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U.S. Ambassador George Krol Presents Credentials to President Islom Karimov

The United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan, George Krol, presented his credentials to the President of Uzbekistan, Islom Karimov, on Tuesday, July 5, 2011. Ambassador Krol expressed his desire to see a renewed spirit of cooperation as we enter a new stage of U.S.-Uzbekistan relations.

Ambassador Krol is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, rank of Minister-Counselor, and most recently served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. He joined the Foreign Service in 1982 and served as U.S. Ambassador to Belarus from 2003-2006.

He has served in overseas postings in Warsaw, New Delhi, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk, and has held several domestic assignments, including as Director of the State Department's Office of Russian Affairs, and as Special Assistant to the Ambassador-at-large for the New Independent States. He has also taught at the National War College and was a member of the State



George A. Krol, U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Department's Senior Seminar. Ambassador Krol is the recipient of several State Department Meritorious and Superior Honor awards. Ambassador Krol is a graduate of Harvard University and Oxford University, England.

U.S. Embassy Holds Workshop by Photographer Frank Ward

On August 7, American photographer Frank Ward gave a presentation to more than a hundred people at the U.S. Embassy. The seminar was created with both pho-



American photographer Frank Ward addresses an eager crowd at the U.S. Embassy on August 7. (U.S. Embassy photo)

tographers and non-photographers in mind and attracted in a standing room-only audience dominated by photographers.

For many, it was unique opportunity to interact with a professional photographer. In fact, the event attracted many newcomers, as it was the first time most of the audience had attended a talk at the U.S. Embassy.

Unlike most of today's photographers—professional and amateur alike—who have converted to digital technology, Ward explained why he continues to use film. During his presentation, he described how labor-intensive it can be to make one good picture.

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Remarks by Ambassador Krol upon Presenting his Credentials to President Karimov

I'm very pleased to be here as U.S. Ambassador. I already feel very much at home in this country famous throughout the world for its hospitality. It's a great honor, opportunity, and pleasure for me to be the Chief of the American Mission in Uzbekistan.

I believe relations between our countries will develop further, and that our cooperation and mutual trust will rise to a new, higher level. For my part, I would like to use this opportunity to improve and deepen relations between our two countries across all spheres including the political, economic and social areas.

I have visited Uzbekistan before; most recently when I was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia. This time I am here to listen and to learn about this country, as well as to explain my own country to the people of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan and its people have an ancient history; however, as a state, Uzbekistan is relatively new and young. In the past as in Uzbekistan has been a political, cultural, and economic center of this region. Your country has always played a great role in establishing stability, security, and development for this region.

It is one of the main objectives of the United States to strengthen and support Uzbekistan's constructive role

in this region. Both our countries are interested in seeing this region develop as a stable, peaceful place. The United States strongly believes durable stability should be based on strong, democratic, free, and developed societies that respect the rights of their own citizens and neighbors. Since its independence, Uzbekistan has achieved considerable results. Much attention has been paid to social and economic progress, which has provided for Uzbekistan's long-term stability and development. The United States wishes to be a reliable and respectful partner to Uzbekistan in establishing security and peace in the region. For me as Ambassador this will be a very important task.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that I will always be open and respectful, and I look forward very much to getting to know and working with the people of Uzbekistan.

Today on behalf of the United States and myself personally, I would also like to congratulate the people of Uzbekistan on the twentieth anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence. The American people wish you peace, prosperity and success, in a spirit of friendship and mutual respect.

Thank you for your kind attention.

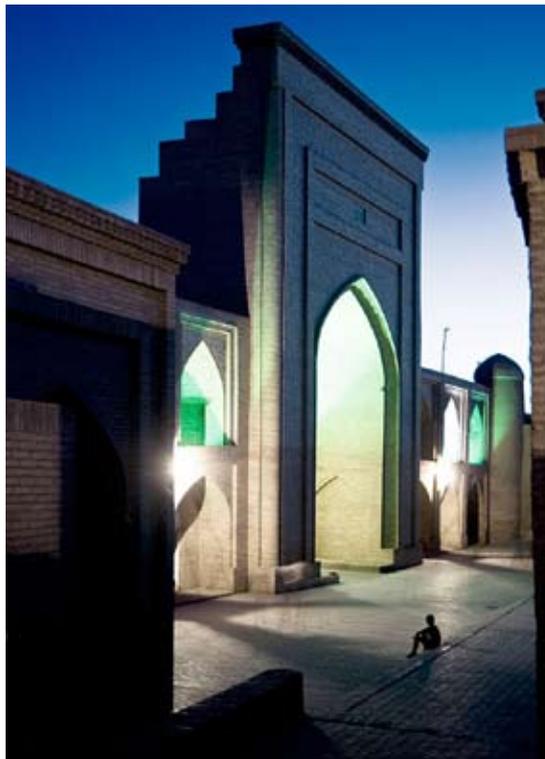
U.S. Embassy Holds Workshop by Photographer Frank Ward

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He advised that when taking a picture, one must consider all aspects of composition: light, layout, texture, focus and expression. In addition, every photograph should tell a story to its viewers.

Using his own work to illustrate his points, Ward showed some of the special effects that are possible to produce in photography. Some of the photographs demonstrated the use of an additive and subtractive approach to composition.

Another special effect can be achieved by altering the exposure time. For example, one of his most intriguing photographs depicts a boy sitting in front of a mosque in Khiva. In reality, the boy is watching a soccer game being played in



Mosque, Khiva, Uzbekistan, 2010. (Photo courtesy of Frank Ward)

front of him. By using a long exposure time, Ward captured only the boy and the mosque, leaving the viewer unable to discern more than a faint presence of the soccer players.

Ward is currently a photography professor at Holyoke Community College in Massachusetts. He has travelled throughout much of the world during his long career as a documentary photographer. His introduction to the former Soviet Union came with a trip to Ukraine in 2001. His first visit to Tashkent, however, was in 2009; he has since returned to Uzbekistan annually.

Due to the overwhelming popularity and success of the photography seminar, the U.S. Embassy is looking forward to hosting more photography workshops in the future.

U.S. Embassy Provides Humanitarian Goods to Local Orphanage

On June 7, several U.S. Embassy representatives travelled to the town of Akkurgan in Tashkent Region in order to meet with children of the orphanage "Internat 78." With them, they brought over \$20,000 worth of humanitarian goods, provided by U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM). The event was organized by the Embassy's Office of Military Cooperation (OMC), in cooperation with Uzbekistan's Ministry of Education.

Prior to the event, Government of Uzbekistan officials, including Ministry of Education representative Farida Mamedova, met with visiting U.S. officials at the orphanage. The U.S. side thanked the Government of Uzbekistan representatives for their warm welcome, and expressed their desire to see similar events take place in the future.

The donation was one of several in Uzbekistan organized by OMC over the past couple weeks. It was part of OMC's efforts to reestablish and strengthen CENTCOM's humanitarian relationship with its partners in Uzbekistan. According to OMC Chief, Major R. Craig Perry, the donation, "further demonstrates the breadth of the U.S. commitment to Uzbekistan. Security is merely one of many areas in which the U.S. and Uzbekistan cooperate. We are also committed to a strong humanitarian relationship with Uzbekistan."

Included in the donation were boxes full of blankets, children's shoes, winter jackets, long-underwear, furniture, and sporting equipment. After unpacking the boxes, Embassy representatives met with the children and employees of the orphanage. Major Perry said he was struck by the close relationship between employees and children. According to Major Perry, "the caregivers at Internat 78 appeared to have a very friendly and loving relationship with the children."



Major Perry hands out baseball gloves to children at Internat 78. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The afternoon ended warmly, as children and U.S. Embassy representatives exchanged hugs. Major Perry said that, "this is my favorite part of my job – being able to directly meet people's needs and making a positive difference in their lives."

Financing for this CENTCOM donation was provided by the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid appropriation, which is administered through the Defense Security Cooperation Agency under the Office of Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief & Mine Action. The program seeks to avert humanitarian crises, promote democratic development and regional stability, and enables countries to recover from conflict.

Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer Visits Uzbekistan



Ambassador Verveer talks with Uzbek women leaders during an NGO roundtable at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Melanne Verveer, visited Tashkent July 15-17. During her visit, Ambassador Verveer met with government officials, business women, and civil society representatives.

She discussed a range of issues, including women's rights and political and economic empowerment. This was Ambassador Verveer's first visit to Uzbekistan in her capacity as Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues.

Appointed by President Obama, Ambassador Verveer coordinates foreign policy and activities relating to the political, economic, and social advancement of women around the world. President Obama's decision to create a position of Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues reflects the elevated importance of these issues to the President and his entire Administration.

U.S. Embassy Hosts Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program Alumni Reunion



Guest speaker Vivian Leskes lectures during the TEA Alumni Reunion. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Thirty-four English language teachers from across the country gathered in Tashkent on August 6-7 to attend the first-ever Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) Program Alumni Reunion organized by the U.S. Embassy.

U.S. Ambassador George Krol opened the reunion by congratulating the alumni on the upcoming 20th Independence Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In his remarks, he commented that although the reunion was a professional development event, it would give participants a chance to network and exchange ideas with other teachers. The ambassador stated, "This will hopefully encourage you to find new productive ways to enhance your teaching methodology and share your newly obtained knowledge with your students."

The two-day reunion consisted of seminars conducted by both U.S. Embassy personnel and TEA alumni. Additionally, core sessions on professional development were led by Vivian Leskes, an English Language Specialist. The U.S. Embassy hosted Ms. Leskes especially for the reunion.

Using an interactive approach, Ms. Leskes presented the English teachers with various techniques for creating theme-based lessons by incorporating both poetry and prose. She

advised that poetry and prose could diversify classroom activities and engage and encourage students in improving their English language skills.

Educational Advisor Sharifa Djurabaeva provided a presentation about studying in the U.S. The presentation contained information on how to apply and matriculate to American universities and colleges. She advised them of exchange programs funded by the U.S. government and highlighted those that are specifically for students. Ms. Djurabaeva distributed information about other exchange programs that the teachers were eligible to apply for including Muskie and Fulbright.

Alumni Coordinator Sardor Djurabaev conducted a session on how to apply for the Democracy Outreach / Alumni Small Grants program. This program provides opportunities for alumni to organize various professional and educational development events in their region and apply for travel grants to attend career-related trainings or seminars abroad.

Many alumni had the opportunity to give presentations as well. These sessions covered a variety of topics, including: creating culture games, effectively developing speaking skills, using technology to blend cultures and more.

When sharing feedback about the reunion, participants mentioned that interaction with their peers was one of the

highlights. Furthermore, the teachers were pleased with the new ideas they received, which will inspire them to continue sharing their knowledge and passion with their students in learning English.



A TEA alumna works on a poster during an interactive session. (U.S. Embassy photo)

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How to Apply for the TEA Program

Eligible Applicants Must:

- Be secondary-level, full-time teachers with five or more years of classroom experience in either English as a Foreign Language, Social Sciences (social studies, civics, history or geography), Math or Science;
- Be citizens of and residents in Uzbekistan;
- Have proficiency in written and spoken English;
- Commit to teach for at least five years after completion of the program; and

- Have submitted a complete application and Institutional Support and Reference Form

Former participants of ILEP, TEA, Partners in Education or the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program are ineligible.

For more information, please visit: <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/tea.html>.

Contact us with your questions at: Tashkent-Program@state.gov, indicating "TEA" in the subject line.

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The TEA program provides teachers with unique opportunities to develop expertise, enhance their teaching skills and increase their knowledge of the United States. It is a six-week professional development fellowship that consists of a non-degree, non-credit customized academic program. It includes coursework and intensive training in teaching methodologies, lesson planning and teaching strategies for home classroom environment. In addition, it provides instruction on the use of computers for Internet, word processing and as teaching tools.

As part of the academic program, participants are able to design or revise a set of lessons for use in their home classrooms as well as modify a lesson into a micro-lesson demonstration for the End of Program Workshop in Washington, D.C. Participants also have the opportunity to complete a forty-hour internship at a secondary school, which allows them to actively engage with American teachers and students.

To learn more about the program and the dates for application submission, please visit the U.S. Embassy website: <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/exchanges.html>.

Ambassadors' Fund for Cultural Preservation Success Continues

The Bukhara State Local Lore Museum is the most recent recipient of the Ambassadors' Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). The museum was awarded \$50,600 to restore 500 artifacts and prepare them for scientific study. The items will then be available for public display at the museum. The AFCP was founded by the U.S. Congress in 2001 and is administered by the Cultural Heritage Center, which is a division of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It was established to aid countries around the world in preserving their cultural heritage.

The U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan has supported nine cultural preservation programs in the past ten years. The Bukhara State Local Lore Museum was chosen partially because of its location. An important stop on the ancient Silk Road, Bukhara is home to many historic structures and archaeological sites.



Preparations for the natural dye lab are nearly finished. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Over the past 50 years, extensive excavations have yielded tens of thousands of archeological artifacts. The museum's collection contains ceramic objects, metal items and paintings, with pieces dating from the stone age through late medieval times. Regrettably, the majority of the objects have never been properly cleaned and repaired. The items are vastly important to the history and cultural heritage of Uzbekistan and will greatly enhance the quality of the museum.



A kolib used for block printing. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The recipient of the 2010 AFCP grant also holds great significance to the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. It is a project in progress at the Said Ahmad Hodja Medressah Artisan Development Center in Margilan. This project, which is well on its way to completion, is working to revive block printing and establish a natural dye workshop. Block printing



A project participant demonstrates chitgarlik. (U.S. Embassy photo)

(chitgarlik in Uzbek) is a way to create decorative patterns on fabric from a carved block of wood (kolib). Although block printing was once a common practice in Uzbekistan, the traditional process has become almost nonexistent. By opening a natural dye lab and teaching artisans how to operate it, the project aims

to promote the use of natural dyes, which has become less common over time. The natural dye lab will aid in maintaining the historical accuracy of chitgarlik and will foster an ecologically-friendly way to color textiles.

Thus far, using photographs and existing block collections found at museums throughout the country, project participants have recreated and restored over a hundred kolibs. Additionally, participants are conducting ongoing research to gather material for a chitgarlik reference book. The publication will include in-



An example of a complicated textile completed using intricate kolibs and many different colors. (U.S. Embassy photo)

formation about kolibs, natural dyes, dyeing methodology and proper printing techniques. It will be available for the use of the general public, researchers and artisans and published in English, Russian and Uzbek. The project will be completed by the end of 2011.

U.S. and Uzbekistan Organize Joint Event to Enhance Emergency Preparedness



Chargé d'Affaires Underriner hands out certificates to participants in the CMEP event in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

On June 13-16, the U.S. Embassy's Office of Military Cooperation (OMC), in partnership with Government of Uzbekistan counterparts, hosted a Civil Military Emergency Preparedness (CMEP) information exchange in Tashkent. This event allowed Uzbek and American experts and practitioners to share best-practices on disaster response to prevent loss of life.

The event, the latest in a series of annual joint meetings on emergency preparedness, was part of continuing efforts to bolster U.S.-Uzbekistan security cooperation. Speaking at the event, the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires John Underriner said, "Disaster preparedness and response is a key area in which the U.S. and Uzbekistan can work together and learn from each other. The U.S. looks forward to expanding and deepening cooperation with Uzbekistan in this area."

The four-day event consisted of two parts: a Seminar on Environmental Hazards and Clean-Up, and an Intra-Ministerial/Organizational Planning Conference. During the seminar, U.S. and Uzbek experts discussed how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the release of hazardous materials including chemical, biological, and radiological substances. During the conference, the two sides discussed cooperation across government agencies and ministries in responding to such events. The conference culminated with Uzbekistan's annual national disaster preparedness exercises, which U.S. participants observed. This was the first time since 2005 that the U.S. CMEP participants were able to observe these exercises.

U.S. experts from CMEP and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers travelled to Tashkent to participate in the event. They were joined by representatives from Uzbekistan's Ministries of Emergency Situations, Interior, Defense, and Health. For many, the event allowed them to reconnect with colleagues they had met at previous CMEP events. These continuing ties serve to strengthen mutual trust and understanding. The event concluded on June 16 with a closing ceremony during which Chargé d'Affaires Underriner congratulated participants on the success of the event. "The seminars that have taken place over the last week have been marked by engaging discussions and very active participation. We hope we can continue such cooperation in the future," he said.

CMEP is a Department of Defense program that encourages host nation agencies responsible for civil emergency planning and their military counterparts to cooperate on emergency preparedness and crisis management. The CMEP Program is a Partnership for Peace Program funded under the Warsaw Initiative Fund.

U.S. Embassy donates forensic materials to the Ministry of Health



Dr. Giyazov shows Ambassador Krol elements of the Main Forensics Bureau lab before the official document signing. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Ambassador Krol presented the Ministry of Health, Main Forensics Bureau with laboratory materials on August 9.

The materials donation included precision glassware, vital testing chemicals and high-tech lab equipment. It demonstrates the United States' continued cooperation with Uzbekistan in developing the forensic sciences' role.

The ambassador was met by Dr. Giyazov, the head of the Main Forensics Bureau; he received a tour of the facility before officially signing over the donated equipment and chemicals.

Ambassador Krol highlighted his wish that the donation of modern equipment will be useful and stressed that forensic scientists "perform a very important function in society." Additionally, he noted that "with better integration into the legal system, Uzbekistan's forensic scientists can make an even more significant contribution to their country."

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The materials were given as a part of the Department of Justice International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program. The State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement first signed a letter of agreement with the government of Uzbekistan in 1996 for U.S. aid in forensic science expansion.

In the past, the U.S. Embassy has conducted training workshops to foster the growth of Uzbekistan's forensic sciences. The embassy has also arranged participation of Uzbek experts in international forensics events and donated other

laboratory instruments. By working with the Main Forensics Bureau, aiding in the replacement of outdated equipment and supporting forensic scientists' training, the U.S. Embassy endeavors to increase the Bureau's capacity to collect and analyze forensic evidence.

Uzbekistan is actively progressing with its Forensic Science Development Project, which aims to obtain internationally-recognized certification from the International Standards Organization. The U.S. Embassy looks forward to continuing the dialogue with the Ministry of Health and the Main Forensics Bureau.

Obama: America's Opportunity Open to All Who Work for It



President Obama addresses the annual conference of the National Council of La Raza, the largest Hispanic advocacy group in the United States. (© AP Images)

President Obama told the largest Hispanic advocacy group in the United States that America remains a place where opportunity is open to all who work for it.

"We're a people who look out for one another. We're a people who believe in shared sacrifice, because we know that we rise or fall as one nation," Obama said July 25 in a speech to the annual meeting of the National Council of La Raza.

Obama, who addressed the annual conference while a candidate for president, said that he had made promises that had to be kept and that his administration has worked closely with the Hispanic community to meet those promises. He said that a crucial promise he made then and believes now is that America remains a place where opportunity is open to all who are willing to work for it.

The president said his administration has cut taxes for middle class workers, small businesses and low-income families; won credit card reform and financial reform; and provided protections against being exploited to those who use payday lenders or send remittances home to families

outside the United States. He added that his administration has secured health care for 4 million children, including the children of legal immigrants, and he is implementing health care reform for those who don't have sufficient health insurance.

The president told the conference that he has worked to make students learning the English language a priority for educators across the United States, while holding schools with high dropout rates accountable. The Obama administration has worked to emphasize the teaching of mathematics and science and invested in community colleges so that workers can gain skills that companies need in their workforces, he said.

He also said that his administration has won new college grants for more than 100,000 Latino students, giving greater opportunities to those seeking advanced educations.

Obama told the nearly 25,000 people attending the annual conference in Washington that he still seeks an immigration system that "holds true to our values and our heritage and meets our economic and security needs." He said immigration reform is an economic imperative.

In recent years, one in six new small-business owners were immigrants. Google and Intel were founded by immigrants, Obama said.

"This country has always been made stronger by our immigrants," he said.

Obama has held meetings at the White House this year with 160 community leaders and local elected officials from 25 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, and with more than 100 White House and Cabinet officials, to discuss his efforts for immigration reform and for the U.S. Hispanic community, the White House said in a separate statement July 25. Other Cabinet officers — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar — also addressed the National Council of La Raza annual conference.

U.S. Science Envoy Dr. Gast Discusses Science and Education Ties



U.S. Science Envoy Dr. Gast at the Ulugbek Observatory in Samarkand. (U.S. Embassy photo)

U.S. Science Envoy and President of Lehigh University, Dr. Alice Gast, travelled to Uzbekistan June 23-26 as part of President Obama's initiative to strengthen science and education ties. The visit, Dr. Gast's first ever to Uzbekistan, was the latest in a series of efforts to enhance U.S.-Uzbekistan scientific relations.

In Tashkent, Dr. Gast visited the Academy of Sciences, where she met with Dr. Shavkat Salikhov, President of the Academy of Science, and Dr. Odilkhuja Parpiev, Executive Chairman of the Committee on Coordination for Science and Technology Development of Uzbekistan. During their meeting, the two sides discussed practical ways in which to advance bilateral scientific cooperation, including through joint workshops and other projects. Dr. Gast noted that the U.S. and Uzbekistan have many common scientific interests and that both sides could benefit from cooperation in these areas.

At the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, Dr. Gast met with a group of over 100 local students. Dr. Gast encouraged the students to pursue studies and careers in the sciences. She also highlighted the potential for greater cooperation between the U.S. and Uzbekistan in the science arena, especially as such fields are often less sensitive to the complexities of the political environment.

In Samarkand, Dr. Gast was able to view first-hand evidence of Uzbekistan's strong tradition of scientific research. She marveled at the rich history of the Registan, climbed the steps of Shah-i-Zinda, and admired the achievements of Ulugbek and his observatory.

Dr. Gast's visit to Uzbekistan came six months after Secretary of State Clinton signed the Science and Technology Agreement between the U.S. and Uzbekistan in Tashkent in December, 2010. Dr. Gast's visit built upon the success of the visit of Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, who was in Tashkent in February of this year.

Dr. Gast was in Uzbekistan in her capacity as a private citizen. She will advise the White House, the Department of State, and the U.S. scientific community about the knowledge and insights she gained from her visit.

Uzbek Farmers Record U.S. Best Practices



Uzbek Agriculturalists Learn Fruit Drying, Processing and Packaging Techniques at the Lester Farms in Winters, California. (Photo courtesy of USAID)

plus private sector actors in fruit processing. The Ferghana Valley is known as the gem of Central Asian agriculture and is famous for its sweet and fragrant fruits and nuts, especially apricots, cherries, apples, peaches and walnuts. Trainees benefited from the insights and experience of the best fruit exten-

sion specialists and private sector experts from the biggest fruit and nut producing state in the United States.

The training program consisted of hands-on field visits in and around Davis and Fresno, California that were directly relevant to topics introduced during classroom sessions. Training content covered best techniques in fruit tree nursery management, production, postharvest handling, drying, irrigation systems and pest control. Technical translation, including questions and discussions were given in English and Uzbek.

Eight of the ten trainees used digital camcorders to record field site visits and orchard training sessions to share with others upon returning to Uzbekistan. Fazliddin Sultanov, agronomist, made DVDs of all his photos and video shorts to share with his neighbors and friends. These video materials have been used by AgLinks for training on fruit production. Marifat Nazarova, adapted the idea of private labeling from visiting Stephens Farmhouse in Yuba City, California and conducted a training program on small-scale fruit processing for 35 farmers in Namangan Province. One of the processors, Olmaxon Egamber-dieva, developed her own private label and sells products in her local shop. Sales of the labeled products increased immediately and significantly compared to products without labels.

Folklife Festival Celebrates Global Impact of Peace Corps

Organic farming, basket weaving, wine, textiles, plastic bottles and shea butter were all on display at the 2011 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington. Each represented an important cultural tradition turned into economic opportunity with help from Peace Corps volunteers.

The Peace Corps was one of three programs featured at the Smithsonian Institution's 45th Folklife Festival, held June 30–July 11 to celebrate folk culture in the United States and around the world. For two weeks, returned Peace Corps volunteers and their host-country counterparts shared their projects, talents and stories with more than a million visitors.

The festival, a summer tradition in Washington, brought more than 280 participants from around the world to the National Mall and included day and evening programs of music, song, dance, storytelling, crafts, cooking demonstrations and discussions. The festival highlighted the diversity of Peace Corps volunteers (PCVs), their experiences and the people with whom they work in host communities.

Peace Corps program curator Jim Deutsch said, "One of the more fascinating things about this part of the festival is that the more than 200,000 Peace Corps volunteers who have served since 1961 are now working in many realms around the world," and throughout various educational exhibits they shared stories, recipes and lessons from two years living and serving abroad. Deutsch said Peace Corps volunteers "tend to be altruistic and idealistic and they have a strong can-do attitude."

During the festival, returned volunteer Rahama Wright spoke about her service in Mali from 2002 through 2004. While serving, she saw many village women struggling to provide for their families and recognized a need for



At the Smithsonian Folklife Festival June 30, Samburu women from Kenya demonstrate how to create high-quality woven baskets and clothing from local materials. (Photo courtesy of Peace Corps)

earning power among the women. Highly motivated by her observations, Wright helped create the first shea butter cooperative in the village as a way for women to make money. "I felt I could help maximize local resources by helping the women become entrepreneurs in the global marketplace."

Serving in the Peace Corps also sparked Wright's interest in the global supply chain. She returned to the United States more conscious of where products originated and fascinated by trade and business.

Wright went on to found Shea Yeleen International in 2005, a nonprofit organization that helps women in West Africa organize cooperatives, provides training on quality assurance and microenterprise development, and brings shea butter products to market. The Folklife Festival featured an exhibit where visitors joined the shea butter production process alongside West African women.



Peace Corps volunteers and their Guatemalan counterparts constructed a sample wall at the Folklife Festival using recycled bottles and trash, with help from festival attendees. (Photo courtesy of Peace Corps)

RECLAIMING TRASH TO ADVANCE EDUCATION

Nearby, visitors watched the construction of a plastic bottle wall as returned Corps member Laura Kutner reproduced the project she completed while serving in Granados, Guatemala, from 2007 to 2010.

Kutner rallied her host community and surrounding villages to collect more than 4,000 used plastic bottles and trash that once littered the streets. The bottles were stuffed, tied together and plastered with cement to build new classrooms at the schoolhouse where she worked as a youth development volunteer.

In addition to Peace Corps volunteers, current

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Folklife Festival Celebrates Global Impact of Peace Corps

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and returned, the festival introduced visitors to the people living in host countries. “The focus of our program is on the people with whom the PCVs serve, the people who are here from 17 different countries who worked with Peace Corps volunteers and in many cases are still working with Peace Corps volunteers maintaining the legacy,” Deutsch said.

The Folklife Festival aims “to encourage these types of cultural conversations in which visitors can learn directly from people from different countries and from the Peace

Corps volunteers,” Deutsch said. According to statistics provided by the Peace Corps, there are currently 8,655 volunteers and trainees living and working alongside citizens of 77 host countries, teaching sustainable skills while respecting the local culture.

Throughout its history, the festival has featured a wide variety of programs highlighting nations, regions and ethnic communities. In 2011, the festival, an annual international exposition of living cultural heritage organized by the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, commemorated 50 years of the Peace Corps, Colombia and the rhythm and blues musical genre.

Stories from former Peace Corps Volunteers in Uzbekistan

VOLUNTEERING IN JIZZAK

by Nathaniel Hersh

I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jizzak from 2002-2004. I worked in the English department at the Jizzak State Pedagogical Institute and lived with a lovely host family in a traditional Uzbek-style home. I am very proud of my Peace Corps service and the students and colleagues with whom I shared it.

I had three primary accomplishments as a volunteer: the development of my students as English speakers and open-minded thinkers, the conversational English textbook that I co-authored with three volunteers, and the summer camps that my future wife and I founded and led together.

The Jizzak State Pedagogical Institute looked deserted when I first arrived, as classes were not in session. However, Nargiza, my local counterpart, led me to the English department on the third floor where I was surprised to meet teachers and students in an otherwise empty building.

A rumor had spread that I was visiting town, and they had come to meet me. While I had expected to feel like an outsider at an unknown institution, I found that my arrival had been anticipated from the moment the previous volunteer departed a year earlier. Colleagues and students alike welcomed me warmly as the new volunteer.

My colleagues in the English department were good teachers and grammarians, but they needed me to encourage students to speak. This was a natural role for me and my students were excellent, very eager to learn and quite willing to talk once we found the right subject.

It was with my students, and as a way to encourage open conversation, that I discovered the duality of the volunteer. The volunteer is an expert, the final authority on the

English language and most things Western, but at the same time a naïf, mostly unaware of local nuances and often doted upon by locals.

Living in Uzbekistan I saw and noticed new things every day, and my students spent the opening moments of many classes answering my questions. This of course led to deeper discussion and ultimately to an exchange of worldviews. Confronting another culture and really thinking about it is one of the best aspects of the Peace Corps for volunteer and host alike.

I developed a sincere respect for all of the ways in which my students and colleagues confronted life’s challenges, and they valued my appreciation for and adaptation to Uzbekistan. It tore down the cultural walls between us.

The greatest challenge of teaching at the institute was balancing quantity and quality and reaching as many students as possible in a meaningful way. Out of this frustration came two projects: a book of lesson plans and summer camps.

The book was a collaborative effort with three other university English volunteers: Laura, my future wife, from Gulistan; Dara from Navoi; and Chris from Nukus. Without a curriculum, we had all spent a great deal of time making our own lesson plans. We pulled the best together into Perspectives, a conversational English guidebook.

With money from the Regional English Language Office at the U.S. Embassy we published the book and traveled to every region in Uzbekistan to lead seminars with local teachers on using the book in their classrooms. All teachers received a copy of the book. We also traveled to a regional English language conference in Kyrgyzstan to pres-

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

ent the book. We met teachers there from the five republics of Central Asia and spread copies of our book throughout the region.

The summer camps started with Laura at Gulistan University, who wanted to provide a cooperative learning environment and a more broad-based curriculum than she could during the university session. We decided to combine our resources and students and hold two combined camps, one for university students from Jizzak and Gulistan, and one for high school students from both regions.

Each camp lasted about two weeks and had approximately 100 students and 50 Uzbek and American counselors and support staff. The camps provided many firsts. They were overnight camps, and many students were away from home for the first time. The camps were in a mountainous area of Jizzak, the first time many students from Gulistan had been to the mountains. We had counselors to teach first aid, nutrition, yoga, rock climbing, basic Japanese, and even swimming, including girls-only swimming lessons.

The camps also offered English language immersion. Not only did the students make great strides in developing their English skills, they were also able to create new identities for themselves in a new learning environment. Many formed lasting friendships with students from other regions and volunteers. Several of the Uzbek students later founded and ran their own camps.

Looking back on my Peace Corps service seven years later, the sincerity and warmth of the many people I met stands out. Working with them was all the motivation I needed as a volunteer. The impetus for the projects I started and the work I accomplished all began with my students, colleagues, host family, neighbors or friends.

I believe that in addition to the Peace Corps' usual accomplishments there is a deeper impact – opportunities, friendships and wonderful memories for the people of Uzbekistan and the United States.

VOLUNTEERING IN CHIRCHIK

by A. Diego Rivera

I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Uzbekistan from 2001 to 2003. During my time there I lived in Chirchik, Kattakurgon, and in a small village called Koson. I have many fond memories from all of those places but I think of Chirchik as my Uzbek home.

In all three places I lived with Uzbek families who included me in all of their family events and holidays, and helped me learn the language and the culture of Uzbekistan. With my families I learned how to make traditional Uzbek food including osh and sumilac, and how to dance like an Uzbek gentleman.

Peace Corps placed me in local elementary schools to teach English and to introduce new teaching techniques to local

teachers. For each class, I was paired with a local teacher. By pairing volunteers with local teachers, Peace Corps is better able to address problems from a local perspective, and more importantly, any program initiated by a Peace Corps volunteer can continue once he or she leaves.

I also greatly benefited from this system of pairing, as I was able to learn a great deal from the English teachers with whom I worked. In particular I was always impressed with the level of education they were able to provide despite a lack of resources.

Over the course of the school year, my students' English abilities increased significantly. However, even more importantly, I taught them that it was good to question their teachers and to think creatively instead of relying only on answers in a book.

I also used classroom time to introduce American culture by incorporating U.S. holidays and activities into my lessons. For example, I gave my students a homework assignment of writing a Mother's Day card in English and having their mothers sign them to show they had received them. I liked reading all the nice messages the students wrote to their mothers and the beautiful pictures they drew for them.

I really appreciated living in the local community and learning about the lives of ordinary Uzbek citizens. For example, I learned from locals the importance of bread, and in particular I learned never to waste it. After I returned to the U.S. I continued to never waste bread or throw it away.

Also after returning to the U.S., I often shared what I had learned about Uzbekistan with my fellow Americans. Many Americans became interested in visiting Uzbekistan once they heard about the warmth and hospitality of the people. I am just one of many Peace Corps volunteers who have taught Americans back home about Uzbekistan and its unique culture. It is this sharing of cultures that is arguably Peace Corp's most important goal and accomplishment.

Due to the extreme distance between Uzbekistan and the U.S., one of Americans' largest sources of first-hand information about Uzbekistan has come from me and my fellow volunteers. It is unfortunate that because Peace Corps volunteers no longer serve in Uzbekistan knowledge and interest about Uzbekistan has decreased greatly in the U.S.

My experience in Uzbekistan while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer changed my life forever. Eight years after I left Uzbekistan I returned to work at the U.S. Embassy. I am happy to be speaking Uzbek again and catching up with old friends.

Uzbekistan will always remain a large part of my life and I consider Uzbekistan my second home. I hope that the U.S. and Uzbekistan can work together to find new ways to cooperate and perhaps one day Peace Corps volunteers will once again serve in Uzbekistan.



The State of Oregon – The Beaver State



Oregon is part of the Pacific Northwest. It is a state of great natural beauty, with ocean beaches, mountains, farmlands, forests, and plains.



Dogwood blossoms frame the Oregon Capitol rotunda with the ax-wielding, gold-en-gilded pioneer statue on top against a brilliant blue spring day sky in Salem, Ore. (© AP Images / Don Ryan)

There are six distinct regions. The Coast Range is a narrow strip of mountains that runs parallel to most of the coastline. To the south is the Klamath Range. The Willamette Valley is a lush region. The Cascades are a string of volcanic peaks extending from northern California to Canada. The Columbia Plateau is in central and northeastern Oregon. The Basin and Range region is one of the largest physical features in the western United States. It extends into Oregon from the south.

Oregon is sometimes called the Webfoot State because parts of it get so much rain. Forests cover half the state. The Douglas fir is the most valuable commercial tree. Softwoods include hemlock, spruce, and cedar. Among the hardwoods are alder, maple, and oak.

Large animals include mule deer, black-tailed deer, elk, antelope, black bears, bobcats, and coyotes. The Columbia is one of the world's great salmon rivers. Chinook and coho, or silver, salmon make up most of the commercial catch.

PEOPLE

The state's population is growing rapidly. Many people have moved to Oregon to work in its expanding industries. Others move to Oregon to retire. About 70 percent of the population live in cities, suburbs, and towns. The chief population centers are on the Willamette River.

The majority of the population has northern European ancestry. Oregon's minorities include Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans.

HISTORY

Between 12,000 and 15,000 years ago ancestors of the Native Americans crossed from Siberia to the area. In south-east Oregon archaeologists have found sagebrush sandals that are more than 9,000 years old. By the time Europeans glimpsed the Oregon coast for the first time, Native Americans in the region had a rich and varied culture.

The first known visitors were the Spanish in the 1500s. English, Spanish, and American explorers visited the area during the late 1700s, but it was not until 1805, when the Lewis and Clark Expedition charted the territory, that fur trappers and traders arrived, followed by large numbers of missionaries and the first settlers. By about 1840 "Oregon fever" was sweeping the Mississippi Valley, and settlers were heading west in covered wagons. As pioneers pushed into southern Oregon, conflict developed between them and the Native Americans. By the 1850s many had died of diseases brought by the settlers. In the 1870s the Nez Percé, led by Chief Joseph, were forced out of Oregon.

Settlers in the Willamette Valley were eager for Oregon to become a territory, but Southern legislators were against the creation of a new nonslave territory. Oregon finally became a territory in 1848. President James Buchanan signed the statehood bill on February 14, 1859.

The state's growing population and industry began to threaten the natural environment. In the 1960s Oregon passed pioneering environmental protection laws, which are helping to preserve the state's natural beauty.

ECONOMY

In early days people made their living mainly by fishing, trapping, farming, logging, and mining. The discovery of gold in California in 1848, and later in the Rocky Mountains, created a market for Oregon's products. In the 1930s Bonneville Dam was built on the Columbia River. Since the 1940s there has been rapid growth in the state's high-



Democrat John Kitzhaber, left, is sworn in as Oregon governor in House chambers as the 76th Oregon Legislature begins in Salem, Ore., Monday, Jan. 10, 2011. Kitzhaber is serving his third term as Oregon Governor. (© AP Images / Don Ryan)



This photo shows hikers around Mount Hood, Ore. (© AP Images / Rep. Blumenuaer Office, Jannie Benner)

technology industries. Today Oregon has a strong economy. Agriculture and the manufacture of lumber, wood products, and paper are still important, but service and manufacturing industries are the leading employers. Tourism is the biggest service industry, followed by advertising and data processing.

Tourism is based on the varieties of natural beauty available throughout the state. These include the highly scenic coastline of the Pacific Ocean; the Columbia River gorge; the mountains of the Cascade Range, highlighted by Mt. Hood, Mt. Jefferson, and the Three Sisters; and the plateau and desert country of the central and eastern parts of the state. Tourists come to enjoy Crater Lake National Park and national recreational areas, and are attracted by hunting and sport fishing. They come also to visit historical sites, such as the route of the Oregon Trail, Fort Clatsop where Lewis and Clark wintered, Astoria, and Fort Vancouver in nearby Vancouver, Wash.

RECREATION AND PLACES OF INTEREST

Oregon is endowed with a wealth of natural wonders, scenic areas, and historic sites. Extensive outdoor recreation areas and tourist facilities have been developed.

The Astor Column, in Astoria, is encompassed by a spiral frieze that tells the story of the exploration of the area. The Western Forestry Center has exhibits on the forest-products



Pacific sea coast scene at a Oregon beach. (© AP Images)

industry. The Bonneville Hatchery, at Bonneville Dam, is among the largest trout and salmon hatcheries. Here visitors can watch salmon ascending the fish ladders in the spawning season.

Annual events in Oregon include the Rose Festival held in Portland in June and the Oregon Shakespearean Festival held in Ashland from February to October. Additionally, events like the Oregon State Fair, in Salem, and the Pendleton Round-Up take place in early fall.

Sources:

- <http://www.oregon.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: OR

Capital City: Salem

Governor: John Kitzhaber

Date of Statehood: February 14, 1859 (33rd state)

Population: 3,825,657; 27th largest

Area: 251,571 sq. km; 10th largest

Origin of State's Name: From the Oregon River, an early name for the Columbia River

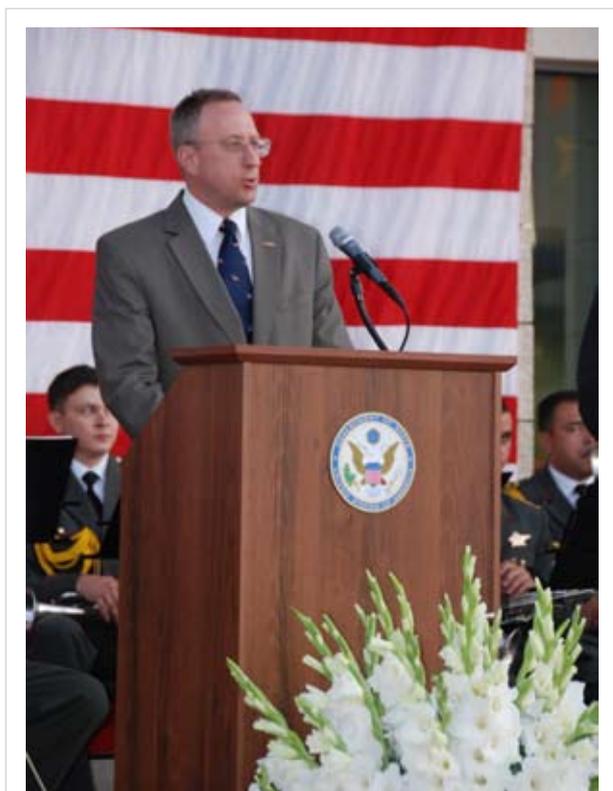
Largest Cities: Portland, Eugene, Salem, Gresham, Hillsboro, Beaverton, Medford, Springfield, Bend, Corvallis

Economy:

Agriculture: Cattle, vegetables, nursery stock, fruits and nuts, dairy products, wheat

Industry: Lumber and wood products, tourism, food processing, paper products, machinery, scientific instruments

U.S. Embassy Celebrates Independence Day



Ambassador Krol delivers his speech at the reception. (U.S. Embassy photo)

On the evening of July 1, the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent held a reception in honor of U.S. Independence Day. Ambassador Krol hosted the celebration, his first official reception as U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan.

Ambassador George Krol's Remarks At Official U.S. Independence Day Reception

Dear Distinguished guests and friends!

I would like to thank all of you for joining us here today as we celebrate the 235th anniversary of the independence of the United States of America.

Although American independence was declared in 1776 it took more than a decade for America to win its independence from Great Britain. It took many more decades for America to fulfill many of the principles so eloquently stated in our declaration of independence. In fact it is a challenge 235 years later for America to maintain those principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

On this day all Americans recommit ourselves to the lofty principles of our independence – principles that have guided us through terrible civil war, civil strife and foreign attacks.

He was joined by approximately 500 guests, including Government of Uzbekistan officials, civil society representatives, business leaders, and members of the diplomatic community.

In his remarks, Ambassador Krol recalled the principles to which the U.S. has aspired ever since the thirteen colonies declared independence in 1776 – life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

According to Ambassador Krol, these “remain our cherished goals and the standard by which we measure ourselves and the world around us.”

Ambassador Krol also highlighted the upcoming 20th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence. He noted that like the U.S., Uzbekistan has embarked on its own course as an independent, sovereign state. He called on U.S. and Uzbekistan citizens alike to work together to meet the challenge of building a strong, prosperous democratic state.

Ambassador Krol ended his remarks by paying tribute to the spirit of freedom and liberty which infused America's declaration of independence. “It is surely a spirit shared by the people of Uzbekistan and by people everywhere,” concluded Ambassador Krol.

Each year on July 4th, the United States celebrates the anniversary of its declaration of independence from Great Britain in 1776. It is a holiday which unites the diverse U.S. population around the values that inspired the founders of the nation more than two centuries ago.

These remain our cherished goals and the standard by which we measure ourselves and the world around us.

This year we also celebrate the 20th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence. Like the United States 235 years ago, in 1991 Uzbekistan embarked on its own course as an independent, sovereign state. Like America, Uzbekistan too faces the challenge of building a strong, prosperous democratic state. Let us Americans and citizens of Uzbekistan work together to meet the challenges of ensuring the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of all of us.

Please join me now in paying tribute to the spirit of 1776, the spirit of freedom and liberty that inspires Americans to this day. It is surely a spirit shared by the people of Uzbekistan and by people everywhere. Thank you for your kind attention.

Smithsonian Institution Conservator Hanna Szczepanowska Shares Expertise with Uzbek Museums and Libraries



Smithsonian Institution representative Hanna Szczepanowska in Samarkand. (U.S. Embassy photo)

The U.S. Embassy hosted Hanna Szczepanowska, a research conservator from the Smithsonian Institution, August 6-17. She traveled around the country to Tashkent, Fergana Valley, Samarkand, Shahrissabz, Bukhara, Urgench, Khiva and Nukus, lecturing on the conservation and restoration of art, architecture and manuscripts. Her trip was a direct result of a Smithsonian delegation that visited earlier this year from January 26-February 2.

In January, the Smithsonian delegation held workshops on capacity building and museum development. They looked at museum collections and suggested a follow-up visit by Ms. Szczepanowska.

The delegation included: Carole M.P. Neves, Ph.D., Director of the Office of Policy Analysis; Paul M. Taylor, Director of the Asian Cultural History Program and Curator of Asian, European, and Middle Eastern Ethnology at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History; and William Smith, Research Project Coordinator.

Ms. Szczepanowska's trip began with a visit to a textile factory in Fergana Valley; she was able to tour the factory and meet local artisans. Upon returning to Tashkent, she began her speaking tour at the Museum of Arts with a presentation about the preservation and conservation of paintings,



Savitsky Museum Director Marinika Babanazarova gives Ms. Szczepanowska a tour of the museum in Nukus. (U.S. Embassy photo)

wooden objects and icons.

While speaking at museums around the country, she addressed conservation issues and detailed the necessary knowledge needed before undertaking the conservation or restoration of works. Common themes in her talks included crucial preventative measures and the importance of the physical environment.

In addition to lecturing at museums, Ms. Szczepanowska spent time sharing her expertise at libraries. She met with more than a hundred librarian conservators. As a conservationist, her specialty is in the conservation and preservation of paper and parchment; she provided detailed instructions on how to keep manuscripts and rare books in lasting condition.

A highlight of her visit was to the Savitsky Museum in Nukus. The Savitsky has more than 82,000 drawings, paintings and artisanal pieces. The museum is famous for housing the largest collection of Soviet avant-garde work outside of Russia.



Ms. Szczepanowska conducts a conservation seminar in Bukhara. (U.S. Embassy photo)

Museum director Marinika Babanazarova gave Ms. Szczepanowska a tour of the conservation workspace and the storage facility where un-exhibited items are housed. Ms. Szczepanowska was impressed with the excellent conditions of the facility and the packaging of the works and praised museum officials for their dedication and hard work.

During her time in Uzbekistan, Ms. Szczepanowska was able to share her conservation knowledge and view many fascinating pieces of history. Conservation is a broad topic that requires specialized knowledge of many areas.

Ms. Szczepanowska's visit helped evaluate the more specific needs of the museums and libraries, setting the foundation for future exchanges of expertise.

Technology Opens Doors for Women, Clinton Says



Secretary of State Clinton. (© AP Images)

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is celebrating her department's TechWomen exchange program, which uses technology to open doors that are otherwise closed to women in the Middle East and North Africa. "Being a woman in the field of technology is not always easy," Clinton said at the State Department during a July 6

gathering for the TechWomen initiative. "But there are so many opportunities in technology that we just have to forge ahead, and we're doing so around the world because we want to make sure that all the tools that technology has made available are just as open to women as they are to men."

TechWomen, funded by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is a public-private partnership that pairs women from top technology companies in California's Silicon Valley with women emerging as leaders in technical fields across the Middle East and North Africa for a professional mentorship and exchange program. According to its website, TechWomen "fosters and develops the next generation of women leaders in the technology field by providing women

and girls with the access and opportunity needed to pursue tech-based careers."

The program began in May with 38 women from the region who came to the United States to spend five weeks working with their American mentors. The State Department July 6 event concluded the U.S. portion of the exchange. The American participants are scheduled to visit their counterparts later in 2011. The 21st century is "the time when women and girls should be fully embraced to be given their universal human rights, no matter who they are or where they live," Clinton said, adding that the Internet has "so much potential for unleashing the creativity and building the opportunity that is at the root of any successful society and that should be available to every person."

The secretary called on program participants to take what they have learned through TechWomen and pass it on to other women and girls in their home countries. She stressed the importance of technology in "enhancing relationships, building businesses and creating greater opportunities." Clinton also announced a new program, TechGirls, scheduled to be launched in 2012 as a complement to the TechWomen program. TechGirls aims to bring teenage girls from across the Middle East and North Africa to the United States for "an intensive month of educational activities," Clinton said.

Investments in New Ideas to Clean Emissions May Bring Better Air



The U.S. government is encouraging development of technologies to clean emissions from coal-fired power plants, like this one in Texas with a pile of coal in the foreground. (© AP Images)

One of the best ways to contain and even reverse climate change is to prevent the release of greenhouse gases that trap the sun's heat and cause temperatures to rise. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced August 25 that it will invest \$41 million in that strategy over the next three years.

DOE is providing grants to 16 private-sector companies and institutions to develop ideas for "post-combustion technologies for capturing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from coal-fired power plants." The projects are intended to develop a method for cleaning up emissions that is cheaper and more efficient than the methods now in use. Today's carbon-capture technologies create what are called "parasitic losses": a significant portion of the energy produced by a plant becomes unavailable for utility customers because it is used to scrub the emissions. The research DOE is underwriting will focus on technologies that can remove at least 90 percent of CO₂ from emissions and increase the cost of electricity by no more than 35 percent.

"Charting a path toward clean coal is essential to achieving our goals of providing clean energy, creating American jobs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions," said U.S. Energy Secretary

Steven Chu. "It will also help position the United States as a leader in the global clean-energy race."

These are among the projects that have won DOE support:

- Use of ultrasonic energy forces to dissolve CO₂ into gas bubbles.
- Use of organic-based solvents to capture CO₂ emissions.
- Use of rapid pressure changes to capture and release CO₂.
- Use of an absorbing agent to capture emissions.

The Obama administration aspires to deploy a cost-effective carbon capture technology within the next 10 years. For its part, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is in the process of enacting a proposed rule to enforce emissions regulations on coal-fired plants. In March, the agency announced a proposed rule to limit emissions of mercury, arsenic, chromium, nickel and acid gases. The regulation would require power plants to install existing pollution control technologies to scrub their emissions, though more than half of the nation's power plants have adopted these technologies voluntarily.

In announcing the proposal, EPA said the measure would prevent as many as 17,000 premature deaths and 11,000 heart attacks a year. EPA said the new standards would also provide particular health benefits for children, preventing 120,000 cases of childhood asthma symptoms and about 11,000 fewer cases of acute bronchitis among children each year. The proposed standards would also avert more than 12,000 emergency room visits and hospital admissions and 850,000 fewer days of work missed because of illness, EPA said.

More Taxi Companies Turning to Greener Operations



Green Cab of Madison has a fleet of 20 Prius taxis, and may add more hybrid vehicles soon. (Photo courtesy of Green Cab of Madison)

Mike and John Schmidt long had dreamed of opening their own taxicab company in the Midwestern college town where their family has lived for several generations.

Opportunity knocked in 2010 when the business plan the brothers brought before the city council in Madison, Wisconsin, was approved without a hitch. They had startup capital from the sale of another company years ago, and a local dealer of hybrid Toyota Prius cars had already offered to sell an initial 10 vehicles to get the company going.

“It was perfect timing with all the Priuses hitting the market and everybody talking about going green,” said Amanda Schmidt, Mike’s 24-year-old daughter and Green Cab’s marketing manager. “We weren’t supposed to add the next 10 cars until we had been open for a year, but we had to add them right away. A lot of people really like us, and we’ve never even done any traditional advertising.”

Environmentally-minded taxi companies have popped up in cities across the United States in recent years, appealing to riders who want to minimize their carbon emissions while on the road. In Arlington, Virginia, for example, a company called EnviroCab made a splash a few years ago when it opened as “the world’s first carbon-negative taxi fleet.” In Boston, the city has required all taxi companies to go hybrid by 2015.

With rising gasoline prices, such taxi companies are often able to offset high investment costs with lower operating costs.

Green Cab’s 20 Prius taxicabs in Madison get an average of 50 miles per gallon of gasoline (21.3 kilometers per liter). That compares with 15 or 20 miles per gallon (about 7 or 8 kilometers per liter) for a traditional American taxicab model, Schmidt said. Lower fuel costs translate into lower fares for customers; Green Cab now offers the best price in town for certain fares.

Of course it takes more than savings of a few dollars to get people to grab your cab, especially in a town with several other taxi companies. Green Cab tries to further distinguish its business with a high-tech taxi dispatch system that runs on a custom-made software program the company ordered to meet its specific needs.

For customers who want to keep fares down and travel greener, Green Cab picks up other riders who are headed in the same direction. Customers can order a direct ride for a little bit more money.

Green Cab’s software system calculates the fare upfront when a customer calls in — taking into account the ride options and Madison’s complicated city zone system, which leads to an extra charge anytime a cab crosses a city zone border.

The call taker at Green Cab enters the rider’s phone number, address, type of ride and destination into the system, which then crunches the numbers. The fare has already been calculated and communicated to the customer by the time the taxi arrives.

The taxi fee is set, regardless of what route the driver takes or whether the car gets stuck in traffic. All cars are equipped with Apple iPad tablet computers that are connected to Green Cab’s booking software and that provide GPS navigation for the drivers.

“People getting into the cab are often taken aback when they see the driver using an iPad,” Schmidt said.

Another perk for green customers: Each car carries a bicycle rack to accommodate people who bike but want a ride one-way or part of the way.

“It’s important for the next generation that we think about the environment,” Schmidt said.



Green Cab employees, shown here, schedule taxi rides with the help of custom-made dispatch software that saves clients money. (Photo courtesy of Green Cab of Madison)

Educational Exchange Programs

GLOBAL UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Eurasia and Central Asia (Global UGRAD), a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, provides opportunities for undergraduate students from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan for one year of full-time, non-degree study in the United States. First-year students will attend two-year community colleges and live in campus housing (dormitories) or with American host families. All other students will attend four-year universities and colleges and will live in campus housing (dormitories). Fellows may not choose their U.S. host university/college or community college.

Here are some of the possible fields of study for Global UGRAD (other fields will also be considered): accounting, agriculture, anthropology, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, criminal justice, economics, education, engineering, environmental management, geology, hospitality management, international relations, journalism, law, mass communications, physics, political science, psychology, sociology, urban planning, U.S. studies.

TECHNICAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will be considered without respect to race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. Persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Competition for the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program is merit-based and open to anyone who:

- Is a citizen, national or permanent resident qualified to hold a valid passport issued by the country of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, or Uzbekistan;
- Is currently residing in one of the following eligible countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, or Uzbekistan;
- Is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student at the time of application at a registered academic institution in one of the 12 eligible countries and in good academic standing. All students must return to their home academic institution for a minimum of one full term (semester or year) following the end of the Global UGRAD program. Correspondence students in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan are also eligible to apply;
- Is between the ages of 18-24 years old at the time of travel to the United States;

- Submits a complete original application and two copies with all required documents by the application deadline;
- Is able to begin the academic exchange program in the United States in the fall;
- Is able to receive and maintain a U.S. J-1 visa;
- Is physically able to complete the program in its entirety;
- Is committed to returning to their home country after completion of the program;
- Is proficient in spoken and written English at the time of application.

Individuals in the following circumstances are **NOT eligible** for the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program:

- U.S. citizens and permanent residents of the United States;
- Individuals currently participating in academic, training, or research programs in the United States;
- Individuals currently studying, residing, or working outside the 12 eligible countries;
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the U.S. government for a period of more than six weeks and who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of application;
- Individuals who have applied for U.S. permanent residency in the past three years;
- Local employees of the U.S. missions abroad who work for the U.S. Department of State and/or the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Employees are also ineligible for one year following the termination of employment;
- Immediate family members (i.e. spouses and children) of U.S. Department of State and USAID employees. Family members are also ineligible for one year following the termination of employment.
- Persons arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime (excluding minor traffic violations).

Please direct all questions to Tashkent-Program@state.gov. Indicate "Global UGRAD" in the subject line of all emails.

For further information, please go to <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/ugrad.html>.

EDMUND S. MUSKIE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

PROGRAM GOALS

The Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program, a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, was designed to identify exceptional individuals who are committed to a future of service and leadership in their home countries and provide these individuals with Master's level academic study and professional experiences in the United States.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Muskie program provides opportunities for Master's level study in the United States to citizens from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in the following fields:

- Business Administration
- Economics
- Education
- Environmental Management
- International Affairs
- Journalism and Mass Communications
- Law
- Library and Information Science
- Public Administration
- Public Health
- Public Policy

TECHNICAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will be considered without respect to race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or gender. Competition for the Muskie Program is merit-based and open to anyone who:

- Is a citizen, national, or permanent resident qualified to hold a valid passport issued by the country of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, or Uzbekistan;
- Is the recipient of an undergraduate degree (four- or five-year study) by the time of the application (undergraduate degree must be in law in order to apply to the Muskie Program in the field of law);
- Submits a complete application (original) and two copies (for a total of three) by the application deadline;
- Is able to receive and maintain a US J-1 visa.

Individuals in the following circumstances are **NOT eligible** for the Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program:

- US citizens and permanent residents of the United States;
- Individuals who have already been recipients of and participated in the Muskie Fellowship;
- Individuals currently residing or working outside the 12 participating countries;
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the US government (e.g., Public Affairs Sections at US embassies or other US government agency) for a period of more than six weeks and who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of application;
- Individuals who have applied for US permanent residency in the past three years;
- Persons arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime as further detailed by ECA;
- Current Program Administrator employees and consultants and their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, and siblings) are not eligible to apply for any Program Administrator-administered grant programs, either as individuals or as the responsible party representing an institutional applicant.

If you have additional questions after reviewing the FAQ, please write Tashkent-program@state.gov with "E. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program" in the subject line or call (+99871) 140-2447.

For further information, please go to http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/muskie_program.html.



Muskie Fellow Tagaev Shukhrat studied at Columbia University's Teacher's College in 2010. (Photo courtesy of Shukhrat Tagaev)

Native American Tribal Dances Move Central Asians



Buffalo Big Mountain performs in full regalia at a school in Oral, Kazakhstan, as his sister, Teresa White Dove, looks on. (Photo courtesy of Department of State)

Buffalo Big Mountain, whose mother is from the Mohawk nation of the northeastern United States and whose father is Comanche of the southwestern plains, always has his Plains regalia and drums ready to go.

Big Mountain identifies with his father's tribe and has had his self-made regalia about 25 years, continually adding and taking off parts. He added a new piece just before going to Kazakhstan to perform recently. His bustle, worn on the back, is made of the feathers of birds of prey, usually eagle feathers. Every color and pattern represents something related to battle. Two shafts at the top of the bustle represent war arrows.

"No two bustles are alike," he said. "The feathers you earn throughout your life are like military medals." His head-dress is made of porcupine and deer hair topped with two eagle feathers.

Recently, the 48-year-old Native American took his colorful regalia, drums and a couple of relatives to four cities in Kazakhstan. Big Mountain, his sister Teresa White Dove, and nephew Sebastian Snowsnake performed traditional American Indian dances and talked about their culture at schools, theaters and stadiums. Snowsnake performed the hoop dance, using as many as 30 hoops to create shapes representing living things like butterflies, turtles, eagles, flowers and snakes.

Nature is dominant in Big Mountain's life; he works as a land surveyor in Ashton, Wisconsin. "I'm outside every day. I definitely enjoy the outdoors," he said.

But dance is equally important. Big Mountain learned traditional dances, like the eagle dance, at a young age from his father. His father learned from Big Mountain's grandfather.

"We all dance," he said of his extended family, whose

members are spread across America. "We all ... promote a better understanding of our culture."

Since 2002, Big Mountain has performed outside the United States many times. He, his wife, Mary, and children — Sage and Zander Kicking Horse — performed in Uzbekistan in 2009 while Mary worked at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent. The Big Mountain family performed 20 times around the country that year.

In October 2010, Big Mountain, Snowsnake and extended family members Bluejay Littlejohn and White Wolf Big Mountain performed in three cities in Tajikistan at the invitation of the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe.

After performing social dances and dances that tell stories, the performers answer audience questions. Audience members often comment on the similarities of their own and their visitors' traditional drums.

Big Mountain recommends elk and deer skin stretched over a hard wood frame to create the best drum. He and his fellow dancers also typically correct misperceptions about Native Americans created by early Hollywood films.

The trips to the three Central Asian countries were funded through the State Department's speaker program.



Buffalo Big Mountain awards a feather to the winner of a student hoop dance at a school in Oral, Kazakhstan. (Photo courtesy of Department of State)

Kino Klub Recognizes Ramadan with Mohammad Documentary and Discussion



Director Alex Kronemer discusses his film "Mohammad: Legacy of a Prophet" during Kino Klub on August 23. (U.S. Embassy photo)

On August 23, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy held its monthly Kino Klub movie screening and director discussion. This month, 50 Uzbeks had the opportunity to watch "Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet," an American documentary. Following the film, the audience conducted a dialogue with its director, Alex Kronemer, through Skype.

The film was chosen to coincide with Ramadan as part of the Embassy's Ramadan programming. It generated great interest among the diverse audience of both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Although Kino Klub films are usually shown in English with Russian translation, the Embassy chose to present this one in Uzbek. This allowed the film to reach a wider audience,

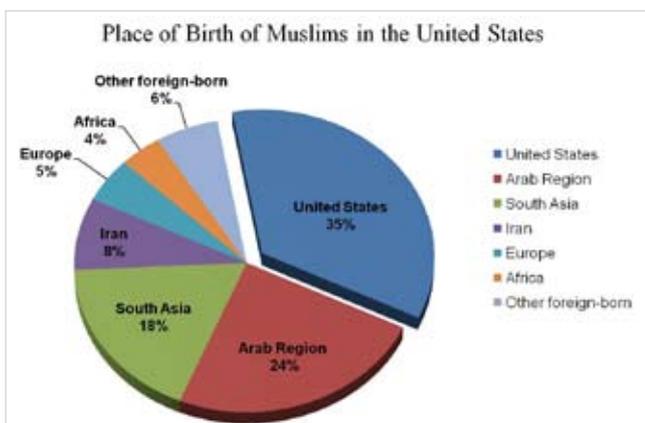
which included filmmakers, students, journalists and scholars. The event helped create opportunities for expanding the Embassy's outreach to the Muslim community.

The audience asked many questions during the lively exchange with Kronemer, ranging from specifics about how the film was shot and edited to how he handled many of the sensitivities that exist around portraying the Prophet Muhammad. Participants contributed thoughtful comments during the discussion and expressed gratitude to the Embassy for facilitating the conversation.

Kronemer and his colleagues at Kikim Media and Unity Productions Foundation spent three years making the film, which is two hours long. It tells the life story of Muhammad while interweaving a narrative about American Muslims, demonstrating the ways in which Americans practice Islam. Viewers are able to see how various American Muslims construe Muhammad's message and follow his teachings today, as the documentary contains interviews with a number of people at their homes, mosques and workplaces.

Kino Klub attendees enjoyed the chance to talk with Kronemer about his work in filmmaking and religious edification. In addition to creating and producing documentaries, Kronemer is the co-founder of Unity Productions Foundation. This foundation aims to bring peace through the media by aiding in the understanding of the world's many faiths and spiritual traditions, including Islam. Kronemer holds a Master's degree in Theological Studies from Harvard University and often lectures on religious diversity and Islam.

Who Are American Muslims?



(Photo courtesy of Department of State)

The total population of Muslims in the United States is estimated to be between 2 million and 7 million. Two-thirds (65 percent) of all U.S. Muslims were born outside the United States. They come from at least 68 countries, according to a survey by the Pew Research Center.

"No other country in the world has such diversity within its Muslim population," said Zahid H. Bukhari of Georgetown University in Washington. "You can say that a small replica of the Muslim world is living in America." Arabs, Pakistanis and other South Asians make up the largest percentage of the foreign-born Muslim population in the United States.

Slightly more than one-third (35 percent) of Muslims in America are native-born. More than half of native-born Muslims are African American. African Americans constitute 20 percent of the entire U.S. Muslim population. Many are converts to Islam. There are about 1,900 mosques in the United States, and the vast majority welcome Muslims from many different cultures and countries.

(Note: The size of the Muslim-American population is difficult to measure because the U.S. census does not track religious affiliation. The Pew Research Center conducted the first-ever nationwide, random sample of Muslim Americans in 2007, and it estimates the total number of Muslims in the United States at 2.35 million.)

Labor Day: Celebrating America's Workers



Labor Day parade float, featuring workers on utility poles, making its way down city street. (© AP Images)

Demo Memo, said about the make-up of the U.S. workforce: “Working women, growing diversity, more college graduates — these trends have been unfolding for decades. What’s new is the looming retirement of the Baby Boom generation” — people born from 1946 to 1964.

In the August 16, 2011, edition of her American Consumers Newsletter, Russell writes that “there is only one obstacle” standing in the way of future U.S. growth: older workers who occupy jobs that would otherwise be held by younger adults, including new college graduates struggling to find work.

“The recipe for growth in the United States is threefold,” Russell said. “Hire the young, follow the Internet and use your imagination.”

Labor Day is celebrated by Americans each year on the first Monday of September to honor the contributions of workers in the United States. A U.S. federal holiday since 1894, Labor Day also marks the unofficial end of summer. Around the country, people hold Labor Day parades like the one seen here in Dubuque, Iowa, featuring a parade float with workers perched on utility poles.

In honor of the day, here are a few facts about American workers:

JOBS AND PAYCHECKS

The U.S. unemployment rate was 9.1 percent in August 2011. (Since 1948, unemployment has averaged 5.7 percent, dipping to a record low of 2.5 percent in 1953 and reaching a historical high of 10.8 percent in 1982.) The jobs outlook, of great concern during the present climate of economic uncertainty, will be addressed by President Obama in a major speech September 8.

As of 2008, women slightly outnumbered men in managerial and professional occupations (26.4 million versus 24.7 million), according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The U.S. Joint Economic Committee reported that in 2010, women’s unemployment rate was 8.6 percent, compared with 10.6 percent for men.

Women still earn less — 77 cents for each male dollar, Obama said in March. But according to a 2011 study by Harris Interactive of recently unemployed workers, men are finding new jobs faster than women.

WORKFORCE

Demographics expert Cheryl Russell, author of the blog

A 2011 national survey by the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project at Indiana University reveals that, contrary to popular belief, most arts graduates are employed and holding jobs in their chosen fields.

The U.S. State Department reported in 2008 that immigrant women are 57 percent more likely to start a business than native-born U.S. women, and that immigrant men are 71 percent more likely to start a business than native-born U.S. men.

BENEFITS, LONG HOURS

As of 2011, 30 percent of same-sex unmarried couples had access to health-care benefits for their partner through their employer, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has extended such benefits to foreign-service State Department employees.

Eighty-seven percent of U.S. Fortune 500 companies (those with the highest revenues) have policies that protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation. The Human Rights Campaign Foundation reports that 59 percent of those large companies provide same-sex partner benefits.

In 2010, 78 percent of U.S. workers in private industry received a paid vacation as one of their employment benefits, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

A 2008 International Labour Organization report said that about 80 percent of employed Americans work 40 hours or more each week.

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 6,000 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!



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



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

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

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

Advising hours are by appointment from 13:00-17:00, Monday to Thursday. To schedule an appointment, please

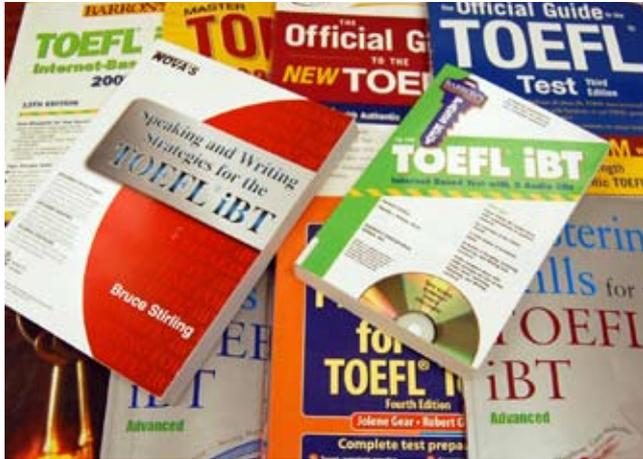


A sample of the materials offered by the Educational Advising Center at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent. (U.S. Embassy photo)

call (+99871) 140-2447 between 9:30 to 12:00 Monday through Friday or e-mail Tashkent-Advising@state.gov.

EducationUSA Opportunity Funds

Are you a top student? Do you want to apply to U.S. universities but can't afford the cost of taking the TOEFL and other tests? EducationUSA Opportunity funds can help! EducationUSA Opportunity funds are awarded to talented



students from Uzbekistan who have a good chance of receiving a scholarship from an accredited U.S. university, but who cannot afford the cost of applying to a U.S. university.

To be eligible for funding, you must:

- be an excellent student
- be applying to degree programs at U.S. universities

- be applying for Fall 2012 admission (undergraduate or graduate studies)
- be in need of financial assistance

Applicants will be chosen on the basis of both merit and financial need. Winners will be awarded a TOEFL test (and other expenses, depending on TOEFL results). Priority will be given to students who have achieved a high score on TOEFL practice tests.

Please note: EducationUSA cannot guarantee admission to U.S. universities and can only provide funding for application expenses.

Contact the EducationUSA center in Uzbekistan to learn more!

Address: 3, Moyqorghon Street, 5th Block, Yunusobod District, Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan.

Phone: (+99871) 140-2447

E-mail: Tashkent-Advising@state.gov

Website: <http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov/advising.html>



EducationUSA.state.gov



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