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**IS THE J-1 TRAINEE AND INTERN EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM STILL
FULFILLING ITS ORIGINAL PURPOSE AS AN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL
EXCHANGE PROGRAM?**

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A capstone paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a

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Abstract

The J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program came out of the legislation of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961. This policy was brought forth at the end of World War II. The J-1 is a “non-immigrant visa category ... for individuals approved to participate in work-and study-based exchange visitor programs” (U.S. Department of State, J-1 Visa Basics). The J-1 has many subcategories, including *Au Pairs*, *Summer Work Travel*, *College and University Student*, *Intern*, *Trainee* and many more. The J-1 visa subcategories that will be the focus of this capstone paper are the *Intern* and *Trainee* programs. The *Intern* and *Trainee* programs are used to bring individuals into the United States to do paid training and internship programs with a focus on education and cultural exchange. The J-1 Exchange Visitor program was enacted to help bridge cultures and communities from around the world. It was a way to connect Americans with international individuals and for them to share and learn technical skills in a variety of different fields. It was a way of educating and building connections. Since 2017, the J-1 Exchange Visitor program has been brought to the forefront and there has been serious conversation about cutting the program based on a variety of reasons. This capstone paper looks at the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program and assesses whether or not it is fulfilling its original purpose as an educational and cultural exchange program. Based on the evidence collected from interviews and surveys, the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program is fulfilling its original purpose as an educational and cultural exchange program.

Introduction

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program, which the J-1 trainee and intern program falls under, was established in 1961 with one of the goals being to promote cultural understanding between people from all around the world (U.S. Department of State, Regulations and Compliance Administration). The other aspect of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program was to promote education and learning.

The J-1 is a “non-immigrant visa category ... for individuals approved to participate in work-and study-based exchange visitor programs” (U.S. Department of State, J-1 Visa Basics). The J-1 has many subcategories including *Au Pairs*, *Summer Work Travel*, *College and University Student*, *Intern*, *Trainee* and many more. This course-linked policy advocacy capstone paper (*J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment*) will provide an analysis of the J-1 visa and will focus on the *Intern* and *Trainee* subcategories. The *Intern* and *Trainee* subcategories are almost identical programs except for a few differences between who qualifies for each program.

The J-1 *Intern* and *Trainee* programs are designed to allow people from all around the world to come to the United States for a specific amount of time to train in an organization, company, farm, or similar environment, which are referred to as *Host Organizations*. In order for an individual to be able to come to the United States and participate in the J-1 program, they must go through a sponsor organization that facilitates the visa process and the training program. The *Trainee* or the *Intern*, both of whom are also referred to as an *Exchange Visitor*, must follow this training program to maintain eligibility. The Department of State designates sponsor organizations to facilitate certain subcategories of the *Intern* and *Trainee* programs. The

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subcategories are linked to career fields, for example some sponsor organizations are able to sponsor Engineering, Agriculture and Marketing subcategories. Each sponsor organization can only sponsor the fields designated to them by the Department of State.

Interns and trainees must come and train under the supervision of someone who has been at the host organization and is considered an expert in the field in which they are working. The host organization must develop and provide, with the collaboration of the sponsor organization, a training plan that must be followed during the *exchange visitor's* training or internship program that provides both training and cultural activities. This training plan must be divided into different phases and each phase accounts for between 1 and 4 months. For example, an *exchange visitor* who is coming for 12 months should have a training plan that has at least 3 phases. Each phase must have particular goals and objectives that the intern or trainee must achieve. The training plan also has specific activities that the intern or trainee must learn or participate in as well as cultural activities in which they might be able to participate. This plan is very similar to a lesson plan that teachers use. It is a way for the trainee or intern, the host and the sponsor organization to be held accountable.

Both the Intern and Trainee program are for international individuals who are currently enrolled in a post-secondary institution or who have been working in the field of their training or internship program, enabling them to come to the U.S. to participate in both cultural exchange and training in their career field for a maximum of 18 months (U.S. Department of State, J-1 Basics). The main difference between an *Intern* and a *Trainee* is that with an *Intern* they must be currently enrolled in a post-secondary institution or have graduated within 12 months of their start date in the United States (U.S. Department of State, Intern Program).

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Interns do not need to have much prior experience in the field that they are studying, but if they come on a program, it must be in the field they are studying (U.S. Department of State, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations). With a *Trainee*, there are two paths they can have followed to meet eligibility. They can either have a degree or diploma from a post-secondary institution and at least one year of experience in the field in which they hope to come and train in the United States (U.S. Department of State, Trainee Program). Alternately, they can have five years of experience in the field in which they hope to come to the United States to train in with no degree nor diploma from a post-secondary institution (U.S. Department of State, Trainee Program). Within the intern field the maximum allotted time that an individual can be in the United States is 12 months and for a trainee it is 18 months.

The organization that will be the focus of *J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment* is *Experience International*. They are a small nonprofit organization that is one of many sponsor organizations working with the J-1 Intern and Trainee Exchange Visitor program. Experience International is located in Bellingham, Washington and sponsors over 100 interns and trainees from around the globe each year. Placements of exchange visitors are across the United States. Experience International first opened its doors in 1989 and has grown from sponsoring a few interns per year to current numbers surpassing 1900 trainees and interns (Experience International, About Us). Experience International sponsors the J-1 trainee and intern program for individuals who are either studying or currently working in the fields of *Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Management, Business, Commerce, Finance, Sciences, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics* and *Industrial* occupations.

Over the last few months, Experience International has heard from many exchange visitors and hosts about the program and their thoughts about participating. This course-linked

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policy advocacy capstone evaluates how both exchange visitors and their hosts feel about the program in regards to the educational value and amount of cultural activities that are implemented into their programs. Exchange visitors and the people who are hosting them have had overall positive experiences. Experience International has been contacted since late 2017 about concerns involving cutting the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program. In response to outward concern from sponsor organizations like Experience International, who were also receiving such inquiries from hosts and participants, a data gathering survey was sent out by the U.S. Department of State. The purpose of this data gathering survey was to evaluate how the J-1 visa was being used and if it was being used as a substitute for a work visa. The research presented in *J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment* strives to use data gathered from intern and trainee exchange visitors and hosts to answer the question of whether or not the J-1 program fulfills its original purpose as an educational and cultural exchange program.

In the United States there are many programs in which international individuals are able to come to live and work. There are many different types of visas that can be used for a variety of different purposes. For individuals who would like to immigrate to the United States, there are specific visas such as Employment Based Immigrant Visas (C5, T5, R5, or I5) and law firms that help facilitate that process. For international students who want to come to U.S. universities, there is yet another process and visa that is used in order to be able to come to the United States and study. For those who are currently pursuing their career field or enrolled in post-secondary education and want to come to the United States to further their knowledge, there is yet another visa which is called the J-1 Visa. Each of these visas make it possible for individuals in different stages of their lives and careers to come to the United State and become part of our growing “melting pot”.

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Experience International facilitates the J-1 Intern and Trainee program in the following categories: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, management, business, commerce, finance, sciences, engineering, architecture, mathematics and industrial occupations (Experience International, USA Exchange Visitor Program). Each of these categories have a variety of specific fields that fall under them. During my time at my current organization I work with all J-1 exchange visitors who are coming for training and the hosts that will be hosting them. Experience International has been around for 30 years and has seen all changes that have happened in regards to the J-1 visa, the exchange visitors and hosts who participate in the program. During my time so far, I have had the opportunity to examine how the exchange visitor program is functioning and found that there was a need to evaluate the trainee and intern program to see whether or not it is fulfilling its original purpose as a cultural and educational program.

The J-1 visa program falls under the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 and the policy of the program is that the J-1 trainee and intern program was made to be a cultural and educational program (U.S. State Department -1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program) which allows participants from around the world to come and gain practical training in the United States while learning about U.S. culture (U.S. State Department -1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program). The other side of this policy is that those who are coming to participate in this program will also be sharing their knowledge of their chosen trade while also sharing parts of their culture with their coworkers and the people they meet while in the United States (U.S. State Department -1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program).

J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment strives to see if in reality, the J-1 exchange visitors were following the original purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor program. It also talks about the

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current state of this policy and its impact today. Secondly, some historical, economic and cultural background to the policy is discussed so that it might be better understood in its importance today. From there this policy advocacy course-linked capstone paper will give a detailed stakeholder analysis in order to demonstrate who exactly is involved and affected by the program.

An analysis of some elements and components of the policy will be done by framing the issue, defining the problem, supplying the goals and objectives of the research, discussing how the research was implemented, and examining the outcomes due to data collection related to the policy outcomes. A discussion of the overall analysis, recommendations and conclusions that were found through the research will follow. Next, an analysis of whether or not the current policy is working, whether it is missing the needs of the target populations, and whether the policy has appropriate goals will be presented. Finally, conclusions and recommendations will be drawn based on the analysis previously provided.

Current State of the J-1 Intern and Trainee Exchange Visitor Program

With the current political climate and the rumors of the J-1 program being cut, the question about whether or not the J-1 Trainee and Intern program is fulfilling its original purpose has come up more often since 2017. There are many stakeholders, including the exchange visitors, who come to the U.S. to further their career in their designated fields, to gain trade related knowledge of specific skills which can only be found in the U.S., and to learn more about the United States and its culture. Hosts are another stakeholder in this program. There are some hosts who hope to gain international connections for trade, who need interns or trainees in order for their business to survive, or who desire to learn about people from different cultures and to make lasting connections. The United States economy also tangibly benefits from this program

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because the J-1 intern and trainee program increases business and income of many organizations and businesses.

J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment examines the J-1 trainee and intern program to determine its current relevance based on how well it is fulfilling its original purpose. The focus is on the 1961 Mutual Cultural Exchange Policy and the Fulbright Hays Act under which the J-1 Trainee and Intern program falls. *Self-Authorship Theory* was used to look at how exchange visitors and hosts develop their own identity and how they then use this to continue or progress in their preferred career fields. *Human Capital Theory* is used to look at how the investment of *exchange visitors* and *hosts* enables growth. Finally, a *Cultural Intelligence Theory* lens is used to look at how the J-1 Trainee and Intern program effects both the *exchange visitor* and *host* in their cultural understanding.

The J-1 Exchange Visitor Intern and Trainee program brings in many people from around the world and has a huge effect on the United States Economy. As of February 28th, there were over 10,000 trainees and over 25,000 interns currently in the US participating in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program (Facts and Figures, U.S. Department of State). In Washington state alone, there are 121 trainees and 978 interns (U.S. Department of State, Participant and Sponsor Tools). This number fluctuates because not all intern and trainee programs start and end at the same time. There is no specific time that a person can start the program. The end of the program also depends upon program type. For interns, the maximum participation duration is 12 months. For trainees it is 18 months, however, any person who comes for an agricultural training program is also restricted to a 12 month duration. (U.S. Department of State, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations). This rule exists for agriculture because, in industries dealing with crops or animals,

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routines recycle seasonally. After the initial 12 month period, agricultural participants would simply be repeating skillsets.

One of the focuses of the Exchange Visitor Intern and Trainee program is education and learning about one's trade or current field of study. Being a program that is based on education, the J-1 category has a narrow participant field in which 86% of exchange visitors are 30 years old or younger (U.S. Department of State, Facts and Figures). Currently at the sponsor organization *Experience International*, around 90% of participants are 30 years old or younger. This low participation age demographic is inherently tied to the nature of program.

Many of the exchange visitors who are interns are coming to fulfill part of their post-secondary education and need internships, which is represented in the total number of interns who arrive to participate in the program compared to those who come as trainees. A vast majority are just starting out in their profession and would like to gain more experience and or gain knowledge, which, when you are just starting out, seems more logical. Participating in the exchange visitor program at this time is also because exchange visitors who are considered interns means that they are currently studying or have just graduated from a post-secondary institution. The common age for that group is under 30 however there are some current participants who are older and this might be due to a change in career path or the desire to learn about new advances in certain fields.

One of the focuses of the Exchange Visitor Intern and Trainee program is that of cultural exchange. Of the current participants in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program, there are currently Exchange Visitors from more than 200 countries (U.S. Department of State, Facts and Figures). At *Experience International* there are people from more than 20 countries currently participating in the intern and trainee program. The organization's reason for sponsoring participants from a

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mere 10% of the possible countries of origin relates to the organization's small size and relative inability to appropriately source people from more countries. Also, there are some countries where the visa denial rate is so high that *Experience International* could not support having many people denied visas. According to Forbes Magazine, some of the countries with the highest visa denial rates are Cuba, Afghanistan, Mauritania, Liberia, Gambia, Bhutan, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Somalia, Guinea and Bangladesh (McCarthy, 2017).

Experience International has been in business since 1989 and, based on trial and error, they have also found that some countries have higher visa denial rates than others due to a participant's inability to prove sufficient home country ties. Because *Experience International* is such a small organization, they were eventually forced to stop working with some countries because they would lose money every time someone's visa is denied. Visa denial also means that *Experience International* would lose that visa and not be able to allocate it for someone else. Other sponsor organizations, such as CAEP, which is one of the larger sponsor organizations, will have a wider variety of countries with which they work because they have networks and connections that can help them source applicants. Also, visa denials do not affect them as much as a smaller organization.

Historical Background of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

"The J-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa issued by the U.S. Department of State to educational and cultural exchange participants. It was created through the Fulbright-Hays Act" (Americans for Cultural Exchange, About the J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa). The Fulbright-Hays Act came from the original bill that was introduced to Congress by J. William Fulbright who was a senator at the time. He wanted to have a program that would generate the "promotion of international goodwill through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture and

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science" (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Informal history of the Fulbright Program). The implementation of the Fulbright-Hays Act immediately followed the conclusion of World War II and was an idea that sought to bridge cultures and communities after such a devastating time. It was further hoped that this would allow Americans to go abroad and learn about different cultures and also to bring in people from around the world to learn about the United States. It was passed into law in 1946.

The act encountered several initial obstacles, most notably in the form of funding issues. There was substantial disagreement as to the source of program funding and the nature of how any such funding should be allocated (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Informal history of the Fulbright Program). Funding was originally sought from a change in the Surplus Property Act which was to allow the Department of State to allocate its funds to programs, which included the Fulbright Act (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Informal history of the Fulbright Program). The Department of Treasury, the U.S. Department of Justice and others within the Department of State; however, need subject wanted to use these assets on buildings and infrastructure rather than designating it to specific people who might be participating in the Fulbright program (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Informal history of the Fulbright Program). Funding was eventually found instead through private institutions such as colleges and universities around the United States who had started to allocate funds to fellowships and assistantships for people who were going to participate in the program (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, The Early Years).

It would take until 1961 for the Fulbright-Hays Act to be born from the original Fulbright Act. The Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 is also commonly known as the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Americans for Cultural Exchange, About the J-1 Exchange

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Visitor Visa). This act has become the baseline for cultural exchange within the United States and for the J-1 program, which falls under that act. The J-1 Exchange Visitor Intern and Trainee program was designed sharing the same goal as the overarching policy of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, which focuses on cultural exchange and educational training.

The J-1 Exchange Visitor Intern and Trainee program is overseen by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Their mission is to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations, as mandated by the Fulbright-Hays Act” (Americans for Cultural Exchange, About the J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa). Their mission is similar to that of the J-1 Exchange Visitor program in that there is a focus on connecting Americans and people from other countries with the overall end goal of understanding.

Economical Background of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

The overarching Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program, which the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor Program falls under, does not receive funding from the United States government. All people who want to participate in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program must go through a sponsor organization. There are many different sponsor organizations which oversee different programs within the J-1 program and also within the J-1 Trainee and Intern program. As stated before, each sponsor is designated for a specific field within the intern and trainee program. Each sponsor organization has different fees that they charge participants. For example the Center for International Career Development charges a program fee starting at \$750 for exchange visitors who find their own hosts (CICD J-1 Training/Internship Program

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Fees, CICD Global Opportunities). Experience International for example has a placement fee starting at \$900 for exchange visitors who find their own host. There are some regulations that all sponsor organizations must follow in regards to payment and money.

All sponsors must thoroughly screen both applicants and hosts, supply health and travel insurance to exchange visitors during the full time of their program, provide an orientation upon arrival (U.S. Department of State, How to Administer a Program). Sponsor organizations must also monitor participants and hosts through the duration of the program (U.S. Department of State, How to Administer a Program). For programs of 6 months or more have both hosts and Exchange Visitors complete a midterm and final evaluation, and comply with all regulations related to the intern and trainee programs (U.S. Department of State, How to Administer a Program).

Even though all sponsor organizations must be approved by the Department of State, there is no one specific amount that they can charge for fees associated with their programs. Since there are many different sponsor organizations of different sizes working in a variety of different fields, there is some variance in cost. For example, although all sponsors must supply health insurance to participants, there is no specific provider that must be used and it is up to the discretion of the sponsor to choose an insurance as long as it fulfills the requirements set out by the Department of State.

Similarly, there is no set amount for the program fees that sponsor organizations charge exchange visitors. It is currently a competitive market for J-1 sponsors because there are many to choose from, which has kept the cost between sponsors relatively similar. Sponsor organizations only receive funding from the fees that they charge participants, so some smaller organizations, like *Experience International* have to charge a higher program fee to offset the costs of running

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the program. On the other hand, larger organizations, like CAEP, have more participants and can lower the cost of their program. Some sponsors are considered 501(c)3s because they meet the requirement to qualify as a non-profit, however they do not need to do any fundraising to continue to be in business.

