Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP)

Participant Resource Booklet

April 2 – April 26, 2019

Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL, U.S.A.

Funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Dear SEAYLP Participant:

Congratulations on being chosen for the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP). We look forward to hosting you and 60 other youth participants and adult leaders April 2–26. We are looking forward to our time together with participants from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam for a 24-day program at Northern Illinois University (NIU) and Washington, D.C. The staff of NIU’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the SEAYLP program are eager to work with you to strengthen both your civic skills and regional connections within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Funded by the U.S. Department of State in cooperation with NIU, the program has a number of goals. They are: (1) promote mutual understanding, (2) advance an appreciation for diversity, (3) cultivate civic engagement and responsibility, (4) develop within participants a commitment to cooperation and a shared vision for the future, (5) foster leadership and civic activism skills, and (6) further an awareness of shared global and regional challenges.

While we hope to make you comfortable in our country and homes during your time with us, it is important that you bring your sense of adventure and a flexible disposition. Although we try to keep cultural and religious differences in mind, part of the program is experiencing American and international culture and developing cross-cultural understanding. Things will be different than they are at home, so be prepared to try new experiences, new foods, and new attitudes, and to look at yourself and the world in new ways.

We are looking forward to these twenty-four days together and a long future of seeing you grow into leaders and global citizens making positive changes in your communities, your countries, and the world.

We encourage you to submit any questions to us via Facebook on the program page or by email at akocher1@niu.edu. See you very soon.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Jones
Director, Center for Southeast Asian Studies

Anastasia Kocher
SEAYLP Administrative Director
Pre-departure Information
Program Overview

The Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) program is designed to provide high-quality leadership and citizenship development. SEAYLP seeks to nurture participants as the emerging generation of leaders who will actively pursue solutions to issues in their communities and countries. It gives participants confidence and experience in collaboration across ethnic, religious, and national boundaries by promoting mutual understanding between the peoples of Southeast Asia and the United States. The program aims to develop a shared sense of civic responsibility and commitment to community development and to hone leadership skills. To do so, it will focus on three major themes: Access and Equity, Green Technology for Growth, and Securing ASEAN’s Future.

Participants will engage in learning activities on the thematic topics within an international group. There will be short lectures from experts or activists in the field, debates, discussions and engaged activities. The program will include service opportunities and field trips that allow participants to interact with activists and others working to solve local and global problems. We will spend time learning concepts that span all types of civic engagement, like leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and creating Civic Action Plans. Together, these exercises should help participants move participants towards greater capabilities in leadership and engagement in improving the world around them.

Participants will also meet and interact with American youth leaders who will join SEAYLP group and travel with us to Oregon, IL for fun camp activities such as hiking, a challenge course, sports, and a campfire. American students will also travel with us to Washington, DC and participate in all program activities.

SEAYLP is an intense educational and cultural experience. Participants will:
- work in small thematic groups with others from different ASEAN countries.
- read, research, and compose presentations and articles in English.
- evaluate the resources and needs of their local communities.
- investigate the interconnections of nations on issues in the environment, vulnerable groups, technology and emergency preparedness.
- go sightseeing in Illinois and Washington, D.C.
- meet with diverse American high school students and shadow their school activities.
- visit a variety of NGOs working on different important issues locally and worldwide.
- explore methods of mediation and conflict resolution, time management, and professional communications
- live with an American family for a week.

When they return to their Southeast Asian homes, SEAYLP participants will carry with them a wealth of experiences in leadership and international understanding that will last the rest of their lives. They will have the skills and preparation to make positive changes through civic action.
Travel Preparations

You will apply for your U.S. Non-immigrant Visa (J-1 visa for Exchange Scholars) at the U.S. Embassy in your country.

Your Passport and Certificate of Eligibility (DS-2019) define your legal status in the United States. They are necessary for your entry and stay in the U.S., and for any temporary departure from and re-entry into the country.

Documents. You will need the following documents during your stay in the United States. Make sure that these documents are either in your carry-on luggage or purse/bag when you travel. Do not give them to anyone unless they show some form of identification that authorizes them to receive it.

A. Legal Documents
   • A valid Passport: with at least 6 months validity beyond your entry date
   • A Non-immigrant Visa: This will be placed inside your passport by a Consular Officer of the U.S. Embassy
   • Certificate of Eligibility (DS-2019 form)

B. Medical History, Medicine Prescriptions, Eyeglasses/Contacts Prescriptions

You should bring any important information regarding medical history. This includes documents regarding any medical conditions you may have, medicine prescriptions you need regularly and your eyeglasses prescription if you wear eyeglasses or contacts. Make sure that these prescriptions and documents are written legibly and in English.

C. The Agreement/Releases forms

You must have the hard copy of the Indemnification Medical Release form, Media Release, Code of Conduct, and Challenge Course Waiver forms that have been signed by parents/guardians or eligible adults. These forms will be collected by the Program Staff at NIU before the U.S. program begins.

Packing

It is in your interest to keep your baggage light and compact because YOU alone will have to carry whatever you bring. YOU alone will be responsible for carrying your baggage to and from all airports. There are no porters or assistants to help you. You may
also want to keep in mind that you will probably be bringing souvenir gifts back to your country, so it is important to leave space for that.

Baggage Allowance

In the past, participants have flown to the U.S. on Delta, American, and United Airlines. Passengers of those airlines to the U.S. are allowed two pieces of check-in baggage weighing no more than 50 lbs. (23 kilograms) each, and one small piece of "carry-on" baggage (10 kg. / 22 lbs.). Your check-in baggage will be taken at the airline check-in counter at each country’s International Airport and you will see them next when you arrive in the United States. Your carry-on baggage must weigh no more than 22 lbs (10 kg) and must be able to fit either under the airplane seat or in the overhead bin. You are also allowed to take only one of the following with you on the plane: a purse, small backpack, briefcase, or laptop bag.

TSA specifications of liquids in your carry-on luggage. Due to heightened security measures, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is limiting the amount of liquids, gels, and aerosols allowed in carry-on luggage. These items include shampoo, perfume, lotions, creams, toothpaste, hair gel, hair spray and other similar products. To bring these items in your carry-on bag, each item should be no more than 3 oz. (90 ml) in size and all must fit into one transparent, re-sealable 1 quart (1 L) - sized plastic bag. Any medication or liquids necessary for diabetic or other medical needs that do not fit into the 1-quart plastic bag and/or are more than 3 oz. must be declared at the TSA Checkpoint. Only those items (any liquids, aerosols or gels) purchased beyond the TSA security checkpoint may be taken on the plane.

What to pack

Things to pack in your Carry-On Luggage

- Identification papers and important documents: Passport and DS2019.
- The original copies of signed Agreement/Release Forms.
- Any electronic devices (laptops, cameras, cell phones, etc.)
- A list of names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of your key contacts in the U.S. and your home country.
- All prescription medicine and medical prescriptions written out by your doctor and/or pharmacist with English-language equivalences. If your medication is in liquid or gel form, put it into a clear, re-sealable 1 quart-sized plastic bag.
- Two days’ worth of clothing in case your luggage is delayed or missing.
- Pocket money (U.S. dollars) in case you want to buy snacks.

**PUT IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS IN YOUR CARRY-ON LUGGAGE, NOT IN YOUR CHECK-IN LUGGAGE/SUITCASE.**

**Things to pack in your Check-in Suitcases/Luggage**

- It can be cold in April in Illinois. Bring warm clothing, such as hooded jacket, sweater, fleece pajamas, sweatshirts, long-sleeved spring wear, jeans/khakis, comfortable shoes, tennis shoes (required for some outdoor activities)
- **Business attire** for the visit to the State Department in Washington, D.C.
- **Evening outfit** for the Dinner/Theater *(optional)*
- Toiletries, make-up, etc.
- Extra pair of glasses, sunglasses.
- **Ethnic (souvenir) crafts** to give to your new friends and host family
- Liquids or gels that are in containers **larger** than 3 oz. It is advised that you put these materials in re-sealable **plastic bags** as the air pressure in the luggage compartment of the plane sometimes causes the liquids/gels to leak, open or explode.
- Pictures of your family, home and community to share with your new friends

**Prohibited Items. DO NOT BRING** any of the following items on your travels to the U.S.: plants, fruits, meats, vegetables, clothing made from the skin of endangered animals, ivory, obscene articles or publications, firearms, knives, scissors, tweezers, screwdrivers, cigarette lighters, metal fingernail files, nail clippers, multi-use utility tools (i.e. Swiss Army Knives), mace or pepper spray. Any sharp objects will be confiscated. Prescription drugs **without** a doctor’s prescription, drug paraphernalia, and illegal narcotics such as barbiturates and marijuana are also strictly prohibited.

**Label your Luggage**

Place **labels** on the **inside and outside** of your luggage with the following information:

YOUR NAME  
Northern Illinois University  
Holmes Student Center Hotel  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
Phone: (815) 753-1444

If your luggage is lost, these labels will help the airline return it to you. Moreover, many pieces of luggage look the same; it is advisable to place a marker (i.e. **ribbons or stickers**) on the outside of your luggage to make it easier to identify on the Baggage Claim carousel.
NOTE: NEVER LEAVE YOUR LUGGAGE UNATTENDED AT ANY AIRPORT.

**Baggage Check In**
When you check in your luggage at your home country international airport, please make sure that it is **checked all the way through** to **O'Hare International Airport** (the airport code is **ORD**)—your final destination.

**Do not make jokes or comments about carrying weapons, bombs, terrorism, or hijacking attempts. All comments will be taken seriously and you could be detained, deported, or worse.**

**Travel Delays**

**In the case of a travel delay, please call:**

- Anastasia Kocher  
  Office: (815) 753-6956    Mobile: (815) 501-0167  

- Nancy Schuneman  
  Office: (815) 753-6812    Mobile: (815) 895-4469

**Arrival in the United States**

**Filling out forms on the plane.** Shortly before you arrive in the United States, flight attendants will distribute **Custom Declaration Forms** on the plane. Fill out the form before you deplane. You will submit them to the appropriate U.S. Customs and Immigration authorities after you land. If you do not understand the form, do not hesitate to ask the flight attendant for help.

**Passing through the Immigration Inspection Booths.** Once you deplane at your **Port of Entry**, follow the other passengers into the terminal area reserved for incoming passengers. You will line up in front of the **Immigration Inspection Booths**. Have your **passport** and **DS-2019 form ready for inspection by the Immigration Officer**. The immigration officer will stamp the travel document with the admission date, the class of admission, and your departure date. You will probably be asked what your purpose for entering the United States and what your final destination is. An appropriate answer would be, **“To attend a 2.5-week training program at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois, funded by the U.S. State Department.”**

**Baggage Claim.** After passing through **Immigration**, you will then go to the **Baggage Claim Area** to pick up your luggage. Make sure that you double-check the baggage claim tags placed on your luggage by the airlines for your name.
Passing through U.S. Customs & Declaration of Goods. Once you have your baggage, you will now proceed to U.S. Customs. Have your completed Customs Declaration form ready. A Customs Inspector will ask you to declare what you have brought into the country. To declare something is to make known the value of the material goods you are bringing into the country. Penalties for concealing declarable items can be severe, so be honest and make a full declaration. Items that you are required to declare include: items of value that you are bringing for someone else; items you intend to sell or use in your business; items you bought in duty-free shops.

