

## **Joint Statement from Philip Barton, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy in Washington and Paul Smith, British Council Country Director USA**

Last year, more than 270,000 US students studied abroad – an all-time high – and nearly three-quarters of a million international students studied in the US. In today's global economy, many of these students may see studying abroad as the best way to get a competitive edge in a fluid international job market.

The benefits aren't just educational. This year, international students funneled \$22.7 billion into the American economy, according to the US Department of Commerce. Universities and colleges are a key service industry. By giving students the tools they need to succeed after graduation, and by encouraging researchers to discover solutions to global challenges, they provide economic benefits that stretch far into the future.

The United States and United Kingdom have a strong history of collaboration in higher education. As each other's leading destination for study abroad and top research partner, the US-UK higher education relationship is arguably the closest and most powerful in the world. The two countries share every single one of the world's top ten universities between them.

As Prime Minister David Cameron and President Barack Obama said about the US-UK relationship in March 2012, "with confidence in our cause and faith in each other, we still believe that there is hardly anything we cannot do." This spirit is also true of our higher education relationship. Our institutes of higher education recognize that working across national borders is essential to support international prosperity, security and sustainability.

One example of the enduring academic bond between the US and the UK is the Marshall Scholarship, which offers up to 40 young Americans every year the chance to study for a postgraduate degree at a UK university of their choice. Candidates for the prestigious scholarship, which is funded and administered by the British Foreign Office, have been interviewed by selection panels across the country in the last week. Some of these young people may go on to match the extraordinary achievements of previous Marshall Scholars, who have won Pulitzer Prizes, Nobel Prizes, and become professors, novelists, politicians, entrepreneurs and journalists.

With more than 45,000 Americans studying in the UK and more than 15,000 British students coming to the US each year, our relationship is already strong. As our universities increase their global education offer and expand their presence worldwide, we must continue to build on that historic relationship and support new higher education partnerships between the United Kingdom and United States.