



# Notes

FROM

# UnderGrad

FREEDOM  
SUPPORT ACT  
Undergraduate  
Program

## Open Forum

### Strengthening the UN System

By BORIS PENKOV

Thanks to the superb support of our alumni association, especially the kind attention of Alumni Assistant Anastasia Zubrilina, I was invited to participate in an open competition held by the United Nations Association (UNA) of Russia and won a grant to take part in the Moscow International Model United Nation 2003 at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (MGIMO) in April 2003. Young people from all over the world got together in support of the United Nations, which was formed to serve the people of the world.

They offered a voice of optimism about the role of the UN as the only organization able to unite people to work towards peace in the world. The welcoming messages from President Vladimir Putin, Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan were greeted with oceans of applause.

I was assigned to represent Italy at the General Assembly of the Model UN. The topic was "Strengthening the UN System." The participants of this conference came from all over the world, and with more than 800 delegates the Model UN in Moscow was the largest in Europe. These students came together to understand the ways of dealing with problems like poverty, the threat of global terror and climate change. The delegates were active at the conference, taking part in debates and in many cultural events in hospitable Moscow.

Speaking about support by our alumni association and *Notes From Undergrad*, I want to thank everyone also for another event. I am a Ph.D. student right now, currently finishing my dissertation on the analysis of American educational discourse and with more than 30 academic papers published about international education. I jumped at the invitation posted in the recent issue of the alumni newsletter to contact Mr. Vangala Ram, then assistant cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. He kindly helped me conduct sociolinguistic research at the Anglo-American School in Moscow in February 2003. I was delighted with the friendly support of the U.S. Embassy and the Anglo-American School. I have no doubt that with such levels of cooperation, international education, including American education, shall help promote better understanding between our nations and the greater glory of education. Thank you for your warm support, kind understanding and enthusiasm. I'm looking forward to serving you, International Education, and the friendly spirit of the United Nations in the future.

*Boris Penkov (1996-1997) studied at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and is from Voronezh, Russia.*

*Participants in the Model UN conference in Moldova listen attentively to a presentation made to their committee.*

## Table of Contents

From the Field	2	Point of View	4	Alumni in Action	10
Open Forum	3	Upward Mobility	6	U-Grants	13
In the Community	3	Photo Gallery	8	Interviews	14

## From the Field

Dear FSAU Alumni,

My name is Masha Cherkashina, and for a while I've been working in the Moscow office of American Councils as the NIS alumni coordinator for the FSA Undergraduate Program. In a couple of days I will be leaving Russia to study for my Master's degree at the Institute of Development Management and Policy at the University of Manchester, UK.

Actually, by the time you get this newsletter, I will already be gone. I'll be happily studying away, going on a field visit to some scary country, writing a dissertation and finally earning a degree. Despite the fact that my life in the nearest future promises to be at least interesting, I know I will miss this job. There are too many things that have happened in the past three years on the program, and even more since I started working for American Councils, to not miss it. There were moments when I was really proud of myself, and there were moments when I couldn't deny the fact that I was the dumbest coordinator in town (especially when not answering all the e-mails, sorry about that). There were ups and downs, but one thing is for sure: I am very grateful to you for being who you are and for teaching me what I know now.



The best thing about this job was seeing your faces, talking to you and listening to your ideas and opinions. The concentration of intelligent faces on the Ugrad program has always surprised me. I loved it that no matter where I went and what happened to me there, once I meet the local Ugradders, everything turned out to be okay.

Many of you I know personally, but unfortunately many of you I don't. There were many people whose eyes I saw only after a couple of years of exchanging e-mails, and that seemed almost unreal. When I think of the map of our 12 countries, it's your faces that I see where names of the cities should be. I will miss you, people.

However, life goes on. It is my pleasure to introduce the new FSAU NIS alumni coordinator, Andrey Muchnik, who is an FSAU alumnus of 1997-1998. He is a great guy, and I am sure you're going to love working with him.

Meanwhile, I am not disappearing from the face of the earth. A different city is just a different location, nothing more, nothing less. My e-mail is [cherkashina@hotmail.com](mailto:cherkashina@hotmail.com). Please stop by if you happen to be in the UK between now and next October (that is, October 2004), and please keep in touch. I will be thinking of you.

Best,  
Masha Che

# 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/](http://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*.

## Notes from UnderGrad Editorial Committee and Contact Information

**Lucy Jilka**, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. ([ljilka@pd.state.gov](mailto:ljilka@pd.state.gov))

**Andrey Muchnik**, American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Moscow ([ugradalum@actr.ru](mailto:ugradalum@actr.ru))

**Alissa Millman**, ACTR/ACCELS, Washington, D.C. ([millman@americancouncils.org](mailto:millman@americancouncils.org))

**Aimee Santimore**, International Research & Exchanges Board, Washington, D.C. ([asantimore@irex.org](mailto:asantimore@irex.org))

**Dallas Shelby**, Design, ACTR/ACCELS, Washington, D.C. ([shelby@americancouncils.org](mailto:shelby@americancouncils.org))

**Ryan Tvedt**, ACTR/ACCELS, Washington, D.C. ([tvedt@americancouncils.org](mailto:tvedt@americancouncils.org))

**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](mailto:ljilka@pd.state.gov) or [asantimore@irex.org](mailto:asantimore@irex.org).

In Russia and Eurasia, please submit materials to [ugradalum@actr.ru](mailto:ugradalum@actr.ru) or [millman@americancouncils.org](mailto: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 WINTER ISSUE:  
OCTOBER 31, 2003.**

## Open Forum

# “Infected” with Model UN Fever

by ELENA CHERNIGINA

I attended the International Model United Nations 2003 Conference in Moscow, sponsored by the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

This conference surpassed all my expectations. Approximately 800 participants from Russia and other countries took part, with participants receiving congratulations from Russian President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and UN General Secretary Kofi Annan.

Model UN is a role-playing game that uses real structures of various UN organizations. Participants play the roles of delegates from different countries and represent one of the UN committees. I was assigned to be a delegate from the Republic of South Africa. I was kind of surprised by this.

The delegation from South Africa (a participant from Saratov and I) submitted for consideration a resolution calling for an increase in social programs, especially in the areas of public health, human rights, education, humanitarian aid and an increase in foreign investments. Most of the delegations from developing countries supported this draft resolution. The resolution served as a basis for establishing a coalition of developing countries from Africa, Asia and South America.

After tough debates, a working draft of a resolution was formed on the basis of two of the committee resolutions. After we established a working draft, we called for amendments and ratification. Some of the amendments were approved by complete consensus, but most were ratified or eliminated only after a hard struggle by both coalitions. The majority of delegations supported the final resolution.

At the opening session of the Model UN 2003 Conference, many senior participants said that Model UN is more than just hobby; it is a kind of illness. I didn't believe that. But now I know for sure it is an illness that I also became infected with. Only one week has



passed from the closing meeting of the conference, and I am already waiting for the next one.

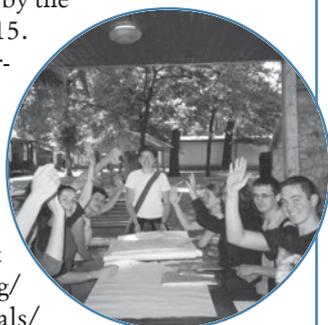
*Elena Chernigina (2001-2002) studied at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, and is from Voronezh, Russia.*

## FSAU Alumni Active in Model UN

Undergraduate alumni from Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus participated in a June 2003 Model United Nations simulation held at Vadul-lui-Voda, Moldova. The alumni were split into two committees. The first committee examined the issue of peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, and the second one studied human trafficking in Eastern Europe. Participants were required to represent the interests of the countries to which they were assigned and debated their country's viewpoints during the formation of resolutions. Final resolutions were successfully negotiated and presented at the end of the conference.

In Kharkiv, Ukraine, undergraduate alumni attended a May 2003 meeting with high-level representatives of UN agencies in Ukraine as well as NGO representatives in order to discuss work toward the Millennium Development Goals. The goals were adopted by UN member states including Ukraine in September 2000. The Goals are indicators of human development that should be achieved by the year 2015.

More information on the Millennium Development Goals can be viewed at [www.un.org/russian/goals/](http://www.un.org/russian/goals/) or [www.developmentgoals.org/](http://www.developmentgoals.org/)



## In the Community

### Sixth Graders Learn about Russia

“Now I wanna go to Russia!” was written on a simple hand-made card that sixth-graders at Longfellow Middle School in La Crosse, Wisconsin, gave me the day I finished with my internship. This phrase, which brought tears to my eyes, was the best award for all the effort I had put into my work as an intern at School District of La Crosse.

