

Muskie Messenger

Georgian Member of Parliament Continues Health Care Reform Program

Levan Metreveli, a Georgian Member of Parliament, completed his Master of Public Health degree at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia in the summer of 2006. Now home, Mr. Metreveli continues to serve in Parliament and is actively engaged in the development of a healthcare-financing model with the Ministry of Health.

During his studies in the U.S., Mr. Metreveli developed a policy paper titled, "E.U. Enlargement and Health Systems: Experiences and Practices from New E.U. Member Countries and Implications for Georgia." His goal in writing the paper was to create a functional action plan for Georgia to follow in order to reform the Georgian healthcare system.

Upon his return to Georgia, Mr. Metreveli began working with state agencies and the international community to reform the healthcare system. The Ministry of Labor, Health Care and Social Welfare of Georgia (MOH) is working with the Health Committee of the Parliament to administer this reform program. In addition, various ministries including the Ministry of Economics, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Agriculture have lent support to the program. Furthermore, the Health Committee of Parliament is developing Georgian legislation in accordance with E.U. standards and regulations. The program will be completed in mid-2009.

The new healthcare policy will target the following objectives: improving intra-governmental cooperation, strengthening the human and technical capacity of the MOH, enhancing cooperation with old and new E.U. member countries, developing favorable a legal environment for health reforms with an emphasis on E.U. legislation, and designing an effective media strategy for health reforms.

Mr. Metreveli believes that, "My Muskie Fellowship at Emory has been absolutely essential to me. My view of public health has radically changed. I believe that my knowledge and experience gained through the Muskie Fellowship can easily be applied at different levels both nationally and internationally."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Carol Whittaker Reflects on SUNY-Albany's Experience as a Host Institution for Muskie Fellows

The University at Albany (State University of New York) School of Public Health (SPH) has actively participated in the Muskie Fellowship Program since 1998 when public health was added as a Muskie Program field of study. Over the past nine years, the SPH has hosted thirty-four graduate fellows from ten republics of the former Soviet Union. The experience has not only greatly benefited the Muskie fellows, but also other students, faculty, and the greater community. Although Albany is a small city, it is the capital of New York state, which means that Muskie fellows have the opportunity to participate in many academic and civic activities outside the classroom. Fellows have been active in Albany's sister city relationship with Tula, Russia and have volunteered their services to many local agencies and organizations, bringing greater cultural awareness to the local community.

Hosting Muskie fellows has provided opportunities for SPH faculty to become more deeply involved in practice-related research in several of the countries where Muskie alumni are now in a position to enter into collaborative projects. This is particularly true in the cases of Georgia and Kazakhstan. Many Muskie fellows from these countries have received additional support from the National Institutes of Health's Fogarty Program, allowing them to complete part of their summer internships conducting research in their home countries. Muskie Public Health alumni in Georgia have formed an active alumni group that supports the development of academic/practical collaborations based on the University of Albany model. The Institute for Children's Environmental Health, an organization that serves Central Asian countries, is another example of a collaboration established by SPH faculty working with current fellows and alumni of the Muskie Program. These and other partnerships would not be possible without the talent and dedication of the Muskie fellows.



Nino Lomia, 2005 Muskie fellow from Georgia studying at the School of Public Health, volunteered with other SPH students over the semester break to help in the reconstruction of homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

CURRENT MUSKIE NEWS

Russian Muskie Fellow Skates to Victory with the Lady Eagles

Maria Musatova, a 2005 Muskie fellow studying public administration, has played with the Lady Eagles hockey team of American University in Washington, D.C. for two seasons. This year the team won the championship for the Delaware Valley Collegiate Hockey Conference. In addition to her achievements on the ice, Ms. Musatova was honored with an All-American Academic Award by the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA).



Library and Information Science Fellow's Experience Working with Community Center Eases Transition to Life in the U.S.

