



**Cooperative Agreement 263-A-00-10-00026-00**  
**Quarterly Report, FY2017, Quarter 4**

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## **Executive Summary:**

On May 4, 2010, IIE/Egypt was awarded the New Scholarship Program (renamed LOTUS Scholarship Program). The original award and subsequent modification in August 2011 provided funding for 150 scholarships. Two competitive, nationwide outreach, recruitment, and selection cycles (summer 2010 and summer 2011) resulted in 150 students being selected and joining LOTUS partner universities. A total of **142 students** have graduated, one Cohort 1 (female) and two cohort 2 students (females) left the program, and three cohort 1 and two cohort 2 students (3 females and 2 males) were terminated due to weak academic performance. **Three** students started their residencies and will continue to be supported by the program between April and October 2018. **One** student who started his residency in November 2016 will finish by October 1, 2017.

On September 4, 2013, IIE/Egypt was awarded funding for 50 additional scholarships. The 50 Cohort 3 students completed the Bridge Year Program at the British University in Egypt (BUE) in June 2014 and began their undergraduate studies in September 2014. A total of 29 students were placed at BUE and 21 students were placed at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT). They have completed three years of their undergraduate degree programs and started their fourth and final year in September.

On June 19, 2014, IIE/Egypt was awarded funding for 50 additional scholarships. The 50 Cohort 4 students completed the Bridge Year Program at the British University in Egypt in May 2015. A total of 26 students were placed at BUE and 24 students were placed at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT). The number of LOTUS Cohort 4 students currently enrolled is 49 as one student was terminated for behavioral issues. They have finished their second year of undergraduate studies and started their third year in September.

**Table (1) Summary of the LOTUS Scholarship Program Results to-date**

Component	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total # of Students	F	M
Currently enrolled students			50	49	99	56	43
(65) Service Learning Projects	35	22	98	104	259*	134	125
All Graduates (including Residency Students)	96	46			142	75	67
Residency Students	4				4	0	4
**Employed Graduates	66	35			101	57	44
Study Abroad	45	20	28	18	111	57	54
Internships	105	59	39	10	213 <sup>1</sup>	105	108

\*Many students participated in multiple service learning projects

\*\* The number of employed graduates reflects the number of students who got employed within one to two years of graduation.

**Table (2) Summary of the FY 2017 Q4 activities took place:**

Activities	C3	F	M	C4	F	M	Total # of Students	Unit
LIA Life Skills Sessions	13	9	4	67	37	30	80	2
Specialized Sessions	7	5	2	30	19	11	37	1
Career Counseling Sessions	5	4	1	34	21	13	39	39
Career Mentoring Sessions	13	8	5	132	80	52	145	145
Cultural Trips	4	1	3	35	22	13	39	1
Service Learning Projects				17	7	10	17	3
Internships	12	4	8	9	6	3	21	21

<sup>1</sup> Some students have completed more than one internship.

**Table (3) FY 2017, Quarter 4 Reporting against Annual Work Plan:**

#	Sub-Task Description	Outputs/Deliverables	Planned FY2017, Q4 C1&C2	Status as of 09/30/2017 C1&C2	Planned FY2017, Q4 C3	Status as of 09/30/2017 C3	Planned FY2017, Q4, C4	Status as of 09/30/2017, C4	Planned FY2017, Q4 for C3 and C4	Status as of 09/30/2017 for both 3&4 cohorts	Planned FY2017,Q4, All Cohorts	Status as of 09/30/2017, All Cohorts
<b>Task 0: Program Start-up and Management</b>												
0.1	Finalize and execute legal service agreements for Universities	University sub-grants are finalized and signed										
0.2	Staffing of all IIE and partner positions	IIE incremental program staff are hired; University asst. coordinators are contracted; NM program staff are hired										
0.3	Complete Annual Work Plan (AWP) for FY17 (year7)	AWP is completed with Cohort 1, Cohort 2 alumni, Cohort 3 and 4 clearly represented and approved by USAID							09/30/2017			
<b>Task 2: LOTUS Scholar Academic and Personal Support</b>												
2.1	Develop agreements with the five universities to host LOTUS students and pay university coordinators	Universities, coordinators and assistant coordinators are paid according to agreed upon intervals							On-going	On-going		
2.2	LOTUS students are supported financially and materially to attend university	Allowances are paid monthly; Student housing and personal space are ensured and monitored; Transportation is provided as needed			On-going for residency students				On-going	On-going		
2.3	Conduct occasional meetings with LOTUS students at the group and individual levels	Meetings are held to identify issues, review policies, etc.;							On-going	On-going		
2.4	Provide wellness and counseling sessions to LOTUS students	LOTUS students receive support and enhance their coping skills							On-going	On-going		
<b>Task 3: Leadership in Action Program</b>												
3.1	Continue development of Leadership in Action Program sessions, materials, and handouts. Work collaboratively with Consultants and Service Providers	IIE will continue developing session materials and handouts for the LIA component in collaboration with Consultants and Service Providers							On-going	On-going		