It is also important to recognize the effects of the J-1 program on the economics of the United States. The economic value that is generated by those participants of the J-1 visa includes housing, paying of all of the fees associated with the J-1 program to the sponsor organization, food, entertainment and other aspects that are associated with living in the United States. Although not the trainee and intern aspect of the J-1 visa, it has been estimated that one program under the J-1 visa contributes over \$500 million to the United State economy (Cavanaugh, 2017).

Cultural Background of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

The J-1 Exchange Visitor Program was based in the idea of bringing different cultures together through practical exchange. Senator Fulbright started this program immediately after the resolution of World War II, during which a devastating toll had been taken on the world. In many ways the final goal of this program is world peace through having Americans interact and understand people from other cultures.

One aspect that is essential to the J-1 program is that of cultural exchange. For exchange visitors who are interns or trainees, culture is included and mandatory as part of their program. In each part of the training plan there is a section that must list any type of cultural activity in which an exchange visitor might participate. The different types of cultural activities vary by exchange visitor due to the location of the individual and the time of year. It is expected that hosts help facilitate the integration of the exchange visitor into cultural activities that happen within the organization or in the community. Hosts are usually contacted to organize cultural events which

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can include holidays, celebrations that are held in the area where the exchange visitor is living, visiting museums and going to community events. It may also include the host or other Americans inviting the exchange visitor to their house for dinner or for some special event, such as a birthday. Other times the sponsor organization does research on the area and suggests cultural activities to the host to be put in the training plan, which is then given to the exchange visitor.

The other aspect of the cultural exchange is that the exchange visitor shares their culture with other participants in the program, with their hosts and with the community at large (U.S. Department of State, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations). Exchange visitors can share their culture in a number of ways, including sharing pictures of home, telling stories about cultural events or holidays, cooking food from home, or other similar activities. The logic behind having the exchange visitor share their culture as part of the regulations is that the cultural exchange should not simply be one-sided but rather both the exchange visitor and the host or other individual benefits from the exchange.

Stakeholder Analysis

There are many different stakeholders involved with the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act and the J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee and Intern program. Each group of people involved have different reasons for an interest in the current policy. There are four groups of stakeholders that will be addressed: *Promoters*, *Defenders*, *Latents* and *Apathetics*.

The first group of stakeholders are the *promoters*. The people who are involved in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act who are considered promoters are the hosts involved in the program. These are the people for whom a change to this policy would have the highest impact. This category has the highest stakes because, if this policy were to be reversed,

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many of them would not be able to survive without the added help that exchange visitors supply them.

Another group of people that fit into this category are the two main advocacy groups for the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange, the Alliance for International Exchange (Alliance) and Americans for Cultural Exchange. Alliance “is an association of 90 nongovernmental organizations comprising the international educational and cultural exchange community in the United States” (Alliance for International Exchange, About the Alliance). This group was formed in the early 1990s and are an advocacy group for International Educational Exchange. They are very active in advocating for programs such as the J-1 and this policy is a current high priority for them due to our current political climate (Cavanaugh, 2017) The Americans for Cultural Exchange is also an advocacy group that is a “coalition of American businesses, families, chambers of commerce, associations, and community leaders who embrace and support international exchange programs” (Americans for Cultural Exchange, Homepage). They focus predominantly on the J-1 programs and have a strong desire to keep the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act because they believe in its overall mission (Americans for Cultural Exchange, Homepage).

The second group of stakeholders are the *defenders*. One of the key groups of people involved in this group are the exchange visitors themselves. They are defenders because, although this policy is a high priority for them, their actions may not have as much impact. This is partly due to the fact that these individuals are not U.S. citizens and do not necessarily have much power when it comes to influencing those who do have the power. The J-1 Exchange Visitor program is essential for many because in its absence they would be denied the ability to come and train in the United States. If the policy were to alter or end, then many of them would

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lose an opportunity to further their knowledge in the diversified technology and skills to which they might have otherwise been exposed through US hosts.

The other group that have a high priority in the policy but cannot have an impact are the families of the exchange visitors who are coming. They also are not citizens of the United States and have little power in making any decisions regarding this policy. They have similarly high stakes in this debate, however, because it means that their spouse, partner, or family member is coming to gain skills that will help them in the future. Additionally, in some cases, they may benefit from the additional income opportunities to support their family. Finally, sponsor organizations are also considered defenders.

There are many Sponsor organizations in the United States but, overall, they seem to lack sufficient power in decision making. Sponsor organizations are reliant upon this policy in order to continue providing their services and the end of the program would mean that many would no longer survive. Other sponsor organizations would be able to transfer what they are doing to other visas but not without substantial loss of profit in the interim. Many sponsor organizations also have partner organizations in other countries that help them source applicants. These partner organizations are part of the defenders group. They may not have much say or sway, but they are interested because their jobs depend on being able to send people to the United States.

The third group of stakeholders are the *latents*. This group includes the communities where the exchange visitors are training and living. These people, if united and prepared to lobby to their current politicians, could have an effect on the policy, however, they may not think it is an important issue. Some of the community members where the exchange visitors are may think that in fact they should not be allowed to be in the country or training in their community. Along the same lines as community members, local businesses constitute another group that could

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affect the policy, yet generally fail to do so due to the low personal stakes. They may not see the increased business they receive as related to the exchange visitors being in their community.

Additionally, the latents group also includes those other individuals working at the organizations or farms at which exchange visitors are placed. For example if an exchange visitor is placed at an IT company it could be one of their coworkers or someone who works in the company but in a different department. However, here again, these individuals often fail to see the J-1 visa program as relevant to themselves either due to a lack of interest in or a lack of knowledge about their coworkers. What's more, many of the exchange visitors' coworkers may not be aware there is even an issue or talk of changing the current policy that allows the exchange visitors to be in the United States. Some of the coworkers may be in the defenders category, however, being in the defenders category depends on how much they are aware of the issue and how much they are invested in the continuation of the program.

Finally, the last group that is considered latent are local and state representatives. Local and state representatives know about the J-1 program and may or may not know about the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act, however, it is not a priority for them. There are many other issues currently in the United States that may take priority over this policy. They will stay in the latent category until a time when and if their constituents have an outcry about this policy.

