

# AUCA Magazine



*American University  
of Central Asia*

*Summer 2007*

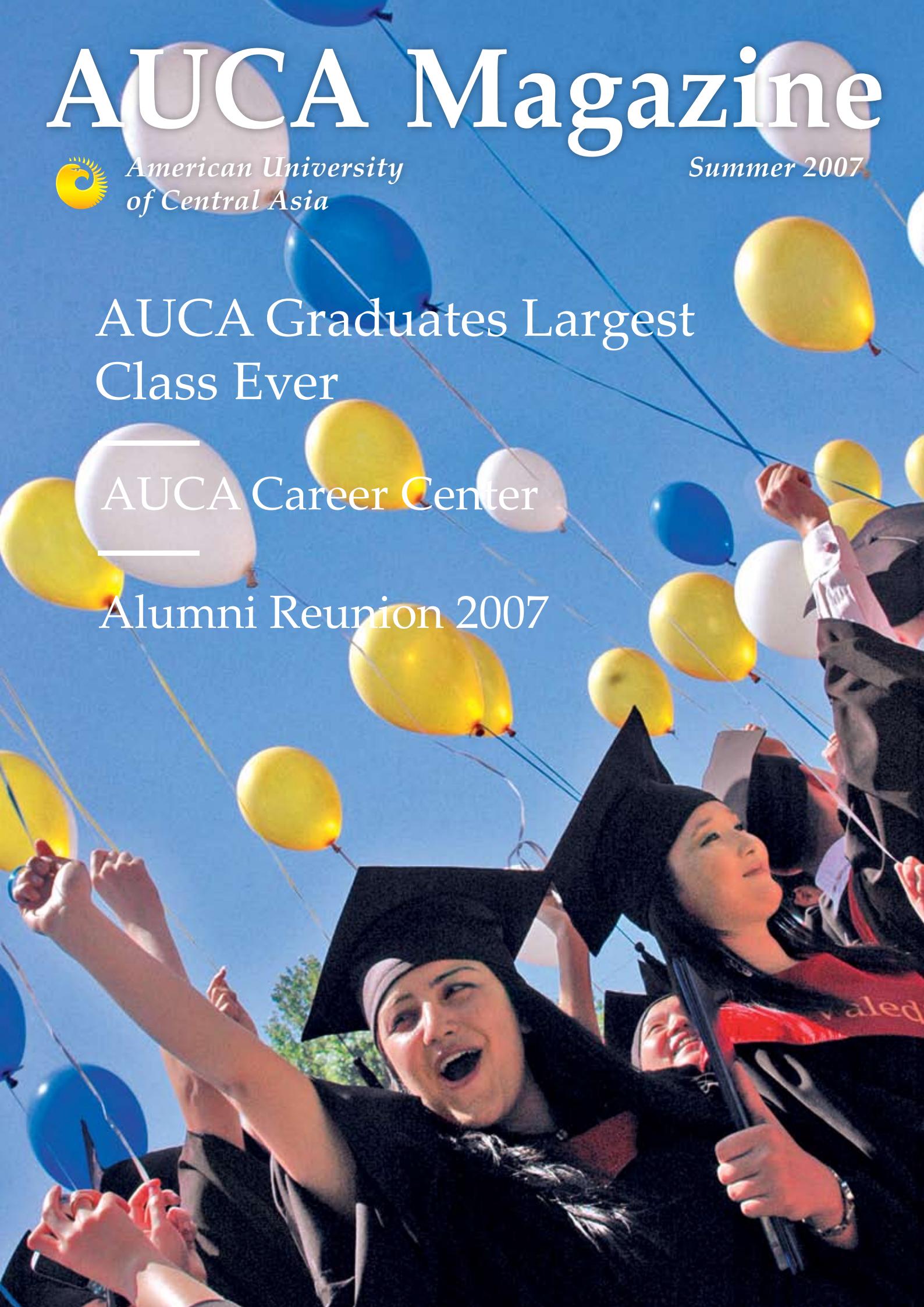
## AUCA Graduates Largest Class Ever

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### AUCA Career Center

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### Alumni Reunion 2007



# AUCA Continuing Education Center

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**Leadership  
begins with you!**

The AUCA Continuing Education Center (CEC) offers short-term business and language courses for individuals and corporate business programs for managers and CEOs.

All educational programs are oriented toward students with higher or professional education degrees.

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AUCA Commencement 2007: a picture-perfect moment in front of the Kyrgyz Parliament building.

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Dear graduates!

Now it is my privilege to share with you and with all who have chosen to witness your commencement some thoughts about the meaning of this wonderful day in your lives and in the life of our University.

Today you join more than one thousand alumni of our great University. Thanks to our faculty and staff you have gained the knowledge, the critical thinking skills, the self-esteem and the values to pursue an exciting future. You begin now an unpredictable and wonderful journey in pursuit of your professional and personal dreams. You are buttressed by your education in the great liberal arts tradition that most assuredly will enable you to choose wisely and creatively as you carve out brilliant futures.

Just as we are proud of you, so we are proud of our ten previous graduating classes. You are indeed our eleventh graduating class! You join our distinguished alumni, graduates from what we consider to be the greatest higher education institution in Central Asia! You are in very distinguished company.

Today, June 9, 2007, your graduation day, the eleventh graduation celebration at AUCA, we also acknowledge our founders who had the vision to establish a liberal arts university, predicated on critical thinking and learning in an atmosphere of academic freedom in the heart of Central Asia: our founders in the governments of Kyrgyzstan and the United States, in the Open Society Institute, in the administration, in the faculty, and on the Board of Trustees. Our founders were visionary teachers, statesmen, philanthropists and entrepreneurs who had the courage and determination to open our doors to some of the most talented students in our region. We must always treasure their brilliance and inspiration as they dedicated themselves

to developing AUK (American University of Kyrgyzstan) then AUCA. The tenacious commitment of our founding and following faculty, staff, students, public citizens and trustees, jointly from more than twenty different countries, has been the sustaining and driving force that has enabled the development of our University in very challenging times and circumstances.

You, our eleventh graduating class, are witnesses to our renewed focus on internationalization as we attract more and more international students, prepare to build an international residence hall, increase our capacity to instruct in the English language, enjoy the fruits of a well invested endowment and design regional studies majors and an all Central Asian core curriculum, with the help of support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, predicated on the synthesis of the intellectual traditions of Russia, Central Asia and the United States of America. You, the class of 2007, are witnesses to the birth of a new phase in the history of our University and carriers of the memories and the traditions that have preceded it. You are supports on the bridge that we are building from our early years into our more mature ones, from our older beginnings to our newer ones. We welcome and need your participation in the ongoing building process that is our University.

As you carve your paths, be guided by the quest for freedom and democracy that sustains your University and that underlies your education. Help the leadership in your own countries to be wise, inclusive and forward thinking. And some day become that leadership with humility, historical perspective, open mindedness, and a sense of humor. Be educators in the best sense of that word: lead others out from ignorance and ideology as we have led you. Never, ever focus only on your own success. Share your knowledge with those beside you and with those who come after you. Your education as free citizens carries with it a profound responsibility: you must give back your time, your talent, and eventually even your treasure. Education is by definition a moral imperative to lead wise and informed lives and to persuade others to do the same.

The late Vika Lavrova, alumna, instructor and friend, was a superb exemplar of an alumna who treasured the freedom of thought she experienced and developed at our University; in all of her days with us she held firm to the notion that with freedom comes responsibility: to question and to improve the quality of thought and life all around her. Please take Vika's challenge and make it your own. Be generous of spirit and critical of mind as you confront the challenges of our twenty first century world. And never, ever lose touch with your alma mater. It will always be here for you as it is for the memories of our treasured Vika and her admirer, the late trustee James Emison.

