

AUCA Magazine



*American University
of Central Asia*

Winter 2008

A Decade of Innovation: AUCA turns 10!

Sensational Results from a Small Expedition

AUCA Law Students Win Lawsuits

Alumni Dossier

Profile: Trustee William Newton-Smith

MBA

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Faculty of AUCA business program is its greatest asset, which is a **synergy of Western teaching** and professional experience and **local business leaders** and practitioners **knowledge and skills**.

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Freshmen on their first day at the University

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First and Lasting Impressions

It is obvious to say that you only have one chance of a "first impression". First impressions matter.

When I recently started at the American University of Central Asia as English Editor I was frequently asked by friends and colleagues "How's it going?" or "What's it like there?" As

the new-boy in the faculty (I'm actually 50 years young, but as Editor I'm allowed some leeway!) I guess you can say I'm qualified to comment.

Over the years I've lived and worked in Kyrgyzstan, I've visited numerous universities and education establishments and I can say emphatically that AUCA is quite unique.

As you walk through the doors of the main building you know immediately you're somewhere different. There's energy, a vitality of 'something', something not quite definable. Students are milling around, some rushing to lectures, some simply standing or sitting around chatting with their friends or snacking in the cafeteria. You could say that this is nothing special, but yet there's an air of enthusiasm, activity and fun that seems to permeate throughout the campus. As you continue through inside, you are struck by the numbers of posters advertising club activities and forthcoming events, small exhibitions and cultural displays. It is obvious that this University is not just about academic excellence and achievement; it's also about social and cultural interchange, respect and mutual understanding between peoples, and importantly about having FUN.

I've since discovered that there are many Student clubs here covering such diverse activities as: music, politics, business, sport, cultural exchange, radio, computing, debating, and more recently the AUCA TV channel. So it's clear that life here outside of academia is often frantic and exciting. You never know quite for certain what will be happening the following week!

First impressions do count. It's just as important for an employing organization as it is for a job applicant. Would you want to work for a sloppy, disorganized, uncaring company? No, I don't think so. First impressions count, it can be the difference between 'Yes' and 'No', and you don't get a second chance.

Big question, would I send my son to AUCA? Well that's easy, yes, but will my son want to study at the same University as his father works? I think that's probably another story!

So far so good. I'm enjoying my work here and my colleagues are great. You know you're in the right place when the work doesn't feel like a task. First Impressions can be Lasting Impressions, so make them good ones.

Nigel Browne

AUCA Magazine

American University of Central Asia, formed in 1997, is dedicated to improving the quality of education it offers by adding new curricula, new programs, and new services to equip its graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to this rapidly changing and developing region and the world beyond.

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President's Remarks on AUCA Tenth Anniversary of the Independence

Dear students, faculty, staff, friends, parents, alumni, members of the Board of Trustees, Madame Ambassador, and Mr. Vice Minister.

On November 12, 1997 AUCA (then AUK) became an independent institution of higher learning dedicated to academic excellence. From the outset, our University introduced an innovative curriculum based on critical thinking and freedom of expression that generated educational reform and developed imaginative and entrepreneurial leaders for the new century.

On that day then First Lady Hilary Rodham Clinton participated in our first initiation ceremony that introduced the freshman class to the rigors and privileges of participating in a special learning community, where students and faculty are co-learners in the search for truth. Mrs. Clinton shared the podium with then President Akayev, founder and Provost Kamilla Sharshkeeva, and AUK President John Clark.

Today, ten years later, November 12, 2007 in this tenth initiation ceremony we look back with wonder at the courage and imagination that enabled our great University to be founded. The original idea was Kamilla's. Without her extraordinary leadership and persuasiveness there would be no AUCA today. We applaud her, and we know that she is with us today in spirit.

Kamilla's dream was supported by three founding angels: the governments of the Kyrgyz Republic and the United States and the Open Society Institute. These wise angels spread their wings and enabled more than twelve hundred students to graduate from our University. Armed with the critical thinking skills and the knowledge to chart their paths, our graduates have already become leaders and entrepreneurs across Central Asia and well beyond. They are living proof that the dream of an American university in Central Asia has taken hold. They are already becoming the angels of our future.

The pride and success of our alums are the direct result of gutsy, innovative faculty and staff who nurtured their students in the study and spirit of the liberal arts. We ask now that those faculty and staff who have been with us since the time of our declaration of independence stand as well call your names:

From the faculty

Burul Shambaeva, Eleonora Karypkulova, Azia Akmatova, Beishegul Alieva, Temirbek Bobushev, Syrgak Kydyraliev, Natalia Majarova, Veronika Drujinina, Olga Grekova, Aleksandr Komarov, Inna Dyachenko, Evgenia Vinogradova, Tatiana Kolesnikova, Svetlana Kunduzakova, Anara Sarygulova, Nurilla Sharshkeeva, Irina Larionova, and Nikolai Shulgin.

From the staff

Ainura Adjibekova, Elena Alyushina, Galina Zalesskaya, Kalbu Argyanova.

Just as we treasure the dedication of those who have shared our first ten years of innovation, so, too, we celebrate the AUCA of



today, a university that has settled into itself and is planning its way to an exciting future. We highlight the stories of a four of our scholarship students from four different Central Asian countries. Their brilliance, courage and imagination exemplify the values that brought us into being and propel us forward. We single out one very special faculty member who graces our University with his presence and inspires colleagues and students across all Bishkek and the international scholarly community to think critically and lovingly.

We envision our path forward as an English speaking international learning and living community with a strong undergraduate research program, a rich general education program with a focus on Central Asia, and exciting preparatory, undergraduate, graduate education and adult educational programs, all with an excellent international faculty, computerized connectivity to the world and a commitment to the public good. This is the academic recipe for an institution seeking US accreditation and an international student body prepared for lifelong learning and leadership.

We collectively pledge to channel the creative energy and resources of our founders into an amazing future filled with the immense creativity of a University that combines the greatness of the educational traditions of Central Asia, Russia and the United States of America.

*Ellen S. Hurwitz, Ph.D.
President*

AUCA Software Engineering Team Earns Spot at Prestigious Competition in Russia



After a strong showing at a national qualifying competition at Kyrgyz-Russian Slavonic University in mid November, AUCA won the right to send a team of software engineering students to Barnaul, Russia, to compete in the semi-final round of the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest sponsored by IBM next month. Four AUCA teams placed in the top 20, including a third and fourth place finish behind the perennially strong Slavonic University teams. Three of AUCA's top individual programmers will be chosen to represent the University at the next round of the prestigious competition, which began in the U.S.A. in 1977. Annually several hundred university teams from all over the world enter the competition, which started as a way to identify the most gifted young programmers in the early days of the software industry.

"Results of this championship reflect how the intellectual potential in information technologies is spread over the world," remarked Dmitry Shostak, trainer of the AUCA programming teams. "In addition, it characterizes how well the university educates its students in this particular sphere."

The world tournament is held in two stages that include a semi-final regional round and the World Finals to be hosted by the University of Alberta in Banff Springs, Canada in April of 2008. At the semi-finals in Russia the AUCA team will join more than 200 squads from universities in the Northeastern European Region, which includes almost all of the former Soviet republics to demonstrate its intellectual power, creative thinking and the knowledge of contemporary software engineering.

AUCA teams began participating in the International Collegiate Programming Contest just a few years ago and have demonstrated continuously improving results at the regional level. In 2002 they placed 99th out of 116 teams, while in 2004 they took 84th place out of 200 teams.

"I've been a part of this tournament for three years, and my results have changed from very bad to pretty good," remarked Maksat Amangeldiev '08, Software Engineering. "This year we were leading in the national round for almost half the competition, but our patience ran out and we

managed only 3rd place. But, we completed the same number of tasks as the winning Slavonic University team," continued Amangeldiev.

In accordance with the contest rules, the teams, each consisting of three members, have 5 hours to solve as many tasks as possible on one computer. The trainers and contest organizers believe that it tests the ability to work in teams and divide responsibilities, as well as challenges the knowledge of such fundamental disciplines as data structure, discrete mathematics, computational geometry, and others. As Dmitry Shostak stated, "Success is mostly a result of creative thinking and implementation of the right strategy to complete the tasks within the limited time."

"It's a serious sport and you feel real excitement when you have to mobilize all your knowledge to win this assignment," remarked Amangeldiev.

"Participation in the international programming contests contributes to raising AUCA's international rating and recognition, as well as helping the students to master their zprogramming skills," concluded Shostak.

AUCA Initiative to Create Online Research Archive Gains Region-Wide Support



At the recent 8th International Conference entitled "Issyk-Kul 2007: Libraries and the Democratization of Society" in Kyrgyzstan, library representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan signed an agreement to support an AUCA initiative to establish the region's first internet-based archive of scientific research papers, reviewed

monographs and other academic publications. Within the framework of this initiative, the AUCA Library will serve as a pilot institution to test all the technologies used in establishing and maintaining the electronic archive. The AUCA Library will then share its experience and recommendations for development of the archive at the regional level.

"In the beginning of this year we initiated the launch of the electronic archive of papers authored by Kyrgyz scientists. Today the repository includes 108 research documents prepared by prominent Kyrgyz scholars," remarked Sania Battalova, head of the AUCA Library. "Now our ideas will be spread region-wide as other countries have also demonstrated an interest to present their scientific achievements to the general public."

The electronic archive offers the public free access to reviewed scientific documents with the right to read, copy, download, disseminate, publish, search and refer to the archive articles.

"The launch of the regional electronic repository of scientific papers developed by the scholars from all over Central Asia will offer new opportunities for science development and help to eliminate the barriers on the way to full-fledged scientific cooperation," said Battalova.

Initiators of this project believe that the establishment of the regional electronic archive will become the first step to formulate an international informational library portal. The informational portal is deemed to contain the fullest and most updated information about regional libraries, its activities and educational resources.

