to Poland. With the sudden influx, educators in Poland struggle to provide language classes and support services. Polish educators met with Capital Region educators from local schools and NGOs who shared best practices from teaching refugees from all over the world.



Parliament Staffers from Moldova

Being a relatively young democracy founded in 1991, this program enabled Moldova's parliament staffers to learn first-hand about the American democracy and political infrastructure. Delegates met with congressman Paul Tonko, state and county level legislators, the Mayor of Albany, county board of elections, the NY Committee on Open government, and several media organizations.



Achievement Awards

On November 17th, 2022, the ICCR hosted its inaugural Achievement Awards to honor immigrants who have made significant contributions to the Capital Region and beyond. Supporters, sponsors, and community members joined the ICCR Board and staff at the Hilton Garden Inn in Clifton Park for a celebration luncheon. The program was emceed by News 10 ABC anchor Michaela Singleton and heartwarming acceptance speeches from awardees.

Also in attendance were representatives from Hudson Valley Community College, Capital Region Chamber, the Chinese Community Center, the Ukrainian Cultural Center, the Turkish Community Center, and many more. Honorees received proclamations from Neil Breslin, Pat Fahy, John McDonald, and Congressman Paul Tonko.

Congratulations to our 2022 Honorees!



Aneesa Waheed
Business &
Entrepreneurship



Dr. Roger A. Ramsammy
Distinguished Career



Manoj Ajmera
Community Service
& Philanthropy



Rev. Mikhail Myshchuk
Community Service &
Philanthropy



Dr. HP Wang
Civic Engagement &
Citizenship



Diane Conroy-LaCivita
Volunteer of the Year





Thank you

TO OUR SPONSORS

KeyBank



PRICE CHOPPER'S
Golub Foundation



United Way
of the Greater Capital Region



ST PETER'S HEALTH PARTNERS

A Member of Trinity Health



GE Research



Jeff Saran, CLU®, CRPC®
LPL Financial Advisor



ENGAGE AMERICA: FUTURE OF KOREA



WORLD
AFFAIRS
COUNCILS of
AMERICA



The Korean
Association of Albany

The Future of Korea series focuses on broadening and deepening public understanding of Korea and the U.S.-Korea relationship. In November 2022, the ICCR hosted a trio of experts - from the U.S. Department of State, the South Korea Embassy, and the Korea Economic Institute (KEI) - in this deep dive into politics, trade, and diplomacy.

We welcomed the Mr. Mark Tokola, VP of KEI, Mr. David Anthony Rodriguez, Political-Military Officer at the Office of Korean Affairs, and Mr. Chang Woo Lee, Public Affairs Officer of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea. The group met with business leaders from Plug Power and Global Foundries at the Capital Region Chamber of Commerce, and visited Albany NanoTech Complex at the SUNY Polytechnic Institute to discuss US-Korea trade and economic opportunities.

They also spoke with students at the Shaker High School about careers in foreign affairs and diplomacy. The visit capped off with a panel discussion moderated by Kathryn Bamberger of the Center for Economic Growth. Attendees also enjoyed Korean food provided by local restaurants.



MENA-USA EMPOWERING RESILIENT GIRLS EXCHANGE (MERGE)



The Global Ties U.S. MENA-USA Empowering Resilient Girls Exchange (MERGE) brings together young women and girls ages 15-19 from the United States and Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region in a supportive virtual space to develop emotional resilience skills. Participants discuss and experiment with a variety of stress-relief and coping techniques while guided by trained facilitators, engaging in both synchronous and asynchronous exchange over an 8-week period.

The International Center collaborated with Global Ties US, the Steven's Initiative, and capital region schools and organizations to recruit young women for the virtual exchange program.

CLASSROOM SPEAKERS: FOREIGN LANGUAGE & INTERNATIONAL CAREERS



We can all agree that learning a foreign language helps students broaden their horizons and open up more opportunities for their future careers. We partnered with Questar III BOCES, an education cooperative serving 22 school districts, to bring expert speakers into classrooms. These experts discuss their personal experience studying and using a foreign language, as well as international travel and exchange programs they have participated in.

Interacting with these experts supports and encourages students to continue studying a foreign language by connecting the classroom to real-world experiences.

To request a classroom speaker, send email to: info@iccralbany.org

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

NATIONAL NETWORKING

Executive Director, Jennifer Zhao, and Board President Mike O'Brien attended the in-person GlobalTies US National meeting in Washington DC. Jennifer collaborated with Faris Alami, CEO of International Strategic Management, and Ashley Holben, program specialist at Mobility USA to give a workshop, "Digital Storytelling: beyond the basics."

We also sent programming volunteer Barbara Weiler to attend the Diplomacy Begins Here Summit in Portland, OR. "I learned a great deal... It is impossible to capture the impactful, engaging nature of this [event]." - Barbara Weiler



Sang Kim, KEI

518 AMBASSADOR PODCAST

With the help of our media intern Fiona Hernandez, we launched the 518 Ambassador Podcast where we interview distinguished guests from the Capital Region and beyond.



FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

The ICCR team joined the celebration at the 51st Festival of Nations in downtown Albany. The event drew thousands to the Empire State Plaza to enjoy arts and crafts, tasting delicious ethnic foods, and indulging in the music with rhythm and dances representing various cultures and traditions of the world. 28 nations were represented in the Parade of Nations and the event concluded with the crowning of the Miss Festival of Nations.

Get Involved

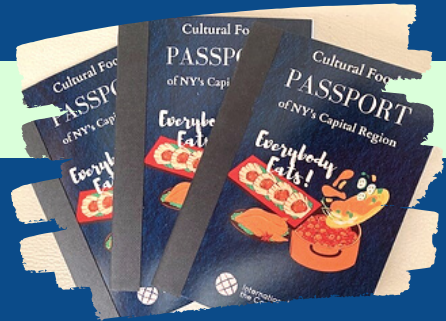
VOLUNTEER

We always welcome volunteers who would like to help with home hosting, dinner hosting, escorting, as well as speaking, event planning, fundraising and more!



JOIN AS A MEMBER

Support the ICCR as a sustaining member and receive discounts to events, and priority invites, and a Capital Region cultural food passport with discounts for 15 local restaurants.



INTERNSHIPS

We work with interns who support the programming and interact with our Board and delegations, and undertake meaningful projects of their own design.



Visit: www.iccralbany.org
 Phone: 518-708-7608
 Email: info@iccralbany.org



[Join Our Mailing List](#)

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 Troy, NY 12180



ICCR

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF
THE CAPITAL REGION
SINCE 1956

At Hudson Valley Community College