#	Sub-Task Description	Outputs/Deliverables	Planned FY2017, Q4 C1&C2	Status as of 09/30/2017 C1&C2	Planned FY2017, Q4 C3	Status as of 09/30/2017 C3	Planned FY2017, Q4, C4	Status as of 09/30/2017, C4	Planned FY2017, Q4 for C3 and C4	Status as of 09/30/2017 for both 3&4 cohorts	Planned FY2017, Q4, All Cohorts	Status as of 09/30/2017, All Cohorts
3.2	Leadership in Action Program and enrichment sessions delivered by IIE staff, facilitators, consultants and guest speakers	Sessions are delivered on identified themes of importance								2		
3.3	Specialized sessions and meetings for specific purposes	Sessions are delivered and meetings held for special projects, etc.								1		
3.4	IIE-led leadership camp	IIE will organize Leadership camps for Cohort 3 and 4 students							1	1		
3.5	Helwa ya Baladi (My beautiful Country) Trips	Each Cohort 3&4 student will participate in two travel opportunities in Egypt over the course of their academic studies to learn more about the different parts of the country and its history and culture.							1	1		
3.6	Annual Student-led Leadership Workshop	LOTUS students plan and conduct an Annual Student-led Workshop							1	1		
3.7	Students service learning projects	Cohort 3&4 students undertaking service learning projects							On-going	On-going		
<b>Task 4: English Language Support</b>												
4.1	All LOTUS students who have not scored >550 take the ITP TOEFL exam	LOTUS students take ITP TOEFL exam to gauge English language proficiency improvements							On-going	On-going		
<b>Task 5: Study Abroad Program</b>												
5.1	Placement of eligible LOTUS students at U.S. universities by IIE NY Placement Office	LOTUS students are placed at U.S. universities on rolling basis based on max. travel dates; Courses are selected based on requirements of partner universities; U.S. university cost share is obtained; IIE works with partner universities on required courses and transfer of credits							On-going	On-going		
5.2	Study Abroad logistics	All logistics necessary to LOTUS student travel to U.S. are undertaken including visa and Trainet entry, travel arrangements, insurance, etc.							On-going	On-going		



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7.1	Continue designing and developing capacity building sessions for LOTUS partner universities	Seminars are developed on topics and issues of importance to the LOTUS partner universities based on each university's needs										On-going
7.2	Deliver Strategic Leadership Seminars to LOTUS partner universities	Leadership seminars are delivered at partner universities										
<b>Task 8: Communications, Monitoring and Evaluation</b>												
8.1	Website design and updating	LOTUS Program website is updated to keep stakeholders informed									On-going	On-going
8.2	Set-up and maintain collaborative communication and survey tools	Survey tools are developed and implemented to gather student feedback and program evaluation data. Baseline survey will be conducted for Cohort 4 students to assess their leadership skills and community service involvement									On-going	On-going
8.3	Revise M&E Matrix	M&E Matrix revised to capture program modifications and realities										
8.4	Identify the Comparison group of students for the program's performance Assessment	Comparison group is established with representation of each governorate to evaluate impact of LOTUS Program on LOTUS students					On-going	On-going				
8.5	Submit Quarterly and Annual Reports										10/31/2017	10/31/2017
8.6	Develop LOTUS highlights and PR documents	LOTUS student success and impact stories and achievements will be collected and documented									On-going	On-going

**Evaluation Recommendations Section:**

**Task 9: Evaluation Recommendations Action Plan (Current Students)**





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		more detailed input than the session evaluation forms and (3) Assess students' needs and interests										
9.5	Conduct a series of focus group discussions with current students to solicit additional qualitative input and discuss needs and interests in greater depth	Analyze survey results and focus group input and integrate as relevant and feasible into future LIA session design and programming taking into consideration the objectives of the LOTUS Program and funding							On-going	On-going		
9.6	Include a report of findings and recommendations for future programming in the FY2017/Q3 quarterly report	Report of findings and recommendations for future programming in the FY2017/Q3 quarterly report							On-going	On-going		
9.7	Send emails monthly to students with recommended websites, articles, and activities to help them improve their English proficiency	These emails will include recommended websites, articles, and activities to help them improve their English proficiency							On-going	On-going		
9.8	Conduct a focus group meeting with students to engage them in suggesting ideas for activities to help improve English language proficiency	(English movie outings or cultural trips followed by discussions in English, etc.) and implement English proficiency activities with students										
9.9	Continue working with students, partners, providers and contacts to source and place students in internships that will be beneficial to them	Internships will be sourced with the idea that the longer the internship, the better. Revision: Internships of at least one-week duration conducted prior to December 2016 have been reported and counted. Given the change in internship definitions in the middle of the project, IIE requests approval to proceed as follows for future internships: one internship for each student should be a minimum of 4 weeks in duration and the other 2-4 weeks in duration.							On-going	On-going		

