



UNIVERSITY
OF CENTRAL ASIA



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Cover photo: The Aga Khan Music Initiative's Ustat-Shakirt ensemble performing at the launch of *Kyrgyz Küüs: Analysis, Thoughts, and Opinions*, the seminal two-volume work by Asan Kaybilda uulu, published by the UCA Cultural Heritage Book Series in 2011.

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000. The Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan signed the International Treaty and Charter establishing this secular and private University; ratified by the respective parliaments, and registered with the United Nations. The Presidents are the Patrons of UCA and His Highness is the Chancellor. UCA's mission is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain societies, while at the same time helping the different peoples of the region to preserve and draw upon their rich cultural traditions and heritages as assets for the future.

The First Word

Keep your finger on the pulse of the University of Central Asia (UCA) with the second issue of our quarterly magazine, Q-News!

Since our inaugural edition, we have received a gratifying and overwhelmingly positive response. I am confident that Q-News will strengthen communication between the University and our diverse partners, while highlighting recent activities and achievements at UCA.

A critical part of UCA's mission is to help the different people of the region to preserve and draw upon their rich cultural traditions and heritages as assets for the future. This issue features UCA's research and learning activities, with a special focus on cultural heritage.

The depth of the University's commitment to cultural preservation is evident through the work of our Research Fellows, the launch of an exciting new pilot textbook and course on Central Asian musical traditions, and the donation of an exceptional humanities library collection to UCA.

Other highlights include the launch of an expanded edition of UCA's bilingual policy glossary, the World Economic Forum and a feature discussing the lively exchange between UCA's executive designer, AECOM UK, who is designing phase I of UCA's main Naryn campus, and young learners from Naryn Oblast.

We hope you find this edition a good read and look forward to your feedback.

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In our next issue:



Archeological Discoveries at Naryn Campus Site



Academic Achievement Ceremony in Faizabad



Kyrgyz PM Satybaldiyev kicks off 2nd Annual Football Tournament



SPCE TVET Alumni & Students Help Construct New Village School in Tajikistan

and more...

Research Fellows Focus on Central Asian Cultural Heritage



A strong focus of UCA's work on cultural heritage is preserving the diverse musical traditions of the region.

A dynamic group of Central Asian and international research fellows at the University of Central Asia (UCA) are engaged in scholarship that reflects the diversity and richness of the cultures of Central Asia. This area of research is related to UCA's mission to preserve and promote the diverse cultural heritages of the region.

In 2012, in partnership with the Aga Khan Music Initiative (AKMI), a pilot edition of the textbook *Music of Central Asia: An Introduction* was produced. The textbook is being taught in a UCA course in Almaty, Dushanbe and Bishkek, and will be revised and published in 2013. The textbook is edited by Drs Theodore Levin and Elmira Köchümkulova of AKMI and UCA, respectively.

Trained as a classical pianist and musical ethnographer, Dr Levin is an Arthur R. Virgin Professor at Dartmouth College, Senior Project Consultant to AKMI and a Senior Research Fellow at UCA. He provided critical leadership in the development of the textbook and is working on a book entitled *Argonauts of Cultural Development: Western NGOs and the Struggle for the Future of the Past in Central Asia*.

Dr Köchümkulova contributed to the textbook and is teaching the pilot course in Bishkek. She served as scholarly editor of *Kyrgyz Küüs: Analysis, Thoughts, and Opinions* by Asan Kaybildal uulu, published by UCA's Cultural Heritage Book Series in 2011, and her current research is on Kyrgyz musical and oral traditions.

UCA Fellows Drs Saida Daukeyeva and Will Sumits also contributed to the book and are teaching the course in Almaty and Dushanbe, respectively. Both have PhDs in Ethnomusicology from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and are involved in conceptualising the development of a UCA/AKMI sound archive on traditional music.

Dr Daukeyeva heads the Folklore Research Laboratory at the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory in Almaty and is studying *dombyra* performance and rituals for the dead in Kazakhstan and western Mongolia. Dr Sumits is an ethnomusicologist, musician and producer. He is researching the history of *maqam* theory and practice in the Middle East and Central Asia and supporting AKMI programmes in Tajikistan.

