

BridgeUSA Program Advocacy Talking Points

Benefits to the United States on the National and Local Levels

BridgeUSA programs strengthen the U.S. economy:

- Program participants bring resources to U.S. communities, including program fees and visitors' spending cash. Just three BridgeUSA programs - the Summer Work Travel (SWT), Intern, and Trainee - contribute over **1.1 billion** dollars to the U.S. economy each year.
- The SWT, Intern, Trainee, Au Pair, Camp Counselor, and Teacher programs operate at no cost to U.S. taxpayers; participants pay fees that cover the costs associated with oversight and administration of the program.
- SWT and Camp Counselor programs supplement local workforce in areas with small year-round populations, which enables local businesses to stay open, and to operate longer and at a greater scale.

BridgeUSA programs support U.S. national security and foreign policy interests:

- BridgeUSA programs facilitate global engagement with a broad public diplomacy reach (participants come from more than 190 countries).
- BridgeUSA programs make it possible to engage with citizens of countries that are of strategic importance to the U.S. foreign policy (e.g., Brazil, China, Ukraine, Turkey, Russia).
- BridgeUSA programs advance U.S. leadership and interests around the world. On average, **more than 75%** of participants return home with a more positive view of America.

BridgeUSA programs increase mutual understanding:

- Program participants learn about the United States while Americans in host communities across the U.S. learn about other countries and cultures.

- Participants complete their programs with a better, more nuanced, and more favorable impression of the United States, its culture and its people.
- BridgeUSA programs help shape current and future leaders. In fact, [one in three](#) current World Leaders participated in an exchange program.

Benefits to BridgeUSA Participants

- BridgeUSA programs enable a broad, diverse population of international students and young professionals to experience American culture first-hand.
- The ability to work (SWT, Camp Counselor) or complete a paid internship/traineeship (Intern, Trainee), offsets costs associated with an immersive cultural exchange experience in the U.S. (e.g., international airfare, room and board, travel within the U.S.).
- BridgeUSA programs help participants achieve personal and professional goals. For example, [96.3%](#) of interns and trainees gained valuable work experience for future career opportunities.
- BridgeUSA programs broaden participants' understandings of other cultures and their own capacities. In fact, [93.1%](#) of SWT participants reported learning how to be more independent.

Your Story

Share your experience with BridgeUSA programs:

For American supporters:

- Impact on American businesses, employees/colleagues, families, and the wider community.
- Personal stories about breaking down stereotypes/cultural barriers.
- Lasting international connections that benefit you and your business, family.

If you're joined by program participants/alumni, they can share:

- How the program helped them achieve specific personal and professional goals.
- Exchange experience in the United States would otherwise be inaccessible due to cost.