



Business for Russia Newsletter



Volume 7, Number 3

Fall 2001

Dear Alumni!

Welcome to the fall edition of the BFR Newsletter. As many of you know, Katherine Lapham is no longer working at IREX-Moscow as Director of the Community Connections program. I started in early September as Kate's replacement and I am very pleased to be a part of the program. Actually, some of you may know me from my work as a Field Coordinator in 1998, when I recruited in Yaroslavl, Vologda, Ivanovo, Kostroma, Izhevsk, and Orenburg. After several years working on a different program, I am thrilled to be back once again with all of the great people who contribute to this program at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), IREX, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy (PAS), and of course, our alumni.

During the last several months there has been a number of alumni events in many regions throughout Russia, from Novgorod to Vladivostok. Alumni events provide a wonderful opportunity for you to maintain contacts with people from your region who took part in the Business for Russia program and to benefit from seminars and training as well. We would love to hear from you if you are interested in helping to organize an alumni event or if you simply want to participate in an alumni gathering but haven't had the opportunity in a while. Please write me at smackey@irex.ru or Elena Arsentieva at earsentieva@irex.ru if you want to share your thoughts on this matter.

Some of you have had the opportunity in recent months to meet with your former host organizations. Several follow-on visits have been conducted in recent months. CIU-Bluefield went to Kostroma, IVC-Detroit traveled to Ivanovo, Kirov and Moscow to meet with alumni, FRAEC-Seattle to Vladivostok and Yakutsk. I was pleased to meet with several representatives of these organizations and hear their ideas and suggestions for the program.

On November 30 and December 1 with generous support from PAS, IREX will hold a BFR Alumni Conference for alumni from the Moscow City and Region. This conference will be last for two days and feature a number of interesting panel discussions and seminars related to small and medium businesses in Russia from both the Russian and American perspectives. The conference will take place at the Renaissance Hotel and include a reception at the U.S. Ambassador's residence, Spaso House.

I hope I have the opportunity to meet some of you at alumni events in the near future. Please do not hesitate to contact me on anything concerning the BFR program or if you just want to say hello.

Steven Mackey
Senior Coordinator, Community Connections -Russia

Thank You

After the tragic events of September 11, ECA, IREX, and Public Affairs received many messages of condolences from Business for Russia alumni. We wanted to let you know that your support during that difficult period was very important to us. Some people have expressed concern that programs such as BFR are in danger of being cut due to the United State's new vigilance in the wake of terrorist attacks. While we are all living in a different world now, professional training and exchange programs will continue to promote peace, prosperity, and mutual understanding. Thank you again for all of your support.

State Department Officials in Ulan Ude

**Rebecca Bryan, Director of Partnerships & Training Division
IREX Moscow**

Arriving in Ulan-Ude, the capital of the Buryat Republic of the Russian Federation, the US State Department team included Mr. Brent Beemer, Senior Program Officer, and Mr. Anthony Kluttz, Program Officer and Ms. Helen Szpakowski from PAS US Embassy /Moscow, on their first trip to the ancient city that remains the largest center of Buddhism in Russia. During their visit, the team attended an alumni event, where approximately 50 alumni, mostly from Community Connections and Business for Russia, converged on Project Harmony's Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) site in order to talk about their experiences in the US and meet the donors of the US programs.



**Rebecca Bryan, Anthony Kluttz, Helen Szpakowski,
Brent Beemer, and Pamela Spratlen at the alumni meeting
in Ulan Ude IATP site**

Through the professional assistance of Dashima Damdinova (Waitsfield, VT, 2000), Coordinator of the IATP site in Ulan-Ude, a forum and social event was arranged for the diplomatic team, which heard first-hand how these culturally diverse groups of CC and BFR program participants from Buryatia had developed close ties and continued to network even today.

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Notes from the Field

Stephen Houtsma, IREX Field Coordinator

I have been working with IREX on both the Business for Russia and Community Connections programs for approximately 20 months now, prior to which I taught English in Chita at the local Pedagogical University there. In calendar year 2000, all four of my recruiting regions were located in the Russian Far East—Primorye, Khabarovsk, Sakhalin, and Kamchatka. This year, my travels took me farther west to the regions of Siberia: Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Altai, and also Yakutia.



Business for Russia Selection Panel in Irkutsk

Business for Russia Newsletter

Compiled and edited by Anna Poluarshinova and CCR staff

The Business for Russia Newsletter is produced by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) with support from the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the US Embassy in Moscow. Funding for the publication is provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), US Department of State. The Newsletter is available free of charge from IREX offices in Moscow, Vladivostok and Washington, and from ECA/PAS. The Newsletter is a quarterly publication. Its purpose is to disseminate information about the Business for Russia program and its participants, and to facilitate communication between and among program participants and their American hosts.

