

“Building Grassroots Democracy in Minority Communities”

Summer 2013 U.S. Mentors Delegation in Europe

June 18 - July 17, 2013

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

June 2013



PROFESSIONAL
FELLOWS

**GREAT LAKES CONSORTIUM
for International Training and
Development (GLC)** — GLC is a
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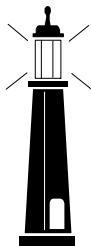
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The Great Lakes Consortium – through WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. – as Contract Agent and Manager – received a grant for a two-way exchange between September 2012 and August 2014 from the U.S. Department of State for the “Building Grassroots Democracy in Minority Communities” with at least 32 participants from four countries of Europe and for 18 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 the U.S. practices in citizen participation and advocacy, engaging minorities, and marginalized populations in civil society and politics, collaborating with community leaders to inform changes in legislation that make a difference in minority communities (incl. Roma, disabled, homeless) and building grassroots democracy.

European participants will be exposed to diverse community organizing methods for citizens in solving problems in their own communities and gain 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. They will examine the relationship between civil society and government and learn U.S. practices on transparency and accountability. Through internship placements at national, state or local organizations across the U.S. they will gain knowledge and experience as well as adaptable approaches that they can implement after their return.

U.S. mentors will travel for a reciprocal visit to Europe. They will have an opportunity to share professional expertise and gain a deeper understanding of the societies, cultures and people of other countries. This citizen civic exchange will promote mutual understanding, create long-term professional ties, enhance the collaboration between GLC and its partners.

The first delegation with a total of 19 fellows from Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia visited the U.S. from April 1 – May 11,

2013 and participated in group seminars, round-table discussions, site visits, and had have interactions with United States leaders. A *tailored 3-week internship* with mentoring, multicultural events, and participation in volunteer activities as well as in the Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, D.C. was also included in the 6-week professional fellows program. Participants prepared 6-9 month individual and group Action Plans for follow on activities. They had have 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 the Little Rock (Arkansas), Chicago (Illinois), Boston (Massachusetts), St. Louis (Missouri), Manchester (New Hampshire), Raleigh (North Carolina), Philadelphia (Pennsylvania), Charlottesville (Virginia) and Seattle (Washington). *The second European delegation is expected* in the U.S. from September 29 – November 9, 2013.

The Out-Bound component will include at least two American mentors’ teams to travel to Europe (between June 2013 and March 2014) for up to 21 days to provide joint workshops with the alumni and on-site consultation and fieldwork, and conduct wider outreach programs. The first U.S. mentor group will travel to Europe from June 19 through July 17, 2013 with 8 Americans who hosted, trained, worked with the European participants of the Spring 2013 delegation. Americans will work with the European alumni in providing workshops, assist with consulting and mentoring. They will be involved in field experience and learn about minority issues and gain cultural experience in Europe.

This program is a collaboration between GLC and its overseas partners: CECA in Bulgaria, Civil College Foundation in Hungary, CeRe in Romania and Center for Community Organizing in Slovakia as well as the European Community Organizing Network (ECON) and many U.S. partner organizations involved in the joint program and the tailored internship, and follow up mentoring activities.

Martin Wallace Nagy

Toledo, Ohio

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Martin Wallace Nagy is an Executive Director of the Arts Council Lake Erie West (ACLEW - founded in 1983), a non-profit regional community arts agency. He formed ACLEW with a desire for larger horizons creating community arts incubators with arts studios, educational spaces and community services in two former elementary schools, as well as a forty-acre early Ohio historical site that provide model programs for all ages of local and international communities alike. Prior to ACLEW, in 1969, Mr. Nagy created the Fine Arts Department at Maumee Valley Country Day School and in 14 years developed a PreK-12 curriculum with art, music, theatre and dance.

Mr. Nagy received a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from the Bowling Green State University in 1971. He has done Master's Degree work in Arts Administration and Nonprofit Management at the Ohio State University and University of Toledo. Mr. Nagy ventured out internationally in 1989 into Hungary and Russia through private sponsorship providing consultancies and workshops with an emphasis on the "Business of the Arts and Community Development" for artists and communities incorporating concepts of creativity, economic development, collaboration and cultural tourism as a paradigm to increase jobs, develop tourism and sustainable communities.

Since 2006 Mr. Nagy has been involved with the Great Lakes Consortium

for International Training and Development in-bound and out-bound programs funded by the U.S. State Department. He has led many successful delegations including persons from the governmental, business, education and the arts sectors through Tanzania, Jordan, Lebanon and UAE, and has conducted diverse workshops for small and large groups (often-times using translators) with a great degree of success and program sustainability. Individuals, groups and businesses from Tanzania, Jordan and Lebanon continue with the plans and works being laid out in workshops, as well as, maintain communications through the internet and social media. Mr. Nagy's plans are to refine and expand his international program offerings to bring healthy democratic, social, economic and cultural gains to more people and communities around the world.

Mr. Nagy has been involved with and presented numerous successful workshops for various international visitors from across the globe to Ohio, and has successfully led many delegations and conducted workshops internationally through Eastern Europe, Africa, Siberia and the Middle East. His extensive back-

ground in the fields of creativity, the arts, education and business combined have proven to be inspiring, productive and long-lasting for both the participants and the communities in which he has worked. Additionally, his leadership and presentation skills, ability to bring people together to collaborate, work together and develop plans have all contributed to projects that have become sustainable.

Mr. Nagy has special skills to work with marginalized population and his expertise will be a great help in finding solutions of some of the problems that the minority community has in Central and Eastern Europe (including Roma, disabled, immigrants, homeless). Through their involvement in arts and crafts they can generate additional income, create jobs, improve environment (using recycled or natural materials), contribute to local grassroots fundraising efforts, engage talented young students in meaningful activities, etc.

With more than 25 years of experience leading nonprofit grassroots organizations in the U.S. and working with global audience in the last 15-20 years Martin will be a great trainer in Europe and mentor of our alumni who are trying to deal with unemployment and other issues. He will be also working with artists to engage them in supporting social justice cause to build a democratic society in Europe.