The National Library Consortium of the Kyrgyz Republic, with support from the Ministry of Culture of the Kyrgyz Republic, organized the conference, which was held in early October at the famous Aurora Resort on the shores of Issyk Kul.

U.S. Fellowship Program Targets AUCA Students, Faculty Who Will Lead Business Development in Central Asia



In September, forty-four AUCA students in Business Administration and Economics Programs became the first awardees of the recently established U.S. Central Asian Educational Foundation (CAEF) Enterprise Scholarships, which aims to provide educational opportunities in business and economics and fostering the growth of free enterprise and open markets in the region. Forty-four freshman students were selected from a pool of applicants to receive annual scholarships ranging from \$300 to \$2,000. In addition, this summer four AUCA instructors from the Business

Administration and Economics Programs were awarded 6-week fellowships at the Carlson School of Business at the University of Minnesota.

Over the next ten years AUCA will be allocated over \$3 million for student scholarships, internships and faculty development programs.

At the press conference held to announce the launch of this new program AUCA President Ellen S. Hurwitz emphasized that the Business Administration and Economics Programs will be powerfully enriched by the gift from CAEF.

"Over the next ten years we will provide to Central Asia hundreds and hundreds of students with the ability to generate new business in the region with the values and the knowledge tied with the principles of a democratic society," remarked Ellen Hurwitz, AUCA President.

The CAEF Enterprise Fellowship Program will focus on need and merit-based scholarships for undergraduate Business Administration students at AUCA, Kazakhstan Institute of Management,

Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP) and the International Business School in Uzbekistan, three universities in the region that adopted western-style curriculum and teaching practices.

According to David Patton, vice president of the American Councils for International Education, "This program focuses on business education development in the region, therefore this long-term project, besides student scholarships, includes such components as internships in the U.S.A. and business faculty training and curriculum development."

AUCA now has nearly 1,250 students from 25 countries with more than 70 percent of the students receiving need and merit-based annual scholarships, which range from \$200 to \$1,700, as a part of the AUCA financial aid program. The AUCA financial aid program, which totals almost \$1 million a year, is partially sponsored by the Open Society Institute, the Aga Khan Foundation, the German Embassy in Bishkek, the U.S. State Department and other organizations.

Dubai-based Photographer and Philanthropist Leads Photography Master Class at AUCA



In November, Mr. Hersh Chadha, prominent entrepreneur and accomplished nature photographer, prize winner of various international photo contests with numerous photography books and photo exhibitions to his credit, visited AUCA to offer students, faculty and staff a master class on photography. This free

master class was accompanied by a video presentation of his photography taken in more than 70 countries worldwide, as well as an exhibition of several photographs.

Chadha briefed students on the fundamentals of professional photography and shared his recipe for taking the perfect shot; every great photo is a combination of the "right camera and right accessories, correct light and shadow, and creativity."

A successful businessman who owns several companies in India and the United Arab Emirates, Chadha chose to dedicate his life to photography and charitable activities. He actively collaborates with numerous international development organizations including the World Wild Fund, the Arabian Leopard Trust, and the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, to name a few.

Chadha believes that photography is the best way of seeing and

understanding the world and his love for photography keeps him in constant motion from one continent to the next. "Travel is more than the sightseeing; it is a deep and permanent change in the ideas of living" remarked Chadha at the master class.

"I have photographed a live volcano, toured the Chernobyl nuclear zone, touched the skies on the slopes of Everest, chased the Serengeti, dived underwater and made a pact with the Brazilian rainforest. Having visited 73 countries and 250 cities I try to present uncommon and hidden aspects of these marvelous places," continued Chadha. "Photography helps to create a thing of beauty and turn the ordinary into something extraordinary."

The photography master urged the students to experiment, to learn to find what seems to be hidden and listen to their hearts. "There is only you and your camera. The limitations in your photography are in yourself, for what we see is what we are," concluded Chadha.

Bishkek Journalism Students Learn About Children



In October, AUCA's Journalism Program, in collaboration with the UNICEF Representative Office in Kyrgyzstan, organized a week-long interactive seminar entitled "The Rights of Children and Mass Media," which gathered journalism students from various Bishkek universities. The seminar, which aims to familiarize students with quality journalistic coverage and the principles of children's rights protection, took place at AUCA from October 15 to 19.

Within the framework of the seminar, participants examined Kyrgyz legislation on child-related issues and the International Convention on the Rights of Children, and they discussed how their principles are put into practice. Participants also learned how to present information on children and from children's perspectives, how to interview children and observe ethical and legal norms and ultimately how not to endanger the very children they are trying to report upon.

UNICEF Representative Timothy Schaffter, who addressed the students at the opening of the seminar, remarked that children's issues are a real challenge for journalists all over the world, but journalists can do a lot by spurring debate about children rights in the public sphere.

During the week-long seminar participating students met with legal professionals, NGO representatives and professional journalists specializing in child-related issues, who all shared their knowledge and experiences with them.

"Our main task is to teach young journalists how to report on the issues related to the

violation of the children's rights without violating these rights," remarked Radik Zylulhidjnov, AUCA journalism instructor.

The seminar schedule included both lectures and practical assignments enabling the students to challenge their knowledge in writing reportage on selected pertinent children-related issues. At the end of the seminar participants were required to apply their new journalistic skills and knowledge by writing a feature story on children's perspectives of selected social issues.

"The theory we learned in classes was presented with a new interpretation here at the seminar. We saw other aspects of the theory and the ways this theoretical knowledge can be applied in practice," remarked AUCA student Pavel Konovalov '10, Journalism.

"We absorbed so much useful and interesting information that we couldn't get from books or even teachers," echoed Aidana Abduvalidova, a student from Bishkek Humanitarian University.

AUCA Students Develop Community Service in Kyrgyzstan



Known for their dedication and active community service work throughout the year, members of the AUCA World Club, a student organization focused on fostering cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding, work especially hard during Ramadan (a holy month for Muslims) to collect money, clothes, toys and food for the Bishkek orphanages, deliver food packages around Bishkek, and organize special celebrations for needy children.

Every weekend during this month,

club members and student senators come together on the AUCA campus to collect and prepare the food and clothes packages for several Bishkek orphanages. According to Kristina Razakova '10, International and Comparative Politics Department, President of the World club, her peers prepared enough packages for more than 100 children in three Bishkek orphanages.

"The community service is not well developed in our society," says Kristina Razakova. "AUCA students, who represent a very diverse community, are very motivated to serve the public and make good for the Kyrgyz society even being so far away from their home countries. The more charity activities we implement, the more our students get involved in public service," continued Razakova.

The World Club has set up booths on AUCA's campus where students, faculty and staff could donate money and clothes that were delivered by the club members and volunteers to where

they were needed most.

Shortly after the Ramadan, the World Club members dedicated their Halloween holiday to visiting two Bishkek orphanages and organizing spectacular parties, pumpkin-carving competitions and food package distribution among the children.

In order to involve the children from orphanages in an active social life, the World Club members will invite them to take part in the AUCA Diversity Week, a weeklong celebration which honors more than 20 ethnic groups represented by the AUCA students. Children from various Bishkek orphanages will join their AUCA friends to prepare the culture presentations and intrigue spectators with colorful traditional costumes, dances and songs.

Knowledge Day: AUCA Honors Top Students



In keeping with its annual tradition of celebrating the pursuit of knowledge and honoring excellence both in and out of the classroom, students, alumni, faculty, staff, parents and friends gathered in the main auditorium at the American University of Central Asia for the Knowledge Day Ceremony to recognize the academic and extracurricular leadership of more than 100 AUCA students.

President Hurwitz honored eleven outstanding seniors on this year's President's List, which requires a cumula-

tive grade point average of 3.8. The top five students from this list, designated as Presidential Scholars, are all eligible for scholarships. In addition, President Hurwitz named the recipient of a new President's Leadership Award, which went to Dinara Kovalenko '08, Psychology, for her outstanding academic performance and extra-curricular activities.

Another seventy-nine students, nearly 7% of the entire student body, were honored for earning a spot on the Vice President for Academic Affairs' List, which requires a cumulative grade point average of 3.67. Forty-eight of these hard-working students are earning degrees in the Business Administration, International and Comparative Politics, or Economics Programs - the three most competitive programs at AUCA. In addition to their excellent academic performance, most of the nominees for the Vice President for Academic Affairs' Award sacrificed their valuable time and energy to take leadership roles in a variety of activities, in-

cluding volunteering for the Freedom House and the AUCA Business Clinic and participating in numerous conferences and forums.

Nikolay Shulgin, Dean of Students, named the awardees of the Leadership Award, which is granted to exemplary students demonstrating leadership in extracurricular activities and community service.

It's an event that few will forget. Proud parents will remember how they watched their children step onto the stage to be honored for their accomplishments. And the students will remember the satisfied feeling of having all their hard work and dedication recognized by the entire AUCA community.

Leading Kyrgyz Law Firm Awards Nation's First Law Scholarship for AUCA Students



In October, Ruslan Abdykerimov '08, Law, was selected as the winner of the first annual Kalikova and Associates Scholarship. Based in Bishkek, Kalikova and Associates is an internationally recognized law firm considered to be the best in the Kyrgyz Republic. Abdykerimov will receive \$1,000 to cover his tuition fees for the 2007-08 academic year. In addition, Abdykerimov will be offered a paid internship with Kalikova and Associates, which primarily specializes in commercial law.

"The main goal we tried to achieve by

launching this scholarship program was to promote students' efforts for professional growth and development," remarked Gulnara Kalikova, founder of Kalikova and Associates. "In addition, it is a very effective way to search for new employees," continued Kalikova.

