Cuba
The People, Culture & Art
A People-to-People Educational Exchange

March 25 - April 1, 2013
Michigan State University Alumni Association
Dear Alumni and Friends,

A subject of mystery, fascination and deliberation for decades, Cuba has been forbidden to American travelers — until now. We are pleased to offer you an exceptional opportunity to visit Cuba yourself on a remarkable 8-day exploration. In this people-to-people exchange, you will discover Cuba through the resource that has kept the country vibrant through decades of political strife and isolation from the world: the Cuban people. Their joys, challenges and unique world outlook will unfold for you through personal meetings and enjoyment of their arts and culture in this program.

Encounter Cuba through intriguing excursions, exciting performances, informative discussions led by knowledgeable experts and personal contact with a variety of Cubans including painters, dancers, teachers, students, medical professionals and everyday people.

Explore Havana’s timeless streets, architecture and famous landmarks. Venture into Cuba’s countryside across impossibly verdant landscapes to plantations and a socialist community before visiting the dazzling southern coast. Enjoy two nights in lovely Cienfuegos and discover the jewel that is Trinidad. Savor local cuisine, talk with Cubans about their way of life and visit their homes, a medical clinic and schools, with access unavailable to individual travelers. This program will show you Cuba’s unexpected delights and the very real struggles of its people.

Cuba: The People, Culture & Art is made possible by a special license issued by the U.S. Department of Treasury. Your guides are expert in the country and will share their personal connections with its people and places with us. Every measure has been taken to ensure our comfort and convenience during the journey.

Please join us in this pioneering cultural exchange. Space is very limited, so call 888-697-2863 today to make your reservation.

Go Green,

[Signature]

Regina Cross
Director of Alumni Travel
MSU Alumni Association
Cuba in all of its color, controversy and history is now open for you to discover in an exciting journey to this fascinating country. There is no better way to discover Cuba than through its people, their culture and their art. Feel the hope of Cuba’s youth through its energetic young dancers and musicians. Experience the strength and spirit of older generations through their openness and warmth. Marvel at opulent colonial architecture frozen in time as much as Cuba’s vintage automobiles. The Bay of Pigs bakes in the Caribbean sun now as Cuba moves into the 21st century. Jump at the chance to see this amazing place and share personal moments with its people.

Program Highlights

- Embark on a truly unique travel adventure – an in-depth exploration of Cuba, now open to Americans after decades of isolation.
- Experience the exceptional opportunity to personally meet and talk with local Cubans from various walks of life, with access to venues not available to individual travelers.
- Enjoy an array of cultural and arts events, including a visit to Cuba’s leading art academy, the Instituto Superior de Arte, and the famous Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba company.
- Explore three of Cuba’s finest cities — all of which are home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites — Havana, Cienfuegos and Trinidad.
- Savor traditional Cuban cuisine at celebrated restaurants as part of a convenient all-inclusive meal plan.

Operated in accordance with a special license issued by the U.S. Department of Treasury, this exclusive program opens the door to a neighbor country long closed to American travelers. It is designed to promote cultural exchange and people-to-people contact.
As the journey unwinds, you will stroll through Old Havana, famous for its lively cafes and the cool lobbies of historic hotels that speak of a long-gone elegant era. Students and painters will tell you about how they mix their socialist educations with their own ideas for Cuba’s future. The breathtaking countryside, with its rolling sugar cane fields and quaint villages will seduce you, as will the charming colonial cities of Cienfuegos and Trinidad. Explore this legendary country that few Americans have ever seen firsthand and meet Cuban people from many walks of life. Experience their music, cuisine and the very real challenges they face every day.

Included meals indicated each day as B | L | D = Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner.

**DAY ONE**

**HAVANA**

**L | D**

Depart your gateway city for Miami, Florida, where you will board a direct-chartered flight for Havana, Cuba.※

**Excursion: A Look into Historic Havana.** Upon arrival, transfer to the historic center for lunch. Then visit the Museo de la Revolución, which houses extensive exhibits of Cuba’s history, including the Bay of Pigs and the Declaration of the Socialist Character of the Revolution.

Then, check in to the Hotel Meliá Cohiba.

