



FULBRIGHT

BULGARIA

th

ANNIVERSARY

Bulgarian-American
Commission for
Educational Exchange

Official Greetings

I am delighted to send greetings from Washington to Sofia, and to all those gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission. This anniversary underscores the strong and enduring relationship between our countries.

Since the Fulbright Program in Bulgaria was established in 1968, more than 1,000 Bulgarian and U.S. students, scholars, researchers, and educators have participated in Fulbright exchanges. The U.S.-Bulgarian Fulbright Program counts among its alumni government ministers, university rectors, and prominent artists. The founding of the commission in 1993 renewed the commitment of the United States to deepen the bonds of mutual understanding and friendship between the people of our countries, and highlighted our belief that Fulbright exchanges have the ability to transform the lives of participants, as well as those in host communities. The Fulbright Program remains as vital and relevant today as when it was first established.

The success of the Fulbright program in Bulgaria has been made possible by the work of the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission and the generous support of both governments and the private sector. It gives me great pleasure to join you in recognizing the many achievements of the Fulbright Commission over the past 20 years. I know that our collaboration will continue long into the future and I send my best wishes for enduring success.

John F. Kerry
Secretary of State of the United States



Dear Fulbright Alumni and Grantees,

As an Honorary Chairperson of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange, it is my pleasure to be part of its 20th anniversary.

Thanks to the variety of programs in the fields of education, governance and business, as well as the numerous cultural and academic activities promoting specialization and professional qualification of graduate students, teachers, lecturers and researchers, hundreds of young Bulgarian and American citizens not only received an opportunity for career development, but also had the chance to immerse themselves in the daily life and environment of a different culture, to share its joys and challenges, to become active ambassadors of their nations in the partner country.

I would like to express my deep respect for the professionalism and commitment of the Fulbright Commission Board members, its staff and associates, and to congratulate all current and former Fulbright grantees.

I am convinced that their community will grow for the benefit of mutual understanding and respect in a dynamically changing contemporary world.

Prof. Dr. Anelia Klissarova
*Minister of Education and Science
of the Republic of Bulgaria
Honorary Co-Chair of the Bulgarian-American
Commission for Educational Exchange*





On behalf of the United States government, I offer my enthusiastic congratulations to the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange and the entire Bulgarian-American Fulbright family for 20 years of building bridges and connections between our two nations. I believe the program here embodies the best in international exchange, and deserves enormous credit for bringing the Bulgarian and American people closer together following the end of the Cold War. The program is thriving today, thanks to dedicated staff, partners, and alumni who recognize the incredible value of international exchange, and I am confident we will see many more years of fruitful collaboration and partnership.

Marcie B. Ries
Ambassador of the United States of America to Bulgaria
Honorary Co-Chair of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange

Senator J. William Fulbright, the man whose vision in 1945 is the reason we are all here today to celebrate, famously had this to say about the inspiration for the international exchange program which bears his name. “In the long course of history, having people who understand your thoughts is much greater security than another submarine.” That is the essence of the Fulbright program – together we study, investigate, and explore, and in doing so, we learn to understand each other better. On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange, I want to congratulate all past, former, and future Fulbrighters as well as the Commission staff and all of the supporters of the Fulbright program. The past 20 years have seen outstanding achievements and I have no doubt that the future will be even brighter.

Elizabeth Fitzsimmons
Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy
Chair, Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange





It is with great joy and pleasure that I would like to congratulate all members of the Bulgarian-American Fulbright community on the 20th anniversary of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange. Twenty years may not be a very long span of time for an institution to fully develop its potential. Yet, it can achieve quite a lot if it draws courage, inspiration and motivation to work from a great idea such as the Fulbright idea of promoting mutual understanding through exchange of knowledge, education, cultural and moral values.

The Bulgarian Fulbright Commission was established at a turning point of Bulgarian and European history and has developed as a highly respected institution helping educational reforms in Bulgaria, promoting the internationalization of education, and the good relations between Bulgaria and the United States. With its manifold activities, it seems to well match Senator Fulbright's definition of a "modest program with immodest goals." However, we would not have been so successful without the consistent support of the American and Bulgarian governments, our partner institutions in the US and Bulgaria, our donors, and the commitment of the Commission Board and staff. I would like to most cordially thank all of them for their dedication to the Fulbright cause.

I have no doubt that the Bulgarian Commission will continue to fulfill its important mission in the years to come and give its valuable contribution to the endless process of education, intercultural understanding, and humanization.

Dr. Julia Stefanova
*Executive Director, Bulgarian-American
Commission for Educational Exchange*

The Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange

The Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange

The Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange (Bulgarian Fulbright Commission) was officially inaugurated in February, 1993, under a ten-year bilateral agreement between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Bulgaria. On December 3, 2003, a new bilateral agreement was signed between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Bulgaria establishing the Fulbright Commission in perpetuity.



Letter of Senator Fulbright to the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission



Bulgarian Fulbright Commission Board, 1994 From left to right: Lawrence Plotkin – Chairman, Dr. Arthur Charles, Dr. Walter Theurer, Christo Georgiev, Prof. Yordan Stoichkov, Prof. Boris Galabov, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Julia Stefanova – Executive Director, Violina Popova, Dr. Hugh Fullerton

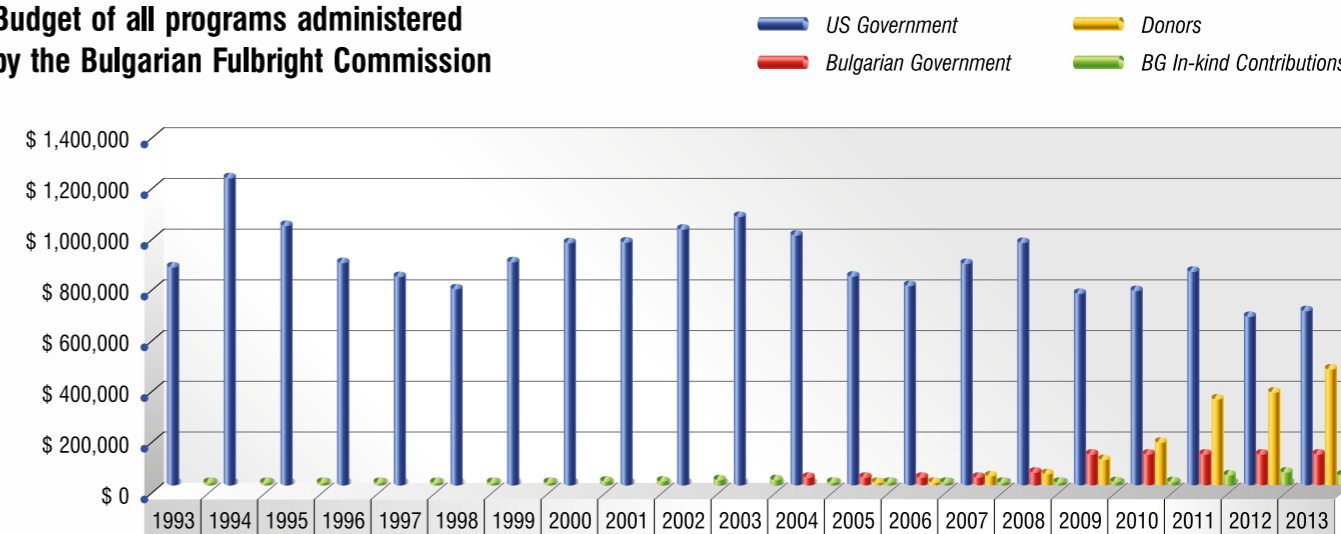


Signing of the second Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria concerning the Bulgarian – American Commission for Educational Exchange, 2003

The Commission Board consists of ten members, five of whom are American citizens and five are citizens of Bulgaria. They represent the major areas of state and public activity: government education and business. The Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Bulgaria and the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria serve as honorary chairs of the Commission. The Board members in 2013 are: PAO Elizabeth Fitzsimmons, Chair, CAO Richard Damstra, Commission Treasurer, Geoffrey Dean, Angela Rodell, Thomas Higgins, Lena Roussenova, Neda Kristanova and Maria Metodieva. Dr. Julia Stefanova has been the Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission since 1993. The Commission staff consists of nine full-time members: Anastassia Miteva, financial officer, Maria Kostova, Rada Kaneva, Iliana Dimitrova, program officers, Snezhana Teneva, educational adviser, Iolanta Koprinova, administrative secretary, Tanya Petrova, accountant/cashier, Ivan Penchev, Fulbright Language Center coordinator and Adrian Zlatanov, Fulbright-Prometric Test Center administrator.

The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program and the Commission in Bulgaria is an annual contribution of the US and Bulgarian governments. In FY 2013, the US government allocation was about \$ 630,000. Since 2003 the Bulgarian government has also provided financial support: \$ 40,000 in 2003; \$ 70,000 in 2008, and \$ 140,000 since 2009. Starting in 2007, the Commission has raised additional funds through cooperation with Bulgarian and US institutions, e.g. *America for Bulgaria* Foundation, *Thanks to Scandinavia* Institute, Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe, the University of Oklahoma at Norman, Sofia University etc. The America for Bulgaria Foundation is the Commission's most generous donor. Since 2009, the Commission has received a total of \$ 1,185,000 from the Foundation to expand the ETA program and the Fulbright International Summer Institute.

Budget of all programs administered by the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission



Grant Activities

The main function of the Commission directly derives from the goals of the Fulbright Program worldwide and consists in administering the exchange of Bulgarian and American scholars, students, teachers, school administrators and professionals and disseminating information about opportunities for study, research, teaching and lecturing in the U.S. and in Bulgaria.



Interview with Fulbright grant applicants



Cultural enrichment program for US Fulbrighters



Wrap-up Seminar for English Teaching Assistants



Pre-departure orientation for Bulgarian Fulbright grantees



Orientation program for newly arrived US Fulbright grantees

Fulbright Alumni

Prior to the establishment of the Commission, between 1967 and 1993, there were 102 Bulgarian and 80 US Fulbright grantees. From 1993 to 2013 a total of 899 specialists have been awarded scholarships under the following categories: senior scholars, graduate students and English teaching assistants, doctoral students, Hubert Humphrey fellowships, Fulbright Teacher and School Adminis-

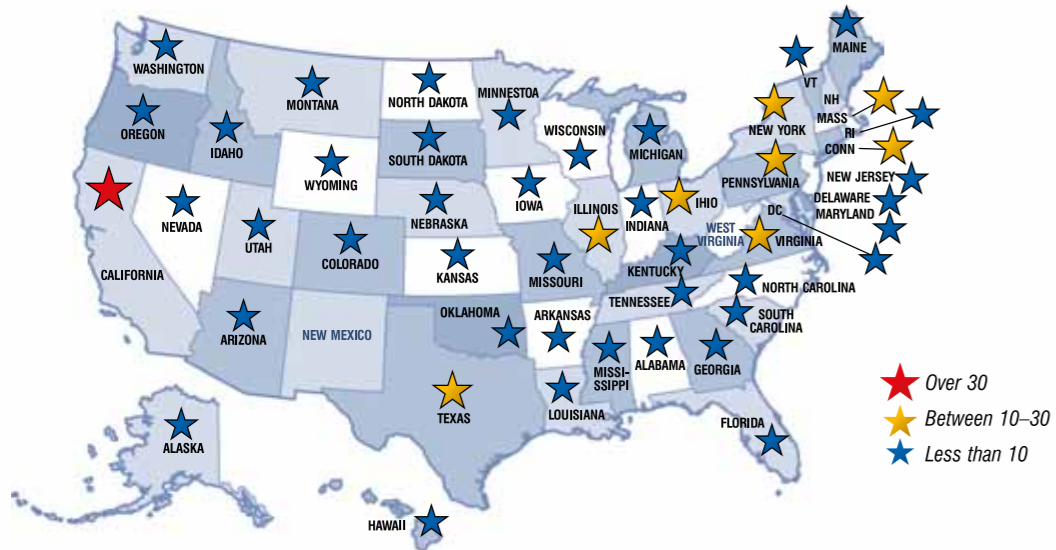
trator Exchange, Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminars, U.S. Studies Summer Institutes, Fulbright Specialists, New Century Scholars, Ron Brown fellowships, and Alexander Hamilton fellowships. In 2013 the total number of Bulgarian and American Fulbright alumni since 1967 is 1081: 533 Bulgarians and 548 Americans.

Fulbright presence in the US and Bulgaria

Bulgarian Grantees and Alumni by Host State



US Grantees and Alumni by Home State



Bulgarian Grantees and Alumni by Home City



US Grantees and Alumni by Host City



Fulbright and International Events



Fulbright – Hays Summer Seminar, 1996



Fulbright – Hays Summer Seminar, 1997



Fulbright – Hays Summer Seminar, 2008



Regional European Workshop for English Teaching Assistants, 2011



Fulbright – Hays Summer Seminar, 2001



Fulbright – Hays Summer Seminar, 2004



Cultural Enrichment Seminar on Social and Cultural Integration in 21st Century Europe for U.S. Graduate Students, 2011



Orientation Program for Fulbright Exchange Teachers from Europe, 2008

Educational Advising and Outreach

Educational advising is another major activity of the Commission that has dramatically expanded since the opening of the Advising Center in 1994. The Center offers information and guidance on educational opportunities in the US, admission procedures at US universities, financial aid, testing, language training, the annual Fulbright and other competitions etc. There are regular individual and group sessions from Monday through Friday. Annually, the center services about 11,000 visitors, email and phone inquirers. Between 2006 and 2012 the number of in-person visits to the advising centers in the country was 27,920 and the number of visitors joining various outreach events was 26,525.



Inauguration of the Bulgarian Fulbright Alumni Association, 1995



25th Conference of Fulbright Executive Directors from Europe, 2005

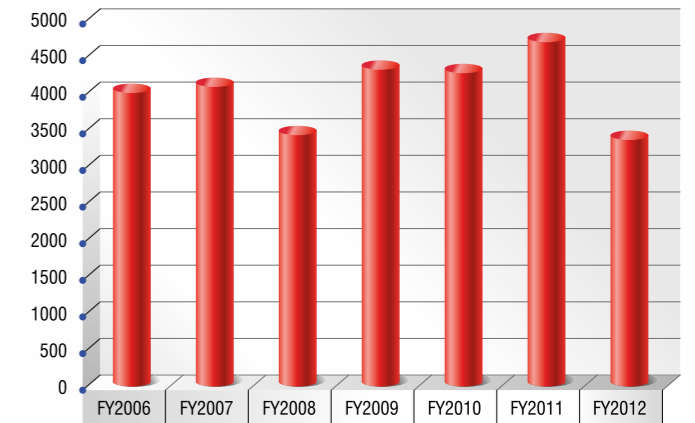


Celebration of the centennial of the birth of Senator Fulbright, 2005

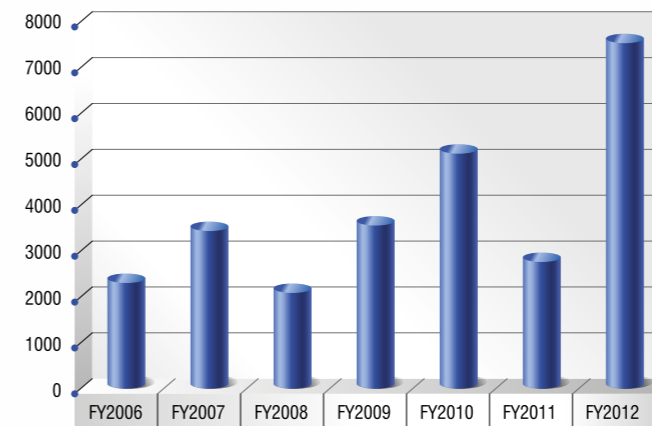


Conference of the Bulgarian American Studies Association, 2007

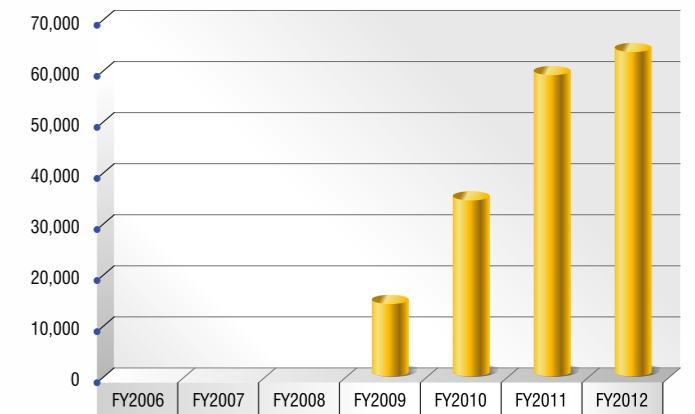
In-Person



Outreach



Website Visitors



Language Training and Testing



Information session at the EducationUSA Advising Center



School visit



US university visit



US Achievers Program participants

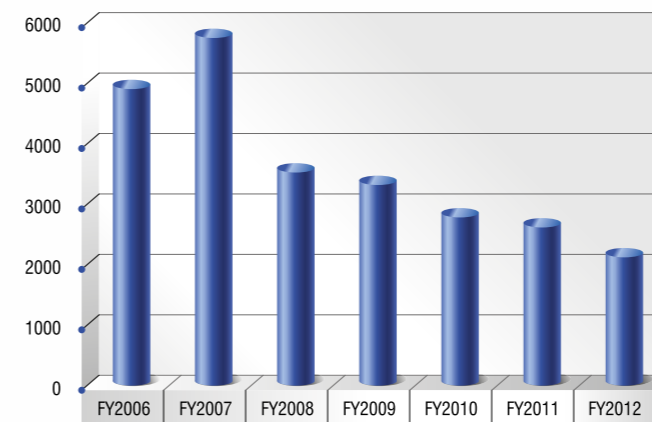
In 1995 the Commission established a Language Training Center in Sofia which offers English language instruction at all levels and preparation for the standardized tests iBT TOEFL, IELTS, SAT, GRE, GMAT and business English. Annually, the Center trains over 300 students. Between 2006 and 2012, the total number of students successfully completed the language courses was 2,975.

In 1997 a Computer-Based Testing Center was opened on the premises of the Fulbright Commission through Sylvan/Prometric. It offers administration of IBT TOEFL, GRE, GED, EPSO, and other tests. Annually, over 2000 testees use the computer-based testing facility. Between 2006 and 2012, the total number of testees serviced by the Center was 24,458.

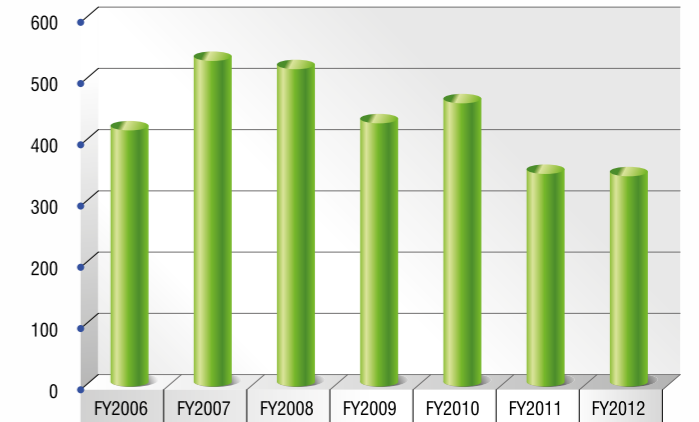


Fulbright Language Training Center in Sofia

Testing



Language Training



Local Information Centers

To make educational opportunities in the US more widely known in Bulgaria and ensure a broader participation of candidates in the Fulbright competition, the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission has opened seven local information centers in the cities of Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo, Sliven, Smolyan, Vidin, Shumen and Kurdzhaly.



Free English language training for Roma students in the Vidin info-center



Official opening of the info-center in Kurdzhaly with the special participation of John Beyrle, Ambassador of the United States of America to Bulgaria, 2007



Official opening of the info-center in Shumen with the special participation of Jeffrey Levine, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America in Bulgaria, 2006

Newsletter

The manifold activities of the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission are publicized by a quarterly Newsletter (now available on the Fulbright Commission's website www.fulbright.bg)



Fulbright Conferences

Every two years since 1994 the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission organizes international Fulbright conferences on key issues relating to education, culture, knowledge and the growth of civil society:



1994 - "Breaking Barriers through International Education"



1996 - "Understanding Differences and Building Bridges" with the special participation of Harriet Fulbright (third from left to right)



1998 - "Education and Civil Society in the Post-Totalitarian World"



2000 - "Globalization and Cultural Differences"



2006 - "Culture, Education and Leadership Today and Tomorrow"



2008 - "Education and Society: Problems, Prospects, Prognoses"



2002 - "Knowledge, Power and Freedom in a Changing World"



2004 - "Strengthening Transatlantic Cooperation and European Integration through Educational and Cultural Exchange"



2010 - "Education for the New Age: Tradition, Reform, Innovation"

Fulbright International Summer Institute

The Fulbright International Summer Institute is the centerpiece of the Fulbright Commission's grant supporting activities. It is a unique contribution of the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission to the Fulbright program which started in 2002 and has been offered annually ever since. FISI (www.fisi-bg.info) offers one and two-week interdisciplinary courses in a variety of fields: political science and international relations, social studies, economics and business, education and communication, cultural studies, etc. The courses are addressed to undergraduate and graduate students and junior faculty from all over the world. Special courses are

offered to US Fulbright grantees. FISI also offers a rich cultural and tourist program.

Since 2002 FISI has hosted a total of 813 students from 40 countries and 111 lecturers from 48 universities or professional institutions in Bulgaria, UK, USA, Canada, Pakistan and Ecuador.

In 2010 the Bulgarian Fulbright Commission received the Fulbright Innovator Award of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State "in recognition of outstanding innovation in designing and implementing the Fulbright International Summer Institute".



The Fulbright Experience

Antoaneta Assenova

Fulbright Graduate Student, Academic Year 2012/2013



In the middle: Antoaneta Assenova at her graduation from Tulane University, Law School

One of Senator J. William Fulbright's most notable quotes is the following: "In the long course of history, having people who understand your thought is much greater security than another submarine." I came to realize that this is not just a figure of speech; it's not a void expression. As a Fulbright alumna, I had the opportunity of getting to know other cultures, mindsets, motives. Being able to participate in cross-cultural communication with people coming from all over the world, from countries with various economic and political development, being able to participate in conversations with professors and classmates, not only on school materials, but on the very meaning of ethics, morals, law and politics in our global world, was an experience that left a mark on me. The experience of being a Fulbright student provided me with the key to a treasure, that no one can ever take away – the key to opening my own mind and becoming a part of a borderless world of mutual appreciation, finding out that in the end of the day, despite the differences, we are all the same.

Brian Murphy

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 1993/1994

I would note that, as I reminisce on some 40 years of service to the legal profession, my service in Bulgaria as senior Fulbright Lecturer in Law at the University of Sofia, was, without a doubt, the highlight of my career in public service.

I have understood the Fulbright Program to have been designed to help to promote and build international and intercultural understanding in our troubled world. I certainly found this to be so, for some of these reasons:

I was privileged to teach on two faculties of the University of Sofia, the Law Faculty and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Aside from the obvious satisfaction of teaching young professionals who would go on to distinguished service to the legal profession, because of the flexibility of the Fulbright Program, I was able also to work closely with the Bulgarian Judiciary. This enabled me to respond affirmatively to the request of the Chairperson of the Bulgarian Supreme Court, Chair; person Ivan Grigorov, to invite the late U.S. Chief Justice, William Rehnquist, on his first-ever visit to a newly-democratic state, Bulgaria. One of the students whom I was privileged to teach had greatly impressed a senior administrator of the U.S. Supreme Court, and this contributed materially to the decision of Chief Justice Rehnquist to visit Bulgaria. This was the first-ever visit by such a senior U.S. Government representative in support of the rule of law, and the visit directly led to a num-

ber of follow-up visits by Bulgarian judges to their counterparts in the U.S.A.

At a personal level, I have remained in contact with a number of my former students in Bulgaria, many of whom are now highly accomplished judges, founding/managing partners of prominent law firms, and more. Only recently, I was privileged to visit several of them throughout the country. A number had undertaken post-graduate study abroad, including in the U.S.A. [in at least one case, through the Fulbright Program!].

My participation in the Fulbright Program was the capstone of my professional career. I feel that it enabled me to make a tangible contribution to the rule of law in the world. I cannot exaggerate its usefulness in promoting international and intercultural understanding.



Brian Murphy at an annual meeting of the Federal Bar Association

Chtiliana Rousseva

Hubert Humphrey Fellow, Academic Year 2000/2001



In the middle: Dr. Chtiliana Rousseva during her Hubert Humphrey Fellowship

The Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program gives a golden opportunity to mid-career professionals to immerse fully into selected academic communities, choose courses of study and carry out research in various scientific spheres, participate in community life, creating lifelong friendships and professional networks. Most importantly, this year of experiential learning in America (2000-2001) gave me the chance to understand the true meaning of democracy and realize the power of community involvement in fostering new values in our disillusioned world. Besides, I saw how the constitutional right of "pursuit of happiness" can set a moral standard and provide impetus for the development of every human being, regardless of race, faith or ethnicity.

I realised that democracy is an active model of government based on the philosophy of giving, community service and commitment. Democratic values are not the private property of the elite but common foundation of social norm, implying accountability for one's actions.

Daniel Vankov

Fulbright Research Scholarship for the Study of Civil Society, Academic Year 2012/2013



Daniel Vankov (on the left) at a road safety presentation

Usually I have to develop an idea, prove that it works and offer it as a solution. The Fulbright programme gave me a chance to turn the process upside down. With my project I had to look at the solutions, see how they work and develop ideas to bring back with me in Bulgaria. Was I prepared for what I found in the States? No! Is it an endless opportunity? Yes! I am already using bits and pieces from what I have learned in my Bulgaria-related work.

Douglas Harms and his wife on the bank of the Danube River

Douglas Harms

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 2004/2005

I made lasting Bulgarian friendships during my Fulbright, both professionally and personally, and have returned to Bulgaria three times to present at the Comp-SysTech conference. My family and I have introduced some Bulgarian traditions to the US; for example, my high school daughter and I make martenitsi in February, and she hands them out to friends at school and I hand them out to my students on March 1st. I've also danced the Xopo with some of my Bulgarian students at DePauw. I'm a disciplinary reviewer for Fulbright Scholars, and also helped the Bulgarian Fulbright commission evaluate applications for Bulgaria. I am deeply involved with promoting Fulbright at DePauw by advising and interviewing DePauw students applying to the Fulbright Student Program; I was DePauw's Fulbright Program Advisor (FPA) for three years. Of course, I've also shared my Fulbright experience by



giving presentations to various groups in Greencastle, and I've promoted Fulbright at computer science professional conferences by attending interest meetings. The website I developed during my Fulbright is still online and it receives a surprising number of visits each month.

Gergana Tomova

Fulbright Graduate Student, Academic Year 2010/2011

If I could, I would have told myself 3 years ago - prepare to be changed, excited, challenged, mind-blown every single day. Prepare to be a Fulbrighter, a visioner and an ambassador of your own dreams and your own country.

Fulbright taught me that your true potential lies within and once you discover it, all boundaries can be challenged. It showed me that you can't know everything, but you can at least be ready for everything.

For me, Fulbright is not a life event; it's a mission that never ends.



Second on the right: Gergana Tomova with international Fulbrighters

Irena Atanassova

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 2012/2013

I was honored to be selected for a Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship and represent my country in the United States. I found that American people were keen to know about different aspects of life and culture in Bulgaria. I shared



Irena Atanassova presents in front of her colleagues at University of Georgia, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory

ideas about the situation of researchers in Bulgaria and in Europe, environmental issues, etc. Other topics of discussion focused on the possibilities for collaboration between Bulgaria and the USA in the field of environmental science. In the beginning, I experienced the effect of living in a small town and it took a little time to settle into a completely new atmosphere. My host and the staff from my Lab were very helpful in every aspect of my life and I had no problems settling in and starting research. Academically my Fulbright fellowship was very fruitful and gave me the opportunity to share information about my work in Bulgaria and get to know the cutting-edge scientific achievements in the environmental science. It was a great opportunity to share views with people with different cultures and lifestyles and enhance our understanding of a changing world.

Kathryn Posin

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
 2011/2012*

The administrators – Julia, Rada, Illiana, everyone, in the Fulbright office immediately made me feel that everything would work out and helped me, with their kindness and expertise, to find the best solutions to all my challenges. I thank them all for their help and inspiration.

The profound artistry and brilliance of the dancers of the Sofia Opera Ballet overwhelmed me and challenged me to bring even more passion, power and color to my Ballet Scheherazade in April of 2011. The musicians played the Rimsky Korsakov music with a rare feeling and technical mastery. The set and projections were skilled and full of imagination. And best of all the audience that filled the Opera House responded with joy and emotion to the works presented. The art of Bulgaria is both ancient and newly shining in the eyes of its people. I was honored to work amongst them all.



Scheherazde Ballet, Sofia Opera House

Kiril Tenekedjiev

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
 2007/2008*

Two amazing things happened to me at the time of my application and selection for the Fulbright Senior Scholar program in 2007, and both were important professionally and personally, yet totally incompatible. It is impossible for me to forget those months of struggle and tough choice, which would perfectly suit for a novel, entitled: “When all desired comes true”! Hard choices come in different packages and change your life forever. It is good to be proud of my own choices made, as hard as they were, as they led me to my experience with the Fulbright program. This would have never been possible without the amazing team of the Fulbright Commission in Sofia, and without... the courage to stand up to the challenge!

Thank you all!



Kiril Tenekedjiev during his Fulbright visit

Kong Ho

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
 2009/2010*

I have now relocated to Brunei Darussalam in the island of Borneo, in Southeast Asia, for almost two years. I walk through the studio and watch my Bruneian painting students of Creative Arts and Communication program of the University of Brunei Darussalam at work, and I feel that Sofia does not seem so far away to me anymore. I still remember the faces of my ten Bulgarian mural painting students of the National Academy of Art—Anelia Aleksandrova, Elena Ignatieva, Stefan Ivanov, Ani Kazirian, Albina Koparanova, Stefan Krustev, Dennis Marinov, Emo Purvanov, Iva Todorova, and Ema Trifonova—their voices, their laughs, and their arguing sound in Bulgarian, all form the deeps of my mind. I believe that art serves as an international language, which blends us together, and that this memorable collaborative art experience in Bulgaria truly crossed geographic boundaries, language barriers, racial differences, and cultural identities.



Dr. Kong Ho (second from left to right), Bulgarian students and professors, and members of the Fulbright Commission staff in front of a collaborative community mural painting at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia

Linda Rashidi

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
 2006/2007*

The National Library—and Kyril and Methodius—was my touchstone for my seven months in Sofia. When I was not teaching or meeting with students and colleagues, I was ensconced in the marble spaces of the National Library, where I unearthed a plethora of Bulgarian literature (translated into English) – and I began to uncover the humor, depth, and patriotism of the Bulgarian spirit. That a culture as old as Bulgaria’s could be so experimental was a revelation to me. Besides my personal enrichment, all this archival digging resulted in two tangible and thrilling projects.

Linda Rashidi in front of Sofia Library “Sts Cyril and Methodius”



Mariana Gerova

Fulbright Exchange Teacher, Academic Year 1995/1996 and 2006/2007



Standing on the right: Mariana Gerova with a group of US students

I would like to express my warmest thanks and high appreciation to Professor Julia Stefanova for the opportunity to be part of the Fulbright society. What did the program give me - unforgettable experience, new friends and lasting friendships, self-confidence, extremely valuable professional qualification which I successfully apply in my teaching, life experience, profound and different outlook on the world, as well as travel opportunities. I was lucky to participate in the exchange program twice - as a teacher at White Plains High School, New York in 1995-1996 and in 2006-2007 as a teacher at Vanguard High School, New York. Living and working in New York was a great opportunity to a foreigner but at the same time it was extremely challenging and exciting. I was well-accepted in both schools and I hope I did my best as a teacher there. I was involved in the exchange program twice had it been a possibility, I would have done it a third time.

Randall Baker

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 1992/1993 and 2000/2001

I came to Bulgaria in 1990 from Indiana University to work with the group of Bulgarian intellectuals working on the development of an indigenous university institution dedicated to the values and skills to build a democratic society. This became the New Bulgarian University, which has grown and flourished since then. I maintained a contact with them ever since, returning as a Senior F. S. in 2000. In 2008 I came to Bulgaria to live and now work as a Distinguished Professor at NBU, and write about Bulgaria.



Randall Baker with the prominent Bulgarian poet, writer and translator Leda Mileva

Stoycho Metodiev

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 2011/2012



Second on the left: Stoycho Metodiev with a group of colleagues

My Fulbright program experience is one of great things that happened in my life. It is giving me opportunity for rapid development in my research field and also new vision about the world. It was amazing to be part of the life of the Iowa State University- science, education, culture and sport.

Meeting colleagues and students from USA and Fulbright scholars from different countries, talks, exchange of ideas and discussions create new understanding, many new friends and possibilities for development.

Feeling to be part of great Fulbright family gives me strength to be better every single day.

Yantsislav Yanakiev (on the right) In the main lobby of the U.S. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) with Mr. Jerry Scarpate - Deputy Director of Research

Yantsislav Yanakiev

Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year 2012/2013

The U.S. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) is a world-class center of excellence for equal opportunity, diversity management and cross-cultural competency training and research. This is particularly important today, since the United States military participates in multinational operations in joint, interagency, and culturally diverse environments. DEOMI was just the right place to conduct my research, "Challenges of Diversity in Defense Organizations: Lessons from the US Experience and Implications for the Bulgarian Armed Forces". The Fulbright program allowed me the chance to work in close cooperation and to learn from my colleagues from the Institute. Additionally, the Fulbright award provided me with the opportunity to broaden my understanding of the U.S. diversity management policies and to identify best practices which can be adapted to the Bulgarian defense forces. I was the first Fulbright Scholar that the Institute hosted in its 40 year history.



Youlia Kantcheva

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
2001/2002*

My first month in LA was really tough – winter and I had nowhere to live. It was quite difficult to find a place only for six months. For a while I was sleeping in the living room of my American friends, in the kitchen of my Bulgarian friends, in two convents... But the huge film library at the University of Southern California was open 24 hours and it was my salvation. My dreams came true. I could watch many world famous films what I hadn't been able to do in Bulgaria at that moment, I could read all the articles in the field I was interested in. I even had the chance to see Ron Howard and Steven Spielberg in the University and to talk to the great Robert Altman. Step by step I became a member of the Fulbright society in the region and my new friends helped me to feel at home. It's an unforgettable lifetime experience. Later, my family visited me. Looking at our happiest smiles in the pictures, it's obvious that we were in Wonderland.



Reneta Bozhankova

*Fulbright Senior Scholar, Academic Year
2012/2013*

During my whole stay in the USA, I gained a multifaceted experience of American culture; I learned about and deeply understood the American life more than I have ever dreamed to have the chance to do. Diversity, dignity, responsibility, family and community life, political attitudes – these are only some of the aspects and characteristics of this society I was able to observe and reflect on.

Acknowledgements

Youlia Kantcheva
(on the left)

Acknowledgements

The Bulgarian Fulbright Commission deeply appreciates the support of our partner institutions in the USA:

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
 (ECA) at the United States Department of State



The Institute of International Education



The Council for International Exchange of
 Scholars



The United States Department of Education



We would like to thank our donors for their help, cooperation and commitment to the Fulbright goals:

The *America for Bulgaria* Foundation



The Thanks to Scandinavia Institute



The Trust for Civil Society
 in Central and Eastern Europe



Sofia University



University of Oklahoma at Norman



New Bulgarian University



We express our gratitude to all Bulgarian and US Universities, high schools, educational and research institutions and NGOs that we have worked with in the past 20 years. We highly value their professionalism, responsibility and dedication to the Fulbright program.

20th
ANNIVERSARY



Bulgarian–American Commission
for Educational Exchange

Sofia 1000, 17 Alexander Stamboliiski Blvd.,
Tel. (+359 2) 981 85 67, 980 82 11, 980 82 12; Fax (+359 2) 988 45 17.
E-mail: fulbright@fulbright.bg



www.fulbright.bg



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