
International Center of Worcester



NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2009

Greetings from the Executive Director

Royce Anderson

We started our new ICW fiscal year this June with a sense of optimism and hope. The last couple of years have been good for us. We've had a good flow of international visitor programs, and we have been advancing well as an organization. You may remember a few years ago when programs and funding were down and we had to cut way back on staff. Now it seems that government programs are holding strong, and prospects seem good for the future of citizen diplomacy programs. Plus our relationship with the Astrakhan State University on the Caspian Sea continues strong and active (see below).

In fact, we have had to turn down three large programs that were offered to us. We don't like to do this, but we have our limitations. Our biggest limitation right now is the number of homestay hosts we have. Some of our largest programs, specifically the Community Connections Program and the Open World Leadership Program (see "Recent Programs" below), require that we keep their international visitors in private homes for one to three weeks.

Over the past 10 years we have put together a list of about 50 wonderful and dedicated people who are willing to share their family lifestyle. But most want to host about once a year, and there are always personal schedules and other conflicts to work around. One of our goals for this year is to find new sources of homestay

families.

Please help us with this effort. Help us spread the word about citizen diplomacy. The homestay experience is the most meaningful component of a visitor's time in the U.S. As one visitor said, "I came as a stranger, and left as a friend."

The ICW Board of Directors was active last year and we have a continuity of leadership going into this year. I look forward to working with the newly elected Board and the new members (see Insert) on the goals we have set for the upcoming year:

- reaching out to business to engage them in Citizen Diplomacy through business events.
- recruiting more homestay hosts.
- provide pot luck dinners and other social occasions for our ICW members.

ICW Annual Meeting

The ICW Annual Meeting was held this year on Monday evening, June 22nd at Clark University. The night began with a delicious pot luck dinner followed by the business portion of the evening. The treasurer's report and executive director's report were read and approved and the new board and officers were elected (see insert). The Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Nan Johnson and a Certificate of Appreciation was given to Manny and Charlotte Zax for their longtime commitment to ICW. This portion of the meeting was followed by a presentation by Lisa Weinberg entitled, "Immi-



gration, Human Rights, and the Law.” The presentation discussed legal protections for individuals fleeing global human rights violations, the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the U.S. Immigration Law.

ICW Goes to Washington!

Lynda Young

Now I really understand the term “citizen diplomacy.” That’s what we (ICW) and our members are – citizen diplomats. For four days this February, my husband, Bob Sorrenti, and I joined



Congressman Jim McGovern speaking at the annual NCIV Breakfast on the Hill.

Royce and Sharon at the national meeting of the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV) in Washington, DC. We had the unique opportunity to meet and share our experiences with dedicated people from across the country and the world in those jam-packed days of activities. We began with a lovely reception and a chance to hear Rick Steves of PBS’s “Rick Steves’ Europe” speak about his quest to help Americans better understand our world through travel. The following days were spent in a variety of plenary and breakout sessions on such topics as advocacy, cultural competency, busi-



Board Member Lynda Young enjoying a U.S. Department of State Reception in the historic Benjamin Franklin Room during the NCIV National Meeting.

ness relationships and homestays There were many highlights: the luncheon with ambassadors – over 60 ambassadors from all over the world joined us for lunch. We had a chance to speak with the ambassador from Romania and exchange ideas and business cards. The US Department of State reception – a fabulous evening in the diplomatic reception rooms where the Secretary of State, the Vice President and Members of the Cabinet entertain the leaders of the world. That evening, the “leaders of citizen diplomacy” schmoozed (my favorite thing to do!) with people from the State Department and with each other as we wandered around the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room and took in all the beautiful furnishings and paintings. Breakfast on the Hill was a chance to meet with our elected representatives and their aides. Our own congressman, Jim McGovern, was one of the speakers (introduced by Royce). Afterwards, Bob and I visited the offices of Senators Kennedy and Kerry to spread the good word of ICW. The Embassy Receptions were a special occasion, too. We went



to the Indonesian Embassy where we were greeted warmly, sampled many dishes and enjoyed a performance of "The Umbrella Dance". Royce's presentation on partnering with your local businesses was also a highlight! He discussed a survey he did with a number of CIV's (Councils for International Visitors), looking at ways to get local businesses involved and to show the impact on businesses.

These few days were a wonderful opportunity to see our nation's capital in an entirely different light. The meetings emphasized how important we are in the activities we do with ICW, whether opening up our homes, our businesses, and our various cultures to international visitors. As the mission of NCIV states: "In a vibrant democracy, the individual citizen has the right – even the responsibility – to help shape foreign relations 'one handshake at a time'." We hope others will take advantage of this chance to attend the next NCIV conference. It is indeed time well-spent.

ICW Business Roundtable

Royce Anderson and Anna De Mulder

On April 7th, ICW held its first Business Roundtable on Citizen Diplomacy at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to attract local businesses to engage in Citizen Diplomacy. Titled "Engage the World and Improve Your Business," it was an important step in ICW's initiative to reach out to businesses. The Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Visitor and Convention Bureau of Central Mass., the Mass. Export Center, and the WPI Venture Forum partnered with ICW and promoted the event to their members.

The event consisted of two parts. First, the afternoon session was a focus group discussion of a few invited business leaders already familiar with ICW programs. They explored with members of the ICW Board how ICW might provide services and benefits that would give tangible benefits to businesses. This was only an initial discussion, and more work is needed

to generate concrete strategies. One action item everyone agreed on was the need to update ICW's mission statement to reflect its new strategic directions.

The second part, starting at 5:30pm, was a reception and dinner presentation. The keynote speaker was Cari Guittard, Executive Director of Business for Diplomatic Action – an organization in San Francisco whose mission is to get large national businesses involved in citizen diplomacy. She explained the work done by her organization on the national stage and how ICW could partner with them at the local level. Her presentation focused on how business people can be a positive spokesperson and role model for American interests abroad and the impact this can have on the local economy.

This event is one of a growing number of similar events put on by ICW's sister organizations across the country in a nationwide initiative to engage businesses in citizen diplomacy. ICW has become a leader in this effort. It is still in an exploratory stage and we welcome all input, help, and suggestions on how we can partner with businesses to improve America's international image, engage businesses in citizen diplomacy and, in doing so, improve economic opportunities.

Special thanks to Anna De Mulder and Pat La-Rochelle for helping the office staff plan and implement the program. Thanks also to NCIV (National Council for International Visitors) in DC for providing a \$2000 grant to help cover the costs of the event.

Spring Potluck Dinner

On May 3, ICW held a pot luck dinner at the home of ICW Board member William O'Brien in Holden. The guests of honor were the 10 Community Connections visitors from Ukraine who made a cultural presentation about their. Special thanks to the members of ICW's So-





ComCon delegates from the Ukraine in their traditional outfits at the Spring Potluck at the home of Board Member Bill O'Brien.

cial Committee and the other volunteers who worked hard to make these events a success.

Recent Programs

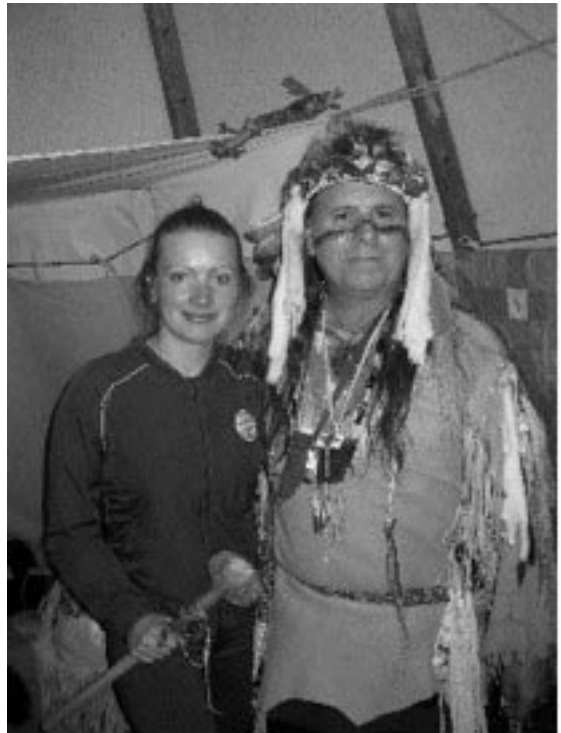
March 4, Health Care; Republic of Kyrgyz

ICW hosted 2 delegates from the Kyrgyz Republic on a program entitled "Health Care: Privatization and Primary Care." These visitors were invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. The program was designed to introduce the participants to the U.S. health care system, its structure, management and administration, delivery systems and efforts toward reform. The delegates visited the UMass Memorial Medical Center and spent time learning about the intensive care unit, the emergency room, and the trauma unit.

April 23 - May 14, Historical Preservation; Ukraine

ICW hosted a group of 10 delegates from the Ukraine on a program entitled "Preservation of

the Historical and Social Environment of Cities." This 3-week Community Connections Program was funded through USAID. The goal of the program was to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the historical, cultural and social environment of cities and to examine how this can be done while assuring services and economic security for the population. Participants learned what makes a city attractive to live in, how citizens are involved in determining, maintaining or transforming their environment, and what are the key elements that need to be considered (schools, hospitals and other services). The visitors took part in many cultural events including a Native American powwow, a



Ukrainian delegate Iryna in the teepee of Chief Gentle Bear during the Native American PowWow.

cookout at the home of Office Manager Sharon Olander's family, a day of volunteering on Worcester's Earth Day, a weekend in New York, and a tour of Boston.





ComCon Ukraine Participants
volunteering on Worcester's Earth Day,
cleaning up an urban site in Worcester.

April 26 - May 5, Technology Parks; Oman

ICW hosted 3 senior officials of the Sohar University in Oman to learn how universities establish technology parks. They were invited to the United States through the International Visitor Leadership Voluntary Visitors Division. They visited several universities including Harvard, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Thank you to ICW members Hank and Donna Rose for arranging a poolside reception and dinner for the visitors at their home.

May 17 - May 20, Youth Center Development; Ukraine

ICW hosted 5 managers of youth centers from the Ukraine invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. The goals of the program were to provide insight into the creation and operation of community youth centers.

The program included visits to the Worcester County Courthouse, the CASA Project, YOU Inc., the Worcester Youth Center, Worcester Public Schools, the Worcester Art Museum, and the gang unit of the Worcester Police Department. In the evening, they went to the Charlton Annual Town Meeting and enjoyed

dinner and homemade ice cream at the home of Jim Welu, ICW member and director of the Worcester Art Museum.



IVLP Delegate from the Ukraine
enjoying an ice cream sundae
at the home of Jim Welu.

July 14, Community Foundations, NGO development, and Public Policy; Netherlands

ICW hosted the Executive Director of OXFAM in the Netherlands. She was a refugee from Iran and became a member of the Dutch Parliament representing the Green Party. Her program in Worcester included a meeting with the staff of Congressman Jim McGovern, a visit to the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, and meetings with faculty and graduate students at Clark University's Department of International Development, Community, and Environment. She has an interest in the foreign policy of the Obama Administration as it relates to the Middle East, Iran and human rights.

July 3 - August 13, Students/Faculty from Astrakhan

This summer, 11 students arrived from Astrakhan State University (ASU) in southern Russian to complete their master's degrees at Clark University. Many of them are actually faculty at ASU, and are here as part of the agreement between ASU and Clark. These students join 3 students who arrived in January. ICW arranged for their apartment and helped with their



arrival, orientation, and assistance during their visit. They are all attending classes at Clark in the evening and some taking English language classes during the day. ICW is facilitating their visit and organizing professional contacts and meetings for them. ICW member Fred Looft is helping several of them make contacts with faculty at WPI. Some other ICW members have offered to host them for barbecues, dinner, or swims. We'll be organizing these social events in addition to their professional and cultural program.

Upcoming Programs

This fall we are scheduled to host two major programs. Both require home stays with local families. We will be looking for families to host one or more visitors in their homes during this program. Please contact ICW if you can help us!

October 1-22, Healthy Lifestyles; Moscow and Tver Regions, Russia

This fall ICW will host a group of 10 Russia public health professionals on a Community Connections program sponsored by USAID. The healthy lifestyle theme focuses on the high-risk behaviors that now threaten Russian life expectancy: smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, suicide, HIV-AIDS, poor nutrition, stress, and domestic violence. The program, now being developed, will include visits to medical facilities, public health agencies, schools, and local non-profits working in these areas. We will also arrange videoconferences with the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, and the Dept. of Health and Human Services in Bethesda, MD.

December 12-20, Public Safety and Community Policing; Pushkin, Russia

ICW is designing a program for 5 government officials from Pushkin, our sister city, funded by the Open World Leadership Center in the Li-

brary of Congress. The delegation will include Pushkin's Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and top officials in the Regional and Town Administration. This is the first time we have hosted an entire group from Pushkin on a government-funded program. ICW worked with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pushkin and Pavlovsk and the Pushkin Mayor to select candidates for the program. We plan a program that will include visits to the Worcester Police and Fire Departments, meetings with City officials, visits to non-profits and school programs involved with public safety. The emphasis will be on community policing, human rights, and public relations.

June 2010, Sister City Pushkin's 300th Anniversary

This coming June, 2010, our sister city town of Pushkin (Tsarskoye Selo) will celebrate the 300th anniversary of its founding by Peter the Great. We are planning to take a delegation of people from Worcester to Pushkin. Several people have expressed an interest in going and we are looking for more.

Office Update

ICW Executive Director Royce Anderson finished his 10th year working at ICW. Starting as a part-time volunteer with Nadia Anderson in 1998, he began working full-time in 2003. Nadia worked with ICW until 2007 when she accepted a full-time job at Babcock Power Company in Worcester.

Sharon Olander, who started as a Clark University student volunteer intern in January 2008, has transitioned to becoming ICW's full-time Office Manager. She worked for us full-time as Administrative Assistant last summer and again part-time during this past school year as she attended graduate school in International Development at Clark. As Office Manager she has become indispensable. We are confident that we can fund her position through October, 2009, and are working hard to generate the



number of ICW programs necessary to support her position beyond that time.

ICW continues to enjoy a steady flow of excellent student interns from Clark University. Clark graduate student Leah Coleman continued with us through December 2008. For the fall 2008 semester we had two other Clark student interns, senior Rachel Ambrose and sophomore Olivia Lotstein. During the spring 2009 semester we had two new Clark interns, Tara Lewis from Bermuda and Kirtana Tanuku from India and Japan, both juniors. Now, for the summer of 2009, we have two new interns: Brittany Card from Saint Anselm College in New Hampshire, and Matthew Thomas from University of Tampa in Florida. Both live in Worcester and are home for the summer. All interns are being managed primarily by Office Manager Sharon Olander.

International News: WorldFocus.com

It's difficult to get good international news on TV. Now you can get it on the Internet. This show is produced every weekday and you can watch it at any time on your computer. If your flatscreen TV has a "PC" input, you can connect your computer and watch it right on your TV. Just click: www.worldfocus.com

Social Networking

ICW is now on Facebook and Twitter. Become a "fan" of ICW on Facebook by searching for International Center of Worcester. Follow us on Twitter; our username is "IntCentWorc" (www.twitter.com/intcentworc). Also, check out our blog at <http://intcent.wordpress.com>. Although in the early stages, we are working hard to use these social networking mediums to expand our image.



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