

## FINAL NOMINATIONS FOR BULGARIAN FULBRIGHT GRANTEES IN AY 2005-2006



### Fulbright Interview, October 18, 2004

Members of the nomination committee: (from left to right) Prof. Dr. Georgi Chobanov, Sofia University; Matthew R. Lussenhop, Counsellor for Public Affairs of the U.S. Embassy and member of the Fulbright Commission Board; Prof. Dr. Julia Stefanova, Executive Director of the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission and Dr. Chenchuramaiah Bathala, U.S. Fulbright lecturer.

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This year the Fulbright Commission received 45 valid applications from Bulgarian candidates for Fulbright scholarships in a variety of research and academic fields. Thirty-nine of them were recommended for interviews: twenty-two were in the graduate students category, fifteen – in the senior scholar category and two were for Hubert Humphrey fellowships. Twenty-three of the candidates were female and twenty-two male. Twenty-seven applicants were from Sofia and eighteen came from different parts of the country. The range of fields in ranked order was as follows: law, business administration, history, physics.

The Fulbright Commission Board nominated the following applicants for Fulbright scholarships and Hubert Humphrey fellowships in ranked order:

**SENIOR SCHOLARS:**

**Principal candidates:**

1. Diana Popova – applied linguistics (Bulgarian language)
2. Albert Krastanov – biotechnology
3. Stanislav Lilov – physics
4. Sonya Ilieva – chemistry
5. Magdalena Elchinova – anthropology
6. Nadya Boyadjieva – international relations

**Alternate candidates:**

1. Milcho Tzvetkov – astronomy
2. Vesselin Alexandrov – meteorology
3. Kiril Tenekedjiev – mathematics

**GRADUATE STUDENTS:**

**Principal candidates:**

1. Alexandra Baryakova – law
2. Denitsa Beyazova – law

3. Traicho Traikov – BA (Oklahoma grant)
4. Peter Petkanov – BA
5. Nina Mocheva – law
6. Radoslava Leseva – computer science
7. Stoyan Stoyanov – international relations
8. Adriana Hristova – law

**Alternate candidates:**

1. Nikolai Bebov – law
2. Maria Hristova – economics
3. Georgui Tzvetkov – law
4. Dobrina Kavardjikova – international affairs

**HUBERT HUMPHREY FELLOWSHIP**

**Proposed finalists:**

1. Albena Bangieva – law/finance
2. Teodora Krumova – law

**TEACHER EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

1. Silviya Draycheva
2. Anastasiya Voyvodova

**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 Impressions

### BULGARIA AND THE NEW CHALLENGES OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY

Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar in Bulgaria, July 11–August 9, 2004

#### TRANSITION

Shelley Friend, Speech Communication Instructor,  
Northwest Vista College, Texas

Transition. Everybody's in it. Nobody likes it. In fact, as I am preparing this article, I am constantly focused on the issue of transition. I am worried that my own transitions between paragraphs will be



awkward. I am apprehensive about how I will implement the project effectively and appropriately. As I try to understand my personal transition back

into the U.S., I wonder if I am worthy of representing the beauty of Bulgaria to my students and family.

Everyone I know is in a transition of some sort or another. My older daughter is in transition in her major about to finish college and enter the "real world." My younger daughter is approaching her final years of high school wondering where she'll go to college and what she will study. My husband and I are about to enter a new decade of life, another category on the demographic scale, an age when they start sending you magazines like *Modern*



*Maturity*, information on early retirement incentives and burial plots. The good news is we may qualify for the “early bird special,” at restaurants and discounts at movie theaters. Even my grumpy old dog, Cocoa, is in transition, and that may be the toughest one of all for our family. There’s nothing anyone can do about transitions, or is there?

Nothing I know lasts in perpetuity, except the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission. In my opinion, it is one of the finest expenditures of the U.S. government, and I’m privileged to have been connected with the program over the summer.

When I first read about the Fulbright-Hays Summer Institute in Bulgaria, I was fascinated. The wording of the program piqued my curiosity about the country, the culture and the people. It sounded welcoming and friendly. I believed the Bulgarian program and I would be a perfect match, and we were.

As a speech communication instructor at one of the fastest growing community colleges in the United States, my areas of interest include interpersonal, organizational, family, and intercultural communication. While I’ve traveled quite a bit, I’ve rarely had the opportunity to become immersed in a culture for an extended period of time. So, this was an extraordinary opportunity. My hope was to share what I learned with the, literally, hundreds of students I work with every year, and broaden their view of the world.

One of my key goals in applying for the Fulbright was to immediately bring the experience back into the classroom. I met Antonya Hristova, a Bulgarian teacher, at the Teacher’s Conference in July and instantly started discussing the possibility of creating a classroom project. She teaches seniors at the German Language High School and was not only open to, but enthusiastic about, designing a project together. The purpose was to establish an intercultural interaction between our students with the goal of supporting their core curriculum objectives.

I teach a collaborative course at Northwest Vista College called *Sociologically Speaking*. It is a

combination of the introductory sociology and speech communication courses. My Sociology colleague, Kara Paige Lopez, and I developed the curriculum for our course that would include a partnership with Antonya’s students. Each U.S. student has a Bulgarian “E-Pal,” and each group of five students has a specific topic to explore via e-mail. They have been researching their issue from the U.S. perspective and intend to ask their partners about the Bulgarian perspective. The broader goal of the project is to enhance intercultural exchange and learn about sociological issues in the U.S. and Bulgaria.

Our students prepared a formal Poster Presentation which was shown at Northwest Vista College on October 20, 2004. The topics of exploration follow:

### **Bul-Tex: Partners in Learning**

- **Communication**
  - Language,
  - Nonverbal communication,
  - Slang terms,
  - Manners,
  - Contextual changes,
  - Evolution of communication patterns since the transition in 1989.
- **Culture**
  - food, fashion, fun,
  - traditions, beliefs, attitudes, values,
  - Popular culture and Art, music
  - Customs and rituals,
  - Influence of U.S. Culture on Bulgaria,
  - Influence of U.S. Media on Bulgaria.
- **Education**
  - Schools,
  - Languages
  - Changes in system,
  - Funding,
  - Adult education,
  - Drop out rates,
  - Standards,
  - Accessibility,
  - Public v. private systems,
  - Styles of teaching.

- **Family**
  - Children,
  - Youth,
  - Family Identities,
  - Aged,
  - Women's Rights and Roles,
  - Marriage & divorce,
  - Death,
  - Religion.
- **Globalization issues**
  - Population changes (immigration/emigration),
  - Demography,
  - Urbanization,
  - Economic system since 1989 (transition to democracy),
  - Types of Jobs,
  - Wages,
  - Global Citizenship and migration issues,
  - Security Studies,
  - Outsourcing and In-sourcing.
- **Health**
  - Problems and concerns,
  - Life expectancy,
  - Medical system structure and issues,
  - Diseases,
  - Costs,
  - Ethical issues ( ex: euthanasia),
  - Environmental issues (ex: smoking, pollution).
- **Political structure**
  - Government,
  - Political Parties,
  - Parliament,
  - European Union,
  - Legislation and Judicial System,
  - National and local entities; voter turnout; military, war in Iraq; Palestinian/Israeli Conflict.

- **Race and Ethnic Relations**

- Minorities, Roma, Turks,
- Special populations,
- Volunteer efforts,
- Citizenship and social responsibility,
- Hate crimes against minorities.

In November, students will give an individual informative speech on a specific topic related to their group issue. Each group will also present a persuasive appeal to the class linking a critical issue in their topic area to how the U.S. is perceived in Bulgaria. We also hope to engage in a video-conference with Antonya's class later on in the semester.

