



September 2008

Monthly Newsletter



Ambassador Tina Kaidanow (left) cuts the ribbon of the new Education USA Center with American School Director, Ardian Hoxha. Photo: Laura Hochla, Embassy Pristina, September 4, 2008

EMBASSY INAUGURATES NEW EDUCATION USA ADVISING CENTER

On September 4th, 2008, Ambassador Tina Kaidanow inaugurated the new, official Education USA advising center at the American School of Kosovo. A \$30,000 grant from the Public Affairs Section, coupled with a cost share of 17,500 Euro from the American School, financed the equipment, materials and staff training needed to establish the center. With test prep materials, college guides and scholarship information, the center has all the resources students need to pursue higher education in the United States. Additionally, American School students volunteer in the center. By helping center visitors find on-line and print resources, American School students not only enhance their own knowledge of the U.S. higher education system, they enjoy a new leadership opportunity as well.



A journalist from the Czech Republic tells the Serbian-language service of the main, Kosovo-wide broadcaster about her experience in Kosovo. Photo: Laura Hochla, Embassy Pristina.

NATO JOURNALISTS VISIT USKFOR, MEET KOSOVO ALBANIAN AND SERB JOURNALISTS, SEPTEMBER 10-11, 2008.

In a two-day visit to Kosovo sponsored by USNATO and facilitated by Embassy Pristina's Public Affairs Section, a group of 11 journalists from Armenia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Tajikistan and Turkey visited Camp Bondsteel and went on a foot patrol with Liaison Monitoring Teams in Kosovo's mixed Albanian-Serb eastern region. The journalists, all veteran reporters on the Kosovo issue, also spent a day talking with Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb journalists, hearing different perspectives on the current political and economic situation in Kosovo. Discussions with local journalists were instructive for the visitors about the Kosovo media landscape, offering insights on local reporters' contact with NATO and the effect of KFOR's radio stations and media campaigns on the reporting environment in Kosovo. These visits provide journalists from European countries a firsthand look at NATO-led operations around the world.



Ambassador Kaidanow waves to citizens of Leshan, Peja/Pec. Photo: Arbnor Haxhibeqiri, Embassy Pristina

AMBASSADOR K Aidanow INAUGURATES CULTURAL PRESERVATION FUND PROJECT, SEPTEMBER 16TH.

Ambassador Tina Kaidanow, greeted by dozens of cheering children waving Kosovo and American flags, laid the first brick in the inauguration of the restoration of the Haxhi Zeka kulla, a traditional Albanian-style home, in the town of Leshan, Peja Municipality on September 16th. The entire town showed up, in fact, to show its appreciation of the \$56,352 project funded by the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation will restore the 19th century home for use as a community center in the town. Neglected for several decades and damaged by the elements, the repairs will include insulating the foundation, repairing the roof and installing electrical and plumbing systems. The locally and internationally respected NGO, Cultural Heritage

without Borders, will implement the work. The Municipality of Peja and the Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Peja both pledged their commitment to the restoration work and to maintaining the building for generations.



Ambassador Kaidanow with Mufti Naim Ternava. Photo: Arbnor Haxhibeqiri, Embassy Pristina.

AMBASSADOR HOLDS SEVENTH ANNUAL IFTAAR FOR ISLAMIC COMMUNITY.

On September 19th, Ambassador Tina Kaidanow hosted Kosovo's Grand Mufti, Naim Ternava, and representatives of the Kosovo Islamic Community to an Iftaar supper. Organized by PAS, the Iftaar was an opportunity to celebrate the ongoing cooperation between the Embassy and the KIC, particularly on educational exchange programs. Kosovo-wide media covered the Ambassador's speech, in which she emphasized the importance of religious freedom in the United States and thanked the Mufti and the KIC for promoting equality and freedom for all of Kosovo's ethnic and religious communities.



Professor Aumente with Minority Media Journalists. Photo: Laura Hochla, Embassy Pristina.

U.S. PROFESSOR TRAINS KOSOVO SERB JOURNALISTS IN ECONOMIC REPORTING.

In a visit sponsored by PAS, Jerome Aumente, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey held two-day intensive sessions on economic reporting for 10 radio and TV journalists from September 15-19, 2008. Plagued by a tendency to focus only on the corruption of individual officials or companies, Professor Aumente's workshop aimed to give them deeper understanding of the economic phenomena at work in a developing country like Kosovo. Since many of these journalists have received little or no formal journalistic training, Professor Aumente's strategies for telling stories about individuals affected by political and economic phenomena will make their

reporting more compelling to Kosovo Serb listeners, most of whom usually turn to Serbia's public broadcaster, RTS. By encouraging these reporters to peer more closely into the human dimension of stories, Professor Aumente's workshops will help Kosovo Serb media outlets increase their viewership and listenership.



Kosovo participants speak with Dr. Lublin and Embassy Tirana. Photo: Arbnor Haxhibeqiri, Embassy Pristina.

KOSOVO AND ALBANIA: U.S. PROFESSOR EXPLAINS ELECTION 2008 ISSUES TO JOURNALISTS AND ACADEMICS.

In a digital video conference with Embassies Pristina and Tirana, U.S. speaker, Dr. David Lublin, a professor of government at American University, spoke with journalists, civil society representatives and academics from Kosovo and Albania. During the hour-long DVC Dr. Lublin discussed the Electoral College, the candidates and key issues. He highlighted the fact that U.S. policy towards the Balkans will likely not change drastically with a new administration, as the European integration of the whole region is a very bi-partisan priority. Participants' questions touched on minority community voting trends, the

strategy of VP choices by both candidates, and the issue of race in the 2008 election. As these two young democracies develop, in-depth conversations about the U.S. political process spark important debates about political processes in Kosovo and Albania.