

CAN A CLOWNFISH GET YOU INTO COLLEGE?

Official Newsletter of the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission



Yes, it can – and not just any college, but the Ivy League! Read EducationUSA student Eleonor Spasova's tips for US university applications to find out more (no finding Nemo necessary). And that's not all we have for you this edition: US Fulbright student in archeology Tyler Lecours talks about ancient colonialism and gives us a sneak peek at the artefacts he has discovered, which are already on display at the National Archeology Museum. Ashod Derandonyan, our first deaf Fulbright/Thanks to Scandinavia graduate student at Gallaudet University, shares highlights from his experience – which included organizing the first-ever visit to Bulgaria by Gallaudet President Roberta Cordano!

On a more somber note, February 24, 2024, marked two years from the start of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Yet true to the Fulbright motto that sees educational exchange as an "avenue of hope," we had the honor of partnering with Fulbright Ukraine to organize the exhibition "Ukraine: War and Resistance." Find out more about the exhibition below, which was attended by VIPs from the governmental, civil and cultural sectors.

We wish all our Fulbright Bulgaria friends and partners a healthy, happy and peaceful spring!



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HIGHLIGHTS

An “Avenue of Hope” through Dark Times

With the beginning of Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine, a cohort of Fulbright photographers, both Ukrainians and Americans, found themselves at the epicenter of momentous events equipped with their own weapons of defense: knowledge and a camera. Ukraine: War and Resistance presents the works of Fulbrighters J.T. Blatty, Oleksii Furman, Brendan Hoffman, Serhii Korovayny, Joseph Sywenkyj, Emine Ziyatdinova, and Oksana Parafeniuk, a former employee of the Fulbright Program in Ukraine.

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BULGARIAN GRANTEES

A Beacon of Change for the Bulgarian Deaf Community

Ashod Derandonyan’s journey is a testament to resilience and empowerment. Having lost his hearing at two, he navigated a world devoid of inclusive policies for deaf people. His journey from facing educational barriers to being the first deaf student at the American University in Bulgaria illuminates the path of overcoming adversity.

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"We believe and hope that this project helps not only Ukraine, but also the countries and communities which support it."

MARIIA KRAVCHENKO
PROGRAM OFFICER,
FULBRIGHT UKRAINE



**U.S. GRANTEES**

Colonial Encounters of an Ancient Kind

A Canadian-American graduate student in Classical and Early Mediterranean Studies at Brandeis University, Tyler is this year's recipient of Fulbright Bulgaria's joint archaeological research grant with Balkan Heritage Foundation. To say his work has gone well would be an understatement – several of the artefacts he helped excavate are already on display at the National Archeological Museum!

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How a Clownfish Helped Me into the Ivy League: My Way to Wharton

Opportunity Funds Program participant Eleonor Spasova shares her remarkable journey to UPenn that includes a clownfish and a whole lot of hard work! Her inspirational story and tips to future university applicants testify to the amazing success of EducationUSA Bulgaria's flagship programs – the Virtual Group Advising Program and the Opportunity Funds Program.

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