

St. John Student Awarded Prestigious YES Abroad Scholarship to Study in Senegal

Roshan Kalantarian, one of 65 students nationwide selected for the Kennedy-Lugar YES Abroad program, will spend the 2024-2025 academic year in Senegal, engaging in cross-cultural exchange, volunteer service, and leadership training

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Roshan Kalantarian

Roshan Kalantarian, a student from St. John, has been selected as a recipient of the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Abroad scholarship for the 2024-2025 academic year.

According to a release issued Tuesday, as part of this prestigious program, Roshan will embark on an immersive cultural exchange experience in Senegal, where they will live with a host family and

attend a local school.

Roshan is one of only 65 students from across the United States to be competitively chosen for the YES Abroad program, a U.S. Department of State initiative under the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Through this program, Roshan will serve as a "youth ambassador" in Senegal, playing a vital role in promoting citizen diplomacy. This role involves enhancing cross-cultural understanding, fostering trust, and building lasting relationships within the host community. Additionally, Roshan will engage in volunteer service and leadership training, contributing to the local community while developing skills essential for global leadership and peacebuilding.

The Kennedy-Lugar YES program, established by the U.S. Congress in response to the events of September 11, 2001, aims to increase dialogue and mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those in countries with significant Muslim populations. Originally focused on bringing international high school students to the United States, the program expanded in 2009 to include the YES Abroad initiative, allowing American high school students to study in one of 11 diverse countries, including Senegal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, North Macedonia, Thailand, and Türkiye.

YES Abroad is administered by a consortium of nonprofit organizations, with American Councils for International Education overseeing exchanges in Senegal. American Councils is a global leader in international education, academic exchange, and language acquisition, committed to creating access to educational opportunities for individuals and institutions worldwide.

For more information about the YES Abroad program and opportunities to host a YES international exchange student, visit www.yes-abroad.org and www.yesprograms.org/host.