UCA is also hosting Fulbright Scholar and Harvard Professor of Music and South Asian Studies Dr Richard Wolf, an expert on classical, folk and tribal musical traditions and music in Islamic practices in India and Pakistan.

UCA Fellow Sunatullo Jonboboev's research focuses on the humanities and social sciences in Central Asia and the history of Ismaili philosophy. He is helping develop UCA's archive of written, sound and visual collections on life in the Pamirs; facilitating the publication of works by regional scholars by UCA's Cultural Heritage Book Series; and is developing volumes on the History of *Tajik Philosophy* with the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Sia Nowrojee

Course on Central Asia Musical Traditions Teaches and Inspires



Dr. Elmira Köchümkulova teaches students in Bishkek about the *komuz* in a new course offered by UCA.

“When she sang, a sense of peace overcame the classroom. It felt like a light, a warm wind. Her voice was strong, bright, light and free. It made me forget about my problems.”

This is what undergraduate Gulzira Kamytzhanova experienced when her professor Dr Elmira Köchümkulova performed on the Kyrgyz instrument *komuz*, in a ground-breaking new course on Central Asian Music offered by the University of Central Asia (UCA).

Dr Köchümkulova inspires students with her *komuz*, introducing traditional Kyrgyz songs and her own compositions.

The 15-week certificate course was based on the pilot edition of the textbook *Music of Central Asia: An Introduction* published by the UCA Cultural Heritage Book Series and edited by UCA Senior Research fellows Dr Köchümkulova and Dr Theodore Levin. Dr Levin is also a senior project consultant for the Aga Khan Music Initiative (AKMI). The textbook is a joint initiative of UCA and AKMI.

The course included a regional overview and ethnographic study on musical repertoires, genres and instruments and musicians from both nomadic and sedentary communities of Central Asia, and examined the effects of globalisation on Central Asian music through

the prism of musical fusion and hybridity, diaspora communities and cultural revitalisation initiatives.

The course was taught in 2012 and 2013 at UCA Aga Khan Humanities Project in Dushanbe, the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek and the Kurmanghazy Kazakh National Conservatory in Almaty, by UCA Research Fellows Dr Will Sumits, Dr Köchümkulova and Dr Saida Daukeyeva, respectively. The textbook was also used by Dr Levin in a course at Dartmouth College in the United States.

“Guest musicians visited our class, giving students the opportunity to hear music in a more personal and intimate context. This was a unique experience, and provided powerful exposure which had a strong impact on the students and their perceptions of traditional music and musicians,” said Dr Sumits.

“Attending live concerts and experiencing diverse musical performances helped me appreciate that music constitutes a large part of the culture and life of people in Central Asia” added student Jibek Toktokojoeva.



In Bishkek, students of UCA's Central Asia Music class enjoy a performance by a local ensemble, using traditional Kyrgyz instruments.

With articles commissioned by 21 Central Asian, European and American scholars, the textbook and course brought together both 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives on the region's music and culture. *"Our aim was to present multiple viewpoints and styles of music scholarship and show their value,"* said Dr Levin.

Dr Sumits added, *"Developing an appreciation of*

traditional music from all countries as a living art form helped break down boundaries and encouraged a perspective that allowed students to appreciate regional traditions other than their own."

The textbook and course will be revised and expanded based on student and instructor feedback and offered for broader instruction across and beyond the region.

Emily Harrison

UCA-SPCE Event Combines Scholarship and Performance

On 26 March 2013, UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) Naryn paid homage to renowned Kyrgyz ethnomusicologist and *komuz* player, Asan Kaybilda uulu, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 80. The event, *My Komuz: The Face of the Nation* was attended by UCA-SPCE staff and students. It featured performances by young *komuz* players.

"Komuz music is viewed as a national treasure, reflecting the history, language, customs and spirit of the Kyrgyz people. We take great pride in our culture and believe that it will live on as long as our language, traditions and music are kept alive," said Ms Aigul Omuralieva, UCA-SPCE Naryn Librarian.

Ms Omuralieva introduced participants to Asan

Kaybilda uulu's two-volume seminal publication, *The Kyrgyz Küüs: Analysis, Thoughts, and Opinion*. It was published in 2011 by the UCA Cultural Heritage Book Series, with University of Central Asia (UCA) Senior Research Fellow, Dr Elmira Köchümkulova serving as scholarly editor and project coordinator.