Martin likes to travel and meet people from other countries, be outdoors, and study the ancient history and arts of foreign countries and of the Eastern Native Americans. He maintains a prolific vegetable garden and native Ohio wildflower gardens surrounding his home.

www.aclew.org

The Arts Council Lake Erie West (ACLEW), known as Common Space, is a regional not-for-profit community arts agency serving communities in the Lake Erie West Region of Northwest Ohio / Southeast Michigan. The grass roots agency was created in 1983 by entrepreneur: artists, educators and business per-

sons to cultivate the arts with affordable artist work spaces and creative programs for the public.

ACLEW operates two facilities under the names of Common Space to dispel the arts mystic, encourage broad community participation and be more accessible to all ages. ACLEW and resident artists and agencies offer classes, workshops and summer camps to the public.

ACLEW also owns and operates the Seven Eagles Historical Education Center in Grand Rapids, Ohio; and the administrative staff provides arts business consulting services to area community agencies and internationally to developing countries. ACLEW's mission is to foster the arts and engage socio-cultural participation through creative spaces, programs and leadership for all ages.

Martin, our sincere thank you for leading the 1st U.S. delegation travel to Europe and assisting with the weekly preparation before the trip!

Ken Grossinger

Washington D.C.

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Ken Grossinger is Chairman of the CrossCurrents Foundation (CCF), a non-profit family foundation that promotes social and economic justice. Immediately before starting the CCF, Mr. Grossinger served as Director of Programs for the Proteus Fund. Both foundations focus their grant making in the areas of non-partisan civic engagement in poor and minority communities and in several other areas including the arts, civil and human rights.

In addition to managing CCF, Mr. Grossinger is a Principal in Democracy Partners, where he serves as a Strategic Consultant to funders, community organizations and unions.

Grossinger is a Commissioner on the Washington D.C. Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and serves on several boards including the Environmental Grantmakers Association, Alliance for Justice, International Labor Rights Forum, Grantmakers in the Arts and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School.

Prior to entering the world of philanthropy, Mr. Grossinger worked for more than twenty years as a strategist in the labor movement. He served as Legislative Field Director of the AFL-CIO for a decade, and in the previous ten years he held several different positions within the Service Employees International Union. Mr. Grossinger is widely regarded as an expert in pioneering national field strategies for labor and community organizations and for building long-enduring alliances between the two. Formerly a community organizer, Mr. Grossinger co-launched the Human SERVE Fund, a national advocate organization that initi-

ated and led the successful decade-long fight for passage of the National Voter Registration Act, commonly known as Motor Voter.

Mr. Grossinger is planning to become more deeply involved with the Great Lakes Consortium, European Community Organizing Network and other international support programs for civic engagement. He also plans to teach community organization, social practice, advocacy, fund raising, labor and community partnerships, and to consult with organizations that need support in these areas and others.

Mr. Grossinger holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from the Columbia

University in New York (NY).

Mr. Grossinger has traveled extensively throughout Asia, Europe, Canada, Central and South America, but he has never participated in any the U.S. government travel programs.

Mr. Grossinger's more than 25 years of experience in community and labor organizing, and his wide range of experience as a consultant for donors and non-profit organizations is a valuable asset to the present exchange program. His experience as a Board member in various organizations is also very valuable for the European partners to improve their non-profit organizations.

Mr. Grossinger will help to reach out to potential Central and Eastern European funders to promote support for community organizing and organizations in minority communities.

His experience in the U.S. working with artists on social justice issues will be also used to promote the role of the arts and culture in achieving social change.

Mr. Grossinger's primary hobby is wine-making.



The CrossCurrents Foundation (CCF) was established to promote social, environmental and economic justice. The work of the Foundation is rooted in the idea that there are times when ordinary people can make significant change if advocates for change have sufficient re-

sources to engage in civic activities. CrossCurrents focuses where it believes private funding can make a strategic difference to community organizing and public education campaigns.

CCF is laser-focused on civic engagement. They invest resources in strengthening the capacity of non-profit advocacy organizations to have a voice

through non-partisan voter engagement and broad based civic participation. They believe that voice will lead to a more just and sustainable environment and improve the ability of community organizations to address crucial issues. CCF is also keenly interested in supporting emerging artists whose work contributes to a more just society.

Gary Delgado

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Gary Delgado is the founder and currently Senior Research Associate of the Applied Research Center (ARC) and the Center for Third World Organizing (CTWO). A nationally recognized trainer, lecturer, and organizer on issues of race and social justice, Mr. Delgado has worked extensively in both the organizing and the academic communities.

Mr. Delgado is a current Board Member and Trainer for the Alliance for a Just Society (AFJS), a Trainer with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and the Producer of short films on race and public policy.

Mr. Delgado the most recent work includes development of a racial equity initiative for the SEIU, a workshop for community organizers on Advocacy Video, and a recent article on racial framing entitled "Kill the Messengers" in



the anthology *Racial Formation in the Twenty First Century* (2012).

Mr. Delgado is currently working on a documentary film project featuring the leadership development work of the Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA) and developing BackStory Narratives, a new initiative to assist community organizations in telling their story via film.

Mr. Delgado received his Bachelor's Degree from the SUNY Old Westbury in 1972, a Master's Degree in Urban Affairs from CUNY Queens College in

1975, and his Ph.D. in Sociology from UC Berkeley in 1983. He has taught "Community Organizing and Research Methods" at UC Berkeley, UC Davis, San Francisco STA, CUNY at Queens, and Brooklyn College.

Mr. Delgado has published over 40 articles on social change practice and has been a guest lecturer at 30 colleges. He has trained and developed organizers and community leaders with over 200 organizations in the U.S., and has consulted with community organizations in England, South Africa, and Canada on issues of welfare reform, housing policy and race relations.

As a nationally recognized trainer, lecturer, and organizer on issues of race and social justice, Mr. Delgado's extensive work in both the organizing and the academic communities is valuable asset to this program. His media experience and his previous travel/consultation experiences in Europe and South Africa are so important and needed in the community organizing world.

www.allianceforajustsociety.org

Alliance For a Just Society (formerly known as the Northwest Federation of Community Organizations), is a national coalition of ten state-based grassroots community organizations. The Alliance's mission is to execute regional and national campaigns and build strong state affiliate organizations and partnerships that address economic, racial, and social inequities. Alliance's current programs

include: campaign strategy and implementation support, base-building support, building organizational capacity and skills of community-based organizations, Institute for Pragmatic Practice reports and communications, and coalition coordination.

The Alliance works on issues that directly impact communities of color. They are working to ensure that health care reform is fully implemented with a focus on addressing racial disparities in

health. The Alliance is working to address the foreclosure crisis, an issue that has disproportionately drained wealth from communities of color and immigrants. It is working on state and federal budget issues to ensure that sufficient revenue is raised to avoid cuts to critical safety net programs. Finally, the Alliance is working to achieve comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship and provisions to ensure family unity.

THANK YOU TO OUR COUNTRY DIRECTORS:

Emil Metodiev, Mate Varga, Nicoleta Chirita, Veronika Strelcova

AND OUR ALUMNI & PARTNERS IN EUROPE:

Daniela Batova, Martin Klus, Monika Vaskovicova, Maros Chmelik, Miroslav Ragac, Timea Kovacs, Csaba Szikra, Dzhevid Mahmoud, Anita Vodai, Hajnalka Kiss, Krisztina Hegymegi Molnar, Zsolt Peter Fugg, Laszlo Jakab, Andrea Tajti, Ruxandra Borca, Raluca Negulescu, Simona Barbu, Georgi Georgiev, Milenko Milenkov, Peter Lazarov and Tamas Szenttamasi

for organizing the 1st U.S. Mentor delegation's visit to Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia on Summer 2013

Joanna Lisa Brown

Chicago, Illinois

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Joanna Brown is the Lead Education Organizer at Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) in Chicago. Beginning in 1993, she worked with parents, teachers, principals and residents to win five new school buildings to relieve over-crowding in the primarily immigrant Mexican neighborhood. From that fight grew a school-community partnership which created parent and after-school programs run by LSNA in the schools. The programs serve both parents and students. Low-income mothers have become leaders through these programs and now run them.

The Parent Mentor program now places 130 parents in classrooms in eight schools, two hours a day for a year internship and has expanded to thirteen communities throughout the state.

A Cord of Three Strands: A New Approach to Parent Engagement has brought national attention to the Parent Mentor program. Ms. Brown helps raise private and government funds, and works with local politicians to make sure the programs are funded. Recently she staffed a successful fourteen-month campaign by parents to prevent the Chicago Board of Education from closing the neighborhood's middle school and giving it to a citywide military academy.

Ms. Brown believes in local neighborhood schools where parents can participate in the life of the school. She has also developed programs to help parent mentors become teachers themselves,

and where teachers have gone to the homes of students to read with families and build relationships. Ms. Brown believes that programs and services must be done with an organizing perspective so they build community leadership.

Ms. Brown has trained with immigrant mothers for the programs she developed, such as Parent Mentors and Literacy Ambassadors, and brings knowledge of history and politics to her local work. She likes to work in interactive ways with small groups and one-to-one mentoring, but also makes presentations to larger groups on her work, such as building community schools, parent engagement, the national and local debate over the role of the school and its implications for low-income children; She can provide workshops on (1) Parent Mentor training - building leadership with parents, (2) politics and organizing in Chicago, (3) basic press relations for community organizing, and (4) developing leaders - using 1-to-1s.

Before joining LSNA, Ms. Brown worked as a press aide to Harold Washington, Chicago's first African American Mayor (1973-77), and worked as a freelance journalist and journalism teacher.

She was a radio reporter at the three-month occupation of Wounded Knee, S. Dakota, where US Indigenous people were protesting human rights violations. She co-authored a book "*Voices from Wounded Knee*" (1973) about that historic event, based on interviews and documentary material.

Ms. Brown has a Bachelor's Degree in English literature and a Minor in SE Asian Studies from Cornell University in Ithaca (NY); a Master's Degree in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism of Northwestern University in Evanston (IL), and a Master's Degree in Anthropology from the University of Chicago. She speaks English, Spanish and some French.

Ms. Brown has lived in the indigenous islands of Kuna Yala (Panama, Italy), in Indonesia at various times of her life, and travelled to Mexico as well as some other parts of the world.

Ms. Brown's knowledge and experience will be a great asset to this program. Because of her organizing and training experience, Ms. Brown will be able to assist the European fellows as they think about local opportunities for community organizing, develop their trainings and develop community leaders.

Ms. Brown's journalism experience will help to explore the importance of media in community organizing and citizen participation. She can help many of the European Fellows work with families and around education.

Ms. Brown personal interests are playing classical music and listening to world music, particularly roots and acoustic music. She also likes hiking.

<http://www.lsna.net/index.html>

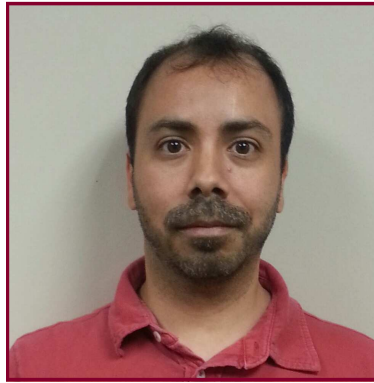
Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) in Chicago, IL established in 1962. LSNA mission is to convene networks of neighbors, schools, businesses, social service agencies, faith communities, and other organizations to collaborate for thriving communities in Logan Square, Avondale, and Lathrop Homes,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

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

LSNA is committed to empowering and maintaining these communities as diverse, safe, and affordable neighborhoods in which to live and work, learn and grow. Logan Square itself is diverse economically and ethnically. One-third of the neighborhood's 80,000 residents are immigrants, many of them undocumented families from Mexico or Central

America. The work is a combination of services and organizing, and the yearly work plan, called the Holistic Plan, is developed in partnership with leaders in the community, including clergy, principals, teachers, parents, and other institution and neighborhood leaders. Fifty of the community institutions including schools, churches, block clubs, and agencies are members of LSNA, engaging more than 2,000 people in organizing and supporting programs.

Hector Manuel Vaca, Jr.
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Hector Vaca is the Director of Action in Charlotte, NC (ANC) since 2010. Through his work with ANC, he has trained and developed grassroots leaders that have won many victories against abusive landlords and is currently working on several immigrant rights campaigns. Because of his organizing work, in 2011 the Charlotte Observer voted him as one of its Seven People to Watch. In the same year, Mr. Vaca received the Unsung Hero award from the Charlotte chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Mr. Vaca has been a community organizer for the past seven years. He started down the activism path at the age of sixteen when he and other students staged a sit-in at their high school to protest the U.S. government's involvement in the Middle-eastern military campaign Desert Storm. In later years, Mr. Vaca discovered the punk rock community,

where he got more civically involved. Mr. Vaca stated: *"I remember going to concerts and seeing that the organizers collected canned goods for the homeless"*. This experience served as his introduction to helping his community.

In later years, as a member of "Food Not Bombs", Mr. Vaca organized his friends and community to go out to local parks on Sundays and feed the homeless population.

Mr. Vaca holds a Bachelor's Degree where he double majored in International Studies and Latin American Studies from the University of South Carolina. During his study years, Hector joined the student organization Students Associated for

Latin America (SALA). In his 2nd year as a member of SALA and as the Community Service Chair, he organized a clothing and food drive to gather necessities for the Hurricane that hit Central America in the mid 1990's.

As a community organizer, Mr. Vaca has been working tirelessly to organize tenants, immigrants, and other people of color. In 2008, while organizing immigrants in Los Angeles, he and the ACORN members he was organizing won a commitment from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service to process over 170,000 citizenship applications that were backlogged.

Mr. Vaca enjoys spending his leisure time skateboarding and writing. He started a 'Zine' - short for an electronic magazine publication - *Stress Factor Reduction Program (SFRP)* in 1992 when he was still in high school to express himself and give back to the punk rock scene who accepted him and helped others like himself feel accepted.

Mr. Vaca posts short stories, poetry, essays, and artwork for others to enjoy and comment on. The 'Zine' can be reached at: commvoice.wordpress.com.

www.actionnc.org

Action NC (ANC) is a grassroots community organization that empowers low to moderate-income communities to take action and win victories on issues of concern to our communities. ANC priorities include: better housing conditions for tenants, living wages for low-wage workers, affordable health care, more investment in our communities from banks and governments, comprehensive immigration reform, and better public

schools. ANC achieve these goals by building community organizations that have the power to win changes - through community direct action, negotiation, legislation, and voter participation.

Through grassroots organization, education and mobilization in low-wealth communities, Action NC: builds a base of community support and develops bold leaders to take action and get results; promotes reforms that address the root causes of poverty, underdevelopment and inequality; expands civic engage-

ment and voter participation; and helps build a movement for social and economic justice.

Issues come straight from the membership because Action NC believes that social change comes from the bottom up. Members are black, white, and Latino families, who are able to take ownership of their issues, by organizing their own communities to take action and are active in running the organization, not just contributors or newsletter readers.



SPECIAL THANK YOU
TO THE U.S. MENTORS AND THEIR ORGANIZATIONS
FOR SHARING THEIR TIME AND EXPERIENCES
TO MAKE THIS PROGRAM A SUCCESS!

Sarah Jane Knoy
Manchester, New Hampshire
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Sarah Jane Knoy is the Executive Director of the Granite State Organizing Project (GSOP) based in Manchester, New Hampshire. She is responsible for building the power and capacity of GSOP and its member institutions through developing and training new leaders, recruiting organizational members and working to develop strategic campaigns.

Ms. Knoy has shared many success stories working with minority communities, one being GSOP's success story of helping to bring together the residents of a Manchester low income housing project. This community is made up of people from over twenty-nine different nations, speaking dozens of different languages. Because the city had cut much needed and helpful programs from the community, conflicts began to arise in this area. GSOP was able to bring the community together to form a diverse Elmwood Gardens Leadership Group which now convenes every other week to discuss community concerns, advocate for improved services review requests and plan community projects.

Ms. Knoy has more than twenty-five years of community organizing experience. Prior to her work at GSOP, Ms. Knoy was the Executive Director for Organization of the Northeast, the Regional Director for Greenpeace Great Lakes, and the Housing Organizer for National Training & Information Center.



Ms. Knoy states: *“Community organizing, my calling and passion, is helping traditionally disenfranchised people build powerful organizations and participate meaningfully in public life.”*

Ms. Knoy has a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Women's Studies from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst (MA) and graduated with her Master's Degree in Human Services Administration from Springfield College in Manchester (NH) in 1996. In the past three years Knoy has traveled to France

for ten days to visit family friends.

Ms. Knoy's over twenty-five years of community organizing background include both field work as well as management experience. She has trained many diverse groups in the basic community organizing concepts of power, self interest, building relationships, running effective meetings, turning problems into issues and action evaluation.

Ms. Knoy has extensive training experience through her current and past work places which is essential to have as a mentor and is a valuable resource for the exchange program. As a Mentor, Ms. Knoy will be able to offer well rounded knowledge and advices to the European partners and professional Fellows.

Ms. Knoy has been practicing yoga for more than ten years. Since moving to New Hampshire she has spent her free time becoming a certified Yoga instructor and is now involved with training new yoga teachers.



Raluca Negulescu with her host family Sarah Jane and Kevin Kintner

www.granitestateorganizing.org

The Granite State Organizing Project (GSOP) is a non-government, non-profit and non-partisan organization rooted in faith and democratic values and includes twenty-eight religious, labor, and community organizations representing 40,000 New Hampshire families. The organization was incorporated in 2002 and works in Manchester, Nashua, and the Souhegan Valley. As the largest grassroots community organization in New Hampshire, GSOP unites to strengthen community members' voices

in decisions that shape their communities by taking issue-oriented actions. By doing so, GSOP broadens and deepens our own organizations' leadership, builds community, and promotes a just society.

The organization strives to create communities in which residents accept, respect, and value one another; justice, equity, and the democratic process are upheld in all interactions. GSOP focuses on problems, such as poor housing, failing schools, barriers to citizenship, unjust working conditions, and lack of access to health care, that affect the livelihood and sustainability of communities.

For GSOP, the method used to achieve social change –increasing the ability of traditionally disenfranchised people to impact decisions affecting their lives – is as important as the reforms achieved.

GSOP members and community leaders conduct research to determine which issues to act on using listening campaigns, one-to-one interviews, and focus groups, as well as more traditional research methods. GSOP's community leaders then design issue campaigns based upon the research and relationships developed.

Lewis Finfer

Boston, Massachusetts

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Lewis Finfer is the Director of the Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN), where he coordinates statewide issue campaigns, coordinates aid to affiliated organizations and coalitions on issues, coordinates fundraising, and supervises staff. His responsibilities include managing seven affiliated local organizations to provide support, and work with the staff of the several statewide issue coalitions.

Mr. Finfer states: "We are affiliated nationally with the PICO National Network of faith based community improvement organizations." Some of the current issues Mr. Finfer is working on are: increasing wages by raising the minimum wage, youth jobs, youth violence prevention, foreclosure prevention, job training, and immigrant rights.

Mr. Finfer has done training on most topics related to community organizing and leadership development and has written trainings on many of these same topics.

Mr. Finfer is a college graduate and has worked as a professional community organizer since 1970 after he was first involved as a volunteer in the Civil Rights Movement in 1968.

In 1984, Mr. Finfer visited Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany dur-

ing those hard years of communism. His grandfather emigrated from Budapest, so he is interested in researching whether he can locate any relatives still though the last one he knows of was his great aunt who died in the 1950's.

Mr. Finfer is looking forward to help with leadership training curriculum development and designing training materials, which are the current needs in Eastern Europe to improve community organizing. Mr. Finfer will be able to assist in these efforts to the European partners and fellows.

In his free time, Mr. Finfer enjoys spending time with his family, jogs with his dog named Emma, grows vegetables in a community garden plot, and reads a lot of novels. His wife, Judy Shea, works in a community arts program, while daughter, Sophia, works in a Boston community health center, and son, Alexander, attends high school.

www.mcan-oltc.org

Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN) and Organizing and Leadership Training Center (OLTC)

are a federation of community improvement organizations working for social and economic justice by putting our religious faith values and our democratic values into action. MCAN-OLTC is affiliated with the PICO National Network of community organizations, a national federation of over fifty congregation based community organizations located in twenty states.

Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN) is the federation of the Massachusetts affiliated organizations taking action together on statewide

issues. MCAN works to develop new and support existing broad based community organizations in New England. These are made up of congregations, and sometimes other organizations and unions, acting together for their values and interests. MCAN works to strengthen the community and the congregation (or organization).

MCAN are characterized by being: interfaith, multi-issue, multi-racial, multi-economic class, dues based, making decisions by a large group of leaders not a small hierarchy, employing professional organizers as staff persons, taking action to address deeply felt community and work problems, and reflecting together on how religious and democratic values inform our efforts.

Organizing and Leadership Training Center (OLTC) was formed in 1985. OLTC worked with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) to form Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) in 1996 and co-directed that effort from 1996-2002. It also founded Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance (MAHA) in 1986 and directed that organization through 1990. MAHA and GBIO are now organizational allies of MCAN. OLTC provides support to community organizations in New England states.

The network focuses on leadership development as the key to building large scale involvement which gives the organizations the "people power" to gain support for their proposals for solving community and work problems.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO
David Gustafson, the U.S. State Department Program Officer,
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Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia!

Janice El-Amin

Little Rock, Arkansas

E-mail: janicetillman@hotmail.com



Janice El-Amin is an Organizer of the South East Arkansas Project. She has become a lead organizer of African American residents in the racially separated, low-income rural communities of the Delta counties of Arkansas.

Ms. El-Amin plays a significant role as these formerly overlooked communities position themselves as important policy players in Arkansas. Already she has supported them to win civil rights, education and electoral policy changes.

Ms. El-Amin began working for Arkansas Public Policy Panel in 2007. Today, as an APPP lead organizer, she is responsible for the development of five grassroots community organizations in Southeast Arkansas that are tackling the legacy of Jim Crow.

Ms. El-Amin facilitates their leader development and campaign development on issues ranging from civil rights to community security. She works at the local and state levels to engage them in the political process. Also, Ms. El-Amin has helped to sustain the infrastructure for movement building in Arkansas through fundraising and bringing national attention to movement building in Arkansas.

Ms. El-Amin's organizing focus is on tackling the racial injustices and racial polarization that still plague the rural

communities of Deep South Arkansas. She works across several counties of the Mississippi River Delta region: (1) In city Gould the residents organized to hold elected officials accountable; (2) in Monticello organized residents engaged and informed voters; (3) In Huttig the residents organized to unite a community that became racially polarized after the election of the city's first black mayor. Ms. El-Amin has connected leaders from these rural communities with other rural and urban, racially diverse leaders from around the state to build a coalition, the Arkansas Citizens First Congress.

Ms. El-Amin began her community work in the church - at her 13, she was the assistant secretary in Sunday school, then later the choir secretary, and eventually the church secretary.

Ms. El-Amin sees her community organizing as a service on a broader scale. She states: *"It has opened up a whole new world for me. We get to help the whole community. We have not chal-*

lenged racism and allowed it to exist. It has been OK with us because that is all we have known. Now we are educating people, they are getting involved, making decisions and weighing in on issues instead of just sitting back and letting things happen to them."

Ms. El-Amin was born in Chicago IL and moved to the small Delta town of Gould Arkansas as a young child. El-Amin's volunteerism began when she was very young and continued when she began her career as an Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of the Gould School District and later served as the Healthcare Coordinator with Delta Access. Ms. El-Amin is married and has three children.

Ms. El-Amin graduated with honors from the historic black Gould High School. She attended two years at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff studying criminal justice before taking a leave to have her second child.

This will be Ms. El-Amin's first travel outside the United States. She is very interested to participate in this exchange and is looking forward to meeting with activists in other countries and to learn from their experience how other cultures handle the cultural dynamics as they address deeply entrenched issues. What she learns, she will put to good use when she will return to Arkansas.

In her free time, she enjoys traveling with her husband, William, and reading.

www.arpanel.org

The Arkansas Public Policy Panel (Panel) is a non-profit organization founded in 1963. The Panel is a 50-year old social justice organization that began as a group of diverse mothers traveling the state to facilitate school integration. Today the Panel is building a progressive movement in Arkansas by organizing citizen groups, educating and supporting them to be more effective and powerful and linking community groups, nonprofits, labor unions and institutions together in coalitions and networks.

The Panel mission is to work for social justice by helping community people to organize, to grow as leaders, and to influence public policy at the local level and the state level. The Panel provides organizing, training, leadership development and strategic planning services.

The Panel is a statewide organization dedicated to achieving social and economic justice by organizing citizen groups around the state, educating and supporting them to be more effective and powerful, and linking them with one another in coalitions and networks. The Panel seeks to bring balance to the public

policy process in Arkansas. In addition, the Panel also supports a diverse coalition of community groups and organizations that develop campaigns and lobby at the legislature as the Arkansas Citizens First Congress.

The Citizens First Congress works to get laws passed that improve Arkansas schools, protect Arkansas' environment, change regressive tax structures, add citizen representation to state boards and commissions, strengthen civil rights, protect victims of violence, reform elections, hold government and corporations accountable and more.

ITINERARY *

Tuesday, June 18

Departure from the U.S. for Martin Nagy, Hector Vaca, Janice El-Amin, Gary Delgado, Ken Grossinger and Sarah Jane Knoy

Wednesday, June 19

Arrival to Budapest, Hungary; Check-in to hotel for 1 night; Orientation for Hungary and getting to know each other

[For Joanna Brown](#): departure from the U.S.

Thursday, June 20 - Travel day

Bratislava, Slovakia

9:00AM: Briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Budapest with Dmitri Tarakhovsky

11:00AM: Departure from Budapest; Pick-up by Veronika Strelcova, and Martin Klus Program Orientation to Slovakia

3:00PM: Check-in to hotel in Bratislava for 4 nights, Sightseeing and meeting with Slovak alumni from Bratislava

[For Joanna Brown](#): arriving in Romania and do consulting and fieldwork with Ruxandra Borca in Bucharest and Petrosani

Friday, June 21 - Bratislava, Slovakia

9:00-10:30AM: Briefing with the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia. Spring Fellows and the U.S. mentors meet with the Embassy officials

11:00AM-4:00PM: "Building Grassroots Power in Roma Communities" workshop for Roma community leaders and NGOs working with minority communities

Organized by Daniela Batova

Workshop with short alumni and U.S. mentors presentations to motivate leaders and NGO partners to learn about community organizing methods

6:00PM: Dinner with Slovak alumni

Saturday, June 22 - Bratislava, Slovakia

10:00-1:00PM: Alumni Advanced Community Organizing Mentoring Workshop to share field experience from Slovakia and the U.S. and report on experience learned in the U.S.

Workshop focus: preparing the Fall 2013 delegation to successfully complete their field experience

Afternoon Sightseeing with alumni friends

Sunday, June 23 - Bratislava, Slovakia / Vienna, Austria

Sightseeing in Bratislava or Vienna with Martin Klus and/or other alumni

Monday, June 24 - Tuesday, July 2

See separate schedules for 2 groups:
GROUP A:

Central Slovakia and Bulgaria

Martin Nagy, Hector Vaca, Janice El-Amin – with Elizabeth Balint

GROUP B: Romania

Gary Delgado, Sarah Jane Knoy, Ken Grossinger, Joanna Brown

Monday, July 1 – Tuesday, July 2

Travel to Budapest, Hungary

For Lewis Finfer:

Departing from the U.S. on July 1st

2:55PM: Arriving in Budapest on July 2nd, check-in to hotel.

Evening: Join the American group at the hotel and joint dinner with Elizabeth Balint

Subgroup Hungary 1 : Debrecen / Bodrogolaszi / Tokaj, Hungary

Gary Delgado, Janice El-Amin and Lewis Finfer

Wednesday, July 3 Debrecen

Morning: Travel to Debrecen by train
Field work, mentoring with Tímea Kovacs

Friday, July 4 Tokaj

Morning/Afternoon: Field work and mentoring with Tímea Kovacs and travel to Tokaj to celebrate 4th of July with the other American group

Friday, July 5 - Debrecen / Budapest

Morning/Afternoon: Field work and mentoring with Tímea Kovacs

Evening: Return to Budapest

Subgroup Hungary 2: Miskolc / Tokaj area, Hungary

Ken Grossinger, Sarah Jane Knoy, Martin Nagy, Elizabeth Balint – with Kriszta Molnar and Tamas Szenttamasi

Wednesday, July 3 - Miskolc

Travel by train to Miskolc, drive to Bodvalenke. Site visits and consulting in Roma art communities, check-in to hotel 1 night

Thursday, July 4 - Miskolc, Tokaj

Site visits and consulting in Lyuko Valley, mentoring on field work with Tamas, and travel to Tokaj to join the other American group and celebrate 4th of July. Check-in to hotel in Tokaj area for 1 night

Friday, July 5 - Miskolc / Bocs

Morning/Afternoon: Workshop and consulting in Bocs with Kriszta and youth art mural workshop in Miskolc with Tamas and Martin Nagy

Evening: Return to Budapest

Friday, July 5 - Budapest, Hungary Delegation reunion

Subgroup Hungary 1 and 2 are arriving in Budapest and meet at the hotel.

[Joanna Brown and Hector Vaca](#) arriving from Sofia and meet in the hotel;
Check-in for 2 nights in Budapest

Saturday, July 6 - Budapest, Hungary

10:00-2:00PM: Alumni Community Organizing Advanced Mentoring Workshop
Discussion topic: Share field experience from Hungary and the U.S. and report on experience learned in the United States.

Afternoon/Evening: Sightseeing

Sunday, July 7 - Budapest /

Szeged, Hungary

9:00AM-1:00PM: Cultural/historical tour of the 8th district with Csaba Szikra Discussion on community organizing in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic neighborhoods / field experience

2:00PM Travel to Szeged and check-in to hotel for 1 night & sightseeing with alumni

9:00PM-12:00AM: "The Marriage Market" operetta of Victor Jacobi – performed at the Szeged Open Air Festival

Monday, July 8 - Szeged /

Kunbabony, Hungary

9:00AM-2:00PM Youth art mural workshop in Hodmezovasarhely with Martin Nagy – organized by Laci Jakab, Zsolt Fugg & DARTKE

10:00AM: Visit the City of Szeged and meet with elected officials

(Optional) Visit the Synagogue and meet with the Jewish community leaders of Szeged

4:00PM: Travel to Kunbabony; check-in to bed and breakfast places: for 2 nights [for Ken Grossinger](#); for 3 nights for the rest of the group.

Evening: Dinner with Mate Varga and community activists, introduction of the U.S. mentors and their organizations

For Martin Nagy

Travel from Szeged, Hungary to Timisoara, Romania with Anda Lupusor

ITINERARY *

Tuesday, July 9 - Kunbabony, Hungary

Discussions with community activists and leaders on how citizen participation can help to survive the crisis and the connection between Citizens

- "Civil Society and the State" – by Ken Grossinger

- "Racial justice approaches in community organizing" – by Gary Delgado

- Citizen's partnership (people-to-people exchanges) including the U.S.-Europe community organizing exchanges – by Lewis Finfer

Wednesday, July 10 - Kunbabony, Hungary

Discussion topics:

- Leadership development practices for minority women – by Joanna Brown

- What are we learning from our work, exchanges, and what might this mean for the future? – by Sarah Jane Knoy

- Story telling session in small groups – by Janice El-Amin and Hector Vaca

- Power analysis – by Lewis Finfer

For Ken Grossinger

Afternoon: Return to Budapest, check-in to hotel for 2 nights

Thursday, July 11 - Kunbabony, Hungary

Morning: Discussion on youth participa-

tion during the crisis such as unemployment, e-participation, media;

Presentation on "Youth Job Coalition" – by Lewis Finfer

1:00PM: return to Budapest; check-in to hotel for 1 night

3:00-6:00PM: Evaluation with Elizabeth Balint and planning of follow on activities

7:00PM: Farewell dinner

Friday, July 12 - Travel day

For Ken Grossinger, Gary Delgado, Hector Vaca, Joanna Brown, Janice El-Amin -

Departure from Budapest

For Lewis Finfer - stays in Budapest until July 18 on his own

For Sarah Jane - stays in Budapest until July 20 on her own

Monday, July 8 - Szeged / Timisoara

For Martin Nagy:

Travel from Szeged, Hungary to Timisoara, Romania; Work with Anda Lupusor - Workshop and site visits

Tuesday, July 9 - Timisoara / Lugoj

Work with Anda Lupusor - Workshop and site visits

Wednesday, July 10 - Timisoara / Staciova

Work with Anda Lupusor - Workshop and site visits

Thursday, July 11 - Timisoara / Brasov

Work with Anda Lupusor - Workshop and site visits, afternoon travel to Dracula's Castle and overnight

Friday, July 12 - Brasov / Bucharest

Early morning departure to Bucharest, meeting with Raluca and site visits

Saturday, July 13 - Bucharest

Training and field work with Raluca Negulescu and Roma youth

Sunday, July 14 - Bucharest

Training and field work with Raluca Negulescu and Roma youth

Monday, July 15 - Bucharest / Budapest

Early departure to fly from Bucharest to Budapest, Hungary; Check-in to hotel for 2 nights

Tuesday, July 16 - Budapest

Evaluation and final report with Elizabeth Balint and Mate Varga

Wednesday, July 17 - Travel day

Departure from Budapest, Return to the U.S.

GROUP A: Central Slovakia and Bulgaria

Martin Nagy, Hector Vaca, Janice El-Amin – with Elizabeth Balint

Monday, June 24 - Trnava / Banska Bystrica, Slovakia

8:30AM: Departure from Bratislava to Trnava (travel time: 45 minutes);

Meeting with: Martin Klus at SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava and workshop

Discussion topics:

- Engaging university students in volunteer activities,

- Why social worker should learn about community organizing methods,

- How to improve citizen participation – with Ph.D. students and faculty

12:00Noon: Lunch in Trnava

Afternoon: Travel to Banska Bystrica, check-in to hotel for 1 night

Evening: Dinner with Chuck Hirt and Veronika Strelcova and/or other alumni from Central Slovakia

Tuesday, June 25 - Banska Bystrica / Rimavska Sobota, Slovakia

10:00AM Workshop in the Community Center on citizen participation with community leaders and sharing community organizing experience by alumni (Miroslav Ragac and Maros Chmelik) and the U.S. Mentors.

Consulting: Quo Vadis Roma organization with Maros Chmelik; Cuban immigrant community with Miroslav Ragac;

Discussion topic: The U.S. Mentors will learn from the personal stories of the minority community representatives, and help them to improve presentation skills and highlight the power of the storytelling.

Late lunch on the way to Rimavska Sobota – Salas Zbojska

4:00PM: Travel to Rimavska Sobota and

check-in to hotel for 2 nights

8:00PM: Meeting and dinner with Monika Vaskovicova

Wednesday, June 26 - Hnusta, Slovakia

For Martin Nagy

9:00AM Youth mural art workshop – with Monika Vaskovicova

For Janice El-Amin, Hector Vaca, Elizabeth Balint

10:00AM Travel to Klenovec to Roma special school and village; meeting with teachers, parents and students

Discussion on minority issues – with Maros Chmelik and/or Miroslav Ragac

12:00Noon joint lunch at Hnusta

Afternoon field trip to Rimavska Pila, cultural center for Roma cultural program prepared by Roma children

3:00PM Art Mural workshop wrap-up

6:00PM: Joint dinner with Monika Vaskovicova

ITINERARY *

Wednesday, June 26 - Bucharest / Sofia For Joanna Brown:

Travel day alone from Bucharest, Romania to Sofia, Bulgaria to join the GROUP A;

Thursday, June 27 - Sofia, Bulgaria

Travel day for the Central Slovakia/Bulgaria group from Rimavska Sobota, Slovakia to Sofia, Bulgaria

1:00PM: Check-in at Ferihegy airport in Budapest

5:15PM: Arrival in Sofia and check-in to hotel for 2 nights, join with [Joanna Brown](#)

Orientation to Bulgaria by Emil Metodiev

Evening: Dinner meeting with alumni

Friday, June 28 - Sofia, Bulgaria

(Tentative) Briefing with the Bulgarian Embassy; Community organizing activities and forum with Peter Lazarov, who is

working with people with disabilities.

Evening: Dinner meeting with alumni

Saturday, June 29 - Sofia /

Lom, Bulgaria

9:00AM-12:00Noon: Alumni Community organizing mentoring program;

Report on the U.S. experience

Afternoon: Travel to Lom; check-in to hotel

Sunday, June 30 - Lom, Bulgaria

Mentoring and fieldwork with Georgi Georgiev and Milenko Milenkov

Monday, July 1 - Lom / Sofia /

Budapest

for Martin Nagy and Janice El-Amin

Travel from Lom to Sofia, then flying to Budapest, Hungary.

12:00Noon: Check-in at airport in Sofia

2:20PM: Arrival in Budapest; Check-in to hotel and meet Elizabeth Balint for dinner.

Monday, July 1 – Friday, July 5

Lom, Bulgaria

for Hector Vaca and Joanna Brown

Mentoring and fieldwork with Georgi Georgiev and Milenko Milenkov

Friday, July 5 - Lom / Sofia / Budapest

for Hector Vaca and Joanna Brown

Travel from Lom to Sofia, then flying to Budapest, Hungary.

12:00Noon: Check-in at the airport in Sofia

2:20PM: Arrive in Budapest

Check-in to hotel and join with the rest of the Americans for joint dinner.

GROUP B: Romania

Gary Delgado, Sarah Jane Knoy, Ken Grossinger, Joanna Brown

Monday, June 24 - Bratislava /

Vienna / Bucharest

Travel day to Romania for [Gary Delgado](#), [Sarah Jane Knoy](#), and [Ken Grossinger](#)

Morning/Early afternoon: Meeting and site visits, consulting

Travel to Vienna, Austria

4:00PM: Check-in at Vienna airport and fly to Bucharest, Romania

8:30PM: Arrival in Bucharest and check-in to hotel for 7 nights for [Gary Delgado](#) and [Sarah Jane Knoy](#); for 4 nights for [Ken Grossinger](#); join with [Joanna Brown](#).

Tuesday, June 25 - Bucharest

Morning: Orientation for Romania by Nicoleta Chirita and dinner meeting with alumni; (Tentative) Briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest

Afternoon: Visit CeRe and learn about community organizing in Romania and compare to other counties in Europe

Evening: Sightseeing in Bucharest

Wednesday, June 26 - Bucharest

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Sarah Jane Knoy](#) with Raluca Negulescu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Gary Delgado](#) with Simona Barbu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Ken Gross-](#)

[inger](#) with Nicoleta Chirita

- Travel day for [Joanna Brown](#), who flying to Sofia, Bulgaria to join another group.

Thursday, June 27 - Bucharest

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Sarah Jane Knoy](#) with Raluca Negulescu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Gary Delgado](#) with Simona Barbu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Ken Gross-](#)

[inger](#) with Nicoleta Chirita

Friday, June 28 - Bucharest

11:00AM-3:00PM: Alumni Community Organizing Mentoring Workshop in English to share field experience from Romania and the U.S. and report on experience learned in the U.S.

Afternoon: Sightseeing

Evening: for Ken Grossinger - Travel to Moldova for 3 days on his own;

7:25PM: Check-in at Otopeni Airport in Bucharest

10:35PM: Arriving in Chisinau, Moldova

Saturday, June 29 - Bucharest

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Sarah Jane Knoy](#) with Raluca Negulescu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Gary Delgado](#) with Simona Barbu

Sunday, June 30

Sightseeing in Bucharest

Monday, July 1 - Bucharest

Morning: for Ken Grossinger: Come back from Moldova arriving in Bucharest at 7:15AM, check-in to hotel for 1 night; re-join the group for evaluation.

Afternoon:

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Sarah Jane Knoy](#) with Raluca Negulescu

- Fieldwork and consulting for [Gary Delgado](#) with Simona Barbu

For the Romanian group: Evaluation of the Romanian experience and plans for follow on activities for the Americans

For Lewis Finfer:

Departing from the U.S.

Tuesday, July 2 - Bucharest / Vienna /

Budapest

Travel day to Budapest, Hungary

2:30PM: Check-in at airport in Bucharest to travel to Vienna, Austria

5:20PM: Arrival in Vienna, Austria; Drive from Vienna to Budapest, Hungary and check-in to hotel for 1 night.

For Lewis Finfer:

2:55PM: Arriving in Budapest; Check-in to hotel.

Evening: Join the American group at the hotel and joint dinner with Elizabeth Balint