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9.10	Revise the Internship Assistance Fund budget lines in next budget realignments to enable a higher funding level to cover costs such as internship fees, longer duration of housing and stipends, increased transportation costs, etc. in the next budget realignment	Internships Assistance fund line items are revised to include a higher funding level							On-going	Completed		
9.11	Engage with entities such as partner universities, business associations, HR and professional associations, etc. as well as personal contacts, to identify potential internships opportunities	A list of internships opportunities is identified							On-going	On-going		
9.12	Send students internship and volunteering opportunities via e-mail and post them on the Facebook group monthly from September to April and twice a month from May – August	Develop and utilize a tracker for the number and types of opportunities shared with students and report on it in subsequent QPRs							On-going	On-going		
9.13	Issue a solicitation for the career component with specific mention of the importance of a strong network of companies and organizations and experience in placing students in internships.	This solicitation will consider the feedback from students during the evaluation. It will address topics that are pertinent to seeking an internship, such as CV writing and interview skills and, later, employment search.										
9.14	Select provider(s) for the career component and work collaboratively to ensure the sourcing of internships and placement of students and that the themes are offered to students during their remaining two-four years of study	Provider(s) will be selected to ensure the sourcing of internships and placement of students. Students will receive information about the labor market, work conditions, types of jobs in different fields of study and when feasible, job-shadowing or practicums							On-going	On-going		
9.15	Nurture relationships with university faculty leaders (deans, vice deans, heads of departments and active professors) to encourage them to meet with students on both formal and informal bases to provide career guidance students' fields of study	University faculty leaders (deans, vice deans, heads of departments and active professors) are available to meet with the students for career guidance on their FOSS							On-going	On-going		

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9.16	Work to identify field specific mentors	Through multiple channels including: career component provider(s), IIE network of contact, alumni of other USG-funded programs such as the Cairo Initiative and Fulbright							On-going	On-going		
9.17	Discuss the addition of a University Assistant Coordinator with AASTMT and if they concur and are willing to cost share the salary supplement, contract an Assistant Coordinator including amending the service agreement and including funding for this position in the next realigned budget	Assistant Coordinator will be hired at AASTMT										
9.18	Hold discussion sessions with students to reiterate program objectives and roles and responsibilities	LOTUS program objectives and roles and responsibilities have been reiterated							On-going	On-going		
9.19	Include sessions on non-violent communication in the LIA program to help students learn how to communicate their feelings and needs in a way that encourages personal responsibility for actions and developing relationships based on compassion and collaboration	Sessions on non-violent communications conducted							On-going	On-going		
<b>Task 10: Evaluation Recommendations Action Plan (Alumni)</b>												
10.1	Conduct series of focus group discussions with alumni	Action plan for Alumni Activities will be developed based on the feedback of the focus group discussions	On-going	On-going								
10.2	Develop a plan for Alumni activities and include it in the next program narrative revision in addition to an increased line item in the next budget realignment	Modified budget with added line item for Alumni activities. IIE will develop a plan that includes purposeful events that would positively affect the career of LOTUS alumni as well as help inform the current students.									On-going	Completed

#	Sub-Task Description	Outputs/Deliverables	Planned FY2017, Q4 C1&C2	Status as of 09/30/2017 C1&C2	Planned FY2017, Q4 C3	Status as of 09/30/2017 C3	Planned FY2017, Q4, C4	Status as of 09/30/2017, C4	Planned FY2017, Q4 for C3 and C4	Status as of 09/30/2017 for both 3&4 cohorts	Planned FY2017, Q4, All Cohorts	Status as of 09/30/2017, All Cohorts
10.3	Conduct a meeting with USAID to understand the USAID alumni network and activities	Shared experiences from USAID alumni network and activities will enhance the alumni activities action plan										
10.4	Set-up and administer a Facebook page for alumni and current students to enhance communication on issues related to networking, personal development, and academic and professional opportunities.	Facebook page which includes alumni and current students which represents a platform for sharing job opportunities, internships, volunteering, professional development, scholarships and English language opportunities. The status of the Facebook group in terms of interaction and types of opportunities posted will be reported in each quarterly report									On-going	On-going
10.5	Conduct an online survey for Cohort 1 and 2 alumni	The survey will solicit input on the quality and utility of past sessions and activities										
10.6	Conduct a series of focus group discussions with alumni to solicit additional qualitative input and discuss needs and interests in greater depth	Analyze survey results and focus group input and integrate as relevant and feasible into future LIA session design and programming taking into consideration the objectives of the LOTUS Program and funding	On-going	On-going <sup>2</sup>								
<b>Task 11: Evaluation Recommendations Action Plan (Current Students and Alumni)</b>												
11.1	Include more opportunities for different cohorts of current students and alumni to gather more regularly	More opportunities are shared with the students and Alumni (job opportunities, internships, volunteering, professional development, scholarships and English language proficiency opportunities)									On-going	On-going
11.2	Include language on opportunities for students and alumni to gather more frequently in the next program narrative revision and an increased line item for	Modified Program narrative that includes Alumni activities. IIE will organize purposeful events that would affect positively the career of LOTUS alumni as well as help inform the current students.										

