



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Tibetan youth leaders to get political training

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Tibetan American college students will have a unique opportunity to learn how to advocate for their community at an International Campaign for Tibet program next week.

ICT's Tibetan Youth Leadership Program will bring together 11 Tibetan Americans from across the United States to explore how policymaking works in Washington, DC.

The virtual program from June 21-25 will include meetings with members of Congress and congressional offices, interaction with civil society advocates and Tibetan leaders, workshops on advocacy and activism, and sessions with TYLP alumni who have served or are serving in federal agencies or Congress.

The goal is to give the promising students the political skills they need as they develop into the next generation of Tibetan American leaders.

"The advocacy of the Tibetan American community is a big reason why Congress offers consistent, bipartisan support for the people of Tibet," ICT Interim Vice President and coordinator of TYLP Tencho Gyatso said. "With the US government now more focused on the threat of China, this is a vital time to train our youth leaders to advance the cause of Tibet in the next generation."

Leadership training

The annual Tibetan Youth Leadership Program aims to give students unique exposure to the American political system and the role that activists, lobbyists, think tanks and journalists play in foreign policy.

This year's program will include:

- Meetings with Reps. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., and Andy Levin, D-Mich., as well as with congressional offices and State Department staff
- A conversation with Aftab Pureval, a politician of Tibetan and Indian descent who received the most votes in last month's primary election for the next mayor of Cincinnati
- A session with Kasur Tempa Tsering, director, India and East Asia, at the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a member of ICT's Board of Directors
- A training on advocacy and human rights with Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch, and Annie Boyajian, director of advocacy at Freedom House, which recently declared Tibet the least-free country on Earth in a tie with Syria
- A session with Josh Rogin, columnist for The Washington Post and author of the new book, "Chaos Under Heaven: Trump, Xi, and the Battle for the Twenty-First Century"
- A discussion with Carl Gershman, the outgoing president of the National Endowment for Democracy

- A panel with Tibetan Americans working in public service and a message from Ngodup Tsering, representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to North America
- Workshops with ICT staff

Tibetan cause

The Tibetan Youth Leadership Program is part of ICT's Lodi Gyari Tibetan Empowerment Program, which includes several initiatives to help Tibetans practice their traditions, protect their heritage and speak up for their rights.

Tibetan American activism is crucial as China expands its repression in Tibet, which the Chinese government took control of more than 60 years ago.

Thanks in part to advocacy by Tibetan Americans, the US government has responded to China's rights violations in Tibet by passing last year's Tibetan Policy and Support Act, which dramatically expands US support for Tibetans, including on the vital issue of the Dalai Lama's succession.

The US also passed in 2018 the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, which led the State Department to ban Chinese officials from entering the US over their refusal to allow American diplomats, journalists and ordinary citizens to visit Tibet.

Youth leaders

At ICT's program next week, the youth leaders will learn how to carry forward the momentum of the recent US Tibet laws.

The 11 Tibetan Americans who will participate in the program are: Tenzin Chonzy of New York University; Tenzin C Dorje of the University of Colorado; Tenzin Gyaldatsang of the University of Minnesota; Tenzin Lhamo of the University of Iowa; Zenden Nhangkar of Western Washington University; Seldoen Oshoe of Cornell University; Sonam Rikha of Pomona College; Karma Tsering Tso of Saint Catherine; Tenzin Tsomo of the University of Oklahoma; Topjor Tsultrim of Williams College; and Tenzin Yonten of George Mason University (TYLP intern).



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