

January 2004

## FLEX Alumni Report

Armenia

### Yerevan

**FLEX Pre-departure Orientation staff recruitment:** During January, American Councils Office collected applications for the Pre-departure Orientation (PDO) Teaching Assistants' positions for this summer. Fifteen FLEX alumni applied for the positions and six of them were invited for interviews.

**FLEX Volunteer for Association of English Language Teachers in Armenia (AELTA):** More than ten alumni of '03 and '04 years helped the AELTA organize the work of their library. The alumni volunteered to sort books. Two or three alumni volunteered in the library each day in January, rotating duties and schedules.

**Charity event for Vardenis Psychiatric Hospital:** During the last two weeks of January, alumni wrote and delivered letters to more than 40 national and international banks and businesses, requesting their contributions of food, beverages, clothing, and other supplies for the hospital. Sonya Armaghanyan '04, Hrachya Ghazaryan '03, Rubina Khachatryan '02, Gevorg Manucharyan '03, and Sona Mirzoyan '04 helped make follow-up phone calls to the banks and businesses.

#### Upcoming Events:

- **Delivering donations to the Vardenis Psychiatrist Hospital** will take place during the second and third weeks of February.
- **Alumni Planning Meeting** will be held in February.

**Contact:** Yerevan Alumni Assistant Liana Tadevosyan '99, [f\\_alumni@accels.am](mailto:f_alumni@accels.am) (374 1) 56-14-10

## Azerbaijan

### Baku

**Alumni Visit the "Downs Syndrome Association":** On January 2, FLEX alumni organized a New Year's party for 45 children with Downs Syndrome. Alumni donated clothes, toys and money, with which they purchased sweets and cookies for the children. On arrival, alumni set the tables and gave out presents. Then the youngsters



recited poems, sang songs, showed handmade things, and performed drama performances for alumni. The sounds of the national music united everybody in a dance. The kids were kissing and hugging the alumni. After the event, the director of the association expressed her heartfelt gratitude. She asked if seeing the poor children shocked the group, and Nargiz Hajiyeva answered that looking at the children's activity and seeing how they express their love of life, she was encouraged to live. Some of the alumni decided to apply for the FLEX Grants Program in order to support the association's social activity. Alumni who participated were Kamran Aliyev '04 (disabled alumnus), Nargiz Akbarova '03, Ruslan Asadov '04, Raisa Azizova '04, Gulara Hajiyeva '99, Nargiz Hajiyeva '99, Aygun Huseynova '04, Elvin Huseynov '03, Tohida Kazimova '02, Dmitriy Kirillov '02, and Taghi Taghizade '02.

**Escorting Visiting Teachers:** On January 17, Ruslan Asadov '04, and Leyla Mammadli '04 (Sumgait) took Professor Thomas Popkowicz, a professor of Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin, and his assistant, who were visiting Azerbaijan through ACCELS AZTEP (Azerbaijan Teacher Education Program for Primary Schools) sightseeing. The alumni showed them the city's most picturesque places and told them about Azerbaijan's history. Murad Isgandarov '03 (Shaki) volunteered to interpret during Professor Popkowicz's meetings with teachers and Ministry of Education representatives on January 19.

**Roundtable Discussion:** Yusif Axundov '97, Farzaliyeva Fidan '97, Fuad Huseynov '00, Fariz Ismailzade '96, and Leyla Mammadli '04 attended the Azerbaijan Alumni Association (AAA) meeting with the Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Mr. Turan Morali on January 18 at the US-Azerbaijan Education Center. He spoke to alumni about Turkey's accession into the European Union and its impact on the Caucasus, U.S.-Turkish relations and the war in Iraq, the current state of Turkish-Azeri relations, and other topics. Then alumni asked

questions, which resulted in active discussion. Mr. Elin Suleymanov, Muskie alumnus and senior counselor on international relations in the Office of the President, facilitated the discussion.

**Visit to Orphanage #3:** FLEX alumni collected clothes and purchased presents for children at Orphanage #3. After some research alumni found out that this orphanage needed certain medicines. Alumni requested a list of the needed medical supplies from the orphanage and purchased all the needed medication. They delivered the items on January 21. Alumni spent time at the orphanage, conducted contests, and danced national dances with their new friends. The orphans sang songs and recited poems. Kamran Aliyev '04, Ruslan Asadov '04, Gunel Babazada '04, Mamed Bayramov '04, Nargiz Hajiyeva '99, Farida Hasanli '04, Aygun Husseynova '04, and Murad Isgandarov '03 participated.

**HIV/AIDS Awareness Seminar:** On January 28, seven FLEX alumni organized an HIV/AIDS seminar at secondary school #46. Thirty tenth grade school students gathered for the seminar, which started with alumni reading the official global HIV/AIDS statistics. Alumni showed a PowerPoint presentation on AIDS which they had prepared, and then guest speaker Mr. Rasim Khalilov, a UN representative, made a speech. Pastor Khalilov presented solutions for how people could avoid the threat of AIDS. Alumni interpreted all speeches into Azeri. The following alumni took part in this event: Rishad Aliyev '04, Ruslan Asadov '04, Kamran Aliyev '04, Nargiz Akbarova '03, Nargiz Hajiyeva '99, Mehriban Kerimova '02, and Nargiz Soltanova '02.

**“Successful Grants Writing” Seminar:** Twenty-five FLEX alumni attended the seminar “Successful Grants Writing” led by Fulbright scholar Anna Senarslan at the U.S.-Azerbaijan Education Center on January 28. Ms. Senarslan set out to equip alumni with necessary skills in the field of grants writing in order to increase their chances of successfully competing for the FLEX Alumni Grant Program 2005. The guest-speaker shared her experience with alumni and gave tips to the young people interested in applying for various grants, focusing mainly on education and research grants. After her presentation, Anna divided alumni into five groups of five people and suggested that the groups of alumni choose a grant topic, and then design the budget and grant application. The groups came up with many fresh ideas for new FLEX Alumni Grant Program proposals.

**Selection of Teaching Assistants:** On January 26 and 27, FLEX staff reviewed the applications of alumni, who had applied for PDO teaching assistant positions. Shane Austin, Baku American Councils country director and Nargiz Hajiyeva '99, FLEX program alumni assistant, interviewed 10 alumni, and selected Khalida Nurmetova '00 and Samir Mammadli '00. **Upcoming Events:**

- **Presentation seminar on AIDS awareness** at Bul-Bul music school is planned for February 18.
- **“Grant Winners” seminar** will be held on February 19.

**Contact:** Baku Alumni Assistant Nargiz Hajiyeva '99, [flexalumni@americancouncils.az](mailto:flexalumni@americancouncils.az) +9 (9412) 92-34-50

## Belarus

### Minsk

**Planning Meeting:** Ekaterina Apet '04, Daria Efimova '02, Aleksandr Kozhura '03, Aliaksei Kudzin '04, Margarita Kuleshova '03, Ekaterina Stratskevich '00, and Anna Tretiakova '01 attended the planning meeting at the American Center on January 25. The alumni discussed upcoming projects, such as the St. Valentine's Day Project in schools throughout Minsk and the Earth Day Project. The alumni also discussed important events such as Global Youth Service Day and the regional conference. The alumni also came up with ideas for events that would be beneficial to their professional development.

**Movie Night:** The monthly movie night was held at the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy on January 27. Eleven alumni came to see the movie *Avalon*. Before the movie FLEX Alumni Assistant Anastassiia Tarassiouk and Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program Alumni Assistant Aleksandr Shlyk gave a quiz on climate changes and geography. Natalia Kripinevich '99 and Aliaksei Kudzin '04 won the prizes provided by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy for their knowledge of these topics.

### Upcoming Events:

- **St. Valentine's Project** will be held in the schools throughout Minsk on February 7-16.
- **Movie Night** is planned for February 17.

**Contact:** Minsk Alumni Assistant Anastassia Tarassiouk '03, American Center for Education and Research, +00375 (17) 228-7264 [flexalumni@amcenter.by](mailto:flexalumni@amcenter.by)

## Georgia

---

### Tbilisi

---

**Christmas and New Year's Celebration with Kojori Orphans:** Tamila Vacharadze '01 from Kutaisi organized a visit to the Kojori Orphanage to celebrate Christmas and New Year's on January 11. Lana Chkhartishvili '04, Maka Gorgadze '04, and Sopo Tabatadze '04 and students from Georgian Technical University participated. At the beginning, the orphans and visitors introduced themselves to each other; and told about their likes and dislikes and what they thought was necessary in life. After teambuilding games, the orphans and alumni performed "The Birth of Jesus," and cooked together. Marina Kurdgelaidze, deputy director of the U.S. branch of the non-profit foundation "Goodwill Physicians" and Irina Mamisashvili, manager of the "Goodwill Physician" Georgian branch, were among the guests.

**Media Group Meeting:** Fifteen FLEX alumni attended the media department meeting at the Alumni Resource Center on January 13. They discussed the design of the new website for American Councils and FLEX alumni. Giorgi Dvali '04 designed the new website, which will be launched in February.

**Grant Writing Workshop:** Twenty FLEX alumni attended a grant-writing workshop held at the Alumni Resource Center on January 21. Tamila Vacharadze '01, Salome Tsereteli '00, and Eurasian Undergraduate Program alumnus Giorgi Meladze '00, all previous grant winners, led the seminar. They explained the basics of grant writing and offered help to all the alumni willing to apply for FLEX grants. The seminar was followed by a movie night. Ketii Botchorishvili '98 and Salome Tsereteli '00 agreed to hold grant-writing consultations every Tuesday and Thursday, during which alumni could get help on their grant applications.

**Model UN:** The opening and first training of the Model UN took place on January 22 at the Alumni Resource Center. Ketii Botchorishvili '98, Irina Rekhviashvili '03, Ia Kurdiani '04, and Giorgi Datiashvili '03 joined 13 Eurasian Undergraduate Program alumni for the meeting. Model UN trainer Giorgi Meldaze '01 conducted the seminar, in which he gave general information about the UN as an organization and about the history of Model UN. He also spoke about the rules and timing. Alumni discussed the topic of the event and chose the countries they will represent through a secret ballot. The alumni decided that Model UN will take place in three stages. The topic of this year's Model UN is reform of the UN Security Council.

**Alumni on the Air:** The leading Georgian TV channel "Imedi" made a special program on alumni and the activities they have conducted. This program was aired on the morning program on January 24, 2005.

