

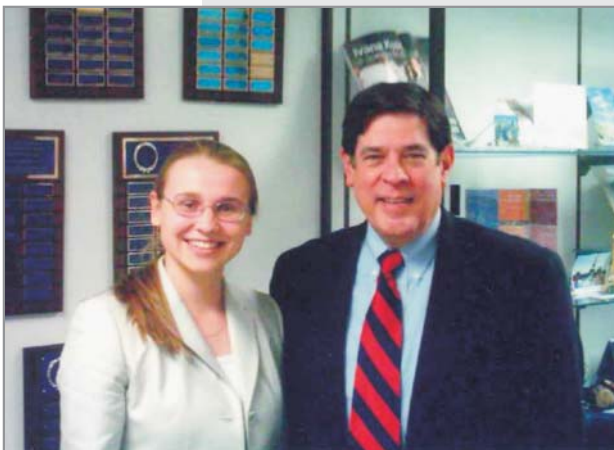
SPOTLIGHT

Academic Mentor Made the Difference for Ukrainian Alumna

Writing a master's thesis is no easy task for most graduate students, but it can be even more daunting for an international fellow working in his or her second or even third language. Reflecting on her studies in public administration at the University of Delaware, **Iryna Kalynychenko** (Muskie 2003) agrees the most difficult part of her academic program was her analytical paper, or thesis, entitled "Increasing the Effectiveness of the National Response to HIV/AIDS in Ukraine: Focusing on the Role of NGOs."

"I wanted to discover why the situation with HIV/AIDS had been worsening in Ukraine, despite the work of many government and non-governmental organizations in this area, and what should be done differently to increase the effectiveness of their work," Ms. Kalynychenko explains. She believes she would not have completed the project so successfully without the assistance of her teacher, mentor and friend Dr. G. Arno Loessner, with whom she is still in contact.

Iryna Kalynychenko (Muskie 2003) and Dr. Arno Loessner after Iryna's analytical paper defense.



"Dr. Loessner was a true support and guide throughout my six-month period of working on the analytical paper, a period that included the process of topic selection in the area of public service, designing methodology, conducting original research, organizing the logistics and communication flows throughout the process of research and writing, and doing analytical work on the findings of the research in order to develop specific recommendations."

In addition to providing feedback and ideas on the paper, Ms. Kalynchenko credits Dr. Loessner as a source of psychological support and faith in her abilities. "One particular episode comes to my mind every time that I think of him," she recalls. "I was in the process of finishing the research paper and faced one of those terrible mental blocks, when my mind literally froze and lost track of the whole picture of the research and the value of the data I obtained through doing surveys of Ukrainian NGOs. I contacted Dr. Loessner for another meeting, hoping to get his thoughts on my work. He listened carefully, looked into my eyes and I think he understood exactly what I was feeling. He comforted me with words of encouragement, came up to the board and started to write something. He wrote quickly for several minutes and then started speaking. He described all of the work that I had done thus far, pointing out the value in each stage of the research. Very quickly, I began to grasp the whole picture, and could get back on my feet with the research that I had done. I felt as if sunshine had come out after a rainy day, and I could finally see everything around in beautiful, clear colors. We spent the rest of the meeting in a productive brainstorming session about the recommendations from my research."

"Dr. Loessner understood the pressures and challenges for me as a graduate student working on her thesis, but he also always remembered that I was an international student. His cultural sensitivity, respect and interest for my culture and my needs exceeded my expectations. Now, five years later, we still keep in touch by email on a regular basis. Dr. Loessner is always on top of things, approaching me with questions on the changes in the political situation in Ukraine, Ukraine's relations with Russia, gas supply conflicts and Black Sea fleet issues. He continues to share his wisdom with me on the topics that are interesting to me. I feel that our work relationship and friendship which started in early 2005 hasn't ended, but instead lasted throughout the years and across the thousands of kilometers that divide us. In one of his most recent emails, he recounted that he looks over my paper occasionally — it is a reminder to him of the success of our efforts. Thank you, Dr. Loessner, for your investment in my life. I hope that my leadership and mentoring of others reflects the level of commitment that you made to me."

Ms. Kalynychenko is currently the Director of Operations for Precedent Academics, a U.S.-Ukrainian company working to provide quality support for academic institutions and individual researchers in the U.S. and Ukraine.

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Fellow Receives Award for Work on GLBT Issues



Viachaslau Bortnik (Muskie 2008) (center) accepting his award.

Viachaslau Bortnik (Muskie 2008) recently received the 2010 Academic Award from American University's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Ally (GLBTA) Resource Center for his work on GLBT issues. The Academic Award is presented annually to as many as two students who have written an outstanding paper, done innovative research, or contributed academically to GLBT issues.

Mr. Bortnik's classmate Shree Chauhan nominated him for his determination and commitment to GLBT activism. "Slava is from Belarus, which is considered homophobic, yet he has chosen to live his life quite openly, despite the dangers that come with this choice," Ms. Chauhan said. "I believe it takes a lot of courage to stand up to adversity of this nature, and I truly admire Slava's bravery."

"Slava has done more than just be true to himself. He works actively to change how society views the GLBT community. In [Washington,] DC, he is active in Immigration Equality, a nonprofit that focuses on the GLBT community and immigration. Also, to address the GLBT community in Belarus, Slava wrote the chapter on the country for the Greenwood Encyclopedia, a publication that explains the GLBT landscape for 82 countries around the world. I know that Slava wants to continue his activism on behalf of the GLBT community after he finishes his degree. I believe he is destined to make a real difference."

Mr. Bortnik graduated from American University in spring 2010 with a master's degree in public administration. During his Muskie fellowship, he interned at the Anti-Defamation League in Washington, DC.

Muskie Fellow Experiences North Dakota-Style Community Action



Sirjoddin Eshmatov (Muskie 2009) (left) fills sandbags alongside other community members.

Over the past century, Fargo, North Dakota residents have seen the Red River, which flows along the city's eastern border, rise as high as 41 feet during the rainy season. When flooding threatens, the people of Fargo pull together to minimize the damage to their community. This spring, **Sirjoddin Eshmatov** (Muskie 2009) from Uzbekistan was proud to join the community action and contribute to help prevent flooding in the city that has become his new home.

Mr. Eshmatov was unaware of the effect floods can have on a community until arriving in Fargo. However, he was moved to action after hearing stories about the devastation caused by past flooding. "Floods are an environmental as well as economic loss for the nation, whether they occur in small or large scales," he observed. "Flood damage impacts rural communities which are suffering from poverty."

Living on the far western side of Fargo, away from the Red River, Sirjoddin knew that any flooding would not affect him or his university directly, but he still wanted to help. After seeing a bulletin in the international student office on campus, he signed up to spend a Saturday filling sand bags with other international students.

Arriving at the volunteer station, Sirjoddin found himself surrounded by large piles of sand, thousands of empty bags and many other community members ready to help. For the next twelve hours, working with a smaller group of volunteers, Sirjoddin filled 20-pound bags with sand and piled them on the back of large flatbed trucks to be taken to the river. By the end of the day, he had helped flood prevention efforts by filling more than 500 bags with his group. He was also able to make friends with people from across the local community, observing firsthand the value Americans place on community service. Seeing people from outside of the flood area drive long distances to work together, Sirjoddin reflected, "I was surprised how many people helped, even if they didn't have anything to lose in the flood."

By March 21 of this year, the Red River had swelled to almost 37 feet, yet Fargo saw little damage, thanks to the actions of ordinary citizens. Looking back on his volunteer experience, Mr. Eshmatov says his main lesson learned is “to help people, even when they are not your friends, your neighbors or your family.” Upon returning to Uzbekistan, he plans to organize service projects bringing together his own community to help others.

Mr. Eshmatov is studying agricultural economics at North Dakota State University in Fargo.

Education Fellow Connects American Students to Classrooms Around the World



Ibrahim Rustamov (Muskie 2009) and his students in Connecticut. Photograph taken by University of Hartford's Observer Magazine.

In his hometown of Isfara, Tajikistan, where electricity supplies are often unreliable and access to technology is limited, **Ibragimdzhon Rustamov** (Muskie 2009) remained dedicated to connecting local students with their peers abroad online. Now a Muskie fellow studying educational technology at the University of Hartford, Mr. Rustamov is building on this experience by linking Connecticut fifth-graders with classrooms around the world.

Mr. Rustamov is a former teacher who had been integrating technology in the classroom since Isfara gained internet access in 2002. He then moved on to work as the Internet Learning Center Educator for Relief International Schools Online, where he began creating lessons based on his own teaching experience and learned new ways of presenting information.

While applying for the Muskie fellowship, Mr. Rustamov aimed to continue finding ways to use technology in the classroom. Shortly after arriving in Connecticut, he approached teachers and administrators at Aiken Elementary School, who welcomed him as a volunteer. Through online learning communities, Mr. Rustamov uses technology to teach students communication skills and important lessons about diversity and tolerance. More than simply talking about different cultures, he aims to show his students different countries in a new way.

Mr. Rustamov originally hoped to connect Aiken students with their peers in Tajikistan, using the [rafi.ki](#) network. This British site, which takes its name from the Swahili word for friend, allows students from around the world to create home pages about their local schools and communities. Students can navigate the user-created pages, giving them the opportunity to meet friends abroad and research their countries.

Unfortunately, due to unreliable electricity in Tajikistan, Mr. Rustamov has been unable to connect his students in the U.S. with children from his country. However, he has started partnerships with students from the UK and China. His students are learning about other cultures by sending messages to peers abroad, starting discussion forums, communicating in chat rooms or setting up video conferences, all with the aid of the site's translation tool when needed.

Currently, Mr. Rustamov's students are creating their own mini encyclopedia pages on the site to provide information for other elementary level students on American states, electronics, climate change and world hunger. To assure the accuracy of the information, pages are closely monitored by both teachers at Aiken Elementary and the administrators of the rafi.ki site. Student enthusiasm for the online network continues to flourish. Aiken Elementary was recently selected as rafi.ki's school of the month and an encyclopedia page on world hunger created by one of Mr. Rustamov's students received "homepage of the month" honors.

Mr. Rustamov has seen the importance in creating an international perspective for his students and hopes their online activities will continue after he has left Connecticut and returned home to Tajikistan.

Russian Alumnus Remembers Example of Business Professor

Though nearly ten years have passed since **Alexander Bryukhanov** (Muskie 2000) completed his fellowship at Iowa State University, one professor still particularly stands out in his memory. “Reflecting on people that influenced me the most during my Muskie experience, I think first of all about my professor, Dr. Charles Shrader,” Mr. Bryukhanov says. “He taught one of the core courses for our MBA program, ‘Strategy and Business Ethics.’ His thoughtful style of teaching, openness to accept opposite points of view, and his dedication to his work gave me a great example of academic and personal excellence. Outside of the classroom, Dr. Shrader was a person that you could ask almost any question. He was open to sharing his knowledge in management science and had the wisdom of an exceptional thinker. In the fast and turbulent business world, I still stay in touch with my professor and enjoy sharing my ideas and continuing to learn from him.”

Mr. Bryukhanov is currently a mentor with Development Capital Networks and a facilitator for the Library of Congress Open World Program.

Muskie Messenger

ALUMNI UPDATES

Ukrainian Society of Investment Professionals to Lead the Way for Ethical Investment in Ukraine

Having worked for several different Ukrainian investment companies, **Andriy Klymchuk** (Muskie 2003) was very familiar with the investment climate in Ukraine. Although there was significant money to be made by investment companies, there was often little regard for transparency and honesty in the way that the deals were concluded and honored. Convinced that this behavior was detrimental to future investment and economic development in Ukraine, Mr. Klymchuk and other Muskie alumni began working to set up CFA Ukraine, the Ukrainian Society of Investment Professionals, a new Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Association.

The CFA Institute (www.cfainstitute.org) is a worldwide nonprofit organization made up of investment professionals. With nearly 100,000 members and 137 regional societies around the world, the CFA Institute is dedicated to developing and promoting the highest educational, ethical, and professional standards in the investment industry.

Mr. Klymchuk and his fellow Muskie alumni believed that the CFA Institute's mission was crucial to the development of economic progress and security in Ukraine. In just under one year, they were able to unite like-minded people and establish the Ukrainian Society of Investment Professionals as a legal nonprofit organization in Ukraine, gaining over 200 members and dozens of volunteers.

According to Mr. Klymchuk, CFA Ukraine is focused on 3 "E" leadership: "Ethics, Education, and Excellence." The society offers members opportunities for networking, job placement, career development and continuing education. Some of the members eventually proceed through a rigorous, internationally recognized three-year program to become CFA charter holders. The members are expected to behave in an ethical manner consistent with the CFA Institute's global standard. If a member is suspected of unethical professional behavior, the CFA Institute's self-regulatory ethics panel will hold a hearing on the case. For companies, government, other NGOs, and individuals, CFA Ukraine is intended to serve as an example of an ethical organization, a platform from which transparent and ethical economic policies are pursued.

The society held its third conference on April 19, 2010, in Kyiv, marking the launch of CFA Ukraine and its official debut within the country's investment and finance industry. The event featured expert speakers commenting on market and industry trends, as well as opportunities for networking. Building on this successful event, the Ukrainian CFA association plans to host a Ukrainian Investment and Economic Forum (UIEF) in Kyiv in October 2010, which CFA Ukraine hopes will become a regular event devoted to improvement of the investment climate in the country and Ukraine's integration into the global investment community.

UIEF sees its goal as facilitating positive practical changes that will help objectively improve Ukraine's position as a member of the worldwide economy and global investment community. The forum will provide a platform and environment for influential leaders to volunteer and contribute to improving the investment climate in Ukraine.

For any questions regarding UIEF, volunteer or cooperation opportunities, as well as feedback, please contact Andriy Klymchuk or Sergei Glazunov at info@cfaukraine.org. Visit www.cfaukraine.org for more information on the forum and CFA Ukraine.



Andriy Klymchuk (Muskie 2003) (left) and Attila Koksál, President's Council Representative of the CFA Institute EMEA-East.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Alumna Receives Prestigious Community Development Award from Syracuse

Shamsiya Mustafayeva (Muskie 2008) of Azerbaijan was recently awarded the Irma Almirall-Padamsee La Fuerza Community Enhancement Award from Syracuse University, where Ms. Mustafayeva had been a Muskie fellow. She was nominated by Professor Scott Catucci for organizing cross-cultural communication workshops for Syracuse's Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration and for her contributions to the university's Orange Dialogue for Peace Project.

According to the Syracuse University website, "The Irma Almirall-Padamsee La Fuerza Community Enhancement Award is in recognition of exemplary individuals for their outstanding contributions and commitment to diversity. These individuals have used their energy, spirit and leadership in initiating and implementing actions that help our campus community move beyond tolerance and create dialogue among people from diverse cultural groups including race, socioeconomic status, sex, age, (dis) ability, sexual orientation, and religion, and have forged meaningful bridges across identities on the Syracuse University campus."

Moldovan Alumni Reach Out to the Regions

To bridge the opportunity gap between the capital and the regions, Moldovan Muskie alumni working in education have focused on sharing their professional experience with communities outside Chisinau. Over the past year and a half, **Marcela Calchei** (Muskie 2008), **Galina Chira** (Muskie 2007) and **Daniela Munca** (Muskie 2006) have initiated and implemented several projects and professional development activities in more than 18 regions in northern and southern Moldova, including Transdnistria.



Marcela Calchei (standing) with teachers at a secondary school in the town of Comrat.

More than 250 teachers and students from around Moldova have participated in these events, benefiting from the experience of Muskie alumni and beginning to implement their own projects in villages and districts all over the country.

Ms. Chira delivered a series of five interactive workshops for Moldovan teachers from Balti, Stefan Voda and Chisinau. One of the most popular topics was "Building Teacher-Student Relationships to Promote Students' Motivation for Learning: Dr. William Glasser's Choice Theory." The workshop provided teachers with a set of concrete tools they can use to improve their relationships with students and strengthen students' motivation to learn. Ms. Chira focused on guidance and counseling during her education studies at the University of West Alabama and interned with the university's Gateway program for incoming academically at-risk incoming freshmen.

Ms. Calchei recently spoke to instructors at Comrat State University on incorporating interactive methods in lectures and engaging students in large classes. The workshop ended with a debate on motivation and ways of increasing attendance, and students' academic standing. Ms. Calchei also introduced several websites with resources to help instructors design teaching materials for their classes. During her studies at the University of Central Florida, Ms. Calchei focused on curriculum and instruction.

Ms. Munca has trained teachers in Balti, Orhei, Cahul and numerous other locations on educational technology, online collaboration, and second-language learning. She focused on TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) during her studies at the University of Mississippi.

The three alumni summarized their outreach as follows: "For us, the Muskie messengers from Moldova, this year has been one of the most rewarding periods of our post-U.S. experience. There is nothing more inspiring and truly fulfilling than sharing with those who appreciate each small opportunity to learn something new and bring change into their community. It has also reminded us that we have been truly blessed with an experience which equipped us with such valuable professional tools, which we will proudly continue using to make Moldova a better country."



Daniela Munca (fourth from left) with teachers at a secondary school in Orhei.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Alumnus Guides Georgian Youth to “Mini-Britain” at English Summer School

Last year, nearly a thousand Georgian youth participated in a non-formal educational camp focused on the English language and British culture. This year, 1,200 students will participate, which makes the program the first subject-related national outreach project of this scale in recent Georgian history. The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia chooses the students that have been most successful in national competitions and sends them to one of three sites, where the summer school is administered by the U.N. Association of Georgia International School and the Buckswood School from England.

Koba Grdzelishvili (Muskie 2003) serves as a head teacher, and sees the summer school as a remarkable opportunity for Georgian youth. He recalls last year's event: “High school students from all over Georgia had a chance to 'leave' their home communities and live for three weeks in the 'country' of 'Mini-Britain' mini' but hugely different in terms of language, culture, and code of social conduct. No visa hassles or flight delays, just straight to Tskneti, Bakuriani, or Tskaltubo! As the head teacher in Tskaltubo, I prepare my staff of eight language teachers and six group leaders to provide the closest version possible of true English language and British culture for the students. My Union Jack tie and American accent gave the incoming students their first cultural shock of their three weeks of music, fun, and classes. Rest assured, they enjoyed the ride!”

“The course director from England and an outstanding group of Georgian staff did an amazing job,” Mr. Grdzelishvili continues. “As pioneers of this project, we naturally had to improvise in the beginning. There were frequent changes in the daily schedule, language classes disrupted by enormous heat, high grass on the volleyball court, and even bathroom leaks, but with the help of the resort staff and local authorities, we got everything up and running in a few days. The staff used their diverse experience to offer up a broad set of interesting and challenging activities, making these days unforgettable for the students. As one of the two team leaders, my job was to help staff keep all the balls in the air: maintain academic excellence in classes, plan and participate in afternoon activities, play sports with youth, and sometimes learn new ones such as cricket, rounders, and twister.”



Koba Grdzelishvili (Muskie 2003) with his students at the English camp.

The English course directors were the best purveyors of foreign language and culture for the students and the highly motivated staff, two of whom are ECA alumni, made the youths' most fervent wishes for the three weeks come true.”

“This year's summer school is already being planned. More than twelve hundred students will travel to 'Mini' Britain to further polish their English, experience the culture of their target language, espouse the principles of development, explore and embrace new values and attitudes, and, to the best of their ability, act as multipliers of knowledge and skills among their peers around the country.”

Muskie MAX Award Leads to Seminar on Sustainable Development in Georgia

Rapid development of infrastructure and construction projects can often cause increased pressure on the environment and natural resources.

Khatuna Gogoladze (Muskie 2007) believes policymakers in her native Georgia should be considering the main principles of sustainable development or the country may face deep and irreversible environmental problems in the future.

To raise awareness of these issues among decision-makers, Ms. Gogoladze organized a workshop entitled “The Environment and Economic Development” attended by eighteen heads and deputy heads of departments of several Georgian ministries and the Tbilisi City Administration. The event examined the role of the public sector in promoting environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources and discussed the regulations and economic tools necessary to ensure sustainable development at a national level. The Georgian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources as well as the Aarhus Center in Georgia participated in the workshop, which was led by Dr. Matthew Auer, one of Ms. Gogoladze's former professors at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) at Indiana University-Bloomington.

A Muskie Mentor/Advisor Exchange (MAX) award helped make Dr. Auer's visit to Georgia possible. MAX is a pilot program supporting continued professional relationships between Muskie alumni and their American host advisors, supervisors, professors, and mentors.



Dr. Matthew Auer presenting at the seminar on sustainable development.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Alumnus from Ukraine Brings Ideas to Young Global Leaders Summit

Igor Shevchenko (Muskie 1996), recently attended the Young Leaders Summit, (http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Young_Global_Leaders/WhatWeDo/Events/YGLAnnualSummit2010/index.htm) from May 2-7, 2010 in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. The topic of this year's summit was "Models of Change." During the summit, more than 250 young leaders were able to strike up personal friendships, share experiences, express their views and hear other ideas on possible mechanisms for the positive transformation of the modern world.

"The uniqueness of the summit is that successful and active young people from more than forty countries from all continents, from different cultures, religions, areas of activity and different social status gathered together in one place," Mr. Shevchenko notes. "While holding the summit, young ministers, members of parliament, politicians, businessmen, academics, journalists, artists, activists and social entrepreneurs, regardless of status, became a unified global team of equal partners, which, during a few days, was working with inspiration on how to change the world for the better." "The summit was held in various formats: plenary sessions, task forces, impact journeys, meet-the-leader sessions and personal communication between forum members during networking lunches and dinners."

The summit also included an off-site visit to the remote village of Kisarave (population: 30), where the international charity organization Plan International implements a rural development program which trains villagers to work together on community problems and increase economic activity for the benefit of all by growing vegetables and raising goats.

Mr. Shevchenko participated actively in a summit task force called "The Next Generation of Public Leaders." He explained that the group was formed in response to the problem of the low quality of public leadership in the world, aims to put more young and talented leaders in power. The task of the group is to cooperate with and assist young leaders who are planning to engage in politics and public administration. The task force's action plan for 2010 included forming a group of advisers, representing current or former politicians and officials, and organizing a series of master classes with politicians such as Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, and Alexander Kwasniewski.



Igor Shevchenko (Muskie 1996) (left) with fellow summit participants in Tanzania.

The Vice President of Tanzania, the U.N. Deputy General-Secretary, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tanzania, and other dignitaries were part of the broad discussion about the next generation of leaders, which aimed to identify the main barriers that prevent talented young people from taking leadership positions in parliaments and governments globally. Among the barriers cited were low salaries for public service, corruption, interference in personal lives, and a lack of meritocracy in the process of election or appointment to public office.

Each participant at the summit was required to submit a personal model of positive change for the world and present it on a single sheet of paper. The model proposed by Mr. Shevchenko was called "Meritocracy." His model and other participants' plans of patterns of change can be found online at <http://shevchenko.ua/ua/media/news/item/10161>.

ALUMNI SHORTS

Lyudmila Lavrova (Muskie 1995) recently won the award for "Highest Professional Achievements" from the St. Petersburg (Russia) Chamber of Attorneys. Ms. Lavrova is an attorney with the St. Petersburg Bar Association.

Azerbaijani Alumnus Shares Investment Insight with Young Professionals

Farid Gardashbayov (Muskie 2007) led a workshop on investment fundamentals for an audience of young professionals and other interested people in May. Approximately thirty participants learned about the capital budgeting process, the time value of money, and investing in fixed income and equity. The workshop was organized by the Azerbaijani ECA Alumni Association.

Mr. Gardashbayov studied public administration at Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA).



Farid Gardashbayov (standing) delivering a workshop for young investors.

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Submission guidelines:

If you are interested in making a submission to the Messenger, please send all text and pictures to <muskie_messenger@irex.org> by September 30, 2010.

ECA and IREX reserve the right to edit submission content. Not every submission will be printed.



Bureau of Educational
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ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES

US Government sponsored exchange alumni are eligible to take part in various Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) supported conference and training activities. In addition to events that support large audiences, individual alumni may apply for small grants that fund the organization of community service activities, conferences, publications, Internet-related activities, research trips, training programs, the creation of associations and other activities.

ECA Alumni Programming for Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program Alumni

State Alumni Website: The State Alumni website is an online community by and for alumni of US Government sponsored exchange and training programs. As of May 2004, the website has over 8,500 registered users. The content of the site is updated every day and alumni are encouraged to submit information to the website for posting. Features of the website include: calendar of upcoming alumni events, job listings and career development information, searchable database of alumni and US host families who have registered at the site, grant opportunity listings, live online discussions, discussion forum, alumni news, alumni resume database, articles written by alumni, feedback form/online survey, live online guest speakers, photo gallery, and the Alumni ListServ. <<https://alumni.state.gov/>>

The ECA Alumni Small Grants Program (ASGP): Alumni may apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 to conduct a community development or professional development project. Fundable project ideas include coordinating a community service project, launching a pilot program at an NGO or organizing a training program for professional colleagues and/or other alumni. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. <<http://www.irex.org/programs/asgp/index.asp>>

Project Smile: Project Smile is a community development program aimed at helping youth, the elderly and the disabled in Eurasia. Each grantee will receive up to \$250 to perform public service in their home city. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. <<http://www.irex.org/programs/smile/index.asp>>

Alumni Events: IREX and the US Embassy organize monthly alumni events in all 12 countries of Eurasia. These events include workshops, conferences, trainings, roundtable discussions, happy hours, movie nights, seminars and lectures. Larger scale events include job fairs that allow alumni to have their resumes reviewed, learn about the current job market in their home country, and meet with potential employers. IREX local offices and the Embassies encourage alumni to actively participate in the development and implementation of such events.



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs