

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER

Information Resource Center or IRC was established by United States Department of State, Bureau of International Information Programs, following the United States and Indonesia comprehensive cooperation. IRC works in Indonesia under The United States Embassy, Jakarta and The United States Consulate General, Surabaya serving as the official representative of The United States in Indonesia (Sinaga, 2016). The structure started by ambassador as head of the Embassy, continued by implementing affair which is Public Affair Section, continued by Cultural Affair Section and IRC works under control of Cultural Affair Section itself. IRC also having another name which is American Spaces (Sinaga,2016).

A. About Information Resource Center

IRC in general functiona to keep mutual understanding of bilateral relationship between The United States and Indonesia through soft approach. It provides programs which are composed by Department of State for Indonesian citizens with a window into American culture and values (Sinaga, 2016). There are various type of programs provided, from small libraries to high-tech cultural centers.

Their presence should represent “an enduring symbol of The United States commitment to a long-term relationship with Indonesia”, and to the American’s ideal of freedom of information.

Information Resource Center or IRC tends to engage with Indonesian citizens through providing them insight into living in The United States, policies and culture through a variety of media. In IRC, Indonesian citizens are provided the opportunities to learn English with native, meet and interact with American experts and speakers, experiences American exhibitions and multimedia installations and stay informed through media resources.

B. Information Resource Center Function and Working area

In Indonesia, IRC is responsible to maintain five main tasks. Again, it aims to keep mutual understanding between The United States and Indonesia, especially the citizens of Indonesia. First, spreading and promoting information about The United States. Second, introducing The United States culture, for example movies, art and others. Third, alumni engagement, exchange program and professional. Fourth, “Study in The United States” which is a program purposed to attract people to study in The United States and also to provide Indonesian students to have an access for educational consultation. Fifth, English teaching and learning (Sinaga, 2016).

1. Information dissamination about The United States

Reaching public attention to create cooperation seems to be really difficult without knowing each other. The United States therefore, intensively approaches Indonesian citizens through IRC by direct method in which The Embassy or Consulate General representatives come to the people, perform an

exhibition and held an introduction about The United States, and also through indirect method by providing library, including with various books related with anything about The United States, and also computer access toward resources, also regarding The United States.

2. Introducing The United States culture

As one of most important and effective components in approaching people, culture is also used by The United States in IRC.

“The United States soft power conduct its identity, and its spread out to all over the world. The United States is generally referred to far and wide as a pioneer in broad media production, including TV and motion pictures. The television broadcasting industry took hold in the United States in the early 1950s, and American television programs are now shown around the world. The United States also has a vibrant movie industry, centered in Hollywood, California, and American movies are popular worldwide. American folk art is an artistic style and is identified with quilts and other hand-crafted items. American music is very diverse with many, many styles, including rhythm and blues, jazz, gospel, country and western, bluegrass, rock 'n' roll and hip hop” (Zimmermann, 2015).

3. Alumni engagement, exchange program and professional

The United States and Indonesia has been working on two way cooperation in escalating human resource quality through educational exchanges. It is categorized in two, exchanges programs for degree and non-degree education and also professional exchange. The United States giving provides opportunities for Indonesian citizens to study abroad for free in The

United States and the vice versa. Exchanges programs are provided for common people who would like to take a short term program in order to experience living in The United States or long term program by pursuing degree in The United States. Professional program is provided for governmental individual who wants to have certain specific training in order to improve skills. The output, or citizens who has finished the program are called alumni or commonly called State Alumni. IRC having responsibility of them, such as providing funds in they wants to create a social projects, maintaining networking among alumni and also held gathering agenda in certain time (Sinaga, 2016).

4. Educational consultation

The IRC provides consultation for Indonesian citizens who want to study in The United States. It cooperates with implementing partner such as The American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF), Bina Antar Budaya and others. AMINEF is a bi-national non-profit foundation which administers the Fulbright and other related scholarship programs in Indonesia. The primary focus of the Fulbright Program in Indonesia is to promote mutual understanding between the Republic of Indonesia and the United States of America through educational exchange and academic scholarship (AMINEF 2015).