**Seminar "American Figures of Speech":** On January 28, Jonathan Hayes, a Peace Corps volunteer, held a seminar on "American Figures of Speech." He spoke about various slang words and phrases used in the United States. Twenty-three FLEX and 12 Eurasian Undergraduate Program alumni attended the seminar, during which they had fun discussing slang words and the ways Americans talk. Following Jonathan's presentation, alumni taught Jonathan some practical Georgian words. The seminar was followed by an English language movie night.

#### Upcoming Events:

- **Seminar about American Sports** will be held on February 4.
- **Debate training seminar** will be held on February 17.
- **Seminar about Irish Culture** is planned for February 18.
- **Model UN training** will be held on February 19.

**Contact:** Tbilisi Alumni Assistant Giorgi Datiashvili '03, [flex\\_alumni@amcouncils.ge](mailto:flex_alumni@amcouncils.ge) +995 (32) 29-21-06

## Kazakhstan

---

### Almaty

---

**Alumni Planning Meeting:** On January 22, 25 FLEX alumni gathered for a monthly planning meeting at the Alumni Resource Center of Almaty ACCELS office. The main purpose of conducting the alumni meeting was

planning alumni activities for the end of January and for the beginning of February, especially discussing the grant-writing seminar and possible trip to Chimbulak. Before starting the planning of activities, alumni shared their news and success stories. Then alumni chose dates for upcoming events.

**Grant Writing Seminar:** Fifteen FLEX alumni gathered at Almaty American Councils office for a grant-writing seminar on January 27. Lena Norakidze '99 highlighted the main aspects of grant writing and application submissions. Alumni brainstormed and discussed several ideas for future cross program events and joint grant projects, as well as fundraising for the Global Youth Service Day in April and the Charity Ball in late May. They expect to submit as many as five FLEX Alumni Grant applications and will conduct fundraising to contribute significant funds for future events this year.

**Climbing the Peak of Success:** On January 29, 17 FLEX and five Undergraduate alumni gathered for a trip to Chimbulak ski resort. They played games, climbed mountains, and just enjoyed the fresh air and spectacular views of the Alatau mountains. They also told each other about their recent successes and shared their hopes for the New Year. They found themselves debating: gender issues, equal rights, obstacles to women's career development, and reasons why few women participate in politics and business. Female alumni tried to give good reasons for why there are so few female leaders in Kazakhstan. They found it interesting that men still strongly believe they deserve more because they believe they are physically stronger and better decision-makers.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Monthly Meeting:** Accepting Alumni Grant applications and Award Ceremony to recognize the 10 most active alumni of the year of 2004 on February 14.
- **Seminar at Kazakh National University of Foreign Languages.** Alumni will share the experience gained on FLEX program with local university students on February 25.
- **February Fundraising** for the alumni charity event. Alumni have agreed with representatives of Proctor & Gamble that the company will donate hygiene products for infants at the orphanage for infants in the small village Karakestek.

**Contact:** Almaty Alumni Assistant Aslan Abzhakov 02, [flexaccelskz@yahoo.com](mailto:flexaccelskz@yahoo.com) +7 (3272) 72-08-03

## Kyrgyzstan

### Bishkek

---

**Grant Writing and Project Implementation Seminars:** On January 15, 28 FLEX alumni participated in a grant-writing and project implementation seminar conducted by Maksat Tynaev '99 and Elnura Djenish '02 at American University – Central Asia. The alumni trainers presented the most successful projects funded and conducted in the past, and based on those examples, taught the basics of grant application preparation. They covered the entire process from project construction, proposal writing, targeting groups, choosing themes, budgeting, scheduling, material preparation, etc. In addition participants received complete information about grant opportunities and agencies that provide. In the final stage of the seminar, alumni brainstormed on future projects.

**Winter Visit to Four Orphanages:** On January 19, Jyldyz Ismailova '04, Diana Mamtova '04, Joldoshibek Osmonov '04, Elena Sharomova '04, and Ksenia Tsoy '04 went to the Children Rehabilitation Center, Child and Family Protection Center, Petrovka and Voynaya Antonovka orphanages in Bishkek to donate the warm clothes and shoes that they purchased with money collected during the New Year celebration fundraising projects they conducted among Bishkek companies. During the visits, alumni offered the children light lunches, played little energizing and critical thinking games with them, and then watched a Christmas movie.

**Elections Roundtable:** On January 27, Anna Kirey '97, in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute, organized a round table "Youth in Elections" at the East West Center, American University-Central Asia. Speakers from the National Democratic Institute first presented information about elections: procedures, policies, and composition. They also shared their prognosis regarding the possible outcomes. Then participants discussed elections in other countries and the role that young people played there. They also explored the importance of young people's participation and the influence they can have on the outcomes of national elections.

## Naryn

---

**Volunteerism and Internship:** Marlis Esenakulov '02 conducted a workshop on professional growth through volunteerism and internships for university-level students on January 16 in Naryn city. Marlis emphasized how volunteering and internships show one's interest and dedication and how they positively influence possible future employers. He also talked about possible professional and personal benefits over the long term. He mentioned that even in the short run, a person can develop leadership, professional, and teamwork skills, and that is possible to receive recommendation letters from organizations and even further employment within a volunteer organization. He encouraged his audience to seek out such growth opportunities.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Brownies Baking Night** will be held on February 15.
- **Alumni monthly meeting** will be held on February 27.
- **Teambuilding and Recognition** for participation awards meeting is planned for February 19.

**Contact:** Bishkek Alumni Assistant Sergey Firsov, [flex\\_alumni@accels.elcat.kg](mailto:flex_alumni@accels.elcat.kg) 66-48-38

## Moldova

---

### Chisinau

---

**Bridges Between Us (BBU) Monthly Training: "Grant Writing and Fundraising Part II"** On January 14, seven BBU interns attended a monthly training session. Veronica Cacean, Eurasian Undergraduate Program alumna, started the training with welcoming remarks and a quiz, which helped the interns remember the previous training and the information that was presented. Afterwards Lilia Fusa '04 presented her project idea. Maxim Semionov '04 and Nadejda Gnevaseva '04 will join Lilia's initiative and will also submit their own grant proposal. The training resulted in project leaders working as teams to develop the grant ideas.

**Training for Odyssey of the Mind Coaches:** On January 20, Natalia Graur '00, and Veronica Cacean, Eurasian Undergraduate Program alumna, organized the training for Odyssey of the Mind coaches, which took place at the Alumni Resource Center. Natalia Graur '00 made a general presentation about the competition and the issues that coaches face. Then, she and Veronica Cacean explained the guidelines, which have to be followed during the competition. Nine alumni agreed to take part in the competition and will perform various volunteer duties.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Planning Meetings** for the St. Valentine Party will be held on February 1 and 7.
- **Odyssey of the Mind National Tournament** will be held on February 5-6.
- **Valentine's Day Fundraiser** is scheduled for February 11.
- **Bridges Between Us Monthly Training:** "Professional Communication" will be held on February 19.

**Contact:** Chisinau Alumni Assistant Igor Grabajiv '03, [flexalumni@accels.dnt.md](mailto:flexalumni@accels.dnt.md) +373 (22) 22-58-60

## Russia

---

### Kirov

---

**Alumni meeting:** Elena Bakulina '98, Vladimir Gordeev '98, Maksim Isaykin '04, Sofya Kaplan '04, Evgenia Lyamina '03, Natalya Nagayeva '02, Olga Rebro '04, Ludmila Rossinskaya '99, and Ekaterina Skopina '96 met at Vyatka Humanitarian Gymnasia for their monthly meeting on January 22. They discussed upcoming events and drafted a plan for the St. Valentine's Day visit to the orphanage. They also practiced their skills while discussing the problem "Should students in higher education be charged tuition fees?" The topic "Problems of choosing a career path" was also of interest to both younger and senior alumni, and they discussed it during the second part of their meeting. They also watched the film *Elf*.

**English Language Training Seminar in Kazan:** Thirty-six FLEX alumni, most from the Upper Volga and southern Russia regions, were competitively selected to participate in a three-day English language teacher training session, January 26-29 in Kazan. The event, sponsored by the English Language Office, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tartarstan, offered advanced students of

## FLEX January 2005 Report



English and teachers the opportunity to develop their English language teaching skills. Many of the participants will work as counselors and teachers at language camps for disadvantaged children in Kazan and Ufa during the summer of 2005. Alumni learned the principles of EFL teaching, and also practiced leadership and team-building skills, as they developed techniques for working with children. The event helped strengthen the alumni network in these regions.

**Kazan Alumni Meeting:** On January 29, Vladimir Gordeev, FLEX alumni assistant, conducted an alumni meeting in Kazan, while visiting the city in conjunction with the Kazan English teacher training seminar. Alina Gilmutdinova '04, Shamil Valiyev '04, Daliya Safiullina '04, Nuriyeva Leyla '03, Khayrullin Marat '03 were present. Kazan alumni discussed common problems that they have in their home city and brainstormed on activities they can carry out in their region. During December 2004 and January 2005 Alina Gilmutdinova '04, Shamil Valiyev '04, Daliya Safiullina '04 made several presentations on American culture and history, Christmas, and New Years holidays in their local schools.

### Upcoming Events:

#### Nizhny Novgorod

- **Tenth Anniversary of American Center in Nizhny Novgorod celebrations**, including a lecture and reception given by U.S. Ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow on February 8.
- **St. Valentine's Day Presentations** will be given for schools children.

#### Kirov

- **St. Valentine's Day Presentations** will be given for school children.
- **Presentations of American English** during lessons of country studies in Vyatka Humanitarian Gymnasia in February.
- **Alumni meeting** is planned for mid February.

#### Cheboksary

- **St. Valentine's Day Presentations** will be given for schools children.
- **Alumni meeting and proposal writing workshop** is scheduled for February 2.

#### Penza

- **Alumni meeting and workshops** are planned for late February.

**Contact:** Kirov Alumni Assistant Vladimir Gordeev '98, [uppervolgaflex@mail.ru](mailto:uppervolgaflex@mail.ru)

#### MOSCOW

**Monthly Meeting:** Olga Fetser '01, Polina Makova '03, Tatyana Maksatova '03, Olga Privalova '04, Olga Pryanichnikova '03, Yulia Tell '02, and Darya Zolotova '03 gathered at the Moscow FLEX Alumni Office on January 15 to discuss upcoming events. Alumni assistant Yulia Tell '02 announced the latest news regarding the outcome of the Charity Week held in December. The alumni talked about the upcoming movie night at the IATP center, the happy hour activity, and expressed their interest in having a grant-writing seminar. Following the discussion, the FLEX alumni participated in a TV shooting of the "Tolerance Theatre" project, which is run by Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program alumni. The project was filmed by the TNT channel, and the FLEX alumni participated in several role-play exercises.

**Movie Night:** Evgeniya Bourilova '01, Olga Pryanichnikova '03, Daria Rudenko '02, Ekaterina Stolyarova '99, Yulia Tell '02, and Darya Zolotova '03 watched the movie *White Chicks* at the IATP Center on January 22.

**Meeting with Thomas A. Farrell, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Academic Programs:** Twenty-four FLEX alumni met with Thomas A. Farrell at the U.S. Embassy on January 28. U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission John Beyrle talked briefly about the importance of exchange programs, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs Thomas Farrell answered alumni's questions regarding the future of various exchange programs. He then went on to emphasize the success of the FLEX program and talked about the

necessity for such programs. Alumni and Embassy officials communicated informally after the speeches were made.

**Grant Writing Seminar:** On January 30, Aleksey Rumyantsev '95 and Yulia Tell '02 led a seminar on grant writing skills for FLEX alumni. Aleksey Rumyantsev explained the main principals of writing a grant proposal and possible ways of evaluating it. He explained the objectives, constituency, feasibility, and beneficiaries of a grant proposal. Yulia Tell announced the 2005 FLEX Alumni Grants Program and reminded alumni about the deadline for applying before going on to discuss grant budget, narrative budget, and cost sharing. She also emphasized the importance of letters of support from cost-share contributors. Aleksey then presented a sample grant proposal for Global Youth Service Day, which was followed by a team activity in which alumni reviewed and discussed the pros and cons of other sample proposals. The following alumni participated in the event: Anna Ermakova '02, Sofiya Gorya '04, Elena Intsertova '02, Ekaterina Isinova '03, Dariya Murchenko '98, Aleksey Rumyantsev '95, Ekaterina Serebryakova '99, Dmitry Teleshev '99, Yulia Tell '02, and Anna Yemelyanova '04.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Monthly Meeting** is to be held on February 9.
- **St. Valentine's Day celebration** is scheduled for February 14.
- **Movie Night** will take place February 19.
- **Visit to the orphanage** is planned for February 26.

**Contact:** Moscow Alumni Assistant Yulia Tell '02, [fsaalumni@actr.ru](mailto:fsaalumni@actr.ru), 7(095) 230-4544.

### Novosibirsk

---

**New Year's Performance:** On January 16, FLEX alumni went to an Omsk orphanage to perform a New Year's program for the children there. City representative Tatyana Veretennikova '00 encouraged the alumni to visit the 40 children at the orphanage, who are in grades 1-4. The dance group "Totem" performed for the orphans, and the alumni organized different contests. Father Frost and his granddaughter-helper Snegurochka also visited the children and wished them a happy New Year and gave them gifts. The event was held with support from the Omsk alumni club and the International Pushkin Library Center.

**Alumni Meeting:** An alumni meeting was held on January 25 for alumni to discuss plans for upcoming February events and also Earth Day and Global Youth Service Day. The following alumni attended the meeting: Darya Afonasyova '01, Elena Astakhova '01, Andrey Burlutskiy '02, Irina Gagarina '04, Nataliya Gashko '04, Elena Khruleva '01, Maxim Lobaty '02, Alexandr Nozdryn '01, Tamuna Otiashvili '04, Anastasiya Parfenova '04, and Alexey Polshuk '02.

### Upcoming Events:

- **"American School" Presentations** will be held in the Siberian region in February and March.
- **Web Design Courses** are planned for school children in Kemerovo in February.

**Contact:** Novosibirsk Alumni Assistant Daria Afonasyova '01, [alumflex@ieie.nsc.ru](mailto:alumflex@ieie.nsc.ru) +7 (3832) 34-42-93

### St. Petersburg

---

**Teaching Assistant Selection:** Five '03 FLEX alumni filled out applications and were interviewed for teaching assistant positions at the 2005 PDO Sessions. Their applications were submitted by January 17 and the interviews were held on January 25-27.

### Petrozavodsk

---

**Boarding School Holiday Greetings:** Alumni from Petrozavodsk got in contact with Yevgenia Burilova '01 to help them organize a holiday activity for children in boarding schools in Petrozavodsk. Together with Moscow alumni, Yevgenia was able to collect and send teddy bears to Petrozavodsk, and Lyudmila Chistiakova '01 and Nikita Vorobyov '03 organized a late "Old New Year's" celebration for the children there on January 26. Natalya Gomankova '02, Yekaterina Ivankina '04, and Anastasya Nerovnaya '03 helped run the celebration, which was attended by over 50 children. The children played games and were each given a teddy bear.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Weekly Volleyball/Basketball Games** will be held.
- **Weekly American Movie Club** will continue.
- **Valentine's Day Celebration** with U.S. exchange students is planned.
- **Weekly Presentations** about the life of U.S. high school students will be held in late February.
- **American Studies Contests** will be held in various high schools in February and March.

**Contact:** FLEX Alumni Assistant St. Petersburg Igor Gots '01 flexalum@americancouncils.spb.ru +7 (812) 571-76-55

**Samara**

---

**Visit with Senator Mallory:** On January 10, Valeria Baburina '99, Elena Pastukhova '00, and other members of the Samara American Alumni Club participated in an informal meeting with Ohio Senator Mark Mallory, who was in Samara on a private visit. The Senator spoke about his state's prosecution system and about efforts the state government makes to help rehabilitate former prisoners. Senator Mallory also discussed the possibilities of a Russian-American (Samara-Cincinnati) partnership, and answered questions regarding his impressions of Russia and American stereotypes of Russia.

**Informal Monthly Alumni Meeting:** Valeria Baburina '99, Valentina Dolgikh '02, Irina Malakhovskaya '98, Elena Pastukhova '00, Anna Shegurova '04, Alexandra Visloguzova '04 attended the monthly alumni meeting held on January 14. They met at an ice-skating rink, and enjoyed coming together to plan upcoming events in a relaxed atmosphere.

**Monthly Alumni Meeting:** The monthly meeting took place at Samara State University on January 20 and was attended by Pavel Alashev '01, Valeria Baburina '99, Ekaterina Gafarova '03, Tatyana Lebakina '03, Irina Malakhovskaya '98, and Elena Pastukhova '00. The alumni discussed possible Global Youth Service Day projects and February plans.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Monthly Alumni Meeting** will be held at the Samara State University in mid February and will be devoted to discussing the upcoming Career Day.
- **St. Valentine's Day** will be celebrated by alumni at the skating rink with other Samara Youth organizations.
- **Career Day** is planned for the end of February and will probably be held jointly with the Samara American Alumni Club.

**Contact:** Samara Alumni Assistant Elena Pastukhova '00, samaralexalumni@rambler.ru

**Vladivostok**

---

**Academy of World Famous Travelers Lecture:** Anastasia Aleshkina '04, Olga Bukach '04, Anastasia Prokonich '02, Dmitriy Shatokhin '02, Anya Ustugova '99, and Polina Zavyalova '00 attended a lecture by members of the Moscow Academy of World Famous on January 8. The members of this academy travel around the world with a minimum budget and great desire to see new countries. Anton Krotov, president of the academy, brought more than 10 books written by him and his colleagues and shared his experiences and gave interesting tips and advice to the alumni.

**Movie Night:** On January 21, 13 FLEX alumni and several Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program alumni gathered at the American Councils office to watch the movie *Sweet Home Alabama*. The alumni also discussed plans to organize an "Alumni Campaign Against Drugs" with help from various universities. It was decided that the campaign should be held throughout the Russian Far East.

**Living Hope Canned Food Drive:** Anastasia Aleshkina '04, Olga Bukach '04, Dmitriy Shatokhin '02, and Polina Zavyalova '00 went to the NGO "Living Hope," which works with homeless children in Vladivostok, to deliver the items collected during their annual canned food drive on January 26. The alumni carefully boxed the canned food they collected over the past three months and brought it to the Living Hope office. The Living

Hope personnel accepted the donation and thanked the alumni for helping them with the drive for the past three years.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Leadership Seminar** by Regional Director Joel Ericson is planned for February 1.
- **Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy Alumni Meeting** will be held February 6.
- **International Education Resources Seminar** will be held February 7.
- **Roundtable Discussion** on “Migration from the Russian Far East: Stop the Human Resources Drain” is scheduled for February 11.
- **Alumni Planning Meeting & Movie Night** will be held on February 18.
- **“How to Succeed in an Interview” Seminar** is scheduled for February 23.

**Contact:** Vladivostok Alumni Assistant Polina Zavyalova '00, [flexalum@vlad.ru](mailto:flexalum@vlad.ru) +7 (4232) 22-37-98

**Volgograd**

---

**Research Project “Ten reasons for the rise in joblessness among young people”:** Anna Bakumova '03, Elena Gladkova '99, Marina Karpushko '04, Nelli Katchaturian '03, and Oksana Panfilova '04 took part in creating a new research project, organized together with the Junior Faculty Development Program alumnus Stanislav Naumov '04. The goal of the project is to find out why it is hard for young people to find interesting and well-paid jobs. The project includes three phases. In the first phases, alumni will create a questionnaire and distribute it among the undergraduate student population of Volgograd universities and colleges. Their goal is to distribute 1500 surveys. In the second phases, they will process the responses, compiling all the viewpoints and formulating the results of the project survey. The third phase involves making public the results of their project publishing information in one or more local newspapers. In January the questionnaire was composed and revised, and is ready to be distributed.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Research project** continues during February and March.
- **Secrets of Success Seminar** will be held on February 20.

**Contact:** Volgograd Alumni Assistant Nelli Khachaturian '03 [nellyi-volgograd@yandex.ru](mailto:nellyi-volgograd@yandex.ru)

**Yekaterinburg**

---

**Meeting with Chelyabinsk Alumni:** On January 26, Program Coordinator Elena Grishchenko and FLEX Alumni Assistant Yelizaveta Gladkovskaya met with Chelyabinsk alumni and American Corner Director Uliya Bovda at the American Corner. Elena Babkova '00, Anton Faizullin '04, Elina Goncharova '04, Julia Suchkova '03 also attended the meeting. The alumni received information concerning grant opportunities and discussed plans for the future. Anton was especially interested in programs offered by the American University of Bulgaria. Julia and Elena agreed to come to Yekaterinburg in February to participate in a training meeting for city representatives.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Local Representatives Seminar** will be held on February 5.
- **St. Valentine’s Day Celebration** is planned for mid-February.

**Contact:** Yekaterinburg FLEX Alumni Assistant Yelizaveta Gladkovskaya '95 [flexalum@ural.actr.ru](mailto:flexalum@ural.actr.ru) + (343) 257- 82-05

**Tajikistan**

---

**Dushanbe**

---

**Orphanage Visit:** Eleven alumni made a trip to Orphanage #2 in the Leninsky District on January 14 to help address the heating problems they were having. The alumni used money raised at the Christmas Charity Ball to respond to requests from the orphanage administration, which asked them to buy sheets of thick plastic to protect the windows from drafts, as well as purchase rice to feed the children. The boys worked outside on the windows, while the girls organized a movie night. After watching *A Shark’s Tale* the alumni played games with

the children and gave the younger orphans toys. The alumni also presented a globe to the orphanage to be used in geography class.

**AIDS Awareness Seminar:** On January 19, Miskola Abdulloeva '02, Sehrangez Isomidinova '03, Akmal Karimov '04, Malika Khakimova '04, and Alfiya Kulmamadova '03 conducted the “СПИД не спит!” (“AIDS is not asleep!”) seminar at high school #74. STDs and HIV/AIDS are on the rise in Tajikistan, and teenagers' lack of knowledge on this topic could put them at risk. The tenth and eleventh-grade students were divided into groups of boys and girls and were then given a brief history of HIV/AIDS as well as how to prevent contracting it. The alumni also distributed brochures from the “AIDS Foundation East-West” on the topic to the students.

**International Standards Roundtable:** Thirteen FLEX alumni attended a roundtable they and Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program alumni organized on January 29. The roundtable was led by the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES) representatives and was held in anticipation of the upcoming parliamentary elections in Tajikistan. IFES Program Consultants Ms. Elizabeth Little and Mr. Brad Farquhar gave a brief presentation on their organization and responsibilities before Ms. Little discussed different issues related to elections and democracy, such as discrimination, election regulations, and basic human rights. Mr. Farquhar then talked about the structure of the Tajik Parliament and the way political parties are represented in parliament. The role of international observers, monitoring agencies, and voter numbers were also covered. The event gave alumni valuable information regarding elections and also provided a great opportunity for them to practice their English language skills.

**Grant Proposal Discussion:** On January 29, fifteen alumni went to the Takob ski resort to celebrate the end of exams. It was also a good opportunity for the alumni to share information about grant proposals. Miskola Abdulloeva '02 reminded the alumni who participated in the FLEX Capacity Building Training that it is time for them to use the knowledge they obtained there to work on their own projects. Firuza Djabarova '04 and Akmalxon Ibragimov '04 suggested organizing an educational summer camp for economics, business, and management students, and Nigina Ekubova '97 (who presently is working at Pragma Corporation, USAID Enterprise Development Project) recommended inviting trainers from Pragma to conduct seminars on the organization and its role, business plan writing, and marketing. The alumni not only came up with a few projects for FLEX Alumni Grants, but also decided what they will be doing for Global Youth Service Day and International Children's Day.

**Computer Training:** Akmalxon Ibragimov '04 and Firuz Oyev '02 started a small alumni project on December 11. Ninth and tenth-grade students from Dushanbe school #4 were given computer lessons on Tuesday and Saturday afternoons. Akmalxon and Firuz taught the students basic computer usage and introduced Microsoft Word. They will introduce Microsoft Excel to the students later in the three-months of computer training they have planned.

#### Upcoming Events:

- **Party Representative Meeting** is planned for February 16.
- **Youth Career Development Workshop** in Khujand will be held on February 10.
- **Orphanage #19 Pizza Party** is scheduled for February 19.
- **Final Global Youth Service Day Project Discussion** is planned for February 26.

**Contact:** Dushanbe FLEX Alumni Assistant Miskola Abdulloeva '02, [flexalum@americancouncils.tj](mailto:flexalum@americancouncils.tj)

+992 (372) 21-21-03

## Turkmenistan

### Ashgabat

**Martin Luther King Jr. Presentation:** On January 11, Sergey Atliyev '01 and Serdar Karliyev '04 brought together 11 high school students to tell them about Martin Luther King Jr. and to discuss the problems of racism and discrimination in U.S.. At the beginning of the presentation Serdar introduced Martin Luther King to the audience and told them about how the charismatic leader sought peace in during the volatile social transformation, which took place in America during the 1950s and 1960s. The participants were eager to learn

more about this man, and Sergey continued the presentation in the form of a general discussion regarding racism.

**Planning for “Beauty is a Beast” Auditions:** Bahar Agayeva '02, Bahar Nuriyeva '02, and Peace Corps Volunteers Shawn Baxter and Christine Ten met at the American Councils office on January 16 to get ready for auditions for the play “Beauty is a Beast.” The alumni plan to perform the play in mid-April, in conjunction with Global Youth Service Day, and they discussed cast selection criteria, deadlines, and advertising for the event.

**Model United Nations Simulation:** On January 18, Sergey Atliyev '01 and Serdar Karliyev '04 conducted a Model UN Simulation Conference for 13 local high school students. Sergey prepared the topic for the simulation in advance, and decided to use a fictional scenario involving HIV/AIDS. The students were divided into delegations of countries and had to discuss a law that, if passed, would allow HIV/AIDS-infected children to be expelled from public schools at the request of parents of non-infected students. The students discussed the issue and had to decide if the UN would allow countries to pass such legislation or not. The participants actively debated the issue and successfully represented their assigned countries.

**Professional Development Training:** Fourteen FLEX alumni from all over Turkmenistan came to the city of Turkmenabat for Professional Development Training organized by American Councils and the American Corner on January 24. Various exercises, interesting lectures, handouts, and practical sessions were included in the training session. Group leadership and team building exercises were conducted between sessions, and U.S. Embassy representatives from the Public Affairs Section, alumni coordinator Gulyalek Solatnova, and public affairs officer Ilya Levin also helped alumni by giving them tips for handling oneself successfully during an interview. Yuliana Kuzyayeva '03 and Bahar Nuriyeva '02 then talked about planning and delivering presentations, and American Corner regional representative Elnara Yunusova discussed time management.

## Dashoguz

---

**Alumni Meeting:** Nine alumni gathered at the American Corner to discuss community activities on January 3, 10, 21, and 26. Alumni talked about St. Valentine’s Day and ideas they have for late winter and early spring. Mehrijemal Altybayeva '04, Jalal Bekchanov '02, Oksana Hojayeva '01, Laziz Hudaybergenov '02, Maral Ilyasova '04, Leila Ischanova '03, Irina Kletchuk '04, Dariko Mkrumyan '04, and Viktoriya Orazova '04 attended the meetings.

**Debate/Improvisation Class:** Mehrijemal Altybayeva '04 conducted debate/improvisation classes at the American Corner in Dashoguz for more than 25 people every Friday in January. During classes Mehrijemal gave the attendees different issues and situations, which they discussed or acted out. The main goal of the classes was to develop critical thinking, leadership, and English skills.

**Spoken English Class:** Mehrijemal Altybayeva '04 organized a spoken English class at the American Corner for high school students. More than 30 people attended the classes, which were held every Tuesday and Wednesday in January. The main goal of the event was to develop the students’ spoken English by giving them new English words and expressions to add to their vocabulary.

**Acting Club:** Dariko Mkrumyan '04 and Peace Corps Volunteer Matthew Stein organized an acting club at the American Corner for interested visitors. More than seven people attended each class, which were held on Mondays in January.

**Newsletter Class:** Mehrijemal Altybayeva '04 conducted a newsletter class for more than 25 interested visitors at the American Corner. Mehrijemal Altybayeva '04, Irina Kletchuk '04, Dariko Mkrumyan '04, and Viktoriya Orazova '04 work on a newsletter for the American Corner, which helps them develop their writing skills.

**Meeting with Counterpart Director:** Irina Kletchuk '04, Dariko Mkrumyan '04, and Viktoriya Orazova '04 attended a meeting with Counter Part representatives at the American Corner on January 27. The main idea of the meeting was to learn new information about the Counterpart Grant Program and to discuss new project ideas for the community.

## Turkmenabat

**Developing Interview Skills:** Muskie alumnus Shohrat Orazov gave a presentation entitled “Interview Skills” for approximately 10 alumni and the general public at the American Corner on January 11. Shohrat emphasized the importance of interview skills when applying to universities and specified important aspects of the interview process that applicants ought to take into consideration. He shared his own interview experiences and gave useful advice. Shohrat then went over sample interview questions and participants were able to ask questions.

**Civil Society and Democracy Workshop:** Merdan Halilov '00 conducted a “Civil Society and Democracy” workshop at the American Corner for 15 people on January 15. At the beginning of the activity Merdan introduced different models of political government, such as feudalism, capitalism, democracy, socialism, nationalistic, etc. He then explained that these models are ideal terms that do not exist in pure form in any country; each of them contains elements of the others. Then the group discussed different types of democracy. The participants defined civil society and how its development influences democracy in a country. The purpose of this activity was to show the public the relationship between civil society and democracy, as well their interdependence.



## Turkmenbashy

**Alumni Discussion:** On January 3, Regional FLEX Alumni Representative Kristina Razahova '04 met with alumni at the American Corner to work on the FLEX Alumni Grant. Ecological and health-themed projects were discussed, and Iyera Askerova '04, Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04, Minara Ismailova '04, and Alina Penjiyeva '04 appeared most interested in such projects. The alumni discussed the benefits these types of projects would have for the community and got a better understanding of how the FLEX Alumni Grant program can be used.

**FLEX Musical Planning Meeting:** Iyera Askerova '04, Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04, Minara Ismailova '04, Alina Penjiyeva '04, and Kristina Razahova '04 gathered at the American Corner on January 4 to talk about a musical performance about the FLEX experience they plan to put on in March. The show will cover the past, present, and future of a FLEX student, and will help convey the American experience through music and drama to potential FLEX students.

**“How to be a Pleasant Person” Presentation:** On January 5, Iyera Askerova '04 and Minara Ismailova '04 gave presentation to 10 people about how to be a pleasant person, based on a book written by Dale Carnegie. Iyera Askerova gave step-by-step instructions and stressed the importance being a pleasant person. Minara Ismailova gave different situations, and the audience had to practice how to handle each one pleasantly. This event helped teach the importance of mutual respect in the community.

**ECO Meeting:** On January 6, Minara Ismailova '04 had a meeting with those involved in the “Pollution of the Caspian Sea and its Coast” project. The alumni and six students discussed possible projects to encourage people to protect the environment, such as an upcoming art show. The results of the Kindergarten Contest were also determined, as were the prizes for the best story about the Caspian Sea.



**The U.S. Club:** Alina Penjiyeva '04 continued to teach students about U.S. culture and society at U.S. club meetings held on January 6, 12, 20, 26. Ten students of English attend the club regularly, and this month they learned about ten U.S. presidents and about the history of the first ten states. The club helps students better understand U.S. culture and how to communicate with Americans.

**Music Club:** Kristina Razahova '04 and Peace Corp Volunteer Alexander Minier held a music club meeting on January 7. The club gives students the opportunity to sing songs and improve their listening comprehension skills at the same time in a relaxed atmosphere. Alexander helped explain unknown words and the meaning of the songs to the participants, and everyone enjoyed learning more about U.S. culture through its music.

**Women's Club:** Yuliya Harudinova '04, Minara Ismailova '04, and Kristina Razahova '04 attended the women's club held by Peace Corps Volunteer Elynn Walter on January 7 and 28. During the club meetings the participants were able to share their thoughts on women's rights and discussed the possibility of starting a newsletter about women's issues in the community. The participants also talked about literature and art made by women in the past and present, and also compared the ways in which women live in different parts of the world.

**Computer Classes for Orphans:** Minara Ismailova '04 and Alina Penjiyeva '04 continued computer classes for students from a local orphanage in Turkmenbashi at the American Corner on January 10 and 24. The purpose of the classes is to teach the students the basics of computer programs. Ten students regularly attend the classes, and have learned about the computer system, floppy discs, the hard drive, and other computer functions via lectures and handouts. The alumni hope that the classes will provide the orphans with computer knowledge that will help them achieve success in the future.

**Presentation on U.S. Universities and Colleges:** On January 12, Alina Penjiyeva '04 gave a presentation to nine people about the higher education system in the U.S. Alina provided information about various U.S. institutions and explained the main differences between universities in Turkmenistan and the U.S. General information about the different degrees offered at U.S. institutions, the history of higher education in the U.S., and the application process was also presented. Alina talked about her personal experience in the U.S., and discussed the advantages to studying abroad. The students in attendance were encouraged to take an active role in such programs to help support the future development of Turkmenistan.

**College Application Process Presentation:** Kristina Razahova '04 provided an explanation of the application process to American universities for 15 American Corner visitors on January 14. Kristina discussed what to consider when filling out the application form, and stressed the importance of standardized tests in the process. Essay writing was also covered in the presentation, and Kristina talked about what colleges are looking for when reviewing applications. The presentation helped students get a better understanding of how to successfully apply to U.S. institutions.

**Book-of-the-Month Club:** Iyera Askerova '04, Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04, and Kristina Razahova '04 continued to attend the Book-of-the-Month Club run by Peace Corps Volunteers Alex Minier and Katie Decker for alumni, 12 students, and English teachers. The participants read various English-language literature, such as *Of Mice and Men* and *Tales of a 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Nothing*, and then meet to discuss the books and go over new vocabulary together. The attendees are also given handouts and writing assignments. The club helps participants improve their English speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as analytical thinking, and debate skills.

**Model U.N. Training:** Iyera Askerova '04, Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04, Alina Penjiyeva '04, and Kristina Razahova '04 took part in the Model UN training held by Peace Corps volunteers Becky Bowman and Alex



Minier on January 18. The alumni were told about the divisions of a Model UN, its history, and how it works. The participants were divided into groups and had to write a resolution and then enacted a general assembly. The training was held in preparation for the first Model UN Conference, which is to be held for the local community in the near future.

**A Key to Democracy:** On January 19, Minara Ismailova '04 organized a class about democracy for nine people. Minara talked about different kinds of democracy, such as direct, representative, parliamentary, and residential democracy. The participants were then divided into groups and had to come up with their own country represented by a president. The groups then discussed and explained their countries and how they went about electing their presidents. Minara then went on to talk about the U.S. Constitution and its importance in guaranteeing human rights. The activities and discussion helped the students develop their creativity and critical thinking skills.

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day Presentation:** Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04 and Minara Ismailova '04 gave a presentation to 12 people about Martin Luther King Jr. Day at the American Corner on January 19. The history of Martin Luther King Jr. Day was discussed, and the students completed assignments regarding the holiday and

played a memory game. The event was meant to help people in Turkmenistan better understand U.S. culture by comparing their holidays to native ones.

**Girls' Basketball:** Iyera Askerova '04, Alina Penjiyeva '04, Kristina Razahova '04, Arzu Talapova '04, and Peace Corps volunteers held basketball practices for fifth through seventh grade girls from Turkmenbashi, Balkanabat, and Serdar three times a week at the American Corner beginning in January. The alumni want to have a basketball tournament at School #12 on March 12 and hope that the project will empower the girls through athletics and teamwork.

**Art Show:** Minara Ismailova '04 organized an art show at the American Corner on January 24. Alina Penjiyeva '04, Kristina Razahova '04, and Peace Corps Volunteers Becky Bowman and Alex Minier acted as the jury for the show. Fifteen people participated in the event, and the theme was "Pollution of the Caspian Sea and its Coast." Each participant prepared a picture that described "The Caspian Sea and Me," and were able to describe the illustration to the jury. The best works were awarded prizes, and alumni hope the project will encourage people to take better care of the environment.

**"Evolution or God, Science or Religion" Discussion:** Seventeen people, including FLEX alumni Alina Penjiyeva '04, Kristina Razahova '04, and Arzu Talapova '04 took part in the "Evolution or God, Science or Religion" roundtable discussion organized by Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04 and Minara Ismailova '04 on February 26. The participants were given handouts on this controversial subject and then discussed the issue. The pros and cons of each argument were examined, and overall the event gave the students a chance to develop their critical thinking skills.

**World Leaders:** Minara Ismailova '04 led the "World Leaders" class for 8 people on January 27. Minara gave a presentation about Kofi Annan, his life and work. The participants then discussed Kofi Annan and examined how life may have influenced his interests and goals. The attendees then discussed other world leaders with whom they are familiar. The students want to make this a monthly event at the American Corner to help them strengthen their knowledge of world leaders and issues.

**Alumni Monthly Meeting:** On January 28 Kristina Razahova '04 met with Iyera Askerova '04, Yulia Hayrutdinova '04, Minara Ismailova '04, Alina Penjiyeva '04, and Arzu Talapova '04 at the American Corner to discuss upcoming events. Peace Corps Volunteers Becky Bowman, Alex Minier, and Laura Myerburg also attended the meeting and appeared very interested in putting forth their ideas for upcoming months. Kristina also provided a copy of the FLEX Alumni Grant Program description and discussed ways the alumni could take on a more active role in February. Ideas such as a Healthy Living Seminar for adults and a Joyous Sports activity for children were suggested and reviewed.

**"Winter Season" Activity:** Alina Penjiyeva '04, Kristina Razahova '04, and Peace Corps volunteers gathered together to conduct the "Winter Season" activity for American Councils students on January 29. Ten people participated in the event, which helped students get to know each other better in a relaxed atmosphere by playing American games. The students also had the chance to ask questions about U.S. culture and traditions.

**Model U.N. Conference:** On January 29, a Model UN conference was organized at the American Corner. Yuliya Hayrutdinova '04, Alina Penjiyeva '04, and Kristina Razahova '04 led the conference, which was attended by 25 people. The alumni used the knowledge they gained at the training session held by Peace Corps volunteers earlier to help the event succeed. Kristina Razahova '04 gave a brief history of Model UN conferences, and Alina Penjiyeva '04 explained how the conference would work and general rules. Peace Corps Volunteer Becky Bowman assisted at the conference and Alex Minier acted as a guest speaker. The attendees were then divided into groups and wrote resolutions before conducting the general assembly meeting. The conference helped Turkmenistan citizens better understand the relationships between countries and the importance of international cooperation.

## Upcoming Events:

### Ashgabat

- **Debate Club** will be led every Monday by Serdar Karliyev '04.
- **Movie Nights** are planned for every Friday at the Educational Advising Center.

- **Auditions for “Beauty is a Beast” Play** will take place on February 5.
- **“How to Initiate and Conduct an Event” Training** will take place at the end of February.
- **“Beauty is a Beast” Rehearsals** will be held three times a week.
- **“Beauty is a Beast” Scenery Construction** will take place twice a week.
- **“Who are Peace Corps Volunteers?” Presentation** by Peace Corps volunteers from Ashgabat and the Ahal region will be held in February.

## Dashoguz

---

- **Acting Class** will be held every Monday in February.
- **“Current Events” Club** will take place every Tuesday and Thursday in February.
- **“Children Against Pollution” Club** will be held every Friday in February.
- **Debate/Improvisation Class** will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in February.
- **Literature Class** will take place every Monday in February.
- **Movie Night** will take place every Friday in February.
- **“Spanish” Club** will be held every Tuesday and Friday in February.
- **Spoken English Class** will take place every Tuesday in February.

## Turkmenabat

---

- **American History Club** will be held once a week.
- **World Study Club** will be held once a week.
- **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Class** will be held once a week.
- **Literary Class** will be held every Thursday.
- **Movie Class** will be held every Friday.
- **Conversational Club** will be held once a week.
- **Valentine’s Day Celebration** will be held on February 14.

## Turkmenbashy

---

- **ECO Meeting** will be held on February 1.
- **How to Write an Effective Essay Presentation** by Alina Penjiyeva ’04 and Kristina Razahova ’04 is planned for February 2.
- **The U.S. Club** will meet on February 2, 10, 16, and 24 at the American Corner with Alina Penjiyeva ’04.
- **Healthy Living Seminar** is planned for February 6.
- **Computer Classes for Disabled Children** will be held on February 7, 14, 21, and 28 by Alina Penjiyeva ’04 and Minara Ismailova ’04.
- **“American University in Bulgaria (AUBG) Soros Foundation Scholarship Presentation** will take place on February 3, 8, 10.
- **Joyous Sports Activity** is planned for February 5.
- **Debate Skills Event** led by Alex Minier and Kristina Razahova ’04 will take place on February 7.
- **SAT Presentation** by Kristina Razahova ’04 will take place on February 14.
- **Book-of-the-Month Club** will meet on February 8, 15, and 22.
- **Women’s Club** will meet on February 4 and 25 at the American Corner.
- **Black History Month Presentation** is planned for February 9.
- **Music Club** will be held on February 11.
- **World Leaders Event** is planned for February 11.
- **Art and Crafts with Peace Corps** will take place on February 16.
- **Movie Night** is planned for February 17 at the American Corner.
- **Valentine’s Day Presentation** will be given on February 14 at the American Corner.
- **Valentine’s Day Party with American Councils Students** will take place on February 12 at the American Corner.
- **“Evolution or God, Science or Religion” Part II** led by Yuliya Hayritdinova ’04 and Minara Ismailova ’04 will take place on February 17.
- **“Professional Development” Training** by Kristina Razahova ’04 is scheduled for February 18.
- **“Selecting a College and Financial Aid” Presentation** will be on February 22.
- **“The Best Caspian Dance” Contest** is planned for February 23.
- **Monthly Meeting** between alumni and Peace Corps volunteers will take place at the American Corner on February 25.
- **“All Lifestyles” Presentation** by Yuliya Hayrutdinova ’04 will be held on February 28.

**Contact:** Ashgabat Alumni Assistant Bahar Nuriyeva '02, [flexalum@online.tm](mailto:flexalum@online.tm) (+99312) 34-26-34

## Ukraine

### Kharkiv

**Kharkiv Alumni Planning Meeting:** Anton Borisov '02, Iryna Horb '04, Ksenya Iasyenko '01, Natalya Kasyanenko '04, Oleksandra Lytvynova '04, Ihor Murashko '04, Kyrylo Orach '04, Oleksandr Peshykov '04, Roman Shatov '04, Iryna Shpak '04, Serhiy Smirnov '04, and Oleksandra Tsymbal '04 attended the alumni planning meeting on January 20. The group set the goal of strengthening the alumni team. They expressed the desire to give alumni more chances to share their experiences and learn from each other. They worked out a detailed plan for the upcoming events for the period January through June.

**“Karlik Nose” A 3-D Cartoon For Orphanage Children:** Alumni took a group of 50 children who study in the first through fourth grade from Kharkiv orphanage #14 to the movies on January 27. The children will remember this day and the fun time they had, as will alumni. The children all wore amusing stereo-movie glasses, and watched a slightly frightening cartoon with a happy ending. Alumni agreed to go to the orphanage again to play with these children or give them classes of English and general subjects. Oleksandra Tsymbal '04 and Natalya Kasyanenko '04 helped organize this event. Iryna Horb '04, Viktoriya Vasylyeva '03 and Yevhen Bobyk '03 also attended.

**English Speaking Club:** Sessions of the club were held every Tuesday in January. Arnab Synha, a Peace Corps volunteer, organizes an English Speaking Club for alumni and members of the local community that takes place regularly in School #4. Alumni and other participants gathered to have a discussion on a chosen topic. The club is open to the public.

#### Upcoming Events:

- **Alumni Planning Meeting** will be held at American Center on February 18.
- **Electronic PR Technologies Seminar** will be held at American Center on February 27.
- **English Speaking Club** will be held at School #4 on February 1 and 15.
- **Valentine's Day Celebration** will be held.

**Contact:** Kharkiv Alumni Assistant Yevhen Bobyk '03, [flexalumni@americancouncils-kharkiv.org.ua](mailto:flexalumni@americancouncils-kharkiv.org.ua) +380 (572) 45-62-78.

### Kyiv

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day:** Zhytomyr FLEX alumni Lyubov Blin '02 and Illya Dyadyk '01 initiated discussions on equality and diversity issues during classes at Zhytomyr State University and Zhytomyr Agricultural University. Alumni talked about discrimination among their peers and learned more about Martin Luther King Jr.'s life.

**Zhytomyr Alumni English Movie Night:** Hanna Antonenko '03, Lyubov Blin '02, Illya Dyadyk '01, Lyubov Dyakova '03, Ihor Karpets '03, Olha Kondratyuk '03, Nataliya Olenchuk '02, and Serhiy Topachevskyy '01 got together on January 22 to watch a movie in English and discuss current alumni club activities.

**Grant Proposal Writing Workshop:** On January 22, Nataliya Balyuk '04, Maryna Gaydak '04, Kateryna Sayfutdinova '03, and Nataliya Voynarovska '00 participated in a grant-writing workshop organized by IREX. Alumni received guidelines on writing and implementing their ideas. They also listened to tips from grant winners.

**Global Village Presentation:** On January 27, Karina Makarenko '98 and Vasyl Miroshnychenko '97, who both participated in the Global Village Program in previous years, gave a presentation on the Global Village summer program for students from Kyiv universities. Fifteen graduate and undergraduate students learned about application requirements and the wonderful opportunities the Global Village program offers, and were able to ask questions. Karina and Vasyl shared their impressions and encouraged students to apply for to the program.

**Fifth Annual Benefit Evening Preparations:** Mariya Dubrovska '03, Anna Dumanska '00, Maryna Gaydak '04, Iryna Gulenko '01, Olena Rybak '02, Iryna Tokatly '01, Roman Tryzub '01, FLEX Alumni Assistant

## FLEX January 2005 Report

Maryna Yaroshchuk '02, and Oleksandra Zhestova '02 helped organize the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Benefit Evening throughout the month of January. The alumni contacted sponsors and established contacts with the city administration. The proceeds from the event will be donated to the children's department of Kyiv Psycho-Neurological Hospital #1. U.S. Ambassador John E. Herbst is expected to be the honorary chair of the organizing committee.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Junior Chamber Ukraine (JCI) Meeting** will be held on February 3.
- **Alumni Happy Hour** will be held on February 4 for alumni of U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs.
- **St. Valentine's Celebration** for Eurasia Undergraduate Program and FLEX alumni is planned for February 14.
- **5<sup>th</sup> Benefit Evening Preparations and Event** will continue until the event is held on March 5.

**Contact:** Kyiv Alumni Assistant Maryna Yaroshchuk '02, [flexalumni@americancouncilskyiv.org.ua](mailto:flexalumni@americancouncilskyiv.org.ua) +380 (44) 246-82-82

### Lviv

---

**Christmas Together:** Lviv alumni held a Christmas party on January 8 with eastern Ukrainian FLEX alumni from Luhansk, Kirovograd, and Kherson whom western Ukrainian alumni hosted for Christmas. Olesya Fedun '04, Maryana Khokhla '04, Iryna Ravlyk '04, and Stepan Shakhno '01 joined the nation-wide youth effort after the presidential elections to bring together young people from eastern and western Ukraine to celebrate Christmas together, while sharing Ukrainian holiday traditions.

**Alumni Meeting:** A regular alumni meeting was held on January 28 for alumni to discuss ways to work after the office closes, as well as to plan activities for the next six months, including the upcoming trip to Odesa for debates. Olha Dehtyarova '02, Olesya Fedun '04, Maryana Khokhla '04, Orysya Kobel '02, Oksana Nos '03, Iryna Odrehivska '02, Yaryna Ravlyk '04, Natalya Salo '01, Ivan Senyk '01, and Stepan Shakhno '01 took part in the meeting.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Alumni Meeting** will be held on February 10 at the Ukrainian Catholic University.
- **All-Ukrainian Debates in Odesa** will take place on February 19-20. Alumni from all over Ukraine will be participating in the debates.
- **Clean-up Day** will be held in a park on March 9.
- **Regular Alumni Meeting** is planned for March 15 at the Ukrainian Catholic University.

**Contact:** Lviv Alumni Assistant, Stepan Shakhno '01 [alumni@americancouncils.lviv.ua](mailto:alumni@americancouncils.lviv.ua) +380 (032) 97-11-25.

### Odesa

---

**Meeting with French University Student:** Dmytro Aver'yanov '04, Mariya Hontar '04, Kateryna Komarova '02, Yuliya Malikova '04, and Anastasiya Marchuk '01 attended a meeting with Myriam Goinard on January 18. Myriam is a journalist and member of the student association at the University of Nantes, France, and was visiting Ukraine to gather information about the Orange Revolution and to find out what young people in Ukraine thought about the recent political changes.

**General Meeting:** Tea Bebia '04, Mariya Bepalova '04, Kateryna Komarova '02, Nataliya Kovyilkina '04, Yuliya Malikova '04, Gennadiy Starostin '02, Dariya Ul'yanova '02, Ihor Yeremenko '04 gathered on January 26 in order to discuss the upcoming debate tournament. Several important organizational issues were brought up, such as hosting for participants from other cities, lunch options, and social activities.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Organizational Meeting** regarding the final organizational aspects of the upcoming all-Ukrainian Debate Tournament will be held on February 15.

- **All-Ukrainian Debate Workshop & Tournament** is planned for February 19-20. Twenty-five FLEX alumni from various Ukrainian cities will take part in the debate tournament, the theme of which is “Freedom of the Press.” Representatives from the Odesa Dispute Club, a well-recognized debate club in Ukraine, will judge the tournament.

**Contact:** Odesa Alumni Assistant Ekaterina Komarova '02, [flexalumni@americancouncilsodesa.org.ua](mailto:flexalumni@americancouncilsodesa.org.ua) Tel: +380 (48) 222-90-77.

## Uzbekistan

---

**Presentation at Jewish School:** Emiliya Asadova '02, Mastura Maradjapova '04, Yulduz Parpieva '04, and Dilyara Yusupova '04 gave a presentation entitled “My U.S. High School Experience” at the Educational Advising Center in Tashkent on January 7. The presentation’s primary audience was the sixth-grade class from Jewish Specialized School # 321 who had heard about exchange programs to the U.S. and wanted to learn more. The alumni talked about their experience living in the U.S. through the FLEX program and encouraged the students to pursue such programs in the future.

**“Leadership as a Lifestyle” Lecture:** President of “Leadership Edge Incorporated” Dr. John Hawkins gave a lecture entitled “Leadership as a Lifestyle” to 23 alumni on January 7. Dr. Hawkins discussed the qualities a good leader possesses and explained the difference between leaders and managers. Raihan Izimbetova '98 and Karim Muhmedov '04 asked about problems leaders may encounter when working with a large team, and the alumni were able to express their points of view on leadership based on their U.S. experience. Dr. Hawkins is a Harvard graduate and provides leadership seminars for corporations around the U.S.

**FLEX Alumna Presentation:** On January 12, Diora Ziyaeva '00 gave a very informative presentation at the Educational Advising Center about her experience participating in the Latvia/Estonia International Parliamentary Debate Tournament. Diora was the only representative from Central Asia, and was able to attend the tournament thanks to a travel grant from the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy. After speaking about her time at the tournament Diora shared useful information about other such conferences with the 24 alumni and students in attendance.

**The Tashkent Open Parliamentary Debate Tournament:** The Tashkent Open Parliamentary Debate Tournament, the biggest debate tournament in Uzbekistan, took place on January 14-17. Sanjar Khudayberdiev '02 and Eurasia Undergraduate Exchange Program alumnus Sergey Nigay initiated the event, which was funded by Westminster International University and American Councils. FLEX alumni acted as judges, speakers, organizers, and spectators at the tournament, the theme of which was “Sustainable Development.” Forty-eight debaters from different Central Asia countries gathered to debate this very relevant topic in either English or Russian. Amirbek Musayev '04 was recognized as Best Speaker in the English league and Aliya Prenova '03 took second place. Rustam Gabaydullin '02 helped lead his team to the final round, where they were narrowly defeated by FLEX alumni Kaarmanbek Kuluev '03 and Urmat Imankulov '02 from Kyrgyzstan. Overall, the alumni had a great time and were able to further develop their critical thinking and debate skills.



**Charity Ball Planning Meeting:** Emiliya Asadova '02, Javlon Jahanov '02, Oybek Khaitov '02, Mastura Maradjapova '04, Shehroz Narzikulov '00, and Jasur Rahmanov '02 met on January 19 to begin planning a charity ball to help raise money for the children’s ward of the Tashkent Cancer Hospital. The alumni discussed potential locations and sponsors for the ball, which is scheduled for April.

**Presentation by Dr. Stephen Lam:** Ten FLEX alumni and 15 alumni from other U.S. Government-funded programs attended a lecture on China by Fulbright Scholar Dr. Stephen Lam on January 20. Dr. Lam, who is researching language policy in Central Asia, discussed China’s international achievements, internal migration, and HIV/AIDS epidemic. The lecture was particularly relevant to Uzbekistan, as China is a neighboring country.

**Lecture by Mr. Donald Nicholson:** On January 26, 11 alumni attended a lecture by Mr. Donald Nicholson, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Uzbekistan and regional director of the SEAF Central Asia Small Enterprise Fund. Mr. Nicholson gave the alumni advice on pursuing careers in business and used examples from his own life and the lives of other successful people to illustrate his point. Mr. Nicholson also helped alumni better understand how to make long and short-term careers goals for themselves, and also discussed the issue of gender in careers.

**“The Dining Room” Auditions:** Alumni Assistant Emiliya Asadova and FLEX Director Nathan Truitt held auditions for a play adapted from A.R. Gurney’s *The Dining Room* on January 30. Twenty-three alumni auditioned for the play, which will help raise money for Global Youth Service Day events throughout Uzbekistan.

---

## Nukus

**Radio Interview:** Tumaris Matekova '04 and local American Councils Representative Khabipnazar Daujanov were interviewed by the *Zhaslar* (Youth) radio program in Karakalpakstan on January 24. Tumaris answered questions about how she participated in the FLEX program and her life in the U.S. She also discussed what she is doing now that she has returned to Uzbekistan.

---

## Ferghana

**Grant Writing Workshop:** Approximately 50 alumni from various U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs gathered in Ferghana on January 29 to attend a workshop on grant writing. The two-day seminar was organized and sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy. Two Peace Corps volunteers led the seminar, which taught the alumni successful strategies for finding funding and writing grants. Several FLEX alumni plan to submit grant proposals to the FLEX Alumni Grants Program.

### Upcoming Events:

- **“How to Write a Winning Grant Proposal” Workshop** for FLEX alumni will be held February 5.
- **Meeting with U.S. Embassy Officials** regarding the U.S. mission to Uzbekistan is scheduled for February 10.
- **Monthly Alumni Meeting and Movie Night** will take place on February 11.
- **Lecture by Daniel Stevens** entitled “Research Globally, Publish Locally” will be held in February.
- **Black History Month Event** will take place at the end of February.

**Contact:** Tashkent Alumni Assistant Emilia Asadova '02 [alumni@flex.bcc.com.uz](mailto:alumni@flex.bcc.com.uz), tel: +998 (71) 152-12-81.

---

## ALUMNI SUCCESSES

### Armenia

*Lia Avetisyan '96* was hired as the position a team leader at Lycos Armenia CJSC.

*Anna Gevorgyan '02* was hired as an administrative assistant at Lycos Armenia CJSC.

*Suren Vardanyants '03* is working as a technical assistant in the Court of Appeals in Yerevan.

Azerbaijan

*Aysel Aslanova '03* is an intern at the Ministry of Economic Development.

*Tohida Kazimova '02* is employed as administrator at “Rig Blast” Construction Company.

*Tamerlan Mammadov '02* is an intern at the Ministry of Economic Development.

---

### Belarus

*Ekaterina Apet '04* hosted a New Year’s concert at her college in Minsk.

*Ekaterina Chetyreva '02* became a member of the dance club and performed at the Minsk State Linguistics University.

*Daria Efimova '02* got a job as an interpreter for the Ericsson Company, which is one of the biggest producers of mobile phones in Belarus.

*Maria Grakhovskaya '04* participated in a track competition at her school in Borisov. She also took part in intellectual games held as a competition among Borisov schools.

*Aliaksei Kudzin '04* was admitted to Lithuanian Christian College. Aliaksei also took part in a weightlifting competition at his school.

*Margarita Kuleshova '03* was admitted to the Theatre Club at Belarussian State Economics University.

*Sergei Smal '02* became president of the Russian Club at his university.

*Anna Tretiakova '01* participated in the debate tournament held at Minsk State Linguistics University.

## **Georgia**

---

*Sophie Gotsadze '02* got a job as a front desk receptionist at an American hotel in Frankfurt, Germany. She volunteers with the USO, providing food and beverages for the U.S. troops going to Iraq or coming from the Rein Main Airbase in Frankfurt. She also holds a volunteer position as administrative assistant for the American Friends of Georgia (NGO), which raises funds for orphanages in Georgia.

*Nino Makatsaria '00* started working at the company “Green Building “as a corporate finance manager.

*Maia Mazaishvili '03* started working as an office assistant at the Georgian Enterprise Growth Initiative (GEGI), funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development.

*Manana Tevzadze '97* started working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Department for International Cultural Relations.

*Tamila Vacharadze '02* was accepted as a coordinator of the Elisabeth Gast Educational Project for Orphans and also got a job as an office manager of the Hypermarket Goodwill.

## **Kazakhstan**

---

*Zhibek Karamanova '03* won second place at the Jessup Moot Court mock court debates that were held among Almaty University students.

*Dina Karibayeva '04, Diana Kudaybergenova '04, and Marzhan Serekova '04* started the Youth Parliament of Kazakhstan with group of other university leaders.

*Maryam Montayeva '03* works as a teaching assistant at the Career Center at the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP.)

*Yekaterina Serebryannaya '04* was chosen for the main role for in an upcoming Kazakhstan English Language Theatre performance of “A Company Way Were Sayings.”

*Marzhan Serekova '04* was elected as a Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP) student body delegate for the International conference that will be held in Abu-Dabi, UAE. She will present a speech on the topic of “New Electronic Technologies in Education.”

*Yelena Sotnikova '04* works as a part time English language tutor for elementary school students.

## Kyrgyzstan

---

*Asel Murzatova '03* has been selected to participate in the International Debate Tournament representing Kyrgyz republic at Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

*Shamamed Seitmuradov '03* volunteers at the Agency for Commerce Information and has been selected to present American University-Central Asia at the Dubai International Educational conference.

*Nataliya Strolyarova '96* works as public relations and advertising manager for “Seitek” trading center in Bishkek.

## Moldova

---

*Valentina Brega '04* and *Irina Nicorici '98* took part in a digital videoconference on the civil rights movement.

*Vadim Dubceac '04* was appointed technical assistant in organizing a digital videoconference between Balti, Moldova and Lakeland, Florida.

## Russia

---

### Kirov

---

*Yuliya Alekseyeva '02* (Penza) graduated with honors from her Penza secondary school in 2003. She currently studies politics and economics at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas.

*Yuliana Amanova '03* (Kazan) studies at the Tatar-American Regional Institute, majoring in linguistics with a specialization in translation.

*Christina Bess '01* currently works as an *au pair* in Germany.

*Vladimir Gordeev '98* was accepted as a student for two IATP distance courses “Sociology and psychology of mass communications” and “PR - communication management” starting January 15.

*Farhad Fatkullin '96* (Kazan) works as a free-lance translator.

*Maksim Isaykin '04* became a winner in English language Olympiad in Kirov Economics and Law Lyceum, and took fifth place in Kirov City English language Olympiad.

*Liliya Iskhakova '03* (Kazan) entered Kazan State University, and is specializing in Oriental studies.

*Sonya Kaplan '04* took a second place in Kirov City English language Olympiad.

*Marat Khayrullin '03* (Kazan) studies at Kazan State Technology University, majoring in economics with a specialization in management. He also works in the Larisa Marketing Group as a promoter and works for the *Raketa* hockey team as an interpreter.

*Asya Loginova '02* (Kazan) is in her last year of studies at the Kazan State Institute of Finance and Economics, majoring in financial management with a specialization in management. She currently works in the Agency of Marketing Communications “Larisa” as an account manager in the client relations department.

*Evgenia Lyamina '03* took first place in the Kirov City English language Olympiad. As a winner of this Olympiad, she will participate in the Kirov Region English language Olympiad.

*Leila Nuriyeva '03* (Kazan) entered Kazan State Pedagogical University, where she is majoring in linguistics, specializing in English and Arabic.

*Olga Rebro '04* took a third place in Kirov City English language Olympiad.

*Yekaterina Rychagova '97* (Penza) graduated from Penza Pedagogical University in 2001. She entered a graduate studies program in London, England in 2001 and earned a diploma in 2004. She is currently working in London.

*Tatyana Syrunina '02* (Sarov) entered Moscow School of Higher Economics in 2003, majoring in law.

## **Moscow**

---

*Takhmina Acheldieva '97* is currently working as a program assistant at Moscow State University Laboratory of Molecular Immunology.

*Vadim Baikov '95* works as the key account manager with Robert Bosch Company in the Power Tools Department. He is also studying to get a second higher education in marketing at the Russian Economics Academy.

*Nataliya Ivanova '95* started a new job with Alion Distribution Company, one of the biggest suppliers of high tech products to Russia, as a multimedia product manager for Logitech, Creative, Thrustmaster.

*Yulia Molodtsova '98* is the lead singer in the band “Ch-B,” which performs at various nightclubs in Moscow. Ch-B band released one of its compositions as part of the “Nashi 14” collection.

*Denis Pimenov '00* (Voronezh) participated in the second All-Russia conference “PR-technologies in an Information-oriented Society,” which was held in St. Petersburg, Russia. He spoke on the topic of “PR in the Civil Society” and his speech was published in a special collection entitled “PR in Civil Society.”

*Elena Putintseva '98*, who works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was sent to Chisinau, Moldova to work in the Consular section of the Russian Embassy for three months.

## **Novosibirsk**

---

*Natalya Gashko '04* was invited to an International Human Rights Forum.

*Bella Struminsky '02* was invited to participate in the week-long Russian Forum on Politics and Sociology. She was also participated in the “Brain Ring” intellectual games held in the Siberian region.

## **St. Petersburg**

---

*Anastasia Furman '04* became a member of the International Red Cross Organization. She currently works as a teacher and organization assistant at her high school and plans to go to college in Murmansk this summer.

*Veronika Sokolova '03* works as an English teacher at a private language school in St. Petersburg. Her students are ninth through eleventh graders.

## **Samara**

---

*Anastasia Ekkert '95* delivered a speech on “Utilization of Internet Technologies in Universities as a Means of Fundraising” at the Povolzhskaya Regional Conference entitled “Electronic Business-Technologies - Practice of Utilization in Commercial and Noncommercial Sectors,” which was organized by Project Harmony on February 4-6. Anastasia studied at American University, Washington, DC (2002-2004) as a Muskie Fellow, and recently began work as a consultant at the American consulting company Booz Allen Hamilton in Moscow.

*Elena Pastukhova '00* participated in the Povolzhskaya Regional Conference “Electronic Business-Technologies. Practice of Utilization in Commercial and Noncommercial Sectors,” which was organized by Project Harmony on February 4-6.

## **Vladivostok**

---

*Galina Besedina '04* is studying international communications in St. Petersburg.

*Denis Savelyev '95* started the Adventure Land Travel Co. This company works with foreign and Russian tourists who come to visit Kamchatka.

*Elena Shindypkina '02* had a one-month internship in China, where she studied Chinese at a university.

## **Volgograd**

---

*Svetlana Botkina '01* (Saratov) studies at Saratov State Socio-Economic University, majoring in translation and intercultural communication. Her specialization is linguist-translator.

*Alexei Shavenzov '95* (Saratov) graduated from Mordovian State University in 1999 with a major in economics, and a specialization in finance. Since 2001, he works for SUN Interbrew as a corporate affairs manager in the administration department.

*Elena Fomenko '03* took the third place in the Volzhsky English language competition.

*Oksana Panfilova '04* took part in the three-day training seminar in Kazan organized by the English Language Office of the U.S. Embassy for the 2005 Summer English Language that will be held in Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. Future teachers and their assistants learned to work in a language camp, learned what were the interesting ways to teach English and how to do it through games. One more teaching seminar will be held in May 2005.

*Yulia Pchelina '03* is working as a guide in a Volgograd travel agency.

*Alina Sinitskaya '04* organized two open lessons of English in a Volgograd kindergarten.

## **Yekaterinburg**

---

*Yelena Babkova '00* (Chelyabinsk) won the “Education in the U.K.” contest organized by the British Council and did a three-month internship at the University of Aberystwyth in Wales. Yelena was also awarded the Chelyabinsk governor’s scholarship.

*Svetlana Baranova '02* is currently working for “Roskonditer” as the manager of the VIP gifts department.

*Vitaly Dmitriyev '04* managed to get an external high school diploma (without attending classes) and entered the Izhevsk State University to major in law.

*Tonya Ivanova '04* successfully passed her winter exams and got all As.

*Polina Rogozhina '04* placed first in the Chelyabinsk Region English Language Olympiad.

*Svetlana Shammassova '99* graduated from Ufa State University with an honors diploma in linguistics. She is currently working as a translator at a company in Ufa.

*Yulia Suchkova '03* is the chairman of Creative and Intelligent Youth, a member of the jury for the “Talents of the XXI century” exhibition.

*Anastasia Syrchina '99* began graduate school at Ural State Technical University, where she teaches project management.

*Alexey Tryapochkin '00* returned from Germany where he spent six months as an intern-student through the European student organization AISEC. Alexey is a senior at Ural State Technical University, specializing in world economy.

*Kseniya Zemlyanova '00* received a scholarship from *Moskovsky Komsomolets* newspaper by winning an essay contest they organized in Perm.

*Yelizaveta Zyryanova '04* defended her thesis on volunteering in the USA. She also placed third at the city English Language Olympiad.

## **Tajikistan**

---

*Aziz Bobokhodjiev '04* established the “Renessans” business center at the Avesto Hotel. He is now working as a manager of the center. He books airline tickets, provides translation services, and assists foreigners with a wide range of questions.

*Tahmina Rahmatova '99* was hired by German Agro Action as a monitoring and evaluation officer.

## **Turkmenistan**

---

*Bahar Agayeva '02* began working as an administrative assistant at the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) on February 14.

*Maral Hanova '99* is working for the Schlumberger Company in Balkanabat.

*Bahar Nuriyeva '02* received a grant from Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy to work on a play production called “Beauty is a Beast.”

## **Ukraine**

---

### **Kharkiv**

---

*Maryna Chorna '02* was selected for the position of president of the international student organization AIESEC in Kharkiv from among numerous candidates. Maryna also actively participates in student parliament at the university, which was organized by a group of students.

*Maryna Davydenko '03* works as a designer in a local company.

### **Kyiv**

---

*Marina Dyomina '02* organized and conducted seminars on tolerance at Dnipropetrovsk State University as a part of Youth Advocacy Council’s (YAC) program. Marina is an active member of YAC, whose mission is to carry out projects devoted to increasing cultural diversity in Ukraine. Marina also initiated the Dnipropetrovsk Active Youth (DAY) Club. The goal of the “DAY” club is to create a network between local NGOs and volunteers.

*Iryna Gulenko '01* is employed by IntWest Distribution as a PR manager. The company belongs to the national Inter TV Holding.

*Dmytor Klymenko '03* is working at LiveRepair.Com Company as a technical expert. The aim of the company is to provide cost-effective online technical support. [www.LiveRepair.com](http://www.LiveRepair.com)

*Anna Opanasyuk '99* is employed by the AIDS Foundation East-West as a regional communications specialist for Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, and the Baltic States.

*Tetyana Poladko '00* helped organize a lecture by Mr. Kalman Mizsei, assistant secretary general of the UN and director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS of the United Nations Development Program, Mr. Anders Aslund, senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment, and Mr. Oleksander Paskavar, president of the Centre for Economic Development. Administrators, professors, and students from prominent universities, schools, and non-governmental organizations attended the event on January 13. Tetyana’s new job title is Youth Governance Component Manager, Human Security for Ukrainian Youth Project at the United Nations Development Programme.

### **Lviv**

---

*Nayalya Bak '01* was selected to participate in the European Week in Eindhoven, Netherlands.

*Olha Dehtyaerova '02* was elected vice president of communications for the executive board of the international student organization AISEC 2005-2006.

*Maryana Khokhla '04* hosted an eastern Ukrainian student for Christmas as part of a nation-wide unity effort.

*Roman Khokhla '02* won third place in the Ukrainian karate championship and second place in Lviv regional competition.

*Victor Piliarchuk '02* participated in a training program, that took place in Yaremcha from December 12-22. The training was devoted to leading a healthy lifestyle.

*Ira Tsyupa '04* was accepted to Volyn State University.

## **Odesa**

---

*Zhanna Babchuk '04* and *Alina Tkachenko '04* served as group leaders of *Studentska Hvylya*, which is a local Mykolayiv *Pora* organization, and worked at the campaign office (*peredvyborchyy shtab*) of Viktor Yushchenko.

*Maria Chaplinska '03*, *Olya Khomyak '03*, *Iryna Lysenko '03*, *Georgiy Sazonov '03*, and *Oleksandra Zhydkih '03* took active part in the student strikes during Orange Revolution in Kyiv and Mykolayiv.

*Maryna Fabyanska '01* works as a teacher assistant in an accounting class at Wisconsin University in Kyiv. She also received a 25% scholarship on her yearly university tuition fee for academic excellence.

*Olena Rabtsoun '02* took part in an official student strike declared by the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Olena stood on Maidan, went to strike in front of the main building of the ICTV channel, and in front of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

*Dmytro Say '01* started a charity campaign for orphanage children and organized two New Year's concerts for the orphans of Mykolayiv.

## **Uzbekistan**

---

*Umrbek Allakulov '04* won the regional English contest in Khorezm and is looking forward to the final round of the competition in late March.

*Gulsanem Allamberganova '04* was interviewed by reporters from Karakalpak Radio about life, traditions, the education system, and people in the U.S..

*Emiliya Asadova '02* had her article "Where the Road Leads a Young Scholar" published in *Time Out Tashkent* magazine.

*Timur Chutbaev '00* started work as an overseas expert in the Alfreight & Forwarding Department at the "KN IBRAKOM" transportation company.

*Sardor Djurabaev '99* started a master's program in business administration, strategy, and culture at Linkopings University in Sweden.

*Raihon Izimbetova '98* has been invited to participate in the Civic Education Week for current FLEX students in Washington, D.C.

*Yusup Karadaliev '97* is working as a representative for the Turkish trading company "MidAsia."

*Zarip Khodjaniyazov '03* was accepted to the Karakalpak State University Finance Department.

*Sholpan Kubeeva '02* is working as a receptionist at the Sheraton Tashkent Towers Hotel.

*Hilola Nishanova '03* was accepted to Queens College in Queens, New York, where she will major in business administration.

## FLEX January 2005 Report

*Tamara Ogay '03* was accepted to the Economics Department at Krasnoyarsk State University in Russia, where she received a full scholarship.

*Yulduz Parpieva '04* is working as a receptionist at the “Dedeman” Hotel in Tashkent.

*Yusufjan Sadikov '98* organized a workshop on “The Role of Youth in the Elections for Parliament.” Yusufjan has been head of the Khorezm Region FLEX alumni association since June 2004.

*Kamilla Sultanova '00* attended the Young People’s Media Network UNICEF workshop in Reykjavik, Iceland in October 2004. As a result of the workshop Kamilla made her own one-minute movie entitled *Breaking Free* about young women’s issues. To watch her movie go to: [http://www.theoneminutesjr.org/mmmcms/public/index.php?thissection\\_id=10&country\\_id=13](http://www.theoneminutesjr.org/mmmcms/public/index.php?thissection_id=10&country_id=13)

*Elena Timchenko '04* won first place at the English language Olympiad among four districts of Tashkent, and now is the third place winner of the City English Language Olympiad.

*Dilyara Yusupova '04* is volunteering for the School Connectivity program at the IATP Center. She finds online information about the schools involved in the program.

*Inessa Yuvakaeva '04* is working as an English language guide for tourists in her ancient hometown, Khiva.

*Diora Ziyaeva '00* won a scholarship from the Fund for American Studies to study at Georgetown University for a semester.