Many Muskie fellows in the field of Library and Information Science have the opportunity to work closely with children and community centers. Mariana Kiriakov, a 2006 Muskie fellow from Moldova, had the chance to volunteer at the Clarion Free Library, the local public library in Clarion, Pennsylvania. Ms. Kiriakov worked mainly in the children's section and assisted the children's librarian on Family Nights, a library activity for children and their parents. According to Ms. Kiriakov, "communication with the patrons made me feel better and helped me overcome my cultural stress." In addition, "the most valuable experience was assisting on Family Nights and watching other volunteers and the whole volunteer program of the library." She later shared her experiences by giving presentations titled "Volunteering in Public Library" and "Children's Service in a Public Library."

Community Service Project Focuses on Fighting Domestic Violence

Kamila Issabekova, a 2006 Muskie fellow from Kazakhstan studying public administration at American University, participated in the World Bank Summit on Youth, Innovation and Development on October, 26, 2006. At this summit, Ms. Issabekova learned about the World Bank Poland Court Watch Program. This program is similar to Ms. Issabekova's community service work with the Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment (SAFE) Court Watch Program that works with the D.C. Coalition against Domestic Violence. For this project, Ms. Issabekova volunteered at a courthouse in Washington, DC, where she monitored domestic violence judicial proceedings and filled out evaluations that provide feedback to the court, the bar, and the community at large.

Ms. Issabekova explains that, "my project allowed me to directly interact with all parties of the American court system and observe how all types of relationship-violence are eradicated through a coordinated mobilization of efforts at all levels of society. Due to participation in this project I gained specific knowledge on the American justice system. Most of all, I learned how the judiciary system can provide the complete service to the society."

Muskie Fellows Receive Top Ranking in Business Plan Competition

The Muskie fellows studying at the University of Maine often benefit from their host university's location near Canada. Gohar Harutyunyan, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Armenia, participated in a "Business Plan Competition" in New Brunswick, Canada from November 29 to December 2, 2006. Ms. Harutyunyan's group presented a plan to introduce organic Armenian dried apricots, tomatoes and prunes to Canadian consumers. Their group designed a logo and flyers, and conducted comprehensive market research and financial analysis. Ms. Harutyunyan also talked to potential suppliers in Armenia. Her group's business plan was ranked among the top four in the competition, and in the "Elevator Pitch" nomination they placed second out of nineteen submissions. Ms. Harutyunyan's team also met with many businesspeople and Export-Import Agency representatives to promote their plan for marketing dried Armenian products in Canada.



Azerbaijani Fellows Celebrate Navruz Festival at Indiana University

Ahad Kazimov, 2005 fellow studying public administration, Elnur Ahmadov, 2005 fellow studying environmental management, and Sadig Aliyev, 2006 studying public policy, were active participants at the Navruz Festival Celebration on March 24 in Bloomington, Indiana. Navruz (or Nowruz) is an ancient celebration of the New Year for Iranians, Turks, Azerbaijanis, Central Asians and many others in the Caucasus and Afghanistan. Indiana University's Navruz Festival is the only festival of its kind in the Midwest, which includes performances, food samples and cultural displays prepared by representatives of the various peoples who celebrate this holiday. Msrs. Kazimov, Ahmadov, and Aliyev helped to prepare the Azerbaijani cultural display and traditional national dish. Mr. Kazimov served as the emcee of the entire cultural program and also performed a traditional Azerbaijani dance with Mr. Ahmadov. About three hundred people, including faculty members, students and residents of the community, attended the Navruz Festival this year.



Ahad Kazimov performs a traditional Azerbaijani dance for the Navruz festival.

Kyrgyzstan and the University of North Texas Represented at ASPA Conference



Tolkunbek Abdygulov, a 2006 Muskie fellow from Kyrgyzstan, represented the Department of Public Administration at the University of North Texas (UNT) at the 68th American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) National Conference in Washington, D.C., from March 23-27, 2007. Mr. Abdygulov participated in many sessions, workshops and panel discussions. According to Mr. Abdygulov, "The chance to talk to the prominent scholars in the field of public administration enabled me to get broader perspectives on public administration and look at existing problems in government from a different angle." As a representative of the Department of Public Administration at UNT, Mr. Abdygulov also promoted the 2008

ASPA conference in Dallas, which will be hosted by the Department of Public Administration at UNT.

