

# Annual University Student Internship Program: June - August 2010

The National Council's Model Arab League/Arab-U.S. Relations Youth Leadership Development Program has been linked for many years to the Council's **Annual University Student Summer Internship Program**. The Summer Intern Program's participants are alumni of the Models and other rising young American leaders of tomorrow. U.S. Ambassador Edward Gnehm (Ret.) made it possible for this summer's program to be administered again in association with The George Washington University's (GWU) Institute for Middle East Studies in the Elliott School of International Affairs. Ambassador Gnehm is a member of the GWU faculty where he holds the Kuwait Chair in Gulf Studies. As in previous years, the 2010 Program provided fertile training ground and an invaluable firsthand professional work experience for young American leaders interested in a career devoted to improving U.S.-Arab relations.



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*The National Council expresses its appreciation to The George Washington University and The Elliott School of International Affairs for the use of its seminar facilities for the 2010 Summer Internship Program in the nation's capital.*

The program, which lasted from June 7-August 6, provided 27 students an opportunity to work in the nation's capital at 20 organizations involved in one way or another in efforts to improve Arab-U.S. relations. The experience is one that could not possibly be duplicated or paralleled by the students' university studies on campus. In addition to their time assisting with the office routines of their host organizations, the interns met and were briefed as well as mentored several times a week by some of America's most renowned specialists in international relations as they pertain to the Arab world.

By design, the primary focus of the academic component of the program centers on a sub-region of the Arab countries, the Middle East, and the Islamic world: *Arabia and the Gulf*. The reason relates to three truisms with implications for American and other countries' needs, concerns, interests, objectives, and relations. First, this particular region, together with its maritime and aviation routes, has

long been regarded globally as the epicenter of the most strategically and economically vital energy resources that drive the engines of the world's economies.



*As these maps illustrate, the academic focus of the internship program is on Arabia and the Gulf which, despite being of vital strategic and economic importance globally, remains little understood by most Americans and many others.*



*Ambassador Thomas Pickering, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations, briefs the students on pressing challenges for U.S.-Arab relations.*



*The National Council's interns gather after a meeting at The George Washington University Elliot School of International Affairs.*

Second, Arabia and the Gulf are front and center among some of the most pressing international issues relating to war and peace as well as world economic growth. Indeed, it is the one part of the planet more than any other to which, on three separate occasions, large numbers of American and other foreign armed forces have been mobilized and deployed in the past quarter of a century. Third, the ongoing importance to much of humankind represented by these nine countries – Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen -- is undeniable. Despite this, the number of Americans who specialize in this sub-region and its member states, or can legitimately claim to be well-informed about the external and internal political dynamics of these countries, remains exceptionally limited.

Accordingly, one of the program's objectives is to increase the number of foreign affairs practitioners that are as knowledgeable of Arabia and the Gulf's internal and external dynamics as possible. To that end, most of the lectures address issues related to the member-states' systems of governance, political realities, economic and social development, as well as foreign affairs, on one hand, and, on the other, the relationships of the United States with this Arab sub-region and its neighbors -- and *vice versa*.



*The interns gather for a final meeting at the Summer Wrap Up Session before returning to their home universities.*



*National Council President and CEO Dr. John Duke Anthony addresses the interns on the topic of "Understanding the Arab World: Lenses Through Which to Look and Learn"*

Internship Program alumni currently serve as senior diplomats in American embassies in the Arab world, in U.S. government executive branch agencies as well as Congressional committees dealing with U.S.-Arab policy issues, major national and international print as well as broadcast media, leading American corporations engaged in U.S.-Arab trade, investment, technology cooperation, and the establishment of joint commercial ventures, and as teachers of Arabic and Arab area studies in American universities.

The Arab-U.S. relations programs, activities, and functions represented by the twenty organizations and corporations that provided the professional work experience component of this year's program are varied. Included among their missions and activities are educational development and exchange, bimonthly and quarterly publications, humanitarian relief, public broadcasting, academic area studies, international transportation, foreign trade, and peace and justice advocacy. An additional feature of the Internship Program is site visits to public and private sector institutions such as Arab embassies, energy corporations, congressional committees, and government agencies.



*At the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, the interns met with and were briefed by Embassy Information Office Director Mr. Nail Al-Jubeir.*



*The interns meet with and are briefed by National Council Arab World Journalism Intern alumnus Mr. Afshin Molavi, Senior Research Fellow at the New America Foundation and author of The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom.*

Administering this year's program again were National Council President Dr. John Duke Anthony as Chairman and lead lecturer, Vice President for Programs Dr. James A. Winship as Coordinator and lecturer, and staff members Ms. Megan Geissler, Mr. Josh Hilbrand, and Ms. Chelsey Boggs as Assistants. Included among the many lecturers were Dr. Hussein Ibish, Senior Fellow at The American Task Force on Palestine; Mr. Frank Anderson, President of the Middle East Policy Council and former Director for the Near East and South Asia at the Central Intelligence Agency; Mr. Milton Bearden, author and a retired Central Intelligence Agency officer specializing in, among other countries, Afghanistan and the Sudan; Mr. Bill Corcoran, President and CEO of American Near East Refugee Aid; Ambassador Thomas Pickering, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations; Mr. Afshin Molavi, Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation; Ambassador Patrick N. Theros, President of the U.S.-Qatar Business Council; H.E. Houda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States; and Rear Admiral Harold J. Bernsen, (USN, Ret.), Chairman of the National Council Board of Directors.