



For Immediate Release
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Alliance Opposes J-1 Inclusion in Presidential Proclamation on Immigration

Washington, DC – On June 22, 2020, the White House issued a proclamation suspending entry into the United States of people participating in the Au Pair, Camp Counselor, Intern, Summer Work Travel, Teacher, and Trainee programs through December 31, 2020.

“The Alliance for International Exchange opposes the inclusion of the J-1 Exchange Visitor programs in the recent Presidential proclamation regarding immigration,” said Ilir Zherka, Executive Director. “These international exchange programs help American families, while enabling American host businesses to remain open year-round. They do not displace American workers, and, in fact, contribute more than \$1.2 billion to the United States economy. These important cultural exchange programs have strong, bipartisan support. The Alliance will continue working to protect these critical programs.”

For more than fifty years, cultural exchange programs have helped support our national security. Exchange visitors develop a more positive view of the United States and maintain friendships here for years to come. Additionally, many become community, business, and political leaders when they return home. Their understanding and affinity for the United States supports our diplomatic efforts worldwide, which is especially important during challenging times like this one.

Zherka added, “We believe it is possible to reopen the economy in concert with health considerations, while continuing people-to-people diplomacy.”

The Alliance for International Exchange is an association dedicated to promoting the growth and impact of exchange programs. Since 1993, it serves as the collective public policy voice for now over 90 organizations comprising the international educational and cultural exchange community in the United States. The Alliance increases awareness of the impact of people-to-people diplomacy.

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