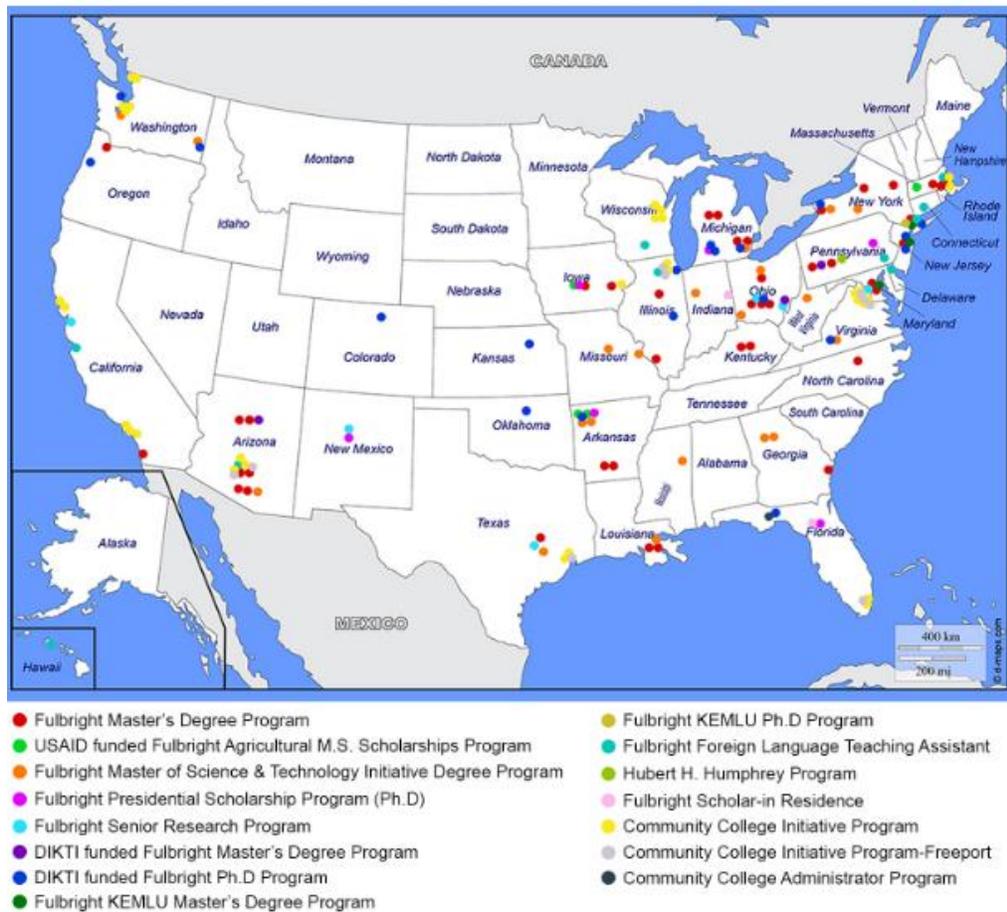


Table 3.1 Scholarship Placing Lists for Indonesian Citizens (AMINEF, 2015)

The other implementing partner is *Bina Antarbudaya*. As an educational based organization, it is always developing the world understanding or global understanding (Antarbudaya, 2014). It is committed to building a better world through the exchange program which is based on cross-cultural understanding. The purpose of the establishment of AFS Intercultural Programs is to prepare future leaders who have a sensitivity, intercultural understanding and attention to the environment.

Through interaction with people from different countries, exchange program participants learn to share, communicate and respect between one another, and respect for diversity. In purposed, in the future there will be emerge of leaders who appreciate the differences, the high sensitivity of the values of peace and friendship, and build positive relationships and understanding each other, both the groups and people from other countries.

It is also no religious background, race, ethnicity, socio-economic groups and political parties and is committed to becoming a non-profit organization, which always worked for the good of mankind. With more than 50 years of experience in cross-cultural understanding, AFS Intercultural Programs has already sent 3,000 students to different countries and has received more than 1,500 foreign students to stay and study in Indonesia (Antarbudaya, 2014).

There are several programs serves by The United States for Indonesian citizens to have chance for study in The United States, or even the opposite way, for United States citizens toward Indonesia, cause basically the Information Resource Center purposed to increase mutual understanding between The United States and Indonesia.

a. Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Program is the most prestigious educational exchange program funded by the United States government. The program was established in 1946 in the United States aims to improve understanding and communication between the United States and Indonesia through various student exchange programs funded. The Fulbright Program since 1952 already provides scholarships to students and researchers from Indonesia and America. Since that year, this program has provided funding for more than 2,400 students and researchers Indonesia to teach or study in the United States. In addition, this program has also funded more than 850 American citizens to teach or conduct research in Indonesia. As the development of the Fulbright program in Indonesia, the government of the United States and Indonesia have agreed to establish the American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF) in 1992. The Foundation bi-state non-profit established to regulate the core programs Fulbright and other scholarship programs funded by the government United States of America.

By 2014, AMINEF through the Fulbright Student program has funded 102 Indonesian students who take master and doctoral degree in the United States. AMINEF also funded nine senior researchers to conduct research or teach at various universities in the United States. AMINEF also provides scholarships for 10 Indonesian citizens to assist the teaching of Indonesian at

top universities in the United States through the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA). In addition, AMINEF also provides scholarships to two Indonesian teachers to teach in two institutions in the United States through the Fulbright Scholar-In-Residence (SIR). In the same year, AMINEF through the Fulbright Student program provides 13 scholarships for students from the United States who conduct research in Indonesia.

