CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

COIL in Brief

Welcome to the November 2026 edition of the monthly COIL in Brief newsletter!

The Congressional Office for International Leadership (COIL) aims to promote congressional and citizen diplomacy with global civic and political leaders. To do so, COIL organizes the Open World Program, which brings delegates from 28 partner countries to the United States to liaise with American peers. Delegates participate in a multi-day Washington D.C. orientation, where they learn about congressional governance, meet with Members of Congress and their staff, and engage culturally with the city. From there, they travel to host communities across the nation, staying with local families and connecting with professional counterparts at the state and local level.

COIL had a productive October, hosting 9 delegations spanning prosecutors, parliamentary staffers, and more.

October 2026 Delegations

October 14-24:



Mongolia - Rule of Law: Prosecutors - hosted in Princeton, West Virginia (Center of International Understanding) and Chicago, Illinois (CIP Chicago)



Georgia- Rule of Law: Young Lawyers - hosted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (GlobalPittsburgh)

October 16-29:



Ukraine - Sister City Partnership - hosted in Monterey, California (City of Monterey)

October 24-28:



Rumsfeld Fellows - Accountable Governance - hosted in Reno, Nevada (Northern Nevada International Center)



Rumsfeld Fellows - Economic Development - hosted in Denver, Colorado (WorldDenver)

October 27-November 6:



Fiji - Parliamentary Staffers - hosted in Detroit, Michigan (Global Ties Detroit)



Moldova - Parliamentary Staffers - hosted in Durham, New Hampshire (Friends Forever International)



Romania - Parliamentary Staffers - hosted in Huntsville/Montgomery, Alabama (Global Ties Alabama)

Delegation Deep Dive



This past month, COIL sent a delegation of Mongolian prosecutors to Princeton, West Virginia, where they were hosted by the Center for International Understanding. Before their arrival in Princeton though, the group had a productive stay in Washington, D.C., which included learning about the American judicial system from Judge Stephen P. Friot, senior United States district judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, and meeting with Judge Reggie B. Walton, senior United States district judge for the District of Columbia, after observing court proceedings. The group also met with representatives from the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development at the Department of Justice and the American Bar Association.

During their time in Princeton, the Mongolian prosecutors had an extremely dynamic program focused on, among other topics, the digitalization of U.S. prosecutorial services, promoting transparency and accountability in prosecutorial decisions, and

the U.S. system for addressing prosecutorial ethics. The group met with West Virginia Attorney General JB McCuskey, Mercer County Magistrate Michael Flannigan, the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, the West Virginia Drug Task Force, Legal Aid Society of West Virginia (photo credit), and many more.

In addition, the group was able to experience local culture, such as learning about Appalachia's indigenous customs and heritage at the Wolf Creek Museum and Indian Village, while also sharing some of their own Mongolian culture by preparing traditional Mongolian dishes for their American host families.

COIL is proud to see further ties develop between the American and Mongolian legal systems, as well as the people of both countries. COIL would like to extend a special thanks to the Council of International Understanding for organizing this impactful Open World program.

Check out local coverage of the Mongolian prosecutors on WVNS here

Delegations on the Horizon

Upcoming COIL programming includes the following delegations in November:

November 4-14:

- **Azerbaijan** - Economic Development through Sports - *Colorado Springs, Colorado* (Colorado Springs World Affairs Council)
- **Moldova** - NC-Moldova Partnership: Agritourism/Local Government - *Raleigh, North Carolina* (Wake Forest Rotary Club)
- **Ukraine** - U.S.-Ukraine Trade and Investment Exchange - *Charlotte, North Carolina* (International House)

November 6-15:

- **ASEAN Rising Leaders Fellows** - Maritime Issues - *San Diego, California* (San Diego Diplomacy Council)
- **ASEAN Rising Leaders Fellows** - Maritime Challenges - *Norfolk, Virginia* (Norfolk Sister City Association)
- **ASEAN Rising Leaders Fellows** - Energy - *Tulsa, Oklahoma* (Tulsa Global Alliance)

November 30-December 10:

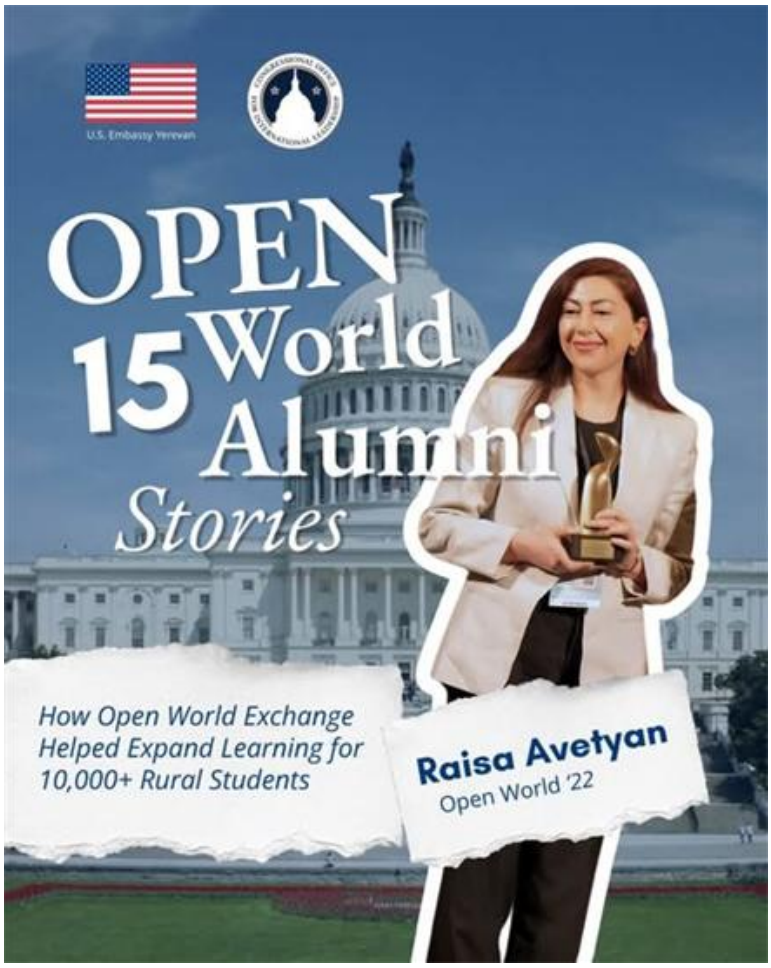
- **Armenia** - Members of Parliament - *Seattle, Washington* (World Affairs Council of Seattle)
- **Central Asian Regional** - Members of Parliament - *Phoenix, Arizona* (CIP Phoenix)

- **Kazakhstan** - Members of Parliament - *Helena, Montana* (WorldMontana)
- **Poland** - Members of Parliament - *Albuquerque, New Mexico* (Global Ties Albuquerque)

Alumni News

A Kosovar Open World alumnus who traveled on a Balkan Regional Business Development Open World Program to Philadelphia in June 2026, recently signed a business contract with Ataraxia Sales & Consulting, LLC, a Virginia-based company, to help deliver cybersecurity services to Americans. His company, Arcus, is a cybersecurity company focused on offensive security and supporting government initiatives in election security and the design and build of Security Operation Centers. Ataraxia will handle marketing, client management, and acquisition, while Arcus will handle technical aspects. He credited the Open World program for helping to make this partnership possible by allowing him to understand American culture and business practices but also develop the connections to facilitate this partnership.

Read more about this partnership on LinkedIn.



In October 2022, Raisa Avetyan participated in an Armenia Open World program around Education Quality and Accountability in the Digital Age. Traveling to Kansas City, she learned about approaches to online learning, teacher development, and educational quality at American universities and schools. Raisa serves as Head of the Distance Learning Department at the National Center of Educational Technologies, where she leads e-School Armenia, which is a project that combats teacher shortages in rural areas by providing quality online education to students. Building on the Open World program, she helped expand e-School Armenia, creating a network of Mentor Schools that connected experienced educators with newer teachers to share expertise and improve education quality. From 2021 to 2025, e-School Armenia reached 250 rural schools, involved 400 teachers, and supported over 10,000 students. Thanks to Raisa's efforts, the project received the Human-Centered Innovation Award from the Armenia National SDG Innovation Lab in March 2026, presented by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. COIL is proud to see its Open World alumni translate their experience on the program into meaningful results back home.

Read more about this story from the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan.



This past month, COIL hosted Open World alumnus Assylbek Murzakhmetov of Kazakhstan in our Washington, D.C. office to learn about his work and accomplishments in the years since his program participation. Mr. Murzakhmetov completed an Open World program focused on Maker Spaces in October 2016, traveling to Arvada, Colorado. After learning about For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) programs in the United States, he was committed to bringing this premier American youth robotics program to Kazakhstan.

In 2020, Mr. Murzakhmetov founded USTEM Foundation, which has become the official operator of FIRST programs in Kazakhstan, as well as a leader in advancing education and skill training in robotics, CAD, 3D printing, and engineering. The foundation now hosts three flagship events and eight robotics/engineering competition tracks, including Battle of Bots and the Almaty Tech Cup. It engages over 15,000 students annually, including through Project STEM Hanym, which offers STEM mentoring to young girls. Additionally, the USTEM Foundation provides a robotics and space engineering training program for educators, better preparing them to instruct students in the field.

Since starting USTEM, Mr. Murzakhmetov has expanded its scope internationally. In addition to Kazakhstan, the foundation is now the official FIRST operator in

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Furthermore, the Kazakh FIRST team coached by Mr. Murzakhmetov won four consecutive FIRST Global Challenge world championships from 2022 to 2025, beating out 190 countries in the 2025 edition.

Stories like this highlight the power of the Open World program to expand American global ties while making a difference in the lives of others. COIL commends Mr. Assylbek Murzakhmetov for his impressive achivements and thanks him for his participation in the Open World program.

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