Since 1986, this extraordinarily successful program has been building genuine relationships between school children and college students from other countries, exciting and motivating children to learn more about places, people and languages they hadn’t even known existed before the visits.

FAQs About SDSU’s Intercultural Ambassadors Program

**What is “Intercultural Ambassadors” Program?**  Each year, a group of San Diego State University international students - the Intercultural Ambassadors – are carefully selected and trained during the fall semester to make a series of visits to K-12 classrooms during the spring semester. The Ambassadors share their cultures and languages through personal stories, literature, geography, visuals and artifacts, and other interactive activities, planning ahead with their assigned teachers to identify age-appropriate presentation topics amenable to integration with classroom curriculum and the Common Core State Standards.

**What are the program objectives?** Distinct from other international “guest speaker” programs, the multiple visits design of the program offers a unique opportunity for classroom cross-cultural experience, with a focus on developing genuine relationships between the international students and the K-12 students and teachers with whom they come in contact. Providing authentic international studies content learning, Intercultural Ambassadors also offer students strong role models for pursuing higher education, including the possibilities of study abroad, while boosting the self-esteem of second language learners and cultural minority students in the classroom.

**How often does an Ambassador come to visit?** In order for the Ambassador and the children to get to know each other, each Ambassador makes 3 separate visits to the same classroom.

**How many classrooms per school can participate?** We encourage participation by more than one teacher at a school. However, each classroom must still commit to three visits by the same Ambassador. Two or more classrooms may not be combined for any of these visits, as that would interfere with developing the sought connection between the Ambassador and the students. Intercultural Ambassadors is not a speaker’s bureau.

**How long is a classroom visit?** A visit to older children (ages 8 or 9 and up), is usually 1 hour in length, while visits to children ages 5-7 run 30 to 45 minutes, by agreement of the Intercultural Ambassador and the teacher.

**How does the program work?** Each teacher is matched with an Ambassador, based on mutual schedules, preference for working with certain age groups, etc. (not by a teacher’s preference for a country). Teachers and Ambassadors meet each other at a mandatory after-school workshop where they set the schedule of classroom visits and begin planning presentation activities. Planning continues through additional conversations and/or meetings following the workshop.

**What commitments must participating teachers make?** Teachers new to the program must attend an afterschool Orientation Workshop in early February. At this meeting they will become familiar with program logistics, review guidelines for working with the international students, and discuss approaches for incorporating the visits into their curriculum. All participating teachers must attend the afternoon workshop the following week in early February where they to meet their Ambassador, schedule the visits and together begin planning the content of the presentations. Parking permits will be supplied for both workshops.
“FAQ*s” About SDSU’s Intercultural Ambassadors Program

What does the program cost? Costs of the program are covered by ISTEP and the SDSU International Student Center. There is no cost to the schools.

How Do I Apply? Complete and sign (including principal signature) the application form and return by e-mail (istep@mail.sdsu.edu), fax (619-594-0232), or U.S. mail to: ISTEP Intercultural Ambassadors, College of Arts and Letters, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182-6014. Application forms can be downloaded at: http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~webwork2/istep/programs/ambassadors.html

When are applications due? The application deadline is January 15, 2016

What if I have additional questions? Contact ISTEP Director Emily Schell at istep@mail.sdsu.edu