



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE
& Soros Foundations Network

BUILDING A GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR OPEN SOCIETY

Scholarship Programs

Scholarship Programs Newsletter Issue 3 – Spring 2008

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Greetings from New York and London! Spring is here and that means Network Scholarship Programs (NSP) staff and grantees are busy preparing for a number of conferences that will be held throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia.

This newsletter begins in fall 2007 as last year's conferences came to an end in the beautiful seaside city of Dubrovnik (Global Supplementary Grant Program). Last fall also witnessed the kick-off of two new initiatives- the Undergraduate Exchange Program Home Country Project Alumni Council and the Annual Regional Alumni Conference.

In addition to conference updates, this newsletter provides information on two quickly developing and important components of the NSP community- the Open Education Movement and KARL, a global intranet with promising potential to network staff and grantees.

Thank you for reading and stay tuned for the next issue.

- Network Scholarship Program

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Global Supplementary Grant Program (Europe) report from Dubrovnik

Michael Sieburg



(GSGP Grantees Sunjid Dugar and Anar Ahmadov)

In October, Global Supplementary Grant Program (GSGP) grantees studying in Europe met in the seaside city of Dubrovnik for a three day conference. Coming from 14 countries and representing an array of fields in the social sciences and humanities, the grantees are an impressive group of PhD students enrolled in universities throughout Europe. To highlight the grantees' research, the conference featured a series of presentations on topics ranging from popular media to oil and democracy to post-conflict reconciliation.



(GSGP Grantee, George Khelashvili)

Dr. Janja Bec spoke with the group at [War Photos Ltd](#), a photo gallery devoted to displaying pictures from conflicts around the world. Managed by a New Zealand-born photographer who covered the war in the 1990s, it was an interesting setting for the group to meet and discuss issues of genocide and war crimes. Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, Dr. Bec spoke about what sparked her involvement in the study of genocide, and what keeps her involved in the subject to this day. Author of several books and professor of a course in war crimes at the University of Sarajevo and Inter-University Center in Dubrovnik, Dr. Bec shared her extensive knowledge on the subject.



(Dr. Janja Bec)

Grantee conferences provide a platform for intra-program networking. To strengthen these networks and provide a means for staying in touch beyond face-to-face meeting, this cohort has an active community space up and running on KARL (see below for more about KARL). GSGP was the first program to join KARL, and the grantees use it to share scholarship opportunities, post job announcements, link to news and current events, and share photos. We are happy they are taking advantage of the system and look forward to integrating the KARL network with more NSP grantees this spring.

Home Country Project Alumni Council *Kristina Dzhadzharova (former UEP grantee)*

(A longer version of this article appears in the upcoming *Scholar Forum*)

Undergraduate Exchange Program (UEP) alumni from Eastern Europe and NSP staff members Anne Campbell and Amanda Lindberg gathered in Istanbul in September 2007 to establish an advisory board with the purpose of monitoring and evaluating current and future UEP Home Country Projects (HCP).

Given the challenges posed by HCPs throughout the years, the Istanbul meeting sought to reach an agreement on the common goals and practices that might ease project implementation. In the past, HCP proposals have been prepared while students are studying in the United States on their scholarship. This has led to situations where some ideas are unable to fit local contexts when the grantee returns home, causing financial difficulties and in some instances, the abandonment of the initial project idea. This initiative came about after the recognition of the need for alumni to become more involved in sharing personal experiences, knowledge, and expertise on project implementation.

First NSP Regional Alumni Conference – Tallinn, Estonia *Lesha Greene*

NSP alumni from the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania gathered in Tallinn, Estonia for the first NSP regional alumni conference, held October 19-21, 2007. The conference, which focused on issues concerning social responsibility, was the first in a series of alumni conferences that will be held in different regions over the next few years with the goal of not only reconnecting NSP with alumni but also providing them the space and opportunity to network among themselves and to discuss issues that are affecting their region. Alumni convened for two days of discussions, brainstorming, and of

course, Estonian folk dancing. One Lithuanian alumnus noted that although she lived in the same country as many of her fellow alumni, she hadn't seen most of them since completing her scholarship program.



(NSP Alumni in Tallinn)

Ms. Karen B. Decker, Chargé d'Affaires for the U.S. Embassy in Tallinn opened the conference. She spoke primarily about American volunteerism and her own experience in Afghanistan. Alumni presented on a wide range of topics, including Women and Social Responsibility, Ecological Footprint of Civic Society, and the Responsibility of Intellectuals in a Transitioning Society. Kristina Mand, a former Muskie Alumni, presented her ideas for a Pan Baltic foundation that would serve as an umbrella agency for the different not-for-profit organizations in the Baltics. Professor Tom Sorrell, Director of the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics at the University of Birmingham ended the conference with a rousing presentation on the social responsibilities of companies in regards to human rights. The next conference will be held in Krakow, Poland in the fall of 2008. It will include former grantees from Slovakia, Poland, and the Czech Republic. See you there.

Cape Town Declaration *Melissa Hagemann*

The Open Society Institute's education and information programs worked with the Shuttleworth Foundation and others to launch the [Cape Town Open Education Declaration](#) in January. The declaration, which has already been translated into over 15 languages, calls for publicly funded educational materials to be freely available online and the adoption of open content licenses for these resources. Open education has the potential to improve the quality and reduce the costs of educational materials.

A Note on KARL *Michael Sieburg*

The Open Society Institute recently developed [KARL](#), a web portal for use by staff and OSI-affiliated individuals, including grantees. Of interest to Network Scholarship Programs is the "community space" feature. A community space is a private website where members can meet, stay in touch, share information, network, and collaborate on projects using a blog, wiki, and file share system. Each user can post a personal profile, which is searchable throughout the network, across all public community spaces. This allows users in different offices and regions to locate other users who may have a particular skill or knowledge set in need. KARL is important for NSP because it brings the New York and London offices closer together. NSP grantees are also being signed up, which will provide them

greater access to the OSI network as well as offer them an efficient means of staying in touch and sharing information with their fellow grantees, strengthening the concept of an NSP as a network spanning programs and years. KARL is an innovative platform for information sharing and virtual collaboration that will be utilized to improve communication with and among NSP staff and grantees.

Program Announcements

The Open Society Institute and the University of Ottawa/l'Université d'Ottawa, in cooperation with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Ottawa, are pleased to announce that applications are being accepted for the Afghan Communications Scholarship.

The Afghan Communications Scholarship provides fully funded fellowships to qualified citizens of Afghanistan to complete a two year MA in Communications at the University of Ottawa/l'Université d'Ottawa in Ottawa, Canada. The program provides the opportunity for post-graduate study in Canada for journalists and communications professionals in early or mid-career who demonstrate both academic and professional excellence and the potential to become leaders, decision-makers and agents of change.

For more information, and to download an application, please visit:
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus_areas/afghan/guidelines

Call for Applications

[Afghan Communications Scholarship](#)
Applications are due **May 1, 2008**.

[Global Supplementary Grant Program](#)
The application deadline for students pursuing a PhD in Europe is **June 4, 2008**.

(Please note: The application deadline for students pursuing a PhD in Asia, Australia, North America, or the Middle East has passed.)

All other program deadlines have passed. [Please check our website for future call for applications.](#)

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