<sup>2</sup> IIE is in regular contact with the Alumni and sometimes IIE individual interviews are taking the place of the focus groups when there a specific need raised by the alumni to discuss career plans and adjustments.

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	alumni participation in the budget realignment											
11.3	Work with both BUE and AASTMT to ensure that LOTUS students are able to take advantage of career activities on campus while still students and after graduation	The university coordinators will share the career activities taking place on campus on quarterly basis. IIE will report on these efforts in the QPRs as per USAID instructions									On-going	On-going
<b>Task 12: Other Action Items</b>												
12.1	Hold a series of internal reflection sessions and discussions with the IIE LOTUS team around relevant issues such as student perceptions, challenges, non-violent communication, positive reinforcement, motivation, responsibility/accountability, etc.	A series of internal reflection sessions will be held to IIE LOTUS team									On-going	On-going
12.2	Draft revisions to the M&E matrix with a two-fold objective: (1) archiving indicators that have not proven to provide useful data and (2) adding indicators that measure important objectives that may not have been captured previously	Meet with the AOR to discuss suggested revisions to the M&E matrix and obtain approval on a revised M&E matrix. Revisions will include archiving the indicators that are not capturing the progress of the program's objectives as it should be and include more precise measures to convey whether key objectives are achieved in a meaningful way for performance management that permits consistent measurement over time.										
12.3	Investigate different leadership self-assessment tools that could be used to measure changes in student perceptions of leadership and improvement in leadership skills	A leadership self-assessment tool will be created to measure the students' progress with regards to leadership competencies							On-going	Completed		



## LOTUS Students Academic Performance

### Status of cohort 1 and 2 students. (142 graduates including residency students, 0 Active, 4 residency students)

The remaining two students from Cohort 1.2 graduated in summer 2017. As of this quarter, all students from Cohort 1 & 2 have officially graduated and IIE has received the transcripts. Four graduates are currently doing their residencies as per below.

### Cohort 3

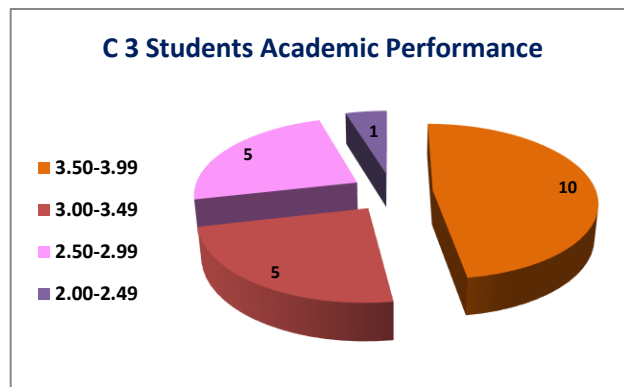
The number of LOTUS Cohort 3 students currently enrolled is 50 with 21 students studying at AASTMT and the 29 at BUE. IIE received the AASTMT Spring 2017 semester grades in July. The grades are listed below.

#### Cohort 3 BUE Spring 2017 Semester grades:

- 10 students earned GPAs of 3.50 - 3.99
- 5 students earned GPAs of 3.00 – 3.49
- 5 students earned GPAs of 2.50 – 2.99
- 1 student earned GPAs of 2.00 – 2.49

No students earned GPAs less than 2.00 and no students at AASTMT are on academic probation according to the LOTUS Terms and Conditions.

Six students from AASTMT returned from Study Abroad in the previous quarter, and their academic transcripts were received this quarter.



During this quarter, the same six AASTMT students who traveled abroad for the spring returned and took summer courses to make up for other required courses that they missed while in the U.S. Currently all six students are on track to graduate with their peers.

There are no grades to report for BUE students as this was already reported in the previous quarter. Two BUE students were on Academic Probation following the release of the end-of-semester grades last quarter. The Academic Advising Manager will be holding separate meetings with the students in the upcoming quarter to provide guidance and support.

