



IREX ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

WWW.IREX.ORG

HIGHER EDUCATION

INDEPENDENT MEDIA

INTERNET DEVELOPMENT

CIVIL SOCIETY

EURASIAN UNDERGRADUATES ACTIVE IN US COMMUNITIES

"I did not know how special I would feel," stated Armenian exchange student Amalya Yerosyan about her community service at a retirement home in Bemidji, Minnesota. Amalya, along with hundreds of other students from throughout Eurasia, is a participant in the FREEDOM Support Act Undergraduate Program (FSAU), a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the US Department of State.

In 2002 IREX began its administration of the FSAU program, through which first-, second-, and third-year undergraduate



FSAU fellow Denys Pervov of Ukraine volunteers as a soccer coach and referee at the YMCA in Illinois

students from 12 Eurasian countries spend a year at US community colleges and universities taking part in non-degree study, community *(Continued on page 2)*

HEROES TV PROGRAM INSPIRES CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN ALBANIA

Heroes come in many forms. In Albania, IREX has assisted in revealing local heroes who have inspired civic participation throughout the country. *Heroes*, a 30-minute TV program, was designed to train local Albanian TV stations in producing low-cost, indigenous programming. Nearly 70 episodes later, the popular show has inspired Albanians to take responsibility for themselves and their communities. By emulating the heroes depicted on the show, citizens have rebuilt schools, preserved cultural traditions, and kept local businesses in operation.

In the episode "District 50," a part of Tirana inhabited by migrants from northern Albania lies in ruin. The district *(Continued on page 4)*



IREX PRESIDENT MARK POMAR (2ND FROM LEFT) WITH CONGRESSMEN DANA ROHRABACHER (R-CA), RICK BOUCHER (D-VA), BOB GOODLATTE (R-VA), LAMAR SMITH (R-TX), JAMES T. WALSH (R-NY), AND JOHN J. LAFALCE (D-NY) AT THE MOSCOW-BASED CONFERENCE

IREX HOLDS GROUNDBREAKING INTERNET CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW

In 2002, IREX hosted the conference "Russia in the Internet Age: Balancing Freedom and Regulation," in partnership with the Russian Duma and Russia's Union of Internet Operators. The Moscow-based conference facilitated discussion between Russian and US Internet policymakers and stakeholders.

With more than three decades of program administration *(Continued on page 5)*

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ABOUT IREX

IREX (the International Research & Exchanges Board) is the premier US nonprofit organization specializing in higher education, independent media, Internet development, and civil society programs in the United States, Europe, Eurasia, the Near East, and Asia.

WOMEN OF ALL AGES EMPOWERED THROUGH TRAINING

In Sofia, Bulgaria, a two-day empowerment and human trafficking awareness seminar was held for 30 high school girls. The event was led by Animus Association, a Bulgarian nongovernmental women's organization that fosters gender equality through social services.

One month after the seminar, the group reconvened to discuss how the training had influenced their behavior. Two girls discussed how they realized, as a result of the training,

that they had been in a potentially dangerous situation the previous summer and could have fallen prey to traffickers, though they did not realize it at the time. Many participants said that their peers had asked for copies of the materials distributed during the seminar.

Several of the participants organized small groups at their schools to relay and discuss what they had learned. One girl taught an hour-long class *(Continued on page 6)*

ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION

The development of a civil society relies upon the knowledge and skills of its citizens and the quality of its educational institutions. IREX higher education programs give individuals in the United States and overseas the resources and opportunities they need to conduct innovative social science and humanities research, increase their professional knowledge and abilities, and advance their leadership skills.

RUSSIAN EXCHANGE STUDENT CERTIFIED AS MEDIATOR IN OKLAHOMA'S SUPREME COURT

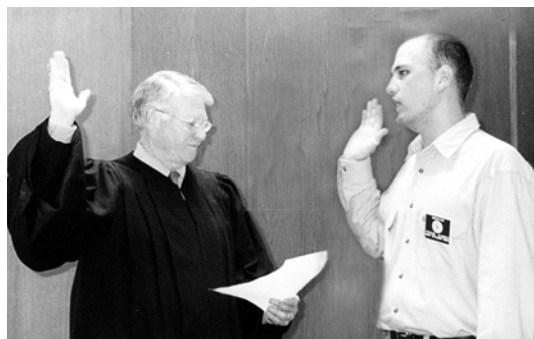
In April Yegor Ivanov, a participant in the Russian Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program (YLF), was sworn in as a mediator in Oklahoma's Supreme Court. Yegor completed 20 hours of formal training and attended mediation sessions in court to attain his certification in "Mediation for the Early Settlement."

Ivanov graduated from the Department of International Studies at Chita State Technical University, specializing in American

studies and English. He was selected for the highly competitive YLF program for his demonstrated leadership skills and interest in public service. At his host institution, Oklahoma State University, he took courses in American studies, international relations, and recreation management, as well as volunteered at the university.

Fostering good relationships between Russian and American universities, communities, and businesses has been the primary focus of his stay in the United States. His exposure to the American concept of social responsibility and his hands-on experience with US public-service institutions will be extremely valuable for his professional life in Russia.

YLF is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State.



Ivanov gets sworn in by Judge Robert M. Murphy, Jr.

IREX ALUMNUS HELPS PASS INFORMATION LAW IN KALININGRAD

On June 27, the Access to Information Law for the Kaliningrad region was finally enacted. The project to draft this legislation was launched nine months earlier by Transparency International Russia.

Undeterred by multiple obstacles, Boris Demidov—an alumnus of the FSA Contemporary Issues Fellowship program (CI) and general manager of Transparency International Russia—and civil society activists from other Russian NGOs managed to get a law passed that the Russian Duma had been unable to introduce for the past decade.

"The first regional Access to Information

Law has finally become a reality in Russia. Now it's up to the Russian federal government to follow the trend," said Demidov, hailing the advent of the new freedom of information legislation in the Kaliningrad region.

Intended to ensure the public's right to obtain non-classified information, the long-awaited law now needs to be promoted, implemented, and enforced. This is potentially a major step toward curbing corruption and increasing transparency among public officials.

CI is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State and is administered by IREX.

EURASIAN UNDERGRADUATES ACTIVE IN US COMMUNITIES

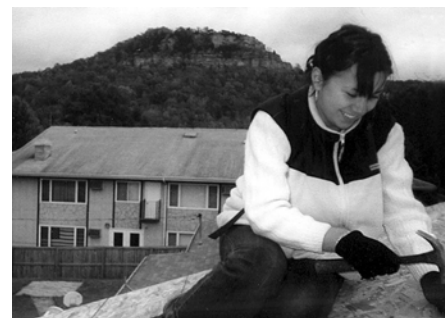
(Continued from page 1) service activities, and internships. Throughout the United States these students are becoming active, contributing members of local communities.

Denys Pervov of Mykolayiv, Ukraine, is spending his year at Wabash Valley College in Illinois, where he uses his talents as a soccer player to referee and coach children's soccer for the YMCA on weekends (see photo).

Georgian Nino Kobakhidze has become an active member of the community of La Crosse, Wisconsin, where she studies political science. For International Awareness Week she discussed Georgian cultural ancestry and language, prepared a photo gallery of her home country, and participated in a panel to discuss women's issues and differing roles of women in societies around the world. In addition to her studies, she volunteers at the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Irina Khalturina of Baku, Azerbaijan, is studying journalism at California State University at Bakersfield. As a staff writer for the university newspaper, *The Runner*, she was assigned to cover a business conference in Bakersfield. "I was there like a real journalist," Irina commented. "It was so exciting! I took my first interview in English!"

Working with the blind, tutoring children, repairing homes, and helping people register to vote are just a few of the activities FSAU fellows took part in during 2002 in addition to their academic studies. One of the most common comments from fellows is how interested their American peers have been in the cultures of their home countries. Fellows have been glad to share stories and often sit on panels and give presentations about their home countries, fostering a greater level of international understanding, interest, and respect.



FSAU fellow Leonilla Guglya volunteering with Habitat for Humanity during her fellowship in Wisconsin

\$50,000 FELLOWSHIP AWARDED FOR STUDY OF RURAL CHINESE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

In 2002 IREX awarded its annual John J. and Nancy Lee Roberts Fellowship to Dr. Qingshan Tan. Dr. Tan, an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at Cleveland State University, is investigating the village electoral system as an emerging political institution in China. The Roberts Fellowship supports cutting-edge research in the social sciences in Europe, Eurasia, the Near East, and Asia by annually providing one grant of up to \$50,000.

Village elections, regarded as one of the three most significant events since Deng Xiaoping's reform, along with de-Communization and free-village and township enterprising, have fundamentally transformed the Chinese countryside. Since the introduction of the 1987 electoral system, more than half a million villages have conducted free elections for village chiefs in China.

"I [do] think that this grant will enable me to research [on] an important subject in today's Chinese political life, that is the understanding of how an important political

institution like the village election in China was created, evolved, and developed," said Dr. Tan. "Such understanding will help gain insights [on] future Chinese political development, especially with regard to electoral expansion to higher levels of government positions."

Dr. Tan is making several trips to China to conduct research for this project. He is conducting interviews and collecting data on the latest rounds of elections in Fujian, Jiangxi, Anhui, Sichuan, Hunan, Hebei, Jilin, Liaoning, and Ningxia. Additionally, he is interviewing representatives from NGOs, universities, research institutes, and the central government.

Dr. Tan received his BA in English from the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute, his MA in international relations from the Beijing Institute of International

Relations, and his PhD in political science from Emory University.

Dr. Tan's proposal was selected from among a diverse pool of applications. Other proposals focused on such topics as religion, law, cultural anthropology, and women's studies.



An accountant in Xinping village counts ballots before an election

GRANT EXPANDS MEDIA COVERAGE OF WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL

The trial of Yugoslavia's former president Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague not only heralds a new era in international law and individual responsibility, but it also provides groundbreaking opportunity for media from throughout the former Yugoslavia to work together in bringing coverage and analysis of the proceedings to their home audiences, in their own languages.

IREX's Hague Project was initiated in 2001 as part of the USAID-funded ProMedia program. The project originally provided opportunities for Serbian journalists. In 2002, a generous grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation provided for the extension of this opportunity to journalists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

From specialized training to logistical support, IREX assistance includes the rental of facilities that serve as a home-office for reporters, complete with computers and telephone lines that allow them to maintain communication with their local newsrooms. The shared housing also serves as a press center

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA

By providing balanced and unbiased information—and by serving as a forum for political expression—-independent media nurture an active and informed civil society capable of making meaningful contributions to democratic and economic processes. IREX focuses on developing local capacity, offering the technical and legal support necessary for building successful independent media systems.

where journalists from a variety of media and countries can exchange information and cooperate on stories.

Ljiljana Smajlovic, an IREX consultant, explains that "For a Serb audience, the Tribunal proceedings have to be covered the way everything else has to be covered: in Serbian, with a Serbian accent, by credible Serb journalists asking the hard questions Serb viewers, readers, and listeners would ask if they had the opportunity."

The Hague Project seeks to foster understanding of the ICTY, encourage the development of high-quality journalism, and promote regional cooperation. Coverage of the trial, together with reporting on the crimes of the last 10 years, will help involve citizens of the former Yugoslavia in the process of coming to terms with their countries' recent past.

LANDMARK LAWS PASSED IN PODGORICA

On September 16, the Assembly of the Montenegrin Parliament passed a long-anticipated set of three progressive media laws. The new laws mandate the ban of public entities from establishing private media, the right of journalists to maintain the anonymity of their sources, the establishment of an independent broadcasting regulator to allocate broadcast frequencies, and the transformation of state-owned broadcasters into public broadcasting services under nonpartisan management.

This legislation represents a major victory for IREX-supported media projects. Once the laws are implemented, Montenegro will have one of the most advanced media legal frameworks in the Balkans.

IREX administers the USAID-funded Montenegro Independent Media Program.

HEROES TV PROGRAM INSPIRES CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN ALBANIA

(Continued from page 1) has no infrastructure except for the electricity siphoned off through illegal connections. However, the citizens of the area were able to successfully raise funds by pooling their own money and obtaining funding from two international organizations. The citizens then worked together to clean up the district and build a road and sewage system. After the episode was broadcast, the mayor of Tirana credited "District 50" with providing the impetus for improvements in several other neighborhoods in the city.

