

Addressing Diversity: An Example

Maria Alley, University of Pennsylvania

Over the last few years, issues of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion have gained real momentum in our society and our field. As our student body becomes more and more diverse, these questions become more central in our work. DEAI resources are featured prominently on the websites of our professional organizations, including [ACTR](#) and [ACTFL](#).

But how do we bring diversity into our classrooms? How do we help all our students feel a sense of belonging in our classes, our programs, and our institutions irrespective of their race, ethnicity, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, and educational and language-learning background?

In his 2010 book “Whistling Vivaldi,” Claude Steele argues that the most powerful cue that enables minority students to be successful in a university environment is the “critical mass,” the situation in which a student feels that there are “others like me.” Building this critical mass and attracting more diverse students and faculty may be a more long-term goal beyond the limits of a specific Russian-language course. However, as Steele argues convincingly, other cues, even small ones like a conversation or a visual, can be very impactful. I believe that we can create strong positive cues for our students that show that we recognize and value diversity, that we believe that diversity is beneficial and even necessary for our students’ success. In our Russian language courses, we can do this by including opportunities for students to engage with Russian-speaking cultures and communities around the world, including local Russian cultures and communities outside of Russia in addition to the more traditional, central locations in Russia like Moscow or St. Petersburg.

The examples below are taken from the curriculum of the elementary Russian language sequence at the University of Pennsylvania where we use materials developed in-house. This allows a certain degree of flexibility in the choice and sequencing of the materials. However, I hope that these examples are useful in explaining my approach to increasing diversity in my courses and that these ideas could be adapted for use in any Russian language program.

One of the most obvious ways of giving voice to different speakers of Russian is to select materials in Russian that were created by and for Russian speakers around the world. As shown in Figures 1 and 2 (see page 2), a simple listening activity on greetings in a first-semester Russian course can include videos from authentic TV shows in Russian from different countries. While students practice listening to greetings, they develop a better understanding of the geography of places where Russian is spoken.

In a similar way, almost any topic, skill or competence presents great potential for highlighting diversity. In the same elementary Russian course, students practice describing colors through learning about different regions and republics within Russia and their official flags. In this assignment, students continue expanding their knowledge of the geography of places where Russian is used and locate several regions, like the Republic of Karelia, on the map. Then students are instructed to google the name of the region and study the visuals that come up in the search to get a feel for the region. Finally, students study the official flag of the region and name its colors. In the final task in this assignment, students describe the official map of their own state, province or country.

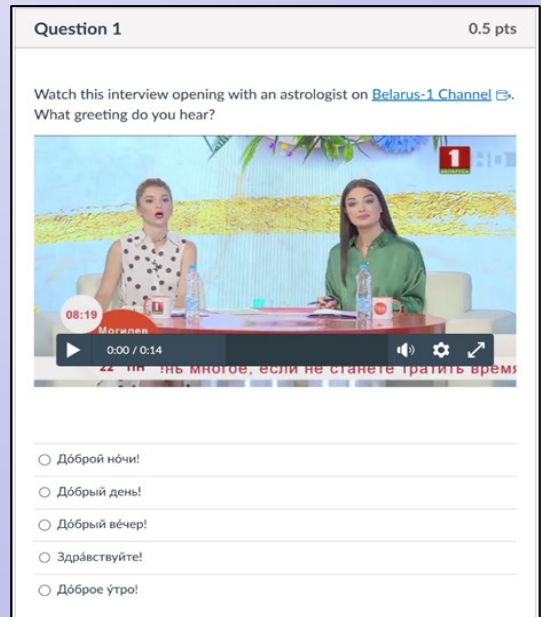


Figure 1. A clip from a morning TV show on [Belarus-1 Channel](#).

IN THIS ISSUE

Front Page Dialog: Addressing Diversity:

An Example by Maria Alley.....1

ACTR President's Corner.....3

2022 ACTR Awards for Excellence in
Teaching Russian—K-12 Level by John
Rook.....6Sparta's Russian Teachers Earn 2022 Na-
tional Recognition.....8

Education In America by V. Cukierman.....9

Beyond the Classroom by Olga Gotta11

SLAVA by Olga Gotta & Betsy Sandstrom...11

CARTA Conference.....11

ACTR Annual Membership Meeting.....12

ACTR Service Awards—2022.....14

Laureates of the ACTR Post-Secondary

Russian Scholar Awards 2023.....18

41st ACTR

National Russian Essay Contest21

In Memoriam: Peter T. Merrill.....27

Post-Secondary


Awards Committee Report.....28

ACTR Membership Form.....30

Addressing Diversity: An Example, continued from p. 1

Question 5 0.5 pts

Watch this interview opening on [Channel One Eurasia](#) airing in Kazakhstan (from July 22, 2022).
What greetings do you hear? Check all that apply.



☐ Доброе утро!

☐ Здравствуйте!

☐ Доброй ночи!

☐ Добрый день!

☐ Добрый вечер!

Figure 2. A clip from a morning show on [Channel One Eurasia](#) airing in Kazakhstan.

Question 2 0.5 pts


1) Республика Карелия

Find Karelia on the map and type (in English or in Russian) the name of the country Karelia borders on the West.

Google "Karelia" or "Карелия" and look at the pictures that come up in the search.

Question 3 1 pts

Какого цвета флаг Республики Карелия? Check all that apply.



