

An Evening on Entrepreneurship and Professional Exchanges
Federal grants, trends, and what makes a good program
with
DC-based Meridian International Center's Global Connect Team

February 14, 2018
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Texas International Education Consortium
1103 West 24th Street
Austin, TX 78705

The Texas International Education Consortium, in cooperation with GlobalAustin and the World Affairs Council of Austin, is pleased to invite you to join us for an interactive evening to discuss U.S. Government international entrepreneurship and professional exchange funding and programs, and the current trends from Washington regarding international educational and cultural exchange, with visiting representatives from Meridian International Center, a nonprofit, global leadership organization and U.S. Government implementer headquartered in Washington, DC.

Some Meridian Program Highlights:

- Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI): 250 entrepreneurs in five-week entrepreneurship fellowships
- Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI): short-term thematic academic institutes
- Short-term academic exchanges/study tours: study tours for foreign higher education officials focusing on international student opportunities and study abroad
- Non-academic short term study tours: study tours for mid-career foreign officials on thematic topics.
- Reverse Trade Missions: connecting foreign procurement officials and private sector officials with U.S. companies in a particular field for possible export opportunities.
- Private Sector exchanges: privately funded short-term study programs for government professionals to come to the U.S.

Please RSVP to Cyan Green at cyan.green@tiec.org by the end of Monday, February 12 if you plan on attending this event.

The visiting team from Meridian International Center will include:

Gretchen Ehle, Vice President, GlobalConnect

Gretchen Ehle joined Meridian in 2009 with over 10 years of experience in international development and exchanges. Her duties include strategic planning, GlobalConnect's business

development strategy and establishing a transparent cross departmental proposal development and award management process, in addition to divisional staff development and financial operations. She has proposed and implemented a wide variety of programs, including professional exchange programs in fields such as higher education, food security, leadership development and the environment. Gretchen previously worked for USAID within the Bureau for Global Health. Gretchen is a PhD candidate in Public Policy at George Mason University from which she also received an MA in International Commerce and Policy and holds a BA in International Affairs from The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. She speaks Spanish and has a certificate in grants management.

Sean Callaghan, Director of Program Development

Sean Callaghan serves as Director for Program Development at Meridian, where he works on proposal writing and business development activities, as well as oversees the work of a team that develops and implements tailored professional exchange programs, university programs, study tours, reverse trade missions, conferences, workshops, and training programs. Sean has 13 years of experience in the international exchange and training field. He oversaw Meridian's implementation of the Iraqi Young Leader Exchange Program (IYLEP) from 2009-2013. IYLEP brought 100 Iraqi high school and undergraduate students to the US for study at 4-5 university enrichment programs. Sean oversaw participant recruiting and the work of Meridian's in-country Iraq team as well as partner and financial management. He has developed short term international exchange programming in entrepreneurship, financial services, youth leadership development, trade and investment, public policy, U.S. civics and government, and U.S. foreign policy. Sean has also overseen conferences and workshops in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Iraq, and Mauritania. He graduated from The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Arts in History and French and from The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs with a Master of Arts in European and Eurasian Studies. He speaks French.

Erin Koepke, Project Director, YLAI

Erin Koepke is the Project Director for the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) Professional Fellowship Program in Meridian's GlobalConnect Division. The Initiative, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau, brings 250 young social and business entrepreneurs from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States for a five-week professional fellowship experience. Prior to her role as Project Director, Erin worked as a Program Officer for Academic Exchanges within the same division, leading consortiums of university partners to implement academic programs and study tours for undergraduate and high school students from the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. Erin has worked with Meridian International Center since 2013.

Prior to her work at Meridian International Center, Erin worked with World Food Program USA as the Manager of Community Engagement and Outreach where she led the strategic expansion of the organization's grassroots efforts and partnership development with universities and civic organizations. Erin received an Ambassadorial Scholarship through Rotary International to travel

to attend University of Cape Town for post graduate education and received her Bachelor of Arts at Ohio State University.