

# Muskie Messenger

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## Muskie Fellow Selected as Guest Speaker at Inauguration of New University President

**Rustam Bekmuradov** (Muskie 2007) was selected from a pool of graduate and international students and recommended by the Dean of Graduate Studies to deliver a speech and greetings at the ceremony of the inauguration of the Fifth President of the University of Alabama-Huntsville, Dr. David Williams. Mr. Bekmuradov spoke on behalf of the graduate students by delivering brief remarks congratulating the new president and speaking on the theme of "The Roles and Responsibilities of Research Universities."



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## Fellow Spends Spring Break Assisting Communities on Gulf Coast

**Tatiana Golubko** (Muskie 2007) decided to spend her spring break in March as a volunteer for the Mississippi Center for Justice ("MCJ"), a nonprofit public interest law firm. The trip was organized by the Duke University Public Interest and Pro Bono program. Four volunteers from Duke and nearly twenty volunteers from the University of Idaho and Roger Williams law schools spent a week on the gulf coast in Mississippi.

Ms. Golubko decided to participate in a project that involved conducting a survey in a low-income African-American neighborhood in Gulfport, MS. The purpose of the survey was gathering information on whether people living in the neighborhood were aware of the prospective expansion of the inland part of the local seaport next to their neighborhood, and whether they supported the project or opposed it. After conducting the survey, the legal volunteers transferred the results into statistical data so that the MCJ lawyers could convey them to the state representatives to prevent the expansion of the industrial facilities in the immediate vicinity of the residential area.

According to Ms. Golubko, "It [was] a great and unforgettable experience, which enabled me not only to see a different America, meet and talk to people I would not otherwise have had an opportunity to talk to, but also to learn about some of America's problems such as poverty and social inequality, which I had no idea existed in this country, and about the way lawyers can make a difference in resolving such problems. Through participation in this project I received an invaluable experience in conducting a so-called client interview, which involves establishing mutual understanding with members of a community which was alien for me and to be able to convey information to them and interpret their responses correctly. Finally, it was a great chance for me to experience working in a non-profit area and feel the difference in comparison to a working environment of a corporate lawyer."



Tatiana Golubko (second from right), with other volunteers in Gulfport, MS.

## Host University Advisor Shares Her Experience Working with Muskie Fellows

Mary Pagliero is the International Student Advisor at the University of West Alabama in Livingston, Alabama. She has been working with Muskie fellows for three years, and serves as the host university advisor. She assists fellows with all non-academic issues.

### How do you fill the roles of host advisor, mentor, and friend with different fellows?

I begin by picking up the Muskie fellow from the airport. During the two-hour drive from Birmingham to Livingston, I try to introduce myself and to get to know a bit about the fellow. Since the Muskie fellow is housed in an apartment on campus, I make sure he or she gets settled in. During the weeks that follow, I make myself available to the fellow. There is no public transportation in town and there are no shopping malls, so I take the fellow shopping and show him or her around the area. I introduce the fellow to their academic advisor and the members of the university administration. I encourage the Muskie fellow to contact me with any non-academic questions throughout their stay on campus.

### What do you like about advising Muskie fellows?

What I like about my position is that I am helping a "stranger in a strange land." I've traveled abroad and know what it is like to be in a culture different from one's own. I was so grateful to have individuals assist me when I was confused and in need of help. I want the Muskie fellow and all of our international students to have someone on campus they can come to without hesitation. I like to consider myself a facilitator, someone who directs internationals to officials who can help or to give them help as I can when I can. My life is much richer because of my association with the Muskie fellows and the other international students. I learn so much about them and their cultures. They are delightful individuals with whom I can interact.

### What are some challenges you face in advising fellows?

My greatest challenge is to be at all times sensitive to the needs of individuals whose culture is different from my own. I do not always anticipate correctly what the Muskie fellows might feel, think, or want because our expectations are often so very different.

### What accomplishments have you seen Muskies make during their time in the U.S.?

Denys Lupshenyuk (Muskie 2005) arrived on campus with limited computer skills. In two years, his skill level advanced such that he developed an International Center website for UWA and the International Student Association website, and he directed his studies in the area of teaching and the use of technology. Denys took full advantage of his opportunity to advance his knowledge in every area he studied. His level of eagerness to learn was well beyond the level of eagerness to learn found in most students on campus. Denys and Galina Chira (Muskie 2007) both have intensity and drive to excel in their studies. Perhaps this is their chance to fulfill a dream, and they are making the most of their time in school here.

### Are there any benefits that you see to being a Muskie fellow? What about challenges?

My observation is that there are many benefits to being a Muskie fellow. One particularly outstanding benefit is that the scholarship allows an individual with little money to live and study abroad. The Muskie fellows' personal experience of the U.S. culture will allow them to take back to their countries first-hand knowledge of U.S. life, education, politics, etc. The challenges are those that come with living in another culture that one knows little about and living away from one's family and friends.

### What aspects of your work with fellows might surprise people?

I don't know that there are any aspects of my work that surprise people. However, a number of my colleagues are puzzled by my readiness and even eagerness to spend the time that is necessary to introduce a Muskie fellow to American culture and to assist them in learning about check books, a checking account, the process of applying for phone service, the process of shopping and interacting with sales clerks, etc. I simply want to make sure that each Muskie fellow becomes comfortable on our campus and in the U.S. It takes time to transition to a new culture, and I want to be available to assist during each step of that transition.

### What about Muskie fellows has surprised you or been different from your expectations?

I was a bit surprised to find that both of the Muskie fellows had genuinely warm personalities and to witness their willingness to accommodate inconveniences. I did expect them to be friendly, but they each are individuals with whom one can develop a relationship that is personal, a relationship that can develop into a friendship. I will call each of the Muskie fellows my friend for life.



Mary Pagliero and Denys Lupshenyuk (Muskie 2005).

## CURRENT MUSKIE NEWS

### Fellow Extends her Professional Connections from the Great Lakes to Kazakhstan

As part of a class on grant writing at Grand Valley State University, **Ainur Nurtai** (Muskie 2007) wrote a grant proposal on behalf of the Enbekshikazakh Community Foundation in Kazakhstan to get funding for its sustainability and grant writing capacity for the European Community Foundation Center. The proposal was successful and the Enbekshikazakh Community Foundation received \$12,000.

Ms. Nurtai has been very focused on linking her academic and community service activities to her future in Kazakhstan. For example, Ms. Nurtai has been working closely with the professors and staff at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership. She hopes that this collaboration will lead to the first center for philanthropy in Kazakhstan. According to Ms. Nurtai, "Corporate social responsibility is highly developing and encouraged in Kazakhstan, [and] I could work to lead this into strategic philanthropy or venture philanthropy." Two professors at the Johnson Center have

already indicated their intentions to visit Kazakhstan and give lectures and presentations on these topics.

In addition, Ms. Nurtai wrote a grant proposal, as part of a class assignment, on behalf of the First Kazakh Community Foundation, which is established and supported by Eurasia Foundation and Philip Morris Kazakhstan. The grant was supported by the European Community Foundation Support organization. Ms. Nurtai has been communicating with the program director at a Grand Rapids community organization, who is interested in developing a community foundation in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. However, according to Ms. Nurtai, "the problem is that there is no concept and history of community foundations and endowment in Kazakhstan." In order to assist with this project, Ms. Nurtai plans to spend her summer internship with the Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

Lastly, Ms. Nurtai is also gaining invaluable experience with the international organization Sow Hope, which is based in Michigan. She was invited to serve on the board of the organization until the end of her fellowship in the U.S.

### Community Service Leads to the American Red Cross National Convention of Volunteers

As a Red Cross volunteer, **Iryna Matveeva** (Muskie 2006) was invited to

participate in the American Red Cross National Convention of Volunteers in Baltimore, MD from March 24-28, 2008. As Ms. Matveeva explains, "I started my volunteering as a subject matter expert with the American Red Cross National headquarters last summer upon completion of my summer internship with this organization. At the national convention, I was chosen as one of a hundred volunteers across the country to participate in the annual parade of volunteers. The costume of each volunteer represented an epoch in the history of the American Red Cross. I also volunteered with facilitating sessions and arranging logistics at the event. I am honored and proud to have established this strong connection with such a prominent U.S. organization. I am looking forward to continuing my work with the American Red Cross in the future even as I return to Ukraine."



Iryna Matveeva in a vintage Red Cross costume of a motor division nurse with one of the youngest Red Cross volunteers, Ward Johnson.

## CURRENT MUSKIE NEWS

### Fundraising Effort Leads to Applied Learning Spring Break Opportunity in Japan

**Dinara Ibraim Kyzy** (Muskie 2007) studies business administration at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, GA and also works as a graduate assistant with a professor from the Management and Entrepreneurship Department. Students enrolled in the class "Applied Global Business Strategies" could travel to Japan during their spring breaks for a ten-day business study tour and cultural immersion.

