



# Notes FROM UnderGrad

FREEDOM  
SUPPORT ACT  
Undergraduate  
Program

## Open Forum

### The Nation Rose for the Revolution of Roses

The month of November is loved by Georgians as much as by Americans. Americans have Thanksgiving, whereas Georgians celebrate St. George's Day on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. This month has also come to symbolize the Georgian nation's fight for its freedoms. In November, 2001, and November, 2003, Georgians stood up for their fundamental rights to free speech and fair elections, both times succeeding. Two years ago the Cabinet of Ministers resigned; this year the president did. The people won both times.

During the last decade, Georgia accepted democracy in exchange for economic well-being. Delayed pensions, wages and unemployment plunged people into a deep despair. However, they are not there any longer.

The alleged falsification of the November 2<sup>nd</sup> election results by the government block For a New Georgia resulted in an uprising of the nation. Two week-long protests on Rustaveli Avenue demonstrated to the government and the whole world that the Georgian people are to be taken seriously. They put up with a harsh economic situation and they resisted cold, hunger and unemployment; but when the government violated their fundamental right to choose their own future, they rose up. This "revolution of roses" took place without a drop of blood. The only red color in the streets that day was that of the red roses the opposition leaders and protesters were holding as a sign of peaceful resistance.

The demonstration of over 100,000 people requesting the resignation of the president started to gather in the streets of the capital on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>. They stormed the Parliament and the State Chancellery, forcing the election riggers to flee the building. No gun fires, no fights, no blood, no brawls, only peaceful protests and the inexplicable happiness that overwhelmed Georgians the next day, when the president resigned. For Georgia, this step did not only mean the end of Shevardnadze's reign, but the end of the system that had given birth to the rampant corruption in which the country had been drowning for more than a decade.

During those days I was not in Georgia. I was attending an international conference in Vilnius, Lithuania. I recall the admiring glances of my colleagues, who could not hide their pride for the Georgian nation that had stood up against an impotent government and changed its fate through a peaceful revolution. When I arrived the next day, I could feel the aura of joy in the air, starting even at the airport. People were smiling; it looked as if they could not believe the post-Shevardnadze era was starting. The taxi driver who drove me into the city explained his feelings: "Now I feel as if the country were born again. Now we have hope and that's all that matters. We are great." He did not *have* to say anything; you saw all of these feelings on his face anyway.

*Sergi Kapanadze (2000-2001) studied at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, and is from Tbilisi, Georgia.*

*Activists in the youth movement Kmara demonstrate in Tbilisi prior to the resignation of President Shevardnadze.*

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## From the Field



Dear Alumni,

I recently visited an orphanage in a small city called Nadejdinsk, Primorskiy Krai, Russia, to take some warm clothes, candy and toys to the children. This was the first time I have done something like this. The experience was terrific, eye opening and troubling all at the same time.

I was impressed with the internal beauty of the children despite the fact (or maybe due to the fact) that they were left behind by their parents and society. They were a little scared to talk at first but then, with genuine sincerity, told me about their good moments without even mentioning anything bad about their lives. They did not mention that the kids in school refuse to talk to them; they did not mention that many of them are sick and the orphanage has no money to send them to the hospital.

Kids from orphanages usually do not study well in school; only a few of them get straight fives. Our indifferent and careless society usually labels them as "incapable." When I went to their library, I realized that it is *our society* that is incapable, as it provides them with almost no books to read. They also do not have any of the other conveniences of the twenty-first century, like access to a stereo or television. Yet, despite the fact that our materialistic society left them in poverty, they have managed to make their internal worlds wealthy and their souls flourish.

Alumni: please consider how to help this most fragile member of our society—orphans. We can not provide them with money, but we can collect our own extra books and clothes and visit these children at least once a month. If not once a month, consider that just one visit can make an orphan happy for one day, as well as inspire him to seek a better future.

I told the children that I would go back to the city and try to find someone who would teach them whatever they wanted to learn. They asked me if they could have English lessons and a dance instructor. There is no reason why we can not arrange such seminars for orphans. I feel it is a crime to turn our heads away from those who need our help. *The cry of the poor is not always just, but if you don't listen to it, you will never know what justice is.*

Sincerely,

Slava Shirokov (2001-2002)

# About THE Newsletter

Notes from UnderGrad is a forum for the FREEDOM Support Act Undergraduate community to express views and share the FSAU experience. Published three times a year, the newsletter is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and produced by American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS in conjunction with the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX).

## About the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs conducts educational and training exchange programs with Eurasia with the aim of fostering mutual understanding between the United States and the countries of Eurasia. Authorized through the Fulbright-Hays Act and the FREEDOM Support Act, the FSA Undergraduate Program is designed to foster democratization and economic development in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

## How to Participate - See yourself in Print. Here's How!

**Open Forum** | Have something to share with the FSAU community? Submit personal essays on your experience with the program, thoughts on international politics or current affairs, or statements about your academic or professional challenges. Essays should be 300 words or less.

**Point of View** | We know you have an opinion. Tell us what it is! Stay tuned for the *Point of View Question* by email and through the new list-serve groups.yahoo.com/group/NotesfromUnderGrad/. Essays should be 300 words or less. Photos strongly encouraged.

**Upward Mobility** | What have you done for yourself lately? Tell us about your promotions, participation in conferences, professional and academic achievements. Submissions should be 100 words or less.

**In the Community** | What have you done for your community? Let us know about your community service either in the U.S. or at home. Submissions should be 200 words or less.

**Photo Gallery** | A picture is worth a thousand words. Tell us your FSAU story in either electronic or hard copy photographs. We'd like to see you at alumni events, conferences and workshops, professional and community service activities. Include descriptions of the event and names of all individuals in the photo. Please send hard copy photographs with return address information so they can be returned to you.

**Websites** | Do you have an alumni website or website of interest to the FSAU alumni community? Submit your URL to the editorial committee with a one-sentence description of the site. All approved sites will be printed in upcoming issues of *Notes from UnderGrad*.

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**Did we forget something?** Submit ideas for new sections and other ideas about *Notes from UnderGrad*. The Editorial Committee will take all letters into consideration.

### Submission Guidelines

In the United States, please submit materials to ljilka@pd.state.gov or asantimore@irex.org.

In Russia and Eurasia, please submit materials to ugradalum@actr.ru or millman@americancouncils.org. **Submissions may be edited for style and language. Not all essays submitted will be printed. All submissions must include name, year of participation in program, university attended and contact information including email address.**

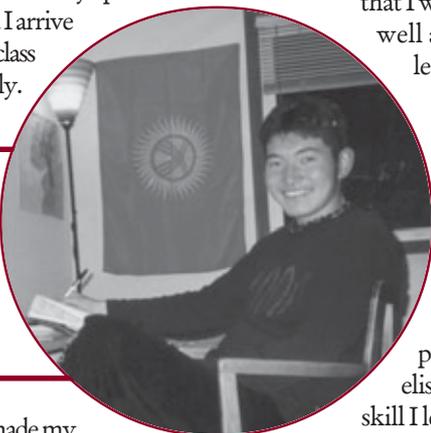
**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS  
FOR THE SPRING ISSUE:  
MARCH 15, 2004.**

## Open Forum

### About American Friendliness

It is almost 8:05 a.m. My bus is coming at 8:05 a.m. and I'm running late. I have just come out of the bushes through one of the "secret roads" between the houses that lead to Sand Point Way where I get on my favorite bus, No. 75. Coming to the road, I see the bus right across the street at the bus stop. It's leaving. I desperately shout and wave, but the bus driver does not hear me and goes on. "I'm dead!" It is my last chance to get to the college on time. I'm mad at myself. I'm nuts! Suddenly, I hear someone signaling. I turn around and see a white car. The driver tells me to get inside the car. I get in and he literally chases after the bus. It is one of the neighbors whom I never talked to! We signal at two bus stops trying to stop the bus, but it goes on. Then the man decides to go ahead of the bus and leaves me at the next bus stop. Over and over I say, "thank you very much" and "I really appreciate it," and I arrive at my morning class five minutes early.