Not only the students, but the teachers as well became my eager listeners. When delivering my presentations on Russia, leading discussion boards and just observing in schools, I was delighted to notice how the teachers benefited from my presence there. They would approach me after a discussion panel and say, “Today I have learned more than during the last two years!” I tried to do all my best to give the people I had a chance to talk with the most vivid picture of what my country is like, how it is different from the U.S. and what they have in common. I also tried to destroy any misconceptions about my country that a lot of American citizens still have in their minds. Well, now it appears to be that I have completed my mission successfully!

*Sofya Mezborina (2002-2003) studied at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and is from Tambov, Russia.*

### Youth Empowerment Summer Camp

Anna Dovgopol (2000-2001) was one of the coordinators for the Youth Empowerment Summer Camp held in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, this June for 30 high school students from rural areas of southern Kyrgyzstan. Ten other FSAU alumni volunteered at the camp, which was organized by Amnesty International – Kyrgyzstan and partially sponsored



*Anna Dovgopol looks on (center) as a proud participant receives his certificate from camp organizers.*

continued on next page

# In the Community

## Point of View

by the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan. The trainers taught classes in gender issues, sexual health, human rights, diversity and political activism. Campers also participated in team-building games and activities, organized an anti-torture campaign, had a mock election campaign and did regular summer camp things like crafts and sports. At the end of the camp, several students decided to organize similar seminars in their schools, for which they asked the alumni trainers to provide lesson plans. One student was elected camp president, and has initiated a youth group in Batken, Southern Kyrgyzstan.

*Anna Dovgopol (2000-2001) studied at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Maine, and is from Kyiv, Ukraine.*

### Focus on Internships

#### Interning with the US Department of Agriculture

"The most interesting and valuable experience from my internship at USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service was getting to know how to work with digital mapping and how to create soil maps using modern technologies as GPS and GIS systems. I also learned about the U.S. government's conservation program and U.S. soil taxonomy.



*Sergiy Smetana takes a soil sample at the Natural Resources Conservation Service.*

Thanks to my internship, I visited a couple of farms and learned about how the government helps farmers deal with their land, and I assisted with a few projects. Also I served as an assistant throughout the whole county and saw in practice a few successful projects of the NRCS.

I am sure that all the technology and mythology I learned will definitely help me one day, especially if I am planning to do some research in environmental science. I think I'll

*When asked, "What is the role and responsibility of the media in your country? Is there one particular media outlet (newspaper, television station, etc.) that does a particularly good job at fulfilling this role?" FSA Undergraduates responded with the following essays. The views and opinions expressed on this page are strictly those of the authors.*

## Combine and Govern

by NELLI BABAYAN

To say that freedom of speech has not increased since the collapse of the Soviet Union is to deny the obvious. Some 15-20 years ago all information in our country came from the Communist Party. Nowadays, Armenian citizens have numerous sources of information obtained from television, newspapers, the Internet and radio. Nevertheless the most popular sources are television and the Internet, among which the most available is TV. Along with Armenian and Russian TV, one can also receive information from Euronews and CNN completely free of charge. Among young people who speak English, CNN is very popular.

If under the Soviet regime one could receive only the "party" version of an event, now it's possible to choose from different versions. If a channel has not only news shows but also analytical programs, then it supports the government or is in opposition to the government or chooses the third way of neutrality (which very often is not successful as it is impossible to be completely objective). Usually the political orientation of a channel depends on whom it belongs to. And it's obvious that this phenomenon is particular to individual countries. Watching a news program on a state-owned channel, it's almost impossible to hear a single word directed against the actions of the government. Sometimes the situation is completely different on some private channels, which are tied to the political opposition. And some channels try to provide more or less objective analyses of events.

No matter if the recipient of the information is young or old, educated or not, in order to receive objective information, one should watch different channels, read different newspapers and define the common features among them. Paraphrasing Julius Caesar's "divide et impera" (divide and govern), news recipients should have the motto "combine and govern!"

*Nelli Babayan (2002-2003) studied at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.*

## Information and Advertising Counts

by HAYK GHAZARYAN

The role of the media in Armenia is, I think, to inform people about the latest developments locally and globally. Also, its role is closely connected with the population's being aware of the latest developments, especially important news. Besides learning about news in your own country and all over the world, I think the media is also an excellent way for developing the advertising industry in Armenia, which is quite important for the development of the economy. People can see various ads, for example in order to buy a house or to learn about a conference, through the media. I think the responsibility of the media in Armenia as well as in other countries is to provide accurate and timely information that is important for residents of Armenia. I don't think there is one particular media outlet that does a good job at fulfilling this role, but the role of the media is somewhat fulfilled in general. For example, what one media outlet cannot fulfill, another one can, and vice versa.

*Hayk Ghazaryan (2002-2003) studied at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Alabama, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.*

## Choices Are Hard To Make

by OKSANA GUSELNIKOVA

The primary role of the media in an ideal world is to be unbiased and fair. This is a

utopian ideal as fairness can never be achieved, and our world is not black and white but a broad spectrum of colors in between. Therefore, I think the primary role of the media is to provide a variety of opinions on a particular subject, giving equal weight to all opinions and making all of them easily accessible. This last condition is very important. For example, perhaps you have access to a variety of opinions on a subject and this makes you think that the media overall is quite unbiased since you are free to make your own choice. However, it is also important to consider whether one particular point of view dominates the media while alternative ones need to be searched for. And how many of us are willing to continuously undertake this effort? Probably only in case the information sounds unreliable, or we have some personal bias against what is being said. In most cases, why would anything sound unreliable if we hear it so often from different media channels?

This situation makes most of us accept the prevalent opinion and disregard those that we come across less frequently. This happens unintentionally and probably on a subconscious level, although many would probably argue that they always make a thoughtful choice. And let us believe in that rather than be confused with a variety of alternative viewpoints and left with no indication of which we should believe in, because choices are hard to make.

*Oksana Guselnikova (2001-2002) studied at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.*

## When Media is Controlled

by: NIKOLAY SMIRNOV

Print media in the Russian Federation has a decisive role in forming the attitudes of people to the realities of life since most Russians do not have access to the Internet or foreign broadcasts like the Russian service of



the US Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. There are many television channels, radio stations, newspapers and magazines that can provide all kinds of information to the Russian people. These media outlets are financed by companies who pay for advertising their goods and services in the media. For this reason I believe, Russian media is interested in giving only that information that is approved by those who finance them. Unfortunately, it is well known that there are many criminal elements in Russia that have money and are not interested in giving accurate information on the problems concerning them. For example, accurate information about the real situation in Chechnya is still not available because Chechnya is considered to be an extremely profitable area that attracts a lot of money from different sources. Chechnya is also used to win votes during government elections.

Another example concerns the absence of real information about the distribution of income among the Russian population. Many government officials and media producers often declare in media that their incomes are small, like the majority of the Russian population. I believe they lie because they want to avoid paying taxes for their huge income.

The above examples show that Russians cannot have free media that give objective information on what is going on in Russia. For this reason, Russian media cannot provide a true analysis of events—even about acts of terrorism—since this could lead to losing a sponsor whose interests could be jeopardized.

*Nikolay Smirnov (1994-1995) studied at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah, and is from Moscow, Russia*

try to apply a couple revolutionary techniques, even for the U.S., of soil mapping back in Ukraine and will try to use it in my research projects. Also I definitely like the way the agricultural service works and maybe some day I might be able to improve this service back in Ukraine.”

*Sergiy Smetana studied at the University of Wisconsin-Richland and is from Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine.*

## Inside the Kansas City Communications Office

Olena Pashnina interned at the Kansas City Communications Office that runs a TV channel and publishes a newsletter. About her experience Olena writes, “Of course, I was very nervous when the first task I got was to write an article. Even if I’ve been published a lot of times in the Ukrainian press, I’ve never been published in the U.S. I was not sure how to



*Olena works on a story for the Fountain Pen at the Kansas City Communications Office.*

write in newspaper style, and I had to write in English. My supervisor Teresa Clark was very patient, editing my first story. Truly saying, I rewrote it about three times. But her advice was very valuable and the next article I wrote was much better. So, I got that priceless experience of writing for the American press. And, I’m sure, it will help me a lot in Ukraine. I will be worth much more as a specialist, because I have experience. To this day, three my articles appeared in *Fountain Pen* and, I hope, much more will appear.

Researching for my stories I learned where to get information, how to interview people, and what to ask. I learned editing and how to use Adobe Pagemaker to layout the

continued on next page

# In the Community

## Upward Mobility

newspaper. I also learned some newspaper design tips. I had the opportunity to learn things I would never have had a chance to learn in Ukraine. I also go to do interviews with the TV crew.

*Olena Pashnina studied at the Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas, and is from Lviv, Ukraine.*

### At The Law Firm of Goldberg & Simpson

Tudor Ulianoschi worked at the law company Goldberg & Simpson in Louisville, Kentucky. In addition to giving presentations on Moldova and its legal system, Tudor also assisted with hearings in the Family Court. About his internship Tudor writes, "I think that the most interesting and the most valuable experience I had was my business trip to the capital of the state, Frankfurt. An attorney and I went to Frankfurt to take a deposition of a witness and try to lead the case to a successful solution. After the deposition, the attorney and I went into a room and discussed the possible solutions for the case. After three hours of negotiations the plaintiff finally decided to drop the charges and, after four years of conflicts, the case was closed. This interesting and valuable experience that I had helped me a great deal to observe and understand U.S. legal procedures and the way cases are heard and sometimes solved.

The Goldberg & Simpson law company is the fifth largest law company in the state of Kentucky. Before applying there, I assumed that they would have some international staff. I was the only international member of the company's team.

I found out American people put great emphasis on their work and are business oriented. The American office environment confirms this fact. Every member of the staff takes his/her position very seriously and works hard to succeed. Another important element of the office environment that I like and appreciate is the work ethic. No matter how busy a worker is, I will always hear the words: "Hi Tudor! How are you today?" followed by a pleasant smile. It makes me feel much better almost instantaneously. I admire this combination of seriousness and the sensation of being welcomed.

### Class of 1998-1999

**Philip Moskalenko** was awarded third place in the Far Eastern Regional Computer Competition "Programmer 2003" that was held at the Far Eastern State University (FESU) in Vladivostok, Russia. His presentation was on systems for optimizing transformation of medial knowledge (information) for multiprocessing computer complexes. Philip will continue his research at the Far Eastern branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences after he graduates from FESU this summer. Philip studied at Marshalltown Community College in Marshalltown, Iowa, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.

**Ayla Azizova** received a scholarship from Syracuse University for a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Ayla studied at Utica College of Syracuse University in Utica, New York, and is from Baku, Azerbaijan.

### Class of 1999-2000

**Yulia Krotova** received a scholarship from the government of Japan for two years of graduate study at the University of Tokyo. She will begin doing her graduate research in October 2003. Yulia studied at Lincoln Trail College in Robinson, Illinois, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.

### Class of 2000-2001

**Anna Dovgopol** graduated with a diploma Magna Cum Laude in American Studies from American University Central Asia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, this year. In the fall 2003, she will attend the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, for graduate studies in Gender Issues. Ann studied at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Maine, and is from Kyiv, Ukraine.

**Naila Nemikina** has been hired as the assistant to the secretary of AzPetrol Oil Company. Naila studied at Wabash Community College in Mt. Carmel, Illinois, and is from Ganja, Azerbaijan.

**Maryna Bazylevych**, upon graduation from Khmelnytsky Technological University of Podillia, was admitted to a Ph.D. program in cultural anthropology at the State University of New York at Albany with a teaching assistantship position and full tuition scholarship. Over the past year, she participated in two professional anthropological conferences. This summer, Maryna was awarded a Supplementary Global Grant by the Open Society Institute to support her academic endeavors. She was also given an award for the essay contest "Famous Refugees in Ukrainian His-

tory" organized by the United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees and the Centre of Informational and Creative Activities VERUM. Maryna studied at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is from Khmelnytsky, Ukraine.

**Zara Harutyunyan** was selected to attend summer school courses at the American Institute on Political and Economic Issues, a program of Georgetown University and Charles University of Prague, Czech Republic. Zara studied at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

### Class of 2001-2002

**Afiga Heydarova** participated in a conference entitled "The CIS: Actual Aspects of International Relations" on April 21-25, 2003. The conference was hosted by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was held at Moscow State University of International Relations (MGIMO). Afiga studied at Mississippi State University in Starkville, Mississippi, and is from Baku, Azerbaijan.

**Svetlana Budnyak** was selected to be an exchange student at the Lessius Hogeschool in Antwerp, Belgium, for the Fall 2002 semester. Upon returning home, she continued working for her university's department chair and faculty members in the preparation of study materials, research, correspondence and interpreting for visiting European professors. Svetlana studied in Mississippi State University in Starkville, Mississippi, and is from Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine.

**Varduhy Lavchyan** was awarded first prize in the National Public Speaking Competition in Armenia. She then represented Armenia in a public speaking competition in London in May 2003. Varduhy studied at Marshalltown Community College in Marshalltown, Iowa, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

**Irina Arutyunova** was selected to attend summer school courses at the American Institute on Political and Economic Issues, a program of Georgetown University and Charles University of Prague, Czech Republic. Irina studied at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, and is from Yerevan, Armenia.

**Ivan Pechorin** participated in the U.S.-Russia summit entitled "Democratic Partners" hosted at Stanford University this past April 2003. Ivan studied at Marshalltown Community College in Marshalltown, Iowa, and is from Vladivostok, Russia.

**Elena Semyonova** was awarded first place in a public speaking competition held at Khabarovsk State Academy of Economics and Law. Her speech was devoted to the issues facing physically challenged people in the Russian Federation. Elena studied at Iowa Lakes Community College in Emmetsburg, Iowa, and is from Khabarovsk, Russia.

**Vusale Ahmadova** has been hired as an Administrative and Project Assistant by Junior Achievement. Vusale studied at Neosho County Community College in Chanute, Kansas, and is from Goychay, Azerbaijan.

### Class of 2002-2003

**Olena Ovchynnikova** was invited to attend the International Youth Volunteer Festival held this July in Oslo, Norway. The goals of

the festival included celebrating youth volunteering worldwide, promoting and facilitating youth participation in volunteer activities and building bridges to interconnect—locally and globally—youth volunteer networks. Olena studied at the State University of New York in Oswego, New York, and is from Uman, Ukraine.

**Alexandr Svetlicinii** attended the Annual Third World Conference held by the Third World Foundation in Chicago, Illinois. Alexandr presented a paper on the problem of migration from developing countries to Europe. The goal of the conference was to address problems developing countries face in the age of globalization. Alexandr studied at California State University in Bakersfield, California, and is from Chisinau, Moldova.

## Community Outreach

### How FSAU Alumni Change the World

For the 2002-2003 academic year, FSAU alumni were involved in numerous different community outreach and service events, both in the U.S. and in their home countries. For the 2003-2004 year, projects are currently being developed by the FSAU Alumni Fellows in each country, but they need your help! Volunteer your ideas, skills, and resources to help FSAU alumni give back to their home communities. For ideas, see some of the outreach activities that took place over the past year (below).

### Armenia Focuses on Computer Literacy for Youth

Undergraduate alumni have been working with the Yerevan Boarding School No. 2. The first project, started in January, consisted of a series of three trainings for students in computer and Internet use. As the students had a difficult time with English, undergraduate alumni returned in March and organized a two-month long English course for students from the fifth, sixth and seventh forms. Twenty-three students enrolled in the course, meeting twice a week.

### Baku Alumni Use IATP to Train School Kids in Computer Basics

Alumni in Baku have put their energies and talent into training school kids in basic com-

puter skills. In order to find the kids most in need, alumni conducted careful research to find a school where kids had neither the opportunity nor the equipment to develop computer skills. As part of the training, alumni took the kids to an IATP Computer Lab and held an interactive presentation. Alumni are planning to continue this type training. Undergraduate alumni Salima Jandarova (1999-2000), Ayla Azizova (1998-1999) and Farid Kerimov (1999-2000) helped conduct the training.

### Alumni Bring Leadership to Moldovan High School Students

As a part of their community outreach project, undergraduate alumni in Moldova held a series of seminars for high school students from Moldovan rural areas. One of the seminars held at Soroca focused on leadership, with 29 students from Dimitrie Cantemir Lyceum attending. The seminar was conducted in English, and alumni Tatiana Babii (Undergraduate 2000-2001), Aurica Balmus (Undergraduate 2000-2001) and Silvia Ursu (FLEX 2000) led the seminar. During the leadership session, participants discussed what qualities a leader should possess, they identified what kind of leaders exist and they role-played the way different types of leaders behave in certain situations. During the seminar, participants realized that they have a particular set of leadership skills to share with others.

I want to become a lawyer in the future, and I am sure that my internship position with an American firm will ease my steps on the career ladder.

*Tudor Ulianovschi studied at Spalding University in Louisville, Kentucky and is from Chisinau, Moldova.*

### Accounting Matters

Maksat Koroluev interned at Berry, Fowles & Co., Certified Public Accountants. About his internship he writes, "I consider this opportunity to be extremely helpful for me in terms of getting valuable experience in the area of accounting and finance. Processing tax returns for individuals and corporations, helping accountants with preparations of spreadsheets and trial balances and doing some other clerical work were my basic duties. I also had a chance to get acquainted with the company's management style and colleagues, which I truly appreciated and enjoyed."

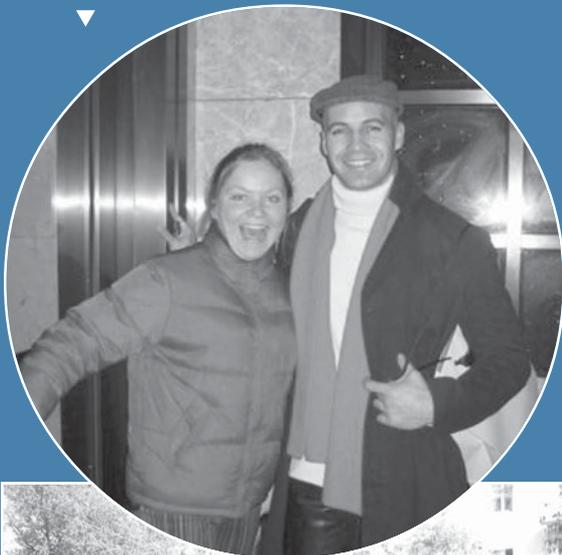
*Maksat Koroluev studied at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Maine, and is from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.*

### Getting to know the Credit Union

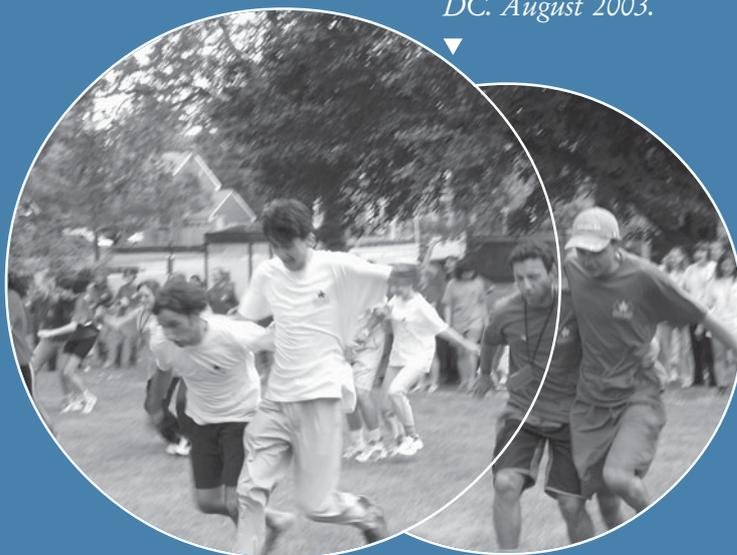
Assel Sakhipova worked at the Rocky Mountain Credit Union. She explains, "This is a very unique place of work for me because there is no such thing as a credit union in Kazakhstan. Our bank is very small: 13 employees not counting myself. My primary task was to compile a procedure manual for the bank. This means recording everyone's tasks and keeping track of changes in different procedures. I updated the manual and made it available for all employees to refer to whenever needed. That is why now I am well acquainted with most of the tasks that credit union employees perform. This was a wonderful learning experience, and I enjoyed it a lot. In addition to that, everyone was very friendly and nice to me. Together we delivered the best service to satisfy our customers' needs and wants by creating an informal, welcoming atmosphere at the Rocky Mountain Credit Union."

*Assel Sakhipova studied at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana, and is from Atyrau, Kazakhstan.*

*Karina Nigmatullina (2002-2003) poses on 5th Avenue in New York with Billy Zane, actor best known from the film Titanic.*



*Current FSAU students play typical games during their orientation in Washington, DC. August 2003.*



*The FSAU students in the...*



*Volgograd-area alumni pose after the re-entry seminar held by Angela Vorobey, 2002-2003 FSAU Alumni Fellow.*



*Moscow-area alumni pose for a formal picture after their August 30 re-entry seminar.*

*"New" and "old" FSAU alumni from Kyrgyzstan are breaking the ice by playing a game called "walking with obstacles" at the Bishkek re-entry seminar.*



*al American  
Washington,*

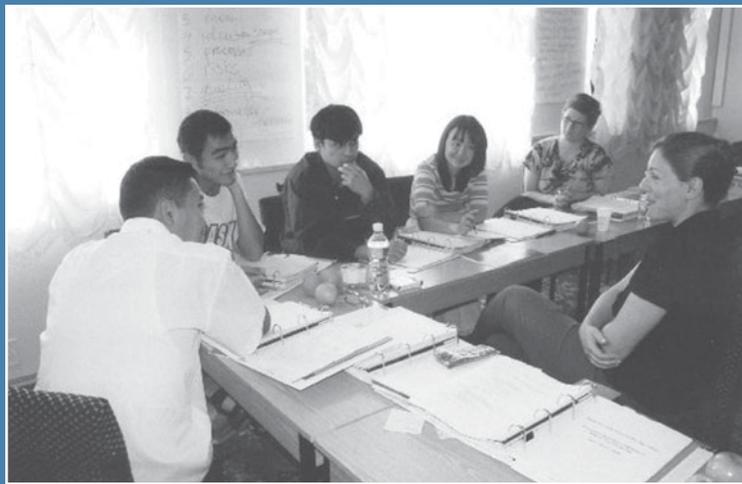


*FSAU Alumni Fellows' soccer team practices evening after a hard day's work.*



*During a Model UN training activity, FSAU Alumni Fellows and ECA Program Manager Lucy Jilka deliberate a proposed resolution.*

*FSAU Alumni Fellows from Central Asia listen to guidance provided during the regional conference planning session.*



*FSAU Alumna Tamara Stebunova (2001-2002) presents her experiences to new returnees during the Almaty re-entry seminar.*



*Tatyana Sklyarova from Novosibirsk and Slava Shirokov from Vladivostok worked hard on their regional conference planning at the FSAU Alumni Fellows' training conference in Moscow, August 2003.*

## Alumni in Action

### Consensus and Debate Highlight the FSAU Regional Alumni Conferences

The Spring 2003 regional conferences held in St. Petersburg, Kyiv, Bishkek and Tbilisi brought together groups of 40-60 FSAU alumni for intense discussions on current affairs and resulted in not only renewed commitment to the FSAU program goals but also expanded networks of alumni throughout the regions. The conferences were engaging, creative and truly showed the high intellectual caliber of FSAU undergrads.

### Our Turn to Take Care: Enhancing Community Service in Russia March 29-29, 2003, St. Petersburg, Russia.

*"The conference gave me an opportunity to meet bright people who are full of fresh ideas, who are self motivated and share their energy with others, who are able to motivate those who surround them and pass their experience, knowledge and attitude to a wider circle of peers."* Natalia Kocheturova (2000-2001) studied at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska, and is from Novosibirsk, Russia.

Prior to traveling to the conference in St. Petersburg, Russia, FSAU alumni from Russia took a look at volunteerism and the kinds of community service projects currently underway in Russia. At the conference, they learned how to work with donors, focused on public relations related to outreach projects, and practiced teambuilding. From local NGO leaders, they learned about human rights projects and how to work



Public health project initiators at the Russian regional conference display their proposal for a feasible and effective approach to their work.

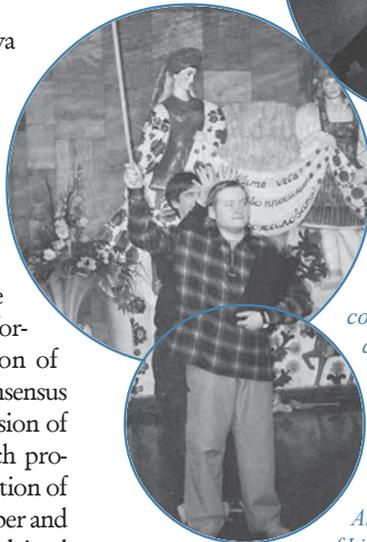
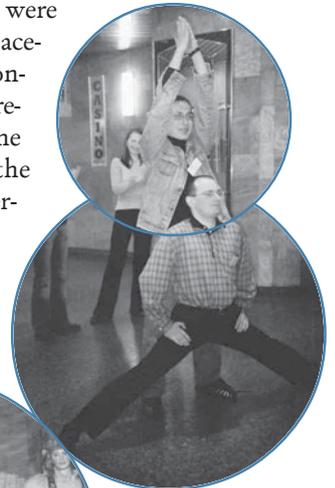
with teens at risk. From their own alumni ranks, Irina Lalayants (FSAU 2001-2002) inspired them with her volunteer work at the women's crisis center "Syostry" ("Sisters"). Throughout the weekend, the alumni worked in groups to identify target areas for enhanced participation in community service outreach in Russia. Proposed projects for future alumni initiatives include women's rights projects, activities to support the development of the rule of law, and a public health initiative. FSAU alumni fellows from Russia will include support for these projects in next year's alumni planning "road map."

### NATO and Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus March 28-30, 2003, Kyiv, Ukraine.

FSAU Alumni from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine used the "Model NATO" simulation technique to debate the question of NATO accession for their countries. To prepare for this exercise, the organizers planned the first day of the conference as a one-day training session on the history and role of NATO from specialists in the region. The director of the NATO Information Center explained the mission of NATO ("not a military bloc, but a consensus of values"), and Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy Marie Yovanovitch provided the U.S. perspective on the function of NATO. A former NATO staff member and expert in security issues Jim Greene explained the Membership Action Plan (MAP) that outlines the process of NATO enlargement, and Oleksiy Makeyev, First Secretary of the Policy Analysis and Planning

Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine gave a speech entitled "Cooperation Between NATO and Ukraine." After the FSAU Alumni Fellows delivered country presentations, the alumni prepared to begin debating. Each alumnus was assigned to represent one of the 19 NATO countries and placed on the political, economic or defense committee. Each committee was tasked with examining the MAP criteria for NATO accession for the three countries, outlining steps to be taken before membership would be offered. The alumni took their roles seriously, re-

ferring to each other in the committee with official titles ("the representative from the Kingdom of Denmark now has the floor") and, even if only temporarily, suppressing their own national feelings for the purpose of examining the issues from an outside perspective. Resolutions from each committee were put forward peacefully and passionately, and the presentations of the resolutions at the end of the conference demonstrated that consensus had been achieved.



Upon receiving their committee assignments, representatives of the 19 NATO countries at the Kyiv conference chose to demonstrate typical images of their new homelands. Pictured are the French committee (top, Eiffel Tower) and the Americans (left, Statue of Liberty).

### Gender and Social Development in Central Asia April 11-13, 2003, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

*"It was so useful because I had a chance to network with other alumni from other countries and talk about gender-related problems; our countries are so much alike and have pretty much the same problems."* Kazimkhan Turaev (2001-2002) studied at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona and is from Uzbekistan.

In Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, FSAU alumni from the Central Asian countries spent three days challenging concepts of gender and identifying urgent areas of concern in the sphere of women's issues. They heard from inspirational leaders such as Camila Sharshkeeva, who attributed her success



Abdujalil Abdurasulov ('01) from Kyrgyzstan demonstrates his group's proposal for a domestic violence hotline at the Central Asia conference.

*workshop—the official resolution, written by delegates—a non-tangible product was the break-up of stereotypes. We learned so much about each other: all three nations have many words in common; marriage practice is very similar in Azerbaijan and Armenia; driving, dating, partying, drinking and many other things seemed so familiar. Even roads and police in the streets of Tbilisi were as bad as in Baku. Yes, after all, this is the Caucasus, a common home for all of us. We departed with sad hearts and long promises to keep in touch. It was a great experience. And only my friend Kamran could not “forgive” the Georgians for the fact that they are allowed to have tinted glass in their cars and we in Azerbaijan are not.” Fariz Ismailzade (1998-1999) studied at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut and is from Baku, Azerbaijan. Re-printed from “A Caucasian Melting Pot,” special article to The Baku Sun.*

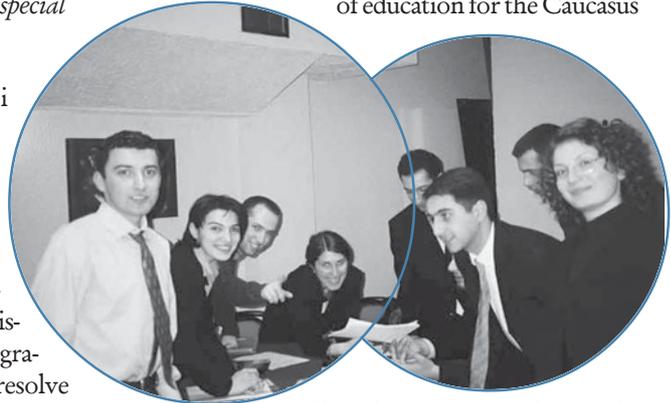
in life to focusing on goals and not concentrating on whether she was a leader or not. The legislative framework surrounding gender issues was presented, and the Kyrgyz parliament's support of women's issues was discussed as a case study. The alumni debated the question of women in the military and role-played the traditional and modern versions of gender expectations in Central Asian culture. They worked in small groups and identified the major challenges in their countries as 1) a lack of gender education, 2) domestic violence, 3) male-dominated leadership and 4) cultural pressures dictating men's and women's roles in society. By the end of the weekend, several groups had pledged themselves to work on the most pressing topic for education and intervention—violence against women and children and date rape. NGO leader Bubusara Ryskulova, the director of *Sezim* (an NGO working on domestic violence issues), invited the alumni to join forces and a group of active alumni trained the attendees in how to teach children about gender issues in regional schools or summer camps.

**Caucasus Integration: The Way to Stability and Prosperity April 18-21, 2003, Tbilisi, Georgia.**

*“Is it allowed to have four wives in Azerbaijan?” one Armenian girl asked me. After that question, I realized how unfamiliar we are about each other's cultures and traditions, even though we live so close to each other. Years of wars and official propaganda have brainwashed generations of people, and now all of us in the Caucasus have stereotypes about each other. For this reason, aside from the tangible result of the*

When the FSAU alumni from Armenia and Azerbaijan traveled to Tbilisi, Georgia, in mid-April for the regional conference, this was the first trip to another Caucasus country for many of them. The discussions about regional integration were not intended to resolve the conflicts that are still unsettled or create economic opportunities and pipelines where none currently exist: they were intended to facilitate the exchange of ideas and recognition of shared values among neighboring alumni and compatriots. As demonstrated by the alumnus' quotation above, this objective was unmistakably realized. After a series of lectures from professors representing the three countries and three perspectives on regional integration, the alumni were launched into a “Mock Parliament” exercise led by FSAU Alumni Fellow Gio Meladze (FSAU 2000-2001) from Tbilisi. Each alumnus was assigned to one

of three committees that were required to draft resolutions on the question of regional integration from the perspective of the economic, political and educational spheres. Although some of the weekend was spent in debates and heated discussions, each committee achieved a negotiated consensus in the end and all resolutions were combined into a single document listing ten “Operatives” they request their governments undertake as a result. They recommended increasing educational and art exchange programs within the Caucasus, and they would like their governments to collaborate on cultural preservation activities on a regional level. They insist their governments cooperate more fully with the Council of Europe, as well as find peaceful resolution to conflict within the framework of the United Nations. The most ambitious of the Operatives included the establishment of a Free Trade Zone among the three countries and the creation of minimum standards of education for the Caucasus



*Elected committee members are happy to complete work on the final resolution at the Caucasus conference. Pictured are (l-r) Fariz Ismailzade and Nezin Bagirova (Azerbaijan), David Mrelashvili (Georgia), Anna Yeghoyan and moderator Arman Gabrielyan (Armenia), Kamran Aga-Zade (Azerbaijan) and Rebecca Hakobyan (Armenia).*



*After the final resolution is presented at the Caucasus conference, the three committees vote for its approval.*

that are equivalent to European standards. The FSAU alumni from the Caucasus are realizing the goals of the FSAU program—reaching for success and not settling for the mistakes of the past. The final resolution was shared with all alumni attendees and is being disseminated to local NGOs, contacts in the various government agencies and at future alumni events.

## Open Forum

# Diary of an FSA Undergrad

by MARINA V. MELNICHUK

In 1995 I came to the U.S. as an FSA Undergraduate. While I have simplified and exaggerated some details—you'll know which ones—the basic facts are true.

**May 1995.** Late phone call from the program coordinator. I am accepted! I am going to America for a year! Wow! Feel excited, nervous and scared. My Mom is probably even more scared, and we spend half the night sitting on the floor next to the phone chatting.

**August 1995.** Flight to the States. It's like a fairy tale. The magic starts on the wonderful Delta Airlines plane when the flight attendant serves complimentary beverages. What shall I have? Orange juice? Diet Coke? It's great to have so many choices.

Middlebury, Vermont. Orientation week. Oh, I love it here! The campus is so tidy and green, my dorm is like a dollhouse, and there are pretty squirrels everywhere. The counselors are friendly and considerate. Vermont scenery is beyond all imagination. Lake Champlain and the waterfalls are fantastic! Every morning I wake up with the pleasant feeling of anticipation: what good things are going to happen to me today?

"Hygiene talk." Feel slightly perplexed and puzzled. They are actually teaching us about taking a shower every day, washing our clothes after a single use, shaving our legs and using deodorant. Although the counselor conducts this workshop in a tactful and polite manner, I feel a bit disturbed.

**September 1995.** Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. Another doll-like neat campus. Being able to *choose* the classes I am going to take is sensational! What shall I take? Art History? Political Science? Women's Studies? The professors are wonderful, and I actually understand everything they say! Hurray! I am not dumb!

**October 1995.** Inauguration ceremony of the new college president, and I have a job. I am an usher showing guests to their seats and distributing programs. Feel full of importance. Am wearing my best outfit: a low-cut crimson jacket with golden buttons and a black silk skirt all brought from home. Oops! My supervisor tells me that, though I do look good, such bright colors are not very suitable for the solemn event and too much cleavage for the early afternoon.

Start watching other people's clothes. Want to look like a true American. Buy a lot of jeans and T-shirts, as if clothes could change me, as if they could help me get rid of my accent. Shopping is therapy.

**November 1995.** Do surprisingly well on my midterms. Get As and one B+. Professors sing my praises and make me blush. The political science professor says I have written the best essay on the industrial revolution she has ever read in her life. I am positively a genius.

I spend a lot of time with Kersti from Estonia, Ira from Ukraine, Szusza and Barnabaš from Hungary, Oleg from Belarus and Davor from Croatia, but why is it I don't have *American* friends? They are all very nice, friendly and polite, but how come I never get really close to any of them? Why do they always ask, "Where did you shop?"

**December 1995.** Am invited to the college president's Christmas reception for international students. Feel happy and excited.

An e-mail from my academic advisor arrives. Ohmigod! It's about *hygiene rules!* Not again! "*Brush your teeth twice a day. Take a shower every day. Wash with soap. Wash everywhere. Come to the reception smelling of detergent.*" Goodness gracious! Do I look dirty? Do I smell bad?

Oleg and Kersti get the same message. Kersti and I spend the night sobbing, "Now tell me honestly, Kersti, do I really stink terribly?" Oh well.

Do wonderful on my finals. Get almost straight As. Gosh, I am on the Honors List! **December 1995 – January 1996.** Christmas break! Feel very mature and grown-up planning a trip, ordering tickets and making reservations. Plane delays, youth hostels, dozens of new acquaintances from all over the world. Feel overwhelmed. I love this country. Great landscapes. Great cities. Absolutely fabulous art museums. Extraordinarily delicious food. Get a new haircut, lose 10 pounds, buy more jeans and sweaters and come back to Trinity fresh and lovely.

**February 1996.** Start going to the gym every day. Get a Valentine from the hazel-eyed Josh, a senior. Wow! I might be one of them after all.

**March 1996.** Bump into Josh in the morning. Apparently, he is seeing Heidi, a girl from my dorm. Well, she is blond, slim, American and shops at Saks Fifth Avenue and Bloomingdale's. Feel bitter and angry.

My Feminist Theory class is really good. Incredibly interesting, challenging and altering my perspective.

Go to Boston for the weekend and buy shoes from Nine West—so veeeery sophisticated.

**April 1996.** Feel terribly nostalgic. Want home! Want to see people who speak Russian, know nothing about tofu and shop in the same clothes market! Tired of pearly-white fake smiles, blue jeans and *Hootie and the Blowfish* music. Feel deeply depressed.

Fantastic break in Florida with Kersti. I love Disney World! Roller coasters! Water parks! Warm weather! Return to Trinity somewhat restored.

**May 1996.** Feel I have to squeeze as much as possible into my last month. Hang around with my usual crowd of East European friends. I love campus life.

Flight home. Feel quiet and sad. The year is over. I'll never go to Professor Hunter's wonderful Shakespeare class again. I'll never dance with Bo, my stunning sensual black date from Ghana. And will I ever see the Grand Canyon, eat Chinese egg rolls or go to a modern dance show? Will I ever get a chance to choose classes, surf the Net, and try on dozens of pretty bathing suits, which actually fit my voluptuous self?

**June 1996.** Back home. Why are the lawns so untidy? Doesn't anybody cut grass here? Why is there so much rubbish on the streets? Why isn't Coke on sale icy cold? Why are the lectures of our professors so boring and pathologically un-challenging? And do any of these people on the bus ever use deodorant?

There's definitely something like reverse cultural shock after all.

Now I can say that year was really one of the greatest and most exciting periods of my life. I became much more grown up and mature. My mentality and ways of thinking changed a lot. I became more socially and politically conscious and got rid of a lot of complexes. I saw so many beautiful and interesting things and places, and met so many people of different backgrounds. And now I can say that despite some moments of uneasiness in the somewhat arrogant and snobbish New England college environment, I actually had a wonderful time.

*Marina Melnichuk (1995-1996) went to Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and is from Vologda, Russia.*

# FSAU University Award Helps Writers Hone Newspaper Skills

Qobil Yunusov successfully completed his University Award project aimed at improving his institute's school newspaper this past spring. He and fellow FSAU alumna and newspaper editor, Inoyat Sadikova, recruited four team members for the project and carried out several training sessions to prepare them for their work. At IATP, they learned how to utilize resources on the Internet, such as collecting materials for the newsletter, obtaining permission to use copyrighted material, and

translating material into Uzbek. The team worked on the newspaper weekly, soliciting material from students and setting up a "mobile mailbox" to collect new material. The team also developed a new section for the newspaper called "Student Life Abroad," and has begun brainstorming other new sections. The team will continue contributing to their institute's newspaper, gaining valuable experience for careers in journalism.



*Qobil Yunusov is a 2001-2002 FSAU alumnus of Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, and a Spring 2003 graduate of the Andijan Institute of Engineering and Economics in Andijan City, Uzbekistan.*

## 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

**WHY:** For enhanced cultural, academic or social atmosphere on your home university campus

**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.

**WHERE:** ECA alumni from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) are eligible to apply.

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

state alumni

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, US Department of State

## State Alumni

The Online Community by and for Alumni of US Department of State Exchange Programs

**When you join State Alumni, you can:**

- ◆ Network with over 750 UGrad alumni
- ◆ Search job listings and career resources
- ◆ Pursue grant opportunities
- ◆ Browse alumni news and photo gallery
- ◆ Join the alumni ListServ

Visit <https://alumni.state.gov> to join today!

## Bulletin Board

### 2003-2004 FSAU Alumni Fellows: Here's What They Have to Say . . .

*In July 2003, fifteen new FSAU Alumni Fellows were hired to carry out alumni activities for FSAU alumni for the 2003-2004 year. They attended an intense five-day training conference in Moscow, Russia, and shared their thoughts on their new role, the meaning of being an FSAU alumnus, and their personal goals and objectives with us.*



**Hasmik Minasyan, Armenia**

*What advice do you have for returning fellows?*

The most important thing is to be patient and optimistic. I know that many of you have problems with your universities, friends and families. You think that nobody understands you and nobody cares about you. I assure you, it's not like that. People just need time to understand that you are different from them, you have not changed your attitudes and warm feelings toward them. You need to act—use your knowledge and experience to do things, and people will appreciate it.

*What is your dream job?*

I have always dreamed of opening a school in my hometown of Gyumri, Armenia. I would like it to have classrooms with computers and Internet, a huge library with comfortable sofas and desks, a gym with a swimming pool, etc. Besides studying they'll also have a chance to have fun—to organize performances and concerts. So now I'm working on this and I hope the experience I got in the U.S. will help me realize my dream in the future.

#### Salima Jandarova, Azerbaijan



*How do you define FSAU alumni?*

FSAU alumni are flexible, open-minded, eager to learn new things and are enthusiastic young people. Though some of them are still like "energy without direction," it is our job to help them find the right direction.

*What is your dream job?*

My dream job is to become an investigator, because investigation is like a never-ending process. Not only do you have to learn new

things, but also you have to implement them in the correct way.



**Nadezhda Potapchik, Belarus**

*How do you define FSAU alumni?*

FSAU alumni are the ambassadors who brought their culture to the U.S. and learned about American culture. They became the connectors who continue to strengthen the bridge of understanding between those cultures through implementing their knowledge and experience gained over the last year.

*What advice do you have for returning fellows?*

Be courageous; don't be afraid of challenges! You are wise, creative, smart and talented. There is nothing that is impossible to a willing heart.

#### David Kapanadze, Georgia



*Why did you apply for the Alumni Fellow position?*

I applied for this position to maintain and develop/expand the friendly and professional relationships among alumni—a very useful resource that can be used for the good of our community.

*What do you hope to achieve for the alumni in your region?*

I hope, and I will do my best, to support the alumni to achieve their goals by giving them different opportunities to exchange their experiences and ideas; by helping them acquire and improve the skills necessary to achieve their goals by holding training sessions, seminars and other educational activities.



**Yuliya Pak, Kazakhstan**

*What is the role of regional alumni work (conferences)?*

The role of regional conferences is to promote collaboration among neighboring countries through the FSAU Alumni Fellows. These Fellows can change the lives of their nation by sharing their ideas with the people of their region.

*What professional skills do you hope to*

*gain as an FSAU alumni fellow?*

I personally will gain solid organizational skills. I will develop my creativity and implement the best part of it.



**Abdujalil Abdurasulov, Kyrgyzstan**

*Where do you hope to be in five years?*

In five years I hope I'll be working in the area of conflict prevention somewhere in the Ferghana Valley.

*What do you hope to achieve for the alumni of your region?*

I hope to strengthen the alumni I network and our relationship. One of my goals is to help alumni get involved in various activities. Also, I will do my best for our alumni so that they enjoy the future regional conference.

#### Tudor Ulianovschi, Moldova



*Why did you apply for the Alumni Fellow position?*

When you spend a year in the U.S. and come back to your country, it is absolutely impossible to stay put. Your head is full of ideas and your mind is ready for action. In this situation, I felt that I had a duty to implement ideas and share the experiences accumulated by Moldovan alumni and the entire Moldovan society. Alumni must understand the important role they play in our community and feel responsible.

*What was your favorite aspect of being in the U.S.?*

From my perspective, the best aspect of American life is the active participation of millions of American citizens in community service activities.



**Tatiana Sklyarova, Russia - Novosibirsk**

*What professional skills do you hope to gain as an Alumni Fellow?*

I hope to gain the skills of a director (showing the right direction, ability to keep the big picture in mind); monitor (keeping stock of what's going on); motivator (encouraging people to participate); and facilitator (doing the right things!).

**What is the FSAU alumni mission?**

Encouraging alumni to serve the community, the country, and themselves!



**Olga Sigaeva,  
Russia – St. Petersburg**

**Why did you apply for the Alumni Fellow position?**

First, I wanted to apply the experience I received in the U.S. to my own country. Second, the responsibilities of the Alumni Fellow position are pretty similar to the responsibilities of a public relations practitioner, which will be my future profession. Such activities as managing different projects, networking, and organizing various events are all suitable to me, and I hope I can manage them all. Third, I'd like to be helpful to all alumni in St. Petersburg and Northwest Region by organizing a community of Ugrad alumni.

**Where do you hope to be in five years?**

I dream to live in my country, either in St. Petersburg or Moscow, because both of them are beautiful cities... I truly want Russia to become more economically strong and developed. I hope I could contribute to its development and improvement.

**Vladislav Shirokov, Russia - Vladivostok**



**What do FSAU alumni have to offer their communities?**

FSAU alumni tend to be some of the most liberal elements of our societies. Fueled by ideas acquired while studying in the U.S., they have the potential to assist in the evolution of Russia liberalism and actively engage in increasing the general populace's awareness of human rights, tolerance, and the role of a citizen. Moreover, influenced by American Puritan traditions such as hard work, they act as examples to many of their peers.

**What is the FSAU alumni mission?**

To create a network of passionate young people who unite local alumni for the purpose of motivation, so that they can continue making our societies better.



**Bokhtar Bakozade,  
Tajikistan**

**Where to you hope to be in five years?**

Reconciling different cultures is challenging to me. I always admired other cultures—whether Japanese or Indian, Islamic or Hispanic. By learning about other cultures, we can bridge the gap that exists between cultures that separate us, (which is, presumably, the source of terrorism). So, maybe, I hope that in five years I'll start to travel around the world, and I'll start with the Arab world.

**What do you hope to achieve for the alumni in your region?**

The most important thing for alumni in my region is to help them feel they are not alone, to create a sense of community. It's very important to express to them that we all share the same experience and problems, and that we can deal with them and solve them together.

**Firyuza Babayeva,  
Turkmenistan**



**What do you hope to achieve for the alumni in your region?**

When I was leaving the States, I was very sad that this unique adventure had come to an end. But one day my advisor told me not to be upset about it, that my adventure is just going to start upon returning home. He said, "You are a new Firyuza now and I have faith in you that you're ready to become SOMEBODY!!" Those words meant a lot to me and have inspired me to go on in this challenging life. Shortly, I'll help alumni continue old projects and develop new projects as well. And I'll do my best to make this new adventure for all alumni a fruitful, valuable and happy one.

**Why did you apply for the Alumni Fellow position?**

For me personally, it was a big and important step to take over the responsibilities of the FSAU alumni fellow. There are lots of reasons I wanted this position but the main reason is to keep building a strong, effective and goal-oriented Ugrad alumni community which will contribute its best to the prosperity of our country.

**Viktoria Volkova,  
Ukraine – Kyiv**



**What advice do you have for returning fellows?**

Never stop dreaming! There are so many dreams in your minds that are worth implementing in your own country as well as worldwide. Don't forget—everything in the world is done by a human being just like you and me. Can you imagine how many great things you can do?

**What would you like to contribute to your home country?**

I want to educate the children of my country about the rights they have according to local and international standards, as well as the importance of advocating those rights.

**Dmytro Grygorenko,  
Ukraine – Kharkiv**



**What professional skills do you hope to gain as an FSAU Alumni Fellow?**

Becoming an FSAU Alumni Fellow, I begin my professional life and hence my career. During my work I will gain tons of different skills. Keeping in mind that there are no limits to perfection, I'll be developing and expanding my leadership, organizational, communication, and risk management skills.

**What is the FSAU alumni mission?**

The mission of FSAU alumni is to become fabulous citizens who will do their best to improve their communities, their societies.



**Kozimkhon Turaev,  
Uzbekistan**

**What advice do you have for returning fellows?**

From my own experience, I know that it's usually hard for new returnees to adjust to life in home society. But they should not give up and should try to think of ways the issues in their home countries could be solved with the help of alumni themselves.

**What is your dream job?**

Since I love discovering new places, cultures and lifestyles, I believe being an ambassador for my country would be my dream job.