The last category of stakeholders are the *apathetics*. This category includes, for example, individuals not from the United States and not interested in participating in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program. They may feel that they will not be affected if there is no longer a policy that allows people to come and do training and internship programs in the United States while also

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doing cultural exchange. They also have no effect on the implementation of the policy because they are not U.S. citizens and are not able to vote in our elections.

Americans in the United States who do not know exchange visitors, what the J-1 program is, and who do not own businesses or organizations would be considered apathetics. Americans who do not know what the J-1 program is have a low priority in the policy due to lack of knowledge. The apathetics category also includes governments from other countries. They do not have any say in what the United States decides to do in regards to the J-1 program and may not be very interested in the outcome because they may see the J-1 Exchange Visitor program as not beneficial to their citizens or they may be from one of the countries where it is unlikely that their citizens would receive the J-1 visa.

Framing the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act

The J-1 Exchange Visitor trainee and intern program both fall under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Act which was created in 1961 as a way to connect Americans to people of different countries and to help bridge a gap between cultures. It came under the Fulbright-Hays Act but focused mostly on bringing international individuals into the United States for training and career development. The J-1 Intern and Trainee Exchange Visitor programs are two of many that fall under the Mutual Educational and Cultural program.

In 2017 the J-1 Exchange Visitor program has been questioned by the White House (Cavanaugh, 2017). This administration has questioned the legitimacy of the J-1 program and has talked about cutting or eliminating certain programs which fall under the J-1 program, including the trainee and intern program, citing several reasons.

One of the reasons the administration has given for cutting the program relates to an executive order that came out in April called “Buy American Hire American” (Tillette, 2017).

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With this executive order the administration has been reviewing immigration and laws aimed at protecting American workers from foreigners coming to the United States to work. It comes from the idea that those who are coming in on the J-1 visa are taking jobs away from American workers.

“In August 2015, Donald Trump...announced via the immigration policy page of his campaign website that if he were elected president of the US, the J1 Visa Exchange Visitor Programme would be ‘terminated’” (Conway, 2016). Comments about cutting the J-1 Exchange Visitor program have caused many to question the validity of the J-1 program. The J-1 program is not designed to take jobs away from Americans as is clearly stated in the Federal Regulations. The J-1 Intern and Trainee programs were originally designed with the federal regulations caveat stating that the J-1 intern or trainee would not take the place of an American worker (U.S. State Department J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational Program).

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program is not paid for by the United States government. The money involved with the program is from the exchange visitor and they must pay the United States government for their visa application and their SEVIS fee. They must also pay the sponsor organization and in many cases pay for housing and food while they are in their placement sites, which helps to stimulate the local community’s economy. The hosts who sponsor the exchange visitor must pay fees to the sponsor organization. They must also pay at least minimum wage to the exchange visitor (U.S. State Department J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational Program). The sponsor organizations must pay the United States government in order to obtain the number of visa allotments they want per year. Some of the fees that sponsor organizations receive from hosts and participants go towards this specifically.

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Goals and Objectives

The goals for both the Trainee and Intern J-1 Exchange Visitor program are similar. Both of these programs strive to forge “positive relationships across the globe, these privately-funded programs work to build lasting alliances with the world’s business, diplomatic, and academic leaders of tomorrow” (Cavanaugh, 2017). Both programs strive to bring in international individuals with the goal of teaching them about U.S. American culture while encouraging exchange visitors to share with Americans part of their culture (U.S. Department of State, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations).

The trainee and intern program also have the goal of providing practical training that follows an agreed upon training plan with the purpose of education and cultural exchange (U.S. Department of State, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations). Creating a training plan may mean extra work for the host, as they are expected to be teaching the exchange visitor the new skills or techniques needed to accomplish their training. Along with this goal of education, it is also supposed to provide a learning environment in which the exchange visitor can learn new things about their field while training alongside a supervisor who has had experience. In some cases, certain skill sets are practiced exclusively by experts located only in the United States.

The second main goal of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee and Intern program is that of cultural exchange (U.S. State Department J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational Program). Integrating cultural exchange into all exchange visitor programs means that the exchange visitors are expected to share aspects of their culture with the host, the community where they are training and their coworkers. Sharing ones’ culture can be done in multiple ways and is up to the exchange visitor to be proactive in sharing in any way that feels comfortable for them.

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The other goal of the cultural exchange is for the exchange visitor to learn about U.S. culture. Because the United States is so large and has many different cultures that live and work together, it is up to the host to help provide cultural activities or information about cultural activities for the exchange visitor to participate in. The specific cultural activities, for example if there is a festival that happens in the community where the exchange visitor is living, are put into the training plan as references for the host and exchange visitor. Hosts do not have to always be the ones to take the exchange visitor to these events but they must inform them about cultural activities that are happening in the communities surrounding the training site and also any cultural activities that might take place at the organization.

Intern exchange visitors have one goal that is different than Trainee exchange visitors and that is that with an Intern the individual must be pursuing a post-secondary degree in the field in which they hope to come to the United States to gain more skills at or have graduated from such an institution within 12 months of starting their program in the United States. Trainees, on the other hand, are people who either have a degree in the field in which they hope to train in with one year of work experience outside of the United States or they are a seasoned professional who has no degree but has been in the field for 5 or more years (U.S. State Department J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. Mutual Educational Program).

Implementation

Since 2017 the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Program and the J-1 program there have been more than 300,000 participants each year who come from most countries in the world (U.S. Department of State, J-1 Visa Fact Sheet). There have been many lasting connections built between exchange visitors, their hosts, and the communities where they have been training.

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There are currently 90 different sponsor organizations in the United States that facilitate the intern program in a variety of sectors and there are currently 96 designated sponsor organizations that facilitate the trainee program (U.S. Department of State, Designated Sponsor Organizations). Each sponsor organization specializes in different sectors which leaves it up to the exchange visitor to choose which sponsor organization they would like to utilize to participate in the program. All exchange visitors must come through a sponsor organization and they can find the most updated current sponsor list on the U.S. Department of State J-1 Visa webpage.

