

Exchange 2.0

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The world is more interdependent than ever before, and the challenges of the 21st Century, whether they pertain to the environment, the economy or our security, will require multilateral solutions. It is critical, therefore, that we provide the next generation with the skills they need to collaboratively address these challenges. Exchange programs present one model for providing future leaders with the requisite critical thinking, cross-cultural communication and collaboration skills. The costs and logistical challenges of such programs, however, prevent this model from reaching all but a privileged few – less than 2 percent of American college students study abroad, for example. In addition, they build connections where they are least needed – the highest percentage of American students go to Europe, while the fewest go to the Middle East & North Africa, where greater connection and understanding is most needed. For both greater peace and prosperity, it is critical that we provide vastly more young adults with the skills they need to respectfully interact in today's interdependent world. Exchange 2.0, an enhancement to the exchange field, capitalizes on the advancements in communication technologies and enables every student to have a profound cross-cultural experience as part of their education, offering an unprecedented opportunity to advance intercultural dialogue and understanding on a global scale.