**Excursion: Cigars and Then Dinner.** Tonight, stroll down vibrant Obispo Street — famous throughout Cuba for its nightlife and timeless feel — to the Hotel Conde de Villanueva, where in the lobby of this former 18th century mansion a torcedor will demonstrate the art of rolling a cigar. Purchase a few if you like, before attending a Welcome Dinner in the beautiful setting of the Hostal Valencia, with its lush courtyard and charming terracotta details.

**DAY TWO**

**HAVANA**

**B | L | D**

**Excursion: Old Havana.** This morning visit Havana Bay to marvel at the Cristo de La Habana, the massive statue of Jesus Christ, and La Cabaña, an 18th-century fortress, the third-biggest in the Americas.

**Excursion: Jewish Havana.** Visit a local Jewish center and its beautiful temple. Learn about Judaism in Cuba through a discussion with some of its members, many of whom sell handicrafts to support the temple’s operations.

**Cultural Event: Ebony Contemporary Dance Studio.** We have a special opportunity to visit here to watch the dancers rehearse and speak with them afterward. (Dance-supply donations are greatly needed and appreciated.)

Enjoy lunch at La Barraca at the famous Hotel Nacional de Cuba, its iconic white towers overlooking Havana Bay.

**Educational Focus: U.S.-Cuba Relations Today.** After lunch, visit the Universidad de la Habana to see the campus and talk with students and professors. Then attend a discussion moderated by Professor Jorge Mario Sanchez Egozcue about relations today between our country and Cuba.

**Local Flavor:** Enjoy dinner tonight at La Terraza, a paladar (a privately owned and operated restaurant) near the hotel.

**DAY THREE**

**HAVANA**

**B | L | D**

**Excursion: Habana Vieja.** Start the day with a charming drive in one of Cuba’s most famous icons, an antique convertible, to Old Havana. In this UNESCO World Heritage site, discover the city’s oldest square, the Plaza de Armas, and the Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, home of the Spanish colonial governors. Walk to the Plaza de la Catedral, dominated by the
baroque Cathedral of Havana, which the Jesuits began building in 1748. Visit the Plaza de San Francisco to see the white marble Fountain of Lions.

**Educational Focus: The Historical and Architectural Development of Havana.** Along the walk through Old Havana, well-known Cuban architect Miguel Coyula will take us through quiet side streets to indicate stately but crumbling buildings and talk about the plight of these homes and the families who live there. He’ll then lead a discussion of Havana’s history and architecture at the charming Hotel Ambos Mundos, where writer Ernest Hemingway stayed.

Enjoy lunch at the Hotel Ambos Mundos.

**Cultural Event: Red-hot Cuban Dance.** After lunch, visit the Cuban ballet school, Lizt Alfonso. Meet and talk with instructors and students before the company’s management describes exporting Cuban dance culture in spite of political and financial challenges. (*Dance-supply donations are greatly needed and appreciated.*)

Continue on to a local dance studio to learn about Afro-Cuban dance from the staff and young dancers including Noel Santovenia Alonso, Marco Hernández Suárez, Maria Yudith Cruz Reinoso and Yadira Cabrera Echevarria. All born and raised in Havana, they have made dance their life and now teach tango and salsa. Try a few steps yourself!

**Cultural Event: Pioneering Artists.** Meet Carlos Pérez, one of the first artists in Havana to own a private studio. At a reception before dinner, talk with Cuban artists about the new opportunities and challenges they have in Cuba for operating a private studio, something artists take for granted in other parts of the world.

**Local Flavor:** Savor a beautifully prepared dinner at the paladar, La Moraleja.

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**DAY FOUR**

**HAVANA**

**Excursion: Modern Havana.** This morning, tour modern Havana, including the Vedado, Havana’s central district, and elegant Miramar, home to Havana’s elite. Delight in visiting a local school to meet with students and teachers (*school-supply donations greatly needed and appreciated*).

Then visit the National Museum of Fine Arts to view its Cuban art, from colonial to current.

**Educational Focus: Contemporary Arts in Cuba.** Learn about the contemporary arts and culture of Cuba from Wilfredo Benítez, a director of the Ludwig Foundation, a non-governmental, non-profit institute that supports Cuban artists.

**Local Flavor:** Enjoy lunch at El Rancho Palco, a wonderfully thatch-roofed restaurant known for its traditional Cuban food.

