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From the Ambassador's Desk | A Bi-Monthly Update from the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon

MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR SHERMAN

IN THIS ISSUE



Greetings to all!

My name is Robert Sherman and I am very excited to serve President Obama and the American people as Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Portugal. Coming from the Boston region, where the largest concentration of Portuguese-Americans in the U.S. lives, it is with great pride that I take up the mission of not only representing the

United States, but also doing my best to contribute, in whatever way I can, to strengthen the warm bonds between our two countries that began over two hundred years ago when Portugal became one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the United States. My wife, Kim Sawyer, and I very much look forward in the coming months to getting to know many of you, continuing to learn Portuguese, as well as getting out of Lisbon to see all of Portugal, from the islands of Azores and Madeira, to Sagres and Braganca.

In this newsletter edition, we would like to highlight the U.S. efforts, alongside our European partners, to seek a resolution to the Ukrainian crisis. As well, we have a summary of some of our recent programs, such as the USS Bataan visit, a series of free musical concerts across Lisbon, and a professional development workshop series for alumni of U.S. government exchange programs.

We also had the pleasure of hosting speaker tours with Peter Chase, an expert on the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, as well as Jamail Larkins, a young and successful aviation sector entrepreneur and up and coming Luso-American writer Carlos Queirós. Education has also been a big focus in the last few months, as, in partnership with Fulbright's EducationUSA office, we were able to organize several sessions to promote United States higher education opportunities around Portugal. With a spotlight on our American Corner network, we wrapped up these sessions with a U.S. university fair in Lisbon, which we hope will be repeated next year! In the coming months, I hope you will be able to participate in a number of other exciting programs we will be having and stay engaged with me and the Embassy through both Facebook and Twitter. Até já!

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CRISIS IN UKRAINE: U.S. SUPPORTS DIPLOMATIC SOLUTIONS



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov meet in Paris on March 30 to discuss the crisis in Ukraine

As the Ukraine crisis escalated from internal anti-government protests in November to the annexation of Crimea by Russia on March 18, the international community has been working to deescalate the security and political situation in the region and reach a peaceful resolution through diplomatic channels.

The United States has made its position clear through both strong words and actions. Secretary of State Kerry has consistently reaffirmed the United States' commitment to the people of Ukraine and the right of Ukraine to determine its future. Meanwhile, the United States and European Union have issued political and economic sanctions against key Russian officials. On March 24, President Obama called an emergency G-7 meeting, excluding Russia from participation, to draft The Hague Declaration, condemning Russia's illegal

attempt to annex Ukraine and warning Russia of increased sanctions and isolation, if it further escalates the situation. Talks between Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on March 30 concluded with both sides recognizing the importance of finding a diplomatic solution and simultaneously meeting the needs of the Ukrainian people. During the meeting, Kerry made clear that the United States considers Russia's actions in the Crimea to be illegal and illegitimate, and that any real progress must include a pullback of the Russian force amassed at Ukraine's border. We remain steadfast in our support of Ukraine as it works towards political and economic stability, so that Ukrainians are not forced to choose between Russia and the West, but can rather create their own future with viable international relations on all sides..

THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (TTIP)



European Commission President Barroso, President Obama, and European Council President Van Rompuy join hands at the 2014 U.S.-EU Summit

In June 2013, President Obama, European Council President Van Rompuy and European Commission President Barroso announced that the United States and the European Union (EU) would launch negotiations on the TTIP agreement. The TTIP is intended to be an ambitious and comprehensive trade agreement that significantly expands trade and investment between the United States and the EU, increases economic growth, jobs, and international competitiveness, and addresses global issues of common concern. If successfully concluded, the agreement will benefit American and European workers, businesses of all sizes, and consumers, by aiming to remove trade barriers in a wide range of economic sectors to make it easier to buy and sell goods and services between the EU and the U.S.

At the end of the fourth round of negotiations, the EU's Chief Negotiator, Ignacio Garcia Bercero, confirmed that

he and his U.S. counterpart, Dan Mullaney, are committed to exploring mechanisms to make it easier for smaller firms to take advantage of the gains from TTIP. Both the U.S. and EU Chief Negotiators reaffirmed their commitment to making steady progress in all areas of the negotiations throughout 2014. They also agreed to hold a further round of talks in Washington before the summer.

On the occasion of the March 24th seminar "Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement between EU-USA," organized by the European Commission in Portugal, the U.S. Embassy invited Peter H. Chase as a speaker. Peter Chase joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as its Senior Representative in Europe, based in Brussels, in April 2010, and he became Vice-President for Europe in August 2012. Peter Chase spoke at the seminar about the challenges and opportunities regarding TTIP.

[Learn more about TTIP](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE EMBASSY

MILLENNIAL CEO AND AEROBATIC PILOT PROMOTES ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO PORTUGUESE YOUTH



Jamail Larkins addresses the young audience

Jamail Larkins, the “#1 Entrepreneur under 30” (according to Inc. Magazine), presented his talk “*Navigating the Journey of Life*” at the American Corners’ first Innovation & Entrepreneurship Speaker series, held on March 17-21 at American Corners throughout Portugal—University of Porto (AC@Porto), University of Aveiro (AC@Aveiro), NOVA University’s Faculty of Science and Technology (AC@FCT-NOVA), and the Superior Technical Institute (AC@IST-UTL). He also talked at several secondary schools during his visit to Portugal.

