



IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.
Peace Through Understanding

IFYE UPDATE

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Closing Out 2020

Executive Director

Ken Gordon, kgordon@ifyeusa.org

2020 will soon be closing and the year will either be one to forget for some or remember for others. In the weeks and months to come, the IFYE leadership continues to focus on growing the Association and strengthening our outreach to other sources of funding. As we look back at the foundational support you, as IFYE alumni, have given over years, it is clear the IFYE experience needs to continue and broaden its reach.

Going forward, efforts will increase with commodity associations that are connected to checkoff programs; and corporations, foundations, and government agencies we have contacted in the past will be contacted again to better solidify relationships. It is through relationships that we all grow, including the organizations that give to IFYE.

2020 has been a challenging year, but your Association has persevered. Guidance from our past leadership and from our new Board of Directors remains steadfast in delivering the value of the IFYE experience to greater numbers in the future. In the November IFYE Board meeting a revised vision was approved: "A world in which all people are globally aware and co-exist with peaceful understanding in thriving diverse communities that affirm the value of all." This vision aligns with our 12 Guiding Principles adopted at the September Board meeting. Those 12 principles were published in the 2020 fall/winter issue of the IFYE NEWS.

IFYE Closes in on 2020 Annual Giving Campaign Goal

With less than a week until the end of the year, the IFYE Association's annual giving campaign goal of raising \$50,000 is well within reach. We are within 17 percent of reaching our goal. A few more contributions will put IFYE over the top! If you have not yet contributed, please help us reach our goal in the few days left of 2020. Money raised from this campaign will go to support our efforts in recruiting participants, expanding our number of participating countries, and growing our organization with partnering organizations.

Investing in IFYE is investing in our young adults and the world they will lead. Donations support the expenses of IFYE - marketing, orientation and debriefing for inbound and outbound program participants, insurance, and supplies. Investing in IFYE helps to build a stronger world!

Take time now to visit the IFYE website at www.ifyeusa.org and click on "Ways to Give." There, you can make an online contribution to the annual giving campaign by credit card or print the form and mail your contribution. Please remember that a gift to IFYE is tax deductible. Our Annual Giving Campaign will recognize donors by level of giving unless you wish to remain anonymous.

Program:
IFYE National Program Director
Alan Lambert, alanelambert@ifyeusa.org

The activities necessary for a successful 2021 IFYE program are continuing as in a “normal” year. IFYE Outbound Representative candidates are being recruited and interviewed. Country placements are underway as well. In these uncertain times, we currently have seven (7) individuals who have been selected as 2021 US IFYEs. I have several other individuals who will be submitting the application materials in the coming weeks.

Though the overall participant numbers may be less than our projected numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we and other country coordinators are moving forward in planning “as if” we will have a successful program. We will need to make a final determination in March/April 2021 to continue with the 2021 two-, three- and six-month programs, or to suspend them until a fall program can be implemented or for all of 2021, as we unfortunately had to do for the 2020 IFYE program.

IFYE received a substantial grant from the United Soybean Board which will provide an additional source of potential IFYEs which come through individual state soybean organizations. The goal is to add eight IFYEs to our outbound program through recruitment in their individual organizations. You can help by contacting a friend or neighbor who is a member of your state soybean association and mentioning this opportunity to them. They can help spread the word to spark applications from your state.

The grant proposal would send two IFYEs to each of the following countries: Germany, Poland, Taiwan, and Thailand. The host family stay remains the foundation of their three-month IFYE experience. Additional interaction with soybean producers, processors, end users, marketers, and others will help these up-and-coming leaders better understand the roles and challenges of US Soybean producers and exporters.

A couple of our participating countries have notified me that they will not be participating in the 2021 IFYE program due to COVID-19 concerns. However, the majority of our country partners are moving forward, as are we, before making such a decision.

With international travel being in a fluid situation, there may be other challenges to navigate, but our #1 priority is the safety of all IFYEs and host families.

If you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

You and the IFYE Family
Carolyn Hansen, chansen@ifyeusa.org
Chair of the Ad Hoc Membership Committee
2021 IFYE Vice President

When anyone asks me what are my two top priorities in life, my answers are easy – Faith and Family. You and I are fortunate because in addition to our “regular” family, we are part of the IFYE Family and many of us have held a variety of roles within this very special family. At our Annual Board Meeting in September, we developed 12 Guiding Principles. The one that speaks very loudly to me is: “We believe our collective experiences as IFYEs, host families, and friends make us family who care about each other and give us an appreciation of the world-wide definitions of family.”

When we think about the lives touched by IFYE over the past 72 years, we begin to realize the enormous impact IFYE has had from its humble beginnings in 1948. From that original IFYE exchange funded by

the U.S. Department of State, to IFYE being administered by 4-H for more than 40 years, to now being managed by our association, IFYE participants share a common bond. IFYE host families welcome new members into their homes and lives. Yes, we are part of a family. No matter how long the experience or program, IFYEs recognize the value of understanding other cultures.

The IFYE Family includes a vast and varied group! Familiar to you are one or several programs to include: IFYEs Outbound and Inbound, Host Families, parents of exchangees, YDPs (Youth Development Project), Ambassadors, YASEPs (Young Agricultural Specialist Exchange Program), AWEs (Agricultural Workers Exchange), PRYLEs (Professional Rural Youth Leaders Exchange), Teen Caravanners, Travel Seminar participants, spouses (“SPIFYEs”), Extension professionals, group leaders, Friends of IFYE, and many clubs, organization, or corporate donors large and small.

Each of us has been part of the richness of the exchange experience. Members of the IFYE USA Board of Directors are working to bring all of us together in our efforts to achieve “Peace Through Understanding.” We are all part of a very large family.

As in any family, there is always work to be done. The IFYE USA Board has been busy refocusing its work on exchange programs and expanding the group of young people it serves and the types of exchanges offered. It is critical we keep our organization relevant to young adults. Connections with USDA and commodity groups are paving the way for new opportunities. We are at a crossroads in the organization and, to better serve you and prospective family members, we are looking at how we do business, what membership benefits are available, and which ones need improvement. We are reviewing how to encourage broader and deeper engagement and involvement with our family.

This year of the pandemic has forced us to look at what we offer our family members and we have been involved in strengthening our partnerships with existing organizations and creating new relationships to cast our net wider, welcoming more individuals and organizations to become part of the IFYE family. While travel was suspended, the work of the organization has been critical to the success of future years and we are seeing a renewed interest in our program from a variety of places. In fact, we have been diligently working on Plans of Action for the next three years which outline what needs to be done to move our family forward.

Many of you participated in our virtual “Family Meeting” by completing a recent survey. Your responses will help guide our future. In the next few months, you will learn how we are approaching “The Family Business.” We know our family needs to expand by inviting diverse participants committed to our values and guiding principles, while appreciating the many contributions and support of our existing family members. Because of the important work that lies ahead, we seek your involvement of time and talents by serving on a variety of Board committees and in helping with outreach. Your IFYE family needs you now more than ever.

Please contact:

- any one of the Board members (<https://ifyeusa.org/about/board.html>)
- Executive Director Ken Gordon (kgordon@ifyeusa.org) and/or
- National Program Director Alan Lambert (alanelambert@ifyeusa.org)

Yours in Peace Through Understanding,
Carolyn

Follow IFYE on Social Media

Sheri Swackhamer (Chair – Digital Media Committee)

Thank you to all those who have responded to our two recent surveys conducted from the ad hoc Membership committee authorized from your IFYE Board of Directors. One finding from our surveys that we would like to immediately correct is how to find us on the Internet and through social media.

Our Website - We share the most content on our website: www.ifyeusa.org where you can find:

- posted articles from returnees with photos
- posted articles and other information from program alumni (host families, supporters, outbound and inbound participants)
- read the latest news including information from
 - our Association President
 - Ken Gordon (Executive Director)
 - Alan Lambert (National Program Director)
 - posted content from our Board of Directors and minutes from meetings (available to paid membership)
 - the latest IFYE news releases
- access to all forms and applications needed to apply to
 - go abroad as an IFYE participant
 - be a host family for any incoming IFYEs
 - volunteer as a Board member, national committee member, or other opportunities
- posted copies of our IFYE NEWS and IFYE Updates (<https://ifyeusa.org/news-events/newsletters.html>)
- financial donation opportunities (Ways to Give and Alumni & Membership tabs).

Social Media

[Facebook.com/ifyeusa](https://www.facebook.com/ifyeusa) is where we rotate social media content of brief stories with photos from recent returnees or relay flashback experiences from IFYEs of yore.

[Instagram.com/ifyeusa](https://www.instagram.com/ifyeusa) (#ifyeusa) is where we share photos, games, or brief content to engage socially.

[Twitter.com/ifyeusa](https://twitter.com/IFYEUSA) (@IFYEUSA) is our newest digital platform where we send out immediate posts that have more timely content such as news briefs, press releases, or content about current events.

Please follow us on any of these platforms by:

- “Liking” our Facebook page by giving us a thumbs up and following us so that you receive the most recent content on your Facebook page’s newsfeed.
- “Follow” us on Instagram and tag us with #ifyeusa to link your photo to IFYEUSA’s Instagram page.
- “Follow” us on Twitter to receive the most up-to-date content to your Twitter account.

All three links/icons are also found at the bottom of our website homepage and you can link through them.

Please submit content for consideration - If you’d like to send us any content for posting consideration to any of our social platforms, please reach out to Sheri Swackhamer, Chair of the Digital Media Committee (sswackhamer@ifyeusa.org)

2021 IFYE Association Board of Directors

Officers

Janet (Jan) Wood, President

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Jess Stairs, Treasurer

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Amazon Smile continues throughout the year



You shop. Amazon gives. Signing up is easy. It will work the same as your regular Amazon account, but IFYE will receive a donation equal to 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. When you sign up, you will have an opportunity to select the charitable organization of your choice; so just select IFYE USA. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Support IFYE by shopping at smile.amazon.com.

Wishing all those from around the world who have been touched by IFYE a joyous holiday and a happy, safe, and delightful new year.