Outcomes

Current U.S. political climate and the recent talk about cutting the J-1 program, further investigation was required to examine whether or not the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program was still fulfilling its original purpose as an educational and cultural exchange program. *J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment* focuses on the Intern and Trainee programs because those are two of the programs that are listed under the J-1 umbrella. The trainee and intern category of the J-1 Exchange Visitor program are also two programs at risk of being cut by the White House at the end of 2017 (Tillette, 2017). These two groups have participated in the program and are able to assess whether or not it is fulfilling its original goals as they are directly involved with the program and are able to assess it based on their own goals. Exchange visitors are able to see it from the participant point of view of actually being part of the program, training at an organization or on a farm and living first-hand the realities of the program.

The hosts have another perspective and that is from the view of an owner or supervisor in their field and working with international individuals from around the world. They are able to look at the program from another perspective, which is from a U.S. citizen who has chosen to

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have an international participant train with them. Hosts would be able to tell if they feel the program is fulfilling its original purpose or if they see it as fulfilling some other purpose. Finally, *J-1 Program Purpose Fulfillment* researches using these two groups because I work at a sponsor organization that works with those two programs.

20 hosts who had recently had an exchange visitor depart. In an initial email they were asked whether they would like to participate in research related to the J-1 exchange visitor program. 10 hosts responded that they were interested in taking part in the research. Out of the 10, nine wanted to do the online survey and one wanted to do a phone interview. The hosts who chose to do the online survey were emailed a link to Survey Monkey, which can be found in appendix B. In this email, hosts were reminded that they were able to skip any question or to decide to no longer continue with the survey.

A total of 15 interns and trainees who were either in their last month of their program or had recently departed were contacted about participating. They were asked if they were interested in participating in either an online survey or doing an interview over the phone or via Skype. In total eight decided to take the online survey and two decided to do Skype interviews. Of the exchange visitors who participated, two were training in Engineering, one in the Sciences, two in Equine, one in Forestry, one in Wine, one in Orchard, one in Dairy and one in general Agricultural field (crops).

The duration of the program varied by exchange visitor. Of the 10 exchange visitors, one was here for 18 months, six were here for 12 months, two were here for 8 months, and one was here for 5 months. Finally, of the exchange visitors, only three were living in metropolitan areas and the remaining seven were living in rural areas. They were all spread all around the country.

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Participants who did the Skype or phone interviews were questioned in privacy and during a pre-set time. Questions that were asked of exchange visitors can be found in appendix A. Participants were allowed to skip or decide to no longer participate at any point in the interview. All video and voice recordings were saved in a secure location. Participants who conducted the online survey were given the link to fill out the survey along with the instructions that at any time they could decide to no longer participate or to skip questions. One week following the initial invitation, participants were sent a reminder email. All of the participants finished the online surveys.

There were a few limitations during the research. One of those limitations was timing. There was a short amount of time in which to collect the information and not all exchange visitors or hosts were available during the time needed to conduct and complete the research. Due to the knowledge that there was a limited amount of time, many more participants were contacted than actually were able to participate. Another limitation was the number of hosts and exchange visitors who were able to participate. Hosts tend to be very busy people and are owners or CEOs of their businesses or organizations with little extra time. Exchange visitors who are in final weeks of their placement and were starting to get prepared for their next phase in life and not necessarily willing to spend time doing interviews or surveys. One individual was outside of the United States making it so the time zone difference was something that caused some challenges. The final limitation was that the research only uses those participants who were leaving or had left at one specific time of year and did not span a larger range of time.

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Exchange Visitor Outcomes

All exchange visitors were given a sliding scale to rate their experience as an intern or trainee. They were asked to fill out or verbally answer in the interview the questions in the table below (Table 1). Their answers were then gathered and then put together in Table 1.

Table 1- Exchange Visitors

Rate the following on a scale of 1-5, 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Not Applicable I (as the trainee/intern):					
	1	2	3	4	5
Had a positive overall experience with this program				10	
Am confident this training will benefit my career and/or studies				10	
Have met my personal expectations and learning objectives			4	6	
Increased my understanding of another culture				10	
Had a positive overall experience with my host			1	9	
Learned new skills			1	9	
Built on my existing skills			1	9	
Was satisfied with cultural activities			3	7	
My host:					
Helped me integrate into the community		1	4	5	
Was interested in my culture			3	7	
Included me in social activities			5	5	

The overall in all fields the majority rated their experience between somewhat agree and strongly agree which is between a 3- 4 out of 4. There was one individual who rated the question about helping them integrate into the community as a somewhat disagree or a 2. The same

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exchange visitor later explained that their host didn't have any organized activity nor did the host make any effort to help them integrate into the community in which they lived. This exchange visitor did say that they made an effort to include them in activities that happened at the company. Overall satisfaction was high among exchange visitors. From this table it is clear that 100% of exchange visitors said they had a positive overall experience with their host, that they are confident that their training will benefit their career and/or studies, and that they increased their understanding of another culture.

One of the first questions that exchange visitors were either asked or were given in the survey was related to how they may have benefited from participation in the J-1 Exchange Visitor trainee and intern program and to what degree this experience will help them professionally or academically, and personally upon reintegration into their home country. One of the most common responses from exchange visitors in terms of how it has helped them professionally, was that it has improved their skills. For each exchange visitor it was a little different in which type of skills they were talking about but they all revolved around being able to gain or improve skills that they need for their profession. Exchange Visitor 9 wrote the following:

This training helps me a lot for my professional and personal growth. I have learned modern dairy farming that I could impart to my students and help improve our dairy cattle project in the university where I work back home (Exchange Visitor 9, personal communication, February 27, 2018).

Exchange Visitor 5 and Exchange Visitor 4 talked about how their experiences will boost their careers once they return home (personal communication, February 28 and March 1, 2018).

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Exchange Visitor 4 said, “I learned a lot that will help me in my career as a vet in my country (personal communication, March 1, 2018)”.