The volumes include CDs with recordings of over 100 *komuz* melodies and narratives on their histories by the author. As part of its mission of cultural preservation, UCA is documenting existing knowledge on the diverse cultural traditions of the region. From 2008 until his death in 2010, UCA worked with Asan Kaybilda uulu to restore and compile recordings of *komuz* melodies and publish the volumes.

Aizada Shakir

UCA's Commitment to Cultural Preservation Inspires Donation of Unique Library Collection



Nearly 600 books donated by Vasiliy Kisunko are available in UCA's Library in Bishkek.

The University of Central Asia (UCA) received nearly 600 books from the collection of the late Russian art historian and professor, Vasiliy Kisunko. The collection includes books on culture, history, politics and political economy published by Soviet historians between 1960 and 1980.

The books have a geographic focus on “the East,” as defined during that time period to include the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia and China. *“These books explain history through the eyes of historians during the Soviet period. People don’t write like that anymore,”* said Gregory Kisunko, Vasily’s son.

Vasiliy Kisunko was born on 7 October 1940 in Leningrad (Saint Petersburg). Vasiliy’s true passion was the arts. After receiving degrees and working in the sciences, he completed a PhD in art history and embarked on a multi-faceted, rich career as a researcher, teacher and art critic. He served as Chair and Professor of Art History at the Moscow Conservatory and the Moscow Institute for Cinematography.

Gregory sees this fearless move from science to the arts as characteristic of a man who was not afraid to embrace his many interests; *“It would be difficult and unfair to say that there was one period in time or even one art-related subject that he was most passionate about.”*

The one constant in Vasiliy’s life was his ever-growing book collection. Over the years, he collected thousands of written works on many subjects, including history, literature and art, and over 10,000 audio records. When Vasiliy Kisunko passed away in 2010, he had a collection of over 35,000 volumes.

Following his death, his wife, Irina Vasil’yevna, a professor of archaeography (the study, collection and archiving of historical written sources) at Moscow State University donated sections of the collection to UCA.

Gregory credits UCA’s mission as the decisive factor in his mother’s decision; *“As an archaeographer, what appealed to my mother was the cultural preservation side of UCA’s mission. UCA cares about the preservation of books. In UCA’s library, the books will be safe and can be used by future readers and researchers.”*

The Kisunko collection is the second major library donation to UCA. The first was in 2011, when UCA received a gift of 700 publications on mountain regions of Central Asia, the Caucasus and other regions of the world from renowned mountain geographer and researcher Dr Yuri Badenkov of the Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow.

Katarina Czarniak

“...What appealed to my mother was the cultural preservation side of UCA’s mission. In UCA’s library, the books will be safe and can be used by future readers and researchers.”

Expanded Edition of English-Russian Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Public and Economic Policy, Administration and Trade Launched



Kiliievych presents the *English-Russian Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Public and Economic Policy, Administration and Trade*.

The Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA) published the second edition of its *English-Russian Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Public and Economic Policy, Administration and Trade*.

The book was launched during a regional tour by renowned economist and policy analyst Oleksandr Kiliievych, who compiled both editions of the glossary. He is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Economic Policy of the National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine and author of over 240 publications.

“This glossary is the product of the enormous and scrupulous efforts of Ukrainian scholar Oleksandr Kiliievych,” explained Dr Bohdan Krawchenko, UCA Director General.

The glossary is the expanded second edition of the *English-Russian Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Policy Analysis, Public Administration and Public Economies* published by the University of Central Asia in 2009.

It was produced under UCA’s Regional Cooperation and Confidence Building in Central Asia and Afghanistan project implemented by IPPA, with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada.

“It is a unique resource, bringing together in Russian and English, concepts and terms to facilitate understanding and clarity by actors in government, universities and civil society across Central Asia.”

The new edition defines over 3,200 terms and concepts and cites examples of their usage in authoritative texts, based on an extensive range of over 130 sources. It also includes an English - Russian, Russian - English dictionary of 3,400 and 4,600 terms respectively.

“The core of the glossary still remains terminology of policy analysis framed by the terminology of public administration and public policy. However, topics of the glossary are now significantly expanded to include the theory of international economics, international finance and the rules of the World Trade Organisation and global competitiveness,” explained Kiliievych.



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The Glossary is available for purchase in
Tajikistan for 50 somoni,
Kyrgyz Republic for 500 soms and
Kazakhstan for 1500 tenge.

Youth Implement Award-winning Social Entrepreneur Projects



Coca-Cola grantee, Elena Shilonosova's *Green Bags Production* project is presented to Kyrgyz Republic President Almazbek Atambayev (centre).

Mobilising the enthusiasm and creativity of youth to address social issues through entrepreneurship is an effective way to engage youth in their communities and build critical leadership skills. This was the principle behind the *Change the World Around You!* competition administered by the University of Central Asia (UCA), in partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation Kyrgyz Republic and The Coca-Cola Foundation and Company.

In a series of workshops held across the Kyrgyz Republic, youth were invited to submit creative project proposals addressing critical needs in their communities. The workshops generated a response of 218 proposals. After attending a *Change the World Around You!* workshop, Meder Usupbekov, 26, was inspired to write a proposal on building wheelchair accessible ramps to major public institutions.

Meder's proposal was among the 26 most promising that were selected. He and the other winning proposal writers attended a three-week training course on social entrepreneurship facilitated by UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (UCA-SPCE) at its Learning Centre in Bishkek.

"UCA-SPCE is in the business of providing training that corresponds to community needs. This

training was designed to help these young innovators transform their great ideas into workable realities. It will immediately help them build and apply skills, while enhancing their qualifications for future employment," said UCA-SPCE Director, Gulnara Djunushalieva.

After the training, the finalists defended their business plans to an independent selection committee. Nine winners were selected, and each received up to \$3,000 to implement their projects. The selected projects are testimony to the creativity and enterprise of youth in the Kyrgyz Republic:

Azamat Akbarov's *Our Future in Our Hands* initiative facilitated the creation of employment opportunities at a baby clothing shop for rural students enrolled in the Apparel Design Programme of Naryn Agrarian Technical College at Naryn State University.

Other projects built facilities to improve the quality of life of community members. Mirgul Alimjanova's *Playground Construction* project in Batken resulted in a new playground to increase safe outdoor activities for families. Meder Usupbekov's *Access Ramps for People with Disabilities* dream is now a reality and ramps are being built to enable wheelchair access to important



Meder Usupbekov receiving his certificate from AKF, Kyrgyz Republic CEO Shahid Punjani for his entrepreneurship project.

public services in Naryn town, such as health and education facilities.

Art and social change are at the heart of two projects. Nadejda Domasheva's *Bride-Kidnapping and Early Marriages is a Crime* project in Kara Kulja, Uzgen, Naukat, Aravan and Osh City is raising awareness of bride-kidnapping and early marriage using forum theatre per-

formances, in which audiences decide the plot direction. Aisuluu Kudaiberdieva's *Dance for Youth with Disabilities* initiative is training youth with physical disabilities to dance and is creating dance groups in Bishkek.

Two entrepreneurial projects in Bishkek addressed environmental issues. Elena Shilonsova's *Green Bags Production* project trained youth from an orphanage to design and sew eco-bags to be sold in prominent supermarkets and shops. Marsbek Tezekov's *Recycling Paper* project involved implementing waste separation systems in schools and selling paper to local recycling companies to generate income to buy textbooks for students.

Two projects in Bishkek used information technology to create useful tools. Shumkarbek Adilbek uulu's *Website for Financial Literacy* provides families with educational resources to help them with financial planning and management. Adilet Murzaliev's *Online Student Assessment Tools* include a database and website to track children's academic performance and encourage parental involvement.

Regional World Economic Forum Workshop

The World Economic Forum organised a workshop at the University of Central Asia (UCA) on 26 June 2013. Approximately 50 current and former government officials, industry leaders, representatives of international organisations and civil society experts from the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan gathered at UCA for the workshop.

The workshop was part of the World Economic Forum project on *Scenarios for the South Caucasus and Central Asia*, which focuses on future prospects of regional economic cooperation. During the event, participants assessed Central Asia's role in tomorrow's global economy. After taking stock of the region's current level of economic integration, participants developed creative visions for the role of the

region in the imminent global economy. In doing so, they reflected on Central Asia's unique strengths and value proposition; both existing and potential.

The workshop concluded with a discussion about the necessary steps to be taken today to fulfil the region's considerable potential in the future. These insights will feed directly into the next phase of the *Scenarios for the South Caucasus and Central Asia* project which will conclude towards the end of 2014.

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organisation committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Nisar Keshvani

UCA Builds Entrepreneurial Capacity in Almaty Region



Mr Bahytzhan Saghintayev (second from right), First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Regional Development of Kazakhstan, visited the SPCE Entrepreneurship Support Centre.

The University of Central Asia's School of Professional and Continuing Education (UCA-SPCE) is implementing a series of initiatives to help communities in the Republic of Kazakhstan develop entrepreneurial capacity and proactive responses to economic challenges.

The initiatives target the Almaty region and augment UCA-SPCE's standard offerings in information technology, accounting and language training. They support the goals of government programmes, and are based on fruitful partnerships with public and private organizations. This includes the Damu Entrepreneurship Development Fund (DAMU), a foundation created by Presidential Decree to support entrepreneurs in Kazakhstan.

Business Advisor Project Implemented under National Business Road Map Initiative

In April 2013, UCA-SPCE launched its *Business Advisor Project* to provide residents and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Almaty region with entrepreneurial support and information.

UCA-SPCE partnered with DAMU to serve as the programme's outreach and training provider in the Almaty region. Under Phase I of the *Business Advisor Project*, UCA-SPCE delivered

dozens of outreach workshops and trained over 1,000 people utilising DAMU materials, including a start-up kit for businesses.

These materials are complemented by UCA-SPCE's experienced trainers who, in addition to their excellent teaching credentials, have at least three years' experience running their own business. Phase II of the *Business Advisor Project* will be implemented from September to November 2013 and the Project will reach a total of 2,000 learners by the end of the year.

Entrepreneurship Support Centre Opens in Tekeli

In February 2013, UCA-SPCE opened the Tekeli Entrepreneurship Support Centre, in partnership with DAMU's Monotown Development Programme.

The Centre provides support for starting and running a business, legal considerations, business support programmes and working with financial institutions. Entrepreneurs can obtain information and advice on registering their business, writing business plans, applying for loans, participating in electronic tenders and preparing tax reports. The Centre also offers training seminars on state support for businesses, improving business performance and career guidance for young people.

"The Centre offers entrepreneurs access to information and the expertise and experience of its staff. Much of the information we readily provide can be difficult to obtain, requiring business owners to engage in time consuming research with state bodies, or to rely on the internet, which is not always accurate or up-to-date," said Oleg Lyssenko, Administrative Manager, UCA-SPCE Tekeli.

Since it opened in February, the Centre has delivered over 350 consultations to 120 entrepreneurs and community members intending to start their own business. Five entrepreneurs have started new businesses using services provided by the Centre, and are enjoying ongoing support.

Oleg Lyssenko

UCA-SPCE Conducts Information Technology Training for Naryn State University

On 27 March 2013, UCA-SPCE Naryn held a one-day training session on information technology (IT) communications systems for Naryn State University (NSU) instructors, students and the Naryn community. The event also gave community members an opportunity to tour UCA-SPCE facilities and learn more about UCA-SPCE courses.

The training was conducted by UCA-SPCE IT staff and introduced basic IT techniques such as data backup or 'mirroring'. Daniyar Tentiev, UCA-SPCE Coordinator of IT Academies and Test Centres, spoke about modern network communication and its growing importance in the workplace.

Attended by 40 NSU teachers and students, including Guldayra Munaitbasova, Dean of the IT Faculty, the training was developed in response to the growing need in towns like Naryn to build



Daniyar Tentiev, UCA-SPCE Coordinator of IT Academies and Test Centres, presents on modern network communications.

IT capacity and facilitate connectivity to larger urban centres. The event helped UCA-SPCE staff assess the utility of one-day community workshops and potential community interest in a new course on networking.

Students Use Innovative Theatre to Prepare for Academic Success

On 26 April 2013, UCA-SPCE's Academic Achievement Programme (AAP) students showcased their English skills at an Open House for parents. Using innovative puppet theatre designed by their English instructors, the students performed folk and fairy tales in English.

After the performance, Gulzana Kurmanalieva, UCA-SPCE Academic Affairs Assistant, met with parents to answer questions, discuss the progress of students and highlight ways in

which parents can help them succeed in their final exams.

UCA-SPCE launched AAP at its Naryn campus in 2012 to assist young students outside urban centres prepare for post-secondary academic success. The programme is designed to equip village school learners with the English-language skills they need to be competitive with urban school university applicants and to succeed once they are enrolled in universities.



AAP students demonstrate their English-language skills through puppet theatre at UCA-SPCE's Open House for parents.

Discovering New Opportunities through Social Entrepreneurship

Meder Usupbekov, 26, describes his experience as a Change the World Around You! Contest winner and grant recipient, in this article based on interviews with Meder and his mother Kayirsa Konushbaeva, conducted in September 2013 by Nurbek Nisharapov, Manager of Academic Affairs UCA-SPCE Naryn.

The Contest was implemented by UCA with support from the Aga Khan Foundation, Kyrgyzstan with funding from The Coca-Cola Foundation and The Coca-Cola Company. For more details on the contest, see Youth Implement Award-winning Social Entrepreneur Projects (page 9). This article was also featured on the Aga Khan Foundation, USA website.



Meder Usupbekov, *Change the World Around You!* contest winner, accepting his award.

My desire to join active society compelled me to find a place where I could be with other youth. When I saw a TV advertisement about the university's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE), my family encouraged me to visit. I was very shy and found it difficult to talk to others, but my brother Azamat went to the School with me in the autumn of 2011. The first thing I noticed about the School was the ramp right in front of the building. I was able to easily use the ramp in my wheelchair.

I had seen and used many ramps throughout Naryn Town; at shops, the market and chemists. However, those ramps were not constructed well and they were hard to use without any help. I had not seen any ramps at public buildings such as state libraries, hospitals, educational institutions and the post office. At that time, I thought I would like to learn more about these places that lacked wheelchair access.

I enrolled in IT courses at SPCE, which I suc-

cessfully completed. Now, to improve my English, I am enrolled in SPCE's Conversational English course. In 2010, I learned about the Change the World Around You! contest. I learned that if I submitted a proposal with an idea to solve a problem in my home town, I might win enough money to put that idea into practice!

I thought back to the first moment I saw the ramp at SPCE and I realized that we needed convenient and standardized ramps. The project was born out of an important need; a need I had experienced myself. I wrote my proposal and entered it into the competition. And it was selected! I was chosen to go with other finalists to SPCE in Bishkek for social entrepreneurship training. I was motivated and saw the training not as a challenge, but as an opportunity.

Being in Bishkek with other motivated youth and developing my business plan was just what I needed to begin something important. I improved my proposal; my business plan included building three wheelchair access ramps in public buildings around Naryn Town.

When I won the competition, I couldn't believe it! I am proud and my family, friends and neighbours have started to respect and treat me well. Besides my mother, I don't think any of them thought I could achieve such success. When I showed them my winning certificate, it was a happy event in my neighborhood. My mother says that I have changed, grown up. She thinks that my attitude towards life has changed since I now have a clear role in this society.

My first ramp was built at the State Hospital, and this year, I'm planning to build another ramp in cooperation with the State Architecture Department at Naryn State University. With support from the Kyrgyz Ministry of Migration, I plan on building a third ramp at the State Musical and Drama Theatre in Naryn.

UCA Executive Designer AECOM Presents Campus Design to Naryn Youth



Samir Pozder, AECOM Associate Director, Building Engineering presents the basics of engineering science to Naryn students.

On 12 June 2013, the University of Central Asia (UCA) teamed up with its executive designer, AECOM UK & Europe to deliver presentations on Structural and Geotechnical Engineering to 85 students at UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (UCA-SPCE) in Naryn.

"The opportunity that UCA brings to the region doesn't start with its construction. It is important for UCA to engage with Naryn youth throughout the entire process. This way, students can learn about different fields of study and possible careers, as they see the design and construction process unfold, literally before their eyes." said Grant Robertson, UCA Director of Construction.

Presentations were delivered by Mr Paul Stewart, AECOM's Regional Director of Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Engineering and Mr Samir Pozder, Associate Director Building Engineering. The presentations were attended by students enrolled in UCA-SPCE's summer programmes, students from eight Naryn Town high schools and students from the Aga Khan Foundation's School Parliament Project (which recruits from a pool of 62 schools and over 15,000 students across Naryn Oblast).

"Being fathers ourselves, it was a true pleasure and honour to be given an opportunity to deliver a presentation on what engineering is about to children in Naryn. We made sure that it would be interesting for students by presenting to our own

kids first and getting it approved by them. Big exam we had to pass!" said Mr Pozder.

Students learned about the basics of engineering science and the structure of AECOM. Mr Stewart and Mr Pozder discussed AECOM's role as executive designer of UCA's Naryn campus site and presented the steps involved in the building design. They also described other AECOM projects, including work on Halley VI, a scientific base in Antarctica, which the students were intrigued by.

"I believe that we managed to capture their attention by providing a snapshot of some of the exciting projects our company is involved in, and we hope that we helped pave the way into the future for at least some of them," said Mr Stewart.

The students enjoyed the presentations and were inspired to learn and do more. *"What should I do to obtain employment in the engineering field?"* asked student Bakyt kyzy Begai. Others asked about student internships with AECOM. Teachers who attended the presentations were also impressed.

"AECOM presented challenging material in a way that was easy for students to understand. Students were engaged and interested. It was a unique educational opportunity, which opened their eyes to a larger world of study and work," said Aija Tynystanova, a grade ten English teacher at #5 Kychan Jakypov Secondary School, Naryn.

News Bites

Briefing Held for Naryn Press

On 28 March 2013, UCA, the Aga Khan Foundation and Mountain Societies Development Support Programme, facilitated a day-long tour for Naryn media to introduce initiatives, achievements and future plans in Naryn oblast.

Researchers Present at Regional Humanities and Social Science Conference

On 4 May 2013, UCA Senior Research Fellows Drs Elmira Köchümkulova and Duishon Shamatov and Research Programme Manager, Dr David Gullette presented at *Lenses, Prisms and Mirrors: Zooming, Interpreting and Reflecting in Humanities and Social Sciences in Central Asia*, a conference at the American University of Central Asia.

UCA-SPCE Organises Business Planning Course for Women

From 25 to 30 June and 9 to 14 July 2013, 25 women from Mountain Societies Development Support Programme in Darvaz district, Tajikistan attended a UCA-SPCE course on *Creating a Small Business to Changing Climatic Conditions in the Region: The Basics of Business Planning*. The course was designed to improve the business skills of people in rural areas, to adapt these skills to changing climate conditions and to raise awareness of the causes.

Naryn Campus Executive Designer Appointed

In May 2013, UCA appointed AECOM UK & Europe to serve as executive designer for the University's campus design. AECOM is preparing detailed design and construction documentation for Phase I construction of UCA's Naryn campus.

Students and Alumni Visit Dushanbe Orphanages

In the first half of 2013, UCA students and alumni came together to deliver items to two orphanages in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Donated items included clothing, toys, diapers, juice and food. During multiple visits to the orphanages, the UCA teams also interacted and played with the children.

UCA Public Lecture Series

April-June 2013

The UCA Public Lecture Series highlights emerging research in and about Central Asia and supports UCA's scholarly and academic programmes.

- *Poverty Profile and Regional Welfare Disparities in the Kyrgyz Republic*, Aziz Atamanov, Consultant, World Bank, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Department of Europe and Central Asia Region, 16 April 2013.
- *How 'Global' is the Global Transformation of the University? The Importance of Transnational Knowledge Production and Critique*, Sarah Amsler, Reader of Education, University of Lincoln, 23 April 2013.
- *Crafting Winning Graduate School and Grant Proposals*, Eric McGlinchey, Professor of Political Science, George Mason University, 18 May 2013.
- *Mathematical Modeling in Water Management of Transboundary Rivers*, Dr Navruzov Sobir, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and Deputy Faculty, Informational Systems, Technical University of Tajikistan, 18 May 2013.
- *Findings from Archaeological Site on University of Central Asia's Naryn Campus Site*, Dr Kubatbek Tabaldiev is a historian and archeologist from Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, 25 May 2013.
- *Soldiers in a Foreign Land: The Experiences of Tajik soldiers of the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989)*, Markus Göransson, PhD Candidate, Aberystwyth University and Junior Research Fellow, UCA, 30 May 2013.

Full details: http://www.ucentralasia.org/public_lectures.asp



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