



## Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Initiative: Summer Institute for Youth

### ***Welcome from the U.S. Department of State***

Carolyn Lantz, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Liza Davis, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

Merrie Blocker, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, we would like to welcome you to the United States of America! We have been closely involved with putting your program together, and we are very pleased to be working with the exceptional team at Wake Forest University. We wish we could be there to greet you in person right now.

The Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Initiative aims to foster relationships among the younger generation of Europeans, Eurasians, and Americans in order to advance the global freedom agenda, to build strong links and awareness of shared values, and to enable youth to face together the challenges of global circumstances in the 21st Century.

In today's terms, the legendary American statesman and diplomat Benjamin Franklin could be called a transatlantic man, someone whose career, interests, studies and life took him back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean, bringing Americans and Europeans closer in understanding. Our intent is for his life to offer inspiration to today's young citizens in the effort to bridge the Atlantic, even after 300 years. As a diplomat and a printer, he leveraged the power of diplomacy and of the media to build understanding of the press and of how Americans and Europeans see each other. This summer institute will guide you in examining what Americans, Europeans, and Eurasians need to know about each other to better communicate person to person.

You are about to start an adventure that will show you many amazing things – some that will surprise you, some that you think are wonderful, and others that are not so great. You will learn about the United States, and the countries represented by the other participants. Most of all, you will learn about yourself. Pay attention to how certain things make you think and feel, and what you want to share with your friends and family back home. We hope that you have a chance to fulfill the goals we have set forth for the program as well as your own personal ambitions during this program.

Congratulations on being selected for this special program. We are very glad you are here. Have a great time and we look forward to meeting you all later in the month!