**Excursion: Vibrant Young Habanans.** Visit the Instituto Superior de Arte, Cuba’s leading art academy, where, on a lush campus that used to be one of Havana’s finest golf courses, students pursue a variety of creative arts. In a round-table discussion with professors and students, we will compare and contrast the role of the arts in Cuba and the United States. (*Art-supply donations are greatly needed and appreciated.*)

**Excursion: Havana’s Eldest Citizens.** Meet witnesses to Cuba’s legendary past at La Quinta Santa Venía, a private religious home for senior citizens. Talk with the nuns who manage the home, and share experiences and activities with the home’s residents. (*Toiletry and medical supply donations are greatly needed and appreciated.*)

**Local Flavor:** Relax over dinner at La Fermínia, an elegant restaurant in a Colonial mansion, and one of the few places where Fidel Castro has dined in public.

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**DAY FIVE**

**HAVANA**

**Excursion: Socialism and Life in the Cuban Countryside.** Journey to the western province of Piñar del Río. Drive through the beautiful countryside, rural communities and famous tobacco plantations. Visit Las Terrazas, a model socialist community
developed in the 1980s. Tour their organic vegetable gardens and mark the occasion by helping to plant a tree with your fellow travellers. Meet and talk with the local gardeners and workers in the community and visit a family’s home to see how they live.

**Local Flavor:** Lunch is served at El Romero, an eco-restaurant that prepares dishes with locally and organically grown vegetables. You may help to prepare your lunch, if you wish. Enjoy a discussion on Cuba’s agricultural industry led by chef Tito Gudas.

Relax during dinner at Café del Oriente, where marble floors and high ceilings tell you you’re in the heart of Old Havana.

**Day Six**

**HAVANA | CIENFUEGOS**

**Excursion: The Pearl of the South.** Travel to Cienfuegos, named a UNESCO World Heritage site for being one of the best examples of 19th-century Spanish urban planning in this part of the world. En route, stop at the Bay of Pigs, site of the infamous failed invasion in 1962 by 1,300 CIA-trained Cuban exiles who wanted to overthrow Fidel Castro’s government. Visit the Museum of Playa Girón to learn more about the invasion. Enjoy lunch at the hotel at Caleta Buena, a beautiful ocean-side location known for excellent scuba diving.

Upon arrival in Cienfuegos, settle into your room at the Hotel Jagua.

**Cultural Event: Music of Generations.** Enjoy a performance by Coro Cienfuegos, one of Cuba’s most famous choirs. Meet the singers to talk about their training and music.

Tonight, enjoy a refreshing dinner at La Casa Verde on the seaside.

**Day Seven**

**CIENFUEGOS/TRINIDAD**

**Excursion: The Many Faces of Trinidad.** Discover petite and lovely Trinidad, a 500-year-old Spanish colonial city and UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit a maternity center, where you will see how the staff cares for pregnant women as part of one of Latin America’s best healthcare systems. (*Baby/maternity clothes and supplies are greatly needed and appreciated.*) Talk with the staff about Cuba’s socialized medicine. Continue to the Plaza Mayor in the center of Old Trinidad, whose plaza is home to Cuba’s largest church, the Iglesia de la Santísima Trinidad, with its 14 wooden altars. Explore the nearby Museo Romántico de Artes Decorativas, housed in the sparkling Palacio Brunet. Visit a Santería temple, where a local santero (priest) will discuss the Santería religion.

Refresh yourself over a buffet lunch in a restaurant on the Plaza Mayor, whose stately 18th and 19th century buildings were financed from riches generated by the sugar trade.

**Local Flavor:** Return to Cienfuegos and a Farewell Dinner at the paladar El Lagarto, where you will meet the owners Maylin Cruz Garcia and Antonio “Tony” Leonart Ordonez to talk about life in the city and what it is like to run a paladar.

**Day Eight**

**Excursion: The Heart of Cienfuegos.** Enjoy a walking tour of the town’s central square, Parque Martí, and explore the cathedral and the Teatro de Cienfuegos, an Italianate structure of Carrara marble, carved Cuban hardwoods and elaborate ceiling frescos. Afterward, see one of Cuba’s 400 policlínico (medical clinics). Talk with doctors and nurses about Cuba’s health system, which is renowned for offering quality care in often third-world surroundings.

This afternoon, depart for the Cienfuegos airport and your return flights home.

