

Fulbright Commission Activities in 2007

Message from the Executive Director

Commission activities in 2007

During the past year the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange continued to work for the successful realization of the Fulbright goals defined in the 1961 Fulbright-Hays Act and the 2003 agreement between the US Government and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria. Its manifold activities aimed to implement the following specific objectives:

- Support academic exchanges in all fields, especially the social sciences, the humanities and US and BG studies.
- Extend outreach to BG universities, schools and other educational institutions to provide a greater number and diversity of applicants, especially from underserved regions and social groups.
- Promote the Fulbright program in Bulgaria in US universities and educational institutions to increase the number of US applicants in all categories.
- Facilitate other programs in furtherance of the Fulbright program.
- Promote the Senior Specialist Program among potential candidates from the US and in Bulgarian universities and educational institutions.
 - Continue to support the local Fulbright info-centers.
 - Expand language training services and upgrade facilities at the Fulbright language center and local info-centers.
 - Continue to provide testing services, including iBT TOEFL, GRE, SAT, LSAT, CFA etc.
 - Continue to offer the Fulbright International Summer Institute.



*Prof. Dr. Julia Stefanova
Executive Director, Bulgarian-American Commission
for Educational Exchange*

- Support the introduction of joint Bulgarian and American graduate programs at BG universities
- Support the Bulgarian American Association and the Bulgarian Fulbright Alumni Association.
- Increase the visibility of the Fulbright program in Bulgaria and the United States through regular contacts with alumni, publications, presentations, Internet, advising, e-mail and person-to-person communication.

- Maintain high standards of program administration on the basis of bi-nationalism, peer review and academic and professional excellence.

A. US Grantees in AY 06-07 and AY 07-08

In AY 06-07 the number of US grantees was 20: 6 lecturers, 4 students, one English teaching assistant, 2 teachers, 6 senior specialists and one visiting lecturer under the inter-country program. The lecturers came from the following fields: US studies, cultural studies, linguistics, chemistry and modern dance. They were assigned to Sofia University, the American University in Bulgaria and the National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts. The senior specialists were hosted by New Bulgarian University, University of Shumen, South-Western University in Blagoevgrad and the Academy of Economics in Svishtov.

There were also four US graduate students in economic development, international relations, political science and fine art. Depending on their projects, they were placed in appropriate universities and institutions such as the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Resources, the American University in Bulgaria and the National Academy of Fine Arts.

For the first time in AY 2006- 07 the Fulbright Commission in-

In This Issue:

Fulbright Commission Activities in 2007	01
Fulbright Office News	05
Announcements	07
To Chicago and Back	10
Out of America	12

roduced the English Teaching Assistantship Program in Bulgaria. The selected grantee worked at the prestigious First English Language High School in Sofia. The host school was highly satisfied with the grantee's work. The survey we conducted at other high schools demonstrated great interest in the program. In the current academic year, there are two teaching assistants already working at very good language high schools in Sofia and Burgas.

In AY 06-07 six American senior specialists visited Bulgarian universities (Sofia University, New Bulgarian University, University of Shumen, South-Western University in Blagoevgrad, the Academy of Economics in Svishtov) to deliver lectures, teach graduate and undergraduate courses, and help with curriculum development in the following areas: social work, economics, business administration, American studies and literature, education. Everywhere, the Senior Specialist Program again proved its usefulness and effectiveness. The Commission staff will continue to work for popularizing it in as many Bulgarian universities and educational institutions as possible.

Under the inter-country program, the Fulbright Commission hosted the visit of one US Fulbright scholar and PR consultant working on a project in Moldova. He gave two very successful public lectures at the Faculty of Journalism of Sofia University and New Bulgarian University.

Under the Fulbright Teacher Exchange two U.S. grantees taught English language and literature at high schools in Plovdiv and Vratsa. Both of them completed their assignments successfully and our feedback from their respective schools is positive.

The Fulbright competition for FY 2007 and AY07- 08 resulted in the selection of 14 US grantees, most of whom are already working in Bulgaria. In the senior scholar category there are 6 lecturers in business administration, textile, journalism, US studies and literature, law and computer science. There are three students in archaeology, folk singing and history. Two more students were selected under the English Language Teaching Assistantship Program. One is teaching at the Sofia High School of Mathematics and the other at the Burgas English Language High School. Under the Teacher Exchange program there are two US grantees teaching English language and American literature at the Tsar Simeon Veliki High School in Vidin and the foreign language school in Vratsa. One school administrator was selected to work with the principal of the Vassil Aprilov National High School in Gabrovo.

B. Bulgarian Grantees in AY 06-07 and AY 07-08

In AY 2006-2007 there were 15 Bulgarian grantees in the following categories and fields: 6 scholars in education, geography, multimedia, e-medicine, cultural studies and economics; 7 students in business administration, law, architecture and public policy, and two teachers in English language and American literature.

The scholars received 5-month grants and returned home on time. Their final reports are all very positive and express great satisfaction with the Fulbright experience.

Of the 7 students, three have returned to Bulgaria, having successfully completed one-year LLM programs. The others are still studying in the US.

The two Bulgarian teachers have also completed their assign-

ments successfully. One of them taught English and English literature in Falls Church, Virginia, and the other – in New York City.

The Fulbright competition for AY 07-08 grants resulted in 20 more Bulgarian nominees that were approved by BFS.

Six scholars were selected in the following fields: cultural studies, law, mathematics, geology, philosophy and economics. Five of them have already started their projects at prestigious US universities: MIT, University of Pittsburgh, Northwestern University – Chicago, SUNY Binghamton University, University of Lexington – Kentucky. One scholar started his program in January 2007 at the University of Missouri.

In the student category 9 students were approved and are currently enrolled in master's programs in media and communication studies, law, international relations, business administration and cultural anthropology. The graduate students are all very strong and highly motivated and it is not surprising that they were admitted to most prestigious universities with financial support: Columbia University, Harvard University, Emerson College in Boston, Tufts University, Emory University, SUNY – Binghamton. Thanks to the long-standing cooperation between the Fulbright Commission and the University of Oklahoma at Norman, another candidate received a joint scholarship for a MBA program at the Michael Price College of Business. The joint scholarship with Thanks to Scandinavia Foundation was awarded to a law student who is now pursuing a LL.M degree at Columbia University in New York.

This year one of our nominees for a Hubert Humphrey fellowship was approved and is now working on her project in the field of public policy in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Commission also nominated two Bulgarian high school teachers that were approved by FSB. They are currently teaching English and American literature at high schools in Portland, Oregon, and Livingston, Montana.

Our New Century scholar Professor Pepka Boyadjieva started her program in March 2007 and is now successfully working with the other members of this year's team on the project "Higher Education in the 21st Century: Access and Equity". Her own theme is "Social and Educational Ex(In)clusion. Systemic/ Structural and Cultural Factors Affecting Access to Higher Education".

In June 2007 the Commission nominated four applicants for the prestigious Science and Technology Award. We are very pleased that two of them were approved: one as a principal and another as an alternate candidate. The AY 08-09 competition resulted in the nomination of twelve principal and 3 alternate candidates for graduate study, lecturing and research and two for Humphrey fellowships.

C. Grantee Accomplishments in AY 06-07

Dr. Linda Rashidi, Fulbright lecturer at the Department of English and American Studies of Sofia University, and Dr. Hristo Stamenov from the same Department participated in an international linguistics conference in the summer of 2007 with a joint paper. Dr. Rashidi also introduced a course in Bulgarian literature and film at her home institution, Mansfield University of Pennsylvania.

After his return from Bulgaria, Dr. Roger Craig, Fulbright lecturer at the Department of English and American Studies at Sofia Univer-

sity, published a new poetry book entitled "Those Years".

Fulbright alumna Dr. Sevdalina Dimitrova was awarded the highest scientific degree of Doctor Habilis in physics. The major part of the research for which she was promoted was undertaken during her visit as a Fulbright scholar to the Bartol Research Institute at the University of Delaware.

Fulbright alumna Dr. Diana Popova from the Burgas Free University became associate professor of linguistics at the Department of Applied Linguistics of Burgas Free University. Recently, she also published a book on globalization and cross-cultural communication entitled "Between Global and Local".

Fulbright alumnus Prof. Ivan Mladenov from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences recently wrote a book on "Conceptualizing Metaphors. On Charles Peirce's Marginalia". The book is in English and was published earlier this year by Routledge Publishing House. He also authored an "An Anthology of Bulgarian Literature" published by Slavica Publishers, Indiana, USA.

1. NON-GRANT ACTIVITIES

Educational advising, English language training and testing are major components of the Commission's non-grant activities. They are effective and time-tested tools of promoting the American educational system and the Fulbright program by providing up-to-date information competent guidance, quality language training, preparation for and administration of standardized tests.

In 2007 a total of 15,488 persons were serviced at the Commission's advising center and local offices, 522 completed English language courses and 5643 took TOEFL, GRE, SAT, LSAT, CFA and the EPSO exam at Commission testing centers in Sofia and Plovdiv.

During the International Education week (November 13-17, 2006) a number of useful activities were carried out attracting the attention of about 1,400 students, professors, high-school teachers, educators and parents. The educational adviser visited economically challenged communities in the cities of Sofia, Varna, Stara Zagora and Smolyan as well as underserved regions and towns with large minority groups, e.g. Shumen, Vidin, Kurdjali and Madan. Presentations about the US educational system and opportunities for study in the US, including the Fulbright program, were made in the major universities and high schools in and outside of the capital. During and around IEW, the Fulbright advising center in Sofia was visited by representatives of seven US universities: Wellesley College, Duke University, University of Chicago, St. John's University in New York, AUBG, Stanford Graduate School of Business and Tuck School of Business (Dartmouth College).

The centerpiece of IIEW 2006 was the official launch of the United States Achievers Program (USAP) in Bulgaria. The new program is supported by the US Embassy and the American University in Bulgaria. The competition selected 15 junior high school students out of 32 candidates representing diverse social groups and 22 high schools from 9 cities in Bulgaria. The Commission organized a series of training activities for the students: workshops, meetings, specific instructions on the application process, work with Internet information etc. It also sponsored an intensive SAT preparation course.

On August 13-25 the Commission held its sixth Fulbright International Summer Institute in the historic town of Tryavna. 2007. This year, FISI attracted 46 participants from the U.S., Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Russia and Azerbaijan. The new group of Fulbright grantees from the U.S. also attended the summer program and studied different aspects of Bulgarian history, politics, economy, tourism, social issues, folklore, literature and the arts. All courses were taught in English by distinguished American and Bulgarian professors, most of whom were Fulbright grantees and alumni. The lecturers represented prestigious universities and institutions from the U.S. and Bulgaria: Harvard University, the University of Michigan, Cleveland State University, Indiana University, Florida Atlantic University, University of Dayton, Sofia University, University of National and World Economy, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, New Bulgarian University, National Academy of Arts, Media Development Center, etc.

The Commission maintains local offices in the major university towns: Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Sliven, Burgas, Varna, Veliko Turnovo, Rousse, Vidin, Smolyan, Kurdjali and Madan.) Their standard activities include educational advising, information about the Fulbright and other related programs, English language training, test registration and assistance to Fulbright grantees. During the year under review two more local Fulbright offices in the towns of Kurdjali and Madan became operational.

4. GENERAL FACTORS IMPACTING THE PROGRAM:

The factors that affected the administration and productivity of the Fulbright program in FY 2006 and AY 05-06 preserved and even strengthened their hold during FY 2007 and AY 06-07. This is because all of them relate to all-pervasive, substantial and long-term changes in Bulgarian society.

1) Accession to the European Union

On January 1st Bulgaria became a full member of the European Union. This is a historic event that crowned and rewarded Bulgaria's efforts to ultimately shake off totalitarian socialism and rejoin the free and democratic European and transatlantic community. It also marked the official beginning of a new transition period of integration that, compared to the post-totalitarian transition, will most likely be longer and more dramatic.

2) Ongoing reform in BG education

The Bulgarian educational system is still going through deep structural changes and transformations aimed at harmonization with the existing EU standards and new requirements. They are part of the Bologna Process that Bulgaria joined in 1999: introduction of the Diploma supplement, two-tier university education (Bachelor's and Master's level), introduction of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and the Diploma Supplement, integration of curricula, assessment systems, quality assurance and accreditation methodology, increase of student and faculty mobility etc. On the other hand, for a variety of economic and political reasons the education budget is limited (in 2006 it amounted to only 4,2% of the GDP) which explains why the educational reform is progressing so slowly. The economic difficulties have affected the quality of education at all levels, eroding academic standards in most institutions, de-motivating and

preventing faculty from upgrading their expertise and updating their teaching methodology. This is the major reason why a great number of students and professors seek educational opportunities abroad.

3) Dramatic increase of educational opportunities in Europe
Similarly to last year, European education continues to be a great attraction for Bulgarian undergraduate and graduate students. There is no statistics about how many BG students studied in Europe in AY 06-07 but most likely their number from last year (over 50,000 students) has risen. Germany, Austria, France, the Netherlands and UK do remain the preferred destinations for young and inquisitive Bulgarians in pursuit of good education. European universities and colleges are ever more aggressively advertising their programs through periodic educational fairs, visits of their representatives, extensive Internet information about simplified admission procedures, low tuition fees, waivers, scholarships, job opportunities etc.

4) Rising cost of education in the U.S.
The steady increase of tuition in many U.S. universities, the new extended formats of iBT TOEFL, GRE and GMAT and the respective increase of testing fees, as well as the entry visa restrictions are the major factors diverting Bulgarian students from applying to U.S. universities in favor of European institutions. The decrease of their numbers is still insignificant but the downward trend is there. Thus, according to the recent IIE Open Doors report for AY 06-07, the number of Bulgarian students in the US is 3,478 as against 3,633 in AY 05-06. This makes a 4,3% decrease over last year. On the other hand, the number of US students coming to Bulgaria has risen from 43 to 97 in AY 06-07.

The Commission has taken prompt measures to counteract the negative trend and encourage capable Bulgarians to apply for Fulbright scholarships: the deadline for applying for Fulbright grants was extended by four months; the Internet site was expanded and improved; educational advising and outreach was greatly intensified; local centers, especially in underserved regions, started offering English language training for a symbolic fee; the two partnerships with Thanks to Scandinavia Institute and Tuck College of Business at Dartmouth College were successfully realized; the Fulbright Summer Institute was effectively used for promoting the Fulbright opportunity. We are fully determined to further mobilize our resources to ensure that the Fulbright opportunity reaches more and better candidates in 2008 and after.

To sum up, 2007 was another successful year for the Fulbright program in Bulgaria in spite of the ongoing changes, the new trends and the rising demands of the 21st century. Therefore, I would like to express my deep and genuine gratitude to the members of the Fulbright Commission Board and staff as well as to our partners from ECA, IIE and CIES and other cooperating institutions in the US for their commitment to the Fulbright program. I would also like to cordially wish all Bulgarian and American grantees, alumni, colleagues and supporters of Fulbright a very happy, productive and creative New Year 2008, with lots of health, good spirits and energy to meet the exciting challenges of the future.

*Dr. Julia Stefanova
Executive Director*

Bulgarian Fulbright Alumni Association Membership Form



Full name

Home address

Field, Academic Rank and Degree

Present Place and Address of Employment

.....

Phone, Fax

Type, Year and Duration of Grant

Place and Name of Host Institution

Please complete and return to the Fulbright commission office address.

Fulbright Office News

Final Nominations for Bulgarian USAP Candidates in AY 2009-2010

The United States Student Achievers Program (USAP) was officially launched in Bulgaria in 2006. The 2008 USAP competition for AY 2009-2010 resulted in the selection of eleven junior high school students out of forty seven candidates representing diverse social groups and twenty five high schools in Bulgaria. Fifteen candidates were from the capital city of Sofia and thirty two came from different parts of the country including the cities of Blagoevgrad, Botegrad, Etropole, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Haskovo, Lom, Pazardzhik, Rousse, Sevlievo, Smolyan, Shumen, Svishtov, Veliko Turnovo, Vidin, Vratsa as well as the underserved regions of Madan and Kurdzhaly. Thirty eight of the applicants were female and nine male. Five candidates were of Turkish origin, one – Romanian and one - Roma. Of the forty seven USAP applicants twenty three were recommended for interviews.

The interviews were conducted on 11 February, 2008. The binational interviewing committee consisted of Dr. Julia Stefanova, Executive Director of the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission and Anthony Miranda, Cultural and Educational Attaché of the US Embassy. All the candidates were of a very high quality and it was not easy for the nomination committee to select the best and most deserving from among such an impressive pool of candidates.

The following USAP candidates for AY 2009-10 were nominated by the Interviewing Committee:

BLAGOEVGRAD

Elena Kiro Davcheva

"St. Clement of Ohrid" Foreign Language High School

GORNA ORYAHOVITSA

Yanitsa Yordanova Petkova

"Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" Foreign Language High School, Veliko Turnovo

LOM

Nikolay Marinov

"Yordan Radichkov" Foreign Language High School, Vidin

MADAN

Mediha Ahmedova Yusmenova

"Otets Paisii" High School

PAZARDZHIK

Georgi Kardzhaliysky

"Konstantin Velichkov" High School of Mathematics



USAP class

ROUSSE

Darin Emilov Grozdev

"Geo Milev" English Language High School

SHUMEN

Dyanko Todorov Yovchev

"Nancho Popovich" High School of Mathematics and Natural Science

SOFIA

Daniel Kirchov Nikolov

"Paisii Hilendarski" Sofia High School of Mathematics

Albena Georgieva Nikolova

National School for Ancient Languages and Cultures "Constantin Ciril Philosoph"

SVISHTOV

Velislava Nikolaeva Georgieva

"Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" Foreign Language High School, Veliko Turnovo

VRATSA

Goryana Georgieva Stoichkova

"Joan Ekzarch" English Language School

We strongly hope that the finalists will make the best use of the unique USAP opportunity and we wish them all a very successful and rewarding USAP experience.

Fulbright Office News

Extending Outreach of The Fulbright Program in Bulgaria

In promoting the Fulbright program in Bulgaria, educational adviser Snezhana Teneva and the Fulbright coordinators Cheresha Chelebieva, Roumyana Petrova, and Anna Georgieva presented the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission at the QS World MBA Fair in Sofia (March 11, 2008), the Educational Fair in Sofia (March 14-16, 2008) and the 2008 Career Fairs in the cities of Sofia, Varna, Blagoevgrad, Rousse, Svishtov, Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, and Veliko Turnovo (March-April, 2008). They provided ample information about the educational system in the US, the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission's activities, the Fulbright program and the 2009-2010 Fulbright grants competition. The events presented a great opportunity for over 1,000 students, scholars, parents, educators, international relations officers, scholarship administrators, career officers, and others interested in international education professionals to find out more about studying in the US.

Outreach activities also included meetings of educational adviser Snezhana Teneva with students at "Geo Milev" English Language High School in Bourgas and "Leonardo Da Vinci" Foreign Language High School in Dobrich, as well as training for new Fulbright coordinators in Bourgas, Varna and Dobrich.

With Bulgaria's recent accession to the European Union more and more European colleges and universities are coming to our country to recruit students. Therefore, it is very important to use every opportunity to underline the advantages and benefits of higher education in the United States.



Presentation at "Leonardo Da Vinci" Foreign Language High School in Dobrich



The Fulbright booth at the Educational Fair in Sofia



Cultural Enrichment Activities for U.S. Fulbright Grantees

Trip to Bansko, 9 February, 2008

BULGARIAN-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE 2009 - 2010 FULBRIGHT GRANTS COMPETITION

The Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange is pleased to announce the 2009-2010 competition for:

- Fulbright Senior Scholar Grants – five months for research and lecturing
- Fulbright Graduate Study Grants – ten months for Masters' and Ph.D. programs
- International Fulbright Science and Technology Ph.D. Awards – five years for Ph.D. programs
- Fulbright – University of Oklahoma Grant – two years for an MBA program
- Tuck School of Business MBA Scholarships – ten months for an MBA program
- Fulbright - Thanks to Scandinavia Institute Grant – ten months for a Master's program
- Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowships – ten months for mid-career professional development
- Research Scholarship for the Study of Civil Society, joint with the Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe – three to five months research study

University professors, researchers, university graduates and mid-career professionals are invited to compete for the respective programs.

All candidates will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Applicants must be Bulgarian citizens (green card holders and persons with double citizenship are ineligible).
- Applicants must be proficient in English.
- Applicants for graduate study grants must present valid scores on the American standardized tests TOEFL and GRE/ GMAT.
- Applicants for Hubert Humphrey fellowships must present a valid TOEFL score.
- Applicants for graduate study grants must hold a Bachelor's degree.
- Applicants for senior scholar grants must hold a doctoral degree.
- Applicants for Hubert Humphrey fellowships must have a minimum of 5 years of professional experience.
- Applicants must be in sound health.

Persons desiring or holding permanent residence in the United States and students already studying there are ineligible to apply for Fulbright awards.

FULBRIGHT LANGUAGE TRAINING CENTER

offers preparation courses for TOEFL, IELTS, SAT, GRE, GMAT and English at all levels.

Sofia 1504, 1 Panayot Volov Street, floor 2, tel. 944 04 41, e-mail: studycenter@fulbright.bg

Deadline for Fulbright and Hubert Humphrey Grants: September 3, 2008

Deadline for Science and Technology Ph.D Awards: June 2, 2008

More information can be obtained at www.fulbright.bg and at the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission
Sofia 1000, 17, Alexander Stamboliiski Blvd., 1st floor, Rooms #9, #15, tel. 980 8212 or 981 6830, visiting hours: Monday-Friday 2:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.

FULBRIGHT INTERNATIONAL SUMMER INSTITUTE 2008

August 11-23, Tryavna, Bulgaria

The Fulbright International Summer Institute (FISI) is an academic and cultural program created by the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission in 2002. FISI offers one- and/or two-week intensive courses in a wide variety of subject areas. All courses are taught in English by distinguished professors from the U.S., Europe and Bulgaria, and are addressed to undergraduate and graduate students, university faculty and professionals. This year FISI is scheduled to take place from August 11 to August 23 in Tryavna. Prospective participants have the unique opportunity to make their own selection of courses. A tentative program with brief course descriptions and biographical notes for the lecturers is posted on FISI website (www.fisi-bg.info). Applicants can choose between the following courses:

Business, Economics and Management

Course 1: Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

Lecturer: Prof. George Siedel, University of Michigan, Business School, MI, USA

Course 2: Modern Microeconomics and the Behavior of the Firm

Lecturer: Prof. Ann Fender, Gettysburg College, PA, USA

Course 3: Managing Money, Investing, and Financial Planning

Lecturer: Prof. Chenchuramaiah Bathala, Cleveland State University, OH, USA

Course 4: Starting a Small Business

Lecturer: Prof. William Heath, Graceland University, USA

Course 5: Creativity and Entrepreneurship

Lecturer: Ivailo Iliev, Encounter Ltd., Sofia, Bulgaria

Course 6: Time Management, a Catalyst for Stress Reduction

Lecturer: Dr. Kent Hjelmstad, University of North Dakota, ND, USA

Course 7: Projects Writing and Projects Management

Lecturer: Danaïl Danov, Media Development Center, Sofia, Bulgaria

Course 8: International Career Planning In a Globalized Economy

Lecturer: Dr. Gary L. Schnellert, University of North Dakota, ND, USA

Law

Course 9: D.A.R.E. --- Debate. Argue. Reason. Examine.

Lecturer: David M. Korn, Phelps Dunbar LLP, LA, USA

Course 10: What You Need To Know About the American Legal System To Do Business with the United States

Lecturer: Prof. Sherman L. Cohn, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington DC, USA

Course 11: Human Rights, Migration Law and Citizenship Issues

Lecturer: Dr. Alla Yastrebova, Moscow State University, Russia

Politics and International Relations

Course 12: American Foreign Policy and the International System in the Age of Globalization

Lecturer: Prof. Mark Kramer, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

Course 13: Decision-Making and Foreign Policy: Southeast Europe in the Trans-Atlantic Relations

Lecturers: Dr. Dinko Dinkov, University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria, and Stoyan Stoyanov, The George Washington University, Washington D.C., USA

Course 14: Contact-Conflict Zones in SE Europe

Lecturer: Dr. Benedict De Dominicis, American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Course 15: Russia Today: Nationalism and the State in Post-Soviet Politics

Lecturer: Dr. Roger F. Pajak, General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems, VA, USA

Communication and Media

Course 16: Global Communication for Global Students: Intercultural Competence and Skills for Students on the Road to Global Success

Lecturer: Dr. Noemi Marin, Florida Atlantic University, FL, USA

Course 17: Communicating for Impact in Business and the Professions

Lecturer: Dr. Jeffrey Smith, University of Southern California, CA, USA

Course 18: Understanding the Media: The Cornerstones of the Effective Communication

Lecturer: Dr. Madeleine Danova, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

Course 19: Public Relations: It Can Make or Break an Organization
Lecturer: Prof. Dan Fellner, Arizona State University, AZ, USA

Science and Technology

Course 20: Web 2.0 4 U: How Do We Handle Information Technologies for the 21st Century
Lecturer: Dr. Plamen Miltenoff, St. Cloud State University, MN, USA

Social and Cultural Studies

Course 21: The West and the Others: Western Views of Other Cultures and Civilizations, from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era
Lecturer: Dr. Diego Lucci, American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Course 22: The Roots of the Modern Global Experience
Lecturers: Dana Goodrich, Northwest Vista College, TX, USA

Course 23: Logic in Continental Tradition
Lecturer: Dr. Alexander Gungov, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

Course 24: Myth-Making in History
Lecturer: Dr. Evelina Kelbecheva, American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Course 25: Europe's Energy Future: Geopolitics, Consumerism, and Threat of System Collapse
Lecturer: Dr. Mark Carper, University of Alaska Anchorage, AK, USA

Course 26: The Art of Seeing (Honing an artistic vision; capturing an idea with a click)
Lecturer: Martha Grenon, freelance photographer and graphic designer, Austin, TX, USA

Bulgarian Studies

Course 27: Bulgarian Folk Music
Lecturer: Dr. Hristo Krotev, American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Course 28: Introduction to Bulgarian Culture (history, politics, economy, folklore, literature and the arts)
Lecturers: Team

Deadline for applications: May 25, 2008

If you want to participate in this event, please visit www.fisi-bg.info for practical information and application forms.

You can also obtain general information from:

Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange

17, Alexander Stamboliiski Blvd.; Sofia 1000, Bulgaria, Tel.: +359 2 980 82 12; E-mail: rkaneva@fulbright.bg

Nominations for 2008-2009 Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program

Principal candidates:

1. Mariela Stoilova – *Teacher of English, "Bertolt Brecht" Language School, Pazardzhik*
2. Velina Draganova – *Teacher of English, 81st school "Victor Hugo", Sofia*

Alternate candidate:

Vanya Ivanova – *Teacher of English, Technical School of Computer Technologies and Systems, Pravets*

To Chicago and Back

Dr. Lyubima Despotova-Toleva is an assistant professor at the Medical University in Plovdiv. She is working on an "E-Medicine" project funded by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. As a Fulbright scholar in 2007, Dr. Despotova-Toleva conducted research at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).



Dr. Lyubima Despotova-Toleva and Dr. Allen Lerner, Chair of International Relations Department, UIC (University of Illinois at Chicago)

На проф. Мария Серато с уважение и благодарност

Беше февруари. Зима. Студена и ветровита. Град, наречен "ветровит". Толкова студено, че езерото бе замръзнало. Толкова ветровито, че почти ме отнасяше. Самолетът закъсна. Много. Мен ме чакаха. Посрещнаха ме сърдечно, с топлина и грижа. В уютен дом. На тази нова за мен земя от първите минути аз не се почувствах чужденец.

Преди години един уважаван от мен професор, изключително деен, ангажиран и приемащ присъще професионалното израстване на младите лекари – проф. Боснев, ме запозна с проф. Мария Серато. Тя идваше на нашите конгреси в България. Имах удоволствието да я съпровождам и да и покажа Старинния Пловдив. С нетърпение я чаках да дойде отново. Бях поласкана от поканите ѝ да я посетя в Университета на Илинойс в Чикаго. Признавам, не вярвах, че ще имам такава възможност. Аз съм лекар, а за лекарите е трудно, почти невъзможно да спечелят изследователска или преподавателска стипендия за Съединените щати. Разбира се, знаех за възможностите, които предоставя програмата Фулбрайт, но моята област е медицината. През годините на моята работа в интензивен сектор все повече и съвсем естествено се интересувах от приложението на информационните технологии – та нали интензивната медицина е най-рано и най-високо технологизираната и компютъризирана област на медицината! Някои проблеми залегнаха в първия ми дисертационен труд, в разработките, спечелили два конкурса за финансиране на проекти към фонд "Научни изследвания" на Министерството на образованието и науката. Окуражена от проф. Серато, реших да представя своята идея в българския офис на програма

Фулбрайт. Бях изненадана и, естествено, щастлива да спечеля изследователската стипендия.

Няма лесно начало. Бях готова да ми е трудно. А ме обгърнаха с внимание, закрила и разбиране. Проф. Серато ми бе приготвила чудесни условия за работа – просторен и светъл кабинет с всички удобства за работа, с невероятен изглед към изгрева, езерото и даунтаун. Даде ми сигурност и спокойствие. Отвори вратите на университета и болницата пред мен. Трябваше само да кажа, какви интереси имам, какво бих искала да видя, да посетя, да науча. Цялото време беше за мен – да мисля, да чета, да пиша, да почивам, да се разхождам, да се наслаждавам на компанията на моите домакини. Правех това, което ми беше интересно, посещавах конгреси, семинари, симпозиуми, организирах програмата си според моите желания. Естествено, човек се разглезва в подобни удобства – колежът, университетската болница, библиотеката, спортния център, ресторанта са на крачка разстояние, не е необходимо да излизам на снега. Наистина перфектни условия за работа. И за отдих. Чикаго е красив град. Сезоните се оглеждат и отразяват в езерото – очарователно различни – суровата зима, ведрата пролет, прелестното лято..... А какъв ли е цвета и вкуса на есенното езеро, на есенния вятър?

Повярвайте, времето не ми стигна да изпълня всичко замислено, защото, нали знаете, апетитът идва с яденето. Но за мен удоволствието да даваш винаги е било по-голямо от това да получаваш. Реших наред с изследователската работа да се опитам да допринеса и аз за разширяване на академичния

обмен между нашите университети и страни. И отново срещнах разбиране и подкрепа от проф. Серато. С нейно съдействие и със помощта на отдела за международно сътрудничество към университета организирахме посещение на нашия заместник ректор по международно сътрудничество и евроинтеграция в Чикаго. Програмата беше доста напрегната – ежедневни срещи и изключително полезни разговори с нашите колеги от различни отдели – международен, изследователски, финансов. Не пропуснахме и най-интересното – клиничната работа. Точно тогава се провеждаха първите демонстрации на хирургичен робот. Посетихме и лабораториите за виртуална медицинска реалност и се запознахме с проектите, разработвани в тях. Резултатите не закъсняха. Със дейната подкрепа на проф. Серато взаимното ни разбиране и сходни интереси се материализираха в подписан в кратък срок договор за двустранно сътрудничество между нашите два университета. Статусът ми на фулбрайтов изследовател също допринесе за това добро годишна сътрудничество. Сега се стремя да реализирам своята нова идея – успешен Атлантис проект, за какъвто имаме пълната подкрепа и заявено партньорство от нашите колеги в Университета на Илинойс в Чикаго. Атлантис е нова чудесна възможност за образователно сътрудничество, открила се пред моята страна след присъединяването ѝ към Европейския Съюз.

Извън своите така да се каже тяснопрофесионални интереси, за мен Чикаго бе интересен и като града с най-голямата българска емигрантска общност. Имах възможност да се срещна със свои сънародници – колеги, студенти,

познати и непознати. Истинска изненада за мен се оказа българската преса, издавана в САЩ. Най-големия български седмичник “България”, издаван в Чикаго, отпразнува своята пета годишнина. С удоволствие написах няколко статии, които бяха отпечатани веднага и предизвикаха неочакван за мен интерес от читателите. С удоволствие ще напиша и други. Усетих и разбрах, че те имат значение за моите сънародници, някои от които ми се обаждат за повече информация.

За съжаление денонощието има само 24 часа, а моите колеги математици и физици все още не са изобретили “времевърт”. Краткият престой не ми позволи да приключя напълно планираната работа. Академичните ми задължения след завръщането ми съществено забавиха темповете, с които възнамерявах да приключя разработката си у дома. Но натрупаните материали, знания и умения се оказаха като градините в английски колеж – между цветята се появява старинна врата, мамеща да я отвориш и те отвежда в тайна прекрасна градина, още по-привлекателна с това, че някъде в нея е скрита друга врата. И те отвежда на неподозирани възшебни места.

И Фулбрайт е врата – към нови идеи, виждания, приятели и срещи. Не само отлична възможност за изследователска или преподавателска работа - Фулбрайт означава нов опит, нов поглед върху обичайното, нови възможности, нови хоризонти. Мъдри хора от изток преди хилядолетия са осъзнали, че не целта е важното, а пътя. Фулбрайт стана много специален за мен етап от пътя, по който вървя.



БЪЛГАРО-АМЕРИКАНСКА КОМИСИЯ ЗА ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЕН ОБМЕН

УЧЕБНИЯТ ЦЕНТЪР КЪМ КОМИСИЯ "ФУЛБРАЙТ" ПРЕДЛАГА:

- Английски език всички нива по системата New Headway
- Курсове за подготовка за TOEFL iBT, NEW SAT, GRE, GMAT
- Курсове по бизнес английски и бизнес кореспонденция
- Разговорен курс за програмата Work & Travel
- Компютърна самоподготовка за TOEFL, SAT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT

БЕЗПЛАТНИ УСЛУГИ ЗА КУРСИСТИ:

- Регистрация за тестовете TOEFL, GRE, GMAT
- English speaking club with native speakers
- Безплатни 10 часа компютърна самоподготовка
- Отстъпки от цените при записване на повече от 1 курс
- Консултации за обучение в САЩ
- Библиотека с учебна и справочна литература

За информация: София 1504, ул. Панайот Волов 1, етаж II, тел. 944 0441, E-mail: studycenter@fulbright.bg

www.fulbright.bg

Out of America

Roz Andronescu, Fulbright exchange teacher
"Joan Ekzarh" Foreign Language High School, Vratsa



Me! The mountain woman!

From the foothills of the Rockies, to the foothills of the Balkans. From the flowing Columbia River to the flowing Iskar. From the City of Roses to the Land of Roses. Portland, Oregon and Vratsa, Bulgaria have so much in common -- and yet couldn't be more different. As a Fulbright Exchange Teacher, I feel blessed to have a full teaching year to explore both the similarities and differences of these two cities.

The restaurants of Portland pride themselves on serving locally grown produce and organic fare. The wines of Oregon have also become famous in the last decade as more and more wineries spring up in the rolling rural; pastures outside of Portland.

Vratsa, too prides itself on its winemaking. October and November finds oak barrels for sale by the roadsides and on street corners -- along with mounds of grapes labeled "merlot", "chardonnay" and several unfamiliar names as well.

Every meal eaten in a "typical" Bulgarian restaurant is freshly prepared -- mostly from organic, local goods. If watermelon is not in season -- you will not find it on the menu. Very little produce is "imported" to Vratsa -- unless you consider the regional villages an import!

Portland prides itself on its independence and diversity. "Keep Portland Weird" is its motto. Perhaps Vratsa wouldn't want to be known as "weird", but it certainly takes pride in being itself -- a town with "beautiful nature", several modern grocery stores and people who know one another almost like a small family. The people here take pride in their culture and happily teach newcomers their own special view on things.

But, Vratsa, like most of Bulgaria, is homogenous. With the exception of Romas and a very small group of immigrants, all of Bulgaria is the same. As an American teacher, it is strange for me to teach to a uniform classroom. Discussing diversity and tolerance is as challenging as physics! There are no living examples to draw from. As my Bulgarian students sit wide-eyed, I tell them tales of Native Americans, explain that "nigger" is an

inappropriate term (a strange dialectical Bulgarian blunder) and discuss how many different Asian cultures have made eating in Portland restaurants a culinary adventure. I ponder the idea that Bulgaria might diversity in the years ahead now that the country is an official part of the EU. Currently, the only "foreigners" flocking to settle here in any sizeable number are from Great Britain -- not much diversity there, it would seem.

Focusing on the future of my students, I find differences as well. The high school students in Vratsa dream of studying and/or settling abroad. So many of them voice their frustration in the government and future of this country. When teachers went on strike this year for high wages, and to move democracy forward -- a harsh lesson was learned and the students were vindicated. The strike failed miserably -- both teachers and students the big losers.

ON the other hand -- Portland is flourishing. Small businesses abound. Young people are moving to Portland in droves. Social awareness is strong and people, not resigning themselves to fate, move for social justice.

One of my goals as a teacher here in Vratsa will be to educate my students about the goodness democracy can bring -- and how individual citizens can make a difference. Sadly, only some 20% of Vratsa turned out to vote last month for the important Mayoral election. Teaching my students to take part in politics so they can help to make a change is an overwhelming task. Teaching them what a social action group can do, what it means to truly volunteer, to think about small businesses as viable options -- of this can help make their lives what THEY want them to be!

Teaching by exchange is a much more daunting job, but one that profits both teacher and student in very rich ways. Sharing ideas -- both the similar and the diverse -- is the fertile ground for growth. I only hope I can plant a few seeds -- and share my own new growth when I return.