Ms. Ibraim Kyzy worked with her professor for the class, Dr. Hope Torkornoo, to raise funds for the trip. She contacted various people to support her in her fundraising goal. During the trip, the students visited Tokyo and Kyoto and met with companies such as Coca-Cola Japan Co., Ltd., AFLAC Japan, Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd., Hitachi Ltd., IBM Japan and Murata Manufacturing Co., Ltd. All the companies presented their strategy formulation and implementation from a global and local (Japanese market) perspective.

According to Ms. Ibraim Kyzy, "The tour was all about learning global strategies

of truly global companies, learning the key qualities of successful business leaders, exploring a very rich culture with unique people, and networking. I think this class was one of the best classes I ever had, since I was able to apply all the theoretical material which I learned in the class immediately to real companies. It was an excellent opportunity for my personal development as well. This experience prepared me and made me one step closer to my career path as an international entrepreneur and successful strategic consultant and helped me to develop critical practice and thinking skills. Now I have awareness not only of the theory and practice of strategies and how these are integrated in the workplace, but I also gained insights into working and communicating with a new (for me) culture."

### Research Project Focused on the History of Armenian Media in California

**Artak Aleksanyan** (Muskie 2006) recently completed his Graduate Creative Project, a documentary on the history of Armenian-American Media in California. It took almost one month to shoot "Armenia on Delivery," which is thirty minutes in length and includes interviews from more than twenty individuals. "Armenia on Delivery" is the very first attempt to summarize the history of Armenian-American media in California, a history that dates back more than a hundred years. During the course of the project, Mr. Aleksanyan also created a comprehensive database of Armenian-American media.



**Artak Aleksanyan recently completed his Graduate Creative Project, a documentary on the history of Armenian-American Media in California.**

## With Distance-Learning Courses, Alumnus Is Able to Continue Teaching Throughout Russia

According to **Alexey Andreev** (Muskie 2004), when he returned from studying at Columbia University, he faced a job-track dilemma: "Should I resume teaching at the university after a two-year break or find a position in some other area?" Although he enjoyed teaching, Mr. Andreev decided to accept an offer from a public relations firm. He works as a PR advisor to the city administration of Koltsovo, a rapidly developing technopolis ('*naukograd*') on the outskirts of Novosibirsk.

However, Mr. Andreev missed teaching, and found a way to get back to teaching in a new way. While at Columbia, he had focused on the principles and methods of distance teaching and learning and using internet-based technologies in language teaching. He applied for an alumni small grant that was known as a SCOUT grant, and was able to negotiate with the Institute of Professional Development and Re-training at Novosibirsk State University, to include his course into their schedule on a trial basis. This course became the first distance course at the Institute. For twelve weeks Mr. Andreev communicated with his students, fifteen in-service language teachers from all over the country, through the internet. Since the initial course, Mr. Andreev has developed a face-to-face professional development course entitled "Modern Distance Education," which he teaches two or three times a semester. He has also continued teaching his course for language teachers.

## Ukrainian Alumni from Different Fields Invited to Participate in Ukrainian School of Political Studies

Muskie alumni **Maria Orlyk** (Muskie 2005), **Olena Maslyukivska** (Muskie 1998), and **Yuri Kushnir** (Muskie 2003) have been accepted to the Ukrainian School of Political Studies that is organized under the auspices of the Council of Europe Directorate General for Political Affairs in the CEE countries. According to Ms. Orlyk, "The school is run as a project implemented by the Agency for Legislative Initiatives. It has been developed in cooperation with the Council of Europe to form, educate, and support a new generation of politicians, civil servants, civil society leaders, scholars, businessmen, journalists, and lawyers. The school intends to provide intellectual and informational support to a network of leaders, enhance public consciousness, and promote understanding of mechanisms and principles of a democratic system. The school also organizes seminars, conferences, summer schools, strategic games and study visits. Alumni of the school will focus on implementation of democratic reforms, integration into the European community, strengthening of the rule of law, and ensuring protection of human rights." The courses in the school are delivered by experts in their respective fields. There will be four sessions of studies, each lasting a few

days. Sessions will be held in Kyiv, Crimea, Odesa, and Strasbourg, France. <<http://www.usps.org.ua/index.php?mid=1/>>

## Fellow Participates in Family Issues Conference in Bulgaria

From February 12-14, 2008, **Gayane Mkrtchyan** (Muskie 2004) participated in a conference about family issues in Sofia, Bulgaria. The conference was initiated by the "Advocates for Human Rights" of Minnesota State University along with Bulgarian NGOs. More than one hundred advocates, policy makers, representatives of police authorities, legislation bodies, and NGOs from the U.S., Europe and Eurasia were invited to the conference. Armenia was represented by Ms. Mkrtchyan, who works at the Armenian office of the Armenian Bar Association. She delivered a report along with only nine reporters at the conference and managed to establish cooperation links with the American and other regional organizations.