*Note: Itinerary sequence and/or scheduled events may change. Many excursions in this program involve an element of walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths or other uneven surfaces.*

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**Cuban Cuisine**

Cuban cuisine is largely a product of the countryside, often cooked from memory rather than recipes. A blend of Spanish, African and Caribbean influences flavor the national dish, *ajiaco criollo,* pork cooked in bitter orange and garlic. Yucca or potatoes, plantains, black beans and rice often accompany the dish. Chicken and saffron-laced rice are popular, too, cooked with a delicious combination of lime juice, olive oil, tomatoes, pimientos, cumin and bay leaf.

As for drinks, the *mojito* is famous for its easy-to-sip blend of rum, sugar, lime and yerbabuena, an herb in the mint family. Perhaps Cuba’s most underrated drink is its coffee, hand-harvested in nearby hills and served with lively conversation.
Hotel Meliá Cohiba
Havana
Just steps from the Malecón, the Hotel Meliá Cohiba overlooks Havana Bay. A contemporary high-rise hotel with stunning views of the Caribbean and the city, it is centrally located minutes from the Plaza of the Revolution and Old Havana. With an outdoor pool, well-equipped gym, Wi-Fi, beauty salon and wide selection of restaurants and bars, the Meliá Cohiba is a convenient and very comfortable base from which to explore Havana.

Hotel Jagua
Cienfuegos
Enjoy the sun-soaked southern coast of Cuba with beautiful views of the Bay of Cienfuegos from every room at the Hotel Jagua, which offers the spaciousness and clean lines of 1950s Cuban modern architecture. Located in the quiet residential area of Punta Gorda minutes from central Cienfuegos, the hotel offers a sleek, light-filled multi-level lobby, restaurant and cabaret-bar, fitness center and dazzling outdoor pool and deck beside the bay.

Program Highlights

Transportation
• Round-trip, chartered jet service between Miami, Florida, and Cuba.

Accommodations | Ground Arrangements
• Five nights in Havana at the Hotel Meliá Cohiba.
• Two nights in Cienfuegos at the Hotel Jagua.

Activities and Events
• Thought-provoking educational programs, featuring planned meetings with local Cubans that will enhance your insight into Cuba.
• All excursions as outlined in the program itinerary.
• A Welcome Dinner with fellow travelers.
• A Farewell Dinner with your fellow travelers.

Extensive Meal Program
• Enjoy seven breakfasts, seven lunches and seven dinners with this all-inclusive meal program.
• Sample authentic regional specialties during select meals at featured local restaurants.

Many Included Extras
• Consultation services of a dedicated Passenger Service Representative prior to departure.
• Services of English-speaking local guides throughout your stay.
• Detailed travel and destination information to assist in planning.
• Tipping of excursion guides and drivers.
• Complimentary travel wallet.

Note: U.S. Department of Transportation has not yet approved the flights, so this brochure cannot identify them.
To reserve your space on this exclusive educational people to people exchange, please submit the completed Reservation Form, along with a booking fee in the amount of $600 per person to:

Michigan State University Alumni Association
535 Chestnut Road
Room 300
East Lansing, MI 48824

Checks should be made payable to Michigan State University Alumni Association.

We have selected AHI International Corp., a licensed Cuba Travel Service Provider, to assist with your travel arrangements to and from Cuba. AHI can assist in booking your air transportation, arranging airport transfers, booking hotel accommodations, arranging ground transportation, assisting with Cuban entry visa applications, and providing other necessary travel services. AHI will invoice participants separately for these travel services. The total cost for this program is estimated at $4,095*.

This includes the $600 booking fee to the Michigan State University Alumni Association and the travel services costs payable to AHI International Corp. As noted above, AHI International Corp. does not have final information regarding U.S. government authorized flight schedules at this time. * This price is based upon per person double occupancy rates. Single accommodations will be an additional $375 (limited availability).

At this time, AHI has provided the following quote for this departure:

Travel Services:            $2,995  land/ground package *
$3,495  Estim ated travel services cost

The land/ground package price includes airport transfers, porterage between airports and hotels, hotel accommodations, all meals, all entrance charges, ground transportation, and Cuban visa application fees. The land/ground package price does not include certain tips and laundry service.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AHI INTERNATIONAL CORP./MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

NOT INCLUDED - Fees for passports are not included in the Land Program price, nor are personal gratuities; laundry and dry cleaning; excursions, wines, liquors, mineral waters and meals not mentioned in this brochure under included features; travel insurance; all items of a strictly personal nature.

