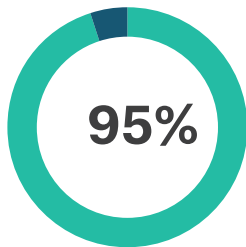


English Access Microscholarship Program

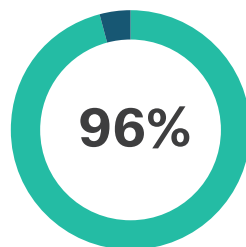
Key Findings from the 2016 Evaluation Report

Program and Evaluation Overview

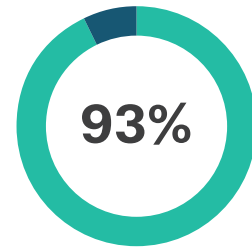
English language teaching and learning programs are an integral part of the Department of State's efforts to foster mutual understanding and build people-to-people ties. The Access Microscholarship Program (Access), sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), provides a foundation of English language skills and exposure to U.S. culture and values to academically promising 13 to 20 year-olds from economically disadvantaged backgrounds through two years of after-school classes, intensive sessions, and enhancement activities. In 2013, ECA's Evaluation Division contracted General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT) to conduct an evaluation of Access.



Survey respondents consider the English skills they gained in Access "valuable" for their everyday lives



Survey respondents reported that Access had improved their grades in high school



Survey respondents have continued to use the language after completing the program, most commonly in their academic life

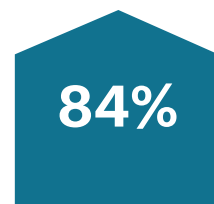
Access alumni surveyed reported being "**capable**" of performing multiple activities in English:



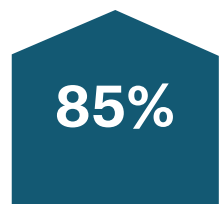
Can write essays, cover letters, applications



Can access websites, social media, and blogs



Can understand American cultural content (TV, movies, and songs)



Can read stories, novels, and newspapers

+75%

More than three-quarters of survey respondents reported that they are more aware of issues in their community; are more committed to making changes in their communities, and have encouraged friends to help in the community.

Two-thirds

of survey respondents who were working at



the time of the study reported using English in their professional life.

Evaluation Highlights

1. The program helps U.S. Missions around the world meet foreign policy goals by:

- Providing expanded educational and economic opportunity to underprivileged youth and fostering their skills as emerging leaders.
- Contributing to increased understanding of the United States and productive U.S. engagement with foreign societies.
- Supporting the development of civil society, including through participants' community service.

Access teachers reported benefits from U.S. Embassy-sponsored Access training include:

1. Opportunities to attend regional Access training programs.
2. Learning new teaching methods.
3. Opportunities to attend U.S. professional exchange programs.

"The need to train young people to take up gainful employment/jobs is very important. This is probably where the Access Program becomes crucial."

–U.S. Embassy Staff, Morocco

2. The program had a profound impact on participants:

- The evaluation found that the Access Program has had a significant impact on the lives of youth from underserved sectors, developing their English skills, improving their academic performance, increasing their educational and professional opportunities, and fostering their civic awareness and engagement with their communities.
- Teachers reported that Access has strengthened their pedagogical skills and professional opportunities, which in turn has had a ripple effect on English teaching in local schools and the wider educational community.

"We ask them to think about things they are not satisfied with in their community, in their country, in the world—if they had the power, what would they change?"

– Teacher, Senegal

1. U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff cited Access **as valuable for engaging** diverse communities in various geographical locations.
2. U.S. Embassy interviewees described Access as a way for U.S. embassies to **develop contacts for outreach programs** in communities, including schools, teachers, and local officials.

Evaluation Methods

- Using a mixed-method evaluation design, data was collected through on-site fieldwork, face to face surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews with Access teachers, program administrators, Embassy and Consulate staff, and students from the FY 2008 and FY 2009 cohort.
- In total, the evaluation collected data from **361** former Access students; **32** teachers; **25** administrators; and **52** U.S. Embassy & Consulate personnel .
- Survey responses cover **17** countries and territories representing the U.S. Department of State's six geographic regions.

"The students' whole lives are changed [by Access]. Some have gone to study English at the university, others have had their grades improved, and some have had the opportunity to study in the United States."

–Student Participant, Peru

