



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2011

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**Pakistani Educational Leadership Project Prepares for Eighth Year at
Plymouth State University
U.S. Department of State Delegation of Pakistani Educators Arrives in
Plymouth in early July**

PLYMOUTH, N.H. - Starting in early July, Plymouth State University will welcome 40 Pakistani educators as part of the Pakistani Educational Leadership Project (PELP), the vibrant cross-cultural and –educational exchange and professional development program that brings together U.S. and Pakistani citizens. The project, with robust components in both the U.S. and Pakistan, is funded by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), and hosted by Plymouth State University. Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) is the project’s in-country collaborator.

This is the eighth year PSU has hosted PELP, which enables Pakistani educators to learn about American innovations in education for adaptation in Pakistan. The month-long intensive institute creates an atmosphere in which Pakistani educators immerse themselves in an inspiring and creative learning environment and work to enhance leadership capabilities. Upon return to Pakistan, the educators effect positive change in the education sector and their schools and communities through documented outcomes of institute training. Project Director Blakeman Allen said “most profoundly, the program builds meaningful and productive relationships between U.S. and Pakistan citizens through shared experiences. It epitomizes the human dimension of U.S.-Pakistan foreign policy.”

PSU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Julie Bernier said PELI is beneficial for everyone involved.

“This is a wonderful project and one that we look forward to each year, said Bernier. “I know the participants benefit greatly from their time spent here, but it’s true, that we equally gain from our time spent with our Pakistani colleagues. They are wonderfully dedicated and caring educators with experiences to share that enrich our lives.”

Pakistan has one of the world’s lowest literacy rates, and spending on education is less than two percent of the country’s gross national product. Since its inception in 2004, PELP has focused on sharing with Pakistani educators best practices in education and exemplary models in professional development and pedagogy, with the goal of improving the quality of teaching and education in Pakistan. Recognized for their leadership abilities, the educators represent secondary level public and public/private sectors and teacher training institutions.

Predominately female, most of them work in Pakistan’s remote and rural areas.

This collaboration crosses boundaries and connects learning communities in New Hampshire and Pakistan. As a conceptual framework, Project Director Blakeman Allen works with entities in the U.S. and Pakistan to ensure that the overall project, and institute curriculum and implementation in Pakistan, reflect U.S.-Pakistan education cooperation goals. They include the U.S. Department of State; U.S. Embassy, Islamabad; ITA; Pakistani alumni and stakeholders; and PSU’s College of Graduate Studies. PSU staff, graduate instructors, and community members have worked with 160 educators from Pakistan since the inaugural institute in 2004.

According to statistics compiled by ITA, alumni of the program acting as master trainers in Pakistan have shared their enhanced knowledge with more than 120,000 educators and students. Representing every province and Pakistan-administered area, including the border areas with Iran, Afghanistan, India, and China, the delegates epitomize Pakistan’s vibrant civil society, rich geographic diversity, and dedicated educators.

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