



April 2013

Prigorodnoe School celebrates renovation

Representatives from Transit Center at Manas, U.S. Embassy Bishkek and Kyrgyz Republic local officials, celebrated the completion of the Prigorodnoe High School renovation with a dedication ceremony, Mar. 4.

The project, which cost more than \$227,000, took about eight months to complete. The renovations consisted of extensive electrical, lighting and plumbing system repairs, the installation of two new boilers, insulation, new exhaust fans, 64 windows, 54 doors and 2,700 square meters of flooring, including the newly renovated gymnasium floor where the ceremony took place.

"This is the biggest project I've worked on to date," said Staff Sgt. James Gruesser, Transit Center Theater Security Cooperation Division project manager. "The completion of this project has been a fantastic experience. It's great for the people that invested so much time and effort on this project to provide a safe and warm learning environment for the students and faculty."

Prior to renovation, the school of almost 800 students, ranging in grades 1st through the 11th, had to endure study in harsh local weather conditions. The school's director witnessed the hardship on both the teachers and students.

"The impact of this project is huge for the children, teachers and parents," said Ismanova Aigurek, Prigorodnoe High School director. "There were such harsh conditions before; the children and teachers had to conduct lessons in their jackets.

Prior to the repairs students would get sick during the cold months, now that they don't get sick anymore, there is almost 100 percent attendance."

This is the second largest humanitarian assistance school project partnered between the Theater Security Cooperation division of the Transit Center, U.S. Embassy in Bishkek and the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education for fiscal year 2012.

"The Transit Center and the U.S. Embassy are proud to partner with you on this meaningful project," said Col. Frank Allara, 376th Expeditionary Medical Group commander. "This dedication serves as an example of the strong relationship between Kyrgyz Republic and U.S. government. A relationship based on shared values and interests that has steadily developed and continues to strengthen between our two countries."

During the ceremony, local Kyrgyz government officials also recognized the importance of this major renovation to the school and expressed the hope of the continued partnership between the countries.

"This [project] not only benefits the children, but the village. This is one of several shared projects in the village that have had a major impact on the people in the area, especially addressing the needs of the children," said Sakkaray Mars Namurbekovich, head of Alanudun Regional Governmental Administration. "May the partnership with both governments continue to grow each day," he said.



Kyrgyz children wave Kyrgyz Republic and United States of America flags during a dedication ceremony March 4, 2013, in Prigorodnoe, Kyrgyzstan. Thanks to the renovations, students can enjoy warm classrooms and a new gymnasium.

The relationship between the school and the Transit Center extends past this one project. Prigorodnoe High School is one of the community partners of the 22nd Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron. Lt Col Russell Davis, 22 EARS commander, was on-hand to share in the celebration. Members from his squadron participate in community partnership events with the school on a regular basis.

"We come out to the school every three or four weeks and play sporting events or conduct cultural exchanges," said Davis. "We usually have school or sports supplies we've accumulated or purchased downtown that we hand out to the kids."

The impact of their efforts can be seen by the greeting received from the school faculty and students.

The festive event featured hand-made gifts from the students presented to Transit

Center and U.S. Embassy representatives. This presentation was followed by several performances by the students displaying a wide range of talent in song, dance and playing the traditional Kyrgyz instrument, the Komuz. The ceremony was marked by the ribbon-cutting with Transit Center, U.S. Embassy and Kyrgyz local government representatives.

The ceremony ended the way it began, with a display of friendship. Children of all grades marched into the gymnasium holding flowers and balloons and waving the U.S. and Kyrgyz flags.

"The relationship is incredible. This is something that will impact the children's life for many, many years and many generations too," Davis said.

TCM introduces Kyrgyz military to aeromedical evacs

Transit Center at Manas medical professionals meet weekly with their counterparts in the Kyrgyz military for the purpose of exchanging information on processes and sharing common terminology.

At the request of the Kyrgyz Republic, the most recent military exchange introduced several Kyrgyz military members to the process of conducting aeromedical evacuations.

The meeting began with an overview of the beginning of flight medicine, followed by a presentation on the stressors of flight on the human body. Following the classroom presentation, participants took part in the hands-on assessment and preparation of a simulated patient to be evacuated for further medical treatment.

“It was very interesting because we have not experienced evacuation by plane or helicopter,” said Kyrgyz Republic Col. Abakir Abdurahmanov, deputy commander of the Bishkek military hospital. “A lot of the information was new for us; now we have some knowledge of aerospace medicine.”

For Lt. Col. (Dr.) Robert Lehman, 376th Expeditionary Medical Group flight surgeon, military medical exchanges such as this one do more than just share information; the exchanges are the first step in building stronger relationships.



Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Rachel Martinez

U.S. and Kyrgyz Republic military members work together to prepare a simulated patient for aeromedical evacuation as part of a military exchange March 18, 2013, at the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan. Exchanges such as this are held on a weekly basis for the purpose of sharing information on processes and common terminology.

“I love having a chance to talk to other cultures and learn their way of life and way of doing things,” said Lehman. “This is just the first step. We never know where these things will lead us.”

Medical exchanges will continue to be

held on a weekly basis, with a plan to cover aeromedical evacuation topics monthly.

“There is always more to know,” said Abdurahmanov.

Service members encourage good hygiene, spread cheer



Master Sgt. Kirsten Smith, 376th Expeditionary Medical Group dental technician, uses oversized props to demonstrate proper brushing techniques to children at Kindergarten #106 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, March 19, 2013.

Inset: Two girls from Kindergarten #106 compare toothbrushes they received from service members during a visit to the school in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, March 19, 2013. The students also received toothpaste, a coloring page and a handout on proper tooth brushing.

Photos by: Tech. Sgt. Rachel Martinez

TCM builds friendships over language lesson

The Transit Center at Manas has played an instrumental role in renovating many schools in the surrounding areas. The completion of those renovation projects is often just the beginning of a lasting relationship.

One such example of lasting relationships is the one between the Transit Center and the Birdik Village School. The school was renovated in 2009, one of the larger humanitarian assistance projects completed by the Transit Center. Now, more than three and a half years later, Transit Center service members are regular visitors to the school.

The most recent visit included a language exchange where service members provided a lesson on the different U.S. regions.

“The exchanges are typically TCM personnel sitting in on the English class lesson and interacting with the students when they need help with something,” said Master Sgt. Shane Hiatt, Transit Center Theater Security Cooperation Division. “This time was different because we were asked to develop a lesson on the U.S. because the students do not have a great deal of knowledge about the U.S.”

Hiatt, along with three other service members, conducted two classes with 10th- and 11th-grade students. Following a presentation on the different U.S. regions, the service members engaged the students in discussion on the topic.

“The interaction between the students and TCM personnel was good,” said Hiatt. “It was good to see the enthusiasm in the students when they were able to identify a state or a region when questions were asked.”

According to the school's director, students begin learning English in kindergarten. This lesson was more than just a good opportunity for the students to practice their English skills with native speakers; it was a symbol of the continued partnership between the Transit Center and the local community.

“It is important that we maintain these types of relations because it shows the Kyrgyz people that the Americans are not just here to support international efforts in Afghanistan,” said Hiatt. “It is important that we embrace the culture and traditions of the Kyrgyz people and share our traditions and cultures as well. After time, the friendships that are built tend to last years.”

Vasilievskoe villagers take pride in repaired school

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, the Vasilievskoe Kindergarten School sat empty for more than a decade. Since it reopened in 2003, the school house has been in need of extensive repairs.

Transit Center at Manas and the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek partnered with the Kyrgyz Republic government and the Vasilievskoe villagers to renovate the kindergarten school. A ceremony was held Feb. 26, 2013, to celebrate the completion of those renovations.

The eight-month, \$258,000 renovation project included installation of new electric heaters, insulation, windows, doors, flooring and a water pump. Additionally, extensive repairs were performed on the roof and electrical, lighting and plumbing systems.

“This was the second largest project we've had overall,” said Staff Sgt. Daniel Skinner, Transit Center Theater Security Cooperation Division project manager. “This project entailed renovating the entire school; that's not very common.”

A project of this magnitude required a strong team to accomplish the task, said Col. William Spangenthal, 376th Expeditionary Operations Group commander, who attended the dedication ceremony at the renovated kindergarten.

