

EVALUATION MATTERS: COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS PROGRAM (CCAP)

The Program

CCAP brings foreign officials with higher education planning responsibilities and administrators from post-secondary vocational-technical institutions to the United States for exposure to the U.S. community college system. CCAP supports the development of higher education in selected countries by expanding the capacity of key educators to develop technical and vocational policies and institutions that support workforce and economic development. CCAP engages approximately one cohort of participants per year from either one country or a group of countries, with approximately 360 CCAP alumni from 15 countries having completed the program since its inception.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Why: The purpose of this evaluation was to understand how CCAP impacts participants' ability to effect change in their home institutions after the exchange program, as well as how DOS stakeholders leverage CCAP to further foreign policy and public diplomacy goals.

Who: The MELI Unit contracted District Communications Group to conduct the evaluation

How: The evaluation used outcome harvesting to 1) best identify institutional outcomes that CCAP has contributed to and 2) attempt to trace whether and how CCAP has contributed to those outcomes. It included: a document review, program observation and site visits, interviews with program stakeholders, alumni, and DOS personnel, and an alumni survey.

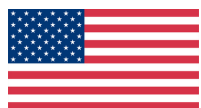
When: February 2022 - July 2024

How Much: \$560,218

Key Findings and Conclusions

CCAP provides alumni with theoretical and practical knowledge that directly contributes to participants' ability to influence change within their home institutions and countries. Nearly all (93 percent) CCAP alumni had at least some success at implementing changes at their institutions after completing their program. The most common changes made were institution-level changes in governance or administration, increased community engagement, changes in student services, and curriculum changes.

CCAP supports networking among participants but creates limited opportunities for connecting with Americans. About two-thirds (64 percent) of alumni reported having collaborated professionally with other alumni through discussions about what they learned and preparing presentations for the country's education leadership about changes that should be made to the TVET or community college system. While most (75 percent) alumni remain in touch with Americans they met during CCAP, these connections are most commonly staff from the program's implementing partners.



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<https://eca.state.gov/impact/evaluation-eca/evaluation-initiative/completed-evaluations>

CCAP could be further utilized as a foreign policy and public diplomacy tool. Participants noted that the topics covered during CCAP were relevant to their jobs and were applicable to their work, with the topics of governance, community engagement, leadership, and student services particularly useful. However, upon return home alumni identified common barriers to making and sustaining changes, including a lack of resources or support from policymakers. Another major issue was a drop in motivation that occurred as time passed after the completion of the CCAP exchange. In most countries, key U.S. Embassy stakeholders do not appear to fully leverage CCAP to further relationships with country officials despite many alumni expressing a desire for more opportunities to interact with Embassy staff and programs. As a result, CCAP is often underutilized as a foreign policy and public diplomacy tool to strengthen bilateral relationships between the United States and foreign government and the higher education sector.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. How, if at all, does the CCAP program contribute to participants' ability to influence change within their home institutions?
2. How do DOS stakeholders leverage CCAP programming and networks to support U.S. foreign policy and public diplomacy goals?

Integrated Recommendations

Countries should be chosen with an even more heightened awareness as to whether the country factors needed for success are present. ECA developed a country selection process that includes having Regional Bureaus provide nominations with justifications on relevant higher education trends, existing initiatives, and other activities that demonstrate alignment with the program. Nominated countries then complete a survey to further expound on the regional bureau's nomination and provide relevant context.

Incorporate more intentional networking sessions between ED and Seminar participants throughout the ED week and consider other ways to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between these two groups. ECA organized the schedule for the 2024 Vietnam cohort so that seminar and ED participants overlapped in the final week of programming. Joint sessions with state legislators and higher education boards facilitated dialogue and networking. Synthesis sessions at the end of the program provided reflection and concrete points of collaboration between Seminar and Dialogue participants upon return to their home country.

Facilitate practical planning sessions during the program for how to implement new ideas and make the creation of actions plans a more deliberate part of the program. ECA implemented project plan workshops for the 2024 Vietnam cohort. The workshops provided an opportunity for participants to develop plans with implementable solutions to institutional problems through research, brainstorming sessions, and mentorship from U.S. counterparts.

Work with the U.S. Embassy in each CCAP country to create a formal continuity plan. ECA encourages U.S. Embassies to dedicate local staff to supporting alumni engagement activities. To help support local staff, following the 2024 programs (Mexico and Vietnam), ECA plans to send concrete ideas for opportunities for U.S. Embassies to engage their alumni.