☐ оранжевый

☐ красный

☐ белый

☐ голубой

☐ синий

☐ зелёный

Figure 3. A task from the assignment about regions and republics within Russia and their official flags.

Addressing Diversity: An Example, to be continued on p. 4

Уважаемые коллеги!

The school year 2022-2023 ended as a normal school year. In my Russian classes at Staten Island Technical HS, almost all students finally stopped wearing masks only at the end of the school year; I was discovering the real faces of my students almost every day in April and May.

The February ACTR Membership Meeting marked the implementation of a new Board-mandated online voting and election procedure, which has required the special skills and time of several of our Board members to set up.

At the membership meeting, recipients of several newly created awards were announced.

Congratulations to:**2023 ACTR Awards for Excellence in Teaching Russian – K-12 Level**

K-8 Suzanne Jouravlev, Sparta Middle School, NJ

9-12 William Brennan, Sparta High School, NJ

2023 ACTR Teaching Excellence Award for Post-Secondary Instructors

Dr. Olga Thomason, University of Georgia

2023 ACTR Teaching Excellence Award for Graduate Student Instructors

Ani Abrahamyan, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Aselle Almuratova, Indiana University

Also, I am especially pleased to welcome our newly elected Board members:

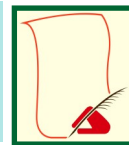
Elizabeth Ewaskio, University of Utah

Olga Mesropova, Iowa State University

Ben Rifkin, Fairleigh Dickinson University

The Board of Directors is working very hard to continually extend services to ACTR members. All possible efforts will be continued to support ACTR members to exchange ideas and resources needed in Russian classrooms and lecture halls around the country by organizing Friday Teachers' Lounges and webinars. I am pleased and honored to thank the ACTR Board's Public Relations Committee and Professional Development Committee for continuing to organize and moderate Zoom meetings (*ACTR Teachers' Lounges*) on teaching and learning the Russian language. The organization's main goal is to support studying the Russian language in the USA. The first acquaintance with the Russian language very often occurs in 7-12 classes.

Launched in the late 1960s, the ACTR Olympiada of Spoken Russian is the oldest of ACTR's secondary school activities. Drawing on the long-established practice of oral

**ACTR President's Corner
СЛОВО ПРЕЗИДЕНТА**

exams, the Olympiada has provided successive generations of American high school and middle school Russian students with a forum to demonstrate their achievement in Russian language study. Currently, the ACTR Olympiada is taking place in eighteen states, including two Olympiadas, North, and South, for heritage speakers.

The New York City Olympiada is "very young"; the first one was organized in 2019. Before that time, ACTR sponsored only a New York State Olympiada, which took place at the University at Albany. For many years only students from my school, Staten Island Technical HS, traveled four hours by bus to Albany, NY, to participate in the competition. We were the only school from New York City. Five years ago, Katerina Ratushnuyk, a new Russian Teacher at SITHS then, took the initiative to become a regional Chair and organized an Olympiada for students from New York City public and private schools.

This school year, on March 10, 2023, our school held a virtual Olympiada for 120 students from NYC schools. We greatly appreciate the help and support of the ACTR members who became judges for the Olympiada. I greatly appreciate the assistance of Betsy Sandstrom, Co-Chair of the National Olympiada, and Elena Farkas, the Board Treasurer. Thank you also to members of the committee to revise materials for heritage learners. Committee members Mara Sukholutskaya, Olga Mesropova, Julia Denne, and Nina Vaykhanskaya served as judges and also had the opportunity to observe the use of current Olympiada materials. This committee is working on a new set of materials for heritage learners and looking for suggestions and ideas from pre-college and college educators.

ACTR will continue to create new professional opportunities for all members.

If you would like to suggest a topic for Friday Teachers' Lounges and webinars, please e-mail Irina Dubinina iridubin@brandeis.edu, Olga Klimova Magnotta vok1@pitt.edu, or John Rook RookJ@glastonburyus.org

The Board of Directors always seeks your ideas, suggestions, and recommendations.

We wish you a relaxing summer and a great new school year, 2023-2024.

Всего наилучшего!

Nataliya Ushakova, President ACTR

Addressing Diversity: An Example, continued from p. 2


In the same elementary course, students practice reading Russian cursive in a task that focuses on major cities around the world that have a considerable population of Russian speakers.

As shown in Figures 4 and 5, in a series of tasks, students are instructed to read several names of cities in cursive. Then they find each city on Google Maps by typing the name either in Russian or in English (either would provide useful practice), then “walk around” the city to get a feel for it, and finally take and submit a screen shot of an interesting place or detail they come across.

Figure 4. Instructions to the assignment on reading cursive and exploring cities where Russian is spoken.

Students typically share a variety of screen shots, some of which can be used in class for follow-up discussion. In the end, students expand their understanding of places where Russian is spoken and begin to notice the differences and similarities among different cities, including cities within Russia. This assignment challenges some of students’ pre-conceived notions of what a typical Russian city is called or looks like. This assignment also serves as a starting point for the conversation about the diversity of ethnic groups populating Russia and other Russian-speaking areas. In a traditional Russian language course, students may not come across the city of Yoshkar-Ola, but a simple and thoughtful incorporation of the city into this assignment honors the 300,000 Russian speakers living there.

