



# DO'STLIK



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## High Turnout to Watch Historic U.S. Presidential Election

On November 5, over 350 people gathered from 6:00 am to noon at Tashkent's Intercontinental Hotel to watch the U.S. President Elections results come in – live! The Uzbek crowd joined billions around the world captivated by America's lively political process that elected the United States' first African-American President -- Barack Obama.



A guest casts her ballot in the mock U.S. Presidential vote. (U.S. Embassy photo)

University and high school students, NGO leaders, journalists, cultural stars, Uzbek government officials, educators, business leaders, members of the diplomatic corps, and Americans living in Uzbekistan observed the election results on two massive screens broadcasting CNN and BBC. Large wall banners displayed information about the Electoral College, and the Republican and Democratic can-

didates' platforms. Volunteers -- including many former exchanges students who have observed U.S. elections firsthand -- shared their insights and explained the U.S. political process to guests.

**Continued on the next page**

## Barack Obama's Victory Speech *President-elect addresses supporters in Illinois*

On November 4, Americans elected Illinois Senator Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States. At the end of a very long Election Day, he addressed supporters at a park in Chicago. Following is the transcript of that speech:



President-elect Barack Obama  
Chicago, Illinois  
November 4, 2008

Hello, Chicago.

If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.

President-elect Barack Obama gives his acceptance speech at Grant Park in Chicago, November 4, 2008. (© AP Images)

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## High Turnout to Watch Historic U.S. Presidential Election



Ambassador Norland highlights the historic significance of the United States electing their first African-American President, reading from Rev. Martin Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech. (U.S. Embassy photo)

### Continued from front page

A majority of attendees were young people. They actively participated in the morning's events. Guests cast their votes in a mock presidential election and mock citizens' referen-



It is all smiles while posing with President-Elect Barack Obama. (U.S. Embassy photo)

dum on banning smoking in public buildings in Uzbekistan. They tested their skills in a trivia quiz on U.S. Elections and had their picture taken with life-size, stand-up photos of the presidential candidates. Decorated with the political buttons of their favorite presidential candidate, guests snapped up informational materials on the U.S. electoral process.

The morning featured a number of important remarks. The crowd listened intently to Senator John McCain's concession speech\* and President-Elect Barack Obama's victory speech\*\*. U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan Richard Norland stressed the historic nature of this election in his remarks, reading excerpts from slain civil rights leader Rev. Martin

Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech. (<http://www.mlkonline.net/dream.html>)

"I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners



Vice Consul Sean O'Hara explains the Electoral College to guests. (U.S. Embassy photo)

will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today."

All present at the event, McCain and Obama supporters alike, appreciated the significance of watching "history in the making" with President-Elect Obama's election victory.

\* Senator McCain's concession speech is available at <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/November/20081105104120abretnuh0.2753979.html&distid=ucs>.

\*\* President-Elect Barack Obama's victory speech can be viewed at <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/November/20081105101958abretnuh0.580044.html&distid=ucs>.

## Embassy Brings U.S. Presidential Elections to Life in Uzbekistan



Chay Chat participants watch clips from the first debate between Senators John McCain and Barack Obama in the recent U.S. presidential elections. (U.S. Embassy photo)

As the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election neared, U.S. Embassy Tashkent stepped up its activities to educate people in Uzbekistan about the election process, devoting a number of Chay Chat Conversation Clubs to the topic.

On October 10, Political-Economic Chief Nicholas Berliner gave the Chay Chat audience a mini history lesson on Presidential Debates of the past and present. He brought the debates to life by showing the audience video clips from many past debates, beginning with the first ever televised debate between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon and ending with two clips from the first debate between current presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain. After seeing all the video clips, the audience asked a number of questions about who can run for president. They were especially interested in the possibilities for foreign-born citizens and women to become president.

Chay Chat Conversation Club visitors also watched some documentary films to learn more about how the U.S. presidential elections work. On August 15, they saw a documentary called "Making the Message: The Fight for the Presidency." This award-winning documentary focuses on the 2004 Republican and Democratic national conventions and examines how candidates build their campaign platforms and generate momentum. In this film the audience enjoyed watching interviews with: campaign strategists, members of focus groups, political reporters and correspondents. On October 24, the Chay Chat Conversation Club visitors had a chance to learn more about the two major-party candidates as they watched hour-long biographical videos about each. The films started with each candidate's childhood and followed them through university, the beginnings of their political careers and up to the present.

Earlier this year in June, the U.S. Embassy invited Sarah Newton, a Fulbright Fellow from Kazakhstan, to introduce

the American political system to the Chay Chat audience by highlighting the upcoming U.S. elections. Ms. Newton has worked on several political campaigns and run student political organizations, so she shared firsthand experience with the audience. Ms. Newton described the major stages in the presidential race, explaining that it actually started in winter 2006, when many candidates from a variety of political parties announced their candidacy. She highlighted the prominent candidates from the two major political parties and described the strategies each had used to convince voters to support them. Ms. Newton explained that citizens began voting in early



Political-Economic Officer of the U.S. Embassy Nicholas Berliner responds to a question from the audience at the Chay Chat on Presidential Debates. (U.S. Embassy photo)

2008 at the primaries and caucuses in every U.S. state. She also summarized John McCain and Barack Obama's campaign platforms, including their stances on such issues as healthcare, the economy, and foreign policy, with a specific emphasis on the war in Iraq and the operations in Afghanistan. Finally, Ms. Newton distributed ballots to the audience and asked participants to cast their vote for one of the two presidential candidates. At the end of her presentation, she revealed the results of this mock election, which Obama won by a landslide – 75 % to 25 % for McCain. When she asked the audience why most of them had voted for Obama, participants explained that his charisma, beliefs and policies appealed to them more.

The Chay Chat Club is held every Friday at the American Embassy at 1600. If you would like to attend, you should call the Embassy at 120-5450 at least two days in advance to sign up.

Movies are usually shown on the last Friday of the month at 1500. The procedure for reserving a spot for the movie is the same.

## Young Uzbeks Learn about American Muslim Families

On September 15, eighteen Uzbek students participated in a world-wide video webcast with Ms. Kari Ansari, Editor of *America's Muslim Family* magazine. The young audience members asked her questions over the internet and could hear and see Ms. Ansari's answers via video. Although this event was open to people all over the world, many of the questions for the speaker came from the audience members in the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent.



Uzbek students participate in a video webcast with Ms. Kari Ansari, Editor of *America's Muslim Family* magazine. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Ms. Ansari is the editor in chief of *America's Muslim Family* Magazine. She founded the magazine with the goal of reaching the Muslim community in America and addressing social issues that concern many of them. She also tries to make the magazine approachable for non-Muslims, so they can learn and better understand Islam and Muslims.

Organized in honor of Ramadan, this webcast with Ms. Ansari allowed young Uzbeks to interact directly with an American Muslim. The Uzbeks and their fellow webcast participants in other countries were united in their curiosity about similar topics, and they posted many questions for Ms. Ansari. A number of participants asked her about Muslim women in America. They also asked about the attitude of the general public towards Muslims and whether or not Muslims are allowed to freely observe their faith in the U.S.

In response, Ms. Ansari underscored the freedom that all Americans have to practice their religions fully. She noted that most Muslims in America are able to take a break from work to pray five times a day and that the U.S. legal system accommodates their religious beliefs. She also described how American Muslims observe Ramadan and explained that her magazine works to build understanding of Muslims and Islam among non-Muslims in the U.S. as it deals with issues that are relative to Muslims that live there.

Ms. Ansari and her husband began publishing *America's Muslim Family* Magazine in 2003 to provide quality articles and features on Muslim life that were otherwise not available in America. She has said that she tries to reach

out with information that is not represented in mainstream media. Her magazine is published quarterly, and it offers a positive look at life for Muslims living in America. The magazine includes profiles of Muslims from all walks of life, family-friendly ideas and activities, articles on historical and contemporary issues relating to Islam and Muslims and a special children's section entitled "Hullabaloo -- Serious Fun for Muslim Kids." The magazine also encourages Muslims to participate in government, the education system and all aspects of American life. Its mission is to celebrate the fact that Islamic values and a free democratic society are 100 percent compatible. To learn more about this magazine and read articles from *America's Muslim Family* visit <http://www.americasmuslimfamily.com/>.

The Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs regularly sponsors online webchats and webcasts on a variety of topics. Other recent events have included webchats on Election 2008, Islamic Art, and Russian-Georgian Relations. To find out about and participate in future webchats, visit the America.gov Ask America page <http://www.america.gov/multimedia/askamerica.html>.

(Adapted from material on Ask America, America.gov.)



Young Muslims read a flyer for Ramadan celebrations before prayer at the Islamic Foundation Mosque in Villa Park, Ill. (© AP Images)

## Embassy Celebrates Ramadan with Documentary Film and Chay Chat



Political-Economic Officer Richard Fitzmaurice speaks at the Chay Chat Club on Muslim Life in America, September 19, 2008. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Over 2 million Muslims live and worship in America. The U.S. has 2,000 mosques, and the first Muslim arrived in America in the 16th century. These are just some of the surprising facts that audience members learned at the events the U.S. Embassy held in honor of Ramadan this year. The events included Iftaar dinners, documentary film screenings, and a presentation about Muslim Life in America.

On September 24, students, NGO leaders, USG alumni, and others gathered at the U.S. Embassy to watch "Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet." This informative documentary takes viewers into the homes, mosques, and workplaces of America's estimated over two million Muslims to discover the many ways in which they follow the prophet's example. The powerful film not only outlines significant elements in the prophet Muhammad's life through the words of religious scholars, but it also features American Muslims speaking about their ability to practice their faith freely and fully in the United States. The film demonstrates the religious and cultural diversity of the United States and the challenges of helping non-Muslims better understand Islam, particularly in the post-9/11 environment. Through this film, the audience learned about the lives of Muslims in other countries outside of Uzbekistan. They also could see that all Americans enjoy religious freedom.

On September 19, Political-Economic Officer Richard Fitzmaurice gave a presentation on Muslim Life in America at the Embassy's weekly Chay Chat Conversation Club. He first warmed up the audience by asking them questions about Muslims in the U.S. In the process, he shared some surprising information, including the fact that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the U.S.; Dearborn, Michigan has the largest Muslim population; and there are about 2,000 mosques in America. The audience also learned that there are

over two million Muslims living in the U.S. today and that the first Muslim in America was Estevanico of Azamor, a Moroccan, who landed in Florida with Spanish explorers in 1527.

Additionally, Mr. Fitzmaurice shared data that helps to paint a picture of the diversity and religiosity of Americans as a whole. He explained that more than 90 percent of adults believe in God, and more than half consider religion to be very important in their lives. He told the audience that most American Muslims – 65% – were not born in the U.S., and more than 50% immigrated to the United States after 1980. He also showed the audience pictures of diverse mosques that Muslims have built in America. After the presentation students asked him questions about Muslim life in the U.S., inquiring about how Muslims practice their faith, the education level of American Muslims, and if non-Muslims sometimes convert to Islam in the U.S.

To learn more about how Americans observe different faiths in the U.S. visit <http://amlife.america.gov/amlife/diversity/atworship.html>.

These events also coincided with the annual release of the Department of State's Report on International Religious Freedom. Through this report, the State Department works to advance the guiding principle that "the best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world."

Visit the Office of International Religious Freedom at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/> to read this year's report.



Malieh Nassar, left, dishes up food for her son, Ossama Nassar, 6, as Dhuha Tawil, 14, right, fills her plate in the kitchen of the Mother Mosque as they end their day of fasting in observance of Ramadan, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. (© AP Images)

## “Press Gaps” Gather Local Journalists to Discuss World Events

The Embassy’s Press Office recently celebrated its first year of “Press Gaps” – a monthly informal gathering for local journalists. The term Press Gap was selected for its cultural connection and nuance. A longstanding tradition in Uzbek society, a “gap” is a small gathering people who discuss social, personal, and/or intellectual issues. The term “gap” suggests regularity, trust, and sincerity among the participants.

The first few Press Gaps featured a 10-15 minute video clip of the most compelling international news items followed by an open discussion of the news, moderated by the U.S. Embassy’s Public Affairs or Information Officer. The clips included segments of the Lehrer News Hour (voiced-over in Uzbek) followed by Obektiv (Focus) TV news program by Voice of America’s Russian Service. The free-flowing discussion oftentimes addressed how the news events were covered by the international and/or Uzbek press, the potential ramifications of the events, and the important role independent media plays in a democracy. Journalists also received America.gov and U.S. newspaper articles on the “hot news” items of the day, seeing for themselves how American journalists covered key issues.

Press Gaps soon evolved into on-the-record discussions with key experts on diverse topics – from promoting U.S.-Uzbek commercial relations to combating trafficking in persons, from expanding alternative energy resources to fighting HIV/AIDS. For example, the General Motors (GM) Plant Manager Gary West traveled from the Ferghana Valley to lead a lively question and answer session on the American automaker’s operation in Uzbekistan. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Bruce Pannier connected from Prague, Czech Republic via digital video conference for a peer-to-peer dialogue on reporting on Central Asia. To mark World AIDS Day, representatives from U.S. Agency for International Development-funded NGOs such as Public Services International (PSI) and Central Asian Program on AIDS Control in Vulnerable Populations (CAPACITY) shared information on their efforts to raise public awareness of the disease, to help integrate vulnerable groups into society, and to improve the quality of HIV/AIDS services in Uzbekistan. Fulbright Fellow and former political campaign volunteer Sarah New-

ton traveled from Kazakhstan to share her insights on the U.S. Presidential Elections. Dr. Rick Schwerdtfeger, Vice President of Advanced RenewableEnergy Company (ARC Energy), connected from Ohio via digital video conference to discuss ways to promote energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy resources. The President of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Uzbekistan Don Nicholson discussed U.S.-Uzbekistan business relations – the successes U.S. businesses enjoy and the challenges they face working in Uzbekistan.



Public Affairs Officer Carol Fajardo opens the Press Gap on combating human trafficking with Ambassador Mark Lagon, Director of the State Department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. (U.S. Embassy photo)



GM Plant Manager Gary West describes the current automobile models produced in Uzbekistan. (U.S. Embassy photo)

ton recently participated in a professional exchange program to the United States. They openly shared their impressions and experiences.

Twenty-five to forty journalists regularly attend the Press Gap – all are reporters, freelancers, or staff-writers with local publications, broadcast media, analytical think tanks, and/or websites. The informal gatherings allow journalists to openly express their views, exchange information, and broaden their professional network. Journalists also learn about the information the U.S. Embassy can provide through its Information Resource Center, Press Office, and website.

All journalists in Uzbekistan (in Tashkent and from the regions!) are welcome to attend. If you wish to participate in future Press Gaps, please send your contact information and the name of your media organization to [TashkentPressCenter@state.gov](mailto:TashkentPressCenter@state.gov).

# Sister Cities Tashkent and Seattle Commemorate 35 Years of Friendship



The marble park bench is unveiled in the Seattle Peace Park. Seattle's donation to the people of Tashkent, August 30, 2008. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The U.S. Embassy and the Tashkent City Mayor's Office organized an American picnic at the Seattle Peace Park on August 30 to mark the 35th anniversary of the Seattle-Tashkent Sister City relationship.

The Seattle-Tashkent Sister City Association dedicated a marble bench for the people of Tashkent. This donation, from the people of Seattle, was the centerpiece of a celebration attended by over 200 guests,



including a 16-member delegation visiting from Seattle. Seattle Council member Jan Drago, Seattle-Tashkent Sister City Association President Dan Peterson, former Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman, former Tashkent Mayor Vokhid Kazimov, Senator Farida Abdurakhimova, and Ambassador Richard Norland gave remarks highlighting the importance of strengthening Uzbek-American friendship through people-to-people diplomacy.

The picnic not only welcomed the general public, but reunited Mayors Uhlman and Kazimov who signed the sister city agreement 35 years ago. It was true celebration of the warm ties between the peoples of Tashkent and Seattle.



Seattle and Tashkent Mayors Wes Uhlman and Vokhid Kazimov reminisce about old times, August 30, 2008. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Ambassador Norland thanks Seattle and Tashkent for 35th years of people-to-people diplomacy, August 30, 2008. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Numerous events have commemorated this special anniversary in 2008. The visiting Seattle delegation shared a piece of American culture by teaching local handicapped children how to play baseball. In late March, the U.S. Embassy and the Tashkent City Mayor organized a clean-up day for the Seattle Peach Park. Seattle Community College connected with Uzbek students via digital video conference in April to learn more about college life in the United States. Former exchange students to the United States and Information Resource Center visitors enjoyed the classic Hollywood film "Sleepless in Seattle." Plus, the Mayor of Seattle plans to welcome a Tashkent delegation to his city in December.

Happy 35th Anniversary!



# The State of Illinois - The Prairie State



Illinois is known as the Land of Lincoln, thanks to Abraham Lincoln who worked his way from humble legislator to President of the United States. Today, Illinois is a study in diverse cultures and landscapes, from the cosmopolitan city of Chicago to the rolling green hills of Southern Illinois.

## HISTORY

Illinois' earliest residents were mound builders whose scattered prehistoric vestiges evidence a great civilization that not only used tools and pottery, but had developed religious beliefs. The Algonquian-speaking peoples dominated the area when the first Europeans arrived in the early 17th century. Later that century, European forts and villages sprouted, spurred by French missionaries and traders who explored the area via the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers and Lake Michigan. After periods under the control of France, Britain and Virginia, an independently governed Illinois Territory was proclaimed in 1809, and Illinois became a state in 1818.

Many early settlers from the South favored slavery, but there were certainly abolitionists, too. The state's internal conflict on the issue was articulated in 1858 during the historic debates between senatorial candidates Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. Despite divided loyalties, Illinois contributed greatly to the Union in the Civil War, and in the process emerged as an industrial state, proficient in steel-making, meatpacking, distilling and heavy manufacturing. This growth created great private wealth but also led to labor strife as workers struggled against low wages and poor conditions. Unions began forming in the mid-19th century, and violent strikes took place between 1877 and 1919.

The state was hit hard by the Great Depression - up to half of Illinois' workers were unemployed. In the 1930s, Democratic governor Henry Horner was able to rebuild state finances and restore efficient government. WWII enabled the state economy to recover.



Visitors pass millennium monument, rebuilt in the same location and a nearly full-sized replica of the original built in 1917, at Chicago's Millennium Park. The \$475 million park is located on 24 acres near Lake Michigan. (© AP Images)

## FAMOUS ATTRACTIONS

### Navy Pier

Chicago's No. 1 tourist destination and home to an abundance of activities, Navy Pier offers attractions, restaurants, shops and special offerings including: Chicago's Shakespeare Theater, the Ferris Wheel, The Skyline Stage, and IMAX theater and more.

### Millennium Park

The world's largest rooftop garden also serves as a music venue and a sculpture garden. The 24.5-acre public park is located in the heart of downtown, hosting the Jay Pritzker Pavilion – an outdoor performance space designed by Frank Gehry; and Cloud Gate – a 66-foot long, 110-ton stainless steel sculpture by British artist Anish Kapoor. Visitors can download a free mp3 audio tour of Millennium Park and find more information by visiting [www.gochicago.com](http://www.gochicago.com).



Boats sail past Chicago's skyline as they make their way to the start line for a running of the Chicago Yacht Club Race to Mackinac Island in Michigan. (© AP Images)

### Lakefront

With more than 29 miles of uninterrupted lakefront, walkers and gawkers have plenty to take in along Chicago's beaches and lakefront. A major summer attraction, Chicagoans and visitors flock to the cities' beaches to soak up the sun, play volleyball, or go for a swim. The path also connects visitors to the Lincoln Park Zoo, Navy Pier, Museum Campus or the Museum of Science and Industry.

### Route 66

America's "Mother Road" starts in Chicago, Illinois, and stretches to Santa Monica, California, covering 2,448 miles (3,941 kilometers), eight states and three time zones. A trip down Route 66 is one of the best ways to experience the real America, and Illinois' portion of the historic road is said to be the best preserved of the entire route.



Chicago Bulls' Cedric Simmons right, and Thabo Sefolosha left, of Switzerland, go up to block a shot by Milwaukee Bucks' Joe Alexander in the second quarter during an NBA preseason basketball game in Chicago, Friday, Oct. 24, 2008. (© AP Images)

## ECONOMY

Because of its central location, excellent transportation infrastructure, and world-class educational institutions, the Illinois economy is healthy, diverse, and vibrant, with a wide range of successful industries. Whether you are engaged in agriculture, finance, manufacturing, technology, or warehousing and distribution, Illinois is a great place to do business.

Located at the industrial and geographic heart of the nation, Illinois is one of the nation's manufacturing leaders. Major industries concentrated in Illinois include food, chemicals, machinery, fabricated metals, computers/electronic, plastics & rubber, and transportation equipment.

The following Fortune 500 manufactures are located in Illinois: Boeing, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Motorola, Caterpillar, Abbot Labs, Sara Lee, John Deere & Co., Illinois Tool Works, Baxter International, Smurfit-Stone Container and Navistar International.

Illinois is home to more than 1,300 food-manufacturing companies. Food processing is the state's number-one manufacturing activity, adding almost \$14 billion annually to the value of Illinois' raw agricultural commodities.

- Illinois is the #1 producer of soybeans in the nation.
- Illinois is the #2 producer of corn in the nation.

- Illinois ranks second nationally in the export of agricultural commodities with nearly \$4 billion worth of goods shipped to other countries each year.
- Exports from Illinois account for nearly 7 percent of all U.S. agricultural exports.
- Illinois is the nation's second leading exporter of soybeans, feed grains and related products.
- More than 44 percent of grain produced in Illinois is sold for export.

**Sources:** [www.gochicago.com](http://www.gochicago.com),  
<http://www.state.il.us>,  
<http://www.census.gov>  
<http://www.discoveramerica.com>  
 "USA" Lonely Planet, 2004



U.S. Map, courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau.

## QUICK FACTS

**Abbreviation:** IL

**Capital City:** Springfield

**Governor:** Rod Blagojevich

**Date of Statehood:** December 3, 1818 (21st)

**Population:** 11,500,000 (6th most populous in U.S.)

**Land area:** 57,900 sq miles (25th)

**Origin of State's Name:** Name comes from a Native American word meaning "tribe of superior men"

**Largest Cities:** Chicago, Rockford, Aurora, Naperville, Peoria and Springfield.

**Major industries:** food, chemicals, machinery, fabricated metals, computers/electronic, plastics & rubber, and transportation equipment.

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It's the answer told by lines that stretched around schools and churches in numbers this nation has never seen, by people who waited three hours and four hours, many for the first time in their lives, because they believed that this time must be different, that their voices could be that difference.

It's the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled. Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red states and blue states.

We are, and always will be, the United States of America.

It's the answer that led those who've been told for so long by so many to be cynical and fearful and doubtful about what we can achieve to put their hands on the arc of history and bend it once more toward the hope of a better day.

It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this date, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America.

A little bit earlier this evening, I received an extraordinarily gracious call from Sen. McCain.

Sen. McCain fought long and hard in this campaign. And he's fought even longer and harder for the country that he loves. He has endured sacrifices for America that most of us cannot begin to imagine. We are better off for the service rendered by this brave and selfless leader.

I congratulate him; I congratulate Gov. Palin for all that they've achieved. And I look forward to working with them to renew this nation's promise in the months ahead.

I want to thank my partner in this journey, a man who campaigned from his heart, and spoke for the men and women he grew up with on the streets of Scranton and rode with on the train home to Delaware, the vice president-elect of the United States, Joe Biden.

And I would not be standing here tonight without the unyielding support of my best friend for the last 16 years, the rock of our family, the love of my life, the nation's next First Lady, Michelle Obama.

Sasha and Malia, I love you both more than you can imagine. And you have earned the new puppy that's coming with us to the new White House.

And while she's no longer with us, I know my grandmother's watching, along with the family that made me who I am. I miss them tonight. I know that my debt to them is beyond measure.

To my sister Maya, my sister Alma, all my other brothers and sisters, thank you so much for all the support that you've given me. I am grateful to them.

And to my campaign manager, David Plouffe, the unsung hero of

this campaign, who built the best — the best political campaign, I think, in the history of the United States of America.

To my chief strategist David Axelrod who's been a partner with me every step of the way.

To the best campaign team ever assembled in the history of politics. You made this happen, and I am forever grateful for what you've sacrificed to get it done.

But above all, I will never forget who this victory truly belongs to. It belongs to you. It belongs to you.

I was never the likeliest candidate for this office. We didn't start with much money or many endorsements. Our campaign was not hatched in the halls of Washington. It began in the backyards of Des Moines and the living rooms of Concord and the front porches of Charleston. It was built by working men and women who dug into what little savings they had to give \$5 and \$10 and \$20 to the cause.

It grew strength from the young people who rejected the myth of their generation's apathy, who left their homes and their families for jobs that offered little pay and less sleep.

It drew strength from the not-so-young people who braved the bitter cold and scorching heat to knock on doors of perfect strangers, and from the millions of Americans who volunteered and organized and proved that more than two centuries later a government of the people, by the people, and for the people has not perished from the Earth.

This is your victory.

And I know you didn't do this just to win an election. And I know you didn't do it for me.

You did it because you understand the enormity of the task that lies ahead. For even as we celebrate tonight, we know the challenges that tomorrow will bring are the greatest of our lifetime — two wars, a planet in peril, the worst financial crisis in a century.

Even as we stand here tonight, we know there are brave Americans waking up in the deserts of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan to risk their lives for us.

There are mothers and fathers who will lie awake after the children fall asleep and wonder how they'll make the mortgage or pay their doctors' bills or save enough for their child's college education.

There's new energy to harness, new jobs to be created, new schools to build, and threats to meet, alliances to repair.

The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep. We may not get there in one year or even in one term. But, America, I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we will get there.

I promise you, we as a people will get there.

There will be setbacks and false starts. There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as president. And we know the government can't solve every problem.

But I will always be honest with you about the challenges we face. I will listen to you, especially when we disagree. And, above all, I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation, the only way it's been done in America for 221 years — block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand.

What began 21 months ago in the depths of winter cannot end on this autumn night.

This victory alone is not the change we seek. It is only the chance for us to make that change. And that cannot happen if we go back to the way things were.

It can't happen without you, without a new spirit of service, a new spirit of sacrifice.

So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism, of responsibility, where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves but each other.

Let us remember that, if this financial crisis taught us anything, it's that we cannot have a thriving Wall Street while Main Street suffers.

In this country, we rise or fall as one nation, as one people. Let's resist the temptation to fall back on the same partisanship and pettiness and immaturity that has poisoned our politics for so long.

Let's remember that it was a man from this state who first carried the banner of the Republican Party to the White House, a party founded on the values of self-reliance and individual liberty and national unity.

Those are values that we all share. And while the Democratic Party has won a great victory tonight, we do so with a measure of humility and determination to heal the divides that have held back our progress.

As Lincoln said to a nation far more divided than ours, we are not enemies but friends. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.

And to those Americans whose support I have yet to earn, I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices. I need your help. And I will be your president, too.

And to all those watching tonight from beyond our shores, from parliaments and palaces, to those who are huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the world: Our stories are singular, but our destiny is shared, and a new dawn of American leadership is at hand.

To those — to those who would tear the world down: We will defeat you. To those who seek peace and security: We support you. And to all those who have wondered if America's beacon still burns as bright: Tonight we proved once more that the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope.

That's the true genius of America: that America can change. Our union can be perfected. What we've already achieved gives us

hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.

This election had many firsts and many stories that will be told for generations. But one that's on my mind tonight's about a woman who cast her ballot in Atlanta. She's a lot like the millions of others who stood in line to make their voice heard in this election except for one thing: Ann Nixon Cooper is 106 years old.

She was born just a generation past slavery; a time when there were no cars on the road or planes in the sky; when someone like her couldn't vote for two reasons — because she was a woman and because of the color of her skin.

And tonight, I think about all that she's seen throughout her century in America — the heartache and the hope; the struggle and the progress; the times we were told that we can't, and the people who pressed on with that American creed: Yes we can.

At a time when women's voices were silenced and their hopes dismissed, she lived to see them stand up and speak out and reach for the ballot. Yes we can.

When there was despair in the dust bowl and depression across the land, she saw a nation conquer fear itself with a New Deal, new jobs, a new sense of common purpose. Yes we can.

When the bombs fell on our harbor and tyranny threatened the world, she was there to witness a generation rise to greatness and a democracy was saved. Yes we can.

She was there for the buses in Montgomery, the hoses in Birmingham, a bridge in Selma, and a preacher from Atlanta who told a people that "We Shall Overcome." Yes we can.

A man touched down on the moon, a wall came down in Berlin, a world was connected by our own science and imagination.

And this year, in this election, she touched her finger to a screen, and cast her vote, because after 106 years in America, through the best of times and the darkest of hours, she knows how America can change.

Yes we can.

America, we have come so far. We have seen so much. But there is so much more to do. So tonight, let us ask ourselves — if our children should live to see the next century; if my daughters should be so lucky to live as long as Ann Nixon Cooper, what change will they see? What progress will we have made?

This is our chance to answer that call. This is our moment.

This is our time, to put our people back to work and open doors of opportunity for our kids; to restore prosperity and promote the cause of peace; to reclaim the American dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth, that, out of many, we are one; that while we breathe, we hope. And where we are met with cynicism and doubts and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes, we can.

Thank you. God bless you. And may God bless the United States of America. (END OF TRANSCRIPT)

## In Honor of International Justice Day, Embassy Celebrates the U.S. Legal System

"Why do Americans want to own guns?" a young Uzbek student asked during a discussion about the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees the right to bear arms. This student was participating in the U.S. Embassy's weekly Chay Chat Conversation Club. In July the Embassy held this event and a showing of the film "Runaway Jury" to commemorate International Justice Day, which falls on July 17.

On July 18, Jonathan Davis, an intern at Embassy Tashkent and law student at New York University, gave a presentation on the U.S. Supreme Court at the embassy's weekly Chay Chat. Mr. Davis explained that America's Founding Fathers established the Supreme Court as part of a system of checks and balances and separation of powers, so that it could prevent the president from becoming too strong. Initially, many considered the Supreme Court to be America's least powerful branch of government, but it slowly grew in power as it began to find some presidential actions, U.S. laws, and treaties unconstitutional.

Mr. Davis also discussed the types of cases that the Supreme Court considers its impacts on law in the U.S. He explained that the Supreme Court considers cases on appeal from lower federal and state courts, interprets laws passed by Congress, and interprets regulations that government agencies issue.

Mr. Davis then divided the participants into four groups and introduced a recent Supreme Court case; *District of Columbia v. Heller*. This case deals with the Second Amendment, which guarantees citizens the right to bear arms, or in other words, own guns. He asked audience members to answer two questions about the case: What does the second amendment mean, and does the U.S. constitution truly protect an individual's right to bear arms? Participants were split in their opinions, with two groups agreeing that an individual has a right to bear arms and two groups disagreeing. After participants discussed their own conclusions, Mr. Davis told them the Supreme Court's decision, which found that the second amendment does protect an individual's right to bear arms.

At the end of July, the Embassy showed the 2003 film "Runaway Jury." Cultural Affairs Officer Stephanie Fitzmaurice opened the event with remarks about International Justice Day, explaining that it commemorates the 1998 establishment of the International Criminal Court, which is the first and only permanent international criminal tribunal established to hold individuals accountable for geno-

cide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Then she quizzed the audience about the U.S. Supreme Court and international justice.

The audience enjoyed the film, which tells the story of a widowed wife, who brought a lawsuit against the gun manufacturing company that she held responsible for her husband's death. The two lawyers in the case each use immoral methods to try to win it, and the jury is caught in the middle. As the story progresses, it becomes clear that it may be difficult for the jury to decide the case fairly, but in the end justice prevails.

Through these activities, participants learned about the U.S. Supreme Court and the judicial system. They had the chance to see that the U.S. constitution is a living document and that it is possible for individual citizens to challenge government actions through a strong Supreme Court.

The Chay Chat Club is held every Friday at the American Embassy at 1600. If you would like to attend, call the Embassy at 120-5450 at least two days in advance to sign up.

Movies are usually shown on the last Friday of the month at 1500. The procedure for reserving a spot for the movie is the same.



Mr. Davis explains the origins of the Supreme Court. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## English Language Specialist Focuses on Assessment

English Language Specialist Dr. Christine Coombe visited Uzbekistan from June 30 to July 5 to hold workshops on language assessment and testing techniques. While in Uzbekistan she worked with teachers who are members of the national teachers' association and also with secondary school English teachers in Ferghana.

The Office of English Language Programs within the U.S. Department of State administers the short-term English Language Specialist program, which sends highly qualified English language professionals overseas for 2-6 weeks to conduct training on targeted topics in the field of English language instruction. Dr. Coombe's visit offered a wonderful opportunity to address English teachers' needs in teaching English and American Studies. Dr. Coombe noted,



Teachers in Ferghana critique a sample test. (U.S. Embassy photo)

“Teachers were extremely receptive to the theoretical and practical work that was presented in the course and interactive workshops. As far as my own field, assessment, is concerned, I was particularly struck by the desire of teachers (both novice and experienced) and teacher trainers to improve their knowledge and skills in this area. Response to my workshops and presentations was very enthusiastic.”

While in Uzbekistan, Dr. Coombe focused her training on three areas that are of interest to English language teachers: Fundamentals of Language Assessment, Test Preparation Strategies and Public Speaking/Presentation Skills. During her training sessions, Dr. Coombe worked with almost 60 teachers of English, and all of her workshops were interactive, providing the teachers with opportunities to ask questions and participate in their learning. They found Dr. Coombe's presentations, including “10 Characteristics of Highly Effective ES/FL Teachers” and “Public Speaking and Presentation Skills” very relevant, as they were interested in improving their teaching and assessment skills.

Through these workshops, Dr. Coombe strives to provide

an overview of important issues involved in the development, selection, use, and evaluation of objective and subjective language assessments. Her practical, hands-on sessions cover issues related to (a) the cornerstones of good assessment practice, (b) types of objective and subjective test items, (c) guidelines for writing good objective test items and (d) common item violations.

After Dr. Coombe finished her presentations, she gave teachers an opportunity to put their new knowledge to use by critiquing a sample test. Through this practical approach, the participants were able to review and critique various assessment techniques and understand the fundamentals of language assessment. Dr. Coombe also provided teachers with ideas on how to assess different skill areas (reading, writing, listening, speaking), alternative assessments, administering assessments, statistics, and test-taking strategies.

Dr. Coombe has a Ph.D in Foreign/Second Language Education and Testing from The Ohio State University. She is currently on the English faculty of Dubai Men's College and works as an Assessment Leader for the Higher Colleges of Technology. She has lived and worked in the Arabian Gulf for the past 15 years. During that time she has served as President of TESOL Arabia and as the founder and co-chair of the TESOL Arabia Testing, Assess-



Dr. Coombe distributes certificates to workshop participants. (U.S. Embassy photo)

ment and Evaluation Special Interest Group who organize the Current Trends in English Language Testing (CTELT) Conference.

If you would like to receive emails from the Embassy with information about educational opportunities for English language teachers and students, please send an email to

[Tashkent-advising@state.gov](mailto:Tashkent-advising@state.gov).

## Wall Street Is Gloomy After Years of Exuberance

### *Analysts say the Street will recover, predict no repeat of Great Depression*



Traders work on the New York Stock Exchange floor; Monday, October 6, 2008. Wall Street tumbled again Monday, joining a sell-off around the world as fears grew that the financial crisis will cascade through economies globally despite bailout efforts by the U.S. and other governments. (© AP Images)

As Wall Street's financial businesses continue a wild ride of panicked sell-offs in stocks and face regulatory changes to their business practices, the stress is showing on the professionals working in the district's banks, stock-trading houses and insurance companies.

"I don't go out to restaurants any more," said Lara, an insurance professional who spoke a few steps from the 60-story Wall Street headquarters of American International Group (AIG), where she works. Lara, who declined to give her full name, and her co-workers worry about their jobs and their pensions, which are partly in company shares that fell sharply in value when AIG's problems became public.

Jeff Glenzer, managing director of the Association for Financial Professionals, expects more layoffs at financial services companies "as they adapt to what is clearly going to be a new world for them."

Retail businesses in the financial district, from restaurants to florists, are feeling the effects. But Wall Street has seen trouble before and bounced back. The worst was the 1929 stock market crash. Stock prices plunged again in 1987, but then recovered quickly.

New York's financial district, the seat of America's financial industry, has been shaken by other traumas. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, destroyed the World Trade Center, a few blocks from Wall Street, companies had to locate missing employees, announce the deaths of employees to their surviving co-workers, and re-establish themselves in temporary offices.

The country has not seen such severe financial turmoil since the stock market crash of 1929, according to many analysts. But while the earlier calamity spilled over into the real economy, causing the decade-long Great Depression, with unemployment of around 25 percent, many economists say this

time a deep economic downturn is unlikely.

"Most economists would agree the federal authorities reacted disastrously" to the 1929 crash, said Sandeep Dahiya, a professor of finance at Georgetown University. Back then, the government hoped to purge the economy of weaker businesses and so made credit harder to come by and stood by while thousands of banks failed. Today, Dahiya said, Washington is injecting unprecedented amounts of public money into the financial system to revive it.

#### BELT TIGHTENING IN MANHATTAN

Wages and bonuses in the financial sector are typically higher than in other industries. In exchange, people in the sector work long hours and know their jobs are less secure. Thousands of jobs have been lost since the troubles began brewing last year, and many in the financial sector are jittery.

The "Masters of the Universe," a term used to parody the professionals who earned millions of dollars a year trading stocks and bonds from the glass and steel skyscrapers towering over Wall Street, today are anxious and share stories of colleagues who have moved into new careers.

"People who were making and selling mortgage-backed securities were the first level of casualties," said James J. Angel, another professor of finance at Georgetown.

Wilson Chow, an accountant with the Wall Street accounting firm KVB Partners, said some of his colleagues at banks and investment companies have been laid off. Others are cutting back personal spending. One 31-year-old accountant gave up her comfortable apartment to move back in with her parents in Queens, a borough of New York City, Chow said. Others are considering going back to school to study law or other more recession-proof professions.

"They don't feel secure," he said. "Tomorrow might be their turn" to lose their jobs.

Yet most observers expect the financial markets to bounce back. "There are lots of protections in place" that have been established in response to previous crises, said Angel, the finance professor. These include federal insurance on bank deposits and stronger oversight of the financial and banking sectors.

Congress is already considering new regulations in response to the problems that contributed to the current situation. These may include better controls over mortgage-backed securities and tighter rules for the rating companies that gave those securities high ratings until the problems arrived.

There will likely be more booms and busts on Wall Street, Angel said. But, he added, referring to the current situation, "this too shall pass."

## Small Businesses Make Local Economies More Sustainable

*Community-based firms rely on local supplies, clean energy and fair wages*



Christy Shi founded a local-food buying club in North Carolina. Members can access a small network of local farms. (© AP Images)

San Francisco — When Gregg Higgins opened a restaurant in downtown Portland, Oregon, in 1994, local farmers were not always able to provide him with the foods he needed to create a menu based on seasonal, local ingredients.

“I’d been always in trouble because I wanted to buy from too many people,” he told *America.gov*.

Higgins joined with other local chefs to create Farm-Chef Connection, a business-to-business network, which let them work directly with growers to fine-tune supplies.

The Connection is among a growing number of small and medium-size enterprises across the United States that emphasizes support for local business and communities as well as the environment.

They want to be called “local living economies” because, as a Salt Lake City-based group put it, they work to bring back or preserve “the choice, texture and vibrancy of our local neighborhoods.”

### IS SMALL BEAUTIFUL AGAIN?

In the book *The Small-Mart Revolution*, Michael Shuman argues that trends such as rising energy and transportation costs, climate change, inefficiencies of global distribution systems and consumers’ desire for more personalized services will help small businesses face competition from global corporations and large retail chains.

By joining together, small businesses can counter the market power of giant corporations, proponents of new localism say. As small firms are more likely to invest in a local economy than their larger competitors, local businesses can contribute to a community’s development by involving more local partners, creating jobs and offering fair wages to employees.

Businesses that make up local living economies range from organic farms and mom-and-pop stores to independent me-

dia, manufacturing operations and green energy projects.

Some networks work with other nonprofit groups and local governments on strategies for economic development, while others focus on marketing campaigns and consumer education, according to Ann Bartz, executive director of the San Francisco-based Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE), a support group for the local networks.

Many groups emphasize “local first” efforts aimed at promoting local selling and buying. For example, for the week of September 15, Sustainable Connections, based in Whatcom County in Washington state, urged local residents to eat fresh local food. Other groups stress closer ties with renewable energy suppliers and preserving natural landscapes. All abide by the principles of paying fair wages to employees, conserving energy and reducing waste.

“Consumers not merely support the idea in general but increasingly vote with their dollars for local supplies,” Don Shaffer, who ran BALLE until 2007, says.

Higgins said that in the Portland area, local farming has changed dramatically and become the envy of the outside world.

### TO TRADE OR NOT TO TRADE?

James Post, a management professor at Boston University, says local living economies are “connected to a theme of attempted social innovation, which is well grounded in the U.S. history.”

By embracing and protecting such collective assets as the natural environment and unspoiled landscape, the living economy groups try to transcend the imperfect workings of the market, he told *America.gov*.

Post said new localism can be driven to some extent by skepticism about byproducts of globalization. But Shaffer explained that the concept of local economies does not exclude international trade. “The idea is to make it a fair trade between small firms,” he said.

Bartz told *America.gov* the local business networks have no desire to deny development opportunities to communities in other nations that rely on exports. “Our vision is a global economy of linked local living economies,” she said.

In that vision, people and communities first benefit from products and services being traded across their boundaries rather than across the globe.

Behind the movement, Post said, is a desire to create products and services for people whom local entrepreneurs know and understand in an environment they appreciate and want to sustain.

## Private Sector Should Resist Internet Censorship, Official Says

### *State's Dobriansky says incentives can help block authoritarian pressure*



The State Department's Paula Dobriansky says the private sector has a "moral responsibility" to resist censorship efforts. (© AP Images)

With government efforts to restrict free Internet access on the rise around the world, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky urged the private sector to resist pressure to limit access to the Web and instead join the United States and others in efforts to "open the doors to unfettered information."

The right incentives from democratic governments can enable industry to "embrace the moral responsibility of resisting pressure" to restrict Web access in repressive countries, she said.

"With the partnership of fellow democracies, industry and nongovernmental organizations, efforts to regulate and restrict free speech will ultimately prove an unsuccessful attempt to hold back the rising tide of democratic change."

Dobriansky spoke in Washington on September 10 at a workshop for journalists, representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and U.S. officials called "Media vs. New Censorship: The Authoritarian Assault on Information." The workshop was hosted by the Broadcasting Board of Governors. Panelists included the directors of Freedom House, the Global Internet Freedom Consortium and the China Internet Project, and the editor in chief of *Washington Prism*, a Persian-language online journal of culture, politics and public affairs.

Dobriansky said the United States has committed substantial resources to expand the Internet. Through this commitment and dramatic reductions in the cost of communication technology, "millions of new users can be empowered by Internet access." The Bush administration is working with the private sector to develop a set of voluntary principles to encourage the information technology industry to protect the free flow of information.

In addition, "we strive to support journalists and press freedom organizations under threat through various grants and funding for initiatives such as providing secure Web sites for journalists under pressure from restrictive regimes," she said.

#### GLOBAL INTERNET FREEDOM TASK FORCE

The under secretary said some of this work is being done by the State Department's Global Internet Freedom Task Force, established by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2006.

In cooperation with NGOs and the private sector, the group monitors Internet freedom across the world and seeks to expand online access.

She said the task force "provides a channel for responding to threats to Internet freedom, where nongovernmental organizations or Internet service providers can flag for us an abuse, upon which we can then act."

The United States raises concerns over Internet freedom both bilaterally and multilaterally, she said. In 2008, both the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development issued statements urging greater Web access to enhance democracy and economic development.

In 2007, she added, the Bamako Ministerial Consensus of the Community of Democracies also "expressed its commitment to the central importance of Internet freedom to democracy and development in three separate statements."

Some governments that are restricting free Web access claim they are protecting their citizens from "dangerous or morally questionable ideas," and others "do not even seek a pretense," she said. The world also has witnessed alleged government attacks upon the Internet servers of other governments.

Dobriansky said that in all of these cases, "the common denominator is deliberate 'denial of the marketplace of ideas.'"

To view or download video footage of the "Media vs. New Censorship: The Authoritarian Assault on Information" workshop, visit the Broadcasting Board of Governors Web site (<http://www.bbg.gov/ondemand.cfm>).



China, Burma, Cuba, Egypt and others have faced international criticism for restricting public web access. (© AP Images)

## Google Aims to Retain Entrepreneurial Spirit as It Grows

### *Pampered by the company, employees give back in creativity*

Mountain View, California — When you visit Google's main campus here you risk a serious bout of envy. You wish your own employer offered at least a small part of what Googlers, as employees are called, can enjoy. The place is so unconventional that at times it feels more like a cross between a self-sufficient gated community, an all-inclusive resort and a college campus than a corporation.

Google employees receive more-than-decent salaries, generous bonuses and stock options and can win founders' awards sometimes worth millions of dollars. But money is not all that matters at one of the most successful software companies, Googlers say.

For example, everything you need at home and in your neighborhood is here and is either free or heavily subsidized: 11 cafeterias that offer gourmet meals; snack and juice bars; laundry facilities with free bio-detergents; day care for kids and a pet-friendly policy (yes, you can bring them from home); on-site car washes and oil changes; and more.

Google also tries hard to make the workplace healthy, convenient and environmentally friendly. The campus draws 30 percent of its power from solar panels, uses an advanced air-filtration system, operates shuttle buses and provides bikes for trips between buildings.

Googlers can go to a well-equipped gym or swimming pool; play beach volleyball, roller hockey and pool; take yoga classes and get a massage. To stimulate their brains, they can study foreign languages and attend various presentations and lectures. And if they get tired from all this, they can take a nap in one of the strategically placed nap pods.

Some companies offer similar benefits. But none has matched Google in the breadth and quality of the offerings. It was more than enough to make Google Number 1 in *Fortune* magazine's 2008 ranking of the best U.S. companies to work for.

Visitors often think the benefits are intended to keep employees at work as long as possible, says Claire Stapleton, a public affairs associate at Google.

Googlers indeed work long hours, and it is not unusual to find a group discussing a project late at night or even into the early morning. But Stapleton told America.gov that the company helps employees in daily chores to give them more time for being creative, independent of whether their ideas

are job-related or not. She believes the extraordinary benefits on which the media and visitors focus so often are not the main reason people are eager to work at Google.

"It has to do more with the corporate culture, which keeps people excited and motivated," she said. Stapleton said Google goes to great lengths to create an invigorating environment and an entrepreneurial culture in which creative ideas are nurtured and often turned into products and services. In such a culture, each product or service is unique. Emily Nishi, a director in the human resources division, says many Googlers are motivated by an opportunity to come up with new things. The company encourages crazy ideas and lets employees go down their own paths, she said.

For example, software engineers can spend 20 percent of their work time on projects that have nothing to do with their job functions. Gmail — Google's e-mail program — Google News, the company's fleet of plug-in electric vehicles and the shuttle-bus service were all conceived initially as such nonessential projects.



Googlers also enjoy working in small, focused and self-managed teams and having easy access to the founders and heads of the company — Larry Page and Sergey Brin — who listen to their suggestions and answer their queries during weekly meetings.

Nishi said Google looks for employees with a wide variety of professional, ethnic and cultural backgrounds because it believes that creativity thrives at the intersection of varied professional and life experiences. At lunch time, the main cafeteria crowd is indeed multiethnic and multiracial, but also unusually young for a large corporation.

Nishi said the company hires a lot of college students. But some Googlers, particularly those in executive ranks, had long professional careers before they joined the company.

Google employs more than 12,000 people at offices around the world. It received almost a million applications for about 3,000 jobs it has advertised recently. With such a choice, the company can select the best. And the quality of Googlers makes it an even better place to work for. "Here you work with the brightest people, the most driven people, the most passionate people and the most compassionate people, who are really interested in making the world a better place through technology," Nishi said.

## President Bush Showcases International Development Progress

*U.S. foreign aid strategy empowering people, delivering results*



President Bush stands with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the White House Summit on International Development, Oct. 21, 2008, in Washington. (© AP Images)

The United States has ushered in a new era of international development, says President Bush, by empowering a new generation of leaders to lift their citizens from poverty, fight disease and increase educational and economic opportunities. “People in the developing world have the capacity to improve their own lives, and they will rise to meet high expectations,” Bush said October 21 in his keynote address to the White House Summit on International Development.

Bush, along with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Henrietta Fore and other top U.S. officials, joined representatives from partner countries, the United Nations, international financial institutions and nongovernmental aid groups at the event to assess progress and urge continued engagement, even in the face of the ongoing global financial crisis.

“America is committed — and America must stay committed — to international development for reasons that remain true regardless of the ebb and flow of the markets,” Bush said.

Since coming to office in 2001, the Bush administration has made global development a top priority, Rice said in opening remarks to the conference. U.S. aid to Africa quadrupled in size and assistance to Latin America doubled while funding for other regions in need was tripled.

The United States has also worked with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to bring \$60 billion in debt relief to poor countries and help them avoid new debt by urging donors to follow America’s example and provide grants instead of loans wherever possible.

The United States has provided an additional \$6.7 billion in 35 countries through the Millennium Challenge Corporation,

an initiative that embodies the administration’s philosophy that leaders must be held accountable for results by linking aid to measurable progress on projects defined by their own governments to promote democratic reforms, open markets and invest in the health and education of their citizens. “For too long, foreign aid was designed to make us feel good. Now, we are ensuring that our resources do good,” Bush said.

The United States delivers more than half of the world’s food aid, Bush said, and has provided more than \$16 billion in funds and commodities since 2002 to feed millions facing starvation. It has provided an additional \$5.5 billion to address the global food crisis, and has promoted new long-term solutions to improve access to food and clean water to break the cycle of famine in the developing world.

The United States has built new partnerships in the developing world to target a wide range of deadly diseases, Bush said. Today, more than 1.7 million people in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe receive treatment through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which has also provided health-worker training, public-awareness education and other services for 7 million others. As a result, Bush said, “communities once given up for dead are being brought back to life.”

Meanwhile, more than 25 million people in 15 African countries have benefited from the President’s Malaria Initiative — a five-year, \$1.2 billion initiative to battle the mosquito-borne illness by distributing insecticide-treated bed nets, conducting indoor spraying campaigns, and providing cutting-edge drugs.

Education is a gateway to prosperity, Bush said, highlighting USAID efforts to train 700,000 teachers, distribute more than 10 million textbooks and provide scholarships in communities across the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. “We are helping to educate the doctors, lawyers, engineers, and entrepreneurs who will be vital to the developing world’s future.”

Promoting free trade is another essential element to long-term development, Bush said, by further empowering nations by gradually replacing foreign aid with self-generated economic growth, and promoting improved transparency and the rule of law.

“We have increased economic opportunity by relieving debt and opening up trade. And we have delivered aid that empowers the poor and the marginalized,” Bush said. “This is a historic commitment we can be proud of, and one that will secure a bright future for our partners in the developing world.”

A transcript of President Bush’s summit speech is available on the White House’s website at [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

## Enhancing Afghan Security Forces Seen as Significant Challenge

### *U.S. will encourage more cooperation between Afghanistan, Pakistan*



Defense Secretary Robert Gates.  
(© AP Images)

Washington — The most significant challenge facing the United States and its allies in Afghanistan is increasing the competence and reliability of the Afghan security forces, says U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

“The persistent and increasing violence resulting from an organized insurgency is, of course, our greatest concern,” Gates told the Senate Armed Services Committee September 23. “Until the insurgency is deprived of safe havens, insecurity and violence will persist.”

Gates said the United States must encourage Afghanistan and Pakistan to work together to secure their mountainous border. Part of that effort includes the establishment of more border coordination centers that are jointly staffed by troops from the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Afghan and Pakistani troops; following up on the 2007 Joint Peace Jirga; and holding routine meetings of the Tripartite Commission.

“We must continue to work with the Pakistani government to extend its authority in the tribal region and provide badly needed economic, medical and educational assistance to Pakistani citizens there,” Gates said.

Any deterioration would be a setback for both Pakistan and Afghanistan, Gates added.

The U.N. Security Council on September 22 unanimously extended the mission of the ISAF in Afghanistan for another year and called for it to be strengthened in the face of increased violence and terrorism from the Taliban, al-Qaida and illicit drug smugglers. The ISAF now has 47,600 personnel in Afghanistan. It was established after the U.S.-led coalition ousted the Taliban regime in late 2001 to help the then-interim government maintain security.

“We are very pleased that the Security Council has unanimously approved the extension of the mandate for ISAF,” U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Zalmay Khalilzad said at U.N. headquarters in New York. Previously, such approval had not been unanimous, he said.

#### CLASSIC INSURGENCY

Gates said the United States is working with the Afghans and coalition partners to counter a classic extremist insurgency fueled by ideology, illicit drug production, poverty, crime and corruption.

During a recent visit to the region, Gates said, he reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to success in Afghanistan, including increasing the number of U.S. forces as well as enhancing the capabilities of Afghan security forces.

“I also expressed my regret, and the regret of the American people, for the civilians killed and injured in coalition and NATO airstrikes,” he said.

Gates said the United States has 31,000 troops in Afghanistan, which is an increase from 21,000 two years ago; more are planned for deployment there. The United States will send an additional Marine battalion this November and by January 2009 an Army brigade. Both had been slated for deployment to Iraq.



Defense Secretary Robert Gates, left, meets with Afghan President Hamid Karzai at the presidential palace in Kabul. (© AP Images)

The security situation has improved so much in Iraq that the five Army combat brigades, two Marine battalions and Marine expeditionary unit that were sent as part of the surge in 2007 have returned home without replacement. Another 8,000 U.S. troops will be withdrawn from Iraq by February 2009 without being replaced.

Eventually, many troops that had been slated for Iraq will be available for missions in Afghanistan, but not until later next year, Gates said. The additional troop requirements include more helicopters, combat troops, military trainers and other military support forces.

But Gates added that security is just one aspect of the greater campaign in Afghanistan. “We must maintain momentum, keep the international community engaged, and develop the capacity of the Afghan government,” he said.

## American Specialist Shares Ideas on Sports Opportunities for the Disabled



Ambassador Richard Norland delivers introductory remarks. (U.S. Embassy photo)

U.S. Embassy Tashkent hosted a Digital Video Conference (DVC) entitled "Overcoming Hurdles: Sports Opportunities for the Disabled" on October 7 to commemorate Disabilities Awareness Month. The DVC featured Mr. David Lenox, Director of Athlete Leadership Programs at the Special Olympics in Washington D.C., who shared with the Tashkent audience his experience in creating sports opportunities for the disabled. The audience included representatives of disabled person's NGOs and athletes and trainers who wanted to learn more about how to address challenges in sports for the disabled.

Ambassador Richard Norland welcomed guests to the event. In his remarks, Mr. Norland highlighted the many positive changes that have taken place in the United States recently in regard to those with disabilities. He explained that the guest speaker, Mr. Lenox, has led a movement to change attitudes towards people with disabilities from one of pity and service for a "disadvantaged population," to a culture of advocacy, inclusion and respect for people with physical and intellectual disabilities.

After the Ambassador's remarks, Mr. Lenox told the audience about U.S. practices and experience in protecting the interests of and creating equal opportunities for the disabled through sports. He explained that his organization had learned a critical lesson when about 10 years ago it started asking disabled athletes themselves how Special Olympics could better serve them. In response, the athletes said that they want to be treated as individuals, not as a collective group with the same ability

level. Mr. Lenox told the Tashkent audience that this desire creates a challenge for those who coach and train disabled athletes, because in many other sports teams, athletes are accustomed to being treated as a group of similar athletes with similar abilities. Over the past 10 years, coaches and trainers at Special Olympics have been learning how to modify their own views and assumptions in order to work more productively with those who have disabilities. He also said that Special Olympics stresses that the goal for their athletes is to focus on achieving more and increasing their athletic abilities, rather than trying to meet some absolute measure of athletic ability. Further, he told the audience about athlete leadership programs and how research and evaluation activities can help organizations most effectively enhance the lives of people with different levels of disabilities.

Audience members, who themselves work to provide opportunities for the disabled through sports, had many questions for Mr. Lenox. They asked how local organizations can raise money to fund their activities. They also asked him about a rumor they had heard that in the future Special Olympics and Paralympics would combine their international competitions into one larger event. He explained that this is a possibility, but clarified that it is likely that athletes with intellectual disabilities and athletes with physical disabilities would probably not compete directly against each other. He explained that it can be very difficult to classify individuals with mental disabilities, because different cultures and countries test athletes in different ways.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in sharing their gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. If you want to learn more about organizations that provide athletic opportunities for those with disabilities, visit the Special Olympics website <http://www.specialolympics.org> and the Paralympics website <http://www.paralympic.org/>.



Digital Video Conference with Mr. Dave Lenox. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## What's next for Michael Phelps?

*He's setting his sights on new goals*



Michael Phelps after setting a world record, winning the men's 200-meter butterfly at the Beijing 2008 Olympics. (© AP Images)

The following article by a freelance contributor to the U.S. Olympic Committee Web site (<http://www.teamusa.org>) originally appeared on August 17 and is reprinted with permission.

What's next for Phelps?  
By Aimee Berg  
[www.teamusa.org](http://www.teamusa.org)

With his record-breaking eight Olympic gold medals won during the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Michael Phelps arguably

he expects a bit of resistance, "because there are [tough] workouts involved. Whether or not he wants to, I think it'll be good for him."

First, Phelps plans to take a break where, he said, "I will be on my clock, have fun, and be with some friends" and, of course, savor the chance to sleep in his own bed in Baltimore, Maryland.

Phelps' post-Beijing plan also involves the 2009 World Championships in Rome. "My mom told me I'd better make the team because she wants to go to Rome," he said. "We have to make that happen so she can go."

Phelps said nothing will top his memories in Beijing, however, and that he deliberately relished each moment there -- especially after hearing from teammates who could no longer recall details of their Olympic races or time spent on the medals podium.

became the greatest Olympian of all time. He also broke seven world records in Beijing and returns to the United States with a total of 14 career gold medals.

After Phelps was done competing in Beijing, he said his Olympic career wasn't finished.

"There are some things I still want to do," Phelps said. "I want to raise the bar in swimming more ... I think it can go even further, and I hope to take it even further."

Phelps' coach Bob Bowman said his 23-year-old protégé will likely try new distances in the future. "We'll have to see how keen he is to go to the sprints," Bowman said, although



United States' gold medal winner Michael Phelps listens to the national anthem during the medal ceremony for the men's 200-meter freestyle final during the swimming competitions in the National Aquatics Center at the Beijing 2008 Olympics. (© AP Images)

"Every moment in and out of the pool will be with me forever," he said.

He also returns to the States with a new lucky number, the one that the Chinese have revered for so long.

"I guess [eight] is lucky for me now, too," he said. "Seeing 8/8/08 and opening ceremonies start at 8:08 - I guess maybe it was meant to be. But for this to happen, everything had to fall into perfect place. If we had to do it again, I don't know if it would have happened exactly the way we wanted it to."



U.S. men's 4x200-meter freestyle relay team members, from left, Ricky Berens, Ryan Lochte, Peter Vanderkaay and Michael Phelps display their medals during an awarding ceremony after the team set a world record to win the swimming competition in the National Aquatics Center at the Beijing 2008 Olympics in Beijing. (© AP Images)

## International Students Getting More Graduate Program Offers



South Korean students chat during International Student Orientation activities at the University of Mississippi. (© AP Images)

For a third consecutive year, the number of international students receiving offers of admission to master's and doctoral programs at U.S. colleges and universities has risen, led by a 16 percent increase in admission offers to Chinese students, according to a new study by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS).

Applications from students in the Middle East rose 14 percent and offers of admission 17 percent. Applications from students in India -- the top country of origin for U.S. international students -- rose just 2 percent, as did offers of admission to those students. Admission offers to South Korean students fell 3 percent.

India, China and Korea are the top three countries of origin for international students enrolled in U.S. graduate schools, accounting for about half of the total, CGS says. Students from the Middle East account for 6 percent of total enrollment.

Overall, admission offers to international students rose 4 percent from 2007 to 2008, less than the 8 percent rise last year and a 12 percent rise two years ago.

CGS President Debra Stewart expressed concern about the slowdown in the growth of international students pursuing graduate studies in the United States. Such a trend holds long-term implications not only for U.S. graduate education, but also for U.S. competitiveness in the global economy, she said. "Happily, U.S. graduate schools are proactive as they continue to establish collaborative degree and certificate programs with institutions overseas as one response to intense global competition," she added.

The report cites two sources of competition as the causes of the slowdown. Institutions of higher education in Europe, Australia and Japan are actively recruiting international students, and the largest source countries for prospective U.S. international students -- India, China and South Korea -- are providing inducements for their students to study at home.

International students also may face such challenges as eco-

nomics uncertainty in their home countries, currency fluctuations, the rising cost of higher education, or lack of sufficient English language skills, particularly among disadvantaged populations.

There were 2.7 million international students worldwide in 2005, according to the latest UNESCO data, up from 1.8 million in 2000 and 600,000 in 1975. A little more than one-fifth of international undergraduate and graduate students were studying in the United States as of 2005, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development estimated.

### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIVE GRADUATE PROGRAMS GROW

According to the new CGS survey, the percentage of U.S. graduate schools that have established joint, dual or other collaborative degree programs in partnership with international colleges and universities has risen from 29 percent in 2007 to 38 percent in 2008, including six of the ten largest.

In dual, or double degree, programs, students take courses and receive a degree, diploma or certificate from each participating school. For example, through a program established by the State University of New York (SUNY) and Turkey's Council of Higher Education, Turkish students can receive two undergraduate diplomas, one Turkish and one from SUNY, after dividing their four years of study between a Turkish campus and a partner SUNY campus.

In joint degree programs, on the other hand, students take courses at each participating college or university but receive only one degree, diploma or certificate from the school at which they are registered.

Most collaborative programs are at the master's degree level, and most are with European universities. Some collaborative doctoral programs are offered, and some of the partnership programs are with institutions in China, India and other countries outside Europe. Business is the most common field of study, but a significant number of collaborative master's degree programs are in engineering, the physical sciences and the social sciences.

CGS is an organization of more than 480 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada aimed at improving graduate education. CGS surveys U.S. graduate schools three times each year: in February to learn how many international students are applying; in June to learn how many international students are being admitted; and in September to learn how many international students actually enroll in U.S. graduate schools.

The full text of the CGS report is available at <http://www.cgsnet.org>.

For information on studying in the U.S., see the State Department's EducationUSA Web site at <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/>.



## Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

The purpose of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program is to award small grants for specific projects that support the development of democratic institutions in Uzbekistan. Grants will be awarded to non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGOs) and media outlets, not individuals.

To be eligible for consideration, the applicant must be engaged in, or propose to carry out, a project relating to:

- building democratic institutions
- fostering a strong and independent media
- supporting civic education
- respecting the rule of law
- protecting human rights
- furthering women's political and social rights
- supporting market reforms, and
- protecting the environment

Proposals must be sent via e-mail to [TashkentGrant@state.gov](mailto:TashkentGrant@state.gov). Supporting documents and appli-

cations for organizations that do not have access to e-mail can be sent to:

Democracy Commission  
Public Affairs Section  
Embassy of the United States of America  
3 Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District  
Tashkent 100093, Uzbekistan

In case of any questions about the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program, please contact:

Democracy Commission Small Grants Coordinator  
Embassy of the United States of America  
3 Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District  
Tashkent 100093, Uzbekistan  
Phone: (+998-71) 140-2441  
Fax: (+998-71) 120-6302  
E-mail: [TashkentGrant@state.gov](mailto:TashkentGrant@state.gov)  
Website: <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/demcom>

## Educational Advising Center at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent

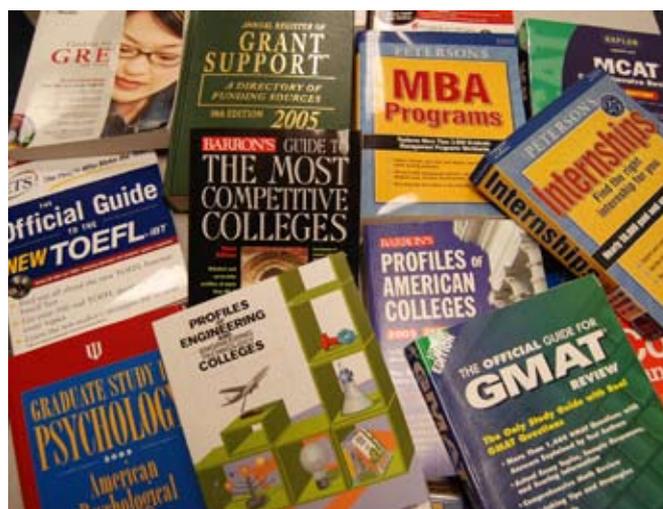


The Educational Advising Center offers the following services free of charge:

- general information about U.S. Education
- individual advising in areas of study and course descriptions
- test preparation materials for SAT, TOEFL, GRE and GMAT that can be used during consultation hours
- U.S. college selection database
- supporting reference materials
- financial aid resources
- application guides
- guides to Distance Learning

The center is supported by an educational advisor, a reference library, and educational software, all of which are geared to meeting the various needs of students that want to study in the United States.

Advising hours are by appointment from 13:00-17:00, Monday to Thursday. To schedule an appointment, please call 120-5450 between 9:30 to 12:00 Monday through Friday or



A sample of the materials offered by the Educational Advising Center at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

e-mail [Tashkent-Advising@state.gov](mailto:Tashkent-Advising@state.gov).

## U.S. Embassy Donates Books to the International Business School *Kelajak Ilmi*

With the help of the U.S. Embassy, the International Business School (IBS) *Kelajak Ilmi* received books for its library, full scholarships for five members of its incoming class, and Digital Video Conference equipment for its distance learning courses.

The donated American textbooks focus on major business management and marketing themes: building profitable customer relationships, harnessing new marketing technologies in the digital age, creating strong brands, and ensuring successful project management. The books are excellent tools for any student pursuing a career in business.



U.S. Embassy Press Attaché Molly Stephenson poses with a librarian of International Business School *Kelajak Ilmi* while donating new business text books to IBS, October 30, 2008. (Embassy photo)

IBS *Kelajak Ilmi*, one of the leading centers teaching business management in Uzbekistan, has been collaborating closely with the United States Embassy for several years. IBS *Kelajak Ilmi* gives Uzbekistan's future business leaders the skills they need to contribute to the strengthen, diversify and modernize the Uzbek economy.



Students of International Business School *Kelajak Ilmi* look through new business text books donated by the U.S. Embassy. (U.S. Embassy photo)



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