

CONTACT: Janet Elliott, Executive Director  
Phone: 213 622-6835 ext. 27  
Email: info@ivcla.org

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**ASSESSMENT SHOWS INTERNATIONAL VISITORS COUNCIL OF LOS ANGELES' PROGRAM IMPROVES FOREIGN TRUST OF AMERICANS**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces the release of the International Visitor Leadership Program Outcome Assessment. The assessment shows an overwhelming majority of International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumni respondents reported their experience was highly valuable for their professional life, enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the United States, and promoted mutual understanding between the United States and their own country. In particular, the majority stated the program helped improve their trust and appreciation of the United States and Americans. The results are primarily based on 827 in-person interviews of program alumni conducted between November 2004 to March 2005 in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine.

The International Visitors Council of Los Angeles (IVCLA) coordinates the IVLP program in Los Angeles, arranging professional and cultural appointments for

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nearly 1,000 international emerging leaders each year, most who are selected by U.S. embassies abroad and who are participants in the IVLP program. These exchanges enable the foreign leaders to obtain firsthand knowledge about our region. They meet and confer with their Los Angeles counterparts and gain an appreciation of the ethnic, cultural, political and socio-economic diversity of the greater Los Angeles area.

As a direct result of their IVLP experience, respondents indicated an increase in their willingness to trust Americans (77%). Alumni reported communicating more accurate information about the United States to other people in their country (91%). IVLP alumni applied their new knowledge and experience in significant ways. Sixty-four percent reported introducing new ideas to their workplace. An astounding 22 percent founded nongovernmental organizations or other organizations in their country. Of the 85 percent of alumni who shared their new knowledge at work or publicly, 53 percent gave media interviews, 36 percent wrote newspaper articles and 34 percent gave presentations.

IVCLA is a membership organization whose members serve as Citizen Diplomats helping to breakdown stereotypes and prejudices. For information about becoming an IVCLA Citizen Diplomat call 213 622-6835 or visit [www.ivcla.org](http://www.ivcla.org).

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