



Weekly Dispatch No. 3

March 31, 2022



Krakow mural proclaiming Glory to Ukraine in Polish

WASHINGTON, DC - COIL has found itself at the edge of a dark pool. Looking down at it reveals nothing more than a reflection of ourselves: our mission coupled with an ever-evolving question of what can we do for our alumni in a region torn by war. The answer came back to us via that reflection. What we can do is help the helpers: the countries bordering Ukraine who are absorbing millions of refugees need the opportunity our program offers to manage this crisis both effectively and humanely. We can do this. And we will. ~Jane Sargus, Executive Director

EVENT - The Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine, in partnership with the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance of the Council of Europe, is conducting a series of online conferences to facilitate the exchange among local leaders from Ukraine and other countries. The initiative is supported by the

Association of Ukrainian Cities and Association of Amalgamated Communities.

Please join via [Zoom](#) Thursday, April 7th, 2022 at 10.00 - 11:30 (PDT) / 13.00 - 14:30 (EDT) / 18.00 - 19.30 (CET) / 19.00 - 20.30 (EET). Speakers include Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the United States **Oksana Markarova**, Kyiv Mayor **Vitaliy Klitschko**, and Open World alumni including Melitopol mayor **Ivan Federov** (recently released from Russian captivity), and Novoukrainka mayor **Oleksandr Korinnyi**.

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Alumna Alina Beskrovna (right) meets Senator John McCain and Senator Chris Murphy in Kyiv 2017

MARIUPOL - "At first, we had everything. We had electricity. We had water. You know, it felt like I could work from home. And then gradually, they bombed the antennas. The Wi-Fi went down. Then the cell phone service went down. Then the lights went out. We had zero information from the outside world. It was all rumors."

Alina Beskrovna from Mariupol, Ukraine hosted by Kilgore College Small Business Development Center in Longview, TX 2012

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Ukrainian judges with Judge Remondini (center in tie) and their local hosts in Indianapolis 2009

BLOOMINGTON, IN - "With nearly a month of devastation unfolding in the wake of Russia's attack and invasion on Ukraine, Hoosier leaders and judges are calling to mind a time when Indiana's bond to Ukraine was stronger than ever.

(Ed. Two Indiana judges) made lifelong relationships with individuals they met over the years — the same people they hope are safe from harm in Ukraine as war wages on. "I'm just so saddened, because I see the videos and I see these crowds and I look in the crowds for faces of people I know," Remondini said. "But it's not going to be over for a while," he continued. "And I think they are in for a lot of suffering and pain. I just hope they continue to get the support that they deserve, you know, as a democracy.

McDonald said she most recently spoke with a facilitator she befriended who was in Kyiv shortly after Russia bombed Ukraine's nuclear power station in Zaporizhzhia. "Ukraine is a sovereign country. And they have the right to govern themselves through a democracy," McDonald said. "I condemn the attack on their right to govern themselves."

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KYIV - “Sometimes when those explosions come I can actually feel my house trembling. And that is very scary... We were hearing constant sirens during the night... I was afraid to sleep in my bedroom because it had a window in it. So I slept in my wardrobe.”

Alumna Inna Sovsun, Deputy Minister of Education and Science (2014-2016), current deputy of the Verkhovna Rada, hosted by World Affairs Council of Oregon in Portland, OR 2009

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KHARKIV - “We met with Prime Minister Boris Johnson. We talked about security guarantees, humanitarian aid, "Ukrainian sky", and weapons... I told him about soldiers, volunteers, and doctors needing ammunition - all currently working to win now! Also, every penny paid for goods/services to international companies in the Russian Federation is blood money!"

Alumna Maria Mezentseva, current deputy of the Verkhovna Rada, hosted by Springfield Commission on International Visitors in Springfield, IL 2009



LOUISVILLE - “Since the Perm-Louisville relationship began, leaders in both communities have provided strong support in the political, cultural, educational, business and medical arenas, according to the World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana. For example, the Council notes the only professional sports park in Russia is in Perm and is modeled after the Louisville Extreme Park.”

Sister Cities of Louisville has hosted delegations from Perm through the Open World program, with recent exchanges in 2015, 2017 and 2019.



LVIV - “What did I understand during this month of full-scale war? Above all, we are very strong, and therefore invincible. And I don't care how pretentious it sounds. Because I think and feel that way. We have established ourselves as a political nation. We are all united - regardless of political views, religion, creed, place of residence, etc. And nothing will ever take away our identity. We now know exactly what it means to fight for values. Fight for the values of truth, freedom and justice. And that's why I believe that in the future most of us will witness them. Ukraine will become much stronger.”

Alumna Halyna Vasylchenko, current deputy of the Verkhovna Rada, hosted by World Affairs Council of New Hampshire in Manchester, NH 2021



KYIV - “One instructor cannot teach 150 people to stop critical bleeding by showing a tourniquet from a podium. Study time should be spent on practice. You can learn to apply a tourniquet by applying a tourniquet! Today we practiced in the field with weapons and equipment with which we will fight.”

Participant whose Open World program was interrupted when the war began in late February.





Ukrainian participants from Cherkasy meeting with Doug Hutchinson of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa 2014

Des Moines, IA - "Iowa Sister States is currently hosting a fundraiser to raise funds for Cherkasy, Ukraine for humanitarian aid to purchase items they have requested that they are in need of. We have set a goal of \$20,000 and hope to have it raised in a week. Also, we hope to do a second fundraiser for when the conflict ends for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

The city of Muscatine has raised funds for refugees from Ukraine should they come to Iowa.

In addition, this is a priority of our Governor, she is going to make an announcement to get all of Iowa behind the efforts to support Ukraine."

Iowa Sister States hosted Open World programs for Ukrainians in 2007, 2013, 2019, 2020



TBILISI - "We need to clean the planet of war criminals!
We need to wake up!
We need to wise up!
Make it safer,
Make it better,
And do it now now now!
We need to build a better future,
And we need to start right now."

Muskie Fellow (2008) and Open World program facilitator Judge Inga Todria, Judicial Reform Advisor, USAID-ROLP





MOSCOW - “In the current situation the Open World program is of particular importance and it should not be closed because this is the only thread that can support dialogue.”

Alum Valery Nechay, Foreign Press Observer and First Deputy Editor-in-Chief Echo of Moscow (St. Petersburg) hosted by University of South Florida in St. Petersburg, FL 2021



KYIV - The New York Times has published an article about the residents of Kyiv and their lives in response to Russian aggression. The article features two Open World Alums - Vladyslav Malashchenko and Maksym Skubenko. Vladyslav's bakery "Good Bread for Good People" has stopped working with private customers and is now baking bread for the people in Kyiv and the Kyiv region that are in need of food. They are producing from 400 to 800 bread loaves daily and passing them over to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Territorial Defense Units, and regular citizens. Maksym was featured as a volunteer who joined the Kyiv Territorial Defense Unit. He had no previous military or weapons experience, but feels that he absolutely has to be there and defend his country from the aggressor.

**Vlasyslav Malashchenko from Kyiv, Ukraine hosted by US-Ukraine Foundation
in Oak Hill, VA 2020**

**Maksym Skubenko from Zvenyhorodka, Ukraine hosted by Chicago Sister Cities
International Program in Chicago, IL 2017**

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