Submission of announcements, feature stories, interviews, and photographs is encouraged, if the materials are in the spirit of the Newsletter. We are currently accepting articles for upcoming issues of the BFR Newsletter. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact Anna Poluarshinova at IREX/Moscow. Photos are also welcome. We would also be interested in any comments or suggestions that you may have.

Business for Russia is a bilateral government-sponsored program providing five-week internships for Russian entrepreneurs at American businesses in communities across the United States. The program is organized and funded by ECA. The recruitment and selection of the candidates is administered by IREX for ECA with support from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Russian Federation.

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For someone like me who has a deep interest in Russia, I can't imagine a more interesting and stimulating position than that of Field Coordinator. In what other job would I have the opportunity to converse first hand with regional businesspeople, government leaders, academics, as well as administrators from other social spheres? At the same time I have visited such incredible places as Lake Baikal, Gorno-Altai, or the Lensk Columns on the Lena River in Yakutia, to name just a few.

Each of my regions this year were unique in many different respects, ranging from the degree of interest in the program to the level of English language ability. I received the greatest amount of interested applicants from both Irkutsk and Novosibirsk Oblasts—approximately 90 in each region. Of course all regions had their "superstar" candidates, but the overall level of experience, education, and English in Novosibirsk was simply astounding. Part of this is undoubtedly attributable due to the fact that Novosibirsk is one of Russia's major academic and industrial centers. During a recent tour of the region by two Washington Post journalists, one of our finalists, Sergei Borodin, was even highlighted in a special feature article! Reading about him on the newspaper's web page, I felt gratified that people "back home" were getting an idea of just how Russia's dynamic new business community is slowly but surely accomplishing amazing things in the face of huge obstacles.

My recruiting schedule for the current year has wound down, but already the preparations for the next round are being made—what regions to target, when we'll be traveling there, how many candidates will be recruited from each. I look forward to taking a reprieve and then starting again traveling to new places and meeting new people. If the candidates next year are even close to the caliber of this year's, success is assured.

"ULAN UDE" continued from page 1

The team also toured the businesses of several BFR alumni. At one publishing house, Darima Tsybenova (Pittsburgh, PA, 1995) illustrated how the company had received credit, purchased European printing equipment, and expanded the business to its current size. Brent Beemer noted that this company represented an excellent example of how the successful and effective business experiences of BFR alumni can be applied in developing and maintaining a thriving company in Russia.

Graphic Designer from Kemerovo Felt Comfortable Staying with Host Families

Evgeni Sushkin (Kemerovo – Philadelphia, PA, Summer 2001)

I was a participant on the BFR Program from the Kemerovo region in June and July of 2001. Our group consisted of nine participants from different spheres of business. My professional activity is connected with printing and advertising. During my internship I visited advertising and printing enterprises in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: PPI Photo Graphics, Stephenson Brothers Printing Company, Global Internet Management, Russian Newspaper 'Russian Market', Taws Artist Materials, and Studio Furnishing & Repro Center. I met with the presidents and managers of these companies and learned a lot about their experiences. I shared my experience with them as well. I learned many different things about management, manufacturing, and sales promotion in American advertising and printing companies. I also understood that our businessmen have many of the same problems as their American counterparts.

During my business trip to the US I stayed with two families. My first hosts were Sam Blackmore and Bev Ralph who live in Berwyn, a suburb located 30 km. west of Philadelphia, which is accessible to every citizen of Philadelphia because of the excellent railway service. Sam Blackmore had been the president of Fiseher&Porter, Inc, a manufacturer of process control instrumentation and computer control systems, for three years before joining other experienced executives in a consulting business



Evgenii Sushkin with US host family Carole and Jean Green and their daughters Ingrid and Leslie.

in 1987. Bev Ralph is a professional artist. In 1994, Sam and Bev spent four weeks in Nizhny Novgorod assisting an embryonic fine arts export business. My second host family were Carole and Jean Green. Mr. Green served in the US Marine Corps for 31 years and retired as a Colonel in 1985. Carole Green worked as a corporate lawyer for Gulf Oil Corporation.

I felt very comfortable staying with the families, because both my hosts were very friendly and sociable people. I spent a wonderful time staying with them and talking about a wide range of things. I would like to express my gratitude to International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia. IVC is the official Greater Philadelphia representative for international guests supported by the US Government and private foundations. The great work of this organization was reflected to our internships and all participants of our group felt very comfortable.

I would like to say that participation in such programs is a good way to develop ties between Americans and Russians. I think that the information and experience received in America will allow all participants to contribute greatly to both the development of our own businesses and the business sector as a whole.

"ULAN UDE" continued from page 2

Another highlight of the trip was the group's participation in the sixth annual Ad Hoc Working Group's Meeting to discuss best practices for Environmental Technologies and Sustainable Business Development in the Russian Far East. Attendees from around the world discussed such topics as eco-tourism, micro-financing, business training, exchange programs, and alumni networking throughout the region.

The visit ended with an excursion to the majestic Lake Baikal, the deepest fresh-water lake in the world, where the remaining days of the meetings were conducted. Although both Brent Beemer and Anthony Klutz are seasoned travelers to the NIS, both agreed that the beauty and magnitude of Lake Baikal was an impressive ending to a successful trip.

Small Grants

IREX and the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) are pleased to announce the completion of two rounds of the CC Alumni Small Grants competition. The goal of the small grants program is to support alumni of the BFR and CC programs in their professional development through individual or community-oriented projects. During the competition, IREX/Moscow received about 300 applications from regions throughout Russia. Thirty-five projects were selected for funding.

Successful projects included publication on the ecological rights of the community, creation of a web site on small business, an educational project for deaf people, creation of a youth Philharmonia for teenagers in a small village, training seminars on the development of e-commerce, program for preservation of national culture and other important community initiatives.

Information about the next round of the Small Grants competition is available on the IREX/Moscow web site www.irex.ru Please contact Elena Arsentieva <ccalumni@irex.ru> for more information or consultations.

Dreams Come True

Yadrevskaya Yulia (Kemerovo - Louisville, KY, Summer 2001)

USA... How far away and unknown this country seemed to ten participants of the BFR program from Kuzbass. Sitting on board the plane, each of us were trying to imagine what was awaiting us in this country. During the 12 hour flight I felt a sense of excitement. How are Americans different from Russians? What is their lifestyle? But all nervousness instantly disappeared the moment we arrived at our final destination – Louisville, Kentucky. Tom Dumstorf was waiting for us at the airport. From this minute we felt the care and attention of the American people. Unfortunately these warm relations are even seldom shown between Russians.

When I recall the internship I now understand how thoroughly our visit was planned from the very beginning. The first three days were devoted adapting to the American lifestyle, meeting with LICC staff, discussing our placements, touring around the city we were living in, and spending nights at the park playing music by a campfire. And finally on the third day of our trip, we met our host families - our American Moms and Dads. They were very attentive, hospitable and friendly. By staying with them we had an excellent opportunity to experience everyday life: how Americans spend their free time, what their interests and hobbies are, and what their favorite foods are.



Yulia Yadrevskaya and Doug Slimick at the information board at the Ford Motor Company

I gained the best impressions at my placements. The goal of my business trip was to study quality control, marketing and public relations. So my first work place was the Kentucky Ford Truck Plant. For a long time I studied the business philosophy of this plant through books and magazines. I couldn't imagine that I would see it with my own eyes. For a girl from Siberia it was like dream; but now I know dreams come true. The Ford Plant is very large with many shops and administrative offices. I had a great opportunity to study Ford manufacturing: paint and stamping shops, assembly lines, and material control. I studied in detail documentation of quality systems: the quality manual, local procedures; and participated with office staff in internal audits. I gained all the information I needed: training books, work documentation on paper and CD-ROMs.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation of the warm welcome I received at KTP. I really enjoyed working with them. Besides their hard work, we spent an unforgettable time together discussing our cultures, traditions, lifestyles, mentalities, etc. I understood that we are like each other.

My American friends said they re-considered their attitude towards Russia and now believe that Russia has a great future. They are delighted by Russian

nature and history, and would like to visit my country some day. This is the best reward for me because people from two different continents have come closer. As for me, I admire American achievements in economics. I like the USA for its freedom and opportunity of self-expression. I appreciate Americans for their common sense and willingness to work. They define a goal and do their best to achieve it. I also cannot but appreciate American individualism because I think a bright creative individual is half of the success in any sphere of human activity. My friends made me presents so I would not forget our friendship. Now I have these gifts and pictures in Russia. So I think about them very often. Now we have good relations and communicate via e-mail.

There is a local magazine at Ford: "KTP LifeLine". My friends from the office put my picture and an article about me in it. Not long ago I received a package from the USA with this newsletter and other presents. I couldn't understand why people who know you only few days do their best to help you with your work. One of my friends from Ford answered: "It's a real treat for most of us Americans to meet new people from around the world. We actually don't travel the world very much, and we don't get many opportunities to truly relate with other cultures. If we do travel, we surround ourselves with 'guides' and 'interpreters', so we end up being fairly insulated from the true nature of the culture and the people. This is too bad, because when you get down to it... very few people are totally unwilling to be friendly and helpful. A certain level of comfort has to be achieved between people to be ourselves".

My other work placement was Guthrie Mayes & Associates, Inc where I received many ideas about how to use Public Relations in banks, restaurants, computer centers, and non-commercial organizations. During my work with this company, I visited an airport, video and record studio, the mayor's office, and an American court. This was important not only for my work but also for understanding American life.

My stay would not have been so complete if I had not had the chance to get to know America in terms of culture and events. My group and I visited Mammoth Cave, a baseball game, the Kentucky Derby, Phantom of the Opera, and Kentucky Kingdom with rolling hills.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and to the LICC staff, and especially to Tom Dumstorf and Dima Klimenko who opened our eyes to American history.

I miss all the people I met in the USA. They are never far from my thoughts. I feel my life has been blessed by meeting them. Now I have many things that remind me of America: pictures and gifts of my friends. I hope we will meet again.

Alumni Events

Vladivostok

On September 19, IREX/Vladivostok and FRAEC/Seattle conducted a seminar "Economic Development of the Russian Far East." About 70 alumni attended the event. Mr. Sozinov, Deputy Head of the Committee for Economics and Planning, Administration of the Primorsky Krai spoke to participants about the economic role of the Russian Far East in Russia. Robbyn Kistler, the Director of Training Exchanges, FRAEC/Seattle, spoke about FRAEC activity and distributed the Community Connections & Business for Russia Newsletter.

Irkutsk

On September 30, a Seminar "Business in Internet" took place at the commercial Internet Center. Twenty one alumni discussed promotion and advertising in Internet, and Internet resources for small businesses and Internet projects investment.

On October 13, alumni participated in Community Service Day. The event was organized by Irina Gerasimova, IREX representative in Irkutsk, to clean the beach zone of Lake Baikal. By this action alumni contributed to the saving of the Lake, which is announced by UNESCO as a World Heritage.

Novgorod

On September 26, Elena Arsentieva traveled to Novgorod to conduct a roundtable meeting of BFR/CC alumni. 23 alumni attended. Local alumni, Galina Ruzhentsova, President of American Programs Alumni Association in Novgorod and Sergei Dmitriev (BFR/Columbus, OH, 1997), member of the board of the American Programs Alumni Club "Alumni Sanctuary," headed the event. The discussion focused on the idea of further development of the Alumni Association in Novgorod, created in April, 2001. The leaders of the North-West Community Development Center were invited to speak about the Promoting and Stengthening Russian NGO Development (Pro-NGO) program that provides different services to CCR Alumni, such as professional assistance through information dissemination, professional consultations, technical and networking opportunities on the base of local resource centers.

Tula

On October 13, Elena Arsentieva went to Tula to conduct the Internet training seminar in joint efforts with Project Harmony IATP site. Three groups of BFR and CC alumni (28 people in total) attended the seminars on three themes: Internet Orientation, Information Search on the Internet, and Business on Internet.

Samara

On September 20-21, a two-day seminar was held in Samara. Project "Implementation of CC Alumni Experience into Practice: Cooperation for Historical and Cultural Heritage Preservation" was initiated by Community Connections/Historical and Cultural Preservation alumni and conducted by Tatiana Fomina, IREX Representative/Samara. The project met the demands of the local professional community and persons interested in historical and cultural heritage preservation, and in using and disseminating the knowledge of the American experience in this sphere. The seminar was targeted to different groups of people: alumni of CC/HCP program, state and local government officers, representatives of state organizations working in the sphere of culture. The seminar opened up new possibilities of cooperation between NGOs and state and municipal organizations. The agenda included sightseeing, presentations by alumni, group discussions, and workshops.

On October 31, 50 alumni participated in the Halloween Project. The project was developed by Oleg Kokarev (BFR, 1994), included a series of roundtables: "Comparison of the Russian holiday - Kaliada with Halloween," "What are Americans and Russians afraid of," "Problems of Maintaining Historical Memory." In the evening Alumni organized the Original Haunted House in the "SamART" theater for pupils of Samara's schools which teach English.

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk

On October 13, 12 Sakhalin alumni had a Community Service Day. They cleaned the Center for Disabled Children/Lugovoe Area. They gathered the foliage and cut down the lifeless trees. In the future, Alumni would like to provide regular assistance to the Center. The Director of the Center welcomed CCR Alumni to take part in arranging holidays for children.



Tula alumni at the Internet training seminar



Project Harmony Internet Access and Training Program



The Internet Access Training Program (IATP) is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State, being implemented in Russia by Project Harmony. The goals of the program are: to provide Internet access to alumni of ECA programs and other target audiences at Internet centers and via dial-up modem access; to train ECA alumni and other target audiences in the effective use of the Internet; to establish and maintain contact through the Internet between ECA alumni and their US colleagues; to sponsor and encourage the development of local-language websites, distance learning, message boards and on-line journals; and to develop and encourage practical and meaningful Internet-based activities for ECA exchange program alumni and their colleagues.

Project Harmony currently administers a network of 57 public access Internet centers in over 35 communities across Russia. Activities include web chats, regional and national conferences, small grants competitions, ongoing technical and content-based training, a regional train-the-trainers project for educators and ECA alumni, alumni networking, technical upgrades and expansion of the program into new regions. IATP will expand to include upwards of 80 centers across 60 cities across Russia between September 2001 and April 2003. The full list of IATP sites you can find at <http://iatp.projectharmony.ru>. The new IATP sites are listed below.

Barnaul - Barnaul State Pedagogical University
Center Coordinator: Dina Tevs
Phone: (3852) 22-88-04
Email: tews@bspu.secna.ru

Krasnoyarsk - Youth Educational Center
Center Coordinator: Olga Razvodovskaya
Phone: (3912) 21-05-35
Email: olga@docentr.ru

Sernur - Educational Center # 2
Center Coordinator: Lubov Sidorkina
Phone: (83633) 83633-962-31
Email: sschool2@marsu.ru

Birobidzhan - Birobidzhan Regional University Scientific Library
Center Coordinator: Elena Myshenko
Phone: (42622) 6-88-41
Email: library@on-line.jar.ru

Nizhny Novgorod - Nizhegorodskaya Regional Universal Scientific Library
Center Coordinator: Ilia Kuzin
Phone: (8312) 39-02-35
Email: ilkuz@nounb.sci-nnov.ru

Toliatti - Development Through Education
Center Coordinator: Vasilii Efosin
Phone: (8482) 48-23-15
Email: def@edufund.cityttl.ru

Blagoveschensk - Amurskaya Regional Scientific Library
Center Coordinator: Tatyana Lobovkina
Phone: (4162) 44-42-74
Email: books@amur.ru

Petrozavodsk - The Palace Of Children's and Youth Creativity
Center Coordinator: Elena Ignatovich
Phone: (8142) 78-33-61
Email: mrgt@mail.ru

Tomsk - Scientific Medical Library of Siberian State Medical University
Center Coordinator: Galina Zakharova
Phone: (3822) 22-57-08
Email: medlib@tomsk.ru

Chelyabinsk - Modem Pool
Southern Ural State University
Center Coordinator: Elena Mitlosh
Phone: (3512) 65-49-92
Email: helen@urc.ac.ru

Ulan-Ude - Republic Center for Information
Center Coordinator: Dashima Daminova
Phone: (3012) 21-37-93

Vladivostok - Vladivostok Regional State Library
Center Coordinator: Natalia Zhandarmova
Phone: (4232) 256-444
Email: zhandarmova@mail.ru

Irkutsk - Utkin Regional Junior Library
Center Coordinator: Irina Egorova
Phone: (3952) 27-70-74
Email: irina@youlib.irk.ru

Ruem - General Education Boarding School
Center Coordinator: Elena Komelina
Phone: (8362) 12-85-69
Email: komelina@rambler.ru

Vologda - Vologda Regional Universal Scientific Library
Center Coordinator: Ekaterina Barinova
Phone: (8172) 72-12-80
Email: barinovae@inbox.ru

Krasnodar - The Center for Children and Youth
Center Coordinator: Helen Feshina
Phone: (8612) 62-83-43
Email: duc@kubannet.ru

Saint Petersburg - IATP Alumni Class at ACTR
Center Coordinator: Svetlana Tcherepanova
Phone: (812) 311-76-55
Email: sveta@projectharmony.ru

Magadan - Magadan Municipal Cultural Center
Center Coordinator: To be announced
Phone: (413-22) 7-58-98

Samara - Samara State University
Center Coordinator: Dmitri Bulavin
Phone: (8462) 16-33-76
Email: buldim@pochtamt.ru

Volzhsk - Informational-Analytical Center
Center Coordinator: Alexander Badanov
Phone: (83631) 2-18-22
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<ccalumni@irex.ru> for more information or consultations.