Connecting flight to Chicago-O'Hare International Airport:
✓ After going through Immigration and Customs, place your baggage onto the baggage conveyor/carousel designated for your connecting flight to Chicago-O'Hare Airport.
✓ Then, proceed to the GATE for your Chicago-O'Hare flight. Do not be afraid to ask the Airport Police or Airline personnel for help in locating the carousel for your baggage, the GATE for your flight, the Rest Room (or CR- Comfort room, toilet), etc.

Arriving in Chicago, Illinois. From your port of entry, you will take a connecting flight to Chicago-O'Hare International Airport. After you disembark (deplane), proceed to the Baggage Claim Area to collect your luggage. NIU staff will meet you at the Baggage Claim Area. They will be holding a sign that reads:

“Welcome SEAYLP to NIU”

Accommodations and other travel Information

Expenses and Program Allowances: NIU will pay for your accommodation/housing in Illinois and Washington, DC. You will receive a cash allowance to pay for meals not provided or paid directly by NIU. This cash allowance will be disbursed weekly, with the first allowance given to you during Orientation.

You will be responsible for budgeting your meal cash allowance over the four-week period. Transportation for field trips during the program will be covered by NIU. Your daily expenses (from shampoo to laundry) will come out of your own pocket money. You will be responsible for managing your accounts for minor expenses not covered by the program budget.

Housing. You will first be housed at the Holmes Student Center (HSC). You will have one roommate during your stay at NIU. Each room has a microwave/refrigerator, and a phone for your use, but you must pay for long distance calls. Some local calls are
For **one week** you will stay with an American host family to experience family life in America first-hand. While in Washington, D.C., you will stay at **Virginian Suites Hotel** for 3 nights (April 23-26, 2019). You will have one roommate at this hotel.

**Meals.** HSC has fast-food counters, cafes, and cafeterias that offer a wide selection of menus at very reasonable prices. There are also a number of restaurants near campus and in downtown DeKalb which are within reasonable walking distance. On most weekdays when you are on campus, you will have your breakfast and lunch at **Neptune Dining Hall.** These lunches are paid directly by NIU. Remember, **YOU** are responsible for all meals **NOT paid** directly by the program. Use your cash allowance for these meals.

**Clothing and Laundry.** While traveling, be sure to dress comfortably. On campus, NIU faculty and students generally dress casually in denim jeans, shirts, T-shirts, sweatshirts, sneakers and sandals.

**You are expected to do your own laundry.** A coin-operated washer and dryer are conveniently located in HSC room 231/233. Detergent can be purchased at the hotel front desk. An ironing board and iron are available in your HSC room. We recommend that you bring clothes that require little or no ironing.

**Computer and Internet Access**
NIU provides computer and Internet access at many locations on campus. Check out the Holmes Student Center’s cybercafé – The College Grind. The College Grind is a relaxing environment that includes a computer lab, coffee counter, and a sitting lounge. The computer lab has 10 computers available. HSC is wireless enabled, which means that a personal notebook, laptop computer, smart phone, etc., can access the internet from any spot in the building. This wireless access is available to all guests.

**Weather and Attire**
You can expect the weather in DeKalb in April to be cool, crisp and rainy. The temperatures will range from 40 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit (0 degrees to 20 degrees Celsius). Light snow showers can be expected intermittently during your stay. You may want to consider bringing the following: **warm jacket, sweaters, long-sleeve shirts, gloves, scarf,** and clothing that may be worn in layers. It is also advisable to bring **good walking shoes** for activities that may include lots of walking, such as the site visits. Gym or sport shoes are recommended for outdoor activities.
Important NOTICE:

Travel to visit family or friends elsewhere in the United States will **NOT** be permitted before, during, or after the program. Family or friends may be permitted to visit the participants during the program, at the discretion of the NIU Administrative Director and in consultation with the U.S. Department of State, provided that such visits will **not prove disruptive to the program**. At no time will family or friends be permitted to accompany the participants during scheduled activities, whether such activities are mandatory or optional. ALL participants will be required to return to their home country **immediately** upon the conclusion of the program.

**Have a Safe Travel to the U.S. and See You at NIU!**