



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.

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A world map from TEA teachers



Here is Tajikistan!

Deaf Students Welcome American TEA Teachers

During their trip to Tajikistan, U.S. TEA Program teachers Ms. Cynthia Bloom and Mr. Ken Hooper visited the ILC of School No. 8 for deaf students. Despite the students' difficulties with hearing and speaking, the meeting passed in a very warm and friendly atmosphere because of students' openheartedness and kindness.

Once our guests introduced themselves, many questions arose. Students wanted to know about American pupils, their life and study. They were surprised to hear that deaf students in the U.S. often times go to the same school and study in the same class as hearing children, and later have the opportunity to receive a higher education studying in a special university.

After spending time and easily making friends with the students, the TEA teachers presented stickers, a world map, and a globe for the deaf students so they would remember their visitors and continue learning about the world. They also left some emails of American boys and girls for our schoolchildren to keep correspondence and make friends with them, perhaps the best gift of all.

Our students thanked the TEA teachers for their visit, and wished to have more guests in their ILC because every time they meet new people, they discover a new world for themselves. They want to have the same rights and live in the same world as others do. And we will try to do everything we can so that they can live happily.

GCEP Chefs

This October, the second partnership activity for GCEP students took place. Through "The Global Recipe Book", Tajikistan and U.S. schools had a chance to learn about national foods of each other's countries and demonstrate their cooking skills. After research on their national recipes, students prepared presentations on the most interesting, favorite and popular foods of their family, community or country, and exchanged the recipes with each other. Presentations can be viewed at <http://www.connect-tajikistan.org/en/gcep.html>



GCEP chefs prepare a delicious meal



Cooking special Tajik bread

The most amazing part of this activity was the process of preparation of meals. Students had a lot of fun while preparing different foods of their partner schools. Girls from the Gulyakandoz ILC together with their Lead Teacher chose and prepared rice cakes from recipes sent by their partners - students from the Academy of the Pacific. Konibodom students decided to cook Fried Lumpia, while boys and girls from Kulob tried their cooking skills in frying chicken, from recipes sent by Henry Foss High School students.

GCEP Students Choose Healthy Food

Besides "The Global Recipe Book" activity, Tajikistan students explored food in its other aspects. Students have learned the differences between healthy and harmful food, the importance of the correct way of eating, and the significance of useful products and vitamins. Some ILCs examined their school canteens and community stores to check the quality of foods they are selling to people. Others invited experts on foods or doctors to ask them questions about healthy food and discuss the importance of hygiene issues. Students of Youth Leadership Clubs conducted lectures for junior schoolchildren about healthy food, helping students lead healthy lifestyles and prevent the threat of many diseases.



Khorog students give brochures on healthy food to junior classes



Speakers from the Red Cross Society at Kulob ILC

At the conclusion students prepared presentations about the research they conducted and shared them with other ILCs.

Online Chatting Became a Tradition



Mr. Beemer answers students' many questions

This month our project group students had another opportunity for online connections – an online chat for all 25 ILCs at one time. The guest of the chat was Mr. Brent Beemer, U.S. State Department, Educational and Cultural Affairs Officer.

Mr. Beemer was invited to visit the Islamic University of Tajikistan in Dushanbe, and especially to see the Internet Learning Center at this university. First Mr. Beemer had a discussion with Islamic University students who were very interested about Muslim people in the U.S. Mr. Beemer spoke about the large Muslim population in the U.S., and there was a lively discussion about varying practices in Islam in different societies. Following the meeting with university students, the chat with all other ILCs commenced.

Young students were mostly concerned about the duration of the U.S. State Department Exchange Programs and English teachers wanted to know about the future of the TEA program. Some students suggested having such exchange programs that would include visits of American students to Tajikistan and provide an opportunity for them to study in Tajikistan schools and universities. Students were just as interested to host American students as they were to study abroad themselves. Mr. Beemer agreed about the value of such exchanges: "Currently, we have few programs that send U.S. students to other countries and schools... but we are working on new programs to change that... we need American students and teachers to see the world more."

While participating in the chat, students from the Islamic University have learned that there are millions of Muslims in the U.S., and that there are programs that are trying to bring Muslims in other countries and in the U.S. into an ongoing and open dialogue.

At the end of the chat Mr. Beemer wished success to GCEP students in their studious life and all the best for Muslims of Tajikistan in the holy month of Ramazan. We thank Mr. Beemer for participating in the chat and actively getting involved in a program which creates the connections he had recognized as valuable among Muslim and international communities.

Trick or Treat!



Pin the tail on the donkey

At the end of October, ILC students and teachers had a jolly and at the same time a frightening activity – they celebrated the Halloween holiday! This activity introduced students with traditions of the ancient holiday which is still celebrated in some European countries and in the U.S.

First, English Club students made presentations about the history of Halloween and its activities: trick or treating and carving Jack O'Lanterns. Then students and teachers were divided into groups to participate in amazing competitions and games. Most of all students liked to play the game "Pin the Tail on the Donkey" with closed eyes and race while carrying balloons on trays.

At the end of the celebration students demonstrated their skills in carving pumpkins, and the audience decided on the best and scariest ones. For all the participants it was a fun – and spooky – Halloween.



Jack O'Lantern

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Young Leaders Help Build Peace

In October students of the Youth Leadership Clubs showed their leadership by learning new things and spreading the skills and knowledge they received to other members of their community. Young leaders researched methods of conflict resolution, as there are many problems in our society which should be prevented at an early stage. A small quarrel between several persons can turn into a large conflict which has a negative impact on others and even between entire countries. That is why it is important for everybody to know and understand how to behave and act in different conflicts.

With this importance in mind, YLC students conducted trainings for community members and prepared performances for better understanding important methods and skills in solving different types of problems.



How to behave in a conflict situation

Serving the Community



Young leaders present clothes to disabled children

Every month Youth Leadership Clubs engage in community service which may include helping poor people, cleaning the school or community area, or visiting orphanages. All 24 YLCs of our program were involved in such activities during the holy month of Ramazan.

Leaders of the Sarband ILC decided to help an elderly lady in their community. They gathered money and visited this old and disabled woman. She was very happy to learn that there is such a club where students in her community care for and support the elderly.

Students of Jabor Rasulov decided to continue helping the nursing home of their community which they used to visit last year. During their last visit they prepared hot meals for disabled persons of

the nursing home. Also, YLC members and project group students decided together to provide patients with warm clothes and shoes. Students' parents and other community members supported the idea of the young leaders and helped them to collect clothes which were then given to the patients.

YLC members want to involve all the students and people from their city to provide more support for the nursing house. Next time leaders will visit the patients together with students from School No. 1 of Proletarsk.



Leaders and volunteers pack collected clothes to distribute

Teachers' Day

One of the remarkable days in early October was the celebration of Teachers' Day. The first Sunday of October is considered to be the Day for Teachers - an important holiday for all schools of Tajikistan and the former Soviet republics. Every school celebrates this event in its own way. But there is one thing all the celebrations have in common - students congratulate their teachers and wish them a happy holiday!

Project group students of the Sarband ILC decided to invite their teachers and celebrate this holiday in the ILC. They made an interesting program, giving performances about the celebration of Teachers' Day in ancient times, and about a typical day in the life of a teacher. Then students recited poems in Tajik, Russian and English honoring teachers and the valuable work they do.



School director answers questions during "TV program"



Young teachers are ready to start their work

The culmination of the program was an activity with the participation of the school director. Students enacted a TV program where the director was asked different questions, which probably would not be asked on a typical school day. The most interesting question was: "What would you do if you had a magic stick?" The director answered that he would build a new school and equip all the needed classrooms for students.

During this holiday many schools have a common tradition - students take the place of their teachers and conduct lessons in junior classes. It is a very good and important tradition as it makes students to understand and respect the difficulties of their teachers' jobs. This year more than 17 project group students of the Sarband ILC became teachers of their school for one interesting day.

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