Eight exchange visitors talked about how this experience gave them the opportunity to expand their career networks because, during their training programs, they were able to interact with people who worked in their fields making those connections and networks. Exchange Visitor 8 wrote, “I have made invaluable contact which will be of benefit wherever my career takes me from now on (personal communication, February 28, 2018)”. Exchange Visitor 5 wrote that, “professionally the biggest benefit is boost my CV and this, probably, will give me more job opportunities, and besides, this experience expanded my professional network (personal communication, February 28, 2018)”. On the personal level, both Exchange Visitor 6 and Exchange Visitor 4 felt that they learned more about themselves and found that they were capable of more than they originally thought they were (personal communication, February 26 and March 1, 2018). Finally, a few exchange visitors talked about how they were able to have some insight into the culture of the United States. Exchange Visitor 10 wrote “I gained a lot of knowledge about and insight into culture, people, work ethics, problem solving etc. (personal communication, March 2, 2018).”.

Exchange Visitor 10, 9, 8,7, 6 and 5 all talked about how they have learned about culture and people (personal communication March 2, February 27, 28, 26, 2018). Exchange Visitor 6 wrote:

I was taken in by my host and his family. I was invited to Christmas dinner and that was amazing! I also was invited to one of my co-workers houses for Thanksgiving. I did not know that I could eat so much food. It was lovely. I learned so much over my time here

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about Americans and I was lucky to get to go to so many festivals and parties while here.
(personal communication, February 26, 2018)

Some mentioned that they had meet very nice people while they were here. They were able to learn things from these individuals. Many referred to the relationships they had built while training with either their hosts or with the other individuals they met.

On the second question, which asked how participants anticipated sharing this “intercultural” experience with friends, family and colleagues once they return home (as noted in Appendix A), most exchange visitors responded that they would be showing pictures and telling stories of their experiences here in the United States. Many said they had already been doing this while they were in the United States and would continue to do so once they returned home.

Exchange Visitor 3 wrote:

I will probably be showing friends and family the pictures I took over the summer and telling them stories about the places I went and experiences I had for the rest of my life - which probably constitutes oversharing my intercultural experience. (personal communication, March 3, 2018)

Exchange visitors were also asked about key parts of the training they received at their placement and new skills they gained. All exchange visitors listed very specific skills that they learned. For example, Exchange Visitor 9 learned artificial insemination along with many other very specific skills that are related to their trade (personal communication, February 27, 2018). Exchange Visitor 5 listed the many skills she learned, including seeding, soil and water testing, soil preparation, greenhouse production of tomato and herbs, along with many other skills (personal communication, February 28, 2018). A few exchange visitors talked about how they gained skills that were more about working with other people or developing their own personal

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skills. The second part of this question asked participants to list any special training and workshops or conferences they attended. In this part, every exchange visitor also took part in either a specific trade meeting or association meeting for their field or they participated in workshops and classes. One exchange visitor attended a Cleaning and Sanitation Seminar, another attended a three-day short course in dairy production.

Exchange visitors were then asked how the training program enhanced their understanding of American techniques, methodology and philosophy as related to their careers. Many talked about how they have seen the difference between the way things are done in the United States and the way they are done in their home countries. Exchange Visitor 8 wrote about how racehorse training techniques are completely different in comparison to those back home (personal communication, February 28, 2018). Exchange Visitor 2 talked about how the perspective is different from Americans as they tend to have different priorities (personal communication, March 5, 2018). Many thought that working alongside Americans helped increase their knowledge about their field in which they are training in.

Host Outcomes

All hosts that were interviewed and who filled out the survey were hosts that I had previously worked with. They all had to answer a question about how long they had been hosting exchange visitors. Table 2 is the collected data from all 10 hosts.

Table 2: Years Hosted

Years	0-2	3-5	6-8	9+
Numbers	3	3	2	2

All hosts were asked what the most important contributions the trainee/intern made to their business/organization were. The responses from hosts mostly described program material

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development that would help the business or organization in the future. Host 10 said that their exchange visitor “made excellent progress in advancing the research project he was working on and the data he produced was publication quality and will be extremely helpful as we move forward on this project (personal communication, February 23, 2018)”. Host 1 talked about how his exchange visitor made an “online mapviewer for internal and external cooperators. She clearly documented her procedures for subsequent employees (personal communication, February 25, 2018)”. Most were very specific to the type of work that the exchange visitor was working in but some of them included assistance in technical impute and Host 8’s exchange visitor helped improve the organization’s social media presence (personal communication, February 22). Host 5 said that their exchange visitor brought hard work and knowledge (personal communication, February 25, 2018).

Hosts were then asked how the trainee/intern benefitted from working in the business. The majority of hosts talked about how the exchange visitor would take experience and specific skills with them from the experience. Host 9 wrote that her exchange visitor “acquired a strong commercial, large-scale timber project base of knowledge (personal communication, March 5, 2018)”. Many talked about how the exchange visitor learned something more in depth about their field and had hands on experience. Host 5 wrote that his exchange visitor walked away with “hands on experience, modern facilities, and life-long friendships (personal communication, February 27, 2018)”.

The final question that hosts were asked about their exchange visitors solicited a description of what cultural activities their exchange visitor participated in during their program. They were to include company events or gatherings that included their intern/trainee. Most hosts talked about cultural activities that happened on site at the organization or business. This

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included lunches, special events, or employee hosted Thanksgivings for interns and trainees. Also, some mentioned that the exchange visitors had the opportunity to travel and go places with coworkers. Host 3 wrote that she was able to take her exchange visitor to baseball games and visit other similar organizations (personal communication, March 7, 2018). Hosts also expressed that their exchange visitors were able to travel around the United States doing a variety of tourist activities including visiting specific towns and tourist attractions. Only Host 9 did not answer this question.