Join your fellow and sister alumni in their quest for excellence here in Bishkek, across Central Asia, in Europe, the United States and Russia. And always be with us, part of us, as we will always be a part of you.

Congratulations!

*Ellen S. Hurwitz, Ph.D.  
President*

# AUCA Magazine

American University of Central Asia, formed in 1997, is dedicated to improving the quality of education it offers by adding new curricula, new programs, and new services to equip its graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to this rapidly changing and developing region and the world beyond.

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# A Personal Farewell

by Anna Vasilchenko '07, Journalism



Anna Vasilchenko '07, Journalism,  
receives her diploma from President Hurwitz

With my tassels pulled from left to right, the brass band sitting silently, the balloons flying high up into the sky, countless memories of my four years at this University flooded my mind. There was so much I lived through and so many emotions I felt here!

Standing in front of the main entrance to AUCA I remembered how four years ago I approached the same doors for the first time to find out about the entrance requirements. Then a month later at the same doors I saw my name on the enrollment list confirming my spot at AUCA. Oh, how I was elated when I received a scholarship and finally realized that I would study at this University!

I was truly happy despite my nervousness about my TOEFL score and the need to learn a term's worth of biology in two weeks to pass the entrance exam for the Psychology Program. Now I realize it was for best that my entrance exam scores for Psychology were not as strong as I expected. My first choice was Journalism anyway and I enrolled in this program with all "A" marks. I understood then that this would be my path.

When leaving the University each graduate remembers their favorite professors and friends, the sleepless nights before exams, the late night parties with classmates, the relief after final exams, and the feeling of anticipation before starting each new academic year after summer vacation. Of course, I too will remember all of this. However, the University for me was not only about academic education, but also about gaining my first professional experience. Within these four walls I got my first job as the public relations assistant. Here I learned about my profession in practice, which is impossible to learn only through books and theories. AUCA and the Communications Office prepared me for my adult life and served as an important stage of my self-development. It is possible to say that here I formed my individuality.

During all four years of study at AUCA in Bishkek I lived alone. My mother lived in our village 100 kilometers away. That's why I spent the majority of my time at AUCA. When I say AUCA is my home I mean that in many ways, not so much in a metaphoric or high-flown sense, but as a home where I literally spent all of my time: studying, working, socializing, eating, and resting. Though frankly speaking I can say I sometimes got tired of constantly being in the same place and wanted a change of scenery. Nevertheless, I love our University and I will miss each and everyone.

AUCA gave me a lot: an education, practical professional skills, a home for four years, good friends, and so many other things. However, it took a lot of sacrifice as well, both on the part of my mother and myself. My mom was my only supporter through all these years, and the diploma I received belongs to her as much as it does to me. I would like to thank everyone who played a part in my life, everyone who stayed close to me throughout these four years, everyone who helped me to grow and develop, and especially my mom. Thank you AUCA!

*Anna is leaving her job in the AUCA Communications Office to work and pursue graduate studies in public relations in St. Petersburg, Russia. Good luck Anya!*



## AUCA Graduates Largest Class Ever

American University of Central Asia hosted nearly 1000 students, alumni, faculty, parents and guests at its Eleventh Annual Commencement Ceremony on June 9 in the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet Theater in Bishkek. AUCA conferred degrees to 224 students, its largest graduating class since its establishment in 1993. The ceremony featured the pageantry common in graduation ceremonies throughout America and the world, but with one key distinction: graduates received both Kyrgyz state diplomas and American bachelor's and master's degrees.

Following University tradition, the commencement ceremony started with the parade of flags of the countries represented by AUCA's diverse student body. The procession of faculty and graduates and the performance of the national anthems of the Kyrgyz Republic and the United States of America helped to start the event on a solemn note. Proud families and guests, who came to the theater to celebrate this long-awaited moment with their kids, listened carefully to AUCA President Ellen S. Hurwitz as

she praised the achievements of the students.

"Today you join more than one thousand alumni of our great University. Thanks to our faculty and staff you have gained the knowledge, the critical thinking skills, the self-esteem and the values to pursue an exciting future. You begin now an unpredictable and wonderful journey in pursuit of your professional and personal dreams. You are buttressed by your education in the great liberal arts tradition that most assuredly will enable you to choose wisely and creatively as you carve out brilliant futures," remarked President Hurwitz in her welcoming address to the Class of 2007.

Special greetings were also offered by Chair of the Board of Trustees Marat Tazabekov and State Secretary of the Kyrgyz Republic Adakhan Madumarov, who complimented the AUCA graduates on the first major accomplishment of their lives – earning a higher education degree. "The modern world is constantly challenging us with numerous social, economical and political issues. And I am sure that you, as highly

qualified specialists, will find solutions to all those challenges," remarked Adakhan Madumarov.

This year, AUCA's commencement ceremony was marked by a very special event as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters. In his address, Mr. Boucher took the opportunity to tell AUCA students that they should ask themselves what they could do for their countries.

"The education you received here makes you unique among Central Asian students. You've been given a broad exposure to a variety of disciplines, learned to emphasize critical thinking, and have had to exercise individual responsibility. Your education not only opens up huge, exciting opportunities for you, but also for your country, for your region, and for the world as well," remarked Boucher.

At the ceremony, AUCA conferred 12 honorary awards to the best graduates of each department and named the valedictorian of the Class of 2007, Begayim Esenkulova. Happy and proud, Esenkulova, a double-major who completed her

bachelor's degree in American Studies and will complete another bachelor's degree in Law next year, stepped up to the stage to represent the Class of 2007 and give her farewell speech.

"Four years ago we came to this University with various goals and dreams, but with one unifying ambition: to receive an education and to get to this point -- graduation. Today we celebrate the culmination of four years of hard work, growth, and learning. I wish all of you to be successful, achieve your goals, and meet each challenge with courage!" remarked Esenkulova.

When all the speeches and presentations were over, AUCA students conducted a special ritual, which symbolizes the end of their university studies. By turning the tassels from left to the right, 224 AUCA graduates marked a new stage in their adult life. After the performance of the international student hymn *Gaudeamus*, the new graduates, faculty and guests paraded back to the University for the inauguration of the University bell, the reception, and a photography session in front of the parliament building to document the traditional tossing of the caps.

*by Elizabeth Zalkind*



# Gallery: Commencement 2007



*Students in national dress carry 22 flags representing the countries of AUCA students*



*Procession of graduates back to their alma mater following commencement*



*Commencement: a time for graduates to say farewell to their favorite teachers*



*New alumni memorialize their graduation on the Alumni Stone.*

*President Hurwitz inaugurates the new tradition of ringing the bell. The inscription reads: "If you have grown in any way since yesterday, ring this bell."*



## INTERVIEW WITH AUCA TRUSTEE DEDE BARTLETT:

Like all AUCA trustees, Dede Bartlett can boast of a laundry list of impressive accomplishments, including working as an executive at major multinational corporations like ExxonMobil Corporation and Altria Group, Inc. (formerly Philip Morris), starting one of the largest domestic violence prevention programs in the world, earning recognition from the International Women's Forum for her lifetime of work helping victims of domestic violence, and sharing her tremendous experiences and valuable insight with young leaders as a lecturer on college campuses across the United States. In February of this year while visiting AUCA for the first time, Mrs. Bartlett graciously agreed to sit down with Copy Editor Beau Gordinier and share her impressions of AUCA and Kyrgyzstan, her vision for AUCA, and her guiding philosophies that have helped her achieve so much.

