

Financiers Desperately Seeking Synergy

Saturday, 15 December 2007

The Institute for International Education recently announced that there were 11,600 Turkish students studying at American universities in the 2005-2006 school year. Although this was a decrease from the 12,500 students of the previous year, Turkey still ranks as eighth in the world in the amount of students it sends to study in the US.

While it's no surprise that India and China are the leading exporters of students, Turkish students make up 2.1 percent of the country's foreign student population.

Every year, many students attempt to transition from their graduation into a career in the US and sixty percent think of returning to Turkey on the condition of a good job offer. Most of these Turks first study finance or business management and then join well-resourced firms. This population is often searching for different platforms in which they can strengthen their community's relations.

The Turkish Finance Network Group, formed in May 19, 2006 in New York by Serdar Kaya, Ali Fuat Ereraç, Oskender Karagül, Gökhan Yılmaz, and Burak Tekes, is an example of one of these platforms. The Group started out as way to bring together graduates of finance, economics, IT, engineering, sociology, and political science and have now forged ties with members in other American cities, in addition to other international cities such as Istanbul, Brussels, Amsterdam, and London. The group has staged nine different events since it was founded in New York and now counts 300 people as members. Of those, nearly 150 live in New York.

It is thought that in metropolitan New York, there are between 2,000 and 2,500 Turks (besides those Turks working in Turkish firms) working in the financial sector. The founder of the Group, Serdar Kaya, tells us that the platform grew out of a need. After having worked in Baltimore, Kaya moved to New York and found it difficult to find the right people in the right places. He states, "We set out to bring the right people together and to create a type of synergy. There were twenty people at our first meeting and as time goes by, more and more people join."

The Group remains a non-profit and aims primarily to create a bond between members. Kaya says that in the future the Group plans to hold conferences and seminars with the purpose of updating members' professional and academic knowledge. They also want to retain their non-profit status while moving towards a more institutional and company-based model. Kaya indicates that the Group tends to accept gainfully employed people and attempts to maintain a certain level of quality. Members include employees of financial giants such as UBS, Citibank, Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch, and Goldman Sachs. The titles of many of these members include analyst, senior analyst, Vice President, and director.

TURKISH FINANCE NETWORK GROUB TEAM / TÜRK FİNANS NETWORK EKİBİ

Boston: Mehmet Yorulmaz, Harvard Business School ‐ MBA /

Chicago: Emre Çakıroğlu, Emory University ‐ MBA /

Maryland: Burak Tekes, Johns Hopkins University ‐ MS /

New York: Tuğba Temurcan, New York University - Human Resources / Gökhan Yılmaz, New York Institute of Technology

- MBA / Ömer Türkmenoğlu, Troy State University ‐ MBA / Çarıl Çullu, Missouri State University ‐ MBA /

New Jersey: Serdar Kaya, Johns Hopkins University - MS / Sema Akboğa Kaya, University of Virginia ‐ PhD

Philadelphia: Ali Fuat Ereraç, Dardane Business School ‐ MBA /

Washington, DC: Tulu Balkıran, Acorn State University ‐ MBA / Altu Baloğlu, George Town University ‐ MBA /

Istanbul: Seda Ekincioğlu, Bilgi Üniversitesi ‐ MS / Oskender Karagül, West Georgia University ‐ MBA /

Belgium: Ayegül Kayaoğlu, Katholieke University ‐ PhD /

England: Elif Yılmaz, /

Holland : Ali Kastrat, Marmara Üniversitesi - MS

(December 2007, Issue 27th)