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Date:

Contact: James A. Lawrence

Telephone: 202-453-8531

## **Fulbright Visiting Scholar Conference Focuses on Access to Higher Education**

*Distinguished U.S. and foreign faculty will discuss increasing college opportunities*

Improving access to higher education throughout the world will be the focus of this year's Fulbright Visiting Scholar Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

One hundred-twenty scholars from 64 countries will gather at the conference, which will be held April 19-21 at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Washington, D.C. This year's conference will focus on how the benefits of higher education can be spread more fully to diverse populations across the globe.

"How to broaden access to higher education is a critical issue for many countries," says Marianne Craven, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. "We hope that sharing the experience of the United States in seeking to create more opportunities, greater inclusion and increased diversity in higher education will be beneficial to the Fulbright Visiting Scholars as they discuss similar issues facing their own countries."

The conference opens on Sunday, April 19 at 2:30 p.m., with a speech by D. Bruce Johnstone, Distinguished Service Professor of Higher and Comparative Education at the State University of New York's Buffalo campus. Dr. Johnstone researches the impact of financial aid and government funding on access and equity at the higher education level. The Distinguished Leader of the 2007-2008 Fulbright New Century Scholars initiative on improving equity and access in higher education, Johnstone will discuss the implications of the current economic crisis on opportunities for the educationally disenfranchised.

Jane Knight, Adjunct Professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, will speak on Monday, April 20 at 12:30 p.m., about global efforts to improve access and equity. Dr. Knight, a Fulbright New Century Scholar in 2007-2008, mostrecently served as editor of *Financing Access and Equity in Higher Education*, a book based on the research conducted by Knight and other New Century Scholars on equity and access issues.

On Tuesday, April 21 at 9 a.m., University of Minnesota Professor David W. Chapman, also a New Century Scholars alumnus, will highlight the efforts of the government of Oman to expand access to post-secondary education. Chapman is an expert on the role of higher education in national development.

Media outlets interested in covering the conference are invited to contact RiShawn Biddle, Public Relations Officer for the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, at [outreach@cies.iie.org](mailto:outreach@cies.iie.org). A schedule of events and information about location will be available at [www.cies.org](http://www.cies.org).

The Fulbright Program, the U.S. Government's flagship international educational exchange program, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided approximately 294,000 participants – chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential – with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. For more information about the Fulbright Program please visit the U.S. Department of State's Fulbright website, [fulbright.state.gov](http://fulbright.state.gov), or contact James A. Lawrence, Public Affairs Officer, at (202) 453-8531 or e-mail [fulbright@state.gov](mailto:fulbright@state.gov).