In "The Babies," the program shows the deplorable conditions in a maternity hospital that cares for abandoned children. Through local volunteer efforts, a new work area was created and new cribs and bedding provided. After the episode was aired, Albanian citizens lined up at the hospital to adopt orphaned children.

"Andoni" describes how the former director of a bank branch in southern Albania became a hero during the pyramid financial schemes of 1997. Before the economy collapsed, Mr Andoni fled the country with the savings of the depositors at his bank. When order was restored in Albania, Andoni returned and promptly gave the depositors back their money. At a time when the majority of the population had lost their life savings during the financial



A screenshot of the Heroes television program

crisis, the episode showed that not everyone was trying to take advantage of economic instability.

Each of these popular episodes is created by a production crew with technical support from IREX through the USAID-funded ProMedia program. *Heroes* producers then work in the field with the local broadcasters to bring each episode to the screen and to instruct the stations on production techniques. The show is then broadcast over an informal network of 21 television stations throughout Albania.

Several local stations within the network have used *Heroes* as a model by highlighting community heroes in their own local newscasts. Additionally, by depicting the civic achievements of local people and communities and encouraging further civic participation, the collaborators involved in creating, distributing, and broadcasting the episodes have set an important example for the Albanian media community.

NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENT PREPARES ARMENIANS FOR ELECTIONS

In October, IREX completed production and distribution of 75,000 copies of a full-color, 16-page special election supplementary newspaper in advance of the October 20 Armenian local elections. The project involved 42 Armenian journalists, 12 advertising sales associates, three American journalists/trainers, and one advertising sales trainer.

IREX trainers worked with journalists in six cities across the country, as well as with top officials of the Armenian Central Election Commission. The publication was distributed free of charge through 14 Yerevan and regional newspapers, NGOs, and other organizations.

Entitled "Local Self-Governing Bodies, 2002 Elections," the insert covered topics such as water supply, unemployment, the condition of roads, garbage collection, and housing. The newspaper insert also explained voting methods and voter rights.

IREX Resident Advisor Peter Eichstaedt said the main goal of the supplement was to help readers learn about their rights and to offer citizens a forum for airing their concerns. "When there is a democracy it means that power is in the people's hands," noted Eichstaedt. "And now (after independence) when it is returned to people again, people don't realize it. We want to remind people that it is their country and politicians must answer their questions and solve their problems."

Meant as a voter aid and also as an example to local journalists on how to serve reader needs, the supplement helps readers understand the role of local and regional leaders and what voters should expect from their elected heads.

This project was part of the USAID-funded ProMedia Armenia program.

FIRST BELARUSIAN FESTIVAL OF REGIONAL TELEVISION HELD

The First Belarusian Festival of Regional Television (Focus-2002) was held in Minsk on September 12-14, 2002. Organized by IREX, the Thomson Foundation (UK), and the local Television Broadcasters' Network (TBN), the festival brought together for the first time all television stations and production companies working on the regional level.

In 2001 IREX, through the USAID-funded ProMedia program, sponsored a group of Belarusian TV journalists to attend the Golden Beggar Festival of Local Television in Kosice, Slovakia, the major competition in Central and Eastern Europe for television. The level of the Belarusian entries in Slovakia was noticeably lower than that of their counterparts in other Eastern European countries, and IREX, assisted by the Thomson Foundation, decided that a Belarusian competition would help improve the quality of TV production.

Additional funding was received from the British Embassy in Minsk, and in early 2002 the festival was announced. The organizers developed a series of seminars, consultations, and on-site visits to assist local stations in producing news clips, documentary films, and public service announcements for the festival competition.

Over 100 works were entered by 25 organizations. After preliminary selection, 43 films by 18 organizations made it to the final competition, where an international jury screened them. The premier works were identified in six categories: Best Documentary, Best News Program, Best PSA, Best Journalist, Best Cameraman, and Best Presenter. The jury members expressed surprise at the high level of the films submitted for consideration.

"All of the works were extremely interesting," said Gennady Buravkin, a prominent Belarusian commentator and poet, and also chairman of the jury. "We came to the realization that this was a festival of regional, but not provincial, television."

Another judge, Eva Dekanovska, chairperson of the Golden Beggar Festival, requested four of the documentaries and three news programs for screening at the Kosice Festival. "The progress made over the past year by these Belarusian television companies is truly astounding," she said. Plans are under way for Focus-2003 to further develop the gains made in 2002.

PROMOTING INTERNET DEVELOPMENT

For over 10 years, IREX has been a leader in using the Internet as a tool for regional development. By providing computer training and Internet access, IREX strengthens democratization, creates new resources for the exchange of ideas, and opens a window to the West.

INTERNET OFFERS ANSWERS FOR DOCTOR IN UKRAINE

by Serhiy Korchaka

My name is Serhiy Korchaka and I am a cardiologist from Kirovohrad, Ukraine. Because our clinic cannot afford the latest international medical journals, I made a few attempts to find cutting-edge medical information on the Internet. But I did not have basic Internet search skills and spending significant amounts of time on the Internet was a major financial drain for me.

Then I visited an Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) access site. In addition to the free training on computers and the Internet, I took a course on HTML basics and created websites—hosted free of charge by IATP—for our hospital and myself.

In February 2002, my colleagues showed me an unusual electrocardiogram. The test had been made in 1999, but no explanation had been found. Subsequently, one of my more-experienced colleagues received some information that suggested

the results were indicative of Brugada syndrome, which we had no information on. I logged onto the Internet and, much to my astonishment, found two articles in Russian by Russian scientists. Then I came across a Belgian website devoted entirely to this disease. I was able to confirm that the strange electrocardiogram was indeed indicative of Brugada syndrome.

There is still no information on Brugada syndrome in Russian or Ukrainian journals or books, even though this disease was first described in 1991 and is not rare. This is why I am convinced that the Internet is the best source of information.

IATP has been extremely useful to the medical community in Kirovohrad. Thank you, IATP.

IATP is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State and is administered by IREX.



Dr. Korchaka (left) with IATP trainer Olexander Shleyenkov

ENABLING COMMUNITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

The former Soviet republics of Central Asia have not successfully established laws that guarantee the participation of disabled persons in society. Wheelchairs are not viable options in cities dotted with stairway entrances and no curb cuts, and current education for disabled youth does little to prepare them to become productive members of society. While the people of Central Asia show great sympathy toward disabled persons, they have begun only slowly to redirect energies and resources towards fostering social integration.

IATP works to set an example for accessibility in the region. Actions that IATP has taken to improve opportunities for the

disabled include:

- Construction of wheelchair ramps at IATP sites
- Conducting training events for deaf and hearing-impaired persons
- Providing small grants to develop Internet content targeting disabled communities
- Establishing partnerships with local organizations that promote the rights of the disabled

Following an IATP computer-skills training for children of the Kambarov School for Disabled Children, one student remarked, “Thanks to you, we, in spite of our physical

IREX HOLDS GROUNDBREAKING INTERNET CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW

(Continued from page 1) experience in Russia and over 10 years of international Internet development work, IREX has a great deal of experience with this topic. The conference focused on four areas: access to information and the digital divide, e-commerce, intellectual property and privacy, and individual rights and information security.

Conference speakers included seven members of the US House of Representatives; high-ranking members of the Russian government; IT business and NGO leaders; and other key members of the Internet technology community. In total, the conference included over 150 participants.

Some of the most disputed issues were the state of the Russian IT market, the rights of individuals and institutions, and the best strategies for ensuring security while protecting freedoms. These debates illustrated the varying perspectives of organizations, individuals, and governments who have faced the same problems under different circumstances.

The consensus was that Russia faces many specific technical, legal, and cultural challenges to the successful development of an online society, but wary progress is being made. A full report of the conference is available at www.irex.org/mosnetconference.

Conference support was provided through the Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Starr Foundation, The People Technology Foundation, Coudert Brothers, US-Russia Business Council, and the Global Internet Policy Initiative.

disabilities, feel ourselves full members of [the] society.”

IATP is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State.



Wheelchair accessible ramp at IATP's Navoi public access site

INTERNET PROJECTS ADDRESS TERRORISM ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

As the one-year anniversary of the tragic events of September 11 approached, many workshops and events were held both in commemoration and to discuss terrorism in the 21st century.

On November 2, IATP Armenia webmaster Margarita Ghazaryan conducted a workshop dedicated to an IATP grants project against terrorism hosted by the Yerevan Academy of Fine Arts. The participants included the employees of the Department of Computer Graphics, students of the academy, and IATP staff members. The resulting website, <http://iatp.r.am/grants/anti-terror>, features a collection of anti-terrorism artwork.

On September 11, IREX hosted an online chat for alumni throughout Moldova to commemorate the tragedy of September 11. One Community Connections alumnus and four FSA FLEX alumni who were in the United States at the time of the attacks moderated the chat. The chat's 20 other participants engaged in a discussion of how terror can be stopped and how they can contribute to making the

world a better and safer place. The chat ended with a moment of silence to honor the victims of the attacks.

Also on September 11, more than 50 Ukrainian alumni of US government-funded exchange programs engaged in an online discussion with US Ambassador to Ukraine Carlos Pascual and Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer Scott Urbom. The alumni gathered at IATP access sites in Ukraine for the chat, entitled "The World after the Terrorist Attacks." The alumni asked many questions regarding changes in America after the attacks, measures taken by the US Congress to freeze or eliminate terrorists' funds, and collaborative efforts to fight terrorism.

Across Central Asia and Eastern Europe, IREX, through IATP, enabled people to develop and host websites devoted to September 11, anti-terrorism, and international understanding. Through the Internet, people across the globe have been able to sympathize over, discuss, and debate complex events and policies, both past and current, that shape the world.

IREX OPENS TAJIKISTAN'S FIRST INTERNET PUBLIC ACCESS SITE

On March 27 IREX held an official opening ceremony for the first-ever free Internet public access site in Tajikistan. The site was established jointly with the Internet Access and Training Program's (IATP) Internet service provider, Babilon T, and is located in Dushanbe. Over the course of 2002, IATP developed its services in Tajikistan dramatically. By the end of the year, four public access sites had been opened and hundreds of individuals and organizations were benefiting from their services.

IATP is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State.

BUILDING CIVIL SOCIETY

IREX is dedicated to promoting open, democratic societies by strengthening the third sector—nonprofit organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups. IREX designs and implements programs that foster collaborative and flexible approaches that meet local community needs.

WOMEN OF ALL AGES EMPOWERED THROUGH TRAINING

(Continued from page 1) about trafficking and conducting safe job searches. The girls noted a high level of interest among their classmates and several of the participants expressed interest in volunteering at Animus to help others learn how to protect themselves from being trafficked.

Animus is IREX's lead Bulgarian partner in the Regional Empowerment Initiative for Women (REIW), a program of the International Labor Affairs Bureau of the US Department of Labor.

In Lapusna, Moldova, after an REIW empowerment and job skills training for eleventh-grade girls, one of the participants approached the trainer with a request to organize a similar training for the girls' mothers. The subsequent training focused on

self-confidence, healthy relationships between parents, and the impact of these relationships on children, especially daughters.

The training provided the mothers with the means to meet other women with similar concerns, and the group has since established a support group, the Mothers Club.

In Kyiv, Ukraine, IREX organized the REIW Training and Networking Workshop. Representatives of REIW partner organizations in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russia, and Serbia took part in the three-day event. Panel and training topics included lessons learned in past campaigns, identifying groups most at risk of being targeted for trafficking, data collection and evaluation methods, and team building among partner organizations.

Additionally, La Strada/Ukraine gave a presentation on efforts to conduct nationwide anti-trafficking public-awareness and educational campaigns, and coordinators from Winrock International Women for Women Centers in Ukraine conducted empowerment Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions and lead panels and discussions.

For many of the organizations, the workshop provided the first opportunity to learn of similar organizations' work. Through the network developed with the help of REIW, partners will support each other in their work on the challenging issue of preventing human trafficking.



Young girls in Ungheni, Moldova, brainstorm on their futures during a training session by the National Women's Studies and Information Center.

RUSSIAN YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS GATHER FOR FUNDRAISING FESTIVAL

One of the most significant problems facing youth social organizations in Russia is lack of funding. In an effort to raise citizen involvement in community development, the Festival of South Russian Youth Organizations, "Crimson Sails 2002," was held in the city of Taganrog.

The goal of the festival was to provide youth and social organizations with the opportunity to share their experiences and discuss the development of charity programs through citizen and business involvement. Eighty-eight separate representatives from southern Russian youth organizations participated in the festival.

The festival hosted multiple seminars, discussions, and classes. The event began with Vasily Ptitsny, from the Southern Regional Resource Center, and his seminar "Fundraising: Steps Toward Collecting Individual Donations." Particularly memorable classes included "Fundraising: Means and Mechanisms for Attracting Resources" and a discussion entitled "Youth in Contemporary Society."

This project was made possible through the IREX-administered, USAID-funded Promoting and Strengthening Nongovernmental Organizations Program (Pro-NGO).

CHARITY OF SEAMSTRESSES REINVIGORATES COMMUNITY

In remembering the difficulties of growing up in wartime Soviet Russia, Nina Petrova recalls, "People solved their own problems then, but in today's world many who have very little ask the government for help." It is the spirit of self-sufficiency that has inspired her work helping her community to solve its problems without government assistance.

For years Nina Petrova has aided deprived families and orphans by setting up collection points for charity items, but it was not until 2002 that a \$700 grant from the Siberian Center for Support of Social Initiatives made possible her dream of opening a charitable seamstress shop. Small grants such as this one are a key tool in IREX's Promoting and Strengthening Nongovernmental Organizations program (Pro-NGO), funded by USAID.

Today, more than 72 mothers and their more than 200 children have come together as part of the association "Radost," where they not only sew and repair their own clothing, but also prepare garments for shelters and orphanages. Plans for the future include starting a continuous guardianship program for formerly abandoned children

released from the children's psychiatric hospital, given that there are always approximately 25-30 children released from treatment before they are assigned to an orphanage.

Hopefully, these children will grow up to believe in the good in life and not have to repeat the mistakes of their parents, thanks to people who are taking the initiative to do something for themselves and for others.



A young orphan receives new clothing, courtesy of Radost

CANCER DETECTION CAMPAIGN SAVES LIVES IN NOVOROSIJSK

There is little support for programs that promote women's health issues within Russia's tattered national healthcare system. According to Dr. M. G. Leonov, cancer specialist and director of the Novorossiysk Oncological Center, gynecological cancer prevention is one of the most overlooked and underfunded areas in the national healthcare budget. In fact, says Dr. Leonov, "The State Duma has not supported funding initiatives for cancer prevention programs for the last three years running. The tragedy of this situation lies in the fact that with vast majority of gynecological cancers, early detection almost invariably can save a patient's life."

Breast cancer affects an estimated eight percent of Russian women, approximately six million individuals. Russian federal cancer units, the state healthcare sector's main line of defense, are chronically deprived of funds, equipment and staff. The

Novorossiysk center alone is burdened with a service area of approximately 700,000 people, an impossibly large number of potential patients.

In 2002, as part of the oncological center's search for funding, Dr. Leonov and his colleagues discovered the Southern Russia Resource Center, an institution whose work is supported through the IREX-administered, USAID-funded Promoting and Strengthening Nongovernmental Organizations (Pro-NGO) program. Through a partnership between the oncological clinic and the regional resource center, Dr. Leonov received a grant that enabled his center to conduct Novorossiysk's first-ever breast cancer prevention program designed for the general public.

Along with five of his colleagues and seven student volunteers from medical colleges throughout the Krasnodarskii Krai, Dr. Leonov conducted a three-month

prevention promotion, from October to December 2002. Through an informational campaign in local print and broadcast media, the women of Novorossiysk were invited to participate in free cancer screenings and examinations held at the oncological clinic. Additionally, instructional pamphlets and posters describing how to perform breast self-examinations were distributed to city pharmacies and doctor's offices.