Moldovan Fellow's Internship Leads to Organization's First Annual Report in Eighty Years

Silvia Bicenco, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Moldova studying public administration at the New School in New York City, has worked closely with the International Institute of New Jersey since the spring of 2006. The International Institute of New Jersey is a nonprofit organization that assists with the resettlement of immigrants. Ms. Bicenco interned with the International Institute during the summer of 2006 and worked extensively on the organization's annual report. The International Institute continued to solicit Ms. Bicenco's advice and support after her internship concluded. Her contributions eventually led to the publication of the International Institute's first annual report in eighty years.

Kansas. She was assisted by the local Armenian community. Ms. Simonyan participated in three events, Flavors of the World, the Language Fair, and the World Expo. The Armenian contingent placed third among 40 countries in the Best Representation of a Country category during the World Expo.



Public Administration Fellow Receives Outstanding Achievement Award

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Arkansas State University named 25 outstanding students as recipients of departmental awards for 2006-07 during the college's annual honors banquet, the Convocation of Scholars. The Political Science Department named four students for the 2006-2007 Outstanding Achievement Award one student for each graduate program and two students for the undergraduate program. Hayk Petrosyan, (Muskie '05) an MPA student from Armenia, received this year's award for Outstanding Achievement in the field of Public Administration.



Public Administration Fellow Chairs Conference Session on Human Trafficking

In March, 2007, Svitlana Batsyukova, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Ukraine studying public administration at the University of Washington, attended the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) meeting in Seattle, where she chaired a session called "Dealing in Humans" and presented on the results of a study titled, "Detection and Prosecution of Human Trafficking-Related Crime," which focused on Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation. This was the second time that Ms. Batsyukova chaired a conference session on human trafficking. At the ACJS meeting, Ms. Batsyukova was invited to collaborate on a paper on this topic with two professors from Texas International University. She also received a request from the Gender Issues Journal for her paper, "Sex Trafficking vs. Prostitution."



Academic Award Presented to International Affairs Fellow

Orazdurdy Khezretov, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Turkmenistan studying international affairs at Western Michigan University, was presented with the D.C. Shilling award, an annual award presented to outstanding political science majors for excellence in scholarship and academic performance.



Armenia Represented at International Awareness Week at Kansas University

Lilit Simonyan, a 2005 Muskie fellow studying public administration at the University of Kansas, represented Armenia during International Awareness Week at Kansas University in Lawrence,

Armenian Educator Nominated for Award

Nara Martirosyan, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Armenia studying education, was nominated by Grambling State University for the Collegiate All-American Scholar Award, an award given by the United States Achievement Academy. Ms. Martirosyan's name and achievements will be published in the 2006-2007 Collegiate All-American Scholar Yearbook.



Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources in Georgia Supervises Expanded Activities

David Tkeshelashvili received an L.L.M. degree from Emory University in the spring of 2006. In August, 2006, Mr. Tkeshelashvili was appointed Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources for the Republic of Georgia. The newly-appointed minister recognized the important role of this ministry in the economic development of the country. Under Mr. Tkeshelashvili's direction, the ministry has undertaken many initiatives, such as:

- A project entitled "Invest in Mining," which envisages the use and reclamation of the country's natural resources. For this purpose, the ministry established the Spatial Information Center, the aim of which is to create and perfect a unified State Fund of Information.
- A simplified and transparent "one-stop shop" principle in the licensing/permissions system. This reform contributes to business development through a more efficient process of issuing licenses and permits on the use of natural resources.
- A reform of the forestry sector that is focused on sustainable planning and the introduction of long-term private ownership.
- Developing the use of protected areas for tourism without harming the areas' ecosystems and biodiversity. The Georgian government considers this project one of its leading priorities.
- Establishing the Aarhus Center, the implementing body for the U.N. Convention on Access to

Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making, and Justice in Environmental Matters.

- The Environmental Inspectorate which collects fines for more than 2,800 violations of environmental laws.

Experienced Teacher Instructs Diverse Group of Students

Daniela Munca, 2006 Muskie fellow from Moldova, taught EFL for five years before she arrived at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, MS, where she studies education and works as an ESL Instructor in the Department of Modern Languages. As an ESL Instructor, Ms. Munca teaches students from Taiwan, China, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, South Korea, India and Chile. According to Ms. Munca, "They all come into the classroom with different expectations, they are used to different teaching-learning styles, and they all have so much to share. I have learned the importance of cultural diversity and how a teacher should respect it." Ms. Munca is also working on an activity called "Wonders of The Modern World," an online project that she is working on with IEARN, the International Education and Resource Network, an organization that is the world's largest non-profit global network enabling teachers and young people to use the internet and other new technologies to collaborate on projects that both enhance learning and make a difference in the world. Ms. Munca hopes to create a globally-aware classroom environment for her students and help them share their vision of the world with young people from all over the planet.



Belarusian Fellow Wins Award for Paper on Freedom of the Press

Andrei Khrapavitski, a 2005 Muskie fellow from Belarus studying journalism at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, recently attended the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's Southeast Colloquium at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. At the conference, Mr. Khrapavitski presented a paper that he coauthored, titled "In Search of an Explanation for Press Freedom as a Function of Culture and Development: Myths and Realities." Mr. Khrapavitski and his colleagues were pleased to learn that their paper was recognized as the top paper in the Open Division at the Colloquium.

Law Fellow in Indiana Attends Nonprofit Training for Attorneys

Artyom Geghamyan, a 2006 law fellow from Armenia at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, was invited to attend the meeting of the Indianapolis Inn of Court on March 15, 2007. The Indianapolis Inn of Court is part of the American Inns of Court Foundation, a non-profit organization formed to promote the goals of legal excellence, civility, professionalism, and ethics on a national level. American Inns of Court helps lawyers become more effective advocates and counselors. Members learn side-by-side with the most experienced judges and attorneys in their community.

Russian Fellow Meets with Vermont Senator

Alexey Kumshatskiy, a 2006 fellow from Russia studying international affairs, had the opportunity to meet with Vermont Independent Senator Bernie Sanders on Capitol Hill. Mr. Kumshatskiy was part of a group of 20 students from the School for International Training that met with Senator Sanders to discuss American foreign policy issues, with a focus on Iraq.

Kyrgyz Fellow Contributes Articles to Local Newspaper

Elza Orozalieva, a 2006 fellow from Kyrgyzstan studying journalism at the University of Mississippi, recently published two articles in the Daily Mississippian. The articles, one on the university's Russian club, and the other about a coastal legal research center, can be found in the March 5, 2007 online edition of the newspaper.

<<http://www.thedmonline.com/news/2007/03/05/>>

Armenian Fellow's Master's Thesis Serves as Basis for Article in American Journal

Narek Kosyan, a 2006 fellow from Armenia studying journalism at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, recently published a paper titled "A Study of the Simplified Tax System in the Republic of Armenia" in the Economic Policy and Poverty Periodical. The article is based upon his master's thesis in public policy from the American University of Armenia. The article can be found in EPP III-3: Budget and Tax Issues in Armenia (October 2006) at <<http://www.edrc.am/public.html?ID=33>>.

Fellows Represent Home Countries During International Week in North Dakota

At North Dakota State University, Nurlan Isaev, a 2006 fellow from Kyrgyzstan studying Environmental Management, and Hasmik Ghazaryan, a 2006 fellow from Armenia studying journalism, joined international students from over 70 countries that marched in the Parade of Nations carrying the flags of their home countries. The parade was followed by the International Expo, where each country had its own booth.

Journalism Fellow Wins Award in Missouri

Elena Chadova, a 2005 fellow from Kyrgyzstan studying journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia, recently won a Mark of Excellence award from the Society of Professional Journalists, an organization that promotes freedom of press and ethical standards in reporting. Elena collaborated with a classmate on a story about a local Missouri resident who runs an unusual business. The story won an award as the third best feature to originate in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa or Nebraska.

Economics Fellow Nominated for Award

Olexander Vasetsky, a 2006 fellow from Ukraine studying economics at Western Illinois University, was nominated for the 2007 Spring Department Outstanding Economics Graduate Student Award. This achievement is awarded to students who have a GPA of 3.75 or higher.

Law Fellow Honored for Academic Achievement

Zviad Skhvitardze, a 2006 fellow from Georgia studying law at the University of Connecticut, was awarded the Clark-Janis International Scholar Prize. The prize is given to a foreign student at the Law School for superior academic achievements.

Canyon, Texas Introduced to Plov by Uzbek Fellow

Ulugbek Akhmedov, a 2005 fellow studying business administration, represented Uzbekistan at West Texas A & M University's International Expo. University students, staff, and local residents visited the expo, where they listened to folk music and viewed pictures of countries, including Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Argentina, Taiwan, India, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador. Mr. Akhmedov prepared plov, the Uzbek national dish, and also distributed a recipe for plov, calendars, and a fact sheet about Uzbekistan.

ALUMNI UPDATE SHORTS

Summer 2007 Edition

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Anna Harutyunyan (Muskie '04) accepted a position as a specialist in the Education Programs Division at AED/Armenia as a part of the Human and Institutional Capacity Development Project. In October, 2006 she participated in the conference entitled civic education and human rights.



Gayane Mkrтчyan (Muskie '04) is an attorney at the American Bar Association, where he works on the Rule of Law Initiative. The Armenian office is working with the Chamber of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia to support its institutional development. As a part of her work, Ms. Mkrтчyan initiated the first official monthly newsletter of the Chamber.

Levan Janashia (Muskie '05) currently runs his own business. As Director of "Future Technologies", he not only maintains his business but also shares his knowledge with his colleagues. Additionally, Levan performs trainings on Project Management for various organizations. Janashia studied at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, where he earned an MBA. He will receive his Masters of Public Administration in December, 2007 from the Georgian Institute for Public Affairs (GIPA).

Alexander Kvatashidze (Muskie '05) has returned to the T.V. Broadcasting Company Rustavi 2, where he recently helped create the new show "Business Courier." The program offers in-depth reporting and critical analysis of major business issues with an emphasis on current events, business development, market outlooks, and emerging opportunities. Alexander has also established the independent Studio "Monitor," which offers various services to broadcasting companies, including investigative journalism, filmmaking and promotion. Along with his team, he is planning to make a film about the "Orange Revolution" of Ukraine.

EIshad Rustamov (Muskie '05) began working for the American Bar Association as a lawyer in Baku starting in November, 2006. While working there he was also offered a position at the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan as a Senior Legal Adviser.

Rustam Mirzoshirinov (Muskie '05) has been employed as the Information Resource Center Assistant with the U.S. Embassy to Tajikistan since the fall of 2006.

The Muskie Messenger Editorial Committee:

Joe Bednarek, International
Research and Exchanges Board
(IREX)

Jamie Kosmar, International
Research and Exchanges Board
(IREX)

Design: **Elena Vaitkiene**

Submission guidelines:

If you are interested in making
a submission to the Messenger,
please send all text and pictures
to <jbednarek@kyiv.irex.org>
by August 15, 2007.

ECA and IREX reserve the right to
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ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES

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

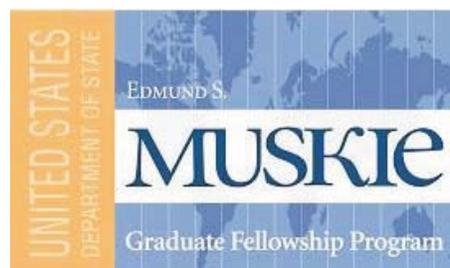
ECA Alumni Programming for Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program Alumni

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

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

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

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



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs