



HUNGARY/ROMANIA/KOSOVO/POLAND: “THE NANNY” SUPPORTS FIGHT AGAINST CANCER



Fran Drescher's billboard in Kosovo.

U.S. Public Diplomacy Envoy Fran Drescher reached out to thousands of Europeans on the importance of cancer awareness and prevention. Along with U.S. Ambassador to Hungary April Foley and the prime minister's wife, Klara Dobrev, Ms. Drescher led a crowd of thousands across the pink-lit Chain Bridge. In a meeting with Hungary's Surgeon General, Drescher urged him to focus on the government's role in cancer prevention. Drescher was enthusiastically received in **Romania**, where she spoke to groups of young women in the cities of Bucharest and Ploiesti, warning them that "cancer comes as a whisper." As guest of honor at Bucharest's annual Illumination International Event for Breast Cancer Awareness, she flipped the switch that bathed Bucharest's Arch of Triumph in pink. In **Kosovo**, Ms. Drescher conducted a roundtable with medical personnel and cancer survivors hosted by the U.S. Agency for International Development and spent an afternoon with U.S. troops at Camp Bondsteel. The U.S. Embassy in Pristina also coordinated six billboards with a picture of Drescher saying in Albanian and Serbian “Early Detection = Survival” and inviting everyone to join Kosovo’s First Annual Walk for Breast Cancer Awareness. In **Poland**, Ms. Drescher’s personal story was especially noteworthy as there is still a great stigma around gynecologic cancers. Ms. Drescher told women to become "health consumers" instead of patients and to learn the early warning signs. She was the guest of honor at a reception hosted by U.S. Ambassador to Poland Victor Ashe, raising over \$1000 for the Urszula Jaworska Foundation, which helps people with leukemia and other blood diseases.

UK: STUDENT DEBATE BRINGS US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS TO NORTHERN IRELAND

Students from Northern Ireland’s two largest universities came head-to-head in a U.S. presidential debate organized by the U.S. Consulate General in Belfast. Two hundred guests including politicians, journalists, American citizens, business leaders and students attended. Representatives of Queen’s University and the University of Ulster took the role of Democrats and Republicans (respectively) in a light-hearted, yet lively debate that showcased the intellectual talents of local students and enlightened spectators about the significant issues facing the U.S. presidential candidates. The event was moderated by BBC presenter Jim Fitzpatrick.



Consul General Susan Elliott and the BBC's Jim Fitzpatrick look on as Michael Ford of Queen's University (left), and Andrew Freaney of the University of Ulster (right) debate, October 2008. [Peter Mckittrick, U.S. Consulate General Belfast]

SPAIN: U/S DOBRIANSKY CLEARS THE AIR ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky met with members of the Spanish press to discuss global climate change. The under secretary was in Madrid to participate in a forum regarding the future of energy and technology sectors. She emphasized to the press that the U.S. has invested over 45 billion dollars over the last few years to combat climate change and develop wind energy technology. The under secretary also commented that the United States will continue to do its part to focus on this important domestic and global problem. She told the journalists she was impressed with the fact that Spain hosts two of the ten most prominent global companies in the area of wind energy production.

News coverage of Under Secretary Dobriansky



Estados Unidos advierte que el acuerdo post Kioto debe ser "económicamente sostenible"

GEORGIA: AMERICAN SOCIAL WORKER OFFERS PSYCHO-SOCIAL CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING

Licensed clinical social worker, professor of social work and psychology, and U.S. Department of State speaker Bonnie Miller visited Georgia to give train-the-trainer seminars and workshops to help mental health professionals respond to the large number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the wake of the Georgian-Russian conflict in August. Down from a peak of over 180,000 IDPs immediately after the conflict, officials now estimate that 30,000 people, including 10,000 school-age children, have been permanently displaced from their homes in South Ossetia and are currently living in schools, kindergartens and other makeshift shelters in the cities of Tbilisi and Gori. Miller's training, including sessions on helping adults and children in crisis, solution-focused therapy, and help-for-the-helpers training, will provide Georgian mental health practitioners with the tools they need to train others in psycho-social intervention for IDPs and those affected by the conflict. Miller has extensive experience working in Bosnia and Kosovo.



Bonnie Miller meets Vera Bebo, who was displaced from the village of Achabeti, during her visit September 28-October 4, 2008. [Ana Kurdgelashvili, U.S. Embassy Tbilisi]

RUSSIA: RETURN OF RUSSIAN CULTURAL TREASURE MAKES MAJOR NEWS HEADLINES



Ambassador Beyrle returning the Russian cultural treasure, October 22, 2008.

