



# Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF)

## 2017 Better Understanding for a Better World

February 1 - 5, 2017

Orlando, Florida

**Co-Sponsor: Al Bir Islamic Association**



- What:** 2017 Better Understanding for a Better World  
**When:** February 1 - 5, 2017  
**Where:** The Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida  
**Who:** CECF (<http://cecf-net.org/>) and the following participating institutions:
- Al Bir Islamic Association (<http://www.albircenter.org/>)
  - Congregation Ohev Shalom (<http://www.ohevshalom.org/>)
  - Northland, A Church Distributed (<http://www.northlandchurch.net/>) (*tbc*)

CECF is offering its 28<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Orlando, FL to American high school students and ECA grant exchange students studying in the U.S. under the auspices of the State Department's exchange programs.

### Overview:

**Better Understanding for a Better World (BUBW)** began in 2006 with an annual conference in Orlando, FL. In 2008, CECF expanded this unique opportunity and included an annual conference in Baltimore, MD. After two more thriving years of BUBW Conferences in both Orlando and Baltimore, CECF expanded once more to include an annual BUBW Conference in San Diego, CA in 2010. These conferences were developed to give American high school students and international exchange students currently studying in the U.S. the opportunity to meet students of diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds. They have been tremendously successful each year and the students benefit in ways that are truly impressive.

Youth are the hope of each nation, and the future of the world's civilization is soon to rest in their hands. The most pressing issue they face today is how to view the "other", people who are different from you. CECF aims to transcend the fear of the "other" through multicultural and interfaith dialogue and mutual respect and understanding.

### Conference Vision / Mission / Objectives:

- Facilitate mutual understanding and appreciation between students from diverse regional, economic, social, religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Discuss stereotypes about the "other" and their impact
- Learn about and discuss the practice of religion and faith in a pluralistic society with the objective of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, and an awareness of common values
- Introduce various aspects of leadership, including those involving business and entrepreneurship
- Forge ties of friendship between American high school students and students from around the world

While the focus of the conference is principally on Judaism, Christianity and Islam, participation is open to students of all faiths, as well as those who may not be active in any particular faith tradition.

### **Follow up after the Conference:**

Students will be encouraged to maintain contact with each other and make a presentation at their schools or at their community centers on the issues discussed throughout the conference.

### **American and Exchange Student Participants and Selection:**

American and International high school students are encouraged to attend. International exchange students will represent the following programs sponsored by the Department of State: Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), Youth Exchange and Study (YES), Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX), American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) and others. Exchange students will be selected by their exchange organizations and American students will be nominated by a staff member of their respective high schools or community /youth group leader.

### **Brief Conference Outline**

#### **Wednesday, February 1: (Arrival, Dinner Social, Ice Breaking Games and Orientation)**

- **Students should plan to arrive to the MCO Airport between 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm.**

#### **Thursday, February 2: (International Youth Summit focusing on Diversity, Cultural Understanding & Leadership)**

- Main address and Interactive Discussion about “The World Today: The Family of Adam and Eve,” elaborating on the need for “Crossing the Divide.”
- An International Youth Summit to discuss the importance of:
  - developing an atmosphere of belonging
  - cultural understanding, sensitivity and respect
  - problems youth face around the world and ways to resolve these conflicts
- Workshop on “Leadership and the Importance of Youth Involvement”
- Becoming a Global Citizen, an experiential program conducted by Walt Disney World Resort staff: Discover, explore, and learn to recognize how various aspects of culture are impacted by changes in technology, commerce, communication, and people (*tbc*)
- Evening recreational time in Disney’s Epcot Theme Park

#### **Friday, February 3: (Interfaith Visits and Panel Discussion)**

- Visit local places of worship like a mosque, synagogue, and church. Students will experience firsthand similarities and differences within the house of Abraham.
- The visits will be followed by a panel discussion with the religious leaders involved in the day’s program.
- Evening recreational time in one of Disney’s Theme Parks

#### **Saturday, February 4: (Rejoicing as One)**

- Recreational time in one of Disney’s Theme Parks
- Banquet, Student Presentations and Certificate Ceremony in the evening with a focus on “The American Experience: Learning about Each Other and Respecting Our Cultural Differences.”

#### **Sunday, February 5: (Wrap Up & Departure)**

- **Students should schedule their departing flights from MCO Airport between 09:00 am – 2:00 pm.**

### **Conference Price Includes**

- Conference Registration
- Lodging at the Walt Disney World All Star MOVIE Resort – 4 nights  
<https://disneyworld.disney.go.com/resorts/all-star-movies-resort/>
- Conference Meals beginning with dinner on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> through breakfast Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>
- International Youth Summit and Conference Workshop
- Admission to The Walt Disney World Theme Parks - <http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/>
- Walt Disney World Youth Education Series Program on 2/2 [www.YouthEducationSeries.com](http://www.YouthEducationSeries.com) (*tbc*)
- Interfaith Program & Panel Discussion
- Banquet & Certificates Ceremony
- Transportation throughout the program, including from the **Orlando International Airport (MCO)** on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> to the hotel and back to the **Orlando International Airport (MCO)** on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>

**For more information or to register –  
contact us at [cecf1@aol.com](mailto:cecf1@aol.com) or call 410-944-6077**