



The Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission - Washington DC

Outreach Newsletter

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THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR, HRH PRINCE TURKI AL-FAISAL MEETS SAUDI STUDENTS IN TEXAS AND ARIZONA

HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal met with Saudi students in Phoenix where he urged them to be good representatives of their country. Prince Turki also urged the students to reach out to the communities they live in, and to experience American culture. Citing his own personal experience in America as a young student, Prince Turki said: "Undoubtedly, you will face difficulties....perhaps some of them are personal but, based on my experience with the American people since I was a student here, the Americans are hospitable and simple people who are thirsty for knowledge."



HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal greets some Saudi students in Phoenix, Arizona

He also emphasized the fact that sending Saudi students to study in the United States is not merely to acquire technical skills, but also to learn and appreciate the American culture. At the same time, by manifesting good behavior, Saudi students can convey a better picture of themselves and their society, he said. It should be noted that HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal is the newly appointed Saudi Ambassador to the United States.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM), implements Saudi national educational and training policies to provide our country with qualified individuals capable of achieving the country's goals of progress and development. We strive to provide our students with the best possible educational opportunities at the best educational institutions in the U.S.A. We support our students academically and financially so that they may concentrate on achieving their academic goals. We also collect and disseminate information that reflects Saudi culture, tradition, and heritage through our active participation in academic, cultural, and social activities.



THE NEW SAUDI SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



His Excellency the Saudi Minister of Higher Education
Dr. Khalid Al-Ankari

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the number of foreign students attending American colleges and universities declined. Probably the sharpest drop in those numbers can be seen among Saudi students who, for a variety of reasons, could not obtain (re-) entry visas to pursue their studies in the United States.

Fear of reprisal, occasional reports of harassment, and the uncertainty about what lies in store for them during their stay in the U.S., compelled many Saudi students to drop out of American schools and seek admission at schools in Saudi Arabia or in European countries. Moreover, the lightening of visa regulations and the inordinately lengthy screening process (a process that takes from a month to more than a year) discouraged many Saudi students from applying to American schools.

Aware of the benefits of having Saudi students in American schools and cognizant of the

destructive potential of shutting them out of the United States, King Abdullah (then, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia) and President Bush made it one of their top priorities to increase the number of young Saudi men and women in American colleges and universities.

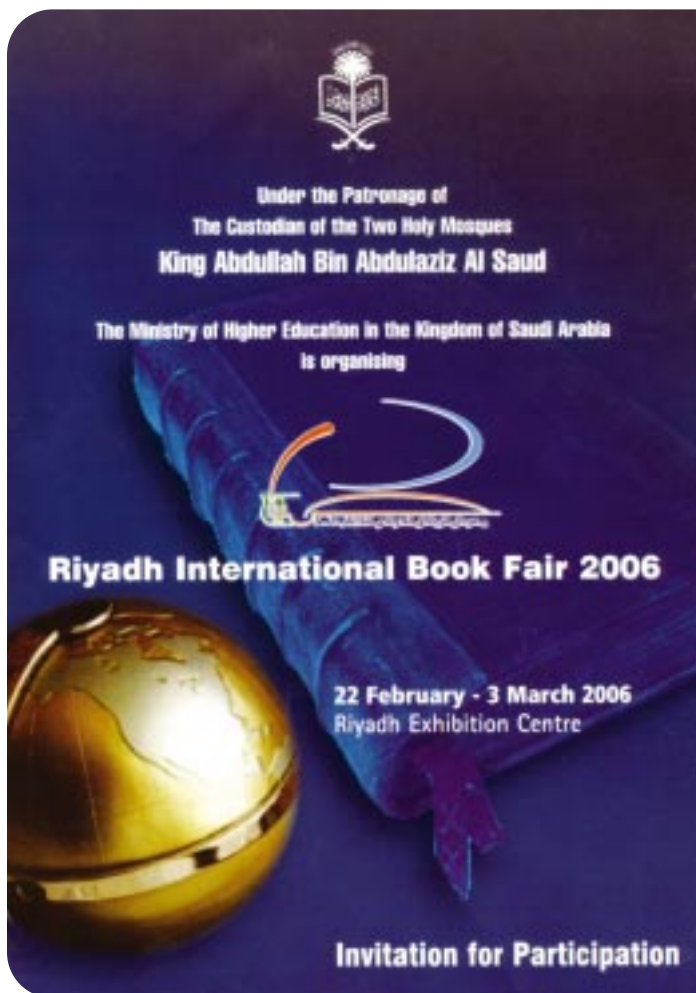
According to the newly appointed ambassador to the U.S., HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal, King Abdullah and President Bush "agreed in a joint statement to increase the number of Saudi students who come to this country. This year alone, we have increased our scholarships to students coming to the United States by 3000 and in the next five years it will reach in the region of 1500 students."

This is not to haphazard decision, nor is it an attempt to please one side or the other. The U.S. has always benefited from hosting exchange visitors and international students. Through them, American has been able to export its ideals to countries like Saudi Arabia, which also stands to benefit from this exchange.

Although the acquisition of technical know-how in different fields is the primary goal of this program, the promotion of inter-cultural exchange has become increasingly important after drubbing the images of both countries have taken in recent times. Among the goals of the new scholarship program is to expose as many Saudis as possible to the American way of life and, in the process, expose Americans to the Saudis.

The minister of higher Education, Dr. Khalid Al-Ankari, emphasized the fact that scholarships are granted on the basis of merit rather than the basis of gender. He attributed the relatively low number of female students who were granted a scholarship to the fact that fewer female students applied for scholarships.

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FIRST SAUDI INTERNATIONAL BOOKFAIR

More than 250,000 books representing 150,000 titles in Arabic and more than 100,000 in foreign languages will go on display at the Riyadh International Book Fair. It is expected that more than 500 publishers will take part in the fair. The books will be in Arabic, English and other languages. The Ministry of Higher Education will invite scores of government agencies, private companies, research centers, Saudi universities and private publishing houses that publish hundreds of books and magazines every year.

The Ministry will create lots of opportunities for visitors to buy treasures of their choice from the hundreds of thousands of books displayed in the fair. Visitors will include students, researchers, writers, scholars, and thousands of readers and book enthusiasts, while sellers will include local and foreign publishers.

SAUDI ART

ALKHOZAMA FLOWER: BY KHALID AL- FAISAL

A unique masterpiece that portrays the beauty of lavender roses in the middle of a lonely desert. With its sweet aroma filling the air, the lavender thoughts sway in the breeze to a far away destination of an unknown path.





DELEGATES OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES VISIT SACM



Donna E. Shalala Professor of Political Science
and President of Miami University

Representatives of a number of American institutions have visited the Saudi Cultural Mission during the last few months to discuss conditional admission and English language centers for Saudi Students. They include:

- University of Montana, Missoula, MT
- University of Tennessee- Knoxville, Knoxville, TN

- Saint John's University, Jamaica, NY
- ACCET (Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training)
- Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
- Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI
- Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN
- Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI
- University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
- University of Findlay, Findlay, OH
- University of Massachusetts-Boston, Boston, MA
- Western Oregon University, Monmouth, OR
- Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA
- University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Lafayette, LA
- Mercer University, Atlanta, GA
- Kent state University, Kent, OH
- University of North Alabama, Florence, AL
- Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL
- Saint Norbert College, De Pere, WI
- University of Denver, Denver, CO
- Ohio State University, Columbus, OH



Representatives of George Washington University

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Representatives of the University of North Texas

- University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
- Linden Educational Service, Washington, DC
- University of California-Riverside, Riverside, CA
- University of Texas-Arlington, Arlington, TX
- Saint Joseph's University Philadelphia, PA
- California State University-Chico, Chico, CA
- Indiana University-Bloomington, Bloomington, IN
- University of North Texas, Denton, TX
- Saginaw Valley State University, University Center, MI
- San Jose State University, San Jose, CA
- Suffolk University, Suffolk, MA
- SUNY-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY
- Texas Intensive English Program (TIEP), Austin, TX
- Macalester College, St. Paul, MN



Representatives of the University of Oregon

- Montana Tech, Butte, MT
- Boston University, Boston, MA
- EF Language Center, Boston, MA
- Washington International Education Council, North Potomac, MD
- La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA
- University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL
- Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
- Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
- University of Nevada-Reno, Reno, NV

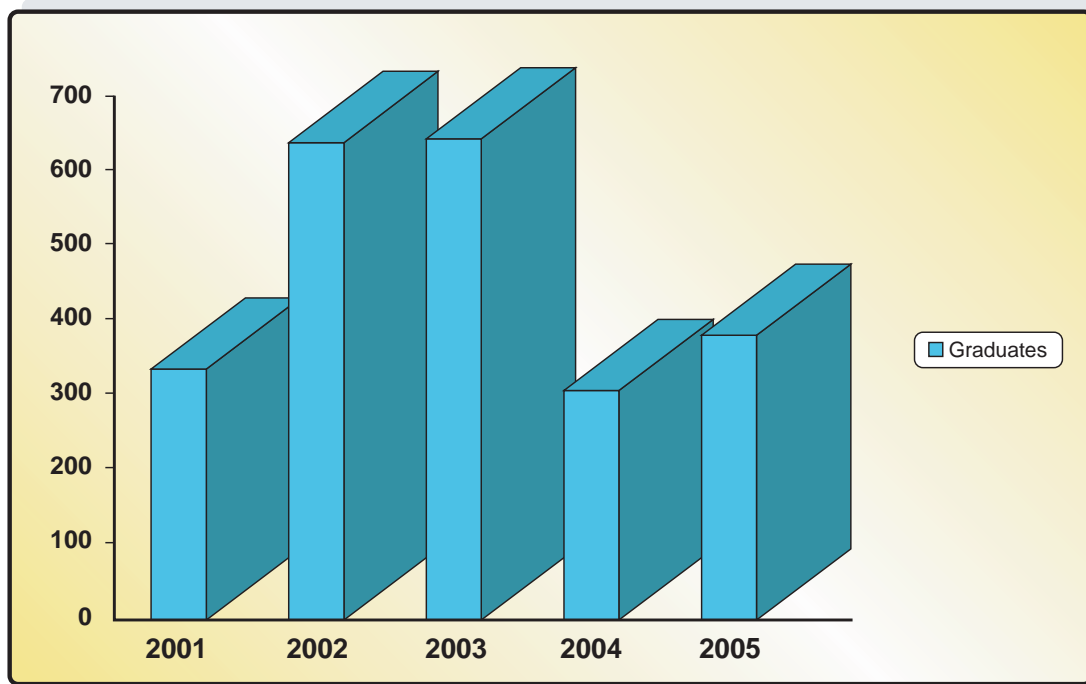


Representatives of the University of Massachusetts

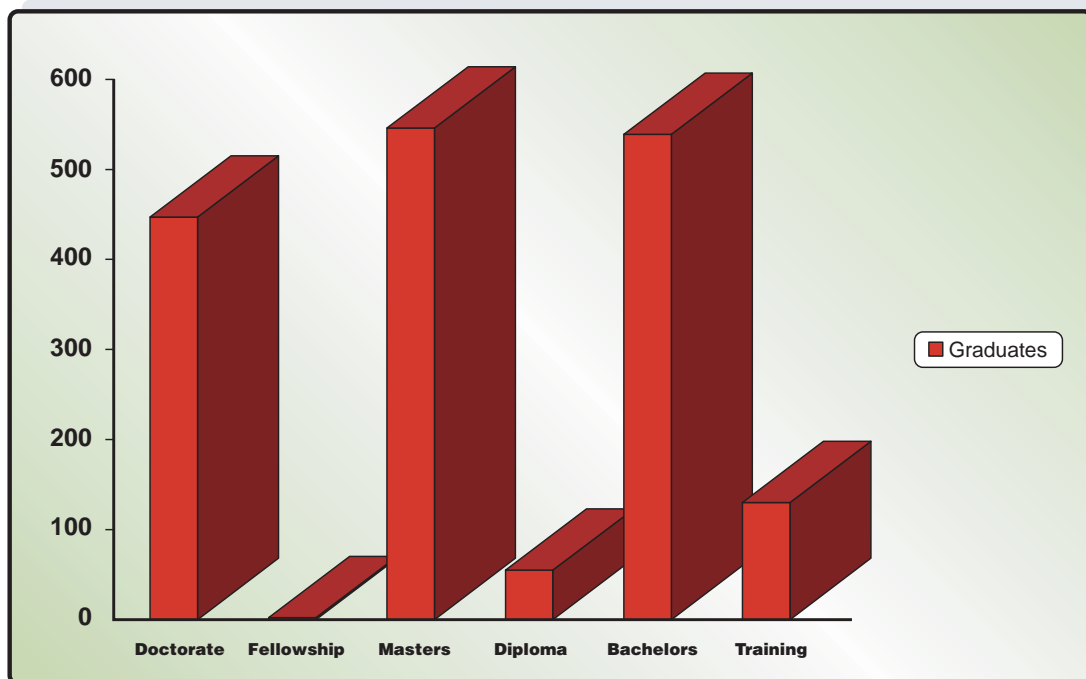
- University of Nebraska – Omaha, Omaha, NE
- Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas
- Portland State University, Portland, OR
- Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA
- Lewis and Clark College, Portland, OR
- Pacific University, Forest Grove, OR
- Bryant University, Providence, RI
- Wilson College, Chambersburg, PA
- Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, NJ
- Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY
- Villanova University, Villanova, PA
- Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI
- Adelphi University, Garden City, NY
- Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI



SAUDI STUDENTS STATISTICS



Saudi graduate scholarship students in the past five years



Saudi graduates in the past five years

SAUDI DELEGATES

Last November a group of Saudi scholars participated in several forums at Boston University, Harvard University, University of Washington in Seattle, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington D.C. The forums, which focused on Saudi-American relations were co-organized by King Saud University in Riyadh. The presentations, lectures, and panel discussions by Saudi and American scholars covered a wide array of topics: including Saudi-American relations, new political reforms in Saudi Arabia, Islam, religious extremism, terrorism, Saudi economy, Saudi educational system, and women's status in Saudi society. These symposia represent the third round of a series initiated by King Saud University in its effort to reach out to the American educational and cultural institutions and to the American public in order to promote bicultural dialogue between Saudi Arabia and the United States following the aftermath of September 11th. In the last two years, King Saud University co-organized symposia on Saudi-American relations at California State University, San Bernardino, Portland State University, Georgetown University, University of North Texas at Denton, and a round-table-discussion at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C.

FRIENDS OF SAUDI ARABIA (FSA) ACTIVITIES IN DENTON, TEXAS

In 2005 The Friends of Saudi Arabia (FSA) (an organization dedicated to fostering a better understanding between the Saudi and American societies), carried out a number of activities, the most important of which is the cultural and artistic exhibit titled "Experience Saudi Arabia". In collaboration with the University of North Texas, this exhibit was held in Denton, Texas and lasted for five days. It was also supported by a number of organizations such as Saudi Aramco, Prince Sultan Foundation and Saudi Airlines. More than 2500 people visited the exhibit as well as the lectures that accompanied



A visitor viewing a pictorial history of Saudi Arabia



Saudi Traditional head gear

it. It was also attended by more than 215 representatives of such organizations as the Greater Dallas Council on International Affairs, the Wall Street Journal, Roosevelt for Consulting and the King Abdulaziz Foundation.

Mr. Omar Al-Hojailan, one of the top parachutists in the world, executed a parachute jump from a height of 5000 feet to signal the opening of the exhibit.



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, (SACM), to the United States is one of the specialized agencies created by the Saudi government in 1951 to administer programs and policies to meet the educational and cultural needs of Saudis studying in the United States. It also functions as the intermediary between U.S. educational institutions and the Kingdom in terms of issues pertaining to culture, education and science.

SACM is part of the Saudi Embassy in Washington, D.C... It is under the auspices of H.R.H Prince Turki Al-Faisal, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the USA. However in terms of administration, finance and student affairs, the mission is responsible to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Higher Education.

The first Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission to the United States was established in 1951 to look after the first group of Saudi students who came officially to study in the U.S. The Mission conducted its business from the Saudi Arabian Mission to the United Nations in New York. In 1956 the mission moved to an independent office in New York under the name of "Saudi Cultural Office in America". It looked after the welfare of 48 students at that time.

In 1975 the office relocated to Houston, Texas, and its name was changed to "Saudi Educational

Office to the USA." In 1977 computers were introduced for the first time to handle financial, administrative and academic matters.

In 1978, a branch office was established in Los Angeles. Toward the end of 1984 the main office was moved from Houston to Washington, D.C. In addition to the main office in Washington, D.C. and the Los Angeles branch office, three new branches were opened in Denver, Chicago and Houston. However, in 1987 the Denver and Chicago branch offices were closed to concentrate all efforts on the remaining three branches. In 1988 a major reorganization resulted in the consolidation of the remaining branches into the main office in Washington, D.C., which was renamed "Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission to the USA.

Since 1988 the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission has undergone constant modifications in its organizational structure in the search for excellence and continues to integrate modern information technology into its office procedures to meet the challenges of providing fast, efficient and reliable support and services to the Saudi students and their dependents in the USA, as well as to enhance SACM's role of strengthening the educational and cultural relations between the Kingdom and the USA

The Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission

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