Overall Analysis

Based on the research conducted with both hosts and exchange visitors, it appears that, according to this group of 20 people, the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act is indeed still fulfilling its original purpose as an educational and cultural program. The J-1 Trainee and Intern program as an educational and cultural program is shown through the interviews and surveys that were gathered. All exchange visitors can point to specific skills that they are learning which can help them in the future and in their specific career fields. Exchange visitors mention that they are learning specific skills that they may only be able to find here in the United States because it may not have arrived yet to their home country. Most of the answers given to questions were about how hosts were teaching or training exchange visitors on specific skills and how at the end of their time they were able to see change.

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Act has the appropriate goals and objectives. One of the objectives is that the program provides practical training. Exchange visitors' responses to questions about the key parts of training they received is undeniable and shows that they have gained practical training while being on this program. Eight exchange visitors listed specific skill that they were able to learn while training in the United States. Also, in the question to exchange

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visitors about how they benefited from the J-1 program focusing on the academic aspect, mentioned being able to train with the best in their field or modern techniques for working on a farm that can be taken back and delivered to others from the home country of the exchange visitor. The hosts who participated in the survey also mention the many specific skills that each of their exchange visitors received when answering the question about how the trainee/intern benefited from working at their business. In the sense of exchange, it is also apparent that hosts learned some things from the exchange visitors including providing companies with needed research or with helping improve materials or an aspect of the job they were doing.

On the cultural side of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Act and the J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee and Intern program, it is clear based on the data collected that both hosts and exchange visitors learned about the other. One host specifically said that their exchange visitor brought a strong British culture. Exchange visitors wrote and talked about how they learned about working alongside Americans and how they did many different cultural activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Having the opportunity to talk and read about the experiences that both hosts and exchange visitors have had during their program has lead me to believe that the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program is truly still an educational and cultural exchange program. From the scale questions that were asked of exchange visitors, only one ranked anything lower than a 3. The questions in Table 1 referred to their overall experience with the program, meeting their learning objectives, increased understanding of another culture, ext. When exchange visitors talked about their hosts in this same section the majority talked about how their hosts was interested in the exchange visitors' culture.

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Overall, there is one area in which there is a weakness and that is on the side of the hosts' role in participating in social activities or helping exchange visitors integrate into the community. It is beneficial to be around Americans and to live in the United States, but the gains can be even greater by taking part in social activities with Americans or with the community. A few hosts inferred that their exchange visitor participated in things, but it was hard to discern if this was because the exchange visitor was proactive and did it themselves or if the host helped them by connecting them to events or social activities. Host involvement in connecting exchange visitors to cultural events is an area which should be evaluated and discussed further with hosts prior to the arrival of the exchange visitors. Hosts should try to provide exchange visitors with social opportunities and activities either with the host or with the host organization.

Based on the research of the J-1 Trainee and Intern Exchange Visitor program is very much fulfilling its original purpose as an educational and cultural exchange. It has been mutually beneficial to both the host and the exchange visitor as they were both gaining skills, either professional or personal, while also learning about another culture or way of doing things. It may not have always been easy, but it will benefit the exchange visitors when they return home in the form of practical experience, hands on training, new understanding about their own abilities and personal connections that they made while in the United States. For hosts, they were able to have someone come and be part of their organization or company who was from a different part of the world, they had extra help which in some cases was essential, they learned things from having the exchange visitor, and hopefully some of them built lasting connections.

The J-1 Exchange Visitor program is an essential program that is truly based on education and culture. It is a program that has helped countless people come to the United States to gain skills and learn techniques which they are able to take home in order to help their own

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communities with their gained skills. Exchange visitors also have the unique opportunity to bring the skills and techniques they have from home to the United States and improve some ways in which some hosts do things. Both the host and the exchange visitor interact with each other and therefore will learn more about people from around the world bridging that gap of difference and the thought of the “other”. It is the hope that the J-1 Exchange Visitor program continues and that hosts and exchange visitors are able to voice their thoughts about the program and be heard.

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Appendix A

Survey and Interview Questions Trainee/Intern:

1. Are you a trainee or an intern?
2. Which field are you currently training in:
 - a. Agriculture
 - b. Forestry
 - c. Fisheries
 - d. Management
 - e. Business
 - f. Commerce
 - g. Finance
 - h. Sciences
 - i. Engineering
 - j. Architecture
 - k. Mathematics
 - l. Industrial Occupations
3. Is your placement site Rural or Metropolitan?
4. Rate the following on a scale of 1-5, 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Not Applicable

I (as the trainee/intern):

	1	2	3	4	5
Had a positive overall experience with this program					
Am confident this training will benefit my career and/or studies					
Have met my personal expectations and learning objectives					
Increased my understanding of another culture					
Had a positive overall experience with my host					
Learned new skills					
Built on my existing skills					

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Was satisfied with cultural activities					
--	--	--	--	--	--

My host:

	1	2	3	4	5
Helped me integrate into the community					
Was interested in my culture					
Included me in social activities					

5. For any items on the list above that you checked “Somewhat Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” please explain:

6. How have you benefited from participation in the J-1 Trainee and Intern program and to what degree will this experience help you -professionally or academically, AND personally- when you return home?

7. How do you anticipate sharing this “intercultural” experience with friends, family and colleagues once you return home?

8. Please describe key parts of the training you received at this placement and new skills you gained. Also list any special training, workshops or conferences that you attended.

9. How did this training program enhance your understanding of American Techniques, methodology and philosophy as related to your career?

Appendix B

Survey and Interview Questions Host:

1. Which field do you work in:
 - a. Agriculture
 - b. Forestry
 - c. Fisheries
 - d. Management
 - e. Business
 - f. Commerce
 - g. Finance
 - h. Sciences
 - i. Engineering
 - j. Architecture
 - k. Mathematics
 - l. Industrial Occupations
2. Are you located in a Rural or Metropolitan area?
3. How many years have you been hosting?
4. Were you pleased with the overall experience? Explain why:
5. Was the trainee/intern beneficial to your business? Explain how or how not:
6. What are the most important contributions the trainee/intern made to your business/organization?
7. How did the trainee/intern benefit from working in your business?
8. Please describe what cultural activities your *exchange visitor* has participated in during their program? Include company events or gatherings that included your intern/trainee.