## PhD Candidate Aims to Transform Use of References in Kyrgyzstan

**Askarbek Mambetaliev** (Muskie 2002) is studying for his PhD at Arabev University in Kyrgyzstan. He recently participated in workshops organized by New York University librarians on how to use reference management tools, particularly RefWorks, which is an online reference system. According to Mr. Mambetaliev, some of the main problems for research in Kyrgyzstan are poorly-developed requirements for academic research and work and corresponding plagiarism. He hopes that encouraging the use of reference tools and standards will combat these problems.

Mr. Mambetaliev has also published a book entitled *Time Management and Career Development in the Kyrgyz Language*, which can be downloaded for free at <http://cie.netfirms.com/>. The book was published with the support of an IREX Alumni Small Grant (ASG). In addition, Mr. Mambetaliev has initiated the Center for International, Civic and Career Development Education at Arabev University. To find out more information, please visit <<http://cie.netfirms.com/>>

# ALUMNI SHORTS

In February 2008, **Artyom Geghamyan** (Muskie 2006) was hired as the Head of the Department of Criminal and Legal Procedure at the Prosecutor's Training School of the Republic of Armenia. The school was established very recently to provide professional training for candidates for prosecutor, as well as additional retraining of the state sector employees of the Staff of the Prosecutor's Office.

In February 2008, **Hovhannes Nahapetyan** (Muskie 2005) was assigned as the Head of the National Institute of Standards by the Minister of Trade and Economic Development in Armenia. He manages the work on development and examination of national (AST) interstate (GOST) standards, as well as scientific and methodical works in the field of standardization.

While **Gohar Harutyunyan** (Muskie 2005) studied finance at the University of Maine, she also studied for the ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) exams. The time and effort she invested in these exams proved useful in her job search back in Armenia. She secured a position at KPMG Armenia as a Senior Advisor in Risk Advisory Services. According to Ms. Harutyunyan, her "ACCA qualifications are not only appreciated here, they are

also strongly encouraged. Finally, I can most effectively combine my academic skills with my job responsibilities."

**Irina Bocan** (Muskie 2003) is currently working part-time for European Management Solutions, a Chisinau-based Consultancy Company, which recruits international development specialists. Since November 2007, Ms. Bocan has assisted with the administration of the news portal [www.civic.md](http://www.civic.md), a website about civil society in Moldova. The website presents articles and interviews about the situation and perspective of civil society in Moldova. Ms. Bocan is also coordinating the volunteers who support the website.

When **Maria Creciun** (Muskie 2005) returned to Moldova, she found employment as a Medical Adviser at the Scientific and Practical Centre of Public Health and Management under the Ministry of Health in Moldova. One of the main objectives of the organization is providing support to the Ministry of Health in developing effective health care policies, mechanisms and tools to improve health care services that would meet international standards. The Centre is one of the key organizations to facilitate redefining and redesigning health care services in the country. The unit she is currently working for is developing the concept of

long-term care and particularly home-based skilled nursing services. In Moldova, these kinds of services have not been developed at all because health care is mostly being provided within formal care facilities.

**Corneliu Bolbocean** (Muskie 2005) works as a national consultant for the Ministry of Informational Development. His main responsibilities include assisting the Ministry in formulation of a strategic development plan, consulting on amending the internal regulations as well as participating in the functional and capacities assessments. His assignment is part of the comprehensive public administration reform process, initiated by the Moldavian Government in 2005, and supported by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, established by the World Bank. At the same time, Mr. Bolbocean continues his teaching activity at Moldova State University, where he has the opportunity to share knowledge and skills he gained in the U.S. with students and colleagues.

**Marat Afzalov** (Muskie 2003) started a new job in January, 2008 at the PBN Company, an international strategic communications consultancy serving clients worldwide from offices in Washington D.C., London, Moscow, Kyiv, and Riga. As Senior Account Manager,

Mr. Afzalov provides strategic communications advice, media relations and event management services to a number of PBN clients.

**Timur Kurbanov** (Muskie 2003) is working to open the first NGO Development Center in Astrakhan as part of his job as Regional Program Officer with the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Kurbanov and his colleagues have already held a training of trainers for the NGO Development Center's staff, giving them the tools to educate and strengthen the local NGO community. Kurbanov and NDI are collaborating with the Astrakhan Governor's office, as well as a registered local NGO, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers.

Working with a local high school director, **Igor Masychev** (Muskie 2005) recently conducted an activity entitled "Share with Children Spare Clothes and Toys." Many families brought used and new clothes and toys. Four big boxes were collected and sent to a local orphanage and to a monastery for girls aged 3 to 12.

