**FSA/FLEX Grant**
*Freedom Support Act/ Future Leaders Exchange Program*

**The Program**
The FLEX Program (Future Leaders Exchange) is a program funded by Congress under the FREEDOM Support Act and administered by the Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The program’s goal is to provide an opportunity for high school students from Eurasia (the term Eurasia is used here to mean 12 New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union.) to experience life in a democratic society in order to promote democratic values and institutions in Eurasia. Students live with host families, attend school, engage in activities to learn about American society and values and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures. The program places special emphasis on leadership skills and seeks ways for participants to develop these skills during the school year. On their return home, students will apply their leadership skills at home and become involved in a well-established FLEX alumni network.

**FLEX and AYA**
AYA has been awarded a grant for the third consecutive year to support the placement and supervision of 40 FLEX students from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Per the grant stipulations, students must be placed in clusters of three students each and will be expected to participate as traditional AYA students, with added cross-cultural teaching and enhancement activities.

AYA seeks to place all students in a cluster in one or more high schools and aims to build a partnership with those high schools to foster creative learning and leadership development opportunities involving the FLEX students.

**What we AYA looks for in a FLEX Local Coordinator**
AYA carefully chooses FLEX local coordinators who can bring to this unique opportunity, his/her experience in cross-cultural communication, conflict resolution skills, demonstrated success working with local press and media, a solid relationship with a community high school, along with a flexible and creative frame of mind. Because this is a very highly regarded government sponsored grant, we are looking for those LCs who will help us meet and exceed the goals of the FLEX program.

Specific responsibilities will include:

- Build a FLEX partnership with an area high school. The school should recognize the learning opportunity provided by the FLEX program and be prepared to work with AYA and the LC to develop cross-cultural learning experiences throughout the year. A letter from the Dept. of State is available to use as a tool when introducing schools to the FLEX Program.

- Recruit appropriate host families for a minimum of three FLEX students. FLEX clusters can be shared with another FLEX LC if both live within an hour’s distance. Provide these families with pre-arrival orientation and with ongoing support and counsel. **The FLEX placement deadline is June 1st.**

- Work closely with at least one community newspaper to follow and report on the FLEX program throughout the program year. The Department highly encourages good publicity!

- Provide FLEX-specific host family & student orientations highlighting goals of FLEX program.
- Provide FLEX students with Mid-Year evaluation session between December & January and a Re-entry Session in April or May or before student returns home.

- Submit quarterly FLEX/Dept. of State student reports (these are lengthier and more involved than AYA Student Reports) by specified deadlines.

- Ensure student participation in and tracking volunteer activities (a minimum of 10 hours of community service is required of AYA/FLEX students per month).

- Inform and encourage students to participate in unique FLEX/Dept. of State sponsored competitions such as Civic Education Week Essay and Computer Training of Trainers Workshop Contest.

- Ensure that FLEX students participate in International Education Week by giving a presentation in a school or doing some other pertinent activity (November).

- Oversight of Host Family Incidental Allowance of $300

- Keep AYA office informed of all FLEX activities and issues

- Provide opportunities for FLEX students to participate in Enhancement Activities. Each student is allocated $300 per year to use for this purpose.

Because we require a ‘little extra’ from each FLEX LC, you will be paid as follows for placing and supervising a FLEX student:

- **Placement** $350 ($250 on submission of paperwork & $100 in Sept.)
- **Supervision** $350 ($125 per semester on submission of report, $100 in June)
- **Community Orientation** $50 (paid in October)
- **Mid-Year Evaluation** $50 (paid in February)
- **Re-entry Session** $50 (paid in June)

**Total** $850

More information on the FLEX Program can be found on the official State Dept. website at:

http://exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/students