Below are the names of several cities where Russian is spoken by a large portion of the population. For this task:

- Go to [Google Maps](#).
- Change language to Russian using the “Language” option in the left-side menu.
- Find each city/town on the map by typing its name in Russian or in English. Refer to [this page](#) for help with typing in Russian.
- Make a note of where each city is located on the world map.
- Take your time exploring each location.
 - Jump in and “walk” around the city using this function  on the bottom right. Observe how these cities are different or similar to each other and to your city or country. Make a special note of street signs.
- Take a screen shot of the city on the map or of an interesting location you found while “walking” there and attach it to each of the questions below.

Question 4

0.5 pts

Йошкар-Ола

Upload

Choose a File

Figure 5. An example of a city name from the assignment on reading cursive and exploring cities where Russian is spoken.

The most challenging and painful part of this work is the question of how to address the horrors of the war in Ukraine and the changing geopolitical situation in the world. How do you “walk” around Odesa now and what “feel” for the city do you get? Would speakers of Russian in Kiev, Tbilisi or Riga today feel comfortable speaking Russian? It is hard to know how to handle these difficult questions appropriately. In my classes, I have tried to be open with my students, to acknowledge the facts and focus on the impact of war on people, to not

gloss over things just because they are painful. For example, in the follow-up discussion about cities, in addition to looking at screen shots of Odesa found by students, we googled Odesa and looked at contrasting images of pre-war Odesa and Odesa with sand bags covering monuments, anti-tank obstacles and people in those pictures. We briefly

talked about this stark contrast and the tragedy of war.

There are also other ways to engage students with speakers of Russian around the world beyond our main curriculum. For example, in my classes, I ask students to listen to music in Russian on YouTube or Spotify and share songs they especially like in class. The instructions are simple: make sure the audio/video is appropriate for class and prepare a couple words in Russian by way of introduction.

Inevitably, two things happen. First, students really get into this task. They are excited to share and find favorite artists and songs that will likely stay with them after our class is over. Second, every song or musical piece that is shared has tremendous potential for emphasizing diversity because students inevitably find music created by artists from different backgrounds, different countries, ethnic groups, etc. In a way, this informal assignment addresses both the natural diversity of Russian-speaking people and the diversity of backgrounds and interests among our students.

After listening to an excerpt or the full song in class and discussing it briefly in Russian, we google the artists to see who they are. For example, a student in my elementary course recently shared a song by Aleksandros Tsopozidis and Elbrus Janmirzoev. As shown in Figures 6 and 7, a simple Google search of the two artists came up with basic information about them. These texts are very accessible at the elementary level and provide great reading and pronunciation practice. At the same time, the information they provide is at the core of the message I am trying to communicate to my students: speakers of Russian are different. Here are a Georgian-born Greek-Russian artist and an Azerbaijani singer who sing a song in Russian that American students at Penn like. With each new contribution, students expand their understanding of the cultural contexts in which Russian is used. They constantly see diversity in real life and it is discovered by them, not hand-picked for them by the teacher.

In conclusion, I believe that we can take simple, but meaningful steps in order to highlight the diversity of people around the world who call Russian their first language and send an important message to our students about the value of diversity. Activities like the ones above could easily supplement any existing Russian-language program or curriculum. They address the same vocabulary and grammar that we typically have in our textbooks, but allow for an opportunity to use these words and constructions in real-life, naturally diverse contexts. At Penn, these activities are designed as homework assignments delivered through Canvas and are followed by in-class activities. However, it is easy to imagine that these general ideas can be implemented in a variety of formats in class or at home with minimal preparation. For example, in the activity about official flags, students could be assigned a region or a country, research the geographical location and the official flag at home, and then report on the region in class.

References:

Steele, C. M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How stereotypes affect us and what we can do*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

Сведения

Александрос Тсопозидис — греческий и российский певец. [Википедия](#)

Дата и место рождения: 1 января 1986 г. (возраст 37 лет), [Самеба, Грузия](#)

Альбомы: [За тобой](#)

Figure 6. Results of a Google search for Aleksandros Tsopozidis.

Сведения

Дата и место рождения: 11 июля 1991 г. (возраст 31 год), [Гах, Азербайджан](#)

Альбомы: [Бродяга](#)

Звукозаписывающая компания: [Warner Music Russia](#)

 [Заявить права на блок знаний](#)

Отзыв

Figure 7. Results of a Google search for Elbrus Janmirzoev.

Знакомьтесь

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2022 ACTR Awards for Excellence in Teaching Russian – K-12 Level

John Rook, ACTR Secretary

This was the first year that the pre-college ACTR Awards for Excellence in Teaching Russian were given to K-8 and 9-12 teachers of Russian in the United States. These awards were initiated this year, along with post-secondary and graduate student teaching awards. These new awards honor and recognize outstanding teachers for their dedication, professionalism and excellence in Russian language instruction across the US in both private and public schools. The awards were also intended to engage teachers through national recognition, in addition to highlighting and strengthening ACTR and Russian language programs nationwide.

The ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian Committee will select one candidate from each level (K-8 and 9-12) who demonstrates high-leverage teaching practices, enthusiasm for learning Russian, and the ability to serve as an influential advocate for teaching Russian on a regional and national basis. The winners will be notified and publicly announced through the ACTR newsletter, social media, and a letter to the teachers' administrators.



Nominees must be current members of ACTR who have taught Russian language courses for at least five years. Candidates can be nominated by anyone who is familiar with the teaching practices and the accomplishments of the nominee.