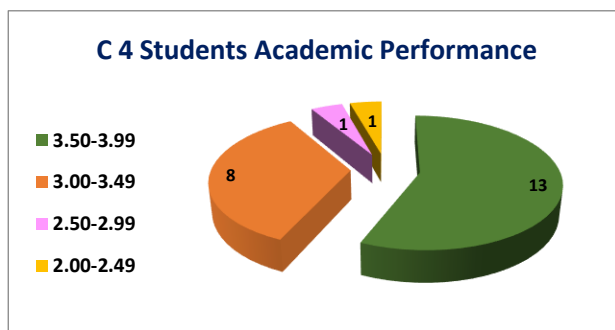
### Cohort 4

The number of LOTUS Cohort 4 students currently enrolled is 49 with 23 students at AASTMT and 26 students at BUE. IIE received the AASTMT Spring 2017 semester grades in July. The breakdown of scores by university is as follows:

#### Cohort 4 AASTMT Spring 2017 Semester grades:

- 13 students earned GPAs of 3.50 - 3.99
- 8 students earned GPAs of 3.00 – 3.49
- 1 student earned GPAs of 2.50 – 2.99
- 1 student earned GPAs of 2.00 – 2.49

No students earned GPAs less than 2.00 and no students at AASTMT are on academic probation according to the LOTUS Terms and Conditions.



## English Language Opportunities:

Students in Cohort 4 are still eligible to qualify for the Study Abroad opportunity if they score a minimum of 66 on their next iBT exam. During this quarter, 19 Cohort 4 students from BUE and AASTMT requested to be enrolled into an Online IBT Prep Course, completed the course and subsequently sat for the IBT exam.

## Campus visits

During this reporting period, there were no academic-related campus visits to the university as it was during the summer holiday. More information regarding campus visits for the Study Abroad component will be found in the Study Abroad section.

## Student Coordination Committee (SCC):

Based on feedback provided by the Mid-term Evaluation, IIE created the Student Coordination Committee (SCC). The SCC at each university is comprised of an IIE representative, a LOTUS university coordinator and four elected students (a female and male from each Cohort) to enhance communication between the three parties. Elections for the 2017-2018 representatives will take place at the beginning of the following quarter.

## Community Service and Extracurricular Activities

During this reporting quarter, 57% of LOTUS Cohort 3 & 4 students who responded to the survey participated in community service and volunteering activities, while 43% were either engaged with their exams or other extracurricular activities. The rest of the students (eight students) did not submit the survey due to poor internet connection at their home governorates or because they are travelling outside Egypt to participate in other extracurricular activities. The students who did not participate in any activities were asked to provide an explanation for their inactivity during the quarter and what are their plans for the coming quarter to make up for community service hours they have missed. The students who failed to respond for unjustifiable reasons were penalized by putting their stipends on hold.

The community service hours included volunteering in several NGOs and charity projects including Resala, Bedayat organization for street children in Minia, Food Bank, Life Makers, Elwafaa Organization and United Youth for development, Albalina Health Office, AYB, Orphanages, Catholic Community Kitchen, the Church and others. Some students devoted their time to serving refugees through the STARS Program for refugees and Saint Andrew Refugee Services. LOTUS Cohort 3 & 4 students collectively were able to devote **1,241 hours** of their time this quarter to community service where they assumed **26 leadership roles**.

Table (4) students' Community Service Hours and Leadership Roles

<b>Community Service Hours</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Leadership Roles</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>1,241</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>

## Updates on LOTUS Alumni

This section of the report provides quarterly updates on the employment status of the LOTUS Cohort 1 & 2 students. IIE maintains the connection with alumni through regular emails, social media and surveys where they provide information on their current jobs and the job interviews they have undertaken. As per the M&E matrix, the target is calculated based on the information extracted from a survey to document their employment status. Targets assume that 10% of the graduates will be employed within one year of their graduation and an additional 25% will be employed within two years of graduation. These estimates take into consideration that the majority of male graduates have compulsory military service after graduation and some chose to pursue graduate studies which will delay their employment. However, these estimates did not take into consideration that some female students get married after graduation and perhaps stay home and start families. To-date, eight female graduates are in this category.



The biggest limitation continues to be collecting the graduates' data after most of them have either returned to their home governorates and/or are engaged either in pursuing their career paths, military service or family commitments. IIE exerts every effort to encourage alumni to be more responsive and provides guidance whenever the need arises. For this quarter, only 13 graduates answered the survey and provided information in relation to their employability status and the interviews they have undertaken.

LOTUS alumni now are active in all tracks of life. To-date, 101 out of the 142 LOTUS alumni are employed, 57 of whom are females and 44 are males. The majority of the male graduates are either doing their mandatory military service or waiting for their military unit location confirmation. Five students are currently pursuing graduate studies abroad. The rest of the graduates are either unresponsive, married, on-maternity or have moved to live outside of Egypt. In this quarter, LOTUS alumni reported a total of seven interviews (3 females – 4 males).