In all of his talks, Larkins addressed the challenges involved in starting up a company and the importance of proper planning, research, funding, and networking. He also talked about career opportunities and trends in the aviation industry to aspiring young entrepreneurs and innovators.

The American Corners’ Innovation & Entrepreneurship Speaker series aims to bring speakers to share their expert knowledge and experience with aspiring young entrepreneurs and innovators throughout Portugal.

[Learn more about this program](#)

PORTUGUESE-AMERICAN NOVELIST HEADLINES AMERICAN CORNER WEEK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF AVEIRO



Carlos Queirós talks about the Portuguese-American novel at AC@Aveiro

On March 11, rising Portuguese-American novelist Carlos Queirós gave a talk at the American Corner at the University of Aveiro (AC@Aveiro), where he was the featured speaker during the university’s second annual American Corner Week. Queirós talked about the emerging Portuguese-American novels from different perspectives, including his own, and later read excerpts from his new tragicomedy novel entitled “Our Lady of Newark.” He is a descendant of Eça de Queirós, who is considered as one of the greatest Portuguese writers in the nineteenth century. Later in the same week, he presented a talk at the University of Minho, University of Porto (AC@Porto), and the University of Lisbon (AC@FLUL).

This year’s American Corner Week at AC@Aveiro also included a showing of American films, a jazz concert, an American stamps exhibit, and informational sessions on eLibraryUSA and Fulbright scholarships.

[Learn more about Carlos Queirós](#)

U.S. AIR FORCE BAND ROCKS LISBON TRAIN STATIONS

In partnership with the Portuguese national rail network and the U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE), the Embassy organized a series of six concerts during peak commuting hours on February 10-12 at three of Lisbon's busiest rail stations, featuring USAFE's rock band, Touch N' Go, which was in Portugal to perform at a NATO military exercise in the north of the country. Despite the rainy weather outside, the three-day concert series, which featured some of the latest American popular music hits, drew crowds of smiling and dancing young people, elderly citizens, tourists and commuters alike. An estimated total of over 11,000 people saw the concerts across Lisbon.



Touch N' Go

LISBON AREA STUDENTS AND EXCHANGE ALUMNI TOUR USS BATAAN



Exchange alumni get ready to tour the USS Bataan

On February 28-March 1, the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon organized a guided tour of the USS Bataan (LHD 5) for Lisbon area alumni of U.S. government - sponsored exchange programs, university students, school children, media and Facebook friends. The USS Bataan, a multipurpose, amphibious assault ship, arrived in Lisbon on February 27, after leaving Virginia on February 8th. The ship was docked at the Jardim do Tabaco and left on March 2.

In addition to learning about the ship and its history, the visitors explored the hangar, the different types of aircraft, and the flight deck, from where the visitors could enjoy the picture-perfect views of the Alfama neighborhood and the Tejo River.

The USS Bataan, commissioned on September 20, 1997, is named after the Battle of Bataan in the Philippines during World War II. The ship has served in combat operations in Iraq and humanitarian assistance missions in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the earthquake in Haiti in 2010

U.S. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FAIR HELD AT INSTITUTE CAMÕES

In partnership with the U.S. Embassy Lisbon, Fulbright, and EducationUSA, an education fair was held on March 19 at Instituto Camões in Lisbon to promote higher education study in the United States to Portuguese students.

The universities at the fair included UC Berkeley, John Cabot University, NYU Abu Dhabi, and Quinnipiac University, with representatives from each university answering questions about educational programs, admissions process, scholarships and financial aid.



Students ask questions at the U.S. Embassy Lisbon's booth

JOINT INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS ON WORKING AND STUDYING IN THE USA HELD AT AMERICAN CORNERS

U.S. Embassy Lisbon's Vice Consul Juan Campos joined Fulbright's English Teaching Assistant from the United States Emily Ashby and EducationUSA's Educational Adviser Ricardo Sequeira in presenting informational sessions on studying or working in the United States to students at the American Corners at the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Letters (AC@FLUL) on February 18 and at the Superior Technical Institute (AC@IST-UTL) on February 24.

The sessions included discussions about educational and internship programs, scholarships and financial aid, admissions process, visa requirements, career opportunities, resume and cover letter writing tips, and the educational exchange experience.



Fulbright ETA Emily Ashby presents information to students at AC@ FLUL

ALUMNI DEVELOP LEADERSHIP AND COACHING SKILLS AT FINAL WORKSHOP

A diverse group of alumni from around Portugal attended the workshop on leadership and coaching at the American Corner at Superior Technical Institute (AC@IST-UTL) in Lisbon on February 22, which was organized by the U.S. Embassy Lisbon in partnership with the Fulbright, AC@IST-UTL and the University of Porto Business School.

During the workshop, the participants not only learned about leadership and coaching skills but also practiced useful techniques in group exercises.

The event is the last of the professional development workshop series (which began in November 2013) with the goal of not only developing leadership skills among alumni but also increasing embassy-alumni engagement and alumni networking.



Exchange alumni practice their coaching skills with the trainer

UPCOMING EVENTS/IMPORTANT DATES

- **2014 Madeira Film Festival – April 21-27**
Reid's Palace and Municipal Theatre, Funchal
- **“The Physics of Super Heroes” by Jim Kakalios – May 5 -9,**
Terceira, Ponta Delgada and Funchal
- **Deadline for proposals for the Alumni Innovation Engagement Fund (AIEF) – April 23**