*Kanat shows his own friendliness at his desk in Seattle, Washington.*



That man just made my day! I was indeed pleased he helped me out. He was just one of the hundreds of other people driving along Sand Point Way. And it is only one example of how friendly many Americans can be.

The very first amazing thing for me—and I bet for many other fellows too—is the famous friendliness of the American people. You can see them smile at you and say a shy little "hi!" in the most incidental places, like bus stops, streets, halls, stores and the like. They are always ready to help you every time you ask them. Honestly, it helped me very much during my first weeks of getting around the city.

It is such an amazing thing that people here can easily get involved sometimes in vigorous conversations without even knowing each other's names. You do not have to know someone or his or her name if you want to talk and share some ideas. Communication is the most important thing in this society, which is the outcome of being friendly to each other.

Where am I leading with all this? Just smiling at the people you see, asking what they think about the weather today, sharing some of your wonderful feelings and being friendly is one of the best things we can learn from Americans. It makes our already difficult and messy lives much easier and nicer. Don't you think so?

*Kanat Kalmakiev studies at North Seattle Community College in Seattle, Washington, and is from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.*

### Letter of gratitude

I would like to share with other Ugrad alumni my feeling of thankfulness to the person who greatly contributed to my academic and personal development during my program in U.S.: this is Mark A. Martinez, professor of political science at California State University in Bakersfield, and my academic advisor. With his help I realized that I was interested in international relations as well as law, my field of study at home. His lectures and guidance inspired me to conduct individual research and analysis. He is not just a professor who teaches, lectures and grades our papers; he also helps with the university's Global Affairs Club. With this club, I helped organize panel discussions on campus and fundraising campaigns. We went to a conference in Chicago to present our papers; we were the only undergraduate panelists at the conference. The most important skill I learned from Dr. Martinez is to critically approach all information and reality. He taught his students not just to read and memorize, but to analyze and discuss.

I think that without his assistance I wouldn't have had such a varied and rich experience on this program. Now that the program is over, I am working on a book about international relations theory for Moldova, in which I'd like to include the thoughts and ideas inspired by Dr. Martinez. I want to encourage all alumni to write thank-you letters to their academic advisors and stay in touch with them. I would also like to encourage all current fellows to use this opportunity to cooperate more closely with their professors and accept their help and advice, which will be extremely useful for their academic and professional development during and after the program.

*Alexandr Svetlicinii (2002-2003) studied at California State University in Bakersfield, California, and is from Balti, Moldova.*

## In the Community



### Students Simulate Homeless Life

On September 28, 2003, Shams Asgarova and Valeriya Afandiyeva participated in a community activity called the Crop Walk. With ten other students from their college, they divided into small groups, carried buckets of water and built cooking fires. The purpose of this activity was to experience life as a homeless person or refugee and to educate the community about refugee situations in the students' home countries. Valeriya commented, "For the first time in my life, I felt myself like a refugee and got a better understanding of a refugee's life position."

*Shams Asgarova and Valeriya Afandiyeva study at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina, and are from Azerbaijan.*



### Alumnus Organizes Youth Conference

Vasily Lucashevich, a student research coordinator at Altai State University, organized a student conference called "Youth in the XXI Century" for 120 young scholars from his region. The students presented the results of their research and were able to explore their findings with university faculty and peers. During the conference, Vasily organized a

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## In the Community

roundtable on “Russian Society’s Stabilization Period,” where 20 students and faculty members discussed political, economic and social aspects of the current stabilization period. The unique feature of this seminar was that it drew experts from a variety of backgrounds—law, economics, political science, history, linguistics, journalism and geography—to share ideas from different disciplines.

*Vasily Lucashevich (2001-2002) studied at the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia, and is from Barnaul, Russia.*



### Turkmen Alumni Bring Thanksgiving to Elderly Residents

Six FSAU alumni visited an old-age home in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, to share a Thanksgiving meal and an afternoon of entertainment with the residents there. The alumni cooked the dinner themselves, and after delivering the hot meal, spent the rest of the day keeping the residents company and talking about their experiences in the U.S. The residents of the old-age home expressed their gratitude and delight that the young generation still cared about them and were able to study abroad and gain a foreign experience for the “prosperity of Turkmenistan.” The alumni volunteers included Aysenem Tuyliyeva and Firuza Haitova from the 2000-2001 class, Murat Sariyev from the 2001-2002 class, and Firyuza Babayeva, Gurbanbib Meredova and Gulyalek Amannazarova from the 2002-2003 class. Firyuza Babayeva, FSAU alumni fellow, is pictured sitting with one of her new acquaintances.

## Open Forum Russian Fellow Attends Gorbachev Speech

Living in a Russian provincial town, do you think a person often has an opportunity to attend a speech of a famous political leader? I bet very rarely or never. Surprisingly, here in Alabama I had an unusual chance to listen to Mikhail Gorbachev speak about the role of political leadership in the contemporary world. The speech took place at the Coliseum at Auburn University on October 6, 2003.

Mikhail Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, is most famous for his reformation of the Russian economy, as well as political and social reform known as *perestroika*. He has also received the Nobel Peace Prize, and he continues to promote the development of solutions for global peace.

The speech was devoted mainly to the role of good leadership in today’s politics. Mikhail Gorbachev began with a quote from Winston Churchill, “A politician thinks about the next election, a statesman thinks about the future.” He said the future situation of the world depends on the current leaders. He thinks the issues of poverty and the environment are the main concerns of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He gave figures from a United Nation’s report that 2.8 billion people live on one to two dollars a day, and just one-third of the world’s population lives above poverty level.

For me, it was extremely interesting to compare my point of view on American politics with another foreign opinion, especially the opinion of the former president of my country. Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized that he opposes America’s invasion of Iraq, because it was a violation of international law. He said he supports Colin Powell’s idea that America should withdraw from Iraq. According to Mikhail Gorbachev, the domination of America over other countries is no longer effective.

Although Gorbachev now has a small amount of political power compared to when he was president, he still remains a leader with great experience, and his words must be valued.

*Polina Volkova studies at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama, and is from Izhevsk, Russia.*



*Paulina photographed former President Mikhail Gorbachev during his speech at Auburn University.*

## Azeri Youth at the Crossroads: New Opportunities in the Transition Period

The first thing people say about the new President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev is that, “he is young.” With this adjective, people attach their hopes for reform and innovation, an orientation towards Europe, modernity, technology and openness.

After a meeting I recently had, I started to wonder about the future of Azerbaijan and Azeri youth. It was a meeting of Azeri students who have studied abroad and came back to Azerbaijan to work or continue their education. Twelve young men and women were sitting at the table discussing ways to help their country. There were different proposals: to organize English language conversation hours, to conduct clean-up campaigns in the local parks, to hold a conference on economic development, to assist Parliament with legal reforms; the list goes on and on. I felt proud of these energetic and devoted young people who love their country and are trying to help it develop and prosper.

Azeri youth who have studied abroad are a powerful force. These are bright intellectuals who have learned the best of science from foreign universities, know how to think critically and analyze, and most importantly, know how to carry out reforms. In the future, these alumni will be the primary driving force of the development of the nation.

But Azerbaijan is a very diverse country. When we think of youth, we must also think of young Azeri refugees and internally displaced people who have been living in refugee camps for the last ten years. These people do not have access to good

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## Point of View

*When asked, "How well do you think the UN is fulfilling its purposes? What are some of its successes and failures over the past decade?" FSA Undergraduates responded with the following essays. The views and opinions expressed on this page are strictly those of the authors.*

### The UN Mitigates Tension and Resolves Conflicts

My first serious collaboration with the UN and familiarization with its inner structure started when I participated in the UN Forum for Young People in Kyiv in July 2003. I champion all of the UN resolutions and appreciate the UN's efforts in peace-making and in establishing stability in the hot spots of the world. I am deeply convinced that Kofi Annan plays one of the leading roles in negotiating with conflicting countries, and the UN facilitates the process of finding multilateral compromises. The UN has a code of goals and purposes and it tries to make every effort to get closer to these purposes by fulfilling certain tasks and missions.

Due to its role in the former Yugoslavia, the situation there considerably changed for the better and religious intolerance and ethnic bias have subsided. In collaboration with some other countries that help with conflict resolution, the UN is working on the Middle East crisis. I am sure the UN's common efforts have done a lot for advancing toward an ultimate diplomatic agreement. I would also specify that the UN monitors international peace-making processes and succeeds in fighting against hunger, AIDS, abuse of women and illegal immigration. It is also improving decision-making procedures in developing countries and enhancing a wide network of UN volunteers who fulfill its missions throughout the world.

At the forum, I made acquaintances with many UN volunteers who came to Ukraine to educate people about their rights, to bolster the Ukrainian economy towards a free market and to promote Ukraine's integration into the world community. In my opinion, the world community cannot function effectively and as a whole without the UN. Though the tasks and purposes that the UN sets forth cannot be fulfilled within a designated period of time because of their complexity, the UN does make gradual concrete steps to mitigate tensions and provide humanitarian aid in certain re-

gions. In complicated and thorny cases, the UN guarantees that every possible attempt will be made to involve the countries in the discussion and come to an agreeable conclusion. The UN, I think, is one of the most powerful instruments of international policy nowadays.

*Inna Volkova studies at Alma College in Alma, Michigan, and is from Lubansk, Ukraine.*

### The Post-Cold War UN: A Bright Future Or Inglorious Failure?

At the dawn of its existence, the United Nations seemed to be the only hope for the human race that had just emerged from the bloody chaos of a devastating world war. Fifty-eight years later, the UN remains the sole intergovernmental organization whose activities cover virtually every aspect of life on earth. The UN Charter was conceived as a platform for the coming generations to build a prosperous and conflict-free international community where ethnic rivalries and nationalism would have no role to play whatsoever. Today, this landmark document might appear as merely the product of wishful thinking rather than a realistic approach to international politics. Indeed, the UN has neither prevented nor solved many of the crises that have arisen since 1945. Most importantly, it was not able to stop one of the most perilous antagonisms in history—the Cold War.

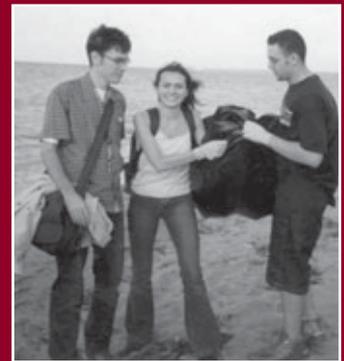
The greatest merit (and probably the worst disadvantage) of the Charter is that it is universal and all encompassing. Yet, as all political platforms and programs, the Charter could not work 100%. Does the UN effectively fulfill the articles that are embedded in its constitution? Well, it does, to the extent possible! Let us not forget that five out of six continents of our planet are divided into more than 200 nation-states, deeply in love with their sovereignty and wary of any attempts to curb their actions on both the international and local levels.



### Students Build House with Habitat for Humanity

During their pre-academic program in Bakersfield, Kseniya Chohey, Nina Farbitnik and George Firsov helped build a house with Habitat for Humanity. Even though they did their service on an early Saturday morning, each student felt good about donating their time and meeting new people. According to George, "I worked from 7:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. and a thought about money never even got into my head—it was just like a bunch of friends gathered together to do something good."

*Kseniya Chohey studies at California State University in Hayward, California, and is from Uzhhorod, Ukraine. Nina Farbitnik studies at the University of California in Davis, California, and is from Aktobe, Kazakhstan. George Firsov studies at Eastern Washington University in Cheney, Washington, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.*



### Cleaning up Lake Superior

Mariya Yukhymenko cleaned up the shoreline along Lake Superior as part of her community service. She commented that although she did not expect an activity like this to be fun, she really enjoyed it.

*Mariya studies at the University of Wisconsin in Superior, Wisconsin, and is from Cherniviv, Ukraine.*

continued on next page

# In the Community Point of View

## Student Raising Funds for Orphanage at Home

Tanya Bidnyak, along with the International Students Association at New England College, is helping to organize a drive to raise funds and gifts to send to orphanages in Ukraine. Tanya started the drive with a Ukrainian celebration day in November, where she and her fellow students played trivia, gave a Power Point presentation on Ukrainian culture and history and demonstrated Ukrainian dances.

*Tanya Bidnyak studies at New England College in Henniker, New Hampshire, and is from Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine.*

## FSAU Fellow Interprets for Ukrainian Child in American School

Kateryna Obvintseva volunteered at the Leaving Davey Elementary School where she helped students with reading. Of special note, Kateryna met Olga, a Ukrainian girl, who was a student at the school. Kateryna explains, "She didn't know English well enough to communicate with her classmates, but her little friends were so eager to know more about her, her country, the traditions and people." Asked to interpret for the class, Kateryna brought in a Ukrainian flag and helped the students understand Olga and helped Olga understand the other children. "The children were so glad to be finally able to ask Olga all they wanted."

*Kateryna Obvintseva studies at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.*

## FSAU Fellow Caring for HIV / AIDS Patients

Alexandre Boytsov volunteers for My House, a temporary home for abandoned children born with drug addictions or HIV/AIDS. Alexander also volunteers for Project Open Hand, whose mission is to prepare and deliver fresh cooked meals to people with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses and disabilities.

*Alexandre Boytsov studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and is from Metallostroi Settlement, Russia.*

The UN does have numerous problems, and the foremost of them is the management of the huge bureaucracy that the Organization has nurtured for the past half a century. One of the six major bodies of the Organization (the Security Council) is based on a post-World War Two status-quo philosophy, a phenomenon that is totally unacceptable. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the world is overly dynamic, and the UN has to catch up with the latest moves in the international arena. The UN has initiated and staunchly supported a great number of progressive steps. Unfortunately, at times it has been unjustifiably slow. One thing is evident, however: we, ordinary citizens of our countries, should be extremely careful not to let a wonderful venture like the UN become an obsolete institution like the League of Nations and fall into disgrace. The price for this mistake would be too high.

*Aghasi Harutyunyan (2002-2003) studied at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.*

## Role of UN Critical in Increasing Multilateralism

Nowadays, the role of international governmental organizations is more significant than ever. Established more than 50 years ago, the United Nations has great influence in the development of international relations on the world stage today. Multilateralism has become more popular among nations. In fact, the world community is aware of being interdependent and vulnerable to international events.

I think sometimes we tend to blame the UN when it does not implement its policies successfully, allowing other countries to infringe on the essential principles of international law. However, the UN is not an independent actor in the international system because it was created to represent its member-states in world affairs and to promote international peace and security. For the past decade, a lot of changes have occurred in the world arena: the collapse of the USSR, the balkanization of Yugoslavia, and more recently, the events of 9/11, the overthrown of the Taliban regime and the U.S. military operation in Baghdad.

Today, everyone shares the feeling of insecurity, and the multilateral approach for the struggle against international terrorism is the road most traveled. The UN is the principal international organization that negotiates different international conflicts and safeguards world peace and security. Sometimes the UN fails, as in the case of the Palestinian-Israeli military conflict, but this is a normal process. Nevertheless, the importance of the UN is obvious in providing international stability and peace. The recent UN resolution on multilateral cooperation for Iraqi reconstruction underlines the increased approach of the world community to international assistance under the umbrella of the UN.

In my opinion, the role of the UN in the protection of human rights is really great. John T. Rourke emphasizes this fact in his research: "The UN Commission on Human Rights has used its power of investigation and its ability to expose abuses of human rights." Furthermore, the UN does not shy away from the world's environmental crisis and supported the idea of sustainable development at the Rio de Janeiro summit.

Given the current order of the international system, I think the UN is the only international organization that legitimately conducts international relations within international law and protects states' sovereignty.

*Yulia Ibraimova studies at Stetson University in Deland, Florida, and is from Almaty, Kazakhstan.*

## The UN and its "Culture of Reaction"

Following the bloodiest and most terrifying war in the history of humanity, World War II, the countries of the world decided to create an institution that would be a bridge among nations for cooperation and promotion of mutual values. This would also be a mechanism to prevent wars and atrocities against humanity. After long debates and public speeches, the countries established the United Nations that would fulfill their great hopes for a prosperous future. Unfortunately, not many activities have served the initial goals.



In the early years of its existence, the UN could not fully carry out its functions due to the Cold War that stalemated any actions. Opposing countries in the Security Council exercised their veto rights widely and vetoed anything that seemed at all to be not in their interests. This prevented the UN from taking timely and appropriate actions to accomplish its tasks. In the post-Cold War era, the UN seemed to revitalize its role and its new Secretary General Koffi Annan became a symbol of these changes. The UN has become more active in world affairs and specifically in sending peace-making and peace-building missions to war-torn countries. This was pledged by the secretary general in his goal "to move the United Nations from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention."

Despite these bold attempts by the UN and Koffi Annan in particular to take greater responsibility and delve deeper into ongoing world affairs, this was not quite successful. Recent experience has shown that rich and strong nations can dictate the rules and establish the agenda of world affairs regardless of the UN's stance. A good example of this was the failure of the UN to prevent both gulf wars and its post-factum involuntary agreement to the resulting actions.

*Babar Salimova (2000-2001) studied at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, and is from Baku, Azerbaijan.*

## Supra-State Organization Needed to Meet Demands of New Millennium

As liberalist Francis Fukuyama argued in his book *The End of History*, the disintegration of the USSR will expand liberal and democratic values to the post-communist countries. He gave one of the leading roles to international institutions; in particular, he outlined the key position of the United Nations. In my opinion, the UN was created for and suited to the bipolar division of the world. Today, it is incapable of dealing with many international issues that arise. Many of the UN's resolutions and sanctions are not obeyed by member countries. For example, even though the UN Security Council vetoed intervention in Iraq, the U.S. did not obey. President Bush himself stated, "You are either with us, or against us!" In addition, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution demanding that Israel halt construction and remove existing stretches of a huge barrier fence in the West Bank. But as we can see, Israel not only disobeyed but continued the construction of the wall on the Palestinian territory in direct violation of principles of international law. American and Israeli disobedience of the UN resolutions is justified by numerous attacks on their national interests. Also, these

countries are democratic and liberal. What would happen if Iraq, South Korea or Iran would ignore UN resolutions? Catastrophe!

Another issue to mention is UN peacekeeping operations. Definitely, the "blue helmets" have had a great impact on the establishment of peace in the world's hot spots like Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, etc... But they are not as efficient as they are supposed to be. For instance, peace-establishing operations in India and Pakistan have lasted since 1949. After more than 50 years, UN diplomats cannot establish peace between these states. In Rwanda, the war between Tutsi and Hutu tribes caused over 800,000 deaths, most of whom were civilians.

Sometimes the structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank contradict the social policies of the UN's specialized agencies such as the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO and UNICEF. I do not want to lessen the role of the UN in establishing peace and principles of international law, of setting democratic foundations, and helping developing countries, but it is obvious that the modern world, with its complicated political and economic issues, needs a more perfect and efficient supra-state organization for the organization of a new millennium.

*Aset Abdualiyev studies at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina, and is from Astana, Kazakhstan.*

## Open Forum

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education or proper health care. These youth are confronted with unemployment, as they do not have the necessary skills (English language, computer training, accounting and business degrees) to allow them to find jobs in the booming energy sector in Baku.

Azeri youth is at a strange point in Azeri history. On the one hand, the old Communist ideology is gone and there is more room for development and freedom. On the other hand, the lack of a new ideology to replace Communism has created a vacuum among Azeri youth. Young men and women do not feel united under a certain ideology and this in turn makes them feel lost.

The election of Ilham Aliyev opens a new era of political, economic and social development in the country. He is known for his support of sports and education, young people, and fresh and innovative projects. The next few years in Azerbaijan will mean a new flow of investment and oil revenues, new economic development and political progress. This in turn will create new jobs and improve the welfare of the population, especially youth.

I am optimistic about the future. As the independence of Azerbaijan continues to strengthen, the ideology of national unity

will prevail and this will unite many young minds, who at times feel detached from their motherland. New youth initiatives and media coverage of youth issues should be encouraged, which will enrich and improve the lives of Azeri youth.

When I was in Tovuz last September, a young Russian-educated man named Asif came up to me and said, "Nobody can run away from his motherland. It is our ultimate duty to develop it." Thousands of others feel the same.

*Fariz Ismailzade (1998-1999) studied at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, and is from Baku, Azerbaijan.*



*American Councils Russian Regional Director Joel Ericson analyzes the successes and failures of Moscow-area alumni in their leadership training exercise.*

*FSAU alumni from Kyrgyzstan demonstrate their solidarity during a planning meeting for the New Year's party planned for the orphanage.*



*FSAU alumni in Kyrgyzstan pose with a box to collect clothing donations for two local orphanages. A few days later, the young recipients of the clothing at the Petrovka Orphanage are pictured next to the large pile; the alumni were sure to find something that fit each child.*



*FSAU alumni couple Suymonkul Kutbidinov (2001-2002) and Daniya Baisubanova (2002-2003) were recently engaged and will be married during the summer of 2004. Congratulations to them from the FSAU community!*



*FSAU the first the con*

*taken*



FSAU alumni in Kazakhstan Aizhan Tyndybekova (1998-1999), Maria Stefurak (1998-1999) and Tamara Stebunova (2001-2002) seem to be enjoying the seminar profiling their fellow Ugrad "success stories" in Almaty.



Alexandr Svetlicinii, 2002-2003 alumnus from Moldova, poses with his pupils in a class on democracy he taught at a summer camp organized by FSAU and FLEX alumni.



Vera Sokolyanskaya (2001-2002), Sergey Ogurtsov (1997-1998), Asya Mishina (1999-2000) and Tanya Korosteleva (2001-2002) gathered for an early holiday celebration and to collect candy bars for the "Chocolate Drive"—an initiative to provide sweets to the ROOF orphanage residents.

This young guest should have won the "cutest mummy" award at a St. Petersburg Halloween party held at the Almus Orphanage, where alumni have been visiting for a few years.

FSAU alumni in Armenia helped organize and attended the first-ever English language Model UN conference in the country.

Georgian alumnus Andro Gigauri (2002-2003) (center) took part in the November demonstrations in Tbilisi that led to the resignation of President Shevardnadze.



## Alumni in Action

### ARMENIA

#### Volunteer-Based English Language Program Organized by Armenian Alumni

On October 6, 2003, ten FSA Undergraduate alumni met at the American Councils office to plan for their ten-week stint as volunteer English language teachers for students at Special School #3. Hasmik Minasyan, the FSAU alumni fellow, had already developed the curriculum for the lessons, and delivered it to her volunteers. The next day, the ten volunteer teachers went to the school to get acquainted with their charges. The sixth and seventh grade students were split into groups, and volunteers assigned to classes. The project will go on through the end of the fall semester, with sixth and seventh grade students being taught on Mondays and Wednesdays, and the eighth graders receiving instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

### AZERBAIJAN

#### FSAU Alumni Lead the new Azerbaijani Alumni Association (AAA)

On November 16, 2003, the Alumni Advisory Board, which is comprised of 14 alumni of various U.S. State Department-funded exchange programs, established the U.S.-educated Azerbaijani Alumni Association (AAA). Leading the association is Fariz Ismailzade, FSAU alumnus from 1998-1999, who was elected chairman of the board for two years. Muskie alumnus Zaur Mammadov was elected deputy chairman. The purpose of this association will be to increase the role of the 800 alumni in Azerbaijan's development, strengthen U.S.-Azerbaijan relations and assist alumni in professional development. The association's immediate goals are to get registered with the Ministry of Justice and coordinate the activities of various alumni groups.

### BELARUS

#### "Learning through Playing" Brought to Schools by FSAU Alumni

High school students and teachers in two cities in Belarus were the focus of training and interactive games developed to instill a student-centered approach in the classroom and to improve communication skills. The training events were carried out during International Education Week, and involved the ninth through eleventh grades in Brest and Grodno, Belarus. The lessons centered on a

*FSAU alumni listen attentively as guest speaker Giorgi Kandelaki presents the youth movement Kmara.*



game called "Shipwreck," where the students had to work together and cooperate in order to survive a life-threatening situation. They practiced teamwork skills and analyzed their strengths and weaknesses as a group. The lesson also encouraged the teachers of these students to include games and interactive methodology in their teaching, after having witnessed the enthusiasm and concentration of their students in this project. In Brest, the FSAU alumni trainers were Inna Ivanyuk (2001-2002), Elena Pisarchik (2002-2003) and Andrei Muchnik (1997-1998 and FSAU Alumni Coordinator, Moscow). In Grodno, Elena Markevich and Alexey Vorob'yov, both of the 2002-2003 class, delivered the training and were even filmed by Grodno Television representatives.

### GEORGIA

#### Student Youth Activism in Georgia

FSA Undergraduate alumni in Georgia have been involved in a three-part series of workshops called "Student Activism: Myths and Realities in Georgia" this past fall. The objective of the series was to familiarize alumni with opportunities to get involved in the political process in their country, whether at university, at the national level or even in international politics. The first part of this series took place on October 9, 2003, when a representative of the youth movement *Kmara* (literally, "Enough") spoke to alumni about the objectives and activities of this group. *Kmara* is a non-violent movement confronting corruption, the collapse of the education system, the absence of the rule of law and the criminalization of politics. FSAU alumni taking part include Giorgi Meladze (2000-2001), Irakli Matkava (2000-2001), Sergi Kapanadze (2000-2001), Khatia Shalamberidze (2001-2002), Dato Koberidze (2001-2002) and Dato Kapanadze (2001-2002).

On October 21, the second event of the series brought several student union heads from the Georgian Technical University and Georgian State University to the Alumni Resource Center, where over 25 attended. The student union heads Levan Japaridze and Irakli Murtskhvaladze presented the activities they've organized, the objectives of their organizations, and the structure of the unions. Finally, on October 28, a member of the

OSCE long term observer mission in Georgia, Hans Friedrich Gutbrod, talked about the ongoing democratic processes in Georgia, including the role of youth and other social movements. Most interesting for the alumni were the issues of public involvement in social movements and the liabilities of implementing Western values in Georgia. The event was nominated to be the most interesting one of the whole trilogy series. David Dundua (2002-2003), Bakur Kvaratskhelia (2002-2003), Sergi Kapanadze (2000-2001), Gio Meladze (2000-2001) and Dato Kapanadze (2001-2002) represented the FSAU community at this important event.

One month after these training activities, *Kmara* activists and several FSAU alumni played an active role in the demonstrations and activities that led to the *Velvet Revolution* in Georgia.

### KAZAKHSTAN

#### Alumni Put on Dramatic Thanksgiving Performance for Orphans

In the village of Baganashyl outside of Almaty, Kazakhstan, the young residents of Regional Orphanage Number Four were recently visited by FSAU and FLEX alumni and involved in a Thanksgiving celebration they had not seen before. The alumni put on a play about the history of the holiday including a description of pilgrims, stories of adventure and hardship, the help of the Indians, and the current Thanksgiving tradition in the U.S. They played games, ate a Thanksgiving meal and received prizes and small gifts from the alumni. After the games, the alumni had the opportunity to sit with the orphans, shake their hands or give a hug and just keep the children company. The group of alumni commented that it was difficult to leave the children, but hope to be able to return another time. One of the orphanage teachers noted her gratitude for the visit: "Thank you very much for making the lives of our kids different." Alumni Fellow Yuliya Pak and Anar Umurzakova, both of the 2002-2003 class, were actively involved in this event.

## KYRGYZSTAN

### Alumni Involved in "Student Potential Development" Project

Clockwise from the left, Abdujalil Abdurasulov (2000-2001), colleague Aisalkyn Botoeva, Lyudmila Beletskaya (2002-2003) and Maksat Koroluev (2002-2003) are pictured in the van prior to their departure for Naryn.



FSA Undergraduate alumni have joined forces with their fellow alumna, Dinara Akmatbekova (2000-2001), to carry out a project of her design, "Student Potential Development." From October 19 to 25, 2003, two groups of four to five people traveled around Kyrgyzstan to teach specific courses in which they received training ahead of time. Each group taught Education USA and Job Hunting, and other courses including Leadership, Conflict Resolution, Gender, Time Management, and Critical Skills were offered to the students as "electives." The first group of student-trainers visited Tokmok, Balykchi and Naryn. The second group went to Kara Balta, Kara Kul and Maili Say. In each location, 30 students were trained at a time. The "Student Potential Development" project is supported by the Local Initiative Grants Program (LIGP) administered by American Councils.

## MOLDOVA

On October 30th, 2003, Alex Svetlicinii (2002-2003), Tudor Ulianovschi (2002-2003) and a fellow alumna of the FLEX program held a seminar for 150 students on "Higher Education Opportunities in Moldova and Beyond its Frontiers" at the Nikolai Gogol School in the city of Balti, Moldova. This event was the first activity resulting from the "Bridge Between US" project that charges 15 alumni to organize outreach activities in five regions of Moldova.

Alex Svetlicinii presented information on higher education opportunities in the international arena, focusing the audience's attention on exchange programs offered by American Councils and the advantages for high school students from Moldova. He also informed them about higher education opportunities at the American University in Bulgaria, in France and in the U.K. The next presentation offered

the students information on higher education opportunities in Moldova, describing what each university offers. The final stage of the seminar focused primarily on two major competitions in which the children can participate: Tudor presented details about the *Odyssey of the Mind* and the Model UN conference to be held next spring. The students were so interested that they grouped themselves almost immediately into four teams to participate in the *Odyssey of the Mind* and two teams to participate in the Model UN national competition.

At the end of the day, the alumni gave the school director handouts summarizing all educational opportunities presented so that students from other classes could also receive this important information. Finally, the alumni collected a sign-up sheet on which the students had listed their special interests. The alumni promised that after they came back to Chisinau they would search for additional information that would be helpful to the children and forward it along to the school. Everybody considered this event to be a successful one.



Tudor Ulianovschi gets the 150 Balti State University students eager to participate in *Odyssey of the Mind* and other competitions.

good time. After picking up fourteen bags of trash, the group of young people spent the rest of the day playing volleyball, American football and frisbee, followed by an evening campfire.

### Novosibirsk Alumni Active at Youth NGO Fair

On November 29, 2003, alumni of the FSA Undergraduate and FLEX Programs were well represented at Novosibirsk State Technical University, which was the host for the "Youth NGO Fair." The alumni are organized as The Association of Alumni of Exchange Programs, and presented their mission, goals and accomplishments to the student population attending the fair.

In particular, they drew attention to their participation in Operation Smile, their community service at Orphanages #1 and #10, school Olympiads and their professional development workshops.

Alumni Fellow Tanya Sklyarova personally communicated with the governor of the Novosibirsk region who showed interest in the activities of the alumni association.

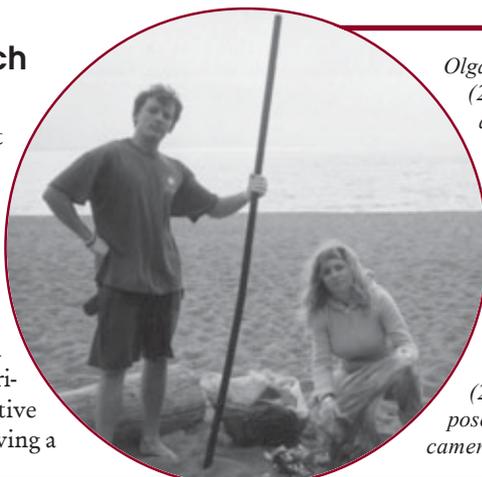
### Vladivostok Alumni Prepare for Strong Showing at Model UN Conference

This fall in Vladivostok, FSAU alumni attended weekly meetings to prepare for the Model UN Conference to be held in that city in December, 2003. FSAU participants include Ivan Pechorin (2001-2002), Alexey Suslikov (1998-1999), Oksana Guselnikova (2001-2002) and Slava Shirokov (2001-2002). Preparations include familiarizing all team members with the rules of Model UN and practicing debate skills with each other. Several alumni in the group got practice speaking in public during appearances at International Education Week

## RUSSIA

### Gulf of Finland Beach Cleaned by Alumni

When the weather was still a bit warmer, FSAU alumni in St. Petersburg joined forces with local FLEX alumni to spend the day picking up trash from the beach in Zelinogorsk, not far from St. Petersburg. They also brought along several friends, who enjoyed the experience of doing something positive in their community while having a



Olga Sigaeva (2002-2003) and FSAU Alumni Fellow, St. Petersburg) actively participates in the beach clean-up while Kostya Polyakov (2002-2003) poses for the camera.

## Upward Mobility

### Class of 1997-1998

Artyem Zakaryan was elected president of the Armenian Model UN Association. Artyem studied at the University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and is from Gyumri, Armenia.

### Class of 1999-2000

Lusine Haroyan has been hired at Hayastan all-Armenian Himnadram as an administrative director's assistant. Lusine studied at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minnesota, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

Alexey Suslikov works as an analyst for the Department for Foreign Investment of the Primorskiy Krai Regional Government. Alexey studied at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Alabama, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.

### Class of 2000-2001

Fariz Ahmadov was hired by International Relief and Development (IRD) as a consultant and is working on a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) project in Azerbaijan. Fariz studied at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky, and is from Ganja, Azerbaijan.

Aigerim Bizhanova is enrolled in a graduate program in Genetics at Clemson University and is working as a teaching assistant. She studied at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina, and is from Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Sergi Kapanadze was selected to attend an international conference on the topic of *Euroatlantic Integration* that was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, in November, 2003. Participants came from 27 countries to take part in the conference; Sergi was the only representative from Georgia in attendance. Sergi studied at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, and is from Tbilisi, Georgia.

Maxim Korenkov works as a manager for Proctor & Gamble, Primorie Branch, Russia. Maxim studied at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.

Giorgi Meladze received a Master's degree from the Georgian Institute for Public Affairs. He was nominated as the student with the best leadership skills in the institute. Giorgi studied at Alma College in Alma, Michigan, and is from Tbilisi, Georgia.

Natalya Yermiyeva organized a parliamentary youth debate at Kharkiv National University on November 22, 2003. The objective was to develop the public speaking skills of the participating students, promote the debate movement in the Kharkiv region and to educate young people while preparing for the debate. Natalya studied at Neosho County Community College in Chanute, Kansas, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

### Class of 2001-2002

Lilit Galstyan has been hired as a coordinator at the Bureau for Caucasian Cultural Programs (BCCP). Lilit studied at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

Inna Ivanyuk was invited by the NGO *New Faces* to participate in an international conference called "Development and Support of Social Organizations." Inna will be working as an interpreter for a speaker from the Netherlands. Inna studied at Iowa Lakes Community College in Emmetsburg, Iowa, and is from Minsk, Belarus.

Lilit Kocharyan has been hired as an economist and sales assistant at CJSC Marketing. Lilit studied at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

Andriy Litvynov delivers lectures and trainings as part of the "psychology club" every Sunday at the Kharkiv American Center. Members learn how to develop effective communication, problem-solving skills, and conflict resolution. Andriy studied at Moorhead State University in Moorhead, Minnesota, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

Vasily Lucashevich took part in an academic conference called "Widening of the European Union" organized by the European Studies Association. He presented his research on the prospects for transforming the EU into a federation at the seminar. Vasily studied at the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia, and is from Barnaul, Russia.

Oleksandr Martynenko has been appointed the Western Ukraine alumni volunteer by American Councils. He will be in charge of organizing alumni events for PSAU alumni in the area. Oleksandr studied at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky, and is from Lviv, Ukraine.

Murat Saryev won first place at the English language *Olympiad* held for students of higher education institutions in Turkmenistan. He received 98 out of 100 points. Murat studied at Alma College in Alma, Michigan, and is from Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Vera Sokolyanskaya became a finalist in the essay contest entitled "My home. My town. My country," which was sponsored by the Ministries of Education and Culture of the Russian Federation. A television version of the contest was filmed in Moscow, after which all 21 finalists were invited to an official visit with President Putin at Novo-Ogarevo. The students

talked to the president for over two hours, with Vera asking him many questions directly. Vera studied at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, and is from Magadan, Russia.

Darya Sosova was elected president of the Model United Nations Club of the Russian Far East and participates in all student organizations from Magadan. Darya studied at the University of Wisconsin at Marinette and is from Magadan, Russia.

Zhenya Voevodina was awarded a competitive travel grant from the American University of Bulgaria to participate in *Balkan Parliament-2003*, a parliament simulation held each year in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, in the beginning of October. Zhenya studied at Marshalltown Community College in Marshalltown, Iowa, and is from Moscow, Russia.

### Class of 2002-2003

Nelli Babayan is doing an internship at the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), where she is carrying out translation and administrative work. Nelli studied at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

Irina Golenkova completed a summer internship in public relations at DaimlerChrysler Services AG in Berlin, Germany. In December 2003, with the support of the Bosch Foundation, Irina will do another month-long internship at the Information Bureau of Baden-Wurtemberg, Germany, of the European Union. Irina studied at the State University of New York at Oswego in Oswego, New York, and is from Omsk, Russia.

Elmurod Kasymov completed a work-study program in South Korea working as an English teacher's assistant for two months. Elmurod studied at California State Polytechnic Institute in Pomona, California, and is from Osh, Kyrgyzstan.

Miragul Kochkorova was accepted to a six-month training program by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in which she will be trained as a credit specialist. As a part of this program, Miragul is working at the KazKomertsBank in Jalal Abad, Kyrgyzstan. Miragul studied at California State University in Bakersfield, California, and is from Jalal Abad, Kyrgyzstan.

Ekaterina Konstantinova has been hired as an accountant in the Business Service Center of Japan Tobacco International. She also participates in a project called the *Centralization Project* as a vendor services clerk. Ekaterina studied at Mississippi State University in Mississippi State, Mississippi, and is from St. Petersburg, Russia.

Svetlana Kozenkova is currently working as the dean's assistant in the Language Department at her university in Cherkasy, and is beginning a university radio station as well. Svetlana studied at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York, and is from Cherkasy, Ukraine.

Elena Markevich is developing an English course for employees of the Republican Library of Science and Engineering. The course will be conducted on a volunteer basis and will start in February, 2004. Elena studied at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut, and is from Minsk, Belarus.

Konstantin Polyakov participated in the "accountancy and enterprise" section of the international student competition held at Engineer Economic University on November 22-23, 2003. Konstantin studied at Alabama A&M University in Normal, Alabama, and is from St. Petersburg, Russia.

Alexander Shlyk participated in the Council of Europe symposium *Youth and Democratic Institutions: From Disillusion to Participation*, in Strasbourg, France. Alexander studied at Southern Maine Technical College in South Portland, Maine, and is from Minsk, Belarus.

Alexandr Svetlicinii was invited to be a discussant at the roundtable discussion "Economic

Growth in Ukraine and Neighboring Countries," scheduled for November 21-22 in Kyiv, where he was to present his research on legislative reforms and their impact on the economic development of Moldova. Alexandr studied at California State University in Bakersfield, California, and is from Balti, Moldova.

Nadiya Yampolska was selected as the Kharkiv representative at the *Millenium Development Goals Conference* in Kyiv that was held on November 23, 2003. Nadiya studied at Southern Maine Technical College in South Portland, Maine, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

### Class of 2003-2004

Aset Abdualiyev was elected treasurer of the Winthrop University Student Legislature in Rock Hill, South Carolina, where he currently studies. Aset is from Astana, Kazakhstan.

Ruslan Aliyev, a criminal justice student at Forsyth Community College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, made the college basketball team. Ruslan is from Baku, Azerbaijan.

Evgenia Egupova was elected vice-president of the Universal Multicultural Association at the University of Wisconsin in Menasha, Wisconsin, where she currently studies. Evgenia is from Vladivostok, Russia.

Krystyna Lyubenko joined the University of St. Louis debate team and is a member of the Model United Nations chapter at her university. Krystyna Lyubenko studies at the University of St. Louis, Missouri, and is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

Mekan Muhammedov was elected sports coordinator for the International Student Organization at his college. Mekan studies at Tacoma Community College in Tacoma, Washington, and is from Abadan, Turkmenistan.

Julia Skatova was elected to the Student Government Association as a Member-at-Large Executive Officer at Fox Valley College in Appleton, Wisconsin, where she currently studies. Julia is from Kharkiv, Ukraine.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Small Grants Program for FSA Undergraduate Alumni: "University Awards Program"

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS under the auspices of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State have initiated a small grants program for alumni of the FREEDOM Support Act (FSA) Undergraduate Program. The University Awards Program is designed to support alumni leadership initiatives on their home university campuses that further the objectives of the FSA Undergraduate Program, such as community outreach, cultural exchange and other educational activities, and enrich campus life for all students.

**WHO:** FSA Undergraduate Alumni

**WHAT:** Grants up to \$500 each

**WHEN:** Open deadline while grant funds last

**HOW:** Find an application form on [www.americancouncils.org](http://www.americancouncils.org) or visit your local American Councils office to pick up a form.

### ECA Small Grants Program

The ECA Alumni Small Grants Program provides grants to alumni of selected Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)-sponsored programs to undertake professional development activities. The purpose of the ECA Alumni Small Grants Program is to further the professional development of ECA alumni. Grants are a maximum of \$1,500, and allow alumni to do the following: conduct a public or community service activity; attend conferences in the Eurasia; make research trips in Eurasia; publish self-authored materials; organize a pilot program; extend memberships to professional organizations relative to their fields; fund travel to Eurasia for U.S. colleagues for conferences, professional consultations or research projects; organize training programs or conferences for other alumni and ECA constituencies; conduct any other projects judged to be in the interest of the program goals by the selection committee and/or ECA.

**WHO:** Alumni of the FREEDOM Support Act Undergraduate Program, the FREEDOM Support Act Contemporary Issues Program (CI), the Regional Scholar Exchange Program (RSEP), and the Russian-US Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program (YLF).

**WHAT:** A grant program that aims to further the professional development of select ECA alumni.

**WHEN:** Annual deadline of February 1st; the next round of applications will be solicited February 1, 2004.

**HOW:** More information, including applications, is available online at: [www.irex.org/alumni/grants.asp](http://www.irex.org/alumni/grants.asp).

### Local Initiative Grants Program (LIGP): Open Competition for 2004 Program

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce the Alumni Local Initiative Grants Program (LIGP), which was established to assist former participants of the Freedom Support Act (FSA) Undergraduate Program, Edmund S. Muskie / FSA Graduate Fellowship Program, Junior Faculty Development Program (JFDP), and Partners in Education (PiE) to contribute to the social, economic and political development of their countries.

**WHO:** ECA alumni of the programs names above, including FSA Undergraduate Alumni

**WHAT:** Grants up to \$5000 each

**WHEN:** February 27, 2004

**HOW:** See application form on [www.americancouncils.org](http://www.americancouncils.org) or visit your local American Councils office to pick up a form.

## Alumni in Action

events held in late November. Oksana Guselnikova and colleague Yana Loskutova (2002-2003) gave presentations on their U.S. academic experiences at a November 20, 2003, roundtable at Far Eastern State University. Later that same day, Ivan Pechorin co-led a seminar with Law Professor Victor Kaurov on students' rights at the university level for 40 university students from around the city.

### TAJIKISTAN

#### Business Skills Imparted to Local Students

FSAU Alumni Fellow Bokhtar Bakozade organized a professional development workshop that brought together FSAU and FLEX alumni with eleven students from the Russian Tajik Slavic University on October 18-29, 2003. A local expert on economics and business development led the in-depth, two-day session on writing a business plan for the 17 budding businesspeople. The first day covered development and investment issues in Tajikistan, the theoretic side of writing a business plan and a case study of a local Tajik business. The second day had the students work together in analyzing a real business plan that had received funding. At the end of the day, the students were invited to apply for small grants offered by different organizations and informed about additional training opportunities by groups operating in Tajikistan. FSAU alumni in attendance include Dadajon Azimov (2002-2003), Botur Kosimov (2002-2003), Manuchehr Kholov (1999-2000) and Bokhtar Bakozade (2001-2002).

### TURKMENISTAN

#### “Happy Halloween” for Local Children

Eleven alumni of ECA-sponsored programs gathered together to visit the Buzmeyin Orphanage and celebrate one of the popular American holidays—Halloween. The event was intended to expose the orphans to an American holiday celebration and to provide them with company and entertainment during this time of year. The celebration started with a Power Point presentation on Halloween that described the background of the holiday, how people decorate their homes, Trick-or-Treating and how to carve Halloween pumpkins. Then Firyuza Babayeva, FSAU alumni fellow for Turkmenistan, gave welcoming remarks and an overview of the

games they would play that day. The children were eager to participate in every game, which included apple-eating contests, a competition for the scariest Halloween face on a balloon, popping balloons, the best mummy and group pumpkin-carving. The winners of the games got special Halloween presents provided by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy. Gulbahar Jumabayeva, FSAU alumna from 2002-2003, had organized a clothing drive prior to the event and donated five boxes of clothing to the orphanage. Before departing, the alumni gathered all the kids and took a picture together. The group, including FSAU alumni Firyuza Babayeva (2002-2003), Gurbanbibibi Meredova (2002-2003), Gulbahar Jumabayeva (2002-2003), Bahargul Begjanova (1998-1999) and Dinara Matkarimova (1998-1999), were asked to return to the orphanage for another American holiday by the children, who were very pleased by this visit.

### UKRAINE

#### Anti-HIV/AIDS Run in Kharkiv

Programming for FSAU alumni in Kharkiv started off this year with participation in a fun run to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS on September 14, 2003. All FSAU participants in the re-entry seminar took part in the fun run, demonstrating their early commitment to their community and learning how to organize events by witnessing the behind-the-scenes logistics. The run was organized by PiE alumnus Andriy Klymyshyn and several FSAU and FLEX alumni. After the run was over, there was a concert, contests and speeches, including by an HIV-positive woman, AIDS NGO representatives and even an immunologist from Cincinnati, Ohio.

