

2016-2017

Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study program



Ayesha Fatima

O'level- III

YES STUDENT PROGRAM 2016-2017

Peshawar Model Girls High School Warsak Road Campus encourages the development of the whole student. Our aim is to support learners in becoming curious, reflective and critical in their thinking as global citizens. Our O'Level student Ayesha Fatima was selected by "YES Program" to embrace her qualities.

She shared her experience in a report which is mention below.

Ayesha Fatima Shares Her Story Of Staying In U.S For Year



As memories come along and moments passes away, I still remember my exchange year as a sophomore student in Marshfield Massachusetts for a whole year. Well, I've wanted to be an Exchange Student my whole high school life. I read about summer programs in a brochure from YES Program, and I thought then that living somewhere else from Pakistan for a year and having friends from another country would be the coolest thing in the world.



I was placed with the greatest host family, they treated me like their own family members and they are like real family in another part of the world. I had a host mom, a host dad, a brother and a sister. Through e-mails we established that I was going to call them Mom and Dad. I got unconditional love and support from my host community.

There are so many highlights of my exchange year that it would probably make me write a whole book on it, but the ones that stand out was attending my local church "Saint Christine" for the first time would definitely be one. Meeting with new faces, and long discussions with Father Tom gave me an insight of the religion other than my own.



Moreover, getting selected among thousands of exchange students for a Better Understanding for Better World Conference at Orlando, Florida was truly a dream come true. With exchange

students from 15 different countries, we learned a great deal of knowledge. We emphasized more on what we have in common than the differences. We visited Mosques, Churches, and Synagogues to table-talks with the scholars.

Being at Disney had its own charm. Girl Scout Leadership Conference at Rhode Island and camping with the Girl Scout of America ignited the true essence of being adventurous, kayaking, water rafting to bonfires and s'mores, I enjoyed every bit of being a Girl Scout.



I made a lot of friends and met so many people. I joined a church youth group, volunteered for a group for teens with cognitive disabilities, an indoor soccer team during winter and the girls track team during spring. During International Education Week, I gave more than 60 presentations about the Culture and Life in Pakistan to more than 50000 audiences in the local churches, elderly houses, middle and high schools of different towns. Every month, I met with other exchange students in our area. I made friends with people from Germany, Brazil, the Netherlands, England, Hungary. It was fun when we were together because we



saw how language, skin color or height didn't matter. We were all the same. We even got to bond right away because we were all going through the same thing as exchange students so we talked about the differences at home, school, and our countries.

I learned so many things about other cultures, and even got to share my own. I remember cooking the Pakistani food for a Christmas party. I was stressed about it but everyone present there loved it.



Being away for a year and living alone in a completely different world has taught me a lot of things. I have grown and my perspective has changed in ways I never would have imagined. I now can say that I am independent, and open to new ideas, and more confident about myself. Friends took me out to movies, hockey games, restaurants, road trips, rock shows and concerts. Everyone was warm, open, and never hesitant in giving hugs. I would say that as much as I missed my family and friends at home, I never really got homesick because I had friends who made sure I was okay.

It was the best time of my life and I will always remember how choosing to go out and discover what the world has in store for me was life-changing and will be something I will always cherish; it was pleasing for me to discover myself and the world around.