In addition to core programs Fulbright above, AMINEF also manages various other scholarship programs, for example-DIKTI Fulbright program funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This program provides scholarships are only for lecturers. AMINEF also administers the Fulbright program-Indonesia Research in Science and Technology (FIRST), which offers scholarships for researchers and teachers from Indonesia and the United States who want to discuss the problems in the field of natural sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics.

FIRST program itself is the implementation of the cooperation program for Higher Education (Higher Education Partnership / HEP) launched by President Barack Obama and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2010 that aims to build closer bilateral relations between Indonesia and the United States through an exchange program. However, FIRST program only a program will run until the end of 2015. HEP program contributes significantly to increasing the number of Fulbright scholarships

granted to Indonesian citizens and Americans who want to learn, teach, or pass up research in these two countries.

b. Youth Program

Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program was established in October 2002 to provide scholarships for Indonesian citizen especially for those high school students from countries with significant Muslim populations, including Indonesia, to spend up to one year academic education in the United States, YES students live with a host family, following high school, engage in activities while learning about America, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their country and culture. In 2007, YES Abroad was established to provide a similar experience for The United States students to Indonesia. AFS Intercultural Programs Foundation along with the United States Embassy in Jakarta manages YES program in Indonesia. Indonesia has than 500 people who have participated in this program.

c. YSEALI Program

YSEALI program launched in 2013, the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) which purposed for the citizen in Southeast Asia including Indonesia. It is The United States government's signature program to strengthen partnerships with emerging leaders in Southeast Asia which

aimed to expand their skills as effective civic, economic and non-governmental leaders in the region and to encourage Indonesian citizens to work together across borders to solve regional challenges. YSEALI programs divided into four themes which are economic development and entrepreneurship, environmental protection, education and also civic engagement.

YSEALI program also provides opportunities for Indonesian citizens to have professional and academic exchanges to the United States, regional workshops for networking and skills development, social media engagement, and a grant competition to support emerging leaders' efforts to address regional issues. Nowadays, YSEALI conduct around 98,000 members from all over Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia connected each other. Since 2014, 891 young leaders have participated in educational and professional exchanges in the United States. More than 1,550 youth have attended 16 skills-building regional exchange workshops in Asia. YSEALI has granted more than \$465,000 in seed funding to 36 multi-national teams for YSEALI-themed projects.

5. English teaching and learning

Language is one of state identities and it also applies to The United States as well. The United States provides an advance English learning in form of program. The program called "ACCESS Program". It is a micro

scholarship given by The United States to Indonesian youths in several areas in Indonesia consisting of Aceh, Palembang, Jakarta, Bandung, Surakarta, Madura, Pontianak and Ambon. Those young people are provided two years learning English for free. They also thought by professional teachers and updated resources like books, dictionaries, magazines and others. The programs are held by The United States's implementing partner that is Center for Civic Education-Indonesia (CCEI).

These are programs provided by The United States for Indonesian citizens in field of English language teaching and learning:

a. English Language Fellowship Program

Through The English Language Fellow Program (EL Fellow), highly qualified US educators in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) participated in a fellowship for 10 months at academic institutions around the world.

b. Program Specialist English

Program Specialist English recruit professionals and academics the US in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to conduct programs abroad ranging from two weeks to four months.

c. Microscholarship Access Program English Language

English Microscholarship Access Program (Access) provides basic English language skills to non-elite, 14 -18 years old students through after-school classes and intensive learning activities in the summer.

d. E-Teacher Scholarship Program

E-Teacher Scholarship Program offers professional English teachers who live outside the United States the opportunity to take seven innovative, online, graduate-level classes through the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and the University of Oregon. The course will explore the main areas of academic specialization Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Those programs also supported by high quality resources which taken from certain resources, such as, Majalah Forum Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Kantor Program Bahasa Inggris, Proyek Pusat Bahasa Inggris Online, American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF), The Indonesian International Education Foundation, VOA Inggris Spesial, Resources for Educational Excellence, ERIC – Education Resources Information Center, The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Educational Testing Service and ASCD – Educational Leadership.

Those Information Resource Center (IRC) programs are constructed in line with The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' (ECA). ECA itself having main mission which is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries including Indonesia by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations (Affairs, 2016).

Based on the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) works to build friendly, peaceful relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through academic, cultural, sports, and professional exchanges, as well as public -private partnerships. From artists, educators, and athletes to students and the youth in the United States and from almost every other country and territory including Indonesia that engaged rising leaders through academic, cultural, sports, and professional exchanges (Affairs, 2016). Striving to reflect the diversity of the United States and global society, ECA programs, funding, and other activities encourage the involvement of American and international participants from traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities.