



# DO'STLIK



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## Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Returns to Uzbekistan



Foreign Minister Norov welcomes Secretary Clinton to Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

visit by a Secretary of State since Colin Powell in December 2001, and reaffirms the importance of the U.S. relationship with Uzbekistan.

Prior to arriving in Uzbekistan, Secretary Clinton paid visits to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. She served as the head of the U.S. delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) 2010 Summit of the Heads of State or Government held December 1-2 in Astana.

On Thursday, December 2, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton made her second trip to Uzbekistan, having visited as First Lady in November 1997, when she traveled to Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. Her current trip marks the first

The summit was only the seventh of its kind convened by the OSCE since the organization's inception in 1973, the last taking place in Istanbul in 1999. This year

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## U.S. Embassy Commemorates the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On the evening of January 27, the U.S. Embassy held its annual event honoring the life and work of civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Ambassador's Residence in Tashkent.



The Embassy's Robert Pitre speaks with the Director of the National Democratic Institute at the reception. (U.S. Embassy photo)

More than 60 representatives of various organizations working in the areas of civil society and human rights joined members of the diplomatic corps and non-governmental organizations for the commemorative celebration.

The guests gathered to recognize the profound and lasting influence of Martin Luther King, Jr. on both American society and the international community. Dr. King, a Baptist minister from Georgia,

rose to national prominence as the head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which advocated nonviolent action

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## Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Returns to Uzbekistan

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the parties focused on improving border security, promoting regional trade, and countering trafficking in Central Asia, and were hosted by current OSCE chair Kazakhstan.

In Uzbekistan, Secretary Clinton met with President Islam Karimov to discuss a wide range of matters in the U.S.-Uzbek relationship and in regional affairs. She and Uzbekistan's First Deputy Prime Minister Rustam Azimov signed the U.S. – Uzbekistan Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement.

This Agreement will provide a framework under which U.S. Government agencies, Government of Uzbekistan ministries, U.S. and Uzbek institutes, universities, and research centers, and possibly private companies can cooperate in the field of science, technology, and education. Secretary Clinton also met with civil society leaders to listen to their perspectives on a variety of topics.

Secretary Clinton's visit to Uzbekistan is part of the continued efforts to deepen relations between the United States and Uzbekistan in all of the key dimensions in our bilateral relationship – political, security, economic and human.

"This administration considers Central Asia to be an important pillar of our security policy and regional U.S. interests," Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake said at subcommittee hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee on November 17. "We must increase our engagement with Central Asia at all levels," said David Sedney, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia, at the same hearing.

After her meetings in Tashkent, the Secretary departed for Bahrain, where she delivered the keynote address at the 2010 Manama Dialogue, a regional security summit sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## U.S. Embassy Commemorates the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



The Embassy's Robert Pitre delivers a speech on the impact of Martin Luther King, Jr. (U.S. Embassy photo)

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to promote social change. From the mid-1950s through the 1960s, he inspired millions to follow his example in nonviolent protest against the segregation and institutional racism common in much of the United States.

Dr. King was arrested several times for leading nonviolent marches and protests throughout the American South, from Montgomery to Selma to Atlanta – his hometown.

His most famous arrest in Alabama led to his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, in which he eloquently argued that he was

compelled to peacefully break unjust state laws in the name of a higher law and higher justice.

His arguments would win the favor of the American public during the 1960s, and led to the massive 1963 march on Washington, DC, the passage of the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

He was assassinated in 1968, but his work has ultimately led to an unending search for justice throughout all levels of American society, and his dream has influenced the expectations of justice and freedom throughout the entire world.

In his speech to the gathered crowd, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at that time Robert Pitre noted Dr. King's influence on the dialogue among nations. Dr. King, said Pitre, dreamed of a day when all people "might claim 'the riches of freedom and the security of justice.'"

Pitre also noted that the second Annual Bilateral Consultations are scheduled for February 2011, and the United States and Uzbekistan will discuss the full range of issues on our bilateral agenda, and as always, this includes human rights.

He noted that "while these discussions will not be easy, and undoubtedly differences will remain, this dialogue may bring us a bit closer to Dr. King's vision of a more just and inclusive world. His vision is the ideal we continue to strive for in the United States and it's one that we will continue to encourage countries around the world to reach as well."

Throughout the event, guests enjoyed a slideshow of important moments in the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and in his struggle against injustice.

## Obama Urges Americans to Meet 21st Century Challenges

In the annual State of the Union address, President Obama urged American lawmakers to support innovative research and educational opportunities as a means of maintaining U.S. economic competitiveness and ensuring its progress in the 21st century.

“This is our generation’s Sputnik moment,” the president said January 25 in his address to a joint session of Congress. He was referring to the rapid American technological and scientific response that created the U.S. space program and new economic opportunities after the Soviet Union launched the first satellite into space in 1957. As a result of its quick mobilization, the United States became the first nation to put a man on the moon in 1969.

Obama referred to dramatic educational and research advances in countries like China and India, and said that he would ask Congress to fund programs in clean energy technology, biomedical research and information technology to help strengthen U.S. security, protect the environment and create new jobs in the United States. To help pay for his proposed initiatives, Obama called on lawmakers to eliminate billions of dollars in current subsidies to American oil companies. “[I]nstead of subsidizing yesterday’s energy, let’s invest in tomorrow’s,” he said. To help reduce the estimated \$1.3 trillion federal budget



The president told U.S. lawmakers that the country’s challenges outweigh its current political divisions. (© AP Images)

deficit, the president also proposed a five-year freeze on domestic spending that he estimated would save more than \$400 billion over the next ten years.

The president also said U.S. exports have increased and recent trade deals with India, China and South Korea will support thousands of American jobs. The United States will enforce its trade deals, he said, and will pursue new agreements with Panama and Colombia, as well as continue its Asia Pacific and global trade talks. Obama said American leadership and global standing have been renewed.

In August 2010, the United States fulfilled its promise to end all combat missions in Iraq. In addition, security control in Afghanistan is transitioning to Afghan forces. Fewer Afghans

now live under control of the Taliban insurgency and in July, “we will begin to bring our troops home,” Obama said. Terrorist safe havens in Pakistan and elsewhere are shrinking, he said, and pledged that the United States will not waver in its struggle against al-Qaida and other extremist groups. Thanks to the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia (New START), “far fewer nuclear weapons and launchers will be deployed,” and the United States is leading efforts to secure nuclear materials around the world to prevent them from being obtained by extremists, he said.

The president cited U.S. assistance to southern Sudanese, who were able to freely vote for their self-determination earlier in January after years of war, and acknowledged the “same desire to be free” in Tunisia, where popular protests proved to be “more powerful than the writ of a dictator.”

The United States “stands with the people of Tunisia, and supports the democratic aspirations of all people,” he said. He urged Congress to enact immigration reforms that would protect U.S. borders and enforce its laws against illegal immigrants while addressing the status of millions of undocumented workers who are already inside the country. Others come to study in U.S. universities and are forced to return home once their studies are complete, he said.

“Let’s stop expelling talented, responsible young people who could be staffing our research labs, or starting a new business, who could be further enriching this nation,” Obama said.

The speech marked Obama’s second official State of the Union address, and came after his Democratic Party lost its majority in the House of Representatives and found its control of the Senate narrowed due to the 2010 midterm elections. The U.S. Constitution requires the president to periodically inform the Congress on “information of the state of the union,” and to recommend “measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient” for their consideration.

Obama will follow up on the speech by sending Congress a proposed budget for the 2012 fiscal year in which he will offer further details on his vision by specifying his spending priorities.

Along with expected increased partisan division in the Congress, Obama’s 2011 State of the Union speech was also influenced by the January 15 shooting of Arizona Representative Gabrielle Giffords in a Tucson, Arizona, attack that killed six people and critically injured Giffords. Joining first lady Michelle Obama at the speech were Daniel Hernandez, a legislative intern who aided the congresswoman, as well as the parents of 9-year-old victim Christina Taylor Green, and Dr. Peter Rhee, who treated Giffords.

In a break from earlier State of the Union speeches, more than two dozen members of Congress chose to forgo the traditional segregated political party seating in the House chamber and sat together as a symbol of political civility following the Tucson shootings.

## A Scholar Looks Back to the Future of Central Asia



Adeb Khalid says the Central Asian idealists who embraced the Bolshevik Revolution wanted to modernize their culture and improve the lives of their people. (Photo courtesy of Department of State)

When Adeb Khalid was growing up in Lahore, Pakistan, neighboring Soviet Central Asia did not seem like a land next door but a distant, exotic place.

Although his work as a historian has taken him about as far as can be from where he started, he has become a leading scholar on Central Asia and its recent history.

Khalid, 46, a Pakistani American and a professor of history at Carleton College in Minnesota, has begun six months of rare scholarly luxury in Washington.

As a visiting scholar at the Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, he is freed from the duties of preparing and teaching classes, mentoring students and meeting with faculty colleagues, not to mention shoveling the snow of another Midwestern winter from in front of his house. (His son, now 14, is big enough to take that over, he says.)

Instead, he has immersed himself in the resources of the world's largest library to finish a history of Central Asia in the first 15 years of Soviet rule after the 1917 Russian Revolution, a pivotal period he describes as one of nationalistic and idealistic hope turning to disappointment and fear.

Khalid is tracing the careers and concerns of that era's Central Asian intellectual and political leaders. He said they yearned to remake Central Asian society in a progressive way, to teach its citizens "literacy, science, the scientific method, hygiene — so they could act like modern, civilized people of the 20th century.

That included changing the place of women in society, doing away with forced marriages, child marriages, polygamy, all of those. So it's a huge cultural agenda." What's more, Khalid said, the Central Asian leaders wanted an economic

revolution for their region of small farmers and nomadic herdsman, bringing not only irrigation and other improvements in agriculture but "doing away with the inequalities of colonialism so that Central Asia would acquire an industry."

"In 1917, Central Asia was a distant colonial periphery of the Russian Empire," Khalid said as he sat in his Library of Congress office.

"It was culturally, religiously, ethnically completely different, as different from Petersburg and Moscow as India was from England. And in many ways, it was run as a colony and not as another part of the empire."

So Central Asians embraced the first Russian Revolution of 1917, which made all Russian subjects equal citizens — "a very, very progressive, universalizing" move, Khalid said. And eight months later, many embraced the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviets' utopian vision of equality.

They became Central Asia's homegrown Soviet administrators and had "a mind of their own," he said — which by the early 1930s made them untrustworthy in the eyes of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin as he consolidated power.

In writings by Central Asia's elites of the 1920s, including Communist Party members, Khalid said, the objections to policies from Moscow are clear:

They lament that Central Asia is treated as "a cotton colony." Their language becomes more guarded as the years go by.

"The rhetoric of the '30s is just so grotesque, whereas in the '20s people would still say what they wanted," Khalid said.

"So I find the '30s less interesting. It's also dismal because all the people I'm [researching] all get shot."

Even the purges of the 1930s, to the historian, show the dramatic leaps Central Asia took in that time. Khalid said that one of the men he has studied, Abdurrauf Fitrat, was born in the Khanate of Bukhara in 1886, just 10 years after it had become a Russian protectorate, and was executed in 1938.

"You go in one lifetime from the Genghis Khan's political tradition to modern totalitarianism," Khalid said.

Khalid said he has been researching this book for years. Some of the most valuable material for the book popped up at the Library of Congress, and it fills several shelves in his office: cream-colored volumes, the covers and spines blank, published in the Turkic languages of Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s and quickly acquired by the library,

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shipped to Washington, bound and put aside without even being catalogued.

The edges of the pages have yellowed slightly, but the volumes have the smell and feel of books never before opened. "People know in the field that there is this stash of books here," Khalid said. "So I went up to the reading room, and they pulled out all the books and they said, 'You take all the ones that you find interesting.'"

He said they cover "all topics under the sun," from beekeeping to physics, and he has been reading those on political and literary topics. When he's done with the materials — before his six-month stay at the library is up — the books will return to their permanent shelves.

Khalid portrays the Central Asia of the 1920s as a place of possibilities. As Turkey was undergoing its transformation from a remnant of the defeated Ottoman Empire to a modern, secular nation-state, Central Asia sought to do much the same.

The cultural modernization was largely a success, Khalid said, and the Soviet Union fostered the rise of "these ethno-national identities" with the creation of the Central Asian Soviet republics.

Yet the central government showed a lack of respect for local culture. "One case is about Eastern music," Khalid said.

## The Ohio State University Sends Representative to Uzbekistan

On February 23, Marco Antonio Chavez, Assistant Director of Enrollment Services at The Ohio State University, spoke to students at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent in order to encourage international enrollment in American universities. He arrived as a representative to the International Education and Career Exhibit held in Tashkent from February 22-24.

The exhibit hosted representatives from universities all over the world, including the United States, Canada, Russia, Germany, Australia, and others. The Educational Advising Center (EAC) at the U.S. Embassy invited Mr. Chavez to participate in the exhibit and hosted its own table at the event to promote its study abroad programs and exchange opportunities for Uzbek students.

The Ohio State University is located in Columbus, Ohio and is home to more than 64,000 students, not including its numerous branch campuses throughout the state, making it the largest university in the United States. Accordingly, Mr. Chavez had an endless number of programs and opportunities to explain to the assembled students.

"I find it easier to tell people what we don't offer: We are not near an ocean, so we don't have an oceanography program, and we don't have any natural gas or oil exploration programs," said Mr. Chavez. "Other than that, we pretty much have everything you can think of."

"The Central Asian intellectuals basically wanted to create a canon of classical Central Asian music. From Moscow came down the line: 'No, there's only one single, universal tradition of classical music, and what you have is Eastern music, and that's well and good, but we need to civilize it, and we need to write symphonies based on themes from that music. But really, it's not a separate tradition.'"

The early Soviet legacy also shows in the Islam of Central Asia, the subject of Khalid's last book.

(His previous book was on the politics of Muslim cultural reform, or Jadidism, under the Russian Empire, and he has written more than a dozen scholarly articles on the past 150 years of Central Asia's history.)

To some extent, he said, Central Asia's ethnic identities supplanted religious identity as the Soviets imposed "a massive, sustained campaign against Islam" and "the forced secularization" of society, especially from 1927 to 1940.

"I call it the disestablishment of Islam as a source of moral authority. No one said they are not Muslim, but it just means something different."

As a result, he said, "Islam is part of the national cultural inheritance but doesn't necessarily dictate things ... as opposed to, say, in Pakistan, where you don't have this language of national and cultural heritage and then Islam is the only thing left, and people using Islamic rhetoric can dictate and there's nothing that can hold them back."



Marco Antonio Chavez, a representative of Ohio State, talks with local students at the Education and Career Fair in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## Dreams of Women's Day in Uzbekistan

### Dreams For My Mother, Dreams For My Daughter

“The United States has made empowering women and girls a cornerstone of our foreign policy, because women’s equality is not just a moral issue, it’s not just a humanitarian issue, it is not just a fairness issue; it is a security issue. It is a prosperity issue and it is a piece issue.”

- *Secretary of State  
Hillary Rodham Clinton*

### About This Project

America.gov and the U.S. embassies in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan invited mothers and daughters to record interviews with each other about their dreams for the other. In all, 32 women and girls volunteered.

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Sevara Karamatullakhodjaeva has witnessed many changes in Uzbekistan during her 81 years, she tells her granddaughter Layli Mutalova.

The roles of women have changed vastly, she says: When she was growing up, many women wore a paranji, or veil, and felt pressured to keep hidden.

She longed to be a dancer but couldn’t pursue her dream because of societal pressures on what the proper role for girls was thought to be.

“It is not a problem if women work now, no problem if women are open now,” she says.

Sevara fondly recalls one thing that has remained, even as it has changed: The commemoration of International Women’s Day, celebrated each March 8.

She recites two poems she learned in her childhood, including an English one:

“Dear, dear Mummy, I love you very much.  
I want you to be happy, on the 8th of March”  
— and remembers when the holiday had a more political tone.

“Many young people did not feel the essence of this holiday; it is hard to remember how difficult it was before,” she says.

Layli recounts how the day became a holiday and is now a daylong celebration of women. “Now after independence, the holiday still exists, and this day is considered to be a holiday for women,” Layli says.

“Young people, young boys should congratulate their girl-

friends; a husband should congratulate his wife. This is the holiday once a year. It is a pleasure to feel that women have a women’s holiday.”

Layli, a successful lawyer and mother of two children, asks her grandmother if she believes men and women are equal in society — and if they can be.

“They of course are equal; they are equal at work,” Sevara says. “Today, some women are not equal in their families because women work, then they come home to do housework at home. There are husbands who help their wives with family issues, but still, many women in Uzbek families are not equal.”

Sevara, who remembers when women first were able to vote in Uzbekistan, asks Layli about her dreams for her own children.

“As any mother, I hope that my daughter lives a better life than we have now,” Layli says.

“If we consider the attitude of men toward women in society, of course, we now have legal equality at work and society, but I also wish that my daughter has equality in her family and in the social sphere.

The role of women and men in the family, the attitude toward children is important. I hope that my daughter’s husband will take care of their children as well, that they will be equal in family life.”

See more of Sevara and Layli’s interview with each other: *Defining Gender Equality in Uzbekistan* (<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoId=737678559001>) and *Witnessing a Change in Attitudes in Uzbekistan* (<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoId=740416696001>).



Layli Mutalova and her grandmother Sevara Karamatullakhodjaeva interview one another about their dreams for the other in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake Returns to Uzbekistan

Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, Jr. visited Uzbekistan on February 17 and 18 for the second Annual Bilateral Consultations between Uzbekistan and the United States, where officials discussed a range of political, economic, and security issues. This process began in Washington, DC, in December 2009, where Blake said the two countries “engaged in frank discussions about trade, human rights, democratic reform, defense cooperation, and regional issues such as Afghanistan.”

As a former Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi and Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Blake has significant experience in South and Central Asia and has repeatedly stressed the importance of Central Asia and Uzbekistan to the stability and prosperity of the entire region. He stated that one of his primary objectives is to “develop more durable and stable relations with the Central Asian countries.”

Blake also gave opening remarks at a Business Forum organized immediately after the political consultations. Representatives of several American companies participated in this forum which aimed to broaden the economic exchange between the U.S. and Uzbekistan.

During a press conference held shortly after the consultations, Blake answered questions from reporters on the content and purpose of the meetings, and on various aspects of U.S. policy in the region. He underscored that his visit “reflects the U.S. determination to strengthen ties with Uzbekistan across the full range of issues on our bilateral agenda.”

While answering questions on a range of issues, Blake mentioned the importance of ‘people to people diplomacy’ in strengthening ties between countries.

“We think that it is one of the most important parts of diplomacy,” he said, stressing that the U.S. government attaches “a great deal of importance to expanding our educational ties and our exchanges and our dialogue, particularly with Uzbekistan’s young people.”

In view of these priorities, Assistant Secretary Blake met with students and young professionals at the U.S. Embassy during the weekly “Chai Chat,” during which the audience hears a short presentation in English and then engages in a question and answer session with the speaker.

The students did not shy away from asking the Assistant Secretary questions on any number of issues. One of the topics covered was the issue of educational exchanges between the United States and Uzbekistan. “Educational exchanges are such an important part of building ties and people to people relationships,” said the Assistant Secretary.

Recalling his time in India with the State Department, Blake noted that now over 100,000 Indian students travel to the United States to receive an education, saying that this has had an incredibly positive impact on the relationship be-

tween the U.S. and India in just a short time. When asked what he wanted to see in the future regarding the bilateral relationship with Uzbekistan, Blake reiterated his desire for increased educational exchange. “We want more Uzbek students studying in America, and more American students studying in Uzbekistan at all levels. That would be great.”

The discussion didn’t remain focused exclusively on educational issues, though. The Assistant Secretary talked with the students about violence in Kyrgyzstan, the economics of trade agreements, the financial crisis, science and technology, ecological issues, Wikileaks, nuclear disarmament, and of course, Afghanistan. “Uzbekistan has played a very constructive role in helping to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan” through electricity and transportation linkages, and “we have a shared interest in stabilizing Afghanistan to prevent extremist threats against our country and yours,” said Blake.



Assistant Secretary Blake speaks with students during the Chai Chat at the U.S. Embassy. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Blake was especially interested in the ideas and opinions of the young women in the audience, and noted that the State Department wants to work more with young women, particularly on issues of women’s empowerment. He told the group of over 100 youth about the first ever Women’s Economic Empowerment Conference in Bishkek, which is planned for this summer.

He also talked about Secretary Clinton’s comments on internet freedom and its importance in the modern world. When he asked how many in the room were on Facebook, almost everyone raised their hands.

“In America we are perhaps online too much,” said Blake, joking about sending emails to colleagues sitting in the next room, “but internet freedom establishes a sense of community and links you to the rest of the world.”

## Muskie Program Alumni Bring Their Education and Experience Back to Uzbekistan

A few months after progressing through each step of the intensive application process and successfully securing one of the highly prized and competitive spots in the 2008 Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellows Program, Saida Akbarova found herself driving through torrential rain and high winds – her first tropical storm – to reach her home for the next two years: a small town in southern Georgia.

It probably isn't what she expected when she arrived in the United States for the first time, but expectations are constantly upended for Muskie fellows, who have the once in a lifetime opportunity to study for one to two years in a graduate institution in the U.S. with all base expenses paid. Dr. Akbarova wasn't too concerned, however, as she rode through the storm with her advisor, Dr. Sharon Brooks, who picked her up from the airport that day. Over the next two years, she said that she and Dr. Brooks became like family. "I was blessed," she said.

The Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program is a unique opportunity for scholars and professionals from Eurasian countries to study at the master's level in the United States on one or two year degree and non-degree programs. They have the option to study in various fields including business administration, economics, education, environmental management, international relations, journalism, law, library science, public administration, public health, and public policy, as well as various subfields and specializations.

The program offers a full stipend covering living expenses, tuition, books, and medical expenses, as well as offering opportunities for professional development. Participants are also



Margarita Aksyonova stands by the entrance to the university where she received her MBA. (Photo courtesy of Margarita Aksyonova)

required to engage in at least 40 hours of community service related to their field, and to intern with an organization in their field after their first year of study. The goal is to foster democratization and market reforms in Eurasia through the development of direct and mutually beneficial relationships between the students and American faculty and institutions.

The merit-based application is extremely rigorous and competitive. Overall, there are around 4,000 applications every year,

with only a four percent acceptance rate. Last year only 15 Uzbeks were chosen out of several hundred applicants. It is not surprising, then, that when Akbarova's mother heard that her daughter was chosen as a finalist, she said, "OK, you've proven your intelligence to us. Now you can turn [the Muskie Fellowship] down." Akbarova chose to continue her series of surprises, and accept the invitation.



Rustam Sapaev stands proudly in full regalia after graduating from Western Illinois University in 2010. (Photo courtesy of Rustam Sapaev)

One of the reasons that fellows need to be very flexible is that the Muskie Program assigns all fellows to their American host institution based on their qualifications, objectives, and the requests of participating institutions. Akbarova had never been to Georgia, and certainly had never been to a small southern town like Statesboro, population 30,000, and home to her program in educational administration at Georgia Southern University.

Another Muskie alum really enjoyed the surprises of living in a rural town of around 20,000 people. Rustam Sapaev, who was accepted to a two year degree program in public policy at Western Illinois University (WIU), was enthusiastic in his praise for the town of Macomb. Though he didn't love the cold winters, he was surprised at the natural beauty of the area.

The young political scientist said that everyone there was so friendly and he was accepted there as one of the locals. "Even strangers smile and say hi as they pass you on the street," he said. Sapaev ventured further, saying that the two years he spent in the U.S. was not just an educational experience, but "also a spiritual and philosophical experience of self-discovery."

Discovery is a common thread running through the experiences of those who participate in the program. Margarita Aksyonova, a business student who received her Master's of Business Administration from South Carolina State University, said that her community service project at the Minority AIDS Council "totally changed my perception of the people living with HIV" and inspired her to find out more about the problem and the people suffering from HIV in Uzbekistan.

A number of the alumni said that they had approached the United States with "rose-colored glasses" and were surprised by the many problems facing American society. Akbarova was appalled at the state of southern public schools as described by local principals in one of her educational management courses, while Aksyonova was surprised to see dilapidated buildings and run-down sections of town, saying that she "never even

thought this kind of town existed in the U.S.” Both were also pleasantly surprised, however, at the kindness, generosity, and religiosity of the people there.

Meanwhile, Dr. Alisher Makhkamov, who now works at UNICEF as a health officer, said he had no problem with culture shock while studying at the University of Missouri, Columbia. “I had educational shock, not cultural shock,” he said, referring to his period of adjustment to the entirely new system, which stressed methods of learning and interaction different from those experienced in Uzbekistan.

The doctor was able to use his extensive experience and intelligence to adjust to the system, and successfully completed his Master’s in Public Health. He noted that after the program, he is better able to understand how the entire system of healthcare and information works, and can more ably work with international research and terminology to better meet the needs of the international community. Another, more positive, surprise was the birth of his first child in Missouri during his time there.

Rustam Sapaev gave birth to his own offspring of sorts while at WIU, producing a significant study on the role of elites in the democratization process. “That paper was my child,” he says with a smile. At the same time, his internship with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) turned into a major project on renewable energy and led to him being hired as a paid graduate research assistant for his entire second year at WIU. It did not stop him from earning top marks in his public policy courses.

Timothy Collins, his supervisor at the IIRA, said that he had a hard time keeping up with Sapaev. As a part-time assistant, he managed to develop an analysis of federal and state energy policy, a paper on the pros and cons of ethanol production, and a dictionary of green energy definitions, as well as conducting and analyzing interviews during research. Collins was even able to visit Uzbekistan in 2009 to deliver a presentation on their work that one of Sapaev’s colleagues called “the best presentation I’ve ever heard.”

“It was exciting to have Rustam here as a student and as a colleague. I admired his willingness to learn, his intellectual integrity, and his ability to develop an understanding of bio-fuels within the national and community context,” said Collins. “His research efforts will provide solid underpinnings for my work over at least the next 18 months.”

Sapaev wasn’t the only participant able to give back to the local community while studying on the Muskie fellowship. Saida Akbarova accomplished one of the key objectives of the Muskie program by actively enriching Americans’ knowledge of her language and culture. She designed and taught a Russian language course as a volunteer adjunct professor at GSU, where Russian had not been offered since 1997.

Akbarova also garnered praise for her work with the University system of Georgia’s Board of Regents and her internship with the University Center for Excellence in Teaching. Not only that, she worked for the Global Ambassadors program to promote international education, and participated in the Georgia International Leadership conference, among others. She is now using her skills as an educational administrator for Westminster

International University in Tashkent.

Asked if she would recommend the Muskie Program to others, Akbarova said that “the program really works for students ready to contribute to American and international education, who really know what they want, and are really motivated.” All four of these alumni display the kind of motivation and determination required to succeed in the program and in their academic fields. While Rustam Sapaev, Alisher Makhkamov, Saida Akbarova, and Margarita Aksyonova were all intelligent, capable, and motivated, one thing they all gained from the ex-



Saida Akbarova (center) poses with her Russian students at Georgia Southern University. (Photo courtesy of Saida Akbarova)

perience was an increased sense of confidence in themselves and their ability to succeed in their respective careers.

“I will definitely recommend [the program]” to others, said Aksyonova, because “upon their return from the States they will feel much more confident in themselves and it will be much easier to find a better job here in Uzbekistan.” This sentiment was echoed by Dr. Makhkamov, who managed to land a job with UNICEF while he was still finishing his program in Missouri. He started his new job less than a month after returning to Tashkent from the United States.

A better job isn’t the only goal of the alumni, however. Rustam Sapaev is currently looking for work and considering further education opportunities, perhaps even in the U.S. or Europe, but was eager to say, “I will come back. I want to do something better for Uzbekistan.”

Ultimately, that is the goal of the Muskie Program. It is a unique chance for young professionals and academics to share their abilities and experience with Americans as well as an opportunity to learn from American educators and colleagues. In so doing, all are more enriched both culturally and intellectually, and our nations are drawn closer together.

More information on the Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program is available online at <http://exchanges.state.gov/academicexchanges/muskie.html>. The program is offered through the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and administered by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), which has information on the Muskie Program at <http://www.irex.org/project/edmund-s-muskie-graduate-fellowship-program>.



# The State of Pennsylvania – The Keystone State



Pennsylvania, located in the northeastern United States, is a Middle Atlantic state with access to the Atlantic Ocean through the Delaware Bay.

One of the original 13 colonies, it was established in 1681 when Britain's King Charles II granted the land to William Penn, who wanted to use it primarily as a haven for persecuted Quakers. Pennsylvania therefore was nicknamed the Quaker State. It also has been called the Keystone State, for its central location among the original 13 states – with six states to the north and six to the south.

Pennsylvania spreads across four major regions – the Coastal Plain in the east, the Piedmont, the Appalachian highlands, and the Great Lakes Plain. Its three largest rivers are the Delaware, the Susquehanna, and the Ohio.

## PEOPLE AND HISTORY

Most Pennsylvanians are of European ancestry. About one-third are German. Others have British, Italian, and Slavic ancestors. About 10 percent of the population are of African origin.

Pennsylvania has nine metropolitan areas with more than a quarter of a million people. Harrisburg, the capital, is a relatively small city, but with all its suburbs has more than 600,000 people. It grew up as a trading post and ferry station on the lower Susquehanna River. The city with the most people, Philadelphia, is on the Delaware River.

Archaeological records suggest that the first Pennsylvanians were prehistoric hunters and gatherers who settled in the region about 12,000 years ago. Their Native American descendants numbered about 15,000 when Europeans first came to Pennsylvania in the early 1600s.

In 1681, King Charles II of England granted one of his subjects, William Penn, a large area of land in America west of the Delaware River. The new colony was named Pennsylvania, the Latin for "Penn's Woods." The Colony was a safe



Tourists look out over historic Gettysburg battlefields near a statue honoring the 72nd Pennsylvania Infantry, in Gettysburg National Military Park in Gettysburg, Pa. (© AP Images)

haven for the Society of Friends, more commonly known as Quakers, so Pennsylvania became known as the Quaker State.

Today it is known as the Keystone State because of its important central location within the original 13 British colonies. The colony thrived until peace was shattered in 1774 by the start of the French and Indian Wars. After this conflict between French and British forces ended in 1763, British rule became more strict. During the American Revolution (1775-83) the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Constitution of the United States (1787) were signed at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

Valley Forge, where General George Washington and his army spent the winter of 1777-78 during the American Revolution, and Gettysburg, the site of an important battle in the Civil War (1861-65), are now tourist attractions.



Steam rises from the cooling towers of PECO's nuclear power plant near Limerick, Pa. (© AP Images)

## ECONOMY

Pennsylvania's economy is extraordinarily diverse. The state's temperate climate, abundant natural resources, excellent system of natural waterways, and industrious population have contributed to its historic prosperity. Agriculture and commerce were the most important economic activities during the colonial period. Later, manufacturing, mining, and transportation became more important. Business and professional services, as well as tourism, have become increasingly significant.

Over the past decades Pennsylvania's economy has changed. Service-oriented industries are now the fastest-growing sector of the economy. They include business, law, medicine, and tourism. Spectacular scenery, cultural attractions, and historic sites attract millions of tourists every year.

Pennsylvania is one of the nation's leading producers of energy – natural gas, hydroelectric power, and nuclear power. The state is also a leading manufacturing center of items such as machinery. Coal is the most plentiful mineral. Pennsyl-



Visitors walk around the Liberty Bell, now located in the New Liberty Bell Center at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia. (© AP Images)

vania also leads the nation in the production of lumber and plantation-grown Christmas trees. Farming accounts for only a small percentage of the state’s total income.

**TOP TOURIST ATTRACTIONS**

**Historic Sites**

Several national parks preserve important historic sites. Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia preserves buildings associated with the American Revolution and the establishment of the United States. It includes Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were signed; Carpenters’ Hall, site of the First Continental Congress; and the buildings of the First and Second Banks of the United States.

The site where Washington and the Continental Army camped during the difficult winter of 1777-1778 is preserved at Valley Forge National Park. Gettysburg National Military Park commemorates one of the most critical battles of the Civil War.

Other national sites include Fort Mifflin National Battlefield, near Uniontown, the site of George Washington’s surrender to the British in 1777 during the French and Indian War, and Hopewell Village National Historic Site, a restored 18th-19th century iron-making village.

Several state parks also include historic sites. Washington Crossing State Park is a memorial to George Washington and the 2,400 soldiers who crossed the Delaware River on Christmas night in 1776 to attack British and Hessian troops at Trenton, N.J. Other places of historic interest include Wheatland, in Lancaster, the home of President James Buchanan; Ephrata Cloister, a restored religious community built in 1732 by the German Seventh Day Baptist; and the Daniel Boone Homestead near Reading.

**The Pocono Mountains**

One of the state’s most popular recreation areas is the Pocono Mountains, which contain numerous resort hotels and recreation facilities. Waterways throughout the state, such as

the upper Lehigh, Delaware, Susquehanna, Allegheny, and Youghiogheny rivers, provide opportunities for whitewater rafters and canoeists.

Lakes and rivers are used by swimmers, water skiers, and boaters. Marinas are available on the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers and on Lake Erie.

For winter-sports enthusiasts, the state has many ponds and lakes that freeze, as well as indoor rinks for ice skating. Pennsylvania’s hills and mountains are used by tobogganers, snowmobilers, and skiers. Ski resorts are numerous.

Sources: <http://www.pa.gov>  
<http://factfinder.census.gov>  
<http://www.50states.com>  
 Grolier Student Encyclopedia, V.13  
 Encyclopedia Americana, V.21



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

**QUICK FACTS**

**Abbreviation:** PA

**Capital City:** Harrisburg

**Governor:** Tom Corbett

**Date of Statehood:** December 12, 1787 (2nd state)

**Population:** 12,604,767; 6th largest

**Area:** 119,291 sq.km, 33rd largest

**Origin of State’s Name:** “Penn” honors the father of William Penn; “sylvania” means “woodland”

**Largest Cities:** Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Erie, Upper Darby Twp, Reading, Scranton, Bethlehem, Lower Merion Twp, Lancaster

**Economy:** *Agriculture:* Dairy products, poultry, cattle, nursery stock, mushrooms, hogs, hay. *Industry:* Food processing, chemical products, machinery, electric equipment, tourism

## Scholars Share Knowledge with Uzbek Students and Professionals

“Awe-inspiring” was one of the words used by Dr. Michelle Leighton and Rodger Dillon to describe moments during their trip through Uzbekistan in December.

The husband and wife duo took a weeklong break from their Fulbright work in Kyrgyzstan to visit Tashkent, Samarkand, and Khiva, and to talk about environmental and economic issues with students and professionals along the way.

Dr. Leighton, a lawyer and professor, and Mr. Dillon, an economic development expert and former policy advisor in the California State Senate, both commented on the reception that they received as guests of Uzbekistan.

“It was far above the usual level of courtesy, especially in Samarkand and Urgench,” they said, noting the enthusiasm with which their arrival and presentations were greeted.

Dr. Leighton, the director of the University of San Francisco Law School’s human rights programs, is working as a Fulbright Scholar at the Kyrgyz Academy of Law in Bishkek, focusing on criminal justice issues, migration, and comparative sentencing.

Supplementing her work in Kyrgyzstan, Leighton delivered talks on climate change and migration, and engaged in discussions with students in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Urgench.

When interacting with the students, Dr. Leighton stressed her desire to highlight the important links between climate and migration and introduce them to concepts that perhaps they had not previously considered.

At Urgench State University, the students were “very inquisitive and engaged, and you could tell they had been thinking about the connections between the environment and the global economy,” she said.

Dillon encountered the same inquisitiveness and eagerness from the audience of professionals at the Academy of State and Social Construction following his talk on “Strategies for Economic Development.”

After using case studies from U.S. economic experiences to talk about the development of a healthy agricultural sector, investment, and infrastructure in a growing economy, the audience had numerous questions about U.S. and Uzbek approaches to development, and inquiries on Dillon’s assessment of Uzbekistan’s potential.

“I told them that one of their best opportunities is the underdeveloped tourism industry,” he said. As someone who has always been interested in history, Dillon remembered hearing of the famous names on the Silk Road as far off and fantastic places, but had never had the chance to see them.

“I’ve traveled all over the world and been to Damascus, Amman, Cairo, China, Indonesia, Europe, Central America and other great places of history, but the inside of Guri Amir (in Samarkand) was just astounding.”

With sites like this, Leighton and Dillon agreed, Uzbekistan could have a thriving tourism industry.

Both of the guests were also charmed by Khiva, and revealed in the unique atmosphere of this “beautiful, exotic, and historical place.”

More than just the architecture and history impressed the pair in Khorezm, though.

They were “greatly impressed by the University of Urgench” and its available resources for students, particularly the graduate student training in natural resources and agricultural development, which Leighton described as “cutting edge.”

She was also impressed by the University’s cooperative achievements with ZEF (The Center for Development Research at the University of Bonn) and UNESCO toward creating sustainable use of natural resources in the region.

During their trip through Uzbekistan in December, the pair also had the opportunity to speak to students at Tashkent’s University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Samarkand State University, and Urgench State University, as well as meeting with local environmental journalists to discuss Western views on climate change and climate-induced migration.

They had a chance to lead a discussion with the U.S. Embassy’s English Discussion Club on environmental issues, and were surprised, again, by the level of enthusiasm and interest.

The event was scheduled for one hour, but the experts interacted with the students for over two hours, and said afterwards that the kids could have kept going for hours.

Dr. Leighton said that both of them were eager to return at some point in the future, and by all accounts, their hosts would be happy to have them.

She is also excited about the chance to collaborate more and develop contacts with specialists and students in Uzbekistan on a range of environmental and legal issues.

“We didn’t get to do all we wanted to do, of course,” said Dr. Leighton, but added that she and Mr. Dillon were both “delighted and grateful to the U.S. Embassy for their work in making this trip possible.”

## Literature Professor and Fulbright Scholar Interacts with Students, Artists



Dr. Anna Oldfield presents a collection of English verse to poet and translator Miraziz A'zam. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Smiles and sighs accompanied the rhythmic tones of folklorist Qursiya Esanova as she sang and played the doira at a gathering of fellow artists.

Poets like Miraziz A'zam, Bahrom Ruzimuhammad, Murod Chovush, Mahmud Yuldosh, and Uktamoy recited their verses, while other luminaries like writer Salomat Vafo and painter Gulnora Rahmon shared their ideas and insights.

"The intellectual energy was fantastic," said Dr. Anna Oldfield of the event on January 4.

In fact, they had gathered to meet with Dr. Oldfield, a Professor of Comparative Literature at Hamilton College in New York and a current Fulbright Scholar at the Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages in Almaty. She was delighted to come to Uzbekistan, the hub of Central Asian folklore, and share her knowledge as well as gain new insights into Uzbek literature and music.

In her first meeting after arriving in Tashkent, Oldfield met with the Creative Writing and Translation Club to interact with local artists and talk about bridging the literary divide between the United States and Uzbekistan.

"There's not, in general, an understanding of Uzbekistan in the U.S. – what kind of culture and literature Uzbekistan has, and what people do here," said Oldfield.

At the same time, Uzbeks don't have much access to the giants of contemporary American literature in their own language. Reading Melville and Poe is essential, of course, but a satisfactory understanding of American literature requires more than a few classics.

One of the best ways to spread understanding, she added, is to increase access to each other's literature through translation. "Through translation," opined Dr. Oldfield in excellent Russian, "we can better know and understand one another."

Dr. Oldfield became interested in Central Asian folklore and music through her graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, during which time she studied as a

Fulbright Student in Baku, Azerbaijan and produced a thesis entitled "Azerbaijani Women Poet Minstrels: 18th Century to the Present".

A desire to further understand Central Asian storytelling traditions was born out of her study of Turkic oral narrative, which "has a depth and richness that is as complex and fascinating as any written literature," as she wrote in 2004 during her Fulbright study.

Echoing her praise of Turkic oral narrative, Oldfield spoke of her admiration for the Uzbek 'dastan', saying that "all the complexity of a novel can be found in a well-told dastan, which interacts with and changes for each audience" through the voice of the 'baxshi' who sings the tale. She said, in fact, that she wants to return to Uzbekistan someday because she "would love to see a baxshi performing live."

While she was not able to fulfill that wish on her January trip to Uzbekistan, she was able to speak with eminent Uzbek professor and musician Hasan Radjaby and his son Aziz at their museum. Radjaby is the son of the great Yunus Radjaby, who produced the first written collections of Uzbek maqams and shash maqams, a body of traditional folk melodies and songs originally used for court music.

"I was amazed by the contributions of this one family to the music of Uzbekistan – that they are so passionate about their



Dr. Oldfield (center) enjoys Hasan Radjaby's description of the displays at the Yunus Radjaby Museum in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

work and their museum, and care so much about the tradition," said Oldfield after spending time with Radjaby.

Much like Ilyas Malayev, a Bukharan Jew who emigrated to the U.S. in 1992 and shared the shash maqam form with Americans, the Radjaby family recognizes the power of traditional music and poetry across linguistic and cultural barriers, and works to share that power with others.

Dr. Oldfield was able to speak with large numbers of students at the Embassy, Samarkand State University, and World

**Continued on page 14**

## Literature Professor and Fulbright Scholar Interacts with Students, Artists

Continued from page 13

Languages University in Tashkent, where she also had the opportunity to listen to performances of traditional Uzbek music. “The musical talent was extraordinary, and there were a lot of good questions,” she said of the encounters at the universities.

While she very much enjoyed the interaction with students and artists in Tashkent and Samarkand – and while she thought Samarkand was “wonderful” – the intellectual and cultural appetite of the Fulbright Scholar was not satisfied by such a short trip.

In Kazakhstan, she is mainly teaching literature and academic writing and working with professors on instruction methods, but her personal research is focused on epic singers and the evolution from epic form to novel.

Central Asia is “central” to the epic form, she noted, and she would love to come back to learn more, involve herself in translation projects, hear more traditional music, and experience the delights of Khiva, Bukhara (the center of shash maqam traditions), Boysun, the Samarkand Music Festival, and a real Uzbek Navruz. Still, Dr. Oldfield expressed her heartfelt thanks to all of those who made this first visit possible.

As for her first impressions of Uzbekistan: “Everyone says this, but I think it is because it is true – the people are absolutely wonderful. They have an incredible passion for and are justifiably proud of their own culture and art.” Her son’s similar assessment was expressed a bit differently. “Tashkent is awesome,” he said, before returning to his book.

Dr. Anna Oldfield has also collaborated with Smithsonian Folkways on several albums in a 10 volume collection called “Music of Central Asia”, with performances by artists from the region on traditional instruments. Smithsonian Folkways is a non-profit record label of the Smithsonian Institution.



Dr. Oldfield discusses American literature with students at the U.S. Embassy. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## U.S. Government Donates Forensic Lab Equipment to Uzbekistan

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) donated forensic lab equipment to the Forensic Center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The donation will allow the Forensic Center to analyze and process drug evidence for the Ministry.

Handing over the equipment at the Forensic Center, DEA Tashkent Country Office Attaché Christopher Melink said the donation was a part of an ongoing collaboration with the forensic laboratories responsible for drug analysis.

He voiced the hope that the donation would help Uzbekistan’s law enforcement professionals conduct stronger, more thorough investigations that would lead to the arrest, prosecution, and conviction of criminals that are putting the security of multiple nations at risk.

The DEA’s ongoing and future projects in Uzbekistan reflect a belief that addressing transnational security challenges requires a comprehensive and cooperative approach.

“Through different initiatives we will work together in a part-

nership to combat the drug trade and other transnational crime that threatens regional security and stability,” said Mr. Melink.

The U.S. Embassy has donated forensic laboratory equipment, sponsored training – both in Uzbekistan and in the United States – for Uzbek scientists, and built relationships between Uzbek and American forensic experts through INL’s ongoing forensic laboratory improvement project.

The Forensic Center is the main lab used by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for crime scene investigations. It has the capability to conduct ballistics, chemical, audio-video, fingerprint, and other types of forensic analysis.

The Chief of the Forensic Center Gennadiy Nikishin thanked the DEA Tashkent Country Office for the donation, and said that its assistance is a natural continuation of relationships that the U.S. has established with Uzbekistan’s law enforcement agencies.

According to Nikishin, only by working together can police organizations of different countries combat security challenges and strengthen the foundation of a strong, safe, and prosperous world.

## American University Students Experience Uzbekistan

"We don't have anything like this in America." That was the echoing refrain throughout a meeting between a group of American university students and their new Uzbek friends at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent.

On January 26, ten students and two professors from Linfield College in Oregon had the opportunity to expand their perspective on Uzbekistan through two very different encounters at the embassy. First, the students heard a short lecture given by Nicholas Berliner, the head of the Political and Economic Section at the embassy, and then had a long and productive question and answer session with him. Next, they met for almost two hours with around ten Uzbek students who had participated in U.S. exchange programs at either the secondary or post-secondary level.

After an informative introduction to the region from Mr. Berliner, the students had a large number of questions for him on topics ranging from U.S. Central Asia policies to life as a diplomat. Their professors, Dr. Dawn Nowacki and Dr. Scott Smith, both wanted the students to have a more formal educational experience in Uzbekistan, and arranged the meeting for that purpose. "The students were more like tourists on this part of the trip than they were in Latvia and Russia, so we were happy the embassy could provide this opportunity for them," said Dr. Nowacki.

Prior to arriving in Uzbekistan, the group had spent one week each in Riga and Moscow, learning about the political and economic changes in both countries since the fall of the Soviet Union. They met with members of Parliament and toured government buildings for a course designed to compare nation building in post-Soviet space. Each of the three nations provided a distinct view of how the different cultures, peoples, and states defined themselves after the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

Uzbekistan, of course, provided a very different perspective for the students, who had a chance to visit Bukhara, Samarkand, and Shakhrisabz before returning to Tashkent on their final day of the course. The schedule allowed the students to experience the country before having their discussion with Mr. Berliner and their conversation with the Uzbek students. This travel undoubtedly enriched the interactions.

When asked about their impressions of Uzbekistan by the Uzbek students, the praise was unanimous, especially for the historical artifacts and architecture. "The gate in Shakhrisabz is really quite extraordinary," said Dr. Smith of their trip to the former palace of Amir Temur in the city of his birth. "Stunning" was the word used repeatedly by one student to describe the experience of seeing the city from the gate of the palace. "It was amazing to imagine what the whole palace must have been like," he said.

The "White Palace" of Amir Temur was started in 1380, and though only traces of the 65 meter gate remain, they leave quite an impression on visitors. As the admonitory inscription over the gate reads, "If you challenge our power – look at our buildings."

The students, who came from all over the United States to study at Linfield, were deeply interested in all aspects of Uzbek culture and history, and were very excited to be able to spend time in

Uzbekistan. One student from Washington said that people in the U.S. have "certain negative ideas about the 'stans,'" but she is very glad to have come. "I'm definitely going to leave here with a much more positive impression of this formerly blurred area on the map," she said.

Professors Nowacki and Smith, who teach in the Political Science and History departments, respectively, and have traveled extensively in the Former Soviet Union, were not ignorant of Uzbekistan's allure. "We had never been to Uzbekistan," they said when asked why they chose it as one of the course's destinations, "and we really wanted to come." Not incidentally, Uzbekistan offered the perfect contrast to the Baltic state of Latvia and the hulking, heterogeneous Russian Federation, providing a fantastic end to the course.

All of the students were reluctant to leave Uzbekistan after experiencing the sights and the culture unique to the region. After spending time in Moscow, they were more than delighted by the people in all four cities in Uzbekistan. "The people have been very welcoming and positive and helpful," said one student. They ate in homes several times and had a lot of fun interactions with locals along the way.



Students from Uzbekistan and Linfield College in Oregon gather for a group photo, flanked by Professors Smith (left) and Nowacki (right). (U.S. Embassy photo)

To finish their trip, they spoke at length with the Uzbek students about everything from cultural differences and education to politics, sports, weather and music. They all enjoyed talking with students from the opposite side of the world who shared so many of the same ideas and interests, and at the end of the evening they exchanged email addresses and names, promising to "Facebook" each other as soon as they could.

The group agreed that they were given a unique opportunity in visiting Uzbekistan, and were glad to have had the chance. "I've had a great time here," concluded one of the Linfield students at the end of the three-week course, "I'd come back in a heartbeat."

Linfield College is a four-year liberal arts undergraduate institution in western Oregon that is known for its excellence in teaching and science programs, and a distinctive international emphasis. Students regularly participate in study abroad programs, including month-long January term courses that teach a curriculum through travel and direct experience with the course material.

## Fulbright Students from Uzbekistan Participate in Food Security Seminar



7th and 8th from left - Bakhodir Kuzyiyev and Maria Pak (holding sign) visit an urban farm in Boston with other Fulbright students. (Photo courtesy of Maria Pak)

For four days in October Mariya Pak and Bakhodir Kuzyiyev joined other Fulbright students for the first Global Food Security Seminar hosted by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA).

The seminar, which was part of ECA's Fulbright Program, took place in Lincoln, Nebraska, where 75 students from 46 developing nations gathered to learn about the challenges of creating sustainable global food security systems.

The diversity of the participants involved and the geographical areas covered provided new insights to Pak and Kuzyiyev.

"It gave me the idea that I should also study the experience of some developing countries in other parts of the world like South America and North Africa," commented Kuzyiyev.

"It helped me to enrich my professional network...and interact with many people with different backgrounds from different countries."

The series of seminars provided to Fulbright students by the Institute of International Education (IIE) is therefore aptly named the "Enrichment Seminar Series." The University of Nebraska at Lincoln cooperated closely with ECA and IIE to organize and administer the seminar, which was attended by two representatives of the Department of State, as well as students from the fields of agricultural and environmental science, biology and biomedical science, economics, engineering, and public health.

Pak and Kuzyiyev are both part of the first group of students from Uzbekistan who are pursuing Master of Science degrees in the United States through the Fulbright Foreign Students Program – one of the many different options available for scholars, students, teachers, and professionals from all over the world through the Fulbright International Educational Exchange Program.

Founded in 1946, Fulbright is the U.S. Government's first educational exchange program, and was created to increase

mutual understanding between the people of the United States and citizens of other countries around the world. The Foreign Students Program, which has existed for decades in other parts of the world, was first initiated in Central Asia starting in 2009, sending four students per year from each of the Central Asian republics.

Seeking a degree in Water Resources Policy and Management from Oregon State University, Pak was excited to participate in Fulbright's first food security seminar.

It was not her first opportunity to attend a seminar or conference related to her research, having attended the "From Lab to Market" Seminar in Boston during the spring of 2010, and the Symposium on Transboundary River Governance in Oregon shortly after the Food Security Seminar. She also has been invited to present her research at the River Restoration Northwest Symposium and at the Conference of the American Association for Geographers in February and April 2011, respectively.

Pak said she has enjoyed the Fulbright seminars and finds them useful. "It is the best way to learn – interacting with the people who actually do hands-on things! It helps [me] to see how these projects are actually implemented," she said, adding that the workshops "help develop interdisciplinary problem-solving skills."

She has clearly put these skills to work in her research at Oregon State, where her work on water governance led her



Fulbright student Mariya Pak used funding to conduct research at the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District in Central New Mexico. (Photo courtesy of Maria Pak)

to work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation office in New Mexico, and will lead her to interdisciplinary conferences next year.

Kuzyiyev, a graduate student at the University of Missouri-Columbia, was drawn to the conference to find out more about working toward agriculture-led growth and adequate

food supply for the poor. Writing his thesis on land reform and agricultural productivity growth in the countries of Central Asia, Kuziyev was particularly drawn to the technological developments of certain companies, along with their successful implementation in countries throughout the developing world, including Kazakhstan.

“The seminar increased my confidence in a better future [for Uzbekistan],” said Kuziyev.

“Farmers do not need to invent new technologies – they are available and [farmers] only need access” to the technologies, along with the “elimination of constraints” keeping them from international investments.

During the first Global Food Security Seminar, Pak and Kuziyev were introduced to different initiatives designed to advance sustainable, agriculture-led growth.



Qobiljon Shokirov, a Fulbright student from Tajikistan, poses with Mariya Pak and Bakhodir Kuziyev at the Global Food Security Seminar in Lincoln, Nebraska. (Photo courtesy of Maria Pak)

They interacted with experts, witnessed technological demonstrations during site visits, participated in cultural events, and worked in a group to address a food security problem.

Pak said the process was “challenging and frustrating” but that they were able to “find common ground and successfully” complete the project. She said she used this interactive experience and applied it to her Master’s research in New Mexico.

The Fulbright seminar series is just one of the many ways in which the program is able to enrich the education and lives of its participants. Students experience great personal and education growth during their time in the United States, and often return to their homes and have a positive impact on their native countries.

Bakhodir Kuziyev plans to return to Uzbekistan to work in the field of agricultural development, researching the role of public and private investment in agricultural productivity.

Mariya Pak hopes to return to Tashkent in June 2011 and continue her work on water resource management, using the strong network of professionals she built while in the U.S. on the Fulbright program to further her work.

The Fulbright Program offers a range of opportunities in Uzbekistan, including the Foreign Student Program, the Science and Technology Award, the Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program, and the Visiting Scholar Program.

To find out more about the programs and their requirements, visit <http://fulbright.state.gov>.



Fulbright student Mariya Pak used funding to conduct research at the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District in Central New Mexico. (Photo courtesy of Maria Pak)

## One Million Electric Cars Coming Our Way?



Journalists in Portland, Oregon, cover the opening of a new charging station for electric cars. (© AP Images)

*Traffic on American roads soon could run a bit cleaner.*

In his January 25 State of the Union address, President Obama challenged the United States to become the first nation with 1 million electric cars. His administration since has announced several initiatives it will ask Congress to fund in the 2012 budget to help spur such rapid growth.

Cleaner vehicles are part of the federal government's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build "clean" industries that provide new jobs. Some experts have questioned whether the goal President Obama set in his speech is realistic, considering that the market for electric cars is still in its infancy. A new report from Indiana University says automakers' production targets won't be sufficient to generate 1 million electric cars by 2015 — mainly because consumer demand isn't yet there.

"We believe that [plug-in electric vehicles] are an idea whose time has come," said Gurminder Bedi, chairman of the panel that authored the report and a former Ford Motor Company executive. "But it's clear that the technology needs a redoubled investment in time, energy and money from both government and the auto industry before [these cars] become part of our automotive mainstream," he added.

Brad Berman, the founder and editor of PluginCars.com, is more optimistic, noting that the first two electric cars aimed at the mass market — the Chevy Volt and Nissan Leaf — have received rave reviews. "Most forecasts peg sales ... to ramp up from tens of thousands per year in the first year or two to hundreds of thousands by 2013," he said. "While it's hard to predict exact numbers, these two models alone will get us well past the halfway mark toward the 1 million goal." A number of additional cars will hit the market over the next two years, adding to the overall volume, he said.

### PROPOSED SUBSIDIES WOULD LOWER PRICE

Because all-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles remain more expensive than equivalent gasoline vehicles, many American consumers still can't afford them. So one of the initiatives in

the president's budget proposal is a \$7,500 rebate, or immediate price reduction, for electric cars.

Today, consumers can claim a \$7,500 tax deduction, with the saving not available for months. Under the rebate plan, a 2011 model of the Chevy Volt would cost about \$32,800. A 2011 Nissan Leaf would be just more than \$25,000. In addition, the president will ask for \$10 million to be awarded to communities that encourage the conversion to electric vehicles — for example, by building special road lanes and parking spaces for such cars, or by training people to work in the advanced vehicle technology industry.

### BATTERIES IN FOCUS

The expensive and relatively short-lived batteries for electric cars remain the big stumbling block to development of a mass market. The Obama administration therefore is asking Congress to boost funding for electric-car research and development by 30 percent. A new "Energy Innovation Hub," meanwhile, would focus on improving battery life and capacity. "We're going to have batteries that go 300 miles [483 kilometers] on a charge, with 10 [dollars] of electricity instead of 50 [dollars of gasoline]," Vice President Biden said during a recent visit to a battery company in Indiana.

The company Biden visited, Ener1 Inc., received a \$118.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy in 2009 to expand its production of lithium-ion batteries. The investment will allow Ener1 to ramp up production to 60,000 electric-car batteries annually and to triple employment to 1,400 by 2013, depending on demand, a company spokesman said.

### FUEL PRICES KEY

Ultimately, gasoline prices may determine the market for these new cars, Berman said. "If the price at the pumps makes a run to \$4 or even \$5, consumers are likely to flock to electric cars — which can be fueled for the equivalent of around \$1 a gallon," he said. Even with these uncertainties, many think sales will soar in coming years, especially as vehicle prices come down. Pike Research, a consulting and research company focused on environmentally friendly technology, estimates that there will be 835,000 electric cars or hybrids on American roads by 2015. That would be a significant increase in just a few years. Carmakers seem to be growing increasingly optimistic. In late January, General Motors announced that it would speed up production of the Chevy Volt in response to growing customer interest.

"We're accelerating our launch plan to have Volts in all participating Chevrolet dealerships in every single state ... by the end of this year," said Rick Scheidt, a General Motors marketing executive. "This is the right thing to do for our customers and our dealers who are seeing increased traffic onto their showroom floors." The company quoted one Maryland dealer who said he's now getting serious inquiries from at least 10 customers a week.

## U.S. Government Supports Small and Medium Enterprises in Uzbekistan

Olmahon didn't realize how much her life was about to change when she first attended a series of USAID-sponsored training sessions held in her neighbor's courtyard with around 25 other local women. The sessions were part of a larger effort to provide training on preservation techniques such as pickling and drying, as well as compote and fruit leather production, reaching over 300 farming households throughout the country. The trainer, a local food technologist contracted through USAID's Agricultural Linkages (AgLinks) program, was impressed with Olmahon's dedication to improving her processing skills at home and at her dry goods retail shop, and gave her a sterilization tray for that purpose.

In the summer of 2010, the trainer had the opportunity to travel to California for three weeks through USAID's Community Connections program. She visited farms, processors, storage facilities, retail stores, and packaging plants, and thought of Olmahon when she saw a small, family-run shop selling homemade labeled products to passing motorists. She brought the idea back to Uzbekistan with her.



Olmahon's newly labeled products on display in her shop. (Photo courtesy of Chuck May)

Now, "Olmahon's Produce" labels can be seen on an increasingly large line of compotes, jams, and pickled goods, and she credits her increased production and revenue to the training provided by USAID. The sterilization tray "was really helpful for us to increase production and improve hygiene," she said, adding that the trainer's insights from the Community Connection's program "helped to market the products quickly." Despite encountering many challenges, AgLinks and other programs sponsored by the U.S. Government in Uzbekistan have provided countless opportunities for local entrepreneurs, from farmers to shop owners. AgLinks was implemented in 2008 through Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), which will currently run the program through July 2011.

Chuck May, director of DAI in Uzbekistan, said that the participants are eager for information that can be quickly absorbed and applied to increase their production and yield. "They are coming from a tightly controlled system [before independence] where experts told them what to do but not why. Now they are entrepreneurs," and USAID gives them the tools to succeed by meeting them where they are and using local agrifirms,

or entities controlling most of the value chain for agricultural products, and water users' association meetings, to spread vital information. Those who have taken the advice of trainers have frequently seen rapid growth in productivity and revenue, and May has seen their techniques spread to neighbors, which he says is known as the "spread effect."

Another program that equips entrepreneurs is the Special American Business Internship Training program (SABIT), which was initiated in 1995 in Uzbekistan and serves the countries of the Former Soviet Union. Based in Washington, DC with a Central Asia regional office in Almaty, SABIT provides around ten four-week training sessions in the United States on different topics such as market research and access, taxation, and logistics. The program also runs alumni events, such as this year's training session on tourism in Bukhara, to be held in February and March. More than 150 Uzbek business leaders have participated in SABIT since its inception.

The goal of the program is to establish partnerships among business leaders and train them in U.S. best practices, encouraging market reforms throughout Eurasia. The SABIT office looks for leaders who plan to apply the knowledge they gain in the training to their work and to their country as a whole. This year, the program is sponsoring training on technology commercialization, the development of small and medium enterprises, airport development, dairy processing, energy efficiency in construction, tourism, water resource management, and transportation services.

One of the most important aspects of the U.S. Government's work in supporting small and medium enterprises, however, is the Democracy Commission Small Grants program, which provides targeted amounts of money to fund project proposals submitted by local non-profit organizations and media outlets. Two of the main goals of the program are to support market reform and to further women's political and social rights, which include projects to promote the advancement of women in business.

Last year, the U.S. Department of State launched the Small Grant Competition to Promote Women's Advancement, including support to projects for training women in business and management. In 2009, the program disbursed grants to different organizations in Surkhandarya and Khorezm for the development of entrepreneurship training and career resource centers, as well as supporting a project to give vocational training to disabled women in Karakalpakstan. The program has also given aid to groups promoting youth business initiatives and a learning center for labor migrants in Ferghana.

Like AgLinks, most of the efforts of the U.S. Government to support small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan are operated by locals and for locals, with the goal of developing institutional and personal capacities for business that can be modeled and spread throughout the country. What Mr. May says about agriculture also rings true for small business development in the region: it "takes time, patience, and investment." The end result, like "Olmahon's Produce," is worth the effort.

## Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans & International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Visits Uzbekistan



Bruce Hudspeth and Aaron Alton look on as Dr. Jones tours the greenhouse at the Institute of Genetics and Experimental Biology of Plants in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

On February 2, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs arrived in Tashkent for a three day visit.

Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones met with government officials, scientists, environmental experts, students, and representatives of various NGOs to discuss current and potential collaboration between the two nations on scientific initiatives in a number of different sectors.

Assistant Secretary Jones' visit builds upon the Science and Technology Agreement Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton signed in December 2010 that provides a framework under which U.S. and Uzbek governmental and non-governmental institutions can work together on issues of science, technology, and education.

Dr. Jones came to Uzbekistan to encourage ratification of the agreement and explore possible avenues for future collaboration.

Her visit is all part of what both the Bush and the Obama Administrations have called "science diplomacy;" an effort to use "scientific collaborations among nations to address the common problems facing 21st Century humanity and to build constructive international partnerships," according to former Science and Technology Advisor to the Secretary of State Nina Fedoroff. This requires the service of a unique combination

of diplomat and scientist that is both rare and vital to the development of international scientific cooperation.

As part of this overall effort, Assistant Secretary Jones received a fellowship from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in 1985 to "participate in and contribute to the federal policy making process while learning firsthand about the intersection of science and policy."

Not many scientists were engaged in this "cross-cultural communication" at that time, said Dr. Jones, but today more than 30 scientists and engineers enter the program every year, and its importance is increasing as policymaking requires more and more expertise and research.

Dr. Jones brought to Uzbekistan her extensive experience in biology and chemistry, having earned a Ph.D. from the Department of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry at Yale, as well as

her governmental knowledge, having served with the National Science Foundation, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, U.S. Agency for International Development, the National Institutes of Health, and other agencies throughout her career.

Interacting with other scientists and experts in the field, the Assistant Secretary was able to enter into a constructive



Dr. Jones talks with Dr. Sultan Suleimanov, the Head of Laboratory at the Scientific Association Physics-Sun, in front of the Big Solar Furnace in Parkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)



Dr. Jones presents a book to Bory Alikhanov, the Chairman of the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan. (U.S. Embassy photo)

dialogue with representatives from the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination, the Institute of Nuclear Physics, the Institute of Genetics and Experimental Biology of Plants, and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations,

policymaking, from the need for objective data in solving global problems to the economic growth that comes with innovation.

She also noted that scientific cooperation was essential to the overall strengthening of any bilateral relationship. Dr. Jones then fielded a series of questions from the audience covering the Aral Sea, nuclear energy, genetic engineering, hydropower, alternative energy and climate change, among others.



Dr. Umar Salikhbaev, Director of the Institute of Nuclear Physics, explains the display to Dr. Jones through a translator. (U.S. Embassy photo).

Investments and Trade. Dr. Jones also spoke with advocates from the International Fund to Save the Aral Sea, the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan, and a group of Uzbek climate change experts.

In Tashkent, before a gathering of students and professionals at the U.S. Embassy, Assistant Secretary Jones noted that “the [Obama] Administration believes in the fundamental importance of science and technology to our country and the world,” both in terms of diplomacy and development.

The Assistant Secretary outlined several ways in which science and technology influence international relations and

At the conclusion of her visit, the Assistant Secretary characterized the trip as “positive and productive,” and expressed confidence that the 2010 agreement and bilateral dialogue will continue to build partnerships between the people, laboratories, and businesses of the United States and Uzbekistan.

“We have many collaborative opportunities to explore together,” said Dr. Jones, “and I look forward to working with you.”



Assistant Secretary Jones listens to a question during her conversation with students and professionals at the U.S. Embassy. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## Annual Alumni Reunion and Charity Drive



Alumni Islom Khamraev and Anastasiya Ni "Wish You All Happy New Year!"  
(Photo courtesy of USG alumni)

It has been a good tradition of the alumni of U.S. government exchange program participants to visit orphanages on a regular basis, particularly on the eve of big events, the New Year's holiday being one of them.

Before arranging a charity drive, alumni threw a New Year Reunion Party at Hottabych Club on December 17, 2010.

More than 150 alumni and their friends bought tickets to attend the event, with the proceeds from the tickets also going to the charity project.

The event started with Carrie Lee, Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO), and Sardor Djurabaev, Alumni Coordinator, welcoming the alumni and highlighting many interesting projects that alumni have conducted this year. With this, they recognized ten alumni (several actually attending the event) with Certificates of Appreciation, signed by Duane Butcher, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires and Molly Stephenson, Public Affairs Officer (PAO), for strengthening mutual understanding between the nations of Uzbekistan and the United States.

The following alumni were among the ones who received certificates at the reunion:

Hilola Suleymanova, 2002 UGRAD alumna was recognized for the business trainings she conducted for alumni;

Sanjarbek Rizokulov, 2009 YEO alumnus – for his support in organizing Monthly Alumni Movie Nights and Bulak-Su Clean-up Project to commemorate Earth Day in April;

Uktam Aminov, 2008 UGRAD alumnus for his assistance to the Public Affairs Section (PAS) in administering the Global UGRAD exchange program by helping to conduct Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) and attending information meetings with prospective candidates.

The reunion then swiftly turned into the New Year Party, with the alumni dancing the night away.

Throughout the whole event, the people pouring into the club left their monetary donations into the charity box set up by the entrance.

In total, UZS 740,000 sums (around USD 450) were raised at the event.

Then, on the lovely Monday morning of December 27, 2010 a small group consisting of USG alumni and PAS employees visited an orphanage in Buka district, a small town located an hour's drive from Tashkent.

The purpose of the trip was to spend a meaningful day and to bring happiness to approximately 100 orphans ranging in age from about five years to 16, while at the same time to donate gifts, clothes and stationeries packed in five big bags.

YEO alumni Anastasiya Ni and Nodira Nurimova (both also happen to be PAS Interns at the U.S. Embassy) and Assistant Alumni Coordinator Anora Karimova spent many hours looking for good toys and other presents to be given to the children in the Buka orphanage.

The guests were very much welcomed by the children and the orphanage employees, particularly Nastya Ni who was recognized by the people who had a chance to meet her in two previous years.

Eyes widened and hearts quickened as the 80 elementary school-aged children gathered in a big classroom already decorated for the New Year's party to receive presents from their visitors.

The children looked happy and excited with the gifts that the alumni presented them. It was a heart-warming time to see the children really enjoying themselves.

Once again, alumni proved that not only can they celebrate the holidays in the great fashion, but can also create a good holiday for others.



Orphan kids wait impatiently for their New Year presents. (U.S. Embassy photo)

## Reports Say World Can Be Fossil Fuel Free by 2050

The world has the technical know-how and financial capability to run entirely on renewable energy by the middle of this century, two California researchers say.



President Obama wants the United States to get 80 percent of its energy from clean energy sources by 2035. (© AP Images)

Their study says that a large-scale transformation of the world's energy systems to wind, solar, water, geothermal and other renewable sources would not cost substantially more than continued reliance on conventional power generation.

The research comes as world leaders seek to tackle climate change while also providing electricity to the 1.4 billion people who still lack access to energy.

President Obama said in his 2011 State of the Union address to Congress that he wants the United States to get 80 percent of its energy from clean sources by 2035, a goal that can be achieved only if more Americans get their power from renewable and nonfossil sources.

Mark Jacobson, an atmospheric scientist and professor of civil and environmental engineering at Stanford University, and Mark Delucchi, a research scientist at the Institute for Transportation Studies at the University of California–Davis, published their article in a recent issue of the journal *Energy Policy*.

It has received significant attention in trade and mainstream media as it provides a rare road map for how the world can move away from coal and oil.

“We wanted to show that there are no large technical or even economic barriers to powering all energy sectors globally on wind, water or solar power because that point is not widely appreciated,” Delucchi told *America.gov*.

“The biggest obstacle is politics.”

Another recent study, this one published by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Dutch research group Ecofys, also concluded that a fossil fuel-free world is within reach.

The groups' 2011 *Energy Report* estimates that it will cost \$4.8 trillion annually, or about 2 percent of the world's gross

domestic product, to switch to 95 percent renewables by 2050.

After 2040, however, the world would start to see net savings through diminished energy costs and greater efficiencies — with annual savings approaching \$5 trillion by midcentury, the WWF/Ecofys report says.

“While investments would pay for themselves over time, we need to mobilize significant capital upfront,” said Jim Leape, WWF's director general.

“It won't necessarily be an easy task. We have to drive efficiency very deep into the economy, and ... cut our energy use in half, so [by 2050] we use only what we used in year 2000.”

Included in the two studies are factors such as the costs of climate change — an expense that would be significantly reduced with a switch to renewable energy.

In the United States, for example, air pollution from coal plants and cars cost the nation \$120 billion in health care costs in 2005, according to the National Research Council, which gives scientific guidance to U.S. policymakers.

“Our plan would eliminate all air pollution and 2.5 million to 3 million premature deaths per year, as well as facilities and exhaust pipes responsible for such pollution,” said Jacobson, the Stanford researcher.

The California and Dutch researchers also factored in future savings, such as a significant reduction in overall energy consumption and the elimination of fossil-fuel subsidies.

According to the International Energy Agency, global government subsidies for the oil, gas and coal industry amount to more than \$500 billion annually.

Prospects for renewable energy have improved significantly in recent years, the researchers said.

“Technology keeps improving and costs keep coming down,” Delucchi said. “For example, there are several interesting wind-power designs and technologies that promise some technical and economic benefits. [And] given recent developments in lithium-ion batteries, I think we will see economical battery-driven electric vehicles sooner than most people expect.”



Air pollution cost the United States \$120 billion in added health care costs in 2005, researchers say. (© AP Images)

## U.S. Embassy Tashkent on Facebook

The U.S. Embassy has its own page on the popular social networking website Facebook. Currently, the page has over 1,850 members, a number that is growing day by day.

The page contains useful information about the Embassy, its programs and activities in Uzbekistan, the Information Resource Center (IRC) and its services and resources.

It also publishes information about Embassy events, important announcements, the updated schedule for the weekly Chai Chat Club and so on.

Additionally, the page provides information and the link to the *IRC Visitor Registration System* - a Facebook application that helps visitors who want to go to the IRC to request appointments online. To check out the system, go to <http://apps.facebook.com/ircvisitor/>.

Registered members, also known as *fans*, can post questions or comments on the notice board (the *Wall*) of the page. They can also leave their feedback on IRC services and discuss Embassy programs.

Anyone who wants to become a member (*fan*) of the *U.S. Embassy Tashkent* page first needs to get a free Facebook account (if you don't have one yet) and then go to <http://www.facebook.com/usdos.uzbekistan> and click on the 'Like' button at the very top. Easy!



<http://www.facebook.com/usdos.uzbekistan>



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