"I applaud Kalikova and Associates for finding a way to support a new generation of distinguished attorneys. This firm truly serves the region by initiating this competition among the best law students of our University," remarked Ellen Hurwitz at the awards ceremony, which took place at AUCA on October 25.

The selection criteria for the scholarships demand that applicants achieve a high cumulative G.P.A. and an outstanding TOEFL score, and demonstrate financial need. Scholarship competitors confessed that the most challenging part of the selection process was writing an analytical essay on one of several contemporary legal issues. Themes varied from exploration and development of mineral resources in the Kyrgyz Republic to the protection of intellectual property rights.

"At the final interview I was asked about my professional focus. And this seemingly

simple question made me think deeply of what my strengths are," remarked scholarship finalist Esen Azhibekov '08, Law.

"I did not win the scholarship, but I gained knowledge as the preparation process really helped me to enrich my education," echoed another scholarship finalist Begaiym Esenkulova '08, Law, who last year was crowned valedictorian of the Class of 2007 after earning her first bachelor's degree in American Studies.

Kalikova mentioned this competition helped her meet with talented and bright students who proved to be the real stars. However, the scholarship required the selection of only one winner, so after an intense debate, the selection committee consisting of law professionals and AUCA law faculty members announced Abdykerimov the winner. In appreciation of their strong efforts, all participants were offered either paid internships with Kalikova and Associates or were invited to participate in various business projects affiliated with the firm.

AUCA and US Embassy Mentoring Program for Female Students Fosters Women Leadership in Kyrgyzstan



BISHKEK, December 4 – Participants of the unique Women's Mentorship Program, launched early March 2007 by the U.S. Embassy and AUCA, organized a meeting last week to commemorate the 16-day campaign to raise public awareness on gender violence. Thirty-five female students from AUCA and their mentors met to discuss the most crucial gender issues facing Kyrgyz society today.

"I applaud this program which enhances women leadership in the region", remarked AUCA President Ellen Hurwitz,

when welcoming the participants of the mentorship program. "As a historian I taught courses on women's movements for freedom and the protection of rights of the individual, and believe that many important issues such as sexual harassment and gender violence have to be discussed openly in society."

Within the framework of this inspiring program mentors and students meet regularly, on an individual or group basis, to discuss gender issues. These meetings have resulted in many collaborative projects and campaigns.

Indira Torogeldieva '09, an International and Comparative Politics student, said "My mentor, Nurgul Asylbekova, a UNDP Gender Program coordinator, helped me to fully understand the overall gender situation in Kyrgyzstan and how I can legally protect my rights."

Mentoring is good practice in society, generally by the older generation to give advice and direction to young people. In the United States mentoring is widely practiced, where successful professional people mentor the next generation of

leaders. The goal of this program is to introduce such programs here in Kyrgyzstan, building on similar local traditions already in place. Experience shows that a most valuable asset, to forward a young woman's career, is a good mentor.

The Women's Mentorship Program is designed to help female students learn leadership skills from their mentors and to pursue successful careers accordingly. To inaugurate the program twenty female AUCA students from the International Comparative Politics, American Studies and Law departments, met with twenty prominent Kyrgyz women leaders: Galina Kulikova from the Moya Strana political party, Bubusara Ryskulova from the charity Sezim Shelter, and Nurjamal Baibolova the former chair of Bishkek City Council.

In just a matter of a couple of months since its inception, the AUCA mentorship program has proved to be so effective that additional programs have been instigated to include students from the regions of Osh and Naryn. In the future, the U.S. Embassy hopes to expand this program to other Kyrgyz universities.

by Elizabeth Zalkind

AUCA Ultimate Frisbee Team Defeats Almaty Squad Twice in Bishkek



In September, Plastic discs sailed over the grass pitch of Locomotive Stadium last weekend. Two Ultimate Frisbee teams were warming up and getting ready for a game while taking short, measured glances at their opponents. It was the first game of the academic year for the AUCA team, FrisBeast, against a new team from Almaty, Kazakhstan. The team from Almaty looked quite fresh despite their four hour journey to Bishkek, and they looked crisp during warm-ups. In the end though, the AUCA team would shrug off their initial feelings of intimidation and convincingly win both games of the tournament.

The Almaty team had recently renewed its roster with a lot of younger players.

"Though some of our players are new to the sport of Ultimate and lacking skills, we have some very good athletes and we'll be able to play a dynamic game," said Jason Hurwitz, captain of the Almaty team and son of AUCA President Ellen Hurwitz.

Indeed, during the first minutes of the game, the Almaty team displayed an effective combination of tough defense and fast counter-attacks that sent them into AUCA's end zone several times for five unanswered points. Indeed it was a bad start for AUCA and they looked helpless against the defensive strategy of the visiting team. "There's no way AUCA is going to win this game," said one of the spectators after the captain of AUCA team called the first time out. By the time the AUCA scored its first point, Almaty was already up 5-0 and was totally dominating play.

It took a while for the AUCA players to find a way to beat the guests' defense and to actually deliver the disc into their end zone. It was a truly amazing game with unpredictable turns and a number of deep, end zone throws featuring "lay-outs" (when an athlete dives to catch the disc). By the end of the first half of the game, AUCA was cracking Almaty's defense and began to play confidently.

After the halftime break, spectators were surprised by an absolutely different game. Realizing that their defense didn't work anymore, the Almaty changed their tactics and employed a classic one-on-one defense. This defense had a little effect and could not prevent the fast, short-pass offense

of the AUCA team, who took control of the game after evening the score 10-10 and constantly mounting counterattacks. Almaty started making more frequent mistakes, which were quickly taken advantage of by AUCA.

The game ended when the disc crossed the end zone line for AUCA's 15th point, sealing AUCA's comeback with a final score of 15-11. The AUCA team exploded onto the field with elation and euphoria, screaming and hugging each other.

The two teams met again the next day and the AUCA team triumphed yet again by a score of 15-12. Both teams gained tremendous experience from the two games and provided an entertaining show for the spectators. Now the AUCA team is getting ready for a trip to Almaty to participate in another weekend tournament in a few weeks.

"I honestly felt that we were due for the the same doom the last time we met the Kazakhstan team. Thankfully, it was definitely clear that their fancy tactics were only short lived to our own determination to win the game. I'm so glad that I got to be there to see the guys on our team enjoy such a sweet victory. I can't wait to face them again in their own country."

by Pavel Kononov

Dear President Hurwitz,

Please extend my congratulations and best wishes to the entire university community as you celebrate ten years of development as an American style Liberal Arts University for Central Asia on November 12, 2007.

In a relatively short period of time the University has earned a strong reputation for its insistence upon critical inquiry and intellectual freedom while fostering innovation and opposing corruption. AUCA's mission is lofty and its adherence to it speaks to the fine work of the University's faculty, staff and students.

As you celebrate your tenth anniversary, I urge the University to sustain its commitment to educating students from across Central Asia, to build an English-speaking learning community, to become a US accredited institution of higher learning and, most importantly, with the support and guidance of the Board of Trustees, to remain a bastion of intellectual freedom as you educate a promising and essential new generation of leaders for the region.

With best wishes,
George Soros

Dear Dr. Hurwitz:

I am very pleased to congratulate American University of Central Asia on its tenth anniversary. In these few years the university has established itself as the premier liberal arts institution of Central Asia, an incubator for future leaders of the region. This is a tremendous achievement.

Over the past ten years, AUCA graduates have successfully pursued careers as entrepreneurs, government officials, community leaders, and a whole range of other meaningful pursuits. The university has become a leader not just in the Kyrgyz Republic, but in Central Asia as a whole. The alumni network links an extraordinary group of talented individuals across more than ten countries who support each other in their endeavors. Your efforts to attract a wide international community to the university are admirable.

The university has never been content to rest on its laurels, but has consistently improved the quality of its education. I would like to commend you and your colleagues on the difficult work you are doing to move toward accreditation in the United States and attracting even more students from Central Asia and beyond. American University of Central Asia is a key element in helping Central Asians to bring about the future that we all seek for the region - a Central Asia that is strong, prosperous, and free.

Ambassador James F. Moriarty
Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
United States Department of State, Washington, B.C. 20520

I would like to congratulate students, faculty and staff of the American University of Central Asia on the 10th Anniversary, and express my deep sense of gratitude to the University for its hard work, professionalism and understanding. In AUCA, not only have I acquired knowledge that helps me built my career and personal plans, but also I have made many friends whom I can always rely on. AUCA is more than university for me; it is a place where I always find support, understanding and help. This is a unique place of its kind that unites students with different national and religious background and from different countries, and makes us be a huge friendly and strong family.

One more time, Happy Anniversary to those who work for AUCA, because of whom our University is prospering!

Kamila Sooronbaeva BA'09



A Decade of Innovation

On November 12, in recognition of 10 years as an independent institution, AUCA kicked off a year-long celebration with a very special anniversary ceremony combined with the tenth annual freshman Initiation. AUCA students, families, friends and distinguished guests gathered in the ornate concert hall of the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet Theater to reflect upon the rich history of the University and usher in its bright future.

In 1997, by decree of the President of Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz-American School, then a department within the Kyrgyz State National University since 1993, became the independent American University in Kyrgyzstan (AUK). AUK was soon recognized internationally as the only university in Central Asia based on the American liberal arts tradition of academic freedom and critical inquiry. To reflect the University's expanded mission and future vision, in 2002, the Board of Trustees and the President of Kyrgyzstan decided to change the name to reflect the University's regional significance – the American University of Central Asia.

From the outset, our University introduced an innovative curriculum based on critical thinking and freedom of expression

“On November 12, 1997 AUCA (then AUK) became an independent institution of higher learning dedicated to academic excellence. that generated educational reform and developed imaginative and entrepreneurial leaders for the new century,” remarked Ellen Hurwitz, AUCA President in her address at the recent anniversary celebration.

“In a relatively short period of time the University has earned a strong reputation for its insistence upon critical inquiry and intellectual freedom while fostering innovation and opposing corruption,” wrote financier and philanthropist George Soros, an AUCA founder, in his address to the AUCA community. “I urge the University to remain a bastion of intellectual freedom as you educate a promising and essential new generation of leaders for the region.”

Nearly 400 AUCA freshmen, their families and guests will not forget quickly this special evening as they were taking their seats behind the orchestra pit with



The wall of AUCA pride

little knowledge of the many surprises and fun that awaited them during the ceremony.

The anniversary celebration and the initiation event, unlike other ceremonial events at AUCA, focused less on formal speeches and rituals and offered more pure entertainment for the enjoyment of students and their families. The first surprise of the evening was the announcement of the U.S. Embassy's new and significant pool of scholarships to support the most well-rounded students at AUCA.

The Ambassador's Scholars Fund scholarships will cover all four years of study for eight AUCA students, selected for their academic achievement, demonstrated financial need, and leadership potential.

I challenge you to find another university in the world, which, in so little time, has sent so many of its graduates to leadership positions in private enterprise, civil society, and public service," remarked U.S. Ambassador in the Kyrgyz Republic Marie Yovanovitch. In keeping

"The quality of AUCA graduates, after only 10 years since the University's founding, is testament to its academic innovation, rigor, and excellence.

with tradition, the U.S. ambassador in the Kyrgyz Republic participated in the Initiation ceremony to honor the freshmen.

Immediately after this last official moment was over, students and families were offered the final and most impressive surprise – a well-rehearsed, two-hour song, dance and humor-packed cabaret that showcased the tremendous talents of dozens of AUCA students and staff.

The 10th anniversary celebration will continue throughout the year and feature a host of academic and celebratory events including conferences, master classes and sports competitions that highlight the ways AUCA continues as a vibrant intellectual and social community developing people and ideas that make a difference in the region.

by Elizabeth Zalkind

Tenth Anniversary and Initiation



President Dr. Ellen Hurwitz delivering congratulatory address on the Anniversary and Initiation ceremony



AUCA Ex-Chair of the Student Senate giving a pledge with a new board of senators



AUCA freshmen are happy with their first Initiation



Cake in dedication to the Decade of Innovation of AUCA



AUCA awards for the last 10 years



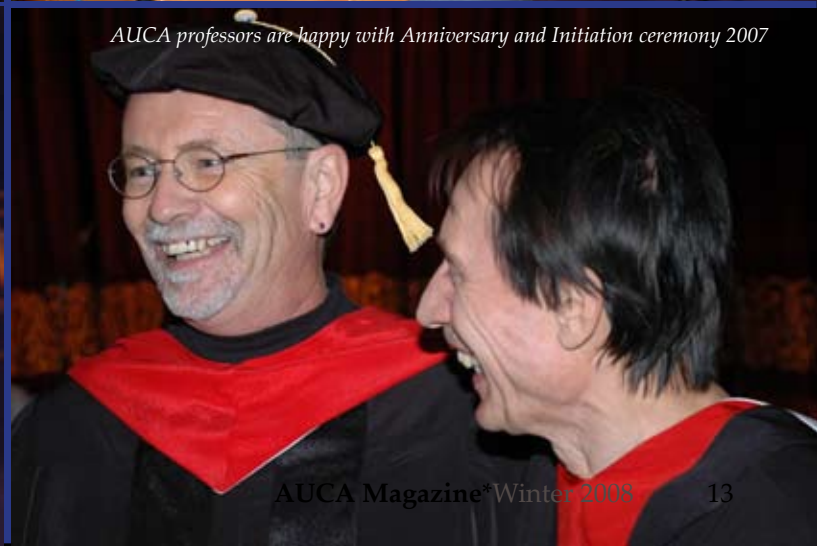
US Ambassador in the Kyrgyz Republic Marie Yovanovitch awarding the first US Embassy scholars



Deputy Minister of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic, Adina Boronov, congratulates AUCA freshmen



AUCA professor of psychology Dr. Aron Brudny wishing freshmen fruitful study



AUCA professors are happy with Anniversary and Initiation ceremony 2007



Confetti



US Ambassador congratulating the whole AUCA community



AUCA dance team "RizeUp" performing their dance on Initiation



Dancing girl



Kids from Special Boarding School of General Education for Deaf Children performing their dance on the stage

“A different lifestyle scenario...”



They consider street dancing is an art form. Feeling the sound, the beats and the rhythm. They create moves and steps that depict daily life. They make street culture dancing an artistic performance. They love dancing. The American University of Central Asia (AUCA) community knows them as ‘RizeUp’.

‘RizeUp’ is a dance team in the AUCA. It was formed in September 2006 by a group of six AUCA students, who have bags of enthusiasm for dance. When they started their dance sessions they soon began to create their own unique pieces of choreography based on the street hip-hop culture. Step by step the students worked on the basic moves, developed their skills and created a “style”.

According to one of the troupe leaders, Emil Lyu, Journalism’07, “ ‘RizeUp’ is the expression that has all the positive energies and meanings crucial for a good start, growth and development of a team.”

Now the ‘RizeUp’ troupe has thirteen dancers. All the members are students with different majors at AUCA. The leaders and instructors of the team, Emil Lyu and Anastasia Pegai, Psychology’09, consider ‘RizeUp’ is more than just a dance team.

“I think about dancing as an art form. Dancing is not only about being able to move like this or that, or for fun, nor is it just about public performances, it’s about life. Dancing takes me away from my everyday life and helps me to create a different lifestyle scenario. When I feel the sound, the beats and the rhythm, I start to create different moves and steps, getting away from the daily routine. I just rise up...smiling”, says Emil.

“I started ballroom dancing when I was 5 years old and continued for a further 8 years. Then I tried out a completely different style of dancing – hip-hop. Ballroom dancing skills helped me to be and feel confident with my hip-hop dancing. Hip-hop dancing for me is not just a hobby; it is an art that makes a fantastic contribution to my lifestyle. I just love it.”, says Anastasia.

Emil and Anastasia had plenty of practice hip-hop dancing during their visits to the United States. Emil received basic skills in krumping, which is a fresh and unique style in the hip-hop movement nowadays. He improved his own style of dancing whilst living in Brooklyn, New York, in the summer of 2006. Anastasia improved her hip-hop dancing skills at the Millennium Dance complex in Los Angeles, California, in the summer of 2007. These great experiences gave them the opportunity and encouragement to practice and develop hip-hop dancing to an artistic level, both inside and outside of the University.

‘RizeUp’ participates in AUCA events on a regular basis. Also, the team takes part in various events organized by local NGOs and companies, performing their highly energetic style of dancing.



TILEK MAMUTOV

General Information:

Citizenship: Kyrgyzstan
Date of Birth: June 9, 1985

Academic Information:

Year of Graduation: 2005
Program: SFW
Degree: Bachelor

Job Information:

Employer: Google Ireland Ltd.
Position: Search Quality Coordinator
Location: Dublin 4, Ireland

AUCA and Google are alike; both of them strongly adhere to their unique values that prove to be one of many reasons for their leadership status. Graduates of many universities are employed at our company, and I see that AUCA in general, and the Software Engineering Program in particular, is highly competitive not only in Central Asia, but also around the globe.

I think that information technology is a solemn opportunity for drastic and long-range economic development of Kyrgyzstan that is necessary to clutch on.



AIJAN BEKKULIEVA

General Information

Citizenship: Kyrgyzstan
Date of Birth: November 12, 1981

Program: International Business Law
Degree: LLM

Academic Information

Institution: AUCA
Year of Graduation: 2003
Program: LAW
Degree: BA

Job Information

Employer 1: GRATA Law Firm
 Bishkek Branch
 (Kazakhstan law firm)
Position: Lawyer
Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Period: August 2003 - May 2006

Institution: London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
www.lse.ac.uk

Employer 2: Kalikova & Associates
Position: Senior Lawyer
Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Period: May 2006 - August 2007

Year of Graduation: 2008

AUCA was actually the first step to success, as I was enrolled in one of the best universities in Kyrgyzstan. I appreciate my years in AUCA very much as apart from great knowledge I received there, I learned such skills as critical thinking, working in group, thinking out of box, which happened to be of enormous help in everyday life and in pursuing my career. I am thankful to the management, staff of AUCA as unlike other universities students feel respected as individuals in AUCA. I always had assurance that if I have a complaint I would be carefully listened and certain necessary actions would be taken to solve the situation. I had no fear this would affect my grades. And in fact I saw it working in practice.

I am always proud to state I graduated from AUCA. And the fact that almost all students are working in the best organizations of the world or continuing their studies in the best universities of the world is already indication of a quality of the University.





AMIRA YUSUFJONOVA

General Information

Citizenship: Tajikistan
Date of Birth: March 23, 1982

Academic Information

Institution (Undergraduate): AUCA
Year of Graduation: 2004
Program: AS (Minor ICP)
Degree: BA

Institution (Graduate): University of Notre Dame

Year of Graduation: 2006
Program: International Peace Studies

Degree: MA
URL: <http://www.nd.edu>

Job Information

Employer: Political Science Department, University of Minnesota
Position: Research Specialist & Teaching Assistant for Professor Kathleen Collins

Research: Islamic Revival and Mobilization in Central Asia

Location: Minneapolis, MN, USA

Period: August 2006 - Present

My journey started at AUCA. I am convinced that I have received an excellent education from AUCA, which in turn helped me to get accepted to graduate program at the University of Notre Dame. After graduating from Notre Dame, one of my professors, Kathleen Collins offered me to join her at the University of Minnesota as her research specialist and teaching assistant. I also completed an eight month internship with Counterpart International in Washington, DC.



ELINA KARAKULOVA

General Information

Citizenship: Kyrgyzstan

Academic Information

Institution (Undergraduate): AUCA
Year of Graduation: 2005
Program: MM
Degree: BA

Institution (Graduate): Central European University

Year of Graduation: 2006

Program: Nationalism Studies
Degree: MA

Job Information

Employer: Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) www.iwpr.net

Position: Regional Editor

Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Having the right direction in the beginning of your career is very important as it sets main principles in life. I believe studying at AUCA helped me to understand that the network you create, the diligence and responsibility you work with, as well as the new ideas you are willing to bring - this is all necessary in achieving the goals you set and becoming useful to society.

I remember that AUCA has always been a busy place, full of fresh ideas, fun, interesting and motivated people. I was surrounded by the "engines" of society who now are the driving force for positive changes. People and friends are probably the most valuable gift AUCA has given me. They are always there to help, to advice and support. And I feel that AUCA community has grown strong enough to make many good things possible.



Life after AUCA: Interview with Mirza Amiri

From fleeing the Taliban with his family in Afghanistan to Pakistan to barely staying one step ahead of hunger and the menacing Pakistani police as a refugee in Pakistan to trudging through the snow to his graduate courses at the prestigious Brandeis University near Boston, the life journey of Mirza Amiri '07, Economics, is an inspirational tale of perseverance, hope lost and regained, and dreams fulfilled. Mirza kindly took time out of his hectic schedule as a graduate student on full scholarship in the International Business School at Brandeis to talk about his remarkable path from his war-torn homeland, his life-changing experience at AUCA, and his plans for the future.

Beau Gordinier: Tell me about your life before getting to AUCA?

Mirza Amiri: Life became very difficult for us once the Taliban took over Kabul. When I was young, before the Taliban came, I always wanted to study abroad. When the Taliban took power, they closed down the university and I lost hope that I would ever achieve this dream. When we fled to Pakistan, things got even worse. The Pakistani that smuggled us into the country stole everything we had, and once we got there we faced constant discrimination. It was the worst days of our lives living in Pakistan. We lost all our money, our home, even our clothes. We didn't know if our friends and family were dead or alive. The police were very hostile and stole from Afghan refugees all the time, and sometimes they planted drugs in your pocket and demanded 100,000 rupees to get out of jail. When I tried to find work, the most they would pay you was often 50% or less than the wages of Pakistanis. I really lost hope of ever achieving my dreams because all I could think about was how to find work to survive.

Finally, when the Taliban was driven out of Kabul in 2002, my family agreed to let me return there alone to work for Focus Humanitarian Assistance of Canada. It mainly focused on repatriating Afghan refugees back to their homes in Afghanistan. I was hired as the assistant to the director, and most of the decisions were influenced by me because the director knew very little of the country. Soon I was promoted

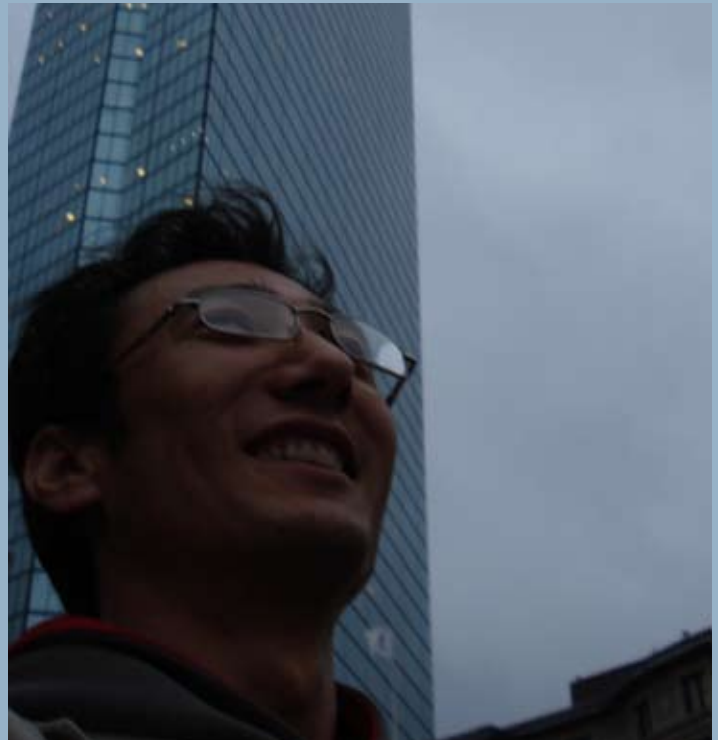
to head of operations and supervised the repatriation efforts at the provincial offices. The most important thing about this experience was that I regained hope and confidence and I realized I had leadership skills and I could greatly contribute to my country.

BG: What are some of the key skills and ideas that you learned at AUCA that helped you move on to a graduate program at a prestigious American university? How did AUCA prepare you for your graduate studies?

MA: AUCA played the role of a ladder for me, which helped me climb up towards the peak of my aims. AUCA prepared me for the graduate program academically. That is why, I feel comfortable here after only 2 weeks. AUCA improved my language skills. I am not only fluent in English in my school now, but I speak in Russian also to some of the international students from CIS countries. AUCA also improved my presentation skills and it is one of my greatest strengths. Professor Valeri Hardin served as a personal advisor for me, although he was not in my department. He was my English instructor, but he advised me in all spheres of my life. He still is my teacher, my advisor and above all a very good friend of mine.

Economics professor Liudmila Konstants taught me about Economic research, which made me a researcher. From her class, I learned how to study and how to work hard for myself. I am very grateful to all of my professors.

BG: What would you tell young men and women in Central Asia about studying at AUCA? What advice would you give AUCA students wanting to pursue graduate studies?



MA: The only thing that I could advise to the people in Central Asia or Afghanistan is that a person who makes

his/her way to AUCA is a lucky one. Not only is AUCA one of the top schools in the region, it is an educational bridge between east and west. With the knowledge and degree from AUCA, one can easily compete in the job market, as well as pursue graduate studies in the west. For AUCA students, who would like to pursue graduate studies, take full advantage of the facilities and opportunities there. Take the required courses in English, sharpen your writing skills by contributing to the student newspaper or perhaps repeating the composition courses as an audit, and try to maintain an excellent G.P.A. Also, for those who want to enter MBA, economics or finance programs, work hard on your math skills so you can score high on the GMAT or GRE tests.

BG: Tell us about your experiences working in Afghanistan this past year. Who did you work for and what is the nature of the organization? What did you learn from this experience? Beyond the troubling security situation in Afghanistan, talk about some positive developments there and tell us about what you think needs to happen there to really pull the country out of crisis and on the path to peaceful development?

MA: I worked for the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) as an investment analyst, analysis section head, and deputy director of the Research and Policy Department. I assumed three positions in a time span of around 7 months. AISA is the only modern, government-linked organization in the country that supports either local or foreign investors to improve the private sector in the country and attract foreign direct investment. AISA is a "one-stop shop," which issues business licenses, provides consultations and supports and organizes investment promotion programs in the country and abroad.

During my tenure at AISA, I learned how to apply the theories from my textbooks to real life situations. I learned about the economy of Afghanistan. I learned that security, infrastructure, low education levels, and corruption are the main obstacles to the economic development of Afghanistan. Despite the immense structural developments, economic reforms and growth, the crisis in the country has not completely diminished yet. At this point, any short-term solutions to the crisis is very controversial since a lot of foreigners are working to exacerbate the situation, which would benefit them in one way or the other. The long-term solution to the crisis in the country is education. One day, this educated generation will pull the country out of crisis.

Beau Gordinier: How are you settling into your new home in Boston? Any first impressions about the United States?

Mirza Amiri: My settlement did not take me that long. I feel at home here already and have been doing well with everything. My first impression about the U.S. came prior to my arrival at the U.S. embassy in Islamabad. Everybody who was standing in the queue of visa applicants was complaining about U.S. visa difficulties. This was true.

My visa process and security clearance took so long that I missed the first two weeks of classes. I am still trying to learn about the culture, traditions, food, parties, characters, and the reason behind the smiles that people show me as I pass them on the street.

BG: Why Brandeis? Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?

MA: I chose, Brandeis University International Business School for its program, which is my favorite, and for the scholarship that I was awarded. I am studying International Economics and Finance, which are my favorite branches of economics. For now the plan is to earn an M.A., and later I will see if I want a Ph.D. With this degree, I am sure that I will acquire a high ranking position in the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, where I worked prior to coming to the U.S., or to the line ministries in Afghanistan (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of National Economics, Central Bank of Afghanistan). Being in one of the afore-mentioned institutions, I can easily notice my contribution to my war torn country.

BG: What does your family think about your move to the United States? Were you inspired by anyone in your family to achieve such academic success?

MA: My father has always been the main pillar supporting me. My family members in Afghanistan have been suffering economic hardships without me, but still they have accepted the tradeoff and have sent me abroad to study. Although I am the first one to acquire higher education in my family, since our older generation did not have opportunities due to the barbaric political system and ethnic cleansing in Afghanistan, I have always followed my father's footsteps.

BG: What fond memories of AUCA pop into your mind now that you are living so far away?

MA: It is so difficult to move from a small house like AUCA to a large house like Brandeis. At AUCA, I almost knew everybody and used to say HI about 200 times daily, while here, it is impossible to do that. So far, wherever in the campus I go, I remember AUCA since some sort of comparison flashes into my mind. I miss the small campus of AUCA. I miss checking books for free from AUCA library. I even miss the noisy reading room of the library.



**INTERVIEW WITH
DR. WILLIAM NEWTON-SMITH,
CHAIR OF THE AUCA BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



Ever since the government of Czechoslovakia forced him out of the country when lecturing at a symposium there in the late 1980s, Dr. Newton-Smith has remained actively involved in helping to transform higher education in the region. He has played a tremendous role in promoting higher education traditions based on academic freedom, critical inquiry and a student-centered approach to learning in Central and Eastern European states and the former Soviet Union. No less distinguished is his career in academia. He earned a Ph.D. in Philosophy at Oxford University and has served as a Fairfax Fellow in Philosophy at Balliol College at Oxford and a CUF Lecturer in Philosophy at Oxford for over three decades, and he is the author of numerous books on philosophy. He now serves as the chair of the AUCA Board of Trustees. During a recent visit to AUCA, Dr. Newton-Smith took some time out of his hectic schedule to share his own philosophy on education and the future of AUCA.

Beau Gordinier: With all of your involvement on the boards of numerous organizations and learning institutions, do you manage to find time for pursuits outside of work?

Dr. William Newton-Smith: Yes, I have a small farm in Wales, and managing that pretty much takes up my spare time. I have 50 acres where I keep horses, we grow hay, and my wife has the only commercial production of lavender in Wales, so this together with maintaining our house and garden keeps us pretty busy. We have help with the horses and harvesting the hay, but I put up the fences and cut down the trees. In the case of the lavender we have to harvest it ourselves. It has to be dried, and tied into bunches which are used for display and aroma. Our long-term goal is to make lavender oil. We'll put that into action next year. Some of the lavender is used to make cheese and also for ice cream, but the main product is for decorations.

BG: Moving on to your career as a respected scholar, administrator and board member for a number of institutions, out of all these roles you have taken over the years, which one gives you the most satisfaction and why?

WNS: Well for a long time I ran a residential graduate center at Oxford and I think that was the most satisfying thing I did. The discussions and debates and interdisciplinary contact while living in a 15th Century manor house surrounded by couple of hundred very bright graduate students - it was very stimulating and fun. So I think, actually running an academic institution like that in a way puts you in regular contact with the students; it's the most satisfying thing that you can do. The most satisfaction is when you work in a small institution. It must be tremendously satisfying for someone to be the president of AUCA. It's small enough so the president can have a personal relationship with a wide number of students. That is certainly the most satisfying thing. I have been involved in the creation of number of institutions, and to witness a university start from nothing and to be involved in that process, that's fun too.

BG: Are you still involved with these universities?

WNS: Yes, I was involved in the creation of Central European University (CEU) and the American University of Bulgaria (AUBG), and I sit on the board of those universities. And I also sit on the boards of a number of university projects and some master's programs in economics. I think that when you have been involved in the creation of something it's very hard to totally disengage yourself. They are like your children.

BG: What is your guiding philosophy to teaching and learning?

WNS: The process is not one of teaching, but rather facilitating the students to learn. I believe very strongly that you are there trying to help them learn. You don't have anything to really teach them, but paradoxically to facilitate their ability to learn rather than being seen as if you have some knowledge to transmit to them. You want to help them to develop their skills. And this kind of teaching, if that's your goal, is fun. You try to stimulate the students to ask difficult questions and to debate with you and each other. So I am very keen on the interactive approach, student-centered learning, and not just because it's fun, but because the best result we can produce are the students who have this ability to reason for themselves using their critical and analytical skills. It is also what the marketplace requires. There is now overwhelming evidence that 10 years from now few students will be doing what they have studied at the university. What are they doing? How could it happen? It is philosophy properly done: independent thinking, arguments, and analysis. The market place doesn't need philosophers. It does not need economists. But it requires analytical skills. There needs to be discussion and debate to find the best answer you can. So you develop critical skills and analytical ability; that's what the marketplace needs. That is the fun way to teach.

BG: What would you say to the people who run educational institutions still using the Soviet model of education?



WNS: I think that the first step is to insist on the right to experiment and to allow the educational approach of another tradition committed to certain liberal rights to flourish. I am convinced that if you have an institution running successfully for 10 years then we'll convince people that it is a good way of teaching. With AUBG there was a lot of local skepticism and hostility in the beginning. A recent survey was conducted with employers in Bulgaria and now they valued the degree of AUBG above all other universities. That becomes a kind of accreditation when the marketplace recognizes the value of this educational approach. I am sure we are going to see more institutions in Bulgaria moving in this direction, especially when they realize they are losing in this field to AUBG. We are starting a smaller project in Saint Petersburg, Russia. And again, we've encountered a great deal of skepticism. They make the same argument: "If you

take this liberal approach than you will not be a specialist." We can only show them the answer in time; in about 10 years we will show the results. But the product of such an initiative is that after some time they will say, "maybe they don't need to be specialists. Maybe they need know how to acquire skills rather than specialize in one field." I think the only answer will be in ten years and I think the time is coming. AUCA graduates demonstrate the value added to their earning potential with their degree. How much better off are AUCA student compared to other universities? I think this is the only way to convince people to take this educational approach seriously. Studies by the World Bank show that is true for developing markets. We can only convince the students and their parents through their success in the job market.

BG: It may be hard to compare because so many AUCA graduates work abroad.

WNS: But even that is evidence. In one sense you cannot conduct real studies because students are all over the place. I held a dinner for all the AUCA grads in the U.K. and there were a significant number working in the financial field. So the fact that you cannot find all of them is itself evidence of the success.

BG: How did you get involved with higher education projects in Eurasia?

WNS: Eventually I became acquainted with George Soros, who started CEU. As he was creating it, he wanted to be sure that he was putting the same amount of money into other forms of higher education, so he created the Higher Education Support Program (HESP). I became chair of the board of Higher Education Sub-Board of the Open Society Institute, and that is where the money came from to support places like AUCA. It also provides funding for scholarships for students from Afghanistan for higher education; in fact a lot of our aid goes toward scholarships. HESP has also given 5 million dollar endowment to AUCA. Recently, the American government agreed to give 3 million dollars to the AUCA for an international residence hall, and we will provide additional 2 million in light of this.

BG: How do you see AUCA progressing over the next ten years?

WNS: I think it has three objectives that it needs to achieve. One is an internationally recognized form of accreditation: American accreditation. That leads to the second objective of getting more funding. I do not think there will be many big donors coming and giving money. The only way it can improve its financial base is probably through many smaller donations that provide the books and computers that students need. It can generate revenue through tuition and it must look at the international student market, where there is more of an ability to pay full tuition than there is locally. I think it is good to bring in more students from South Korea and China, who will pay significantly for quality education. But because AUCA is not within their home country, the parents of these students want quality assurance. It can only be given in the process of accreditation. Locally they do not need an American accreditation, because kids here know about the University, but from students coming from abroad need that. Another objective of the University is to have 80% of courses in English, not because it has some special merit as a language, but because it has become the "international" language. We cannot invite students from abroad if there will not be a primary medium for them as a language.

BG: In your opinion what makes AUCA unique among all other universities in the region?

What makes it stand out in Central Asia is that no other university has its structure with an independent board of trustees working with university administration to create this student-centered learning environment.

Sensational Results from a Small Expedition



A two-week archeological intern for students from the anthropological department of AUCA ended with a truly scientific discovery. Burial mounds they had been excavating along the Tosor river (located on the southern shore of Issyk Kul lake) were found to be of a previously unknown type. Although the AUCA team couldn't exactly identify the cultural origins of the archeological finds, the students and their mentors reckon that the mounds date back to the time of the 'Great Migration of People'. To age the finds precisely samples will be sent for analysis to specialist laboratories in Russia or Germany.

A Good Start?

On arrival, the Tosor river campsite was particularly uninviting due to the gale force winds and torrential rain. On their own, and for the first time in their lives, the girls had to erect tents (the boys were due much later). Bad luck, depressingly, seem to haunt them as the leaky tents offered little protection from the bad weather. However, their luck turned when a local shepherd passing by saw their plight, and offered shelter in his house.

Cholpon Janadylova, who arrived a day later, had a more vigorous initiation test. She had to get to and find the campsite on her own; with the expectation that the expedition group would be waiting there for her. She searched for several hours and eventually caught up with the rest of the group.

Things finally settled down, and the students and mentors got down to the serious business of archeology, and domestic chores such as cooking. As Aida Abdykanova, an AUCA archeology professor and head of the archeological intern said, "The students had to learn not only how to carry out an archeological dig, but also how to cook!"

Maria Desdemona, Garik and Ashot

The students worked patiently and diligently. In their search for artifacts, sophomores Ania and Alina dug a hole two and half meters deep. Fortunately, they didn't forget to cut steps into the side so that they could get out again! Having worked more than four hours without any discoveries, the girls moved on to assist other students on more promising excavations.

Novices can often be lucky. Our young archeologists came across an ancient and extraordinary burial site. It was totally uncharacteristic for the region. The students discovered a whole complex of burial mounds, each fenced off with rectangular stones. This wasn't their only luck; the students uncovered human remains.

The study of archeology can be squeamish since unearthing human remains, even ancient ones, can be disturbing. In fact, one student decided to return home. The rest of the team were highly excited by their finds, so much so that mealtimes were frequently forgotten. Alina said, "I was so thrilled by the finds that I just couldn't stop working."

Nurzat Sultanalieva discovered the remains of a woman and a child in one of the ancient graves. The students named the woman "Maria Dezdemona" and the child "Garik". Subsequent investigations showed, however, that Maria was in fact a man. After lengthy deliberations it was decided to keep the name Maria (or Mashka).

The student archeologists shared their experiences on how they identified remains. For example, Anna Marupova would bravely jump into a grave, mumble about ghosts and begin



digging. She would shout, "Look! This skull has broad arched eyebrows and the molar teeth are big. The skeleton is large with narrow pelvic bones. It must be man. We should be able to work out his age when he died."

Along with the skeletons were found additional artifacts: animal bones and metal buckles. The bodies were buried with their heads aligned to the south, indicative of possible religious practices in the region at that time. The three graves discovered suggested that this burial site was of particular significance to the tribe, a special place.

"These discoveries gave us clues about who were these people and their culture," said Kubatbek Tabaldiev, an archeology professor and advisor to the expedition, "This complex of burial mounds with angled stones sparked a huge interest in the scientific world. We can now roughly date the mounds. Unfortunately, there is still too little information to fully understand their tribal culture and practices, but we are continuing our research."

Kubatbek went on, "If nomad tribes settled in this area, they should have left some evidence behind, and these graves are proof that they did. I think we need to extend our search for artifacts to the riverbanks. I have excavated burial mounds for more than 20 years, but I have never seen anything like this before. This new type gives us useful information about the evolution of culture, the use of materials and the people who populated this region of Kyrgyzstan. Other experts will examine these materials, and if their conclusions match ours, it will make a significant impact in the scientific world."

"Of course the students hoped to unearth valuable objects such as jewelry, but the mounds were looted centuries before," said Aida Abdykanova, "They're disappointed, but nonetheless the archeologists should not give up. Only purposeful and systematic research will get results."

"Vasia Was Here" in ancient Arabic ...

The students were also lucky enough to contribute to the pool of knowledge of local archeology. Kalys, a local shepherd, told them about several huge stones with inscriptions on them, in the mountain summer pastures (locally referred to as "Jailoo"), on the upper reaches of the Tosor River, a quite inaccessible area. Our keen archeologists decided to investigate further.

Kalys as guide led the way. The wondrous stones were of a type never seen or recorded by archeologists before. On the surface of one large boulder they saw typical pictures of mountain goats. Above these pictures was an inscription in Arabic. Kubat Shakievich realized that the drawings were at least 1,500 years older than the inscriptions.

Kubatbek Tabaldiev said, "To all appearances, the stone seems to have served as a marker of a sacred place for ritual ceremonies. It will be necessary to properly excavate the site in order to establish the facts more fully. Ashes, animal remains and ritual items will provide us with invaluable information about the culture of ancient people who populated this area."

He added, "I think that this Arabic inscription dates from the Karakhanid era (11 AD) and serves as a sign that says something like 'Vasia was here'. Although the Karakhanids had a

tendency towards bad behavior, this historical relic tells us something about the development of writing traditions of ancient people. Other locals told us about further boulders with similar inscriptions. The locations of these boulders, the Canyons of Tosor, Barskoon and Juku, suggest the existence of another branch of the Great Silk Road. We will need to organize an expedition to study this area more fully."

Kanbolot Akmatov, a fourth year student of the Historical department at the Kyrgyz-Turkish University 'Manas' and a member of the expedition group, conducted his own search of the valley and found a boulder with a large picture depicting a man holding a camel, a quite unique find. It was difficult for him to determine its age and origins, but he will certainly try and find out. Probably this picture was drawn during the 6th to 10th centuries and is of Sakousun origin. He has already decided to become an archeologist, but he hasn't decided which period to specialize in.

50,000 years in a day ...

For Ada Abdykanova and Kubatbek Tabaldiev this wasn't the end of their adventures. The young and experienced archeologists led them to other archeological sites in the same area. "We didn't choose the Tosor River valley area by accident. Previously, objects from a number of historical periods have been found in this area. There are graves from the period of the 'Great Migration of People', graves from Turkish period and many other sites of ancient settlements. We didn't fully appreciate just how much activity there was in our small country in ancient times."

Walking along a high mountain path, they came across a large rectangular hole. To the uninitiated, it would seem very disappointing to have walked so far just to see a big hole, but the archeologists didn't feel that way at all.

"This is the site of the Muster period (approximately 40,000 years ago). It is more than just a location. This was a Paleolithic workshop. Thousands of years ago, primitive people visited this site to make tools out of stone. In 2001, there was an international archeological expedition here, organized by Novosibirsk Institute of Archeology and Ethnology at the Siberia branch of Russian National Academy. They discovered over 3,000 artifacts and other material evidence of ancient life. The Tosor site is one of the two excavated and researched sites of ancient people in Kyrgyzstan," says Aida Abdykanova, a specialist in the Paleolithic period.

While walking around the big hole, Aida talked about this astonishing prehistoric workshop.

"We discovered six cultural strata here. This shows us that this region was settled and abandoned several times. The time period between settlements was about a thousand years. People left because of poor climatic or other adverse conditions."

The young archeologists were very happy. Although they were taught how to identify stone tools, they failed to find a real example. What they did find was evidence stone tool making in the form of stone tool fragments and scrap.

Some meters away from the hole, they found a Turkish mound dated 6 to 10 AD. It contained a corpse of an ancient warrior and his horse. Weapons and other personal items found with him indicated that people who traveled through this area used this gravesite to inter their dead.

In one day, the young archeologists had learnt about history spanning a period of almost 50,000 years.

We should work professionally

Just like representatives of other professions, archeologists have their own code of conduct. For instance, it is good practice to restore the excavation site after their research is completed. Furthermore, while taking a picture of an object, the archeologist's footprints should not be seen. To do otherwise would suggest amateurism and bad practice.

The physical digging turned out to be the easy part. The hardest part was the actual removal of objects. Many ancient items can be easily damaged when handled, so firstly, a plan of the exact position of an object along with surrounding small details, has to be drawn.

"Recording findings is very difficult. We need to restore the site after excavations have been completed, so it's very important to record all the details," said Aida Abdykanova, "Incidentally, this frightened the students. They asked whether they had to return stones back to exactly the same place, as they were before the excavation."

"Archeologists' work is not romantic. It is difficult and meticulous. The basic tools are spade, spatula, brush, camera, ruler, outline map and lastly a location satellite system (GPS). Before GPS we positioned objects differently (e.g. 50 meters from a particular reference point). With GPS we can record the exact location of an archeological object."

by Elizabeth Zalkind



AUCA Legal Clinic Students Win Five Lawsuits over the Summer Break



Instead of relaxing and enjoying their long-awaited summer vacations, three AUCA law students spent long hours offering free legal counseling through the AUCA Legal Clinic. This year the AUCA Law Department won an \$11,000 grant for Legal Clinic development from the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI), funded by the Higher Education Support Program (HESP), which promotes the sustainable reform of legal studies in higher education. This grant enabled students and their mentors to work through the summer in response to their clients request to carry on legal counseling without interruption.

Marina Abdurahmanova '08, Esen Aijibekov '08 and Alia Abdraimova '08 were selected from a

pool of senior law students to be the Legal Clinic representatives.

During the three summer months, AUCA students and their mentors—AUCA law instructors—won five lawsuits and offered free counseling to more than forty clients, with several complex cases are still pending.

“To quickly understand the case it helps to know the legal code and its articles to be used in a particular situation. We acquired the simple but very important knowledge of where to go, who to contact and what application to write. In other words, *the Legal Clinic helps to transform theoretical knowledge into a profession,*” remarked Abdurahmanova.

Head of the Legal Clinic Linara Mambetalieva mentioned that AUCA clientele are very specific and includes people who cannot afford hiring a lawyer or have already exhausted all other avenues and see the Legal Clinic as their last resort.

Although the Legal Clinic focuses on legal counseling and advocacy, its representatives have to often offer its clients psychological support and sympathy. Mambetalieva believes that it helps students to learn about the harsh reality that many people face in this society.

Abdurahmanova, who personally won two lawsuits this summer, thinks that advocacy is a real challenge. “When judges and opposing parties see students in court, they can hardly restrain an ironic smile and always feel sure in their victory.”

Abdurahmanova recalls a case when she was representing a poor 24-year-old woman with two children, who were evicted from the home.

“It was a very complicated case. Firstly, the woman did not have any proprietary rights to the room she was staying in, and was actually living there without permission. And secondly, I hadn’t taken the Housing Law course yet and knew very little. But I was sure we could help this desperate woman.”

When Abdurahmanova and her mentor requested that the court postpone the court hearings for two weeks in order to learn more about Kyrgyz housing laws, the judge snidely remarked that AUCA's legal education had too many gaps in it and it couldn't equip its students with proper legal knowledge.

"Afterwards, I took two weeks to learn about the housing law, and I won the case."

Abdurahmanova continues to counsel the young woman, who must gather the necessary documents to become an official owner of the premises in question.

Some clients, Abdurahmanova thinks, want a solution to their problems immediately. There were several situations when clients were calling the office and demanding urgent advice, but students can only offer advice after consultation with their mentors. As a result, some clients called the head of the program and complained.

However, students believe that the best evaluation of their work is their clients' appreciation and the increase in the number of people coming to the clinic.

"I am so thankful for the help I got from AUCA Legal Clinic. They offered me very serious and sound recommendations and helped me to prepare for the court hearing. Thanks to their support I managed to protect my rights and interests," remarked Lyudmila Nazarenko from Bishkek, whose lawsuit was won by the Legal Clinic students.

"I wish to heartedly thank Lenara Mambetalieva, director of the AUCA legal Clinic, and Alia Abdraimova '08 for their help and advise," echoed Valentina Manuilenko, a pensioner from Bishkek. "We had such a complicated lawsuit, and my advisers invested so much effort and so much time to help me win this case. I wish them all success in their hard and so much needed work," continued

Manuilenko.

The AUCA Legal Clinic was launched in 2002 as a required practical course for law students and with two main objectives: to offer future professionals an opportunity to employ their theoretical knowledge in real legal situations, and to give free legal counseling and advocacy to needy people.

More than 1,000 people have applied to the Legal Clinic for assistance during its four-year operation. AUCA young law professionals won over 90 per cent of all lawsuits they

initiated and took part in. Recently, the World Bank representation in the Kyrgyz Republic selected the AUCA Legal Clinic, from a pool of twelve law clinics in Kyrgyzstan, as the best, and offered close cooperation in an effort to provide free quality counseling to the Kyrgyz people.

"I had to pluck up all my courage in order not to start crying or responding to the judge in similar manner, which could be viewed as unethical as it could harm my client"

by Elizabeth Zalkind



MY THOUGHTS... ON PHOTOJOURNALISM



On December 18, AUCA Journalism students attended a photography course by the well known Kyrgyzstan photographer Alexander Fedorov. The Students presented their best photo works at an exhibition entitled Time Pieces. Over 50 photographs were put on display. Categories included portraits, reportages and landscapes. Alexander Fedorov believes that photographic art is impossible to appraise, so he graded students according to composition, light, and subject material; thus in the final assessment it will be the general public who will consider and judge the students' work.

After the exhibition, Lazarina Kuchmenova'09, a psychology student who displayed six of her works, shared with us her thoughts on photojournalism.

Perhaps for each of us who decided to take the Journalism course found that photography is a type of art that cannot be ignored.

Unfortunately, I don't know who persuaded me or how I got involved in the art of photography, but I can tell my short story.

I do remember that my first day of experiencing photography, it dates back to June when I finished the 9th form in high school. I asked my friends to go for a walk with me in the Botanic Garden to take some pictures. We had a great time, but the greatest joy was when we developed the film. Afterwards I began to take photographs, albeit as an amateur, of my friend in the very same Botanic Gardens. She is my most favorite model.

At that time, I had a very simple camera which I unfortunately lost, because of this I lost too many chances to take pictures, to record those most interesting moments in my life. Incidentally, when Alexander Pavlovich, our AUCA Journalism professor, was shown these pre-university photographs, he didn't like many of them

After entering the university, I started to use my friends' cameras. I loved those days when I could see the pictures I took; this fired my desire to take pictures again and again. It was more important for me to take my own pictures instead of copying those of others. I pursued my own originality.

During my studies we discussed the pictures taken by students, and there were many to look at. Alexander Pavlovich showed us good pictures, and then explained why they were good, or bad. He showed and explained the shortcomings of poor pictures. These comparisons gave us an insight to the details and applications to use or avoid when taking pictures.

I would like to tell you about Alexander Pavlovich. This man not only taught me photography but also opened up a whole world of philosophical vision, and explained the concept that we should not simply take photographs we must also follow an idea and an objective, to see beyond.

My vision of modern photography...

Nowadays people enjoy technology. We spend our spare time in front of the television or the computer. These things don't need anything from us. We can ignore them, or we can hit and shout at them if they don't work. We can behave any way we want towards them. We are not afraid of their reactions. But we should be careful with people. We should think about what words we use during conversations. We also should consider the gestures we use. Because of their own laziness people often have more contact with things rather than people. However, this is not always the case, if depends on the equipment.

One of these kinds of equipment is the camera. It may have been invented as a means to counteract boredom, and for some it still remains so. At first people who used cameras became interested in how they worked. Afterwards, they realized it was possible to use them for other goals, for example, to take pictures of outstanding and famous people. In the past to take a picture of say Leo Tolstoy, was an occasion of importance. People felt a sense of duty to record important events and famous people. Much later cameras became widespread and almost everyone now possesses and uses a camera, and their homes are full of pictures of their families and life.

For many, photography was a means of recording their lives such as anniversaries, celebrations and holidays. People liked to experiment and fantasize, dressing up as Queens or Kings for their portraits. More and more people wanted their photos taken and were taking photos. In this way modern photography developed and appeared as a new art form.

Technology is progress and change, and allows us to realize our ideas. Using computer technology and software such as the PhotoShop program, we are able to tint pictures red, yellow, green or any color in between.

Modern photography is not just a picture loaded into PhotoShop; it is like a projection of our thoughts, and our distinctive personality. A real photograph is always unique, like nothing taken before.

It is worth mentioning the role of photography in advertising. Frequently, we think about technological progress by looking at the advertising billboards in our towns and cities, or in magazines and newspapers. Perhaps these kinds of pictures are also indicators of modern photography. To sell something it is necessary to advertise

it well.

As well as portraying our thoughts and ideas, modern photographic technology allows us to take pictures of Leo Tolstoy in the dark, a picture in moonlight, or even under water.

Along with the technological progress, the scope of our fantasies and imagination is also extending. Modern photography is our thoughts realized through modern technology.

What kinds of photography do I like the most: color or black-and-white?

First and foremost, I need to discover how I generally perceive a color, and only then will I know the answer to the question: "What kinds of photography do I like the most?" The reason might be that I take pictures very often, for example when I take pictures of rain, if two pictures out of a hundred are good, I am very happy.

For me to explain the meaning of 'color', I would need to give you an example: landscape.

Landscape is called landscape because of its colorfulness. We can't show this through black-and-white media. A picture of a field of ripe wheat is golden, and this golden color is important to us. We also can't accept it solely in black-and-white because then our picture will openly lie to us. If we, anyway, go ahead and take this black-and-white picture, then it has a psychological perspective: a negative emotional color.

The same thing happens to a portrait. It is extremely important for a photographer to know what he wants to depict in his picture. If a

portrait is colorful, the person in the portrait will look joyful. If we take the portrait in black-and-white the person will look different; everything might be all right with him but something will seem not quite right with his face and his look. There are more small details in the portrait when it's in color.

It's the color of a picture which acts like a prompt from the photographer to the observer. If a picture is colorful, then it's positive. If it's black and white, the picture holds something puzzling, a tragedy may be or a hidden philosophy.

Just thoughts...

"I loved opening pieces of time" (my own phrase). I don't know whether it sounds good or not. But this phrase depicts my constant need to take photographs..., and it always happens, that results are not at first so important to me, but when I look through what I get, I hate myself.

Recently I've started thinking often about what my pictures give me. First of all, it's a feeling that I created something and to notice God's creation. I show it to people in the form of how I understand this. Moreover, all my friends live in remote areas away from Bishkek. When I write to them, I enclose pictures in the letters. These are material evidence of my feelings and what I want to tell them.

Day by day I frequently understand that this job will be a 'given' for me, and I will be a photographer for the rest of my life. Naturally, I will not take pictures of tourists, or villagers standing in front of soldiers in the main square, but something with more depth, related to pieces of time; time from the whole stream of existence.



by Lazarina Kuchmenova'09



*We're not Santa Claus –
We just study*

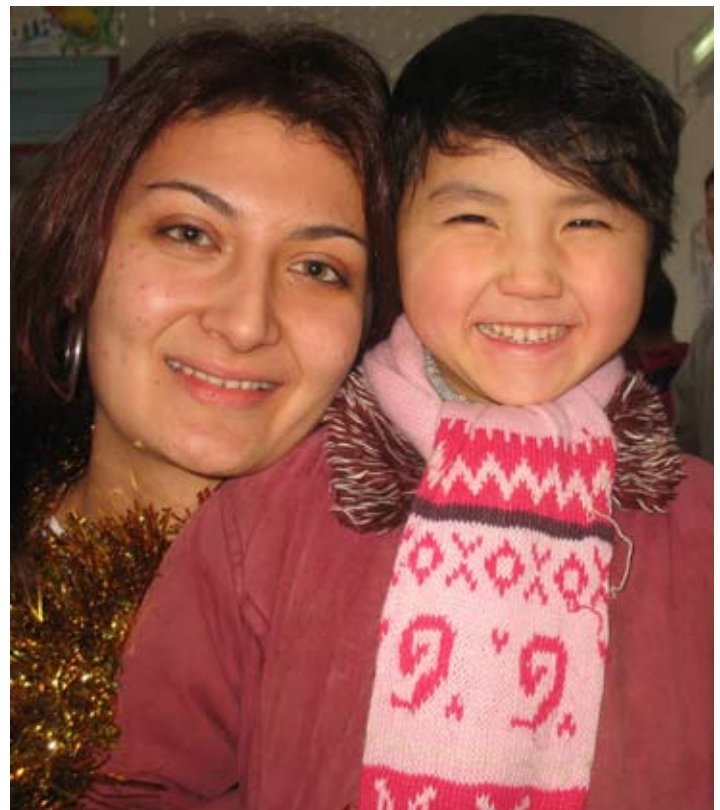
On New Year's Eve, volunteers of the AUCA Alumni Office with the support of the Kyrgyz Investment Credit Bank (KICB) and Kalikova & Associates Company, along with other kind people who really care about children and young people, turned words into action by making the occasion a real holiday at the Ak-Suu orphanage in Teploklyuchenko village, Issyk-Kul.

As well as their cheerful and festive performances, AUCA students and representatives of the KICB gave New Year present packs to 106 children, donated 90 pairs of shoes, and 2 sewing machines. Some of the older children are skilled sewing machinists, and these machines will help them to further develop their talents.

Before the volunteers left the children gave them gifts of hand-made souvenirs. According to Niyazova Jenishgul Karabekovna, the director of the Ak-Suu orphanage, "We have been hoping for this kind of support for a long time. In the past we have asked the government and other organizations for help, so we are very grateful and happy that AUCA students, KICB and Kalikova & Associates Company have responded and are helping us to solve some of the problems at the

orphanage."

Somebody said, "It is better to give than to receive." Perhaps, this is right. Happy New Year everyone! Please give presents!



by Maksim Poletaev'10

SUPPORT AUCA



What does it cost to plant the seed of academic discovery? We can't know how far a student's interest will take him or her, so AUCA provides the rigorous liberal arts foundation that enables each student to become lifelong learners, expand the frontiers of knowledge and excel in every aspect of their lives.

The cost of educating each student is \$3000 per year, while the average student only pays \$1000? The difference comes from your generous donations to our Annual Giving Fund.

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We are certain that all of us reflect upon our experiences at AUCA with pride and gratitude. The University has made great strides over the years, but there is still much to do to elevate AUCA to the next level. So please join us in making a gift to the AUCA Annual Fund today to ensure that current students will continue to enjoy the attentions of dedicated faculty and staff and that future challenges of the University can be met.

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