

“Citizen Legislative Advocacy in Minority Communities” U.S. Mentors Delegation Visit in Europe July 8 — July 29, 2012

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of the Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division

July 2012



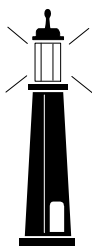
PROFESSIONAL
FELLOWS

GREAT LAKES CONSORTIUM for International Training and Development (GLC) — GLC is a collaborative effort of the Bowling Green State University, Lourdes University, The University of Toledo, and WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc - Contract Agent and Manager. Established in 1999.

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The Great Lakes Consortium – through WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. – as Contract Agent and Manager – received a grant for a two-way exchange between September 2011 and May 2013 from the U.S. Department of State for the “Citizen Legislative Advocacy in Minority Communities” with 28 participants from four countries of Europe and for 17 U.S. mentors.

The overall goal of this exchange is to provide a professional development opportunity for up-and-coming and mid-level professionals to gain knowledge of U.S. practices in engaging citizens and community leaders in collaboration to inform changes in legislation that make a difference in minority communities (incl. Roma, disabled, homeless, immigrant populations) and strengthen democracy.

The first delegation with a total of 16 fellows from Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia visited the U.S. from March 26 – May 5, 2012. They were exposed to diverse community organizing methods how to engage citizens as active participants in solving problems in their own communities. European fellows participated in the U.S. in group seminars, round-table discussions, site visits, and had interactions community organizers and leaders. A *3-week internship* with mentoring, multicultural events, and participation in volunteer activities as well as in the Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, D.C. were also included in the 6-week professional fellows program. Participants did prepare a 6-9 month individual and group Action Plan for follow on activities. They had various opportunities to experience the American family life and the diversity in

the U.S. through staying with American host families during their internship in Detroit (Michigan), Youngstown (Ohio), Chicago (Illinois), St. Louis (Missouri) Charlottesville (Virginia) and New York city. They will gained hands-on experience at both public and civil society institutions in the U.S. and a deeper understanding of U.S. society, culture and people.

The first delegation of 9 U.S. mentors will travel for a reciprocal visit to Europe between July 8-29, 2012. The U.S. participants of this exchange will have an opportunity to share professional expertise and gain a deeper understanding of the societies, cultures and people of other countries. They will participate in workshops, seminars organized by the alumni of this program and contribute with presentations, discussions and mentoring. They will also visit public and civil society organizations working with the alumni in implementing projects in minority communities and provide them on-site consultations.

This citizen civic exchange will promote mutual understanding, create long-term professional ties, enhance the collaboration between GLC and its overseas partners: : CEGA in Bulgaria, Civil College Foundation in Hungary, CeRe in Romania and Center for Community Organizing in Slovakia as well as many U.S. and European partner organizations. Thank you very much for your assistance and support!

A second European delegation with 16 participants from Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia is expected in the U.S. from October 1 – November 10, 2012.

Monique George
New York, New York
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Monique George or Mo (as she prefers to be called) organizing experience started in college where she worked locally with the New York Public Interest Research Group as their Campus Leader. Upon graduation, Mo accepted an organizer position with the Service Employees International Union Local 1199 where she worked for 10 years.

After leaving 1199, Mo moved on to become the Lead Organizer at the Empire state Pride Agenda, where

she fought for the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. After the passing of her grandmother (who raised her), Mo resigned from Pride Agenda and decided to spend some time traveling including time spent in London,

Paris, Italy, and Monaco. Mo is currently the Public Housing Partnership Director at Community Voices Heard, and help navigate the various coalition and national work of the campaign.

Mo holds her BA degree from SUNY New Paltz, and a Masters in Public Administration from Metropolitan College. Mo lives in Brooklyn, New York with her partner of 6 years is very excited to be traveling to Eastern Europe. "I'm looking forward to learning from the European fellows how they organize in their communities as well as share any of my own experiences that would be helpful".

Community Voices Heard (CVH) New York created in 1997 is an organization of low-income people, predominantly women with experience on welfare, working to build power in New York City and State to improve

the lives of our families and communities. CVH currently works on welfare reform, job creation, public housing and other economic justice issues that affect low-income people, particularly low-income women of color.

CVH current work through a multi-pronged strategy, including public education, grassroots organizing, training people about their rights, political education, civic engagement and direct-action issue campaigns.

Deb Martin
Fremont, Ohio
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Debra Martin is the Director of Community Development and the Great Lakes RCAP program at WSOS Community Action.

The Great Lakes RCAP is one of six regional RCAPs that provide water, wastewater, and other community development assistance to local governments in rural areas and small towns in seven states. Other community development services include community planning, economic development services, community facilities project development, watershed management, and loan programs and

technical assistance for small businesses and communities.

Ms. Martin has over eighteen years' experience working with small communities and local governments. She has been active in the development of rural policy and has served on nu-

merous state and federal advisory groups. She currently serves as a U.S. Chair for the U.S.-Russia Civil Society Partnership Program – an initiative of the Eurasia Foundation and USAID. She earned a B.A. from the University of Findlay in Political Science/Public Administration and is currently pursuing a Master of Community and Economic Development from the Pennsylvania State University.

Deb is interested in working with local governments to promote inclusion and engagement of their citizens in policy, planning and development, and finding ways for community members to come together and define a shared vision for their future.

WSOS Community Action Coalition (Fremont, OH) is a community and social service organization that helps to create opportunities for low-income people and small communities. WSOS provides services for individuals, families and communities through its four service divi-

sions: Family Development, Senior Services, Housing and Energy, and Community Development. While the WSOS is a direct service provider, community organizing is often a necessary part of this work, and we have organized low-income and minority groups to demand their rights on

various issues, as well as organizing a levy campaign every four years to support the senior citizens' programs. WSOS works with local governments to promote civic engagement and encourage citizens to become involved in the development process.

Maria Trejo
Chicago, Illinois
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Maria Trejo a recent graduate of the Grow Your Own Program at Northeastern Illinois University with a degree in bicultural and bilingual education. Maria has participated in several leadership roles at the Chicago based non-profit Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA). She is currently employed by LSNA, as the Afterschool Program Director. Her daily efforts include engaging middle school students, parents and educators to address educational, developmental, and social needs.

Since October 2002, Maria was involved in LSNA as a parent volunteer through the Parent Mentor Program. This program is an opportunity for parents to work within the school to learn strategies and techniques to help their children as well as the community. At the same time the program is a stepping-stone to further their education and passions within the different issues that the community faces. Maria found her passion in elementary education. She then was nominated and elected as President for the Advisory Board Committee at one of the Community Learning Centers and secretary for the Executive Board Committee at LSNA. Shortly after, she was hired

to be a Resource Coordinator at one of their sites.

Encouraged by her fellow co-workers she decided to be part of a new initiative formerly called, "Nueva Generación". The program was intended to be certified bilingual teachers to teach in their communities. In May 2011 that dream was made a reality with middle school endorsements. While working full-time and going to school full-time, as a single mother, she encouraged her two daughters to also be very involved in their education. They are both currently university students that have broken boundaries and stereotypes for children of single parent households.

Maria uses this same passion to work with her middle school youth and parents to help them think about future endeavors and how it is that they are going to get there. She has been creating programs that teaches

these youth to become leaders in their community, advocates of their peers, how to use Restorative Justice to find the means to certain issues. She has built relationships with the youth that impacted their life and given them the skills to pursue any dreams regardless of certain boundaries of life. She likes to empower her youth to become involved citizens and the ability to make right choices even after they graduate. At the same time, she is also focusing on the parents to help them understand the importance of the parent-youth relationship they have with their children. Continuously bringing in resources that will provide awareness, education, and skills to better deal understand their children.

Maria would like to gain knowledge on shared strategies that are being practiced in other countries to engage youth, parents, and community. This is her first trip to Eastern Europe and is very excited on getting to know policies and procedures used for community development. The obstacles that communities are faced with and how as a community organization works in collaboration with their constituents.

Maria is fluent in English and Spanish. She enjoys quality time with friends, loves to travel, and wait for the moments that her daughters come home to visit her.

Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) Chicago, IL was established in 1962 is to convene networks of neighbors, schools, businesses, social service agencies, faith communities, and other organizations to collaborate for thriving communities in Logan Square, Avondale, and Lathrop Homes, a densely populated, low-to-moderate income community in Chicago. Forty-three various community institutions including

schools, churches, block clubs, and agencies are members of LSNA, engaging more than 2,000 people in organizing and supporting programs.

LSNA's current program activities include campaign to preserve the Chicago Housing Authority's Lathrop Homes as public, building new affordable rental units in Logan Square, and creating approximately 90 job positions; organizing Commu-

nity Learning Centers, Parent Mentors who work daily in school classrooms and Parent Tutors; innovate Leadership opportunities and restorative justice practices at the high school level; building Health Outreach Team that link more than 1,500 undeserved people to affordable, high quality health services; and also provide Immigration work centering on helping legal permanent residents become citizens.

THANK YOU TO

**David Gustafson, the U.S. State Department Program Officer,
and our partners at the U.S. Embassies in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia!**

Mary Tarullo

Chicago, Illinois

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Mary Tarullo works at Lakeview Action Coalition (LAC) in Chicago as an Affordable Housing Organizer. At LAC, she organizes low-income tenants, homeless individuals, staff and clients of local social service agencies, and congregants of neighborhood churches and synagogues to preserve existing and create new affordable housing. Her work also involves organizing Tenant Associations in feder-



ally-subsidized buildings to preserve their housing through direct action and policy work, and collaborating with citywide coalitions to increase revenue for affordable housing in the

city. She studied English literature at Grinnell College and started organizing around housing issues in Boston after graduating.

She is excited to be traveling to Eastern Europe for the first time to learn about how communities are coping with privatization, and what they have learned first-hand about how various economic models function. Specifically, she is interested in exploring the ways in which affordable housing is sustained and/or created, and how race factors into housing and other economic issues.

Lakeview Action Coalition (LAC) Chicago, IL

was started in 1994 as a multi-issue, institution based community organization working to sustain racial, economic and other forms of diversity in a rapidly gentrifying Chicago community using community organizing. LAC's main power base is in Lakeview, although mem-

bership is expanding throughout Lincoln Park and North Center. The coalition's 48 members groups include diverse religious congregations, nonprofit agencies, business associations, banks, and 2 HUD tenants associations. LAC's power and ability to make change is based on the power of the organizations

within our membership. A goal and challenge of LAC is to reach out to all members of the community, particularly those most impacted by the local social justice issues, and bring them together to research issues, develop strategies and work to make positive change and build local organizational power.

Kirsten Dunham

St. Louis, Missouri

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Kirsten Dunham is the Director of Policy and Advocacy for Paraquod, a Center for Independent Living in St. Louis, Missouri. She graduated from Washington University, St. Louis with a Master of Social Work degree.

Ms. Dunham has worked for 16 years in the disability rights field to increase access to self-directed personal attendant services, implement the Olmstead Supreme Court decision, increase access to affordable health care and remove work disincentives. She also works with the organizing team to mobilize the disability community to vote, engage in legislative



and community advocacy and build power.

Ms. Dunham serves on boards and participates in various coalitions organizing for disability rights, health care and budget priorities. Recently, Paraquod hosted Peter Lazarov from Bulgaria for three weeks. Peter is a

Chief Coordinator on issues relevant to assisting people with physical disabilities. He is also a Health Expert on Public Health and Health Policy to the Movement for National Unity and Salvation.

Ms. Dunham and other staff worked with Peter to share information and strategies to organize the disability community, advocate for community and legislative change and build effective advocacy organizations. On her visit to Bulgaria, Ms. Dunham is interested in learning about disability-related laws in Bulgaria, hearing about social attitudes and the status of Bulgarians with disabilities, and talking with disability advocates about strategies to create more accessible communities.

Paraquod (St. Louis, MO) is a local private 501(c)(3), not-for-profit with a mission to empower people with disabilities to increase their independence through choice and opportunity. Founded in 1970, *Paraquod* is one of

the oldest non-residential Centers for Independent Living in the country. *Paraquod* provides over 40 services, addressing the needs of individuals with all types of disabilities. Programs include Assistive Technology,

College for Living, Consumer Directed Services, Deaf Way Interpreting, Employment, Independent Living, Public Policy, and Youth and Family. Last year, *Paraquod* served over 4,000 people with disabilities.

Cathy Woodson Charlottesville, Virginia

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Cathy Woodson, a native of Virginia and her professional career has been in the not-for-profit sector. She has worked in the capacities of Executive Director, Program Director, Program Coordinator and Administrator, with more than 20 years working in direct service programs. Seeking to focus more on social justice work, she began working with Virginia Organizing as a Community Organizer.

She currently works with diverse communities on local, state, and national issues relating to economic justice, civic engagement, and leadership development. Cathy coordinates

anti-oppression workshops on race, class and sexual orientation. She coordinated the Virginia Organizing leadership institute and has developed training materials and workshops on community organizing, community lobbying and advocacy. She facilitates anti-oppression workshops around the United States with social justice groups and diverse religious communities.

During her time in Europe, she would like to meet and talk with community leaders, learn more about the Roma culture and issues affecting the Roma communities. Cathy wants to share her experiences working in communities and she is interested the leadership development practices that engage community members to become involved in issues that affect their lives. Cathy is excited to learn new approaches in community work and look forward to sharing with her experience with her colleagues.

In addition to her organizing work, she is a member of several organizations and groups working on racial justice. Cathy enjoys spending time with her family, reading, meeting new people and visiting garden sites.

Jay Johnson Charlottesville, Virginia

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Janice E. Johnson (Jay), a native of Hampton, Virginia, received her early education in the city's public schools. She received a BA degree in Psychology from Wilson College in Chambersburg, P.A. and M.A. in Guidance and Counseling from Hampton Institute (University).

During her working years, Jay has had careers in social work, Girl Scouting, real estate; business and civil service. As a professional Girl Scout she rose through the ranks from field director to national staff

member to Executive Director of Western Reserve Girl Scout Council in Akron, Ohio.

During her 15 years employment with the City Of Hampton she orchestrated a 5,000 citizen involve-

ment in planning the Coalition' for Youth's first Plan of Action for Hampton's Youth to become empowered members of the community. For Hampton's Citizens Unity Commission she cofounded the "Opening the Door to Diversity Book Group; now in its 13th year.

Jay has served as a board member for Virginia Organizing, the local and national YWCA, Girl Scouts, and several local child advocacy groups. She is a member of the NAACP and the 99%. She enjoys reading, travel, history and exploring various cultures. During her European visit she hopes to engage with and learn more about the Romni people.

Virginia Organizing, (Charlottesville, VA) started in 1995 is a state-wide grassroots organization dedicated to challenging injustice by empowering people in local communities to address issues that affect the quality of their lives. For the past 17 years, *Virginia Organizing* has established a solid community organizing track record in Virginia. *Virginia Organizing* has provided assistance in the development of new local organi-

zations addressing social and economic issues in communities across the state and has created a growing network of labor, human rights, faith, housing, environment, education and other non-profit groups to work together to achieve concrete improvements.

In the process, *Virginia Organizing* has built a solid organizational infrastructure for strategic campaign

planning, communications, grassroots leadership development and fundraising. *Virginia Organizing's* core approach is to use an intentional method of building one-to-one relationships among people of diverse backgrounds, identifying issues of concern, providing training in research and leadership, and implementing strategies that break down traditional divisions as well as achieve concrete results.

Juli Bertalan

Toledo, Ohio

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Julia Bertalan recently graduated with her Master's from Union Theological Seminary of New York City and moved back to her hometown of Toledo, Ohio. There she has an internship at a historical Hungarian Reformed United Church of Christ Church. Julia is very active in with in her community, Birmingham East Toledo, which is a historically Hungarian neighborhood, but has flourished into a diverse ethnic neighborhood. She is involved in the community garden and planning community events such as the Birmingham Ethnic Festival. Julia is currently working around housing issues in the neighborhood. Julia's family heritage is Hungarian.



While spending a year in Budapest studying the language, Julia was introduced to the work of grassroots organizations, not only in Hungary but also in surrounding countries. It was during this time that she was introduced to the work of the European Community Organizing Network (ECON), which is one of the partner organizations of the Citizen Legislative Advocacy in Minority Communities exchange program.

Julia understands Community Organizing as a very powerful and effective way to bring positive change to a community and is excited to see the continued efforts of incorporating and strengthening community organizing efforts in Eastern and Central European communities.

Upon her return to the US in the summer of 2011, Julia was appointed as the Friends of ECON Field Organizer. ECON recognizes the important of building a connected and informed group of colleagues in the US; the Friends of ECON. The Friends of ECON includes supporters, those interested in the work of ECON, and those interested in connecting the work of ECON with community organizing happening in the US. Julia is the US Field Organizer to help lead this effort.

European Community Organizing Network (ECON) was formed as a project of the Central and Eastern European Citizens Network in January, 2008. Mission of ECON is to develop an ongoing network for the promotion, support, and expansion of community organizing in Europe. The network is guided by the values of justice, compassion, democ-

atic participation, and appreciation for ethnic, racial, and spiritual diversity. ECON consists of partners in 13 countries and promotes community organizing in a variety of forms. The purpose is to actively engage large numbers of people to powerfully solve neighborhood and city-wide problems. Community organizing follows a three-step process of (a) Systemati-

cally listening to residents and citizens in order to select and prioritize problems and visions, (b) Research to identify potential solutions, and (c) Solve these problems and achieve these visions through self-help approaches and/or engaging key government and other institutions. Also ECON has had a supportive network of colleagues in the US.

Luke Allen

Detroit, Michigan

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Luke Allen grew up in the small town of Bear Lake, in rural north-west Michigan. He attended the Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan, and where Luke ran "Track and Field" and studied Political Science and Evolution-



ary Psychology. Graduating in 2009, Luke comes to the Tubman Center after a year of service with City Year Detroit, where he led a team of 8 young adults who tutored and mentored students full time in a middle school on the east side of Detroit.

In his spare time, Luke enjoys running, watching and participating in sports, reading, and jumping off of things into water.

Harriet Tubman Center (HTC) Detroit, MI was started in 2007 with the mission to be a recruitment and training center for new organizers. The Center is on a path to become a statewide collective focused on building statewide power to

change the rules in Michigan in favor of low and moderate-income people.

Over the next 3-5 years, Tubman will become a firm of organizers of all levels, such as recruiting, training and placing organizers; creating new local

organizations and building the organizing capacity of existing agencies and community organizations; and creating statewide issue campaigns and coalitions of partner organizations and allies.

Testimonies from U.S. hosting organizations

The following U.S. partners and internship hosting organizations from six different states contributed their generous support to the 1st delegation from four European countries – Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia – welcomed and helped the delegates participation in various activities, discussions, volunteering and social events:

- *Michigan, Detroit: Harriet Tubman Center;*
- *Ohio, Youngstown: Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative;*
- *Missouri, St. Louis: Paraquad, Inc.;*
- *Illinois, Chicago: Lakeview Action Coalition, Chicago Homeless Coalition, Logan Square Neighborhood Association and National People Action & their affiliates;*
- *Virginia, Charlottesville: Virginia Organizing;*
- *New York, New York: Community Voices Heard.*



Kirsten Dunham: *“Paraquad, a Center for Independent Living* in St. Louis, Missouri, was very glad to host



Peter Lazarov and share the history of the disability rights movement in the United States, the advocacy and organizing strategies we use and information about organizational practices and policies to support advocacy initiatives. On his first day here, Peter attended the statewide Disability Rights Legislative Day at our State Capitol.



Over 500 disability advocates gathered to rally and lobby in support of legislation to create opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society. The theme was

“Take Note, We Vote”. Peter also attended a smaller lobby day during which he met with Missouri state legislators to learn about the role of citizen advocates from their perspective. He also participated in some of our Community Advocates meeting, during which community members with disabilities identify targets and plan strategies to make their communities more accessible.

Working with Peter is important to Paraquad in many ways. First, taking time to answer questions helps us to think about how we do things and what new tactics we might try. Connecting with disability rights advocates and spreading the independent living philosophy are important to us as well. If we can share and learn from each other, we can increase opportunities and rights for people with disabilities around the world. Finally, Peter shared his culture with us through conversations and writing a blog post. The exchange of information and learning about other



cultures gives us a broader perspective. Our community organizers plan to stay connected with Peter and continue the exchange of ideas and strategies.”

Marilyn Leistner from the Missouri Secretary of State's office congratulated Peter Lazarov



St. Louis, MO Paraquad, a Center for Independent Living - Peter Lazarov (in center) with Paraquad staff - row 1: Chris Worth, Juliet Salih, Kimberly Lackey, Amanda Beals, Danica Neale, Joan Headley (Director of Post-Polio International); row 2: Latoya Chauncey, Kirsten Dunham; row 3: Megan Burke, Pamela Perlmutter, Cindy Price, Amy Chichacki

Bill O'Brien: “Here in Detroit, we of the *Harriet Tubman Center for Organizing* extend our gratitude to the Great Lakes Consortium for International Training and Development & a 16-member European delegation for their recent visit to Detroit and for the two members of the delegation: Eszter Eva Nagy and Lavinia Chiburte who remained behind for over 3 weeks. The visit of the large delegation opened the eyes of many community leaders in and around Detroit,



so that leaders here could compare and contrast their work with that of European organizers. The result for us was a deepened understanding of our own work as extending and deepening democracy in our areas. The two who stayed with us contributed to the building of relationships between Detroiters and ethnic Europeans both in the city and the suburbs, and wrote voter training materials for our civic engagement project. The Harriet Tubman Center hopes to continue our involvement with the Great Lakes Consortium well into the future.”



Cathy Woodson: “Our organization *Virginia Organizing* provided opportunities for three interns:



Boglarka Janoskuti, Maryana Borisova and Zuzana Bargerova to observe and learn diverse approaches to solving problems with communities including leadership development. They were able to visit four cities in Virginia: Charlottesville, Richmond, Hampton and Virginia Beach. They visited a local community center (NGO) providing a neighborhood library, a community garden and educational services for low income children. This visit also included a walk through the neighborhood meeting local shop owners who participate with the community members to improve the physical appearance of the community by painting abandoned buildings. The interns observed the

formation of a Dismantling Racism workshop agenda with local NGO working to breakdown racial barriers within the domestic violence and sexual assault programs. They introduced themselves to a social work class at a historical Black College, Virginia Union University, sharing with the students why they were visiting the U.S. They were learning about community organizing and the work of Virginia Organizing. In addition to this experience, they visited several NGOs serving homeless community members and providing youth services. They were also introduced to several governmental programs serving youth and adults. We also learned a lot from them.”



Maria Trejo: “This has been truly an enriching and educating program that I am partaking in that has peaked personal and professional interest. Having the interns: Ognyan Isaev, Miglena Yordanova and Tamas Avar come to our organization, *the Logan Square Neighborhood Association*, and share their stories and



personal struggles has created greater awareness of their social, political and cultural environment that has shed new perspectives to the work that we undergo here and in other parts of the country. Interns were exposed to the different issues we face on a daily basis through our struggles here in the states. In hopes that

I also learn from their work when I go to Eastern Europe and be part of a network where we can help each other build connections and share strategies and techniques to the contribution of social change.”



Jennifer Hadlock (Community Voices Heard, New York, NY):



“Meeting Ana-Maria Suciuc and Marton Gosztonyi was really good to re-inspire me in the work I am doing. They provided a different perspective because of growing up in a non-capitalist country and now experiencing capitalism.

On a personal level, I was very excited in Richmond, Virginia to be talking with others about organizing "white" people through their ethnicity. As someone who very much identifies with my ethnic background and believes in anti-racist organizing, I think this strategy of supporting people to identify with their cultural background instead of the concept of race is a great idea. I have been thinking about this for a long time and it was exciting to see I am not alone. Getting together in Richmond with all the 16-member delegation from 4 countries, their U.S. mentors, and leaders of the European Community Organizing Network included many interesting discussions.”



Mary Tarullo (Lakeview Action Coalition, Chicago, IL):



“Our organization learned a lot from our three interns, and they also helped us with our work. They provided a fresh perspective on our organizing, and comparing and contrasting our countries was a useful way to examine both our cultural and economic privileges, and where we still struggle.

For example, we realized that as U.S. American organizers, we have a relatively easy job of talking with people about power (even though it still proves to be a challenge). But we came to learn about how, in an Eastern European context, typical organizing language and concepts that we use can be inappropriate and counter-productive, and it gave us the opportunity to think about what we take for granted as U.S. Americans, and what we could do to be more effective with the language that we use in organizing. And despite our many privileges, it was helpful to be reminded about the ways in which our government does not provide basic human rights like health care and housing, and how these are much more respected basic human rights in Eastern Europe.

We also discussed the similarities and differences between our countries and how race and racism plays out in everyday life. Beyond these instructive moments, they also helped us with outreach for our Action Assembly, which was a huge success, partly due to their assistance!”



THANK YOU TO
Liuba Batembegska and Emil Metodiev, *CEGA Foundation Bulgaria*
Mate Varga, *Civil College Foundation Hungary*
Oana Preda and Nicoleta Chirita, *CeRe Romania*
Milan ‘Kajo’ Zboril and Chuck Hirt, *Center for Community Organizing Slovakia*

ITINERARY *

Monday, July 9, 2012

Kunbabony & Budapest, Hungary

Arrival at Budapest airport during the day from 6 destinations

GROUP 1: Travel to Kunbabony
4:00 PM: Extended “market place”

GROUP 2 Budapest, Hungary
Check in to Helia Hotel for 2 nights;
Program assessment with Elizabeth Balint & Dinner

Tuesday, July 10, 2012

Kunbabony & Budapest, Hungary

GROUP 1: Kunbabony, Hungary
Morning: Orientation for U.S. mentors by Deb Martin & workshop planning
2.30-4:00PM: Socio-political analysis and activism in the U.S. – Context from the U.S. delegation (Kirsten Dunham, Mo George).

GROUP 2: Budapest, Hungary
9:00AM-5:00PM: Meetings and mentoring at the Hungarian Anti Poverty Network Organized by Iza Marton and Balint Vojtonovszki;
Dinner with Elizabeth Balint

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

Kunbabony & Budapest, Hungary

GROUP 1: Kunbabony, Hungary
9:00-10:30AM: Activism in the world: Global uprising, movements and activism – Panel Discussion, including Deb Martin
10:30AM-1:00PM: Activism on the local level – Workshop, including Mary Tarullo
Afternoon: mentoring GLC alumni on their U.S. ideas to implement

GROUP 2: Budapest, Hungary
9:00AM-12:00Noon: Site visit with Judit Szollar to Temporary Home of the Families in the XVIII. District
12:00-2:00PM: Lunch
2:00-4:00PM: Visit the Family Help Center and Child Care Center in Kobanya;
Dinner with Elizabeth Balint

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Kunbabony & Szeged, Hungary

GROUP 1: Kunbabony, Hungary
Morning: Site visits in Kunbabony
4:00-5:30PM: Changes, solutions and practices – Challenges facing community organizing – Workshop, including Mo George and other U.S. mentors

GROUP 2: Szeged, Hungary
9:00AM: Travel to Szeged from Budapest with Elizabeth Balint and check-in to Hotel Forras for 3 nights
12:00Noon: Lunch & time to rest
5:00-7:00PM: Presentation by Jay Johnson and Cathy Woodson about their life and work and discussion at the Civic Café at Szeged City Hall Press Room; Organized by Dr. Ildiko Szondi, Szeged City Councilwoman
7:30PM: Dinner with Elizabeth Balint

Friday, July 13, 2012

Kunbabony & Szeged, Hungary

GROUP 2: Travel to Kunbabony
10:30-12:30PM: Future planning workshop for organizers – including whole U.S. delegation (Group 1 & 2) and participating alumni from the 1st delegation
Lunch in Kunbabony
1:00PM: Departure to Szeged for both GROUP 1 and 2.
3:00PM: Check-in to Hotel Forras (for 2 nights for GROUP 1) and program orientation by Elizabeth Balint
5:00PM: Sightseeing tour with the Fun train of Szeged
6:00PM: Dinner at “Old Bridge”
8:30-10:00PM: Outdoor classical music concert at the Szeged City Hall Courtyard

Saturday, July 14, 2012

Szeged, Hungary

8:00AM: Breakfast at the hotel
9:00-12:00Noon: Meet with local escorts for walking tour/sightseeing in small groups in Szeged; Lunch on

your own

2:00-5:00PM: Sightseeing continues or time to enjoy the pool at the hotel and rest

6:30PM: Dinner for the delegation at Port Royal restaurant

9:00PM: Enjoy the Open Air Festival Folk Dance Gala: Hegyen Volgyon Lakodalom (Wedding) performance with hundreds of folk dancers on stage

Sunday, July 15, 2012

Budapest, Hungary

8:30AM: Breakfast at the hotel
10:00AM: (Optional) Catholic mass at the Szeged Dom or enjoy the pool at the hotel and rest time; Lunch on your own
1:00PM: Departure to Budapest
3:00PM: Check-in to Hotel Papillon in Budapest
5:00PM: Meeting with Tamas Avar & supporters of the RAMBLING CINEMA movie and discussion
8:00PM: Enjoy some sightseeing and lights of Budapest

Monday, July 16, 2012

Budapest, Hungary

7:30AM: Breakfast at the hotel
9:00-10:00AM: Meeting at the Budapest City Hall (V. Varoshaz u. 9-11) with Istvan Makai, President of Roma Self-Government of Budapest, and leader of Roma Civic Association and with Eszter Nagy
Discussion topics:
- Learning about the Roma self government role and activities,
- European Model for Roma Integration.
- Report from Eszter Nagy, how her experience in community organizing in the U.S.A. can be useful for involving Roma minorities
10:00-11:00AM Meeting with Dr. Barnabas Kelemen and learn about the city government
11:15-1:00PM: Visit U.S.A. Embassy in Budapest
Meeting with:
Leila Kamgar, Cultural Attache, Agnes Frehr, Alumni Director, and others from the Embassy & GLC

ITINERARY *

alumni

Discussion topic:

Report on the U.S. experience by alumni & briefing with the U.S. mentors during pizza lunch

2:00-4:00PM: Meeting with Marton Gosztonyi and leaders of Autonomia Foundation (AF): partnership with Roma and non-Roma civil organizations;

Discussion topics:

- The U.S.A. community organizing experience;

- Success stories from AF changing lives in Roma communities.

4:00PM: Enjoy some sightseeing in downtown Budapest

6:00PM: Meeting with Boglarka Janoskuti & Föld Theatre Studio members.

Discussion topic:

Learning about the community theatre & the Wise of the World presentation.

Tuesday, July 17, 2012

Budapest, Hungary

8:00AM: Breakfast at the hotel

11:00-5:00PM: Workshop with “The City is for all Members & Supporters”, and Hungarian Alumni organized by Betti Sebaly

Workshop agenda:

11:00-11:30AM: Social time, getting to know each other

11:30-12:00Noon: Introduction of “The City Is For All”; origins and how they work

12:00-1:00PM: Lunch

Three work groups: (1) Housing, (2) Homeless Services, (3) Public Space

1:00-3:30PM: An introduction of running activities and campaigns followed by a discussion:

- How NGOs in the U.S.A. and Hungary handle similar issues;

- What their campaign goals and strategies are;

- What strategies they use to reach out to communities

4:00-5:00PM: Workshop continues

6:00-8:00PM: Evening workshop part with Judit Szollar and the New Approach group at the Info Café

Discussion topic:

- Judit Szollar's report about her experiences in the U.S.A.

- *How* social workers can use community organizing in Hungary.

Wednesday, July 18, 2012

Romania, Bulgaria

GROUP A: Travel to Bucharest

6:35AM: Departure from hotel to Ferihegy airport in Budapest

9:35AM: Check-in to Tarom Airlines RO 232, leaving Budapest

12:12PM: Arrival in Bucharest

Welcome by Nicoleta Chirita and Lavinia Chiburte; check-in to hotel in Bucharest

(See the Romanian schedule from July 18 to July 24 separately.)

GROUP B: Travel to Sofia

9:30AM: Departure from hotel; drive with a minibus to Vienna, Austria airport; check-in with Austrian Airlines OS 797

3:20PM: leaving from Vienna

5:55PM: Arrival in Sofia

Welcome by Emil Metodiev and Ognyan Isaev; check-in to hotel in Sofia

(See the Bulgarian schedule from July 18 to July 24 separately)

Tuesday, July 24, 2012

Bratislava, Slovakia

GROUP A: Departure from Romania to Slovakia

Morning: Sightseeing in Bucharest

11:45AM: Leaving the hotel and drive to the airport, check-in with TAROM Airlines RO 235

2:45PM: Leaving Bucharest

3:35PM: Arrival in Budapest; Pick-up by Elizabeth Balint at the airport in Budapest and travel by mini-bus to Bratislava;

8:00PM: Check-in to Hotel Advance in Bratislava for 2 nights

GROUP B: Departure from Bulgaria to Slovakia

8:30AM: Leaving the hotel and drive to the airport, check in with Austrian Airlines OS 806

11:30AM: Departure from Sofia

12:10PM: Arriving in Vienna, Austria; Transfer in Vienna and travel by bus to Bratislava escorted by Kajo Zboril

6:00PM: Check-in to Hotel Advance in Bratislava for 2 nights

8:00PM: **GROUPs A & B** joint Orientation led by Kajo Zboril

Wednesday, July 25, 2012

Bratislava, Slovakia

10:00AM: Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for the Development of Civil Society

2:00PM: Meeting at the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava with Chargé d'affaires Thatcher Scharpf.

4:00PM: Meeting with Citizens Group from Petralka neighborhood

Thursday, July 26, 2012

Bratislava & Banska Bystrica Slovakia

9:30AM: meeting with Zuzana Bargerova, exchange participant

12:30PM: Departure

3:00PM: Arrival to Banska Bystrica and check-in to hotel for 1 night

5:00PM: Workshop with community leaders of Zvolen-West neighborhood

Friday, July 27, 2012

Banska Bystrica, Slovakia & Budapest, Hungary

9:30-12:00Noon: Meeting with Martin Micek and consultation

1:00-2:00PM: Lunch

2:00PM: Meeting with Veronika Strelcova and consultation

4:00PM: Evaluation of the European experience with ECON leaders

5:00PM: Farewell Dinner

7:00PM: Departure to Budapest

9:30PM: Check in to Hotel Papillon for 2 nights

Saturday, July 28, 2012

Budapest, Hungary

Sightseeing & free time activities

Sunday, July 29, 2012

Travel back to the U.S.

** Itinerary as of July 8, 2012 — subject to change without further notice*

ITINERARY *

Schedule for GROUP A: Romania

Wednesday, July 18, 2012 Bucharest *Morning and early afternoon:*

Arrival and check-in to IBIS Hotel,

3:00-6:00PM: Visit CeRe's office

Meeting with: Lavinia Chiburte and Ana-Maria Suci, alumni in Exchange Program.

Welcome & Introduction: (1) Presentation of the Romanian NGOs and the Romanian Context; (2) Presentation of the U.S. organizations

7:00PM: Dinner

Thursday, July 19, 2012 Brasov

Travelling to Brasov;

Meeting with: Mihaela Carstea, alumni in the Exchange Program

Check-in at the Hotel Casa Wagner for 1 night

11:00-1:00PM: Visiting Roma communities urban area of Brasov or Sacele City

1:00-3:00PM: Lunch

3:00-6:00PM: Zarnesti, Romanian Scouts Camp; Camp activities;

Presentation: "Educational system and volunteering in Romania"

7:00PM: Dinner at the Bran Castle

Friday, July 20, 2012 Brasov

9:30-11:30AM: Meeting with local NGOs, APC presentation: "Romanian Political and Administrative system"

11:30-1:30PM: Lunch in Brasov; Travelling back to Bucharest

6:00-8:00PM: Dinner in Bucharest; Last preparations for the workshop

Saturday, July 21, 2012 Bucharest

One day workshop "U.S. Community Organizing Models and Tactics – ways to adapt them to Romanian Context"

Discussion topics: (1) Faith-based community organizing; *Presentation:* "U.S. Context" by Lavinia Chiburte, Luke Allen and Juli Bertalan Lavinia Chiburte, Luke Allen and Juli Bertalan; (2) Youth Voice; *Presentation:* "Youth Organizing" by Lavinia Chiburte, Luke Allen; (3) Community organizing tactics: Non-violent direct action; *Presentation:* "Possibility of using these tactics in Romania" by Ana Maria Suci and Mo George/Mary Tarullo; (4) Community organizing tactics; *Example:* "Ohio Lobby Day" by Mihaela Carstea.

Sunday, July 22, 2012 Bucharest

10:00-12:30PM: Site visits of two neighbor-

hoods in Bucharest;

Meeting with: Leaders of the Initiative groups (Pantelimon, Lacul Tei)

1:00-5:30PM: Lunch in City Center, free time and rest

6:00-8:00PM: Community event organized by Callatis Civic Initiative Group

8:00PM: Dinner

Monday, July 23, 2012 Bucharest

9:30-11:00AM: Meeting with ACCEPT; Talk about LGBT rights; Arranged by Ana Maria Suci

11:00-12:00Noon: Break and travel

12:00-1:00PM: Meeting with AMP (ActiveWatch); *Discussion topic:* "Projects for disabled and Roma communities" by Radu Raileanu

1:00-2:30PM: Lunch

2:30-7:00PM: Travel to Policy Center; Meeting for Roma and Minorities

7:00-10:00PM: Late dinner;

Walking tour – Calea Victoriei and Casa Poporului

Tuesday, July 24, 2012

9:00AM: Breakfast and departure to Slovakia

Schedule for GROUP B: Bulgaria

Wednesday, July 18, 2012 Sofia

5:55PM: ARRIVAL to Sofia

6:30PM: Check-in at Hotel Alabin for 2 nights

7:30PM Dinner

9:30PM: Late Salsa Party

Thursday, July 19, 2012 Sofia

8:00-9:00AM: Breakfast at the hotel

9:30-11:00AM: Welcome and Introduction at the office of C.E.G.A. Foundation (Emil's workplace)

Discussion topics: (1) An overview of the Bulgarian situation; (2) Presentation of BG organizations; (3) Presentation of U.S. Organizations;

11:30-1:00PM: Discussion about Legislative Advocacy and Community Organizing at the office of C.E.G.A. Foundation; focus on Roma & Youth & Health; Meeting with 2nd delegation participants

1:00-2:30PM: Lunch

3:00-4:00PM: Visit National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues;

Discussion topic: Policy perspective from the BG government at the Council of Ministries

4:00-5:00PM: Meeting with the "Teach for Bulgaria Organization".

6:00-7:30PM: Sofia sightseeing tour

7:30PM: Dinner

Friday, July 20, 2012 Simitli

8:00-9:00AM: Breakfast & check-out.

9:00-10:30AM: Traveling to Simitli, check-in at the Hotel Dimario for 1 night.

11:00-12:00Noon: Meeting the local Mayor; *Discussion topic:* (1) Policies towards Roma and Youth; (2) Youth Strategy plans; (3) Local Youth practices

12:00-1:00PM: Side visit at the Roma Community

1:00-2:30PM: Lunch

3:00-6:00PM: The Youth Workshop (Maryana's Association the "Youth Network for Development").

7:30PM: Dinner at Maryana's house

Saturday, July 21, 2012 Ravda

8:00-9:00AM: Breakfast

9:00AM: Check-out from Dimario hotel; traveling to Ravda (550 km);

2:00-3:00PM: Arrival & check-in to the hotel for 2 nights.

4:00-5:30PM: Visit Arete Youth Foundation (Miglena's organization); *Meeting with:* Team & Youth Leaders of the camp "Forward Together".

Discussions topics: (1) Mission of the camp and purpose; (2) The youth leaders are coming from different locations, placed all over Bulgaria and they play huge role in the overall camp; (3) Sharing personal stories from the youth.

6:30-7:30PM: Sea side night walk

8:00PM: Dinner on Sea side terrace

Sunday, July 22, 2012 Burgas

8:00-9:30AM: Breakfast

10:00-11:30AM: The Leadership and Community Organizing;

Discussion topic: Programs & practices in the U.S. by Maria, Cathy and Jay

11:30-4:00PM: Traveling to Burgas (20 km); Sea side and cultural visit

5:00-6:00PM: Get to know participants of the camp; Ice breaking games;

7:30PM: Dinner

8:30PM: Social time and Cultural evening.

Monday, July 23, 2012

Kavarna & Sofia

8:00-9:00AM: Breakfast & check-out from hotel

9:00AM: Traveling to Kavarna

11:00-11:30AM: Meeting with the Mayor; The Municipality of Kavarna is partner of the Integro Association (Ogy's organization) on the project "Thank You, Mayor".

11:30-1:00PM: Side visit at the Roma community; Meeting with youth and community leaders

1:00-2:00PM: Lunch; Travel back to Sofia (500 km)

8:00PM: Check-in at Alabin Hotel

8:30PM: Dinner & free time

Tuesday, July 24, 2012

9:00AM: Breakfast and departure to Slovakia