“This team consisted of leaders from the United States Embassy, Transit Center, Kyrgyz government, Vasilievskoe school and our contractor,” Spangenthal said. “Today, we not only celebrate the completion of a \$258,000 renovation that

includes new electric heating, new windows and doors, new flooring, roofing repairs and new insulation. Today we also celebrate the return of students to a comfortable and safe learning environment where the children can focus on their education without distraction.”

Before the renovations were complete, the school could only accommodate 42 students; children were on a waiting list to attend the school. Now that the school building is in better condition, the school can

hold 170 students, enabling administrators to enroll everyone on the waiting list.

“This project has brought so much joy and happiness to our villagers,” said Kuschbaeva Manzura Abdullaeva, Vasilievskoe Kindergarten School director. “Before the renovation project our school didn't have proper windows, flooring or heating. But today, there is very good heating. Our roof was dripping before, now we have a good roof, and they've installed very nice plumbing. It is very good for our children as they can stay warm and comfortable now.”

The transformation is a noticeable one for all in the village.

“I was excited to see the new building and how well it turned out,” said Sakaraey Mars Namurbekovich, head of Alanudun Regional Governmental Administration. “While we were coming up to this kindergarten today, what opened up before us was a very magical house. I remember what used to be here - now look at what it turned out to be. This project was necessary for the people who live in the village, especially the children.”

Following the ceremony, school administrators provided a tour of the school, showing off the recent renovations.

“I am very excited to personally view all these improvements,” said Spangenthal. “Thank you all for inviting us today and we look forward to continued cooperation and partnership in the future.”



Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Rachel Martinez

Children perform a song during a dedication ceremony to celebrate renovations at the Vasilievskoe Kindergarten School in Vasilievskoe, Kyrgyzstan, Feb. 26, 2013. Four times as many children can enroll in the kindergarten now that the school building has been completely renovated.

Renovation improves school, builds friendships

For the last 30 years, staff at the Kamyshanovska School have struggled to properly maintain the school house.

Students at Kamyshanovska School can now enjoy an improved learning environment thanks to a recent renovation project done in partnership with Transit Center at Manas, U.S. Embassy Bishkek and the Kyrgyz Republic government. Members from the Transit Center and the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek joined with Kamyshanovska villagers at the school for a ceremony Feb. 27, 2013, to celebrate the completion of the \$58,000 renovation project.

Maj. Joel Kleehammer, U.S. Embassy in Bishkek Office of Military Cooperation chief, attended the ceremony where, as the father of eight children, he spoke about the importance of education.

“Education is very important to families and children here, in the Kyrgyz Republic, much like it is in America,” said Kleehammer. “I believe that the Kamyshanovska School, its students, its staff and the parents of students will greatly benefit from this renovation project.”

The project, which was completed two months ahead



Photos by: Staff Sgt. Stephanie Rubi

Representatives from Transit Center at Manas and local Kyrgyz officials cut a ribbon during a dedication ceremony Feb. 27, 2013, in Kamyshanovska, Kyrgyzstan. The ceremony celebrated the completion of a \$58,000 renovation project that included new sinks, windows, doors, tile flooring, water well and heater expansion tank.

of schedule, included new sinks, windows, doors, tile flooring, a water well, and an expansion tank for the heater. As renovations occurred over the seven-month period, attendance rose and students and teachers were able to focus on education instead of the distractions of cold breezes from broken windows and

tripping hazards from unkempt floors.

Airman 1st Class Jesson Jordan, Transit Center Theater Security Cooperation Division contracting officer representative, was the project manager for

the renovation and said he felt overjoyed with the project and the experience.

“Prior to renovations, school employees would pump water into buckets from a water source located outside,” said Jordan.

Water now runs throughout the entire school, saving staff from having to endure the sometimes harsh weather conditions. Additionally, employees no longer have to refill the radiant heating system water tank by hand, thanks to the installation of the expansion tank.

Zizikalo Nina Timofeevna, a Kamyshanovska School teacher, has been teaching for 53 years and appreciates the recent renovations.

“Now the classroom is warm and bright, giving students better studying conditions,” said Timofeevna. “The Transit Center has given

us so much; the students know that, and both they and I are very grateful.”

Throughout the years the Transit Center and the U.S. Embassy have also donated school supplies and equipment for students at the school, such as paper, new chalkboards, writing utensils and other items. The relationship between the U.S. and Kyrgyz personnel at the school goes beyond assistance and partnership, for many, it has grown into a friendship.

“I’m so glad I got to see the project completed,” said Jordan. “I’ve become friends with the staff and students because of this project. The kids make all this work worth it. They’ve invited us to play soccer, ping pong and all kinds of sports and it is just a great experience. They are great kids and they deserve a proper learning environment.”



New windows, along with the installation of an expansion tank on a radiant heating system, keep a classroom warm at the Kamyshanovska School Feb. 27, 2013, in Kamyshanovska, Kyrgyzstan.

Ozornoe school welcomes renovations

Students dressed in traditional Kyrgyz costumes offered bread and smiles as they greeted representatives of the Transit Center at Manas, U.S. Embassy Bishkek and local Kyrgyz officials who arrived for the Ozornoe Secondary School Dedication ceremony recently.

The ceremony celebrated the completion of a Humanitarian Assistance renovation project between the U.S. and the Kyrgyz government.

The repairs consisted of the installation of 75 double-pane energy-efficient windows, extensive replacement of pipes, radiators, and electrical systems and a refurbished heating system. The seven-month project cost more than \$53,000 to complete.

“Completing this project gave the Kyrgyz government and the Transit Center an opportunity to come together and support the children of the Ozornoe School. The kids now have a warm, comfortable environment to study in,” said Staff Sgt. James Grueser, Transit Center Theater Security Cooperation Division program manager.

Ozornoe Secondary School was originally constructed in 1968 and this is the first time there has been any kind of renovations.

According to the school's principal, the school was originally planned for a total of 192 students with grades ranging from first to eleven. They now have more than 980 students and operate in



U.S. Air Force photos

Representatives of Transit Center at Manas, U.S. Embassy Bishkek and local Kyrgyz government joined students and faculty of the Ozornoe Secondary School during a dedication ceremony Mar. 23, 2013, in Ozornoe, Kyrgyzstan.

three shifts with four graduating classes. The school's principal thanked the TCM and U.S. Embassy for making a warm, safe and cozy environment in which the children can study.

“Because we have a large difference between full capacity and the students who attend the school--we have 35 different class groups getting an education here. We thank the partners who helped make the school a better environment for our children,” said Momunova Jarkyn Tursunaliyeva, Ozornoe Secondary School principal.

This project further symbolizes the partnership between the U.S. and Kyrgyz governments.

“Today we're here to celebrate education and accomplishment. We're so proud of the completion of this project and much needed repairs. It is days like today that I feel the true bond and friendship between the American and Kyrgyz people,” said Col. Shirlene Ostrov, 376th Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander.

The improvement of the educational environment of the children was a consistent theme expressed throughout the ceremony.

“I would like to personally thank the Transit Center and U.S. Embassy for the

good things you have done for this school. All that you've invested in our school has a huge social impact on our school,” said Khvan Ludmila Petrov, leading specialist of Alamedin State Administration.

The sentiment of partnership was echoed by the U.S. Embassy Bishkek representative Mark Fernando.

“This event is a result of a great friendship and cooperation between the U.S. government and the Ministry of Education in Kyrgyz Republic. This is one of the many ways we exhibit our continued support to the schools of the Kyrgyz Republic,” he said.

The ceremony ended with a showcase of the talents from the students of the school. They sang, danced and recited poetry representing the great celebration of this event.

“I'm sure our children many years from now will be able to look at the windows here and say this was provided by a country far away from here. Your time here may end here eventually, but a piece of you will always remain in the warmth that you've given to this project. We will remember you with kind words and good memories,” said Tatyana Vasilyevna, Deputy Mayor of Prigorodnoe Village District.



An Ozornoe Secondary School official gave a tour of a renovated classroom to Col. Shirlene Ostrov, 376th Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander, Mar. 23, 2013, in Ozornoe, Kyrgyzstan. The installation of new windows, along with extensive replacement of pipes, radiators, and electrical systems and a refurbished heating system, help provide a warm, safe and cozy environment for students and faculty.