### Alumni and Current Students Facebook Group

IIE started to track the opportunities posted in this Facebook group in response to Recommendation No. (1) in the Mid-term Evaluation Report; *“Build on and formalize the incipient network of LOTUS graduates and students to move toward the objective of establishing a nationwide network of young professionals. Although this is a long-term objective that will ultimately need to be self-sustaining, steps can be taken toward laying the groundwork and infrastructure in the remaining three years of the program”*. During FY2017, Q4, the following opportunities have been posted either by IIE team members or LOTUS alumni.

- 17 job opportunities in Cairo, Alexandria and Luxor, Aswan, Qena, Bani Suef, Fayoum, Behira, Sohag, Assuit, Kafr Al Sheikh, Gharbia, Dakahlia, Qaliobia, Giza, Marsa Matrouh and Menia
- 40 internship opportunities in various companies including Care, Henkel, WFP, UNDPC...etc.
- 2 scholarship and career development opportunities for graduate studies

### Study Abroad Component:

During this reporting quarter, IIE's Academic and Experiential Learning (AEL) division placed six Cohort 4 students for the fall 2017 term in the United States where they are taking a full course load.

IIE conducted an initial meeting to initiate the process of issuing the DS 2019s. During the session, students filled out necessary forms including the biographical data form, medical health examination form, stakeholders' responsibilities and the Conditions of Sponsorship for U.S. based activities form. They also had their medical examinations at Alshrouk Hospital the same day. The rules and regulations in the forms were explained and activities were conducted to get the students to think about their fears and expectations regarding living and studying abroad. They also wrote and signed pledges which they would keep throughout their study abroad journey, this included : *‘ I will not be afraid to try new things’, ‘ I will accept myself for who I am’, ‘ I will try to get out of my comfort zone’, ‘ I will strive to be professional at drawing natural scenes’, ‘ I will find new things about myself’, ‘ I will broaden my knowledge’, ‘ I will make the best use of my time- and will not oversleep’, ‘ I will keep my values’ and ‘ I will not be afraid to make English mistakes’.*

#### **Pre-Departure Orientation Sessions (Cohorts 3 & 4):**

##### **Fall 2017:**

IIE held one Pre-Departure Orientation session for the six students who traveled for the fall 2017 semester. The PDO session included the following activities to prepare the students for their study abroad experience.

Allowances were handed out to the students along with their passports and visas. The first activity was examining the students' fear and expectations of studying abroad. The activities that followed focused on the details of the travel journey, entry into the U.S., the different activities they could engage in on and off campus and a reiteration of the rules and regulations of the J-1 visa and USAID. After presenting their fears and expectations they were given paper which included the many steps pertaining to the travel journey from checking in until the entry into their destination. They had to arrange the paper in the right order chronologically and they role-played the interview with the immigration officer that would take place during entry into the U.S. The next activity included different situations which could happen in the U.S. including things like having a difficult roommate, being discriminated against in class or by people, encountering culturally different activities etc. Discussions were encouraged regarding the situations and the students had to decide who to contact in each situation, the study abroad officer, the academic advisor or the study abroad advisor in the U.S.

The students were introduced to the cultural aspect of studying abroad through the experience of the LOTUS director's experience. Subjects like sexual harassment and cultural shock were addressed. They then were invited to write a letter to themselves which they would receive upon their return. Finally, they were given their allowance and passports along with journals including 'wish you well' notes from the IIE team members. These journals are a tool to help them be introspective and encourage them to reflect on different matters throughout their study abroad.

## Re-entry Workshops

During this reporting period, a re-entry session was conducted on July 7, 2017 for the six LOTUS students who returned from spring 2017 Study in the U.S. opportunities. The session was conducted by IIE Consultant. IIE staff members attended the session to witness the progress of the students who passed through different stages of development. The session included the following aspects:

- The students introduced themselves and the universities that they attended in the U.S. They had the time to express their feelings about the university, the trip, and the places they visited. Most of their views were very positive towards the study abroad experience.
- The first activity focused on identifying students' current phase of re-adjustment in which they were asked to describe their current feelings and their places on the re-entry "worm". The students' stages showed that they are re-integrating in the society with no sense of frustration.
- The facilitator further continued identifying the stages and outward/inward indicators of the culture shock with students.
- An important activity was identifying the students' top challenge, which was their inability to apply the new skills and knowledge that they gained from the study abroad experience.
- Another activity was about measuring gains situating their selves on a scale to see the shift in attitudes (before and after). Each student was able to identify his/her feelings on the scale.
- The following activity was about the students' observations and stereotyping while studying at US.
- Recognizing stress and coping mechanisms were very useful since they all started to feel some differences upon their return. They also expressed how they miss the US academic and cultural life especially for science students who miss laboratories and the practical experience.

Finally, the session concluded by turning the U.S. study abroad experience into lifelong learning and leveraging experience, during which the facilitator stressed on the importance of moving from this point and building on it. The students were appreciative of this opportunity where they were able to share their reflections and thoughts on their experience which they deemed as 'unique and beneficial' and impacted their life positively in different ways. The students eventually confirmed that they will work on applying what they have learned abroad and will spread the knowledge acquired among their peers and friends. Finally, the facilitator wrapped up the session and the students evaluated the session favorably (93% satisfaction). A Re-entry meeting is bound to take place during the next Quarter.

On another related note and as part of collaborating between the scholarship programs at IIE, students from LOTUS cohort 4, who are currently studying in the U.S. were asked to send the Study Abroad Officer videos to use during the LSP program's study abroad orientation. The students currently studying at SUNY Plattsburgh made a collaborative video explaining the different aspects of studying and living abroad, which was very well received by the LSP Cohort 1 students at BUE.

## Leadership in Action Activities

### Leadership Camp:

As part of the LOTUS Scholarship's Leadership in Action Program, IIE held a leadership camp at the Cataract Pyramids Hotel from August 10<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. The forty-seven participants were mainly Cohort 4 students with the exception of a few students from Cohort 3 who were unable to attend the camp with their cohort last year.

Cohort 4 has demonstrated challenges in communicating with each other and trusting their peers. As such, the focus of the camp was to help them overcome these challenges by providing them with the appropriate tools. The camp was led by consultants that specialize in conflict resolution, non-violent communication, and accepting diversity. The camp's format consisted of interactive and experiential sessions, activities, and field trips and addressed topics including effective communication styles, methods of non-violent communication, listening and empathy, and collaborative and inclusive leadership.

As part of the leadership camp, the students participated in field trips to expose them to new concepts, to provide them with additional opportunities to connect with each other as a group, and to serve the overall objectives of the leadership camp. During the trip to SEKEM, the students were divided into two groups, each attending a different session and then they switched. The first session was an introduction to art therapy led by play director John Melad and the second session was led by members of SEKEM's Environmental Science Center (SESC) and provided students with an overview of farming and encouraged them to connect with nature by finding ways to create useful products from materials found around them. Dunes Tours implemented a trip to the Pyramids during which students learned new information about the history Egyptian civilization. For some students, this was their first time to visit the Pyramids and for the majority had not visited the sun boat. The final field trip day consisted of visits to Fagnoon and Baladini. At Fagnoon, the students met the founder and heard about his vision for creating the venue and the challenges he faced and overcame. The students also participated in the various activities available there such as drawing, painting, wood cutting, and sculpturing. Students then visited Baladini, which is an initiative that came about through exchanges between Egyptian and Italian women and it seeks to empower women from the Sakkara community to cook healthy and locally-sourced food using Egyptian and international recipes and techniques. Women from the initiative shared their story with students and explained the different cooking methods they use. After the talk, the students enjoyed lunch cooked by the women.

## Annual LOTUS Student-led Leadership Workshops

### The Seventh Annual LOTUS Student-led Leadership Workshop

Arab Academy for Science and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) confirmed that they will host the Seventh Annual LOTUS Student-led Leadership Workshop. IIE had initially proposed for the Workshop to take place in October, however, the dates were not convenient for AASTMT and as a result Saturday, November 11 was identified as the Workshop day with the rehearsal taking place on Thursday, November 9.

During the Leadership Camp, student organizers took advantage of their time together to continue with their planning for the Workshop. In addition, on September 30<sup>th</sup>, IIE organized a meeting to give the students a chance to get together now that they are back at their universities and students who were on study abroad have returned. The students have coined the Workshop title as Carpe Diem: Live in the Now and they have decided to focus providing attendees with resources on how to

address daily challenges faced in order to be able to live in the present moment. IIE felt that the Workshop's description and agenda needed more clarity and in turn discussed them in more details with the students. In addition, the committees shared updates and any challenges they faced. The students are currently working on revising the Workshop description, agenda, and suggested speakers' list based on the feedback received and will share with IIE. Once these documents are finalized, IIE will share with USAID for approval.

## **LOTUS Diwan Session: The Evolution of Higher Education and the CILAS Model**

The founder of Cairo Institute of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CILAS), led the LOTUS Diwan Session on the evolution of higher education. He provided students with the history of traditional higher education systems and their evolution. In addition, he discussed with students the new trends and alternative systems of higher education including the CILAS model. The session took place immediately after the LOTUS mini-career camp (*details on the camp are provided in the Career Component Section*) and during the LSP leadership camp. As such, IIE took advantage of having students from both programs in the same venue to have them attend the session as a way to help create networks between LOTUS and LSP students.

