



Media Note
Office of the Spokesman
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Twelve-Month Intern Work and Travel Pilot Program

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte and Ireland Foreign Minister Micheal Martin signed a Memorandum of Understanding on an Intern Work and Travel Pilot Program on September 24 in Washington, D.C.

The United States and Ireland soon will begin to implement a Twelve-Month Intern Work and Travel Pilot Program for post-secondary students or young people within twelve months of graduation. The new program is an innovative exchange program that will allow thousands of young people from Ireland to enter the United States for a period of twelve months on a J-1 exchange visitor visa. There also will be reciprocal opportunities for young people from the United States to travel to Ireland. This will allow students from both countries to participate in a variety of internships, and to travel independently within the United States and Ireland.

The program will be coordinated by the private sector under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, and falls under the Intern Category of the Exchange Visitor Program. This program is set to be launched in late 2008 or early 2009. Further details and prerequisites on the program will be available from the U.S. Embassy in Dublin and Ireland's Embassy in Washington, DC.

The people of the United States and Ireland have deep and abiding traditional and historical links. Today's signing is designed to cultivate further mutual understanding between the people of the United States and Ireland, and to strengthen the connections between young people from our two countries. By enacting this agreement, the United States government hopes to broaden the international internship and travel experience for those who may not otherwise have an opportunity to do so.

Authority for the Exchange Visitor Program derives from the [Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961](#), also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The Act's intent is to increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and other countries through educational and cultural exchanges.

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