Transit Center Economic Impact as of March 31, 2013

Direct Expenditures	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 Actual	FY12 YTD	FY13 YTD
Payments to Kyrgyz Govt - Dip Note	\$26,620,000	\$60,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$45,000,000
Payments to Manas International Airport	\$22,999,039				
Lease, Passes, Utilities		\$4,029,091	\$7,817,140	\$4,475,365	\$4,208,333
Aircraft Landing, Parking, Service Fees		\$21,157,571	\$19,460,590	\$21,301,884	\$7,631,421
Contributions to Airport Improvements	\$30,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,658,294	\$108,049
Contributions to Kyrgyz Aeronavigation	\$0	\$0	\$30,000,000	\$60,505	\$58,8000
Contract Payments (Furniture, Sports Equipment, Parts, Supplies, Buildings, Renovations, Road Repairs, Grounds Maintenance, Refuse, Custodial, Vehicle Leases)	\$24,601,908	\$42,790,517	\$30,916,871	\$31,567,612	\$14,178,922
Leases (non-MIA)	\$81,562	\$66,596	\$120,698	\$132,687	\$33,190
Programmatic Humanitarian Assistance	\$1,700,000	\$2,273,488	\$823,634	\$1,887,684	\$191,480
Subtotal Direct Expenditures	\$106,602,509	\$130,317,263	\$149,138,933	\$140,084,031	\$71,410,195
Indirect Expenditures					
Estimated U.S. military local spending	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$2,011,226	\$1,500,342
Subtotal Indirect Expenditures	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$2,011,226	\$1,500,342
Total Economic Impact	\$107,640,039	\$131,479,006	\$150,566,329	\$142,095,257	\$72,910,537
DLA Jet Fuel Payments (GAK)				\$208,137,115	\$98,786,907

Villagers celebrate water improvement project

For centuries, water sources have been a gathering place for people.

Water brought people together when representatives from the Kyrgyz Republic, Transit Center at Manas, and U.S. Embassy in Bishkek gathered at a well site in Jangi Jer for a dedication ceremony April 5, 2013.

The dedication ceremony celebrated completing a humanitarian assistance project that involved renovating three water wells and significantly improving the water quality and availability for the more than 9,000 residents of Jangi Jer. The \$97,400 project took approximately four months to complete. It included replacing water pumps, piping and electrical systems to run the three wells, installing of ultraviolet purification systems and constructing a pump house.

“Before the project, the water was not reliable,” said Staff. Sgt. Timothy Wellman, TCM Theater Security Cooperation Division program manager. “The old pumps were rusted and would shut off. Some of the piping was above ground, which in the harsh winters here would sometimes freeze. We wanted to do this project and do it

quickly because it's the main water supply for 9,000 residents.”

The humanitarian project was greatly appreciated by village leaders, especially considering the cost of repairs.

“If we were to do this project ourselves, we would have to have used our budget for the whole year; we wouldn't be able to pay for anything else,” said Tezekbaev Nasirdin Kazievich, Jangi Jer mayor. “We're grateful to the people of America and the Transit Center for doing this project for the people of our village. Water is an important source of life. And now our water is greatly improved.”

Access to clean water is the foundation of healthy and thriving community, said the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek cultural affairs attaché, Johanna Fernando.

“This is just one example of how the Transit Center works to improve the provision of public services in nearby communities,” Fernando said. “We continue to work closely with the government of the Kyrgyz Republic on improving quality of life and providing better opportunities for the people of Kyrgyzstan.”

The dedication ceremony was more than



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Stephanie Rubi
Jangi Jer village officials and representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek and Transit Center at Manas cut a ribbon during the Jangi Jer well dedication ceremony, April 5, 2013, in Jangi Jer, Kyrgyzstan.

a celebration of improved quality of life; it was a celebration of the partnership and friendship between the Kyrgyz Republic and the United States.

“We appreciate the partnership with the U.S. government,” said Kenjebaev Amankan Batyrbekovich, deputy state regional administrator. “The greatest gift we can give back is to make you all honorary citizens of this village.”