



# NEWSLETTER

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## Global Connections and Exchange Program for Tajikistan

Global Connections and Exchange Program for Tajikistan has established 24 Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) in secondary schools across Tajikistan. The program's main goal is to increase global dialogue and educational opportunities by installing modern computer equipment with Internet access in schools, and developing training and learning projects for teachers and students.

### Tajikistan Global Connections and Exchange Program activities include:

- \* Teacher training on using computers and the Internet in classroom teaching;
- \* U.S. school partnerships on civic education projects, teacher and student exchanges;
- \* Public access and programs for community members and disadvantaged groups;
- \* Development of sustainable practices for schools and communities.

## C O N T E N T



Guest speakers in Khorog ILC answer students' questions

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### Live and Let Others Live

This was the subject of the meeting on the 20th of January between students of Khorog ILC of School No.2 and various representatives: school teachers, officers from the local education department, and representatives of the youth center and local NGO "Madina". The initiators of this meeting were project group students but it was the January partnership activity "Youth in Action" that inspired students to organize this event and to learn more about the work of different organizations addressing youth issues.

During the meeting students asked guest-speakers questions about unemployment, drug addiction, and other problems found among some teenagers. Unemployment is a top concern in the GBAO region and in the country in general. Most sociological and socio-psychological surveys indicate that unemployment causes negative consequences for the whole society and its separate social groups, families, and individuals. Negative consequences lead to different illnesses such as: increase of heart diseases, large number of suicides and murders, and high number of patients in mental hospitals.

This discussion provided students with valuable insight about the issues surrounding their community, and further demonstrated the need for young people to be aware and take action on these social issues.

## Youth in Action



Food drive organized by American youth

In January GCE students continued their program activity with another interesting project that allowed them to show the role of youth in their own community and world's society. Students learned about themselves and other young community members by conducting interviews and re-



Students help their school with construction work

search on youth of different ages. They defined common images and adjectives used to describe youth by different groups of society, and discusses the impact youth actions have on society. Students highlighted the young people of Soviet times who were brave schoolchildren and struggled against fascism during World War II. Nowadays young people also struggle but this struggle comes in different forms.



Students clean their school yard

As for students from Khujand ILC, they see their contribution to the society as conducting environmental activities to protect nature. Youth from Gulyakandoz believe that to be young means to be full of energy and desire to develop the world and be developed, to educate and be educated, to help and be helpful, and to be more than a member of its local community but to be a citizen of the whole world - a global citizen.

Other youth saw their role as providing support, care and attention for those who

need it. For example, during the holidays youth in Delano, California collect food for the less fortunate, while some give their time to performing for the elderly in the local convalescent hospital. Many U.S. students volunteer their time by helping the elderly at nursing homes. Youth also contribute to the community by tutoring others in a range of subjects. Youth will go to other schools and help out students in after-school programs, encouraging them to live a positive lifestyle without the influence of drugs, alcohol, and violence.

At the end of this activity students created publications showcasing the role of youth in society and their power to create a brighter future for themselves and for future generations. Students' publications can be viewed at <http://www.connect-tajikistan.org/en/youthinaction.html>



Every year Oshkosh students organize blood drives to increase blood supplies to save lives

## Youth Leaders in the Community

The first month of the New Year was really interesting for Youth Leadership Clubs (YLCs) and useful for the community. Community members were given the opportunity to learn basic computer and Internet skills. As knowledge of computer basics is becoming increasingly important, many students not only from neighboring schools but from orphanages as well received training in our centers in the month of January. Members of the Khujand center YLC invited orphans and gave a general introduction to computers, programs like MS Word and Paint, and Internet skills. At the end of the training some of the students opened their own e-mail accounts, ready to start exploring the world and communicate with people across the globe. Students were very pleased to have opened a new window in their life.

Other YLCs conducted community service projects through volunteering. They helped school librarians to sort the books in the library and clean the room. Other volunteers visited the elderly, held seminars for the community to raise awareness about diseases, and helped the school administration to holding events and school activities. Students and YLC members have said that day by day, the community, teachers, and students from other schools are expressing their gratitude and happiness for such club that is willing to help and teach others, without asking for anything in return. On behalf of those who have benefited from the work of the YLCs, *Thank you Youth Leaders!*



Orphans receive training at Khujand ILC

## Welcome to the Maryland School for the Deaf!

Students from the Maryland School for the Deaf will be partnering with the School for the Deaf in Dushanbe to work collaboratively on projects and engage in international dialogue. We welcome Mr. Martin O'Brien and his students to GCEP Tajikistan!

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## ILC Manager Ibrahim Rustamov on Becoming a Webhead



Ibrahim Rustamov - graduate of Critical Thinking course

Just after finishing the Critical Thinking distance course at the American English Institute of the University of Oregon, I was informed about Electronic Village Online (EVO) sessions. EVO has different sessions which English language teachers and educators around the world can sign up to participate in at no cost. So I signed up to learn more about "Becoming a Webhead 2006" and "Creating Webquests". Other ILC Managers from Gulyakandoz, Kayrakkum, Aini and Kulob also joined sessions such as "Just in Time Teaching" and others.

As a member of the "Becoming a Webhead 2006" session I wish to tell briefly about what we do and what I have discovered during the past three weeks.

Starting from January 16<sup>th</sup> to February 26<sup>th</sup> teachers and educators in the session explore Web communication tools and share the best ways of using them in teaching practices, engaging with students, collaborating on projects, and participating in

conferences. This collaboration takes place online, connecting all participants who are otherwise geographically apart.

Participants are learning collaboratively and hands-on to:

- use various web tools for learning and teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)/ English as a Second Language (ESL)
- interact through e-mail, text chat, voice chat, voice e-mail, and distribution lists, among others
- reflect on ways of applying tools to their teaching, either online or face to face
- create web pages and web logs (blogs), online worksheets, surveys, interactive exercises and rubrics related to their own contexts

Weekly chats are held to discuss content and pre-defined topics, strengthen relationships and create a sense of community.

Information for this article came from <http://dafnegonzalez.com/baw-06/index.html> Much of the content resulting from the discussions will also be continuously posted on this site.

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