A rare Hermitage Museum catalog from the library of Czar Alexander III, stolen by the Nazis during World War II, was returned to the Russian Agency for the Protection of Culture. The U.S. Embassy in Moscow organized an event announcing the return of the book, which attracted immense Russian press coverage and was ranked as the fifth most important news item that evening. The book, an important piece of cultural patrimony, was recovered last year by the Department of Homeland Security and their Russian colleagues. Arranging the return of this cultural treasure is just one of the many cooperative projects the U.S. and Russia work on.

FRANCE: THA BOYZ SHARE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The Native American pow wow group Tha Boyz met with students, diplomats and literature enthusiasts during an eight-day program sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Paris and Festival America, an annual festival featuring literature of the Western Hemisphere. Tha Boyz is composed of members of several Native American tribes including the Ojibwe, Ute, Sioux and Crow. The embassy worked with the town hall of the 19th arrondissement (subdivision) of Paris to organize two performances, one for children at a local youth center and one for high school students. The 19th arrondissement has recently seen an increase in youth-related violence as well as tension between various ethnic and social groups. This event was an opportunity to demonstrate how one's cultural differences can be positively shared instead of becoming a source of division. One audience member noted that their music reminded her of the sounds of celebration made by people in her country. Students asked about Native American culture and racism in the United States. In addition to meeting with students, Tha Boyz opened the Festival America and participated in a panel discussion on Native American culture before an audience of several hundred. At the end of their program, the group participated in the opening of U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's "Picturing America" exhibit.



Tha Boyz on stage in Paris, September 2008. [K. Stolte]

ITALY: UNIQUE PROJECT FOR ITALIAN MUSLIM STUDENTS



The U.S. Embassy in Rome sponsored seven Italian Muslim university students to travel to three U.S. cities (Dearborn, MI; New York City; and Washington, DC) to learn about diversity, integration and American Muslim life in the United States. The participants, student leaders from Milan, Reggio Emilio, Rome and Sicily, returned from their program energized and enthused about the U.S. and the American contacts they made. When they returned, the Muslim Cultural Center of Rome sponsored an event for the local Moroccan community featuring four of the students.

Italian Muslim students in front of the White House during their trip, September 12-28, 2008.

SWEDEN: “LITTLE BAGHDAD” HOSTS US OPPORTUNITY FAIR

Södertälje, the Swedish town with the largest concentration of Iraqi immigrants, collaborated with the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm to host the Södertälje Opportunity Fair, "USA 2009." The fair was designed to provide information and advice on the myriad of opportunities for people who would like to spend a short time abroad in the United States, as students, au pairs or interns. U.S. Ambassador to Sweden Michael Wood and Södertälje Mayor Anders Lago opened the event, expressing pleasure over the continued cooperation between the city and the embassy. Over 700 people attended the fair, where they could talk one-on-one with representatives from various placement organizations and participate in two panel discussions. The panelists for the first discussion were all returnees (including two returnees of immigrant ancestry), who shared their experiences living in the United States. The panelists for the second discussion included an embassy official explaining visa procedures and a representative from the Fulbright program who discussed how to apply to schools in the United States.



Ambassador Wood opens the Opportunity Fair, "USA 2009" before a crowd of 250 participants, October 16, 2008. [Ryan John Koch, U.S. Embassy Stockholm]

SPAIN: DR AZIZAH AL-HIBRI DISCUSSES WOMEN AND ISLAM



Dr. Al-Hibri listens to her audience as they ask her questions during her visit, October 6-10, 2008. [Annica Meza, U.S. Embassy Madrid]

Dr. Azizah Al-Hibri, the founder of Karamah, a charitable and educational organization of Muslim women lawyers who focus on human rights issues, traveled to Madrid and Barcelona to speak about women and Islam in the 21st century. In Barcelona, she spoke at the European Institute of the Mediterranean, where the audience included members of the Muslim community, students, scholars and local NGO representatives. She also met with a group of local Muslim women to discuss issues affecting their community, such as domestic violence, women's rights, the importance of education, and the role of imams in Western societies. The visit included a meeting with the head

of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Catalonia Department of Inter-religious Dialogue. In Madrid, she sat down with Muslim immigrant representatives of a legal aid NGO interested in reaching out to Muslim women on issues of domestic violence. She also visited a public middle school where she met with students, university political science majors, and a group of researchers. This program provided a valuable opportunity for local Muslim women leaders to exchange views with a prominent American Muslim woman scholar.

GERMANY/DENMARK: CITIZEN DIALOGUE PROGRAM PROMOTES INTERFAITH UNDERSTANDING

The State Department's Citizen Dialogue program brought American Muslims to Hamburg and Copenhagen for cross-cultural and interfaith discussions on political, social and personal topics, including the importance of playing an active role in one's community, religious freedom, and Muslim life in the U.S. The group sponsored by the U.S. Consulate General in **Hamburg** discovered that their counterparts in Northern Germany work on similar projects and face similar challenges, such as dealing with domestic violence, conflict resolution in schools, and helping the homeless. Their program included a reception hosted by Consul General Karen Johnson, visits with integration-focused NGOs, a trip to Hamburg's biggest mosque, and a roundtable with 22 guests who engaged the four Americans in a frank dialogue on the life of Muslim Americans before and after 9/11. The four American Muslims who visited **Copenhagen** as part of the same program got a sense of the Danish immigration debate and how, as suggested by an article in a leading Danish weekly, Danish Muslims are not as integrated there as in the U.S. The group's program included meetings at the Islamic Christian Study Center, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, and the Gerlev Sports Academy in the city of Slagelse. In an interview with Danish weekly *Weekendavisen* participant Kamel Shrek, a math teacher from Texas, said of the program, "We seek to build bridges of friendship."



Imam Fateen Seifullah from Las Vegas with Kurdish Youth. [Martina Schulze, U.S. Consulate General Hamburg]

HUNGARY: EMBASSY BUDAPEST ELECTION CONFERENCE DECLARED A WINNER



University students participate in mock election at Budapest College of Communications and Business, October 14, 2008. [Carolyn Glassman, U.S. Embassy Budapest]

Over 150 interested and energetic participants from universities throughout the city participated in the U.S. Embassy in Budapest's day-long conference on the 2008 U.S. presidential elections. The program, hosted by the Budapest College of Communication and Business, engaged youth audiences on the U.S. elections and key policy issues. Fulbright scholars from throughout Europe talked with the students about the critical issues of immigration, race, religion, and the role of both the Internet and traditional media in the election. The program also featured a live debate between representatives from Democrats Abroad and Republicans Abroad. Former Republican Senator Larry Pressler spoke via digital video conference on some of the key issues impacting the U.S. electorate and the election process and took numerous questions from participants. U.S. Ambassador to Hungary April Foley closed the conference with remarks highlighting the historic nature of the current campaign.

VATICAN: EMBASSY CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The U.S. Embassy to the Holy See hosted the second in a series of conferences commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its enduring legacy, focusing attention on its multi-cultural origins and how U.N. delegates from all of the world's great cultural and religious traditions worked together to reach a common agreement on a set of universal rights. This conference was titled "For Everyone, Everywhere: Universal Human Rights and the Challenge of Diversity." Before a large crowd of diplomats, journalists, and Holy See officials, keynote speaker Professor Jean Bethke Elshtain examined the source and nature of these rights, while Cardinal Renato Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said "no effort should be spared to safeguard basic human rights under every political system." Other speakers included Professor Janne Matlary of Norway, Father Thomas Williams, Professor Habib Malik of Lebanon, and Professor Hsin-chi Kuan of Hong Kong.



U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See Mary Ann Glendon's speech at the conference was printed in the October 22, 2008 issue of *L'Osservatore Romano*.

RUSSIA: BROADWAY MUSICAL A HUGE HIT IN RUSSIAN FAR EAST



The first night of the show, September 2008. [Dmitriy Motovilov, U.S. Consulate General Vladivostok]

The city of Vladivostok enjoyed performances and workshops by two Department of State Cultural Envoys—Bud Coleman of the University of Colorado at Boulder and Clare Henkel, a costume designer for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Coleman and Henkel staged three performances of Stephen Sondheim's musical “Company” for enthusiastic audiences at the Fine Arts Academy. This marks the first time a Broadway musical was staged in the Russian federal subject of Primorye. During their stay, the Cultural Envoys also conducted musical and theatre dance workshops and gave talks on American theatre, the nuances of American design, and staging “Company” at major universities.

CROATIA: US OLYMPIC TAEKWONDO STARS CONDUCT CLINICS AND MEET WITH STUDENTS

Steven Lopez, a three-time Olympian and two-time Olympic gold medalist, and his brother, Jean Lopez, the U.S. National and Olympic Taekwondo coach, visited Croatia to bring an American perspective on sports. During their six-day visit, the Lopez brothers conducted training for over 120 Taekwondo students from Croatia and neighboring countries, including the Croatian national team. In addition, the Lopez brothers met with high school students in the city of Krapina and with students from the American International School of Zagreb. Jean and Stephen inspired their audiences, emphasizing that hard work, commitment, responsibility and respect were the keys to their success. The Lopez brothers talked about the sacrifices they made to achieve the American dream and about their siblings, Mark and Diana, who won silver and bronze medals respectively in Taekwondo at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.



Olympic Taekwondo champion Steven Lopez and national team coach Jean Lopez with high school students in Croatia during their visit, October 9-14, 2008.

HUNGARY: AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZES HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND TOLERANCE



U.S. Ambassador to Hungary April Foley met with 50 art students from the town of Zirc visiting the Keith Haring exhibit at the Ludwig Museum. After observing the high schoolers taking part in an artistic activity, the ambassador talked to them about the Bush administration's moral and financial commitment to fight HIV/AIDS globally and underscored Keith Haring's messages on the importance of prevention and tolerance. She encouraged the students to act responsibly and to accept differences. Haring, a famous New York artist and activist, died of AIDS in 1990.

Ambassador Foley with students, who created this Keith Haring-style artwork, October 2, 2008. [Monika Vali, U. S. Embassy Budapest]

CZECH REPUBLIC: US-CZECH RELATIONSHIP “ON ICE”

The U.S. Embassy in Prague's American Center organized an “Evening with the NHL” in the lead-up to the National Hockey League's first ever regular season game in Prague. U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic Richard Graber opened a jam-packed multimedia event at the center with Voice of America ice hockey expert Jiří Fisher and Czech hockey legend Milan Novy (the all-time Czech leading goal scorer in the NHL). Later Fisher spoke to hundreds of teenage students at Prague-area schools. The ambassador also attended a practice session of the U.S. Figure Skating Team during a visit to the Moravia region.



American Center director Mirek Konvalina and U.S. speaker Jiří Fisher with a future hockey legend, October 2008. [Petr Dolezel, U.S. Embassy Prague]

ARMENIA/GEORGIA: PILOBOLUS DANCE TROUPE OPENS THE CULTURAL SEASON



Josie Coyoe of Pilobolus and Ilya Sukhishvili of the Georgian National Ballet work together during a master class, September 26, 2008. [Levan Kherkheulidze]

The American modern dance troupe, Pilobolus, opened to great acclaim and excitement in **Tbilisi**, an important show of U.S. support for Georgian cultural life since the Russian invasion in August. Pilobolus dancers astounded the audience with the artistry, creativity and physicality of their uniquely American modern dance form, introducing something new and exciting to Georgian audiences. Master classes with members of the Georgian Pantomime Theater and the Georgian National Ballet Sukhishvili enhanced the cultural exchange. The group then traveled to Armenia, where they performed a standing-room-only concert in the **Yerevan Opera House**. The group gave a master class to the Armenian State Ballet Troupe and the Barekamutyun State Dance group. The U.S. Embassy in Yerevan estimates that over half of all Armenians were able to get a look at this outstanding group of performers.

CYPRUS: DAS GRAFFY TALKS GREEN DIPLOMACY AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (DAS) Colleen Graffy visited Cyprus to engage both Greek and Turkish Cypriot audiences through a variety of outreach events. In a visit to the Greek Cypriot village of Peristerona, DAS Graffy met with community leaders from two neighboring villages on either side of the Green Line, which divides the Greek and Turkish communities, and toured a church, a mosque, and a renovated building that will serve as a multi-use community facility. DAS Graffy also took part in a bicomunal discussion with members of the Cypriot Environmental Stakeholders Forum, which brings together a number of actors from the two communities on a variety of environmental projects with the support of the U.S. Government. Other activities during her three-day visit included a university fair, a bicomunal roundtable on education, and a visit to a historic neighborhood within the ancient Venetian walls of Nicosia. The preservation of the neighborhood is one of a number of U.S. Agency for International Development projects in which Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have worked on together to preserve their shared cultural heritage.



(L-R) Ambassador Urbancic, DAS Graffy and Daniel Hadjittofi, Executive Director of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission, October 2008. [Jason Chue, U.S. Embassy Nicosia]

FRANCE: EMBASSY ORGANIZES "A PATCHWORK OF CULTURES" QUILT EXHIBIT



Mrs. Stapleton tours the exhibit, October 2, 2008. [Sophie Nadeau, U.S. Embassy Paris]

The quilt exhibit "A Patchwork of Cultures: A Traveling Exhibit from Louisiana to France" opened in the Toile de Jouy textile museum in the greater Paris area. Debbie Stapleton (the U.S. Ambassador to France's wife) and Mayor Jacques Bellier inaugurated the exhibit in the presence of approximately 250 guests. This exhibit, co-organized with the museum, displays 30 quilts; half celebrate the Franco-American friendship and the other introduce the African-American tradition of quilting. The museum also organized a series of lectures for approximately 150 attendees on "Quilting in America: A Social History" by Professor G eraldine Chouard, and "Louisiana in French" by France Louisiane-France Am ericainie President Claude Teboul. Thanks to the U.S. Embassy in Paris' partnership with the France Patchwork association, the museum was also able to accommodate two workshops attended by 50 women new to the art of quilting from the Paris area. The exhibit has already traveled to the cities of Angoul eme, P erigueux and Rochefort.

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