MOBILITY AND FITNESS TO TRAVEL - The right is retained to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of this trip who, in the opinion of AHI International Corp. is unfit for travel or whose physical or mental condition may constitute a danger to themselves or to others on the trip, subject only to the requirement that the portion of the total amount paid which corresponds to the unused services and accommodations be refunded. Passengers requiring special assistance, including without limitation those who permanently or periodically use a wheelchair, must be accompanied by someone who is fit and able to assist them, and who will be totally responsible for providing all required assistance.

AIR TRANSPORTATION - If connecting flights to the Cuba charter flight are requested, special promotional fares may be used, in which case penalties of as much as 100% may be assessed by the airlines if reservations are changed or cancelled after ticketing. After departure, if the reservations are changed, you will be charged the higher, as that Year Economy class fare. VARIATIONS TO THE GROUP ITINERARY MUST BE REQUESTED NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.

CANCELLATION - In addition to airline cancellation penalties, all cancellations for any reason whatsoever shall be subject to a $250 per person cancellation fee. Cancellation from 120 days to 78 days prior to departure will result in forfeiture of 10% of the entire cost of the trip per person; 75 days to 30 days, 50% of the trip cost per person; cancellation from 29 days up to the date of departure will result in 100% forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip. TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE IS AVAILABLE - AN APPLICATION WILL BE SENT AFTER YOU RESERVE. All cancellations must be submitted in writing to AHI International Corporation. We strongly suggest purchasing travel insurance. Travel insurance information will be sent to you with your confirmation letter from the MSU Alumni Association.

BAGGAGE - All baggage including checked and carry-on cannot weigh more than a combined total of 44 lbs. All checked bags will cost $20 USD and if total luggage is overweight, then $2 per pound overweight fee. This fee is payable in cash only and 70 pounds total weight is the maximum.

AUTHORITY TO USE IMAGES AND AUDIO RECORDINGS - On occasion, AHI International Corp. obtains from its staff, or from participants, photographic or video images of passengers and trip activities. By participating in this travel program, you authorize AHI International Corp., without providing compensation to you, or obtaining additional approvals from you, to include photographic and video recordings of you, as well as voice recordings included with any videos, in AHI International Corp.’s sales, marketing, advertising, publicity and/or training activities.

RESPONSIBILITY - AHI International Corp. and Michigan State University Alumni Association do not own or operate any entity which provides goods or services for this program, and act only as agents for the independent suppliers of travel conveyance, transport, accommodations or other services. All such persons or entities are independent contractors. As a result, AHI International Corp. and the Sponsoring Association are not liable for any negligence or willful act of any such person or entity or any third person. In addition and without limitation, AHI International Corp. and the Sponsoring Association are not responsible for any delays, delayed departure or arrival, missed connection, loss, death, damage or injury to person or property or accident, mechanical defect, failure or negligence of any nature howsoever caused in connection with any accommodations, transport services or for any substitution of hotels or of common carrier equipment, with or without notice, or for any additional expenses occasioned thereby. Dates, Programs and Tour costs, although given in good faith and based on tariffs, exchange rates and other information at the time of printing, are subject to change at any time before the departure date. No revisions of the printed itinerary or its included features are anticipated; however, the right is reserved to make any changes, with or without notice, that might become necessary, with the mutual understanding that any additional expenses will be paid by the individual passenger. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. If the entire program is cancelled for any reason, participants shall have no claim other than for a full refund. By forwarding the deposit, the passenger certifies that he/she has no physical, mental or other condition of disability that would create a hazard for himself/herself or other passengers and accepts the terms of this contract set out herein and in more specific pre-departure passenger information. The airlines and other transportation companies concerned are not responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their conveyances. The passage contract in use, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the company(s) and the passenger and/or purchaser of this trip.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CHARTER FLIGHTS

A Charter Operator with an OFAC Carrier Service Provider license will arrange the charter flights to and from Cuba. Exchange program participants should refer to the Charter Operator’s Operator-Participant Contract for further information on the charter program conditions. AHI International Corp. will provide this information as soon as the U.S. government approved flight schedules are available.