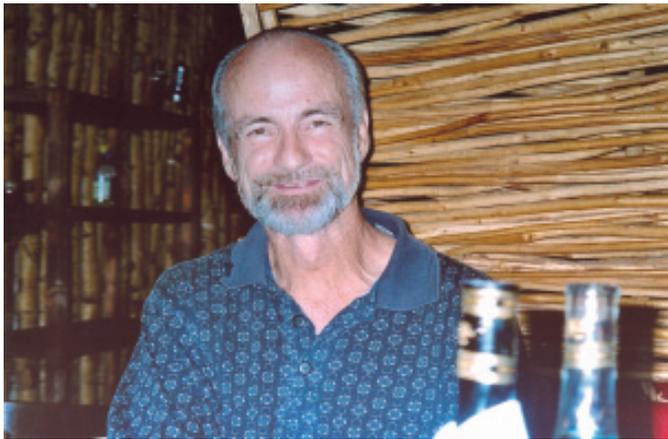
As my students face their own transitions to becoming more educated adults, I am grateful to my dear friends in Bulgaria who shared their struggles and stories, and to the Bulgarian students who so generously gave their ideas and opinions.

There has also been a physical transition between Bulgaria and me. I shared a story with some students I met at the Fulbright International Summer Institute. They were interested in hearing that when my daughter, Sarah, was born in Colorado twenty years ago, my father sent me a box of dirt from Texas. He instructed me to place it under the birthing table because he wanted his first granddaughter to be "born on Texas soil." They immediately recognized the symbolism of such a gesture and, as I left Pamparovo for Sofia on my last day of the conference, they presented me with a precious container of Bulgarian soil. I intend to spread some of the soil on our campus, and in my own yard, so I will always have a piece of Bulgaria growing in the land near me, and in my heart. After all, isn't that what the Fulbright is all about?



## COLLECTED NOTES OF THE BULGARIAN EXPERIENCE

**Jimmy Clark, Instructor,  
El Paso Community College, Texas**



The Fulbright travel program to Bulgaria turned out to be a very good non-linear adventure in that the unraveling of Bulgaria's checkered past happened in lurches-some due to the history time-line and some due to insertions of present philosophies-just as the Russians found themselves on top of Greek settlements and the Romans on top of Thracian settlements.

These are some of the many realizations through immersion-encapsulated experiences as a series of gestalts, holistic realizations. Epiphanies seemed to ascend with me while climbing out of the cave of Orpheus. The river Styx added sheer slipperiness to the revelations. This was Greece, but Greece was also Thrace. The current political divisions are only momentary. The Bulgarian Fulbright-Hays program structure allowed for a kind of fitting in, experiencing the connections but then suddenly (30 days) you're out of there!

These encapsulating experiences started upon witnessing a dog standing in a square hole-that was a foundation for a small roadside building-looking intently at an uninterested man sitting on a pile of rubble. I never expected such a mental souvenir to express a viewpoint of a restructuring of what now is my understanding to be Bulgaria. I can see the

viewpoint of Bulgaria's national value system that had so carefully constructed through time mostly intact but the perspective of that national value system is rapidly becoming much more pluralistic. And it keeps compounding under its own accord as would the unfolding of the lotus blossom.

As a neophyte to Eastern Europe, the experience felt like being launched out of a sling shot. Living among evidence of history (be it though the experience was only 30, 29, 28, 27 ...days) that is



all around does not let that history so fleetingly pass but keeps it lingering in the mind as part of the soul's daily destiny. This is and was frontier. The people and the settings reflect that. This includes the remnants of not so worldly alliances gone awry. Their alliances may not have been fruitful but nonetheless are historical.

Travel through the country led me to feel like a tossed flat stone skipping across the surface of a deep pool of water. It was at first difficult to distinguish things well. The thirty day total immersion technique of the Bulgarian American Fulbright program began to reveal the depth of the history of this region of the Balkan Peninsula. The range in the history of Bulgaria is as diverse as the faces of the many Orphi to the locking in of the doctrine of the Ottoman for the long term. Christian European states too had embattled the region through soft power-language for controlling influence. The outlook was driven by language with loftier intentions that did not foresee destiny. Why exact retribution for forced decisions of the circumstance of location, location, location? Faced with national annihilation, survival is the reward. To what depth of soul does this sustained objectivity penetrate?

The Bulgarian American Fulbright Commission is a very mature program in a country of a very long and tumultuous history. The Commission brought in experts to talk to us about a wide array and enriching international topics (including the cult of cooperation for national defense) extending beyond the Balkan Peninsula. We attended close to 40 lectures, seminars, presentations and in BG words 'and so on.' Dr. Thomas Stapleton, a Fulbrighter since 1949 did put it succinctly with "the value of interdisciplinary contact is the unconscious education in other peoples' disciplines."

Panel presentations and discussions examined the cultural and social controversies of the era and their continued impact on their communities. The program inadvertently uncovered the life experiences of those who had to participate in the Regime and the effect that it had on fracturing of communities. Lectures almost always took place behind closed doors. Poets incanted their verses and expressed the awareness of the standing underground as a necessity of survival in an

oppressive era and recovery from a totalitarian state. Prime Minister Lucanov's Winter of 1990. Videnov's banks of 1996-97.

All technologies have their time and place and as a consumer, one buys a product with certain expectations of delivery. An automobile is clearly understood in its intent and function. But when one buys into an economic-philosophical system, especially one that is revolutionary, the fine print may not match the delivery. Some technologies work better and stand the greater chance of survival. Part of that is a matter of timing. The drivers are new too and some may not be good at driving anyway!

BG looks forward to EU inclusion in '07 knowing that like some of the previous alliances it is not the panacea. But I thought it was worth going to live among the consequences of that history even if it were only for 30 days. The process once again of Bulgarian nationalization is as a microcosm and a magnification of yet another national experience. Hope still lingers for wisdom in the oligarchies, the cultured ones (This is evidence of the distanced perspective of the long lived society). Bulgaria needs its extraordinary people, the best minds to direct its headlong hurling into a contemporary destiny.

The counteracting agent to globalization is human nature. To make globalization work, the communication of fundamental human behavior should take front stage. Looking back to the hunter-gatherer states of social (survival mode) development one may find that hunting groups roamed out from communities of say one hundred inhabitants. And if Robert Wright in *Nonzero* is correct, his memic assumption is that the environmental setting in which we live gets encoded into our genes. That's at least 175 generations of directed social evolution!

The fight or flight limbic system is what helped us to survive at a certain time of our 'progressive' development, but its influence too could keep groups from collectively going where we need. Without communicating the understanding of its unconscious influence upon our character and collectively as a 'human' society, misunderstood progress may short-circuit future expectations no matter how well written the descriptive contract may be.

I now understand the de-connective nature within us will fragment and separate the multifaceted lives of the global community as part of normal learned evolutionary entropy. It is human nature to attempt to describe and distinguish things well to order perceived chaos (including internationalization.) When you fight entropy, one keeps pumping in energy into a closed system and the containment becomes overloaded.

The affect of change is difficult to predict to some extent because not everything gets encoded. Each generation has to relearn the experiences of the previous generation. With the Fulbright program, the world really does have a chance to be a better place. It is easier to see objectively from afar. That's the hunter's encoding. That is a tool, part of our heritage to be used to help one another towards a pluralistic world order.

The Bulgarians are awesome, enduring people, steadfast in character. Their demeanor is a

consequence of surviving on the frontier. I enjoyed meeting the young people-high school to university. They have an air of knowing living that is fitting the global community. Young Bulgarians see themselves first as world citizens. They deserve it; they have earned it.

The Fulbright notion of promoting universal human understanding is quite a noble undertaking. I would like to thank the Bulgarian American Commission for this opportunity. It has been an illuminating experience; however, the personal internal change is still not completely comprehensible because it is difficult to look into that reflective light. Thanks again for sharing the dramatic life.

All 14 of us from across the U.S. had enough travel or experience at living on this planet to be able to get along 30, 29, 28, 27 days ...etc. Will our nature let us reach ground 0 at which the theory of Globalization can benefit all?

## RETURN TO U.S. FROM BULGARIA

**Louisa Bradford, Social Studies Department Chair,  
Birchwood High School, South Carolina**



Participating in the Fulbright-Hays summer seminar has opened my eyes to the impact of the European Union on its newest aspiring member. My group of 14 college and high school educators expected to learn about the history and culture of Bulgaria. We had lectures and presentations from some of the leading scholars of the country. However, I would have to say that learning about Bulgaria's struggles to meet the requirements for EU membership was the most revelatory.



As one political analyst described it, “try to imagine building a civil society, with all the institutions and policies necessary, in a few years with people who have been oppressed for much of their recent history”.

Since I am a social studies teacher, I was intellectually aware of the strictures of Communist policies on politics and the economy. However, actually having conversations with teachers my age about growing up with these strictures deepened my understanding. Yet, no one expressed self-pity, only eagerness to get things right, now that Bulgaria has the chance to mold itself into a progressive republic. The only troubling aspect I saw was the migration of many young people out of the country after 1989. Bulgaria has lost nearly a million people, largely due to high unemployment rates.

My greatest enjoyment during our travels was seeing the countryside. A deep feeling of peace came over me as we were driven past acres of sunflowers, herds of goats and sheep and

through the most beautiful villages I could have imagined! I will never forget these impressions:

the grapevines which draped the fronts of the houses, shading tiny front yards covered in vegetables, roses and flowers; the innumerable roadside cafes, where there was almost always a small group, sharing a coffee; and the occasional horse-drawn wagon. I loved the sense of timelessness, the feeling that the ancestors of the people I saw had lived here for ages.

I could not conclude this narrative without mentioning the monasteries and churches we visited. They were, of course, treasures. But more than that, I saw a vision of Bulgaria’s spiritual past. The numbers of reverent visitors to these holy places surely is an indication of the Bulgarian peoples’ devotion to orthodoxy. These are not just historical sites, these are places of pilgrimage, faith and hope. What these monasteries represented to the Christian faith, and to the salvation of Bulgaria, is enormous and perhaps beyond secular explanation.

Corresponding with Bulgarian friends and with the other members of my group has been joyous, but also a little sad. I miss these new friends, miss the excitement of discovering new places and the challenges of travel. I have set myself the goal of re-discovering my own state, with an idea for a book about historic churches here. Most happily, as a result of my first informal presentation about Bulgaria and the Fulbright Commission, I am helping two teachers research their applications for exchange. I know in my heart that this journey has re-energized me as a teacher.



## Fulbright Office News

### After Two Months in Bulgaria



Meeting of the U.S. Fulbright graduate students with Commission staff



### Cultural Enrichment Activities for U.S. Fulbright Grantees



One-day trip to the historic town of Koprivshtitsa

### Community College Fair



The Bulgarian Fulbright Commission assisted the American Association of Community Colleges in promoting 22 U.S. community colleges at a Community College Fair held at the Radisson Hotel in Sofia on October 12, 2004.

More than 230 students, parents, high schools principals and teachers, educational advisors and journalists, as well as representatives of the U.S. Embassy and the Consular Section visited the fair and received invaluable information on the U.S. community college system, the application process and visa procedures.

## 11<sup>th</sup> AUBG Grad School Fair



Nearly 50 students attended the advising session conducted by Fulbright educational adviser Snezhana Teneva on graduate study in the US at the 11<sup>th</sup> AUBG Grad School Fair in the town of Blagoevgrad, November 10, 2004. Thirty more visitors stopped by the Fulbright booth.

## International Education Week



Official opening of the ninth Fulbright information center in the town of Vidin



This year the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission staff marked the International Education Week (November 15–19, 2004) with the opening of its ninth local information center in the town of Vidin and the Fulbright Open Doors.

About 150 students, parents, teachers, lecturers and researchers visited the Fulbright Advising Center in Sofia during the IEW. They were consulted on the educational system in the U.S. and the opportunities to study, do research and lecture at American colleges and universities. Bulgarian students applying to U.S. universities and colleges were given the opportunity to get in contact with U.S. Fulbright graduate students and teachers, members of the Fulbright Commission staff as well as representatives of the U.S. Embassy and the Consular Section in Sofia.



Carolina Ramos from the American Embassy in Sofia giving a talk on "Visas and F and J Procedures"

## To Chicago and Back

*Sylvia Draycheva is principal of the Language School Joan Ekzarh in Vratsa. In AY 2003-2004 she was on a school administrator exchange at the Haven High School in Haven, Kansas.*



Sylvia Draycheva (to the left) with her American landlady

Going to Kansas was the most wonderful experience I had ever had in my life.