On February 1, 2008, **Olga Yakimakhov** (Muskie 2003) joined PACT, Inc. in Kyiv as Senior Program Officer for the Ukraine program. PACT works with capacity-building programs for NGOs in dozens of countries around the world.

## **Commencement Workshop Held in Western Maryland**

From May 19-22, the 2006 fellows who studied in two-year programs and the 2007 fellows who studied in one-year and fifteen- and sixteen-month programs gathered outside of Washington, D.C. for the third annual Muskie Commencement. Fellows had a chance to reflect on their time in the U.S. and began preparing for their return home from both a professional and a personal standpoint. Fellows attended sessions about career planning, teamwork and leadership, and alumni opportunities. Fellows also had the opportunity to share research and academic achievements with one another in the form of professional presentations, and shared cultural and artistic presentations at a talent show. The Commencement culminated with a formal reception honoring the Muskie fellows in Washington, D.C. with representatives of the U.S. State Department, embassies, and local host universities in attendance.

## **An Introduction from the New Muskie Senior Program Officer**

After more than a month in this new position, I'd like to say that I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work directly with the Muskie program and to meet and work with all of you. For the past several years, I've worked with programs in countries throughout Eurasia, and I've been fortunate to meet, know, and work with a number of returned Muskie fellows. I can say that all of these individuals amazed me, for their intellectual curiosity and knowledge in their fields, their passion and commitment, their cross-cultural understanding, and for their wonderful attitudes and great sense of humor. I believe that Muskie is an excellent program, effective and valuable, for the technical and personal skills and knowledge that you gain through your experience in the U.S., for the bridges that are built between fellows and Americans, and for the contributions that you make in your home countries. I congratulate all current fellows and alumni on your participation and accomplishments.

Rachel Surkin  
Senior Program Officer

## The Muskie Messenger Editorial Committee:

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### Submission guidelines:

If you are interested in making a submission to the Messenger, please send all text and pictures to <[muskiemessenger@irex.org](mailto:muskiemessenger@irex.org)> by June 30, 2008.

ECA and IREX reserve the right to edit submission content. Not every submission will be printed.



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and Cultural Affairs

[www.exchanges.state.gov](http://www.exchanges.state.gov)



# ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES

US Government sponsored exchange alumni are eligible to take part in various Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) supported conference and training activities. In addition to events that support large audiences, individual alumni may apply for small grants that fund the organization of community service activities, conferences, publications, Internet-related activities, research trips, training programs, the creation of associations and other activities.

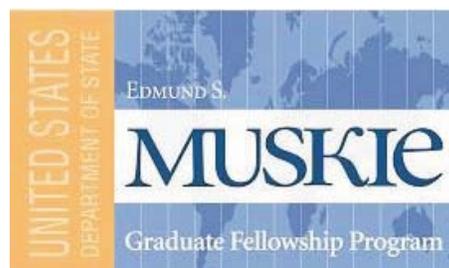
## ECA Alumni Programming for Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program Alumni

**State Alumni Website:** The State Alumni website is an online community by and for alumni of US Government sponsored exchange and training programs. As of May 2004, the website has over 8,500 registered users. The content of the site is updated every day and alumni are encouraged to submit information to the website for posting. Features of the website include: calendar of upcoming alumni events, job listings and career development information, searchable database of alumni and US host families who have registered at the site, grant opportunity listings, live online discussions, discussion forum, alumni news, alumni resume database, articles written by alumni, feedback form/online survey, live online guest speakers, photo gallery, and the Alumni ListServ. <<https://alumni.state.gov/>>

**The ECA Alumni Small Grants Program (ASGP):** Alumni may apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 to conduct a community development or professional development project. Fundable project ideas include coordinating a community service project, launching a pilot program at an NGO or organizing a training program for professional colleagues and/or other alumni. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. <<http://www.irex.org/programs/asgp/index.asp>>

**Project Smile:** Project Smile is a community development program aimed at helping youth, the elderly and the disabled in Eurasia. Each grantee will receive up to \$250 to perform public service in their home city. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. <<http://www.irex.org/programs/smile/index.asp>>

**Alumni Events:** IREX and the US Embassy organize monthly alumni events in all 12 countries of Eurasia. These events include workshops, conferences, trainings, roundtable discussions, happy hours, movie nights, seminars and lectures. Larger scale events include job fairs that allow alumni to have their resumes reviewed, learn about the current job market in their home country, and meet with potential employers. IREX local offices and the Embassies encourage alumni to actively participate in the development and implementation of such events.



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