#### Human Rights Assessed by Kyiv Alumni

Thirteen alumni of the FSA Undergraduate Program from Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Kharkiv and Izmail gathered in Kyiv on December 13, 2003, to learn more about human rights issues in Ukraine at a conference dedicated to the International Day of Human Rights and 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Experts from OSCE, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and the Ukrainian-American Bureau for the Protection of Human Rights each gave presentations on human rights violations in Ukraine and the activities of their organizations to address them. The group also addressed how youth in

Ukraine can get involved in protecting human rights and fighting those who violate human rights. The alumni had the opportunity to ask questions of these specialists and share their own ideas about the problem in Ukraine. The end of the workshop included a “brain ring” competition between two groups of alumni, testing each other on their knowledge of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international bodies dedicated to human rights. Each participant of the event was presented with a book on human rights issues that was donated by the U.S. Embassy, the OSCE and the Ukrainian-American Bureau for the Protection of Human Rights.

### UZBEKISTAN

#### Post-Graduate Education Promoted by FSAU Alumni

FSAU alumni in Uzbekistan helped organize a conference at which fifty-five undergraduate students at Tashkent State Technical University were encouraged to pursue higher education and were provided with some training to help prepare for the entrance process. This conference, held during International Education Week, included the active involvement of U.S. Embassy representatives and fellows in the Civic Education Project (CEP), as well as American Councils staff. The group of experienced educators and international travelers emphasized the role of a graduate degree in not only one's field of study, but also in one's personal development. Since many of those in attendance were interested in international education, particularly in the U.S., one very effective session provided guidance in writing statements of purpose and had students submit their own essays to a visiting professor from Mexico who would return them with comments a week later. Along with Alumni Fellow Kozimhon Turaev, the FSAU alumni who participated in this event included Laura Rakhimova, Dinara Rakhmanova, Inoyat Sadikova, Sergey Nigay, Ravshan Yakubov, Ulugbek Madrakhimov, Khurshid Kholov and Adiba Kholmurodova.

## January

9	Grant Writing Workshop	Khabarovsk, Russia
9-10	Public Speaking and Writing Skills Seminar	Dashoguz, Turkmenistan
10	Training: Business Ethics and Human Resource Management	Chisinau, Moldova
10	Resume Writing Workshop	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
11	Brainstorming Retreat for Regional Conference	Chimgan, Uzbekistan
13	Sexual Health Seminar	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
14	Grant Writing Workshop	Almaty, Kazakhstan
15	Grant Writing Workshop	Vladivostok, Russia
16	Grant Writing Workshop	Tbilisi, Georgia
17	Online Chat with US Ambassador	Baku, Azerbaijan
19	Dr. Martin Luther King Day Essay Contest	Vladivostok, Russia
21	"Motivation to Pursue a Career" Outreach Seminars	Chisinau, Moldova
23	Successful Company Tour	Novosibirsk, Russia
24	Grant Writing Workshop	Moscow, Russia
24	Grant Writing Workshop	St. Petersburg, Russia
24	Seminar: "Central Asia: Threats to Stability from Inside"	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
25	Grant Writing Workshop	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
29	Leadership Training in Regional Schools	Sheki, Azerbaijan
31	Grant Writing Workshop	Chisinau, Moldova
31	Grant Writing Workshop	Novosibirsk, Russia

## February

1	Training in Project Management	St. Petersburg, Russia
2	Intercultural Communication: Outreach to Disabled Children	Yerevan, Armenia
6-8	"Odyssey of the Mind" Tournament	Chisinau, Moldova
7	"The Idea of Volunteering" Seminar	Almaty, Kazakhstan
7	Presentation Skills: Part I	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
8	Training: Building Professional Networks	Moscow, Russia
8	Seminar: Making Your Opinion Count	Baku, Azerbaijan
8	Sexual Health Seminar	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
8	Effective Business Communications: The Art of Negotiation	Kharkiv, Ukraine
13	Training: Team Work, Life Skills, Psychology	Tashkent, Uzbekistan
13	Debate Tournament	Yerevan/Tsakhkadzor, Armenia
14	Seminar on Oil and Gas in the RFE	Khabarovsk, Russia
15-29	Sexual Health Training for High School Students	Chuy, Kyrgyzstan
19	Leadership Skills Training	Chisinau, Moldova
20	Leadership Seminar	Vladivostok, Russia
20	Project Management Training	Tbilisi, Georgia
20	Grant Writing Workshop	Tashkent, Uzbekistan
21	Presentation Skills: Part II	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
27	Outreach to High Schools: Free Enterprise Course	Baku, Azerbaijan
28	Community Outreach Project: Recycling	Almaty, Kazakhstan

## March

3	Round-table: Where is Kyrgyzstan heading?	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
4	Seminar: Resume Writing and Public Speaking	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
6	Grant Opportunities	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
7	Workshop on Marketing	Kharkiv, Ukraine
8	Panel Discussion: Women's Rights	Vladivostok, Russia
10	Career Enhancement: Resumes, Cover Letters, Job Search	Yerevan, Armenia
10	Seminar: "European Integration - Elements and Procedure"	Chisinau, Moldova
<b>12-14</b>	<b>Russian Regional Conference "Russia at Crossroads"</b>	<b>Moscow, Russia</b>
13	Workshop: "Sexual Education for Youth in Belarus"	Minsk, Belarus
13	Leadership Skills Training: Part I	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
16	Concert for Disabled Children	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
13-20	Workshops for Students: Conflict Resolution, Sexual Health, etc.	Southern Kyrgyzstan
22-27	Outreach to Schools: U.S. Education System	Samarkand, Bukhara, Navai, Sirdarya, Uzbekistan
<b>25-28</b>	<b>West NIS Regional Conference</b>	<b>Chisinau, Moldova</b>
27	Teaching Basic Computer Skills to Students	Baku, Azerbaijan
28	"Funny Games" – Sports with Orphans	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

## April

<b>1-4</b>	<b>Caucasus Regional Conference</b>	<b>Tbilisi, Georgia</b>
4	Earth Day Clean-up	Chuli, Turkmenistan
<b>8-10</b>	<b>Regional Conference: "Regional Security in Central Asia"</b>	<b>Almaty, Kazakhstan</b>
10	Presentation Skills Workshop	St. Petersburg, Russia
10	Easter Egg Hunt	Kodjori/Tskneti, Georgia
10	Conference: "Terrorism Factor in International Relations"	Kyiv, Ukraine
10	Seminar: "Tolerance Must Be Everywhere"	Chisinau, Moldova
10-11	Training: Management Seminar	Novosibirsk, Russia
15-17	Model UN Conference	Chisinau, Moldova
17	Career Day	Moscow, Russia
17	Chess Competition	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
21	Successful Company Tour	Moscow, Russia
21	Talk-show: "Legal Protection of Students"	Novosibirsk, Russia
24	How to Write Effective Cover-letters	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
22-26	Windows and Internet Training	Minsk, Belarus
24	Training: Project Management	Baku, Azerbaijan
25	Seminar: Public Relations	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
26-27	Outreach to Local High Schools: Future Career Training	Tbilisi, Georgia
27	International Internship Fair	Kyiv, Ukraine
29	Community Service Training	Chisinau, Moldova

## Alumni Web Sites

Please send your personal web site or site that you believe is of interest to the FSAU community to [ugradalum@actr.ru](mailto:ugradalum@actr.ru) or [millman@americancouncils.org](mailto:millman@americancouncils.org) in order to be included in upcoming issues of Notes from UnderGrad. Happy Surfing!

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