**Beau Gordinier: This is your first time to Kyrgyzstan. What are your general impressions of Kyrgyzstan?**

**Dede Bartlett:** I have always been passionately interested in the Silk Road and I have been fortunate to visit a number of the surrounding countries. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to come here; in fact I sought it out. Having said that, I was not prepared for how amazingly warm, hospitable and friendly the people are. I have been here a little over a week now and there have been so many acts of kindness on the part of total strangers, on the part of people who knew me only slightly, I have been simply amazed. I don't think I've ever experienced this in other countries to such a degree.

**BG: Are there any specific incidents you can recall?**

**DB:** I went with fellow Trustee Emita Hill to Karakol last weekend and we had a marvelous time. We visited the livestock market on Sunday morning and the splendid wooden Orthodox Church. Then we traveled back to Bishkek and stopped for a cup of tea between near Cholpon Ata. I left the tearoom to wash my hands and walked out to the car leaving my camera behind. I hadn't realized my camera was missing until suddenly, the owner ran out with my camera and gave it to me with all smiles. I was astonished, because in countless other countries that

camera would have been gone forever. And here were kind people who were helping a stranger out of the goodness of their hearts. I wished this happened more often in my country!

**BG: Please share your thoughts about stepping into AUCA for the first time.**

**DB:** I'm amazed at the diversity of the students. Although I am from New York City, which is a very diverse city, I was surprised at what a cosmopolitan gathering of eager people you have here. I had the opportunity to meet with some students and recent graduates, and I was very impressed at how bright and motivated they are! I lecture on a lot of college campuses around the United States, and you can really tell who is



motivated and who is just warming the seat. Students here are definitely not warming the seat, and I am very impressed with that.

**BG: What do you like to do in your downtime? What are your hobbies and interests?**

**DB:** Well, I do adore traveling, and I particularly enjoy archaeology, so being able to travel to AUCA is such a natural fit for me. I get a chance to combine my interests in higher education with a passion for seeing what I think are some of the last "special" places in the world, and I think this a special place. It's also a culture in transition, and that excites me. The region has an exceptionally rich archeological past. I spent two hours in the State Historical Museum in Almaty looking at marvelous Scythian artifacts, and I spent several hours at the National History Museum here in

Bishkek looking at similar artifacts. The ancient and modern cultures of Kyrgyzstan deserve to be better known to a wider audience. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of ignorance and misunderstanding in the United States about Central Asia. My countrymen are generally unaware of the long and rich history of the region, and we need to educate thought leaders about AUCA's roles in educating the next generation of economic, political and social leaders of the region.

I also love cooking. I just spent 3 hours in 5 different markets here in Bishkek looking for different spices. There are so many different spices that exist here that I cannot find in New York, including 5 or 6 varieties of peppers, several different types of cumin and a granulated lemon that is quite rare! You have two types of fabulous rice from Osh and Uzgen that I'm hoping to bring back because I'd love to make *plov*. I also bought spices for *lagman*. As you can see, the amazing food of this region adds to my enjoyment of the entire experience.

**BG: What other parts of the world do you like to travel to?**

**DB:** Well, I've been fortunate to have worked for two multinational companies, so when I was with the Mobil Corporation, I worked in the Middle East, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Western Europe. When I was with Altria, the former Philip Morris, I worked in Australia, Central America and Eastern Europe. I was very fortunate to be able to indulge so many of my outside interests and to work with a variety of different people and find ways of achieving common objectives across cultural barriers. That's extremely rewarding.

**BG: You've had a remarkable career, climbing up to the highest positions in some of the largest corporations in the United States. What have been your guiding philosophies that have helped you achieve such success?**

**DB:** Well, first of all, I don't think there's any way that anybody gets to the top of any organization without acknowledging a little bit of good fortune. I worked hard, but so did a lot of other people. Being at the right place at the right time is an act of God. However, at some point in everyone's career, bad things happen, and bad things happened to me as well. Your mentor may get fired or go to another company. I am convinced that as a result of globalization, every person working today will be a victim of downsizing, mergers, outsourcing or some unpleasant change. When I lecture to college students in the United States, I always tell them that it's how they respond to these setbacks that will spell

the difference between success or failure.

I am a great believer in the need to reinvent oneself. I've probably had seven different careers within those two companies, and a lot of it was due to my reinventing myself. I looked for what needed to be done, found a niche and did my job very well. So what does that take? It takes hard work, it takes organization, it takes good communication skills, but it also takes risk-taking. You've got to be willing to, as a friend of mine writes, jump from one trapeze to the next. And it's scary. But I believe that you don't really have a choice. You have to. And the first time you do it it's really scary, but the second time, you've got more self-confidence.

**BG: You are involved in a number of domestic violence prevention organizations. Please talk about your involvement in this issue.**

**DB:** I'm chair of the National Domestic Hotline Advisory Board, and I'm on the boards of a number of other domestic violence organizations in the United States. I started a domestic violence workplace program at Altria 12 years ago, and I'm very pleased that it has become a \$50 million philanthropic program. I am most proud of this because it gave voice to people who had no voice, and it gives comfort to people who are in desperate need. And it helped shine a light on a horrible part of life for (*continued on page 10*)hundreds of millions of women around the world. Domestic violence is a plague that flourishes in the dark. I have always believed that if we make people aware, action gets taken, laws get written, the needy get help, and we raise the standards of acceptable behavior.

**BG: You won the International Women's Forum "Women Who Make a Difference" Award in 2005. Was that in recognition of your work in the social service sector?**

**DB:** It was in recognition of the work I've done to help victims of domestic violence in the United States and overseas. The International Women's Forum is an international organization of women leaders in business, philanthropy, the arts, non-profit, and government around the world. The award was enormously gratifying because my peers are superb women of achievement. It's extraordinary to be recognized by people whom you hold in great esteem.

**BG: Why did you decide to become an AUCA trustee?**

**DB:** I am passionate about the region, and I talked to

Trustee Emita Hill, a fellow member of the Women's Forum about AUCA. I also met with Trustee Scott Horton. After doing further research, I met with Ellen Hurwitz, and I asked all three if they thought I could help. They said I could and that's why I am here.

**BG: What is your role on the Board of Trustees?**

**DB:** My role is development, which is another way of saying fund-raising. Because my background has been in marketing, I hope to provide some insights and some strategies that will enable AUCA to become better known among thought leaders around the United States. We already have some programs and initiatives going forward that will start to bear fruit fairly soon. I intend to utilize Ellen's three visits to the U.S. each year to extend AUCA's support network. I will also help Ellen speak with important groups and members of the press. AUCA has a terrific story to tell.

**BG: What kind of role do you envision for AUCA in Central Asia?**

**DB:** It seems to me that AUCA fills an absolutely critical niche in Central Asia. AUCA is a prestigious university that is educating the future social, economic and government leaders of the region. I can't think of anything more important for the countries in the area and for the larger countries of the world. As such, the University deserves widespread recognition and support.

**BG: In your opinions how do you empower women to start taking more leadership roles in government**

**here in Central Asia when there are so few women in such positions today? Can you change the individual, or is it up to the broader society?**

**DB:** That's an excellent question. As you imply, there will always be these tensions in society. My father once told me that nobody gives up power willingly. But one of the most exciting developments around the world that may change this power dynamic is the growth of women-owned businesses. It has been shown time and again that when women own their businesses and control their money, they are able to educate their children and take care of their families and be independent. Often leadership flows from that. Of course, women's empowerment is translated in different ways in different societies. However, something that seems to be universal is that when young children see their mothers as strong and independent, it has an amazing effect on the attitudes of young boys and girls growing up. The roots of change are always with that next generation.

**BG: What would you say to women here at AUCA, who may be unsure about what their role will be in the competitive marketplace?**

I would say several things: First of all, education is a lifelong experience, and it is vital to keep learning new skills and be on the look out for new opportunities. Secondly, women must be especially prepared to manage their own lives and have their own money. Marriages falter, careers change and unforeseen difficulties occur. But keeping skills current and evolving and reinventing yourself as new opportunities arise is vital to survival and the well-being of the family.



## AUCA Ultimate Frisbee Team Faces Tough Competition in Almaty



The FrisBEAST team from AUCA and UFD (Unidentified Flying Disk) from Almaty met again in early May in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to fight for the regional ultimate frisbee championship. Two exciting days of ultimate frisbee games were held on the well-maintained grass pitch at the Miras International School in Almaty. After visiting Bishkek this past February, the UFD team of Almaty invited AUCA's team to join last weekend's tournament. Though shorthanded due to visa problems, AUCA fought valiantly, but eventually fell to the more experienced Kazakh squad 13-15.

The first day was dedicated to team practice, which was attended by both teams and a group of Miras students. After the first few scrimmage plays it became clear that the following day's game would be very dynamic and competitive.

UFD is a very experienced team with skillful players, many of whom are European and American expats living in Almaty. They employ quick pass tactics, and the AUCA team had to maintain a tight defense to prevent their deep tosses to the end zone. In the five-per-side game, implementing this defensive strategy required constant movement, which resulted in frequent substitution of players on the field.

Shortly after warming up on Sunday morning, the teams lined up in their end zones for the kick-off. Within the first five minutes, FrisBEAST executed a series of aggressive plays and soon found themselves up 3-0. The fluid game featured a number of marvelous layouts (when players dive on the grass to catch the disk) and beautiful deep bombs to the end zone. Soon, UFD took the initiative and after successful defense and well-organized attacks they lead at halftime by a score of 6-4.

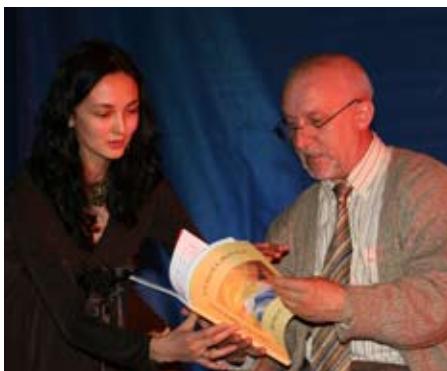
In the second half of the game, fatigue set in for the understaffed FrisBEAST team and they often committed inaccurate plays. There were seven players on the FrisBEAST roster, with four male and three female players. The original roster had eleven players, but four students could not get visas for Kazakhstan in time. So without substitutes in this fast-paced game, FrisBEAST wore down quickly. After a knockout combination of stifling defense and counterattacks, UFD won the game 15-13.

"I think we lost primarily because our team did not have enough players. We were faster and ran more than the fellows from UFD," said Todd Evans from FrisBEAST.

Playing in Almaty was a very valuable experience for AUCA's young frisbee team, which will certainly participate in future tournaments and help build the popularity of the sport throughout the region. Support from AUCA and Mario Rabello, president of USAvtos Trade Company, helped make the AUCA frisbee team's participation in the Almaty tournament possible.

*by Pavel Konovalov '10, Journalism*

## AUCA Literature Competition Attracts Writers from Across Region



On May 22 in the Main Conference Hall (CH-1), thoughtfully redecorated like a writer's salon with cozy armchairs and a steaming samovar, AUCA's Golden Stool Literary Club honored the winners of its prose and poetry competition, which began accepting entries last fall. The selection committee, consisting of AUCA literature professors and prominent Kyrgyz writers, examined more than 60 poems and short stories submitted by authors from places as far away as Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia.

The title of the competition, "We Be of One Blood, Ye and I," a quote from Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, speaks to the themes of the contest: tolerance and human values. Nikolay Shulgin, AUCA dean of students and initiator of the competition, said the purpose was to eventually publish a collection of literature by regional writers that focuses on the ideas of tolerance and human values. The collection, which will include the best poems and short stories submitted by contest participants, will be published as gift book and distributed throughout Central Asia.

Most of these promising young talents were on hand to step up to the stage to collect their certificate and prize money. Bekbolot Asrankulov, a young writer from Kyrgyzstan, was awarded the first prize for his short story entitled *Playfellow*. Daria Djumageldinova, Kazakhstan, and Adel Omuralieva, an AUCA alumna from Kyrgyzstan, shared the second prize for the touching novel *Zhenka: The Sea Captain* and a series of poems, respectively. The third prize went to AUCA student Ghulamreza Fazlinaiem '08, ICP, from Afghanistan for his poem "Adventurous Eyes" and Aisuluu Djekshelaeva from Kyrgyzstan for her poem "Walk."

In addition, the selection committee granted a number of encouragement prizes for writers who deserved appreciation for their original ideas and creativity. Chingiz Bekkoenov from Kyrgyzstan was recognized for his original depiction of complex interpersonal relationships in his short story "Expedition to Lake Issyk-Kul." Zamira Razzakova, a young writer from Uzbekistan, received a special prize for her creative depiction of ethnic culture in her novella *Home Sickness*. Bakyt Koichelov was honored for his original poetic vision while AUCA student Lazarina Kuchmenova '09, Psychology, received a special award for following the traditions of modern Russian poetry.

The awards ceremony focused less on formal speeches and rituals and offered more pure entertainment for the enjoyment of writers and the guests of the event. AUCA organized a truly literary reception where all the guests enjoyed their tea and reflected upon the turns of their lives, which shaped their own poetry and short stories.

*by Elizabeth Zalkind*

### Two AUCA Students Win Prestigious AUB Scholarship, Bank Listens to their Ideas



Adel Sultanova '08, and Aleschenko Anatoliy '07, both from the AUCA Business Administration Program, along with eight other students from other local universities, were selected for the 14th Scholarship Program of AsiaUniversalBank (AUB), one of the largest commercial banks in Kyrgyzstan. The AUB Scholarship, one of the largest and most sought-after educational grants available in the country, provides awardees with monthly stipends of 3,000 soms for five months.

"Supporting such talented, motivated and active youth, AUB stimulates the interest of students in pursuing vital professions,

conducting scientific research and building a better future for their country," remarked Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Chynara Ryskulova at the AUB scholarship award ceremony.

The selection process for the scholarship program requires applicants, well over 120 students this year, to conduct research and write an analytical paper on a pertinent issue in the national banking sector. This year's theme was "Mortgage loans in Kyrgyzstan."

"Every time we select an essay theme we worry about the students' capacity to cope with it. This time we received a record number of applications from Bishkek, Naryn, Issyk-Kul, and Osh. It seems we raised a very crucial issue for the country as we have never received so many great ideas and proposals," remarked Sergey Zanin, head of business development at AUB.

During the award ceremony, which took place in late March, AUB held a workshop on the contemporary problems of mortgage loans in Kyrgyzstan in response to the student demands to discuss their ideas with banking professionals. In particular, the participants analyzed issues such as:

German and English models of mortgage lending; problems of loan security in rural areas; mortgage models developed by the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic; and the issue of attracting long-term capital to Kyrgyz banks in an effort to increase loan amounts and decrease interest rates.

AUB representatives explained to the students that interest rates and loan terms depend not only on the preferences of the banks, but are affected by a wide range of economic factors. AUB professionals also spoke about key trends in the sphere of mortgage lending. In particular they focused on the cooperation between banks, insurance and real estate firms.

AUB instituted its prominent scholarship program in 1999 to provide grants to university students who are concentrating their studies in the fields of finance, accounting or banking. Over the past few years, twelve AUCA students have won the coveted scholarship award. The awardees of the AUB scholarships are also invited to work as an intern at the bank, and some eventually decided to pursue careers with AUB.

### AUCA Students Make Up Largest Delegation at UAE Education Conference



In March, 18 AUCA students representing all University departments participated in the fourth biennial Education Without Borders (EWB) conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where they joined 1000 other students from more than 100 countries. This year the EWB, which started in Abu Dhabi in 2001, was titled "Innovative Solutions to Global Challenges" and focused on issues related to education, technology and the media.

"We believe Education Without Borders 2007 will inspire the hearts and minds of leaders worldwide as we move forward with a focus on solving some of the world's most pressing challenges. We will

continue to imbue participants with new ideas, new friendships, and the sense that each of us has the power to affect positive social change," remarked conference organizers.

AUCA students beat out hundreds of other applicants from all over the world to participate in the world's largest student forum. AUCA students' application essays on issues related to the global challenges were outstanding enough to earn them full scholarships to the event. In addition, the AUCA delegation was the largest at the conference.

Within the framework of the 3-day conference, the student delegations participated in numerous debates, presentations and sessions related globalization, education development, cutting edge technologies, and media relations. In addition, students were offered unique opportunities to listen to the lectures and speeches delivered by such prominent world leaders as Placido Domingo, world renowned award winning opera singer, Professor Muhammad Yunus, the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Johannes Georg Bednorz, the 1987 Nobel Prize Winner for Physics, Chris Cramer, managing director of CNN International, and many others.

"From the very beginning I was amazed

by the scale of the conference, which gathered hundreds of students from all over the world, Nobel Prize winners, and heads of the world's leading companies. After meeting all these people, I realized how important the development of education and technologies is for finding solutions to many global challenges. Moreover, I felt confidence in my own strengths to change the world for the better," remarked Azat Kupsuldaev '09, Business Administration.

Students also participated in cultural and social events, including country and university presentations, laser shows, fireworks, an Arabian Desert excursion, a Placido Domingo concert, and more.

"The students put together a rich and varied program, which celebrates international dialogue and global understanding. The world in the 21st century is a much smaller place. Education, technology and global perspective are key components of success in the future. It is events like this allow us to move forward as one global community for a better world," commented Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan, minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and chancellor of the Higher Colleges of Technology.

## AUCA Students Represent Kyrgyzstan at International Student Festival in Norway



Four AUCA students represented Kyrgyzstan at the International Student Festival in Trondheim, Norway, which gathered more than 400 students from all over the world. This year the International Student Festival, which began in Trondheim back in 1990, was titled "Global Boundaries" and focused on issues related to globalization. AUCA students outshined hundreds of other applicants from nearly 100 countries in a competition for 400 open spaces in one of the largest and most prestigious student forums.

"To apply to the conference we had to write an essay on a theme related to the globalization processes. I used all my creative thinking and knowledge to complete this assignment and I succeeded," remarked Pavel Konovalov '00, Journalism. "The festival fully funded each student's expenses at the event, so I was motivated to do my best in writing the application essay," continued Konovalov.

Students participated in 16 different thematic workshops related to globalization. AUCA students participated in the World Parliament experiment aimed at answering the question of the possibility to govern a world consisting of hundreds of different nations and groups of people in a way that everyone's voice is heard. The World Parliamentarians debated the Darfur conflict and discussed the ethics of international intervention in national conflicts.

"One of the most fascinating activities of the festival was the experiment of establishing a World Parliament, which was organized this year for the first time," remarked Konovalov. "This experiment is aimed at establishing a structure that could help the world's citizens solve various

challenging situations despite all cultural, ethnic and religious differences."

This year also featured the awarding of the Student Peace Prize (approximately \$8,000), which is awarded every second year to a student actively engaged in promoting peace, justice and human rights. This year the Student Peace Prize went to Charm Tong, a female student from Burma, for her efforts in protecting the rights of Burma's ethnic minorities.

Important world leaders often speak at the International Student Festival, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Dr. José Ramos-Horta and Professor Wangari Maathai, and former Soviet President Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev.

## AUCA Students Represent Kyrgyzstan at Prestigious International Law Contest in Washington



In April, two AUCA law students, Begaiym Esenkulova '08 and Albina Rahmidinova '08, represented the University and Kyrgyzstan at the world's largest and most prestigious Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, in Washington, D.C. This year more than 2000 law students from 600 universities worldwide gathered at the Shearman & Sterling International Rounds, the culminating event of the 2007 Jessup Competition, in an effort to select the best students of international law. To earn their right for the pass to the final round of this intellectual tournament,

AUCA students beat 13 law school teams from all over Kyrgyzstan and faced some of the world's most promising future lawyers in Washington. It is the second time in the AUCA's 14-year history when its students participate in the Jessup Competition and the forth time for Kyrgyzstan.

Widely recognized as the most prestigious international moot competition in the world, the Jessup Competition gives competitors the opportunity to argue a case before the International Court of Justice. Working as a team, they represent fictional states in a hypothetical but topical case of international law. On the jury bench sat His Excellency Hisashi Owada of the International Court of Justice and other distinguished international law experts.

"In the final round competition we faced very serious competitors – Ph.D. students from the U.S. and French universities. It was so obvious that they are very strong, excellently prepared and mature law professionals," remarked Esenkulova.

"We mobilized all our strength and energy to present our views and arguments for a moot case, which did not have a correct decision. Those who presented the best evidence and proofs actually won the tournament," added Rahmidinova.

Although AUCA students did not win the Jessup Competition, which was won this year by a team from the University of Sydney, they brilliantly represented the University and received much praise from competing peers and their mentors.

Moreover, both ladies left Washington with impressive job offers. Esenkulova, in collaboration with a law professor from Australia, will conduct research on the practices of international public law in Central Asia and publish the findings in the Harvard Law Review. Rahmidinova received an offer from a large company to undertake an internship in its legal affairs department.

The C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, instituted in 1959 by a joint initiative of Harvard, Columbia, and the University Virginia, is an annual weeklong tournament in which student teams from all over the world compete in various simulations and role-plays to enhance understanding of the international law among future generations of legal professionals and promote its further development.

*by Elizabeth Zalkind*

### AUCA Professor Publishes Science Fiction Compilation Honoring Late Author



Alan Kubatiev, assistant professor of American Studies, prominent science fiction writer, and laureate of prestigious international literature contests, compiled and published a collection of short stories entitled *Sheckley's Academy*, dedicated to

the world-renowned science fiction writer Robert Sheckley, who passed away in 2005. The collection was recently published in Moscow.

According to Professor Kubatiev, Sheckley's novels served as a true literary academy for many Russian science fiction writers, which inspired them with his subtle irony, limitless imagination and original perspectives on modern life.

"When Robert Sheckley passed away, I felt that a part of him remained with us. I asked myself whether his novels affected modern literature. All those writers whom I invited to participate in this collection gladly agreed," mentioned Kubatiev.

Kubatiev invited all the major Russian science fiction writers who, in his opinion, understood Sheckley's philosophy. The author believes that all short stories included in the collection are not simple imitations of the master's works, but instead represent "diploma papers" by those writers who graduated from "Sheckley's Academy."

Readers of the compilation will not find classic science fiction – space ships, explosions and ruthless conquerors from

neighboring galaxies. Instead, as Kubatiev remarked, the readers will get acquainted with the bright and graceful irony, amusing chaos and black humor, which made Sheckley so popular worldwide.

The collection, which gathered short stories from such prominent Russian, Kyrgyz, Italian, and British science fiction writers as Igor Alimov, Alexander Bachilo, Leonid Kaganov, Aron Brudnyi, Roberto Quaglia, Ian Watson and others, highlights Sheckley's legacy and global influence on modern fiction literature.

Soon after publication, Sheckley's Academy became tremendously popular among readers and critics alike, and has even spurred significant literary debates. Several critics reproached Kubatiev and other authors for being too impudent to consider themselves as the master's apprentices. According to Kubatiev, this little "scandal" helped to sell two thirds of the first edition.

Readers in Kyrgyzstan will be able to get acquainted with the prominent graduates of "Sheckley's Academy" by the summer of 2007, when the book is due to hit the shelves here.

### Intimate Glimpse of Native American Culture at AUCA-Sponsored Photo Exhibit



For many Bishkek citizens their only knowledge of Native Americans comes from the legends they heard as children. In April, AUCA offered all citizens of Bishkek the opportunity to take an intimate look at real Native Americans in ceremonial dress celebrating their heritage at the photo exhibition entitled "North America: The Spirit of the Past." AUCA organized the exhibition of John Krob's vivid photographs at the Kyrgyz National Fine Arts Museum.

John Krob, amateur photographer and special advisor to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was

on hand to unveil 50 of his outstanding photographs of Native Americans, and as Krob explained, "to make people of Central Asia aware of the connections between the Old World and the New."

"The history of the migration of the ancestral Indians from Central Asia across the ice bridge into Canada and the Americas were well documented. It is a known fact that the ancestors of the Kyrgyz people settled in the Montana region of the U.S. You can see similarities in facial features as well as traditional dress and design," remarked Krob at the opening of the photo exhibition.

Krob had the unique opportunity to take photographs at the Annual East Coast Indian Pow-Wow, a gathering of different tribes usually off limits to photography to avoid the commercial exploitation of these sacred events.

"When I saw John Krob's photos for the first time, I immediately wanted to buy a few. However, John said they are not for sale! A year later I met John again and asked him to do something with these outstanding photos; this was how the idea of the exhibition began," remarked AUCA President Ellen S. Hurwitz in her welcoming address at the photo exhibition.

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony, Krob advised the guests to "take a moment and study the Indians' eyes and start to understand their struggle to keep their heritage alive." As soon as Krob cut the red ribbon to officially open the gallery, the guests rushed in to see for themselves the differences and similarities of Indian and Kyrgyz cultures. Many tried to compare the traditional dresses and ornaments and, as one guest admitted, "The discoveries gave food for thought."

Another guest admitted that American Indians were a mystery to him, since they were usually depicted as a savage, warrior and a downtrodden minority. Now it is possible to see true Native Americans."

Krob confessed that although he is not a professional photographer, his love for photography goes back 30 years. "Working for the government gave me the opportunity to travel around the world and discover people and nature through the camera lens. There is always a picture out there to be taken; one doesn't have to look very far. The trick is to determine which photograph to snap."

## Law Department Joins International Initiative to Promote Reform of Legal Studies in Higher Education



AUCA became the only university in Central Asia to join the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI), funded by the Higher Education Support Program (HESP), which promotes the sustainable reform of legal studies in higher education. PILI unites six law schools in five countries (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan) in an effort to develop strategies for legal education reforms in their respective countries. PILI

emphasizes a practice-oriented approach to legal studies in support of the larger goal of promoting public interest law, encouraging better democratic practices in the justice sector, and fostering a rights-based culture.

This three-year project will provide significant financial support to the target universities for a number of activities, including curriculum development workshops that offer technical assistance for reforming curriculum and evaluation based on the Bologna academic standards. In addition, all PILI members will participate in international conferences, where they will learn about educational reform best practices and increase their knowledge about the Bologna process. PILI activities will also provide numerous clinical internships and fellowships to transmit best practices for clinical teaching, clinical management and organization.

"AUCA participation in the PILI project is first of all a great opportunity to generate new ideas and share experiences with European universities, which are also going through a challenging reform process," remarked Elida Nogoibaeva, chair of the Law Program at AUCA. "Although many of those European universities have been

reforming their law programs for already some time, AUCA is not yielding its law curriculum to them. Moreover, several of our innovations such as the legal clinic and the legal skills courses place AUCA in a leading position," continued Nogoibaeva.

"In developing this project to support long-term reform of legal education in CIS countries, it was critically important to involve universities that are innovative and can serve as a model for others," said Edwin Rekosh, executive director of the Public Interest Law Institute. "AUCA is clearly such an institution, and we are very pleased to have it as a partner."

According to Nogoibaeva, AUCA participation in PILI might help with reforming the Kyrgyz higher legal education system as a whole, as well as serving as a source of new progressive ideas from Europe and USA. In addition, AUCA participation in PILI and the European Law Faculties Association, a strong PILI supporter, offers the University a unique opportunity to build partnerships with European universities and develop academic exchange programs for students and faculty.

## AUCA Launches Business Clinic to Enhance Students' Business Skills and Facilitate Research



AUCA's Business Administration Program launched a new educational initiative, the AUCA Business Clinic, which is dedicated to developing the research and consulting capacity of the program's faculty and students. In accordance with the Business Clinic mission, AUCA students, directly advised by Business Administration faculty, will provide free marketing and consulting services to Kyrgyz businesses. Clients will pay only filing fees and "out-of-pocket" expenses.

"It's always a great challenge for any

academic institution to balance the theory and practice of any profession taught in the classroom and to equip students with the most demanded skills and knowledge," remarked Azamat Akeleev, director of the AUCA Business Clinic.

"That is why the AUCA's Business Clinic will look for opportunities to bridge theory and practice and provide Business Administration students with real-life business skills. We see it in the continual interaction between the institution and practitioners, whether it's during class, guest lectures or student projects," continued Akeleev.

Student involvement in the implementation of real business projects will help them understand all the stages and challenges of a project, from research to planning to the interpretation of results. In addition, students will employ their skills and acquire considerable business experience during their studies. As a result, AUCA's Business Administration students will graduate from the university with a broad base of solid theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In addition, the business project implementation process will help AUCA students to acquire valuable working contacts with the Kyrgyz businesses.

AUCA's Business Clinic will focus its activities on executive consulting and marketing research. Though it has only recently opened, the Business Clinic has already finalized two projects for Kyrgyz companies. The International Business Council requested surveys to be conducted on the quality of the local educational services market, while Telnet Company requested Business Clinic students to examine the customer profile of their EasyPay payment system. In addition, the Business Clinic organized a series of guest lectures on the issues of establishing business and tax policies.

AUCA's Business Clinic will also serve as a forum to enable Business Administration faculty members to conduct research and develop case studies based on local business situations. Until now, AUCA students have used case studies from Europe and the United States. However, in order to prepare students to effectively function in the multi-faceted business environment of Central Asia, AUCA is striving to become a clearinghouse for local business knowledge.

*by Elizabeth Zalkind*

# AUCA Career Center

*The elevator to success is out of order. You will have to take stairs... one step at a time.*



Executive Director of Leadership Development Natalia Slastnikova

One may think that teaching career planning and development is a waste of time. However, the recently established AUCA Career Center strongly believes that a successful career is the result of thoughtful self-development and constant investment in one's professional qualifications. Paraphrasing Dr. Gary V. Carter, AUCA Career Center staff live by the following statement: "It is students' attitude towards career planning, more than their aptitude, which will determine career altitude."

"Students have to recognize that they are fully accountable for their own careers. We foster students' self-understanding and personal growth by assisting them in career planning and in articulating their goals in a way that is interesting and relevant to employers," said Natalia Slastnikova, executive director of leadership development. "Smart career development requires students and graduates to be self-reflective, resourceful, motivated, flexible, and able to keep their skills and competencies up-to-date. It's an ongoing, life-long process," continued Slastnikova.

The AUCA Career Center is unique in Kyrgyzstan. The Center was established last summer in an effort to help AUCA students and graduates learn successful career planning and development, or as the Career Center staff say, "to struggle for your place under the sun and find the job that's right for you." The Career Center is a place where students get rid of an idea that they will be employed "at one click" as soon as they receive their diplomas with almost no efforts invested.

The Career Center was initiated by the Development Office and the Alumni Association, which guided undergraduates by sharing their knowledge and experience with job searches, resume and cover letter writing, and other skills. In addition, the Alumni Association offered workshops on interviewing and organized several career fairs.

These alumni seminars, master classes and workshops were so successful and highly demanded that the AUCA administration decided to establish a dedicated department responsible for students' career development.

"People often think that career centers shall help students to get jobs," remarked Slastnikova. "We chose a different approach. The AUCA Career Center offers students and alumni a number of effective tools for successful employment. Of course, we help our students with employment after we convince them of the necessity of making thoughtful life decisions and self development," continued Slastnikova.

"It is unrealistic to find jobs for all graduates, but we can help them to effectively search for jobs and favorably position themselves," mentioned Lira Djuraeva, career services coordinator. "We are not hunting down employers to convince them that they must employ our graduates – this is like tribalism."

The Career Center helps students and graduates to understand the employers' requirements for potential recruits. The Center teaches students how to present themselves when trying to attract the interest of companies they wish to work for. In addition, the Center teaches students how to utilize the respect and recommendations of their employers when looking to move on to a new job – one of the most effective strategies for a successful career.

In addition to offering career planning consultation, the Career Center give students the chance to take several psychological tests to identify their strengths and weaknesses. These tests help students to better understand whether they are a good match for the profession of their choice.

"What is most important in our job is that we break the myth that one will have only one employer for life," remarks Slastnikova. "Our Center teaches students to be socially and professionally mobile and ready to review their life and career plans. Previously one could count on having one career within one organization in their lifetime. The situation of course has changed dramatically. Students have to be prepared for this," concluded Slastnikova.

The U.S. Department of Labor says that the average person will have 3.5 different careers in his lifetime and work for ten employers, keeping each job for 3.5 years. A similar situation is developing in Kyrgyzstan, according to Djuraeva and Slastnikova. Moreover, sometimes students become disillusioned with their selected profession during their undergraduate studies. "If they manage to redirect themselves to another sphere of professional activities, they almost always benefit," said Slastnikova.

"I'll think of my career later on during my senior year," is a common refrain of students according to Djuraeva. "This is a very amateurish point of view. The earlier students understand what they want to do with their life, the better off they will be. We begin all of our consultations by explaining this very simple truth. Although I believe

that students should start thinking about their future profession even before entering the University. Why do you need to plan your career? It will prepare you to land on your feet after unexpected misfortune. Today you may work for a very prosperous company, but tomorrow it may go bankrupt. It is very important to make yourself marketable and make a smooth transition to a new job when necessary," remarked Djuraeva.

The greatest advice offered to students, according to Djuraeva, is to consider themselves as a small business, with their own mission statement, strategic plans, resources and other business components. And like a business, students must market themselves and answer the following questions: What do I want? How do I achieve my goals? And what skills do I need to develop to achieve these goals? A student's "marketing plans" will be especially effective if they maintain a sense of creativity and perseverance.

"We tell our students not to stop at the stage of finding a vacancy announcement and applying for the job," stated Djuraeva. This announcement may not provide you with the all the required information needed to successfully pass the interview. So we recommend our students to be proactive and search the Internet for as much information about the company as possible. Find out about the company and its major activities, what it's known for, what does it need, etc. It all will help you to sell yourself profitably."

To help students understand how they can best employ their knowledge and skills in their future professions, the Career Center organizes numerous career development events from career exploration days to on-campus presentations to company tours. Students use all these opportunities to get a glimpse of organizations on the inside.

"Our students are very ambitious. And we often have to tell them that the fact you graduated from one of the most prestigious universities in Central Asia is not the end of the story. Your academic knowledge is good, but you also need to have practical skills and experience, so do not expect to grab a top management position at the very beginning of your career," remarked Slastnikova.

The Career Center is often called an intermediary between the students and business, government, international organizations, and NGOs. Major organizations including Shoro (traditional beverages), Sky Mobile, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Non-State Pension Fund, U.S. Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic, Ministry of Economics, and several consulting and law firms are all eager to share the insights of their professions with AUCA students. Students from other universities often request AUCA to include them in the career events and share their experiences and "know how" with their universities. Recently a few Kyrgyz universities decided to follow the AUCA example and establish their own career centers.

Baurzhan Berdibekov '09, Economics, a Career Center volunteer, summed up the Center activities: "This is

where I realize my potential and find a good employer. I participate in all career events and analyze the employer requirements."



The AUCA Career Center offers a variety of services for students and alumni, including career development workshops, job fairs, as well as assistance in finding local and international internships and employment opportunities on and off-campus.

Since its inception nearly one year ago, the AUCA Career Center organized career exploration days for students in the following AUCA programs: Psychology, Sociology, Economics and Business Administration, Journalism, Software Engineering, Law, Cultural Anthropology and Archaeology, International and Comparative Politics. In addition, the Center held a number of workshops on career planning, graduate school, resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation and career fair strategies. Moreover, the AUCA Career Center offered students a unique opportunity to learn the insights of their future professions through company visits and on-campus presentations by companies such as GMS Translation Services, IREX, KIMEP, AIESEC, and the Hyatt Regency Hotel. AUCA students also gained career planning insight at guest speaker lectures such as Professor Martin Ossewaarde's lecture on creating an environmentally friendly career path. World Bank Country Manager Mr. Roger Robinson also spoke with students about perspectives on economic development in Kyrgyzstan.

# Alumni Reunion



"Oh my God! I haven't seen you for ages!" was a common refrain heard amid a festival of hugs, kisses, happy tears, and emotional greetings at the 5th Annual AUCA Alumni Reunion. For the past five years the AUCA Alumni Association has held the reunions not only to renew old friendships, but also to strengthen the enthusiasm and commitment to our alma mater. Looking sharp in their cocktail gowns and suits, AUCA alumni, including 30 who traveled from Kazakhstan, once again demonstrated that their AUCA life does not end after graduation.

On April 28th, 2007, more than 200 AUCA alumni (about 20% of all alumni), from the first graduating class of 1997 to the most recent graduating class of 2006, gathered at the new Vefa Center in Bishkek. After entering the banquet room and greeting old friends, attendees walked past an exhibition featuring caricatures of ten prominent AUCA alumni. Guessing their identities helped people to relax and get the evening started on a light-hearted note.

John Clark, AUCA's first president, was the first honored guest to address the alumni. "My four years working at AUCA were the best years of my life. We taught you to be leaders and I hope you'll be committed to your ethical obligation to

develop your region. When you graduate it does not mean it relieves you from the responsibility to uphold the values of AUCA. You still continue to be an important part of AUCA," exhorted Clark.

Current AUCA President Ellen S. Hurwitz addressed alumni and expressed enthusiasm about the future of AUCA. In particular, President Hurwitz stressed the importance and value of an active, successful alumni body in the development of the University.

Following President Hurwitz's address, alumni were treated to a well-rehearsed, two-hour song, dance and humor-filled cabaret that showcased the tremendous talents of dozens of AUCA students and a few Kyrgyz pop stars.

Later on, reunion organizers presented two more surprises for the alumni: a sentimental documentary tracing the history of AUCA, and the awarding of a special Alumni Association prize to the most generous alumni. The prize went to Ulugbek Salymbekov '98, Business Administration, for his outstanding support and contributions to the University. The award was created to help to motivate AUCA graduates to donate to the University and support new

generations of students. In his acceptance speech Salymbekov joked, "Just 300 or 400 dollars and you're on the stage collecting glory!" More than \$650 was collected at the reunion, in addition to much more in pledged donations.

Even after the reunion program was over, alumni did not rush out the exits. Most didn't want the evening to end and couldn't stop sharing stories from their university days.

"It was a great opportunity to meet old friends I used to stand in line with at the kitchennette, sit next to in classes and joke around with in the hallways," said Ulan Tilenbaev '03, Law, an attorney at Kalikova & Associates in Bishkek.

"Overall the reunion was great. The concert was especially well organized and very interesting. However, I really wish we had more time for interaction after the concert. I wanted it to go on all night," remarked Aselya Djailoева '04, Sociology, who currently works on a community-based childhood development project for the Asian Development Bank.

For many it was a chance as well as to catch up with classmates and relate exciting news about their family lives and careers and share the pride of each other's successes. "I am very proud of Almaz Bazarbaev '00 (valedictorian, swiftly rose to general manager position at the Kyrgyz wireless phone company BiTel) and Cholponbek Jumashukurov '02 (valedictorian,

now studying at Harvard Business School on a McKinsey & Co, Inc. scholarship.) They both achieved great success at such a young age. We should all follow their example," praised Stepan Filshin '06, Business Administration, currently a marketing officer at Kyrgyz Investment and Credit Bank (KICB).

"It was so inspiring to see that AUCA keeps growing. I was pleased to learn that many of my classmates achieved such great success in their lives and careers," remarked Katerina Tsui '01, Business Administration, currently working as the vice president of Sibu Holdings, a mining company based in Kyrgyzstan.

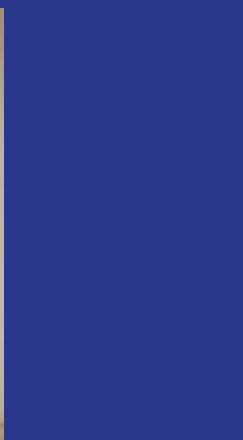
At present there are over 1000 Alumni all over the world. AUCA Alumni represent the University in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and even Africa. More than 60% keep in touch with AUCA. The Alumni Association makes every effort to increase the number of active graduates and encourage them to support the University for the sake of the students and future prosperity of AUCA.

The purpose of the reunions is not just to reunite old friends, but also to reaffirm the role of alumni in life of the University to support the current students and keep alive the spirit of AUCA. Each year the number of grads is increasing, and we hope this will continue as the AUCA community spreads around the world.

*by Marat Yusupov, Beau Gordinier, and Elizabeth Zalkind*



# Gallery: Alumni Ball 2007



New AUCA publications raised great interest among alumni





*The gallery of caricatures of famous alumni prepared by organizers pleasantly surprised the guests*





# Carpe Diem

Yes, we should live to seize the moment and explore thousands of paths in order to find our own way, overcoming barriers and obstacles and following it to the end. This is the philosophy I have adopted since my life changed dramatically one year ago; I became a student at AUCA. Perhaps it happened by accident. Perhaps it was fate.

It is really not difficult to imagine the life of a common schoolboy in a village called Lebedinovka, where I grew up. Everything seems ordinary to the point of being boring and predictable. I seldom had dreams. I felt there was really nothing to dream about. My day began early and ended late. No, I did not spend it working my fingers to the bone. On the contrary, the day dragged on because I was apathetic and had no purpose.

But I managed to find direction in my life. And it was not so difficult as you may think. You need faith in your strength, the support of friends, the advice of mentors, and then you will know where you are going. The most important thing is your choice of friends and mentors, and in this department, I was lucky. On my first day of Orientation Week I met Dean of Students Nikolay Shulgin. I knew immediately I wanted to become friends with him because his demeanor and his words greatly resonated with me. He inspired me to be a positive member of the community: to work hard and honestly, but never forget about having a full social life. Since then he's become not just a mentor for me, but a great friend.

Perhaps my first impressions of AUCA have not yet faded, but I am certainly head over heels in love with the way of life that AUCA has taught me. I was honestly stunned by what I saw and felt on campus in my first few days at AUCA. I was not treated like a lowly first year student without rights, but I was already considered a full-fledged member of the AUCA community. This made me more motivated than I ever imagined. It made me want to study hard and contribute as much as I could to this community that accepted me so quickly.

The learning process seems to go smoothly so far, and this is not surprising since here you can follow your interests and choose the subjects and the teachers you like. Besides, we have continuous access to the library, which has a large collection of books and countless online databases at our fingertips. All this encourages me to even study harder.

I simply cannot imagine my life without the Debut student theatre, Positif student radio, playing accordion and participating in dozens of other performances and events. In short, the social life at AUCA really makes me feel like a complete person. There is a lot of discussion of the existence of an "AUCA spirit." In fact, it is as plain as day. It is in the hearts of the people who make up the backbone of our University: teachers, students, security guards, cleaners, the Bravo Cafe and the kitchenette staff, and many others.

And finally comes the most important thing. What does AUCA give to me? I am overcome with joy when I get up at 6 a.m. and happily hustle, yawning all the way, to campus to catch my critical skills or composition classes, when I buy a pastry at Bravo Café and eat it on the run to the radio office, then afterwards drop off my article at the newspaper or public relations office, and then run again to the main auditorium for rehearsal, and finally, tired but smiling, I find myself in the computer lab where I work until my eyes ache. This is what AUCA gives me: happiness in its purest form, to the point of exhaustion!

*Maxim Poletaev '10, Journalism, who earned a full scholarship to study at AUCA after winning the Brain Ring competition in his senior year in high school, just finished his first year at AUCA with a GPA of 3.67. And he's a darn good bayan (accordion) player.*

**Do you think that one person can change the world?**

# SUPPORT

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR AUCA STUDENTS?



What does it cost to plant the seed of academic discovery? We can't know how far a student's interest will take him or her, so AUCA provides the rigorous liberal arts foundation that enables each student to become lifelong learners, expand the frontiers of knowledge and excel in every aspect of their lives.

Did you know that the cost of educating each student is \$3000 per year, while the average student only pays \$1000? The difference comes from your generous donations to our Annual Giving Fund.

More than ever, contributions from friends, alumni and parents are essential to maintaining the quality of our academic programs, and they ensure that students are afforded the best experience at American University of Central Asia.

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- o Equipment and technology upgrades.

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