## **Helwa Ya Baladi Trips**

### **Fayoum Trip**

Dunes Tours implemented a trip to Fayoum from August 23-25 for Cohort 4 students and some Cohort 3 students who didn't participate in the last year with their cohort. The trip consisted of a variety of activities and visits to cultural sites such as Kom Oshim, Wadi El Rayan, and Wadi El Hitan. Students also visited the Art Center in Tunis Village which was founded by Mrs. Evelyne Porret as a way to encourage the local community to pursue pottery as a handicraft. Another activity on the trip was a visit to the Mohamed Abla Caricature Museum where the students had a chance to meet Mohamed Abla and learn about the history and importance of caricature art. In addition to the visits, Dunes Tours also arranged for a lecture by an official from the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency in Fayoum so that the trip participants could learn more about the environment in Fayoum including the various challenges it faces and initiatives to help protect it.

## **Service Learning Projects**

IIE received the three final reports for the projects that were implemented last quarter.

- *"Yes we can"* was a two-day health awareness session for high school students in which a group of nursing students shared techniques for first aid, how to handle emergencies, and Hepatitis prevention in Minya.
- *"Look forward to the future"* was a series of three sessions for students ranging from 11-19 years old in Port Said on the following: diversity and how to deal with and accept different people in our life; time management for students; and stress management techniques.
- *"Active Citizens for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"* was a project to help 20 youth (ages 17-30 years old) in Assiut to become more active citizens in their societies in order to maintain the 17 sustainable development goals set by UN. The team conducted sessions on a variety of topics including diversity, intercultural dialogue, global communication, community service, team building and project planning.

## **Career Component**

### **Mini Career Camp**

On August 21-22, IIE led a mini career camp mainly for Cohort 4 students with some Cohort 3 students in attendance who did not attend the camp held for their cohort in Q2. A total of 37 students participated in the camp, which consisted of mock interviews and career mentoring sessions. Prior to the camp, IIE shared with students a fictional internship announcement that included a job description and then IIE conducted individual mock interviews with students simulating real-life interviews. Student received feedback from the IIE interviewers and had a chance to ask questions. Three of the four career mentoring sessions held were led by LOTUS alumni as a way for them to share their experiences and advice with current LOTUS students.

IIE finds that having alumni lead sessions has been successful in strengthening the network of LOTUS students and also alumni resonate well with students who are in-program as they are relatable. Below is a summary of each session:

- **Making the most of your LOTUS Experience:** LOTUS alumnus discussed with students the importance of taking advantage of the different opportunities LOTUS provides students with such as Leadership in Action sessions in order to develop their skillsets.
- **How to stand out from the crowd:** LOTUS alumnus, shared her story with students and how she used the skills and experiences she gained through LOTUS as a way to set her apart from her peers in university and later in her professional life.
- **Creating a professional LinkedIn Profile:** LOTUS alumnus helped students create and update existing profiles on LinkedIn in order to help them become more competitive.
- **Ted Talks:** LOTUS team members showed students a series of career-related Ted Talks and led students through reflection discussions after each one.

### **Partnership with AMIDEAST Finalized**

During this reporting period, IIE received AO approval to issue a sub-award to AMIDEAST for the Career Component and finalized the sub-agreement with AMIDEAST. An implementation kickoff meeting was held to provide the teams with an orientation on the LOTUS Program and also an opportunity to plan the activities for the year.

### **Internships**

During this reporting period, IIE secured the following documentation for internships:

#### **Cohort 3: 12 internships; 8 students (3 females and 5 males)**

The internships were sourced by IIE and by the students and took place in the following places in Egypt:

- Audi Bank
- Arab African International Bank
- GBPOLO Bus Manufacturing SAE
- Ramrod Hotel Supplies
- Trust for Tax Consultancy
- Pepsico
- Electronics.com
- Hassan Allam Construction
- NEP

In addition, students conducted the following internships as part of their Study in the US opportunity:

- Twin Star Credit Union
- Life Styles
- Yvonne Richardson Community Center

#### **Cohort 4: 9 internships; 8 students (5 females and 3 males)**

The internships were sourced by IIE and by the students and took place in the following places in Egypt:

- Marji3
- Arab African International Bank
- Al Raey Preschool
- Innoventures

In addition, students conducted the following internships as part of their Study in the US opportunity:

- Life Styles
- Yvonne Richardson Community Center
- Arkansas Veterans Home at Fayetteville

## Leadership in Action Program Assessment Tool

**Current Students:** in the coming quarters, IIE will lead individual sessions with Cohort 4 students in order to discuss how they rated themselves on the leadership competencies in the LIA assessment survey and in turn understand what they might need to be able to rate themselves differently. The sessions will serve as an opportunity for more customized and focused attention on each student in order to help them continue to grow and strengthen their relationship with IIE.

**Alumni:** Forty-six alumni completed the assessment. IIE will provide a summary of the results in the next report.

### Upcoming Activities

- **Implementing career component activities:** AMIDEAST will begin implementing the career component activities.
- **Seventh Annual Student-led Leadership Workshop:** IIE will continue to work with and support students as needed.
- **Individual sessions with students:** IIE will meet with Cohort 4 students as additional and customized support to help hone their leadership skills.