## American Councils Offices

### ARMENIA

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
18/2 Marshall Baghramyan Ave.  
Yerevan, Armenia 375019  
tel: (374-1) 56-14-10  
Ugrad Alumni Fellow: Hasmik Minasyan, ugrad@accels.am

### AZERBAIJAN

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
ul. Akmad Javad 5, kv 3  
Baku, Azerbaijan 370001  
tel/fax: (99412) 92-34-50  
Alumni Fellow: Salima Jandarova,  
ugrad@americancouncils.az

### BELARUS

Minsk  
Alumni Fellow: Nadezhda Potapchik,  
ugradalumni@amcenter.by

### GEORGIA

American Councils for International Education  
2, Arakishvili Street,  
Tbilisi, Georgia 380079  
tel/fax: (995-32) 29-21-06  
Alumni Fellow: Dato Kapanadze,  
ugrad@amcouncils.ge

### KAZAKHSTAN

American Councils for International Education, Inc.  
Seifullin Ave. 531, office 604  
Almaty, Kazakhstan 480091  
tel: (73272) 63-30-06  
Alumni Fellow: Yulia Pak,  
smartjuly@yahoo.com

### KYRGYZSTAN

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
Tynystanova 98, Flat 1  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 720000  
tel/fax: (996-312) 22-18-82  
Alumni Fellow: Abdujalil Abdurasulov,  
abdurasulov@accels.elcat.kg

### MOLDOVA

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
37B Tricolorului St.  
Chisinau, MD -2012  
tel: (3732) 22-58-60  
Alumni Fellow: Tudor Ulianoschi,  
ugradalumni@accels.dnt.md

### RUSSIA

**Ekaterinburg**  
American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
620144 Ekaterinburg  
ul. Khokhryakova 104, office 309  
Tel/fax: (3432) 22-74-23  
Natalia Koroleva,  
highed@ural.actr.ru

### Moscow

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
Leninskiy prospekt, 2, kom. 504  
Moscow, Russia, 119049  
Tel.: (095) 230-45-90  
Alumni Coordinator: Andrey Muchnik, ugradalum@actr.ru  
Alumni Assistant: Anastasia Zubrilina, ugradassist@actr.ru

### Nizhniy Novgorod

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
6 Zelensky S'ezd  
Nizhny Novgorod, 603600  
Valeria Erofeeva, actr@kis.ru

### Novosibirsk

ACCELS  
Prospekt Lavrenteva, 17, 1st floor, 4th entrance, rooms 1-3  
Novosibirsk, Russia 630090  
tel: (3832) 34-42-93  
Alumni Fellow: Tatyana Sklyarova, ugalum@ieie.nsc.ru

### Samara

ACTR  
ul. Tsiolkovskogo 1A, kom 5  
Samara, Russia 443100  
tel/fax: (8462) 42-45-76  
Arkady Andreichuk,  
actr@samaramail.ru

### St. Petersburg

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
Nab.Fontanka 44  
St. Petersburg, Russia 191025  
tel. : (812) 311-76-55  
Alumni Coordinator: Olga Sigaveva, s\_helga@hotmail.com

### Vladivostok

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
Okeanskiy prospekt, d. 15a,  
Vladivostok, Russia 690091  
hedTel.: (4232) 40-69-69  
Alumni Fellow: Vladislav Shirokov,  
slava\_shirokov@hotmail.com

### Volgograd

ACTR  
ul. Port Saida 18, kom 18  
Volgograd, Russia 400066  
tel/fax: (8442) 36-42-85  
Elena Konkina,  
volgactr@advent.avtlg.ru

### TAJIKISTAN

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, Inc.  
105 Rudaki Ave., apt. 13 and 14  
Dushanbe 734001  
Tajikistan  
Phone/Fax: (992-372) 21-1795  
Alumni Fellow: Bokhtar Bakozade, ugrad@actr-tj.org

### TURKMENISTAN

ACCELS  
78 Maktymguly, 1st Floor  
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan 744000  
tel/fax: (993-12) 39-53-28  
Alumni Fellow: Firuza Babayeva,  
ugradfellow@online.tm

### UKRAINE

**Dnipropetrovsk**  
American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
pr. Karla Marksa 35, korp. 5, kim. 31  
Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine 49044  
tel: (0562) 45-23-40  
Veronica Zhukovska,  
accels@email.dp.ua

### Kharkiv

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
Suite 278, kor. 1  
Maidan Svobody 7  
Kharkiv, Ukraine 61022  
tel: (0572) 45-62-78  
Alumni Fellow: Dmytro Grygorenko,  
ugradalumni@americancouncils-kharkiv.org.ua

### Kyiv

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
vul. Melnykova 63  
Kyiv, Ukraine 04050  
Tel.: (38044)246-8221  
Alumni Fellow: Viktoriya Volkova,  
ugradalumni@americancouncilskiyv.org.ua

### Lviv

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
vul. Ferents Listy, bud. 4  
Lviv, Ukraine 79000  
tel/fax: (0322) 97-11-25  
Iryna Chuyan:  
accels@accels.lviv.ua

### Odesa

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS  
vul. Staroportofrankivska 26,  
kim. 61  
South Ukrainian Pedagogical University  
Odesa, Ukraine 65020  
tel/fax: (048) 732-15-16  
Lyudmyla Stolyarova,  
general@americancouncilsodesa.org.ua

### UZBEKISTAN

ACCELS  
68 ulitsa Konstitutsii  
Tashkent 700031  
Uzbekistan  
tel: (998-71) 152-12-81/86  
Alumni Fellow: Kozimkhon Turaev,  
ugalumni@actr.bcc.com.uz

## IREX Offices

### ARMENIA

IREX/Yerevan  
50 Khanjyan Street, Yerevan  
375010  
irex@irex.am  
(374)(2)56-37-81

### AZERBAIJAN

IREX/Baku  
1 Sharifzade Street, "Zerkalo",  
Baku, 370138  
irex@iatp.baku.az  
(994)(12) 97-75-02

### BELARUS

IREX/Minsk  
73 Varvasheni Street, 5th floor,  
Minsk 220002  
irex@irex.by  
(375) 17-226-0687

### GEORGIA

IREX/Tbilisi  
62 Chavchavadze Avenue,  
Tbilisi 380062  
irex@access.sanet.ge  
(995-32) 25-06-78

### KAZAKHSTAN

IREX/Almaty  
ul. K. Karmysova, 76, Almaty  
480100  
irex@freenet.kz  
(7) (3272)63-88-31

### KYRGYZSTAN

IREX/Bishkek  
National Acad. of Sciences, pr.  
Chuy, 265, Room 106, Bishkek  
720071  
irex@freenet.kg  
(996)(312)61-08-11

### MOLDOVA

IREX/Chisinau  
180 Stefan cel Mare Boulevard.,  
Office 1219, Chisinau MD-2004  
idatii@irex.md  
(373-2) 24-65-24

### RUSSIA

**Moscow**  
IREX/Moscow  
Gazetny pereulok, 5, Moscow  
125993  
irexmos@irex.ru  
(095)956-0978

### Vladivostok

IREX/Vladivostok  
ul. Svetlanskaya, 150, 3rd floor,  
Vladivostok 690005  
irexvlad@irex.vl.ru  
(4232) 22-22-37

### TAJIKISTAN

IREX/Dushanbe  
pr. Rudaki 103, apt. 10,  
Dushanbe 734001  
irexdir@irex-tj.org  
(3772) -24-58-65

### TURKMENISTAN

IREX/Ashgabat  
American Center, 78 Magtymkuly  
Street, 2nd floor, Ashgabat  
744000  
irex@iatp.edu.tm  
10-993-66-30-79-20

### UKRAINE

IREX/Kyiv  
vul. M. Hrushevskoho, 4, kim.  
210, Kyiv 252001  
staff@kyiv.irex.org  
(380) (44) 228-8637

### UZBEKISTAN

IREX/Tashkent  
4 Bobur Street, Tashkent  
700003  
irextash@irex.org.uz  
(998-712) 55-83-58

## PAS Alumni Staff

### AZERBAIJAN

Afet Ibrahimova  
Alumni Contact  
aibrahimova@pd.state.gov

### BELARUS

Irina Ivleva  
Alumni Contact  
iivleva@pd.state.gov

### GEORGIA

Magda Magradze  
Alumni Contact  
magradzem@state.gov

### KAZAKHSTAN

Karlygash Balapanova  
Alumni Coordinator  
kbalapan@pd.state.gov

### KYRGYZSTAN

Nazgul Toktosunova  
Alumni Contact  
toktosunovank@state.gov

### MOLDOVA

Irina Colin  
Alumni contact  
icochisn@pd.state.gov

### RUSSIA

Anna Poplavko  
Alumni Coordinator  
poplavkoav@state.gov

### TURKMENISTAN

Dinara Matkarimova  
Alumni Coordinator  
matkarimovadr@state.gov

### UKRAINE

Vira Maxymova  
Alumni Coordinator  
vmaxymov@pd.state.gov

### UZBEKISTAN

TBD  
Alumni Coordinator  
smmtash@pas.usembassy.uz



**F R E E D O M**  
**S U P P O R T A C T**  
Undergraduate  
P r o g r a m