When I was fifteen I took a plane for the first time in my life to join my mother who worked in Medea, Algeria. It was magic to go to Africa, to visit such exotic places, to be witness to such strange and different from those I had been used to events.

Two years later I discovered another incredible life – western Europe-new technologies in real life, hypermarkets, urban places, historical castles, etc. It was magic again. When I went to Asia I found that the wonders on Earth never finish. During my trips, in those foreign places you can imagine what strange, wonderful, funny, happy and confusing experiences I had, can't you? That is why I am writing all this – just to make you understand how special and true my first statement is.

America is not another continent, it is another world. Spread out areas, exotic nature, high technologies, people having unbelievable beliefs and behavior. But let's start now from the beginning. After 36 hours without sleeping, changing one plane after another I reached Wichita, Kansas, where the principal of Haven High School and his wife were expecting me at midnight on that last airport. He was tall and smiling, she was short and smiling too – Terry and Tanna Fehrenbach. As I soon understood they were incredibly kind, hospitable, open-minded, natural people, loving and supporting each other, living in a large, cozy house with a garden and a back yard. Their two children were gone to live their own lives. Almost once a week we had parties in their house with many of their friends – Terry and Tanna cooking and smiling, preparing all salads of vegetables grown in their

own garden. The food was delicious and abundant but the drinks – missing – only water and tea with a lot of ice.

Going to different meetings, working lunches; visiting other families even in other states I let go one of my predictions – Americans do not drink alcohol. But they compensate eating – everywhere, all the time, except the time they work. And they work hard – never counting the working hours – work with a smile on their faces. There were 30 teachers in Haven High School – starting early in the morning (7–7:30 A.M.), teaching their subjects according to a permanent schedule every day and often leaving at 10–10:30 P.M., training their students in different sports, after 7 periods. Sport is very important. In the American schools – every single student is involved in a team and they train hard to become winners in so many competitions, tournaments etc. At the same time teachers and staff are very active and distracting themselves; they travel a lot, belong to different clubs and churches, invite friends to their place or go to their friends' place, play games, prepare barbecue parties... Most of them invited me to meet their families, to taste their favorite homemade pie.

The most fascinating person I met there was my host – Dixie Schoepp. She offered her beautiful house to me to live better than at home and prepared a list of places “compulsory” to visit. We organized American parties, Bulgarian parties; she took me to Blackwell and Bartlesville in Oklahoma state (4 hours of driving) to meet her daughter's family. She even introduced me to her ex-husband, a very famous local businessman, selling Shevies (Shevrolette) because she wanted to show me everything as if the image of the U.S.A. depended on me! Americans are proud of themselves. Every morning after a special signal they stand up and say a vow with a hand on the heart. The American students are the most disciplined in the world. They move in their huge and well-equipped school

without making any noise or throwing litter. They follow the rhythm of their daily routine trying to be as good as possible in the subjects they have chosen for the current school year. Speaking to them in the corridors or in the classrooms or in the auditorium another one of my predictions towards Americans fell down – most of them are interested in science, languages, politics, cultures, etc.

It could not be other way when adults as Mr. and Mrs. Humphrys from Great Bend exist. Mr. Humphrys – an attorney who belongs to a special club in his town invited me to present Bulgaria and the Bulgarian educational system. When I arrived there I could not reach the seat I was supposed to in front of the audience – I saw a huge Bulgarian flag hanging and words of welcome in Bulgarian. Imagine my feelings at that moment at about 10000 km from home, on the other side of the globe, those unknown people who respected me, who cared about me, who were interested in me... I just cried.

The Americans are well – raised. They try to make you feel valuable and happy. A boy from Haven school made specially for me cornbread just because he knew I had not tasted it before.

The Americans are not afraid – during my stay in Topeca – the capital of Kansas (and it was a little time after the big blackout in the eastern part of America) Terry and I felt absolutely free to enter any room in Capitol building, to sit in the chairs of the state representatives and even in the Governor's chair. Nobody checked us.

I can go on and on to share unforgettable impressions of that huge country and wonderful people although I saw just a small part of it. But I am sure I made you interested in going there. It is worth taking any opportunity to visit new places. I like this: The world is a book. When you stay in one country you read only one page. Turn the pages.



## Out of America

*Terry Fehrenbach is principal of the Haven High School in Haven, Kansas. In AY 2003–2004 he was on a school administrator exchange at the Language School Joan Ekzarh in Vratsa.*



Terry Fehrenbach (first from right to left) at a friendly dinner.

I recently completed what I consider to be an excellent administrative Fulbright Exchange with the Language School in Vratsa, Bulgaria. My exchange was the second half of the project which saw Mrs. Sylvia Draycheva spending six weeks working with me in Haven, Kansas. I believe her experience in America was also a very successful exchange.

The success of the program is based on several key points. The selection process of exchange partners was very extensive and very effective. Both Mrs. Draycheva and I had to step outside of our comfort zone. It is a big leap of faith to leave a school for six weeks and travel to the other side of the world to explore an unknown system. The Fulbright screening process was able to match two people from divergent cultures and backgrounds and create a wonderful professional experience.

I believe it is also important that the two school systems were progressive in their willingness to allow two principals to undertake such a project. Allowing the chief administrator to be absent from a building for an extended period of time placed a burden on each school but it was a burden worth bearing. The value of the exchange will be felt for many years to come as the lessons learned by each administrator are shared in their home schools and countries. I have personally had the opportunity to visit with many professionals about the program and have additional presentations scheduled for the future. I will be giving a presentation at the Kansas summer conference for secondary school principals. In excess of 150 current administrators will have an opportunity to hear of the exchange program and what I consider to be the reasons for considering applying for an exchange program.

My original intention for participating in the program was to find educational ideas in Vratsa that could be applied in my school. After four weeks in Vratsa, it became apparent that educational requirements would make it difficult to use many of the concepts used in Bulgaria. Their national curriculum is different from Kansas. The structure of teacher training and student requirements was different from Kansas. The real value of the program became more evident as I examined the culture of Bulgaria. I have been able to bring back much of that culture and share with my school, community, and state. The exchange gave my students an opportunity to experience the way of life in a foreign country in a way that is not possible in a traditional classroom setting.

During my time in Bulgaria, Mrs. Draycheva and I talked many times about ways to increase the impact of the exchange program. From the discussions, we developed the proposal to have students and teachers involved in such an

exchange. I am one person spreading the information concerning the culture of Eastern Europe. I examined the school system and the culture from an administrative point of view. How valuable would it be to have a similar program where students and teachers could explore the education system from their viewpoint. Not a day goes by that a student doesn't ask me something about my experience and the same students ask about a student exchange program. Those students would be wonderful ambassadors for the United States and I know that many of the students from Vratsa would be great representatives from Bulgaria.

The proposal that was presented to Dr. Stefanova in March outlines the purpose and rationale for such a student exchange. I believe this could be a very valuable program as it opens new opportunities for my students. It has the potential of opening up borders between our two countries and cultures that have never been opened.

**BULGARIAN-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE  
"FULBRIGHT"**

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Wednesdays 9.00 am – 1.30 pm  
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Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday 1.30 pm – 6.00 pm  
Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday 9.00 am – 1.30 pm

**INFORMATION**

**Call:** (02) 980-49-85, (02) 981-22-15  
Monday – Friday, 10.00 am – noon, 2.00 – 4.00 pm  
**Visit:** Monday – Friday 2.00 – 4.00 pm  
Sofia 1000, 17 Al. Stamboliiski Blvd., Floor I, Room 14A

## FULBRIGHT INFORMATION CENTERS IN BULGARIA

**PLOVDIV** 4000, 42 Knyaz Alexander I Str.  
Tel. +359 (32) 652 866  
Cherasha Chelebieva, Coordinator  
E-mail: fulplov@plovdiv.techno-link.com

**VELIKO TARNOVO** 5000, University of Veliko Tarnovo, Rectorate, Office 524  
Tel. +359 (62) 639 929  
Emilia Mezeva, Coordinator  
E-mail: fulbright@abv.bg

**STARA ZAGORA** 6010, Trakiiski University, 9 Armeiska Str., DIPKU, office 121  
Tel. +359 (42) 601 563  
Nedyalka Turnovska, Coordinator  
E-mail: nturnovska@abv.bg

**ROUSSE** 7013, University of Rousse, 38 Riga Str., Pedagogical Faculty, Room 510-511/A  
Tel. +359 (82) 846 106  
Assistant-Prof. Roumyana Petrova, Coordinator  
E-mail: fulbright@ru.acad.bg

**VARNA** 9000, VARNA UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - 2<sup>nd</sup> Building  
24 Evlogi Georgiev Str., Office 105A  
Tel: +359 (052) 303 265 ext. 132  
Kaloyan Kolev, Coordinator  
Email: fulbright\_varna@hotmail.com

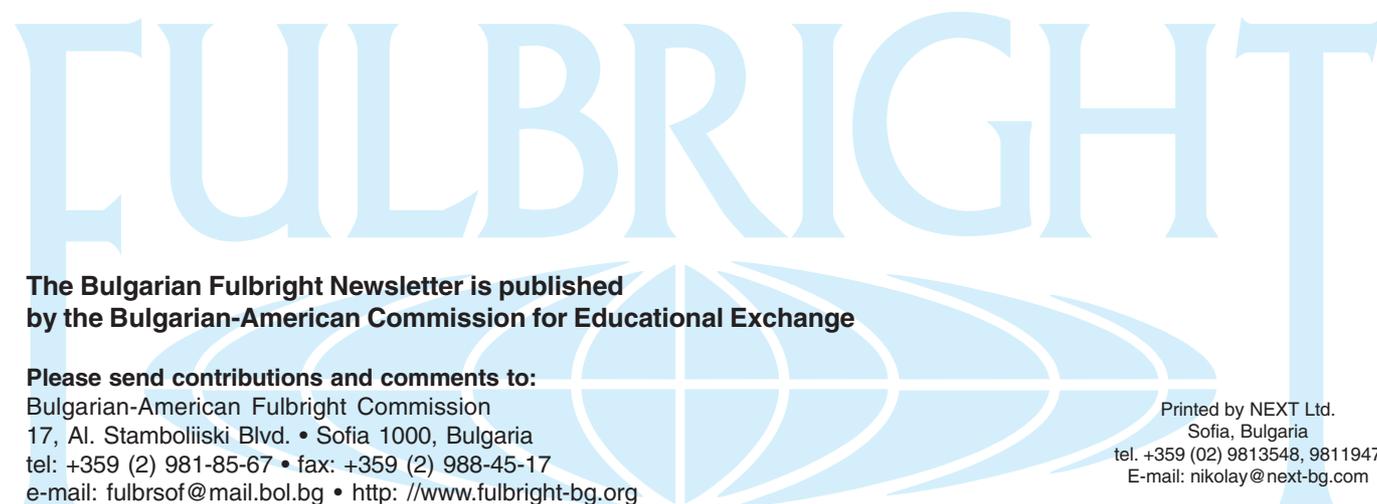
**BOURGAS** 8000, 58 Slivnitza Str., 4th Floor, Left  
Tel. +359 (56) 842 453  
Sabina Nedkova, Coordinator  
E-mail: fulbright\_bourgaz@abv.bg

**SLIVEN** 8800, TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY - Sliven, 59 Bourgasko shosse Blvd.  
Tel. 359 (44) 667 545  
Petia Kopankova, Coordinator  
Email: petia\_kopankova@yahoo.com

**VIDIN** 3700, Tsar Simeon Veliki High School, 6 Targovska Str.  
Tel: +359 (94) 606 734  
Dilyana Stefanova, Coordinator  
E-mail: fulbright\_vidin@abv.bg

**SMOLYAN** 4700, 85 Bulgaria Blvd., Office 101  
Tel. +359 (301) 63 680  
Ludmila Gospodinova Teneva, Coordinator  
E-mail: lteneva@abv.bg

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Please send contributions and comments to:  
Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission  
17, Al. Stamboliiski Blvd. • Sofia 1000, Bulgaria  
tel: +359 (2) 981-85-67 • fax: +359 (2) 988-45-17  
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