Of the hundreds of women screened, 148 were diagnosed with either precancerous growths or early-stage breast cancer, and eight women had mid-term or advanced manifestations. According to Dr. Leonov, "Most of these cases can be successfully treated. These women can experience a 100 percent recovery because of early detection." With the success of this event, Dr. Leonov hopes to make the campaign an annual event.

RUSSIAN SMALL GRANT RECIPIENT ORGANIZES INFLUENTIAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING CAMPAIGN

With only \$990, Lyudmila Erokhina of the Russian Far East organized a far-reaching and influential PR and education campaign to raise public awareness and educate law enforcement officials about the trafficking of women. She is an inspiring example of how much can be achieved with a small amount of money.

In Primorskii Krai and its city of Vladivostok, the human trafficking business is, unfortunately, flourishing. Utilizing her academic expertise, Erokhina, chair of the philosophy department at the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, designed the campaign “Stop the Women’s Slave Trade.”

Erokhina’s campaign included a variety of educational outreach tools:

- A poster contest and exhibit
- Lectures at high schools and universities
- Articles in local newspapers
- Interviews with local television stations

The poster contest and exhibit brought together students and professional designers to graphically convey the image of women caught

in a web of corruption and sexual exploitation. The exhibit exceeded all expectations in attracting the attention of young people and effectively disseminating information locally about trafficking. Moreover, Erokhina coordinated the production and distribution of 1,500 brochures to young women at universities, schools, discos, dormitories, and restaurants. The resourcefulness of Erokhina and the generous help from volunteers enhanced the effectiveness of the grant money.

Erokhina’s efforts were not limited to the academic and youth environments. Familiar with the criminological aspect of trafficking, she also conducted seminars for local police officers, judges, and prosecutors. This led to her current work as a senior researcher at the Vladivostok Center for Organized Crime.

The trafficking of women in Russia is

not only a widespread business, but is also a criminal activity often underestimated and misunderstood by the general public and law enforcement officials. Lyudmila Erokhina (see photo) has taken a new, scholarly approach to the problem, applying academic research

methodology and putting strong emphasis on the responsible collection of data. This has given her efforts a concrete foundation of credibility and has galvanized anti-trafficking concerns in the region. Her book *Trafficking of Women* is the first book published in

Russia that directly deals with this difficult issue. All the information gathered and distributed as a result of this project has been incorporated into Erokhina’s courses “Introduction to Gender Studies” and “The Philosophy of Feminism.”

Erokhina, an alumna of multiple IREX programs, received her grant through the ECA-funded Alumni Small Grant Program.



IREX REDESIGNS WWW.IREX.ORG

In 2002, IREX launched a new version of its website, www.irex.org. The redesigned site offers many improvements over previous versions, including the following:

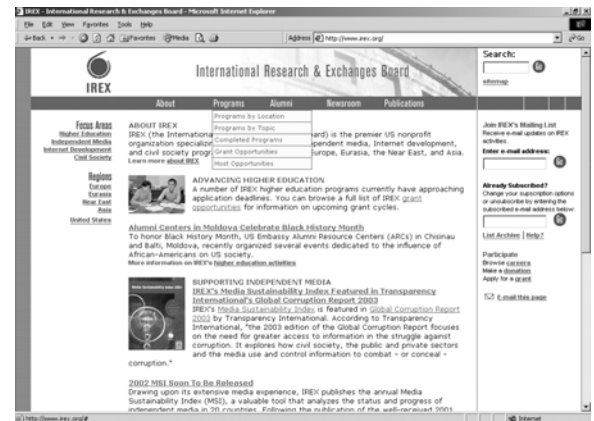
- Intuitive content organization
- Dynamic navigation
- Regional photographs
- Topical and regional pages
- A newsroom with media outreach services

As with previous versions of the website, www.irex.org offers grant opportunities, downloadable application materials, career postings, and updates on alumni activities.

IREX launched its first website in 1994 and has continued to refine and improve its

online presence ever since. The latest redesign was prompted by the need to organize the wealth of information IREX offers about its activities online (over 7,500 files developed over nearly a decade).

IREX is committed to publicly sharing information about its mission, activities, and opportunities and will continue to seek ways of improving its online services to meet the needs of its growing audience. Please visit our website at www.irex.org.



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Independent Media
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