The recipients of the 2022 K-12 Awards are two teachers from a long-standing Russian program in Sparta School District in Sparta, New Jersey. **The K-8 award recipient is Suzanne Jouravlev**, a dedicated teacher of Russian language and culture at Sparta Middle School who has been teaching for 33 years.



The 9-12 award recipient is William Brennan, an 18-year veteran teacher of Russian language and culture at Sparta High School.

A newspaper article about the two teachers is reprinted in this newsletter.

Congratulations to the 2022 award recipients on behalf of ACTR! The K-12 Award Committee would also like to thank all colleagues who nominated teachers. The committee looks forward to receiving your nominations for the 2023 K-12 ACTR Excellence in Teaching Russian Awards.

Nomination materials will be updated on the website by June 2023. The deadline to nominate candidates for the 2023 awards will tentatively be December 1, 2023. More information about these awards and how to nominate a candidate can be found on the ACTR website: <https://www.actr.org/teaching-excellence-award.html> If you have any questions, please write to the following K-12 Award Committee members:

Committee Chair, John R. Rook (rookj@glastonburyus.org)

Committee Co-Chair, Elena Farkas (RussianAZ@alaskan.com)

Sparta's Russian Teachers Earn 2022 National Recognition

By Jennifer Dericks

Published March 25, 2023 at 12:51 pm

(Reprint of the Article from Tap into Sparta, Your Neighborhood News Online)

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/sparta/sections/education/articles/sparta-s-russian-teachers-earn-2023-national-recognition>



SPARTA, NJ – Two Sparta Russian teachers have earned the 2022 Excellence in Teaching Russian award from the [American Council of Teachers of Russian](#). William Brennan and Suzanne Jouravlev were nominated by their colleague Eric Hood for the honor. The ACTR selects one teacher for the high school and one for the middle school level to “honor and recognize outstanding teachers for their dedication, professionalism and excellence in Russian language instruction across the United States.”

Brennan said, “I am honored and humbled to win this award, and I want to thank Mr. Hood personally for submitting my name in nomination. He didn't tell me in advance so I was especially surprised when I got it. That said, it's very clear to me that whatever success I have been able to have as a Russian teacher is a direct result not only of the excellent students we have taking Russian here in Sparta, but also due to the strong sense of teamwork and partnership that Mrs. Jouravlev, Mr. Hood and I have developed over many years of working together. Each of us has strengths that complement each other, and it is this partnership among the three of together that makes our department so strong and enables me to be successful as a teacher.”

Jouravlev said, “I am so grateful to my colleagues, Mr. Brennan and Mr. Hood. Honestly, I could not do my job without their comradery and support. The three of us have been working together for almost 2 decades; complementing each other in most areas, balancing each other where necessary. I don't believe I deserve an award for doing what I love every day but I'm very humbled and thankful for this recognition.”

Sparta High School Principal Edward Lazzara said, “We are very proud of Ms Jouravlev's and Mr. Brennan's accomplishments. They

are caring educators and we are lucky to have them as members of the high school and Sparta School District.”

“We are very proud that Mrs. Jouravlev was recognized for this award,” Sparta Middle School Principal Frank Ciaburri said. “Mrs. J is passionate about teaching. She loves Russian and loves her students. Mrs. J has the ability to connect with her students, making her classes fun, engaging and rewarding for everyone. We are lucky to have a teacher like Mrs. J as a part of the Sparta Middle School team.”

Hood has worked with Jouravlev and Brennan for more than 30 years. “We have collaborated not only in the classroom, writing curriculum and selecting materials, but also in real life,” Hood said. Brennan and Jouravlev shared their thoughts on their unique careers: The Sparta Middle School and Sparta High School Russian students have experienced teachers; Jouravlev with 33 years and Brennan 19 years in the classroom. Brennan began teaching Russian in Sparta at the middle school in 2004 and the high school in 2005. Jouravlev said she had just returned from a year in Moscow working on her Master's degree when she was approached to teach Russian at the Sparta Junior High. While she has had experience teaching students from grade six through 12 she has been in the middle school for most of her career. Their journey to the classroom was very different for the duo. Brennan began as a freelance Russian translator in New York City and “always dreamed of becoming a teacher.” While in the United States Army, Brennan first studied Russian at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey California. After graduating from that program he worked as a military translator. He had taught Russian classes to his fellow soldiers and knew “teaching was something I enjoyed.” He went on to get certified to teach history and Russian at the State University of New York at Albany and “jumped at the chance” to teach Russian in Sparta.

Sparta's Russian Teachers Earn 2023 National Recognition, to be continued on p.8

Sparta's Russian Teachers Earn 2023 National Recognition, continued from p.7

For Jouravlev "teaching was the furthers career from her mind" and had not studied education in college. A Sparta student since second grade, Jouravlev's interest in Russian began as a junior high school student when she was able to try four world languages and "felt a true attraction of the mysterious Cyrillic alphabet and the Soviet culture. She decided to study Russian and as senior "jokingly" asked her Russian teacher if they could "take a field trip to Russia." She was told, if she organized it he would chaperone. Later that year Jouravlev and 22 classmates spent a week "fully immersed in the Russian experience." "My love for Russia, their people and their language was born with my first trip abroad," she said. Jouravlev studied Russian at George Washington University followed by a year at The Pushkin Institute in Moscow.

At the age of 23, she said she was "given an textbook and a list of students and told to go for it." Jouravlev would go on to earn her teaching degree through the "alternate route" program, relying on her own experiences as a student to build her new career, she said.

Jouravlev said she and Hood have been visiting Russia "since the early 90s" having chaperoned more than a dozen week long "field trips" to Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Brennan has also been to Moscow and Saint Petersburg, chaperoning three student trips with Hood and Jouravlev.

"It is an unbelievable experience for both teachers and students alike," Jouravlev said. "The opportunity to communicate in Russian and to finally see all the things they've been learning about with their own eyes is truly invaluable."

Jouravlev said she always enjoys planning and chaperoning the bi-annual trips to Russia.

"Seeing the kids grow since the sixth grade and finally able to put it all together as young adults is so very gratifying for an educator," she said.

"Sue has participated in the Russian Olympiada. She has gotten the students prepared and also judged the Olympiada. We have also traveled several times to Russia, visiting the cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Sue is an excellent organizer and great

with administrative matters. Moreover, she has an excellent command of not merely the Russian language, but the mindset as well. Sue has solved numerous problems and helped many students over the past thirty years. She is fantastic in the classroom. Sue gets the students interested in Russian, not the easiest task. Both Bill and I are grateful that she is in Middle School. Without Sue, Bill and I would not be here teaching Russian," Hood said.

The three student trips to Russia really stand out for Brennan as highlights of his Russian teaching experience.

"Additionally, I'm very proud of the accomplishments of my students at the Olympiada of Spoken Russian and the Russian Essay Contest," Brennan said of the annual competitions.

Jouravlev agreed preparing the students for the Olympiada and seeing them progress through the years, is "very rewarding."

"What I value most is the rapport I have with my students," Jouravlev said. "The kids make me smile and laugh every single day. The students who choose to study Russian are typically motivated, high academic achievers who sincerely care about their studies. They make my job easy in that they are truly interested and eager to learn. All of the students whom I have taught throughout the years have given me so much joy. I am extremely grateful and blessed to have been given this opportunity."

Hood nominated his two colleagues for their awards and has much to say about their impact on the Russian program. "Sue has participated in the Russian Olympiada. She has gotten the students prepared and also judged the Olympiada. We have also traveled several times to Russia, visiting the cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Sue is an excellent organizer and great with administrative matters. Moreover, she has an excellent command of not merely the Russian language, but the mindset as well. Sue has solved numerous problems and helped many students over the past thirty years. She is fantastic in the classroom. Sue gets the students interested in Russian, not the easiest task. Both Bill and I are grateful that she is in Middle School. Without Sue, Bill and I would not be here teaching Russian," Hood said. Hood continued about Brennan.

"Bill Brennan is a fine teacher and a true friend. Bill is constantly



reading about teaching and finding new ideas. He uses these ideas and shares them with me. Bill is one of the rare Americans (As is Sue) who have mastered the Russian language and can teach it to Americans. He has also struck up a constructive relation with his students. More than being a fine educator, Bill can be relied on in tough spot. He helped me personally through the toughest time in my life."

Brennan said, "Overall it's been a privilege and a joy to have the kind of smart, capable, and motivated students like we do in Russian, and such great colleagues."

EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Personal observations of Valentin Cukierman, McLean, VA

After teaching Russian for twelve years on the university level and 34 years in an American public high school, I am approaching imminent retirement. I am now reflecting about my life, my academic and teaching career, and my experiences in education.



In 1939, at the start of World War II, my father, with only a pack on his back, ran on foot as a refugee from Warsaw, Poland, towards Russia (USSR) away from the German bombardments. In the small town Ruzaevka, a junction station near the Volga River north of Stalingrad, towards the end of the war, he met and married my mother, who originally came from Poltava, Ukraine. She had been drafted by the Soviet military and moved to an interior post in the USSR. This move actually saved her life. The Germans, as they entered Poltava, had all the Jewish citizens deported out of town and executed. Within a three-month period at the start of the war, my mother had been notified of the loss of her entire family, including her parents and her sister, by the German executions, and her brother and her young Russian husband who lost their lives on the front lines. I was born to my Polish father and Russian mother in Ruzaevka, USSR in June 1945.

After the war ended, my father and his new family decided to re-patriate back to Poland. In Poland he could not find anyone still alive in his immediate family. He and my mother were the only survivors of their respective families. I never knew nor saw pictures of my grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives. Their lives and memory were lost to the war. We ended up in the city of Wroclaw (formerly German Breslau) in Silesia in the southwest of Poland. My mother became a very successful teacher of high school Russian. Annually she received a special monetary recognition for outstanding teachers from the Polish Ministry of Education. Many successful pedagogical approaches I learned, not in graduate school, but from my own mother, who would often take me along to her school.

In 1968, I graduated with Master of Arts (MA) degree from the Russian Philology Department at the University of Wroclaw. I was chosen to be a lecturer in Russian at the Wroclaw Fine Arts Academy. However, at that moment, Poland

no longer needed me. A blatant, political, antisemitic campaign started in Communist Poland as an aftermath of the 1967 six-day war in Israel. Jewish citizens were accused of being "Zionists," the "fifth column," not deserving the trust and confidence of the government. My mother, until then a valued teacher, widely respected for her work, was not needed either. She was transferred, after twenty years of work, from a secondary to a primary school, which for her was an unjust humiliation.

The government urged us to leave Poland, and we were stripped of our citizenship as soon as we applied for our exit visas. My father was 67 years old. To leave the country, he had not only to renounce his Polish citizenship, but to forfeit the retirement pension he had earned. After more than twenty years of life in Poland, my parents left for the unknown without any financial security. We were given three weeks to pack our belongings and depart, uprooting ourselves and preparing to start a new life for the second time.

The United States accepted us as political refugees. Upon my arrival in the US in May of 1970, I was completely absorbed with surviving, adjusting, and learning about my adopted country. Since we had no surviving relatives anywhere in the world, we could not request a permanent place to settle in the US. So, we ended up, quite by chance, in the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan. There I found a manual labor job in the shipping department of a car company. They paid me \$20 a day cash under the table. Since my way home was not safe, I was told to keep the money in my shoe under my foot. That lasted about two months until the shoes fell apart.

Someone at work suggested that I visit the University of Michigan to find a more appropriate environment where I might be able to use my academic background. Since I could not afford a bus, I hitchhiked to Ann Arbor, Michigan, (about an hour away) with all my university diplomas from Poland. I found the Slavic department and kept knocking on the doors of the faculty. Some doors opened and some did not. I introduced myself and kept inquiring about the opportunity to enroll in graduate school. Finally, lo and behold, a few weeks later, I received a letter of invitation to the graduate program. A candidate who had been accepted was in a car accident and withdrew his application. His unfortunate accident became my first stroke of luck in America.

I was given a chance to teach beginning Russian as a "teaching fellow" and to take some graduate courses towards my doctorate. I was exempted from tuition and given a chance to be a resident tutor in "Russian House," a university dormitory. My room and board were discounted, and I began to breathe more easily. My yearly stipend was \$4,000—an overwhelming amount of money for my émigré expectations. Upon landing in America, a few months earlier, I had only \$16 to my name. Three years later, thanks to my survival thriftiness, I was able to buy a new car for cash.

My graduate courses were quite sophisticated. I quickly discovered some Russian authors and interpretations that were either banned or censored by the Communist government. For example, in the University of Wroclaw I was allowed to have access to the Nobel Prize winner Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (a forbidden book at that time) only under supervision in the secure room in the library. However, my major challenge was the English language. The first semester the department allowed me to write papers and participate in lectures in Russian. I remember my first paper written in English. That is when I began to feel that I had finally found my world - the world of academia.

In 1974, only four years after my arrival in the US, and at the age of 29, I received a position as a full-time Assistant Professor in the Slavic Department of the University of Connecticut in Storrs. I was told that they chose me over 137 applicant candidates (my self-esteem surged towards the ceiling). I taught Russian and Polish language and literature. In 1976 I returned to the University of Michigan to defend my PhD thesis "The Odessa School of Writers." In my thesis I proved for the first time that these young Russian Odessan writers

Education in America, continued from p. 9

spontaneously formed a legitimate literary school. A copy of my dissertation was exhibited for years at the Odessa Literary Museum, as if to show to the world that, to quote the then director of the museum, "even foreigners are interested in the culture of our city."

While teaching in Connecticut, I became a Fulbright Scholar in an IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board) exchange program between the USA and the USSR. I took a sabbatical and spent an academic year in 1978-79 in Leningrad. I was doing research in Russian libraries and immersing myself in the socio-cultural-political life of the Soviet Union. It was a very dramatic, meaningful, and revealing year which greatly not only enriched my scholarship, but also gave me a true understanding of the intrinsic values permeating the Soviet Communist system and the psychological state of individual citizens.

Towards the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s the world was shocked by the breakup of the Soviet Union and its consequences. Suddenly, Russia and the Russian language became the center of the world's attention. Six high schools opened Russian language programs in Fairfax County, near Washington, DC, where I had relocated after learning about the imminent closure of the Slavic Department in Connecticut. One of the public schools, Langley High School, located half a mile from the headquarters of the CIA, became the setting for my 34-year high school teaching career.

I consider myself the founding father of this high school Russian program which has educated thousands of young people. We even expanded with another part-time teacher. While programs in other schools in the county gradually withered, Langley's has been thriving. As of now, we still have over 150 students studying Russian, an impressive number given the fact that this public school of 2000 students offers as many as seven foreign languages on a regular basis.

My proudest accomplishment was setting up a cultural exchange program between our school and a high school in the then renamed St. Petersburg, Russia. We completed 25 student exchanges in the years between 1990 - 2019. Under my leadership, approximately 20 American students would spend ten days in Moscow and in St. Petersburg in homestays during Langley's spring break. A month later 20 Russian students would spend ten days in our houses (also homestays). Our hosts became our guests.

For many of the students the lessons they learned from each other would stay for much longer than the knowledge they got from their textbooks. For instance, on our way back home from Russia, my students would loudly wonder: "How come the Russians are so happy? After all, they don't have anything." Which brings out the major question of the meaning of our human existence: What makes us happy? My over-indulged American students from the wealthy suburbs of Washington, unanimously saw the emptiness of their fascination with material possessions. What a valuable lesson for all of us!

In 2011 at the annual national conference of AATSEEL in Pasadena, California, I was awarded the highest distinction in my profession for Excellence in Teaching at the High School Level.

However, in looking back at my very successful career, I cannot ignore issues and problems that undermine the quality of education in this country. To bring up a few examples:

In most international standardized tests in math, science and reading, US students invariably place in the middle of the pack, among smaller, poorer nations. These mediocre performances are hardly satisfying and beg for justification.

The money for education comes from taxes, which are approved by the con-

stituents. In the US, people often vote against raising taxes. This situation results in less funding for public education. As for universities, they have had to resort to generating income to ensure their survival. A burden falls on the individual college student which in some cases mean exorbitant fees. Many of my brightest students avoid applying to the best colleges for fear of not being able to afford the tuition.

Our society in general is not inclined to give teachers due credit for their mission of imparting knowledge. Nor is there a general appreciation of the skill and art required for being a successful teacher. In other parts of the world teachers are addressed respectfully as "Professors" and treated as elite members of the community. Here in the US, the general society, the business world, pursues their own goals to attract the potential customer. Quite often one comes across an article in the public media where it is eagerly revealed that a commonly admired person is either a high school or college drop-out.

In social encounters among teenagers, the popular kids are often intellectually mediocre while the thinking, reflective ones are considered nerds and often dismissed. After all, the human mind in the history of humanity has always been the most sacred. That is why higher education in the developed world (outside of the US) is basically for free, because in their eyes, a young, educated mind is the future of the country.

Another problem interfering with the appreciation of learning process in school is the obsession with sports activities. In my school there are over 40 clubs and teams. It drains the students' attention. No academic successes have been glorified and celebrated as much as athletic prowess. In my US public high school, the front wall is decorated with its proud displays of school accomplishments, of which about 90% are related exclusively to sports. At the school's official graduation ceremonies, principals customarily extoll the virtues of the school, starting with the sports accomplishments rather than the academic achievements.

The lowering of standards and expectations in school is visible in a recently instituted new grading policy. To enhance the graduation rate, the school administration in my county instituted a "no zero" policy, meaning the lowest grade must be an "F" not "0". As a result, a student who submits a test with nothing on it gets 64% credit just for being present in class.

On a more encouraging note, one must give credit to the US school system for promoting students' individuality and personal interests through the opportunity to choose courses that appeal to them. It allows students to develop their own tastes and interests. I remember as a student in my high school in Poland the only choice we were given was a foreign language. The school would never trust our judgement enough to let us control our own educational destiny.

Also, it must be noted that the relationships between students and teachers in the US are much more relaxed than in Eastern Europe. Students feel much more at ease (not fearful) in front of their teachers, which facilitates the learning process. An average American student has high integrity, unlike in Eastern European schools where cheating was the modus vivendi. American students, by and large, are models of personal pride and integrity. In many cases the teacher can almost leave the students during the test alone, one on one with their consciences.

Interestingly, whenever a student gets in trouble and a teacher singles him out for public condemnation, most of the time the class supports the "culprit" rather than the teacher. Compassion is very tangible. From my high school recollections, my classmates would take the opportunity to denigrate the poor victim just to please the authorities.

Despite historical obstacles, practical business-materialistic mentality, and inherent lack of genuine appreciation of pure education, the US has produced a great deal of brilliant and successful graduates both in high school and universities. Both of my sons benefited from the American school and academic system. One son graduated from MIT. Both sons earned PhDs in Physics, one

from the University of California at Berkeley and one from Stanford University. I too am grateful for the most rewarding years of my life teaching Russian in the USA.

Valentin Cukierman, PhD
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e-mail vcukierman@fcps.edu (work)

Beyond the Russian Classroom

The 2021-2022 school year was an interesting time to live in and to be in school. With the invasion of Ukraine by Russia our Russian 6/AP class started to learn more about it from the perspective of the Russian people rather than looking from an outside view. The event changed how our school reacted as we started a humanitarian aid drive to send to Ukraine from our World Language Department. We always learned about Russia in our Russian class but as seniors we also learned about Eastern Europe, including Russia, in Current Issues (CI), a Social Studies course required for the senior class. The problem with CI is that we learn about the world from the American perspective. We developed a presentation about the war from the perspective of the Russian people and believe it allowed our classmates to view the events from a different angle.

During our time of preparation for the presentation, each of us was tasked with one specific topic to cover. These included censorship of private media, propaganda from the state, protests, and how the government influences schools. It was some of the most intriguing and enriching research we've done as students. We used sources that came from Russia such as tweets from Russians, Russian news sources both independent and state run. It truly opened our eyes to new perspectives.

When we gave the presentation in CI, we each took turns presenting the information. This was a new experience for all of us because we had to present this to ~500 peers. It was the first time students were given an opportunity to address the CI class. It did not help our nervousness that most decided to put down their phones and pay attention to our presentation. Just by doing this we learned valuable lessons and skills such as, to not make an opinion with only one perspective, and always do proper research. We think we, using our Russian language skills to research, were able to effectively summarize the information we gathered. This was in itself an important learning experience. We think we showed our peers a new perspective which was really impactful on us because we now felt as though we made a difference on our generation.

We couldn't have done it without each other: Daniel Silvester, Francesco Ossino, Zach Lebowitz, Vijay Tandon, and Eva Mulholland, all working together to get this finished in a timely manner. We would like to thank our amazing Russian teacher, Olga Gotta, for the idea and for all of her help finding sources with us. Along with our thanks to Olga Gotta, we would like to thank Rita Oleksak, Glastonbury World Language Director, for her support and our CI teachers for encouragement to make our presentation the best it could be.

Submitted by Olga Gotta on behalf of her students.

SLAVA - THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL SLAVIC HONOR SOCIETY

Olga Gotta and Betsy Sandstrom

membership. It is a wonderful opportunity to motivate students to continue learning their Slavic language. When inducted, new members receive national recognition of academic excellence, a membership certificate, and the Society pin.

We are happy to share that SLAVA has been growing and new chapters have been opened: Seneca High School, Tabernacle, NJ in 2021, Whitehaven High School, Memphis, TN in 2022 and Volcano Vista High School, Albuquerque, NM in 2023. We would also like to highlight a few schools that have been annually inducting new members. These include but are not limited to Abington Heights HS, Clarks Summit, PA, Langley HS, McLean, VA, Maggie Walker Governor's HS, Richmond, VA, Sparta HS, Sparta, NJ, Academy of Information, Technology and Engineering, Stamford, CT. In 2022, 124 new members were inducted from 13 schools.

SLAVA is evolving. Most importantly, Duma members have been reviewing and working to modernize the constitution. This is long overdue. In addition, to recognize and encourage middle school Russian students, we are working to establish a Slavic honor society specifically for this group. If you would like to participate in this effort, please contact us at actrslava@gmail.com

Dear Colleagues,

CARTA (The Central Association of Russian Teachers of America) is pleased to invite you to its 25th Annual Conference that will take place on March 31- April 2, 2023 in the Sheraton Hotel, Downtown Oklahoma City.

Let us get together in Oklahoma City in spring to salute service to our students and educators and to recognize our colleagues' contribution to teaching Russian Language, Literature, and Culture.

The conference will include individual papers, panels, and roundtables on Russian Language, Literature, History, Culture, and Language Pedagogy.

For information about the conference please contact Mara Sukholutska-ya, tel: (405) 639-9268, <msukholu@ecok.edu>.

The conference registration and membership forms can be found at <https://cartaws.wixsite.com/online>

The photo shows participants at the 2022 CARTA Conference in Waco, Texas.

Submitted by Valentina Iepuri



SLAVA was founded in December 1973. It serves as a means for the recognition of academic excellence in the study of Slavic languages, literature, culture, and related fields on the high school level. The Society provides incentives for scholarly interest in Slavic life and culture.

SLAVA has been patterned after other existing honorary organizations. Students whose minimum average grade in the third year of Slavic language study is 88% or higher and whose minimum overall academic average is 80%, qualify for SLAVA

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF RUSSIAN

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

February 18, 2023

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM ZOOM

Meeting Notes - prepared by John R. Rook, ACTR Secretary

Nataliya Ushakova (ACTR President) opened the ACTR Annual Membership Meeting. Diane Nemec-Ignashev, presided over the meeting as ACTR Parliamentarian. It was requested that all attending ACTR members review and approve the agenda for this year's meeting. Meeting protocol required that only questions concerning agenda topics be raised and any new business for ACTR be addressed at the end of the meeting and only if there was sufficient time. The voting process for the meeting was also explained to the attending members. Links to any committee reports are listed within the appropriate agenda topic. Link to meeting agenda: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MU_bw4wPZ-t3k4A6tGtzoM8QQwEsLYvYA_6QWvaw2j4/edit?usp=share_link

Motion: Accept the agenda for today's General Membership Meeting. **Vote:** Agenda was unanimously approved by all in attendance.

Review and Approval of Minutes of 02. 18.2022 Membership Meeting

Motion: Approve the minutes from last year's ACTR General Membership Meeting on 2-18-2022. **Vote:** Meeting minutes were unanimously approved by all in attendance.

ACTR Membership Secretary Report

Irina Dubinina, Membership Secretary, reported that there are currently 496 active members, based on a 365-day calendar year. The largest category (241 members) remains lecturers, instructors, pre-college teachers, retirees and independent scholars. Members were encouraged to renew their membership if need be and requested to check their membership account settings, including information regarding the name and type of their institution, as well as how they prefer to receive the ACTR Letter and Russian Language Journal (USPS mail or electronic via email). Irina explained to members that they support the field of teaching Russian language in the US by being an active member and that they can donate to an ACTR fund such as the ACTR Russian Laureate Scholarship Fund, the ACTR Claire Walker Olympiada Fund as well as the ACTR Professional Development Fund in honor of Olga Kagan.

More details regarding this report can be found via the following link: *Link to ACTR Membership Secretary Report:*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SBGtWt5PlsF2Q2ayNvVgk4xcMg3b1BB6/view?usp=share_link

American Councils Program Office Report and ACTR programs

Dan Davidson, Executive Director, presented a program office report that touched upon the following areas:

1. NEWL - Russian registration and updates. The NEWL-Russian (formerly known as the Prototype AP Russian Exam) will be administered and proctored in April. NEWL is comprised of four proficiency-based tests in the area of reading, listening, speaking and writing which all contribute equally to the aggregate score. The NEWL score reports are analogous to AP scores and the four skill-specific sub-scores are based on the ACTFL proficiency scale. More details regarding the NEWL exam, including score levels and the 2022 results can be found in the link to the program report. Registration remains open until March 31, 2023 and exam administration will take place on April 27, 2023 (Make-ups on April 28-29, 2023).

2. Sponsored research and study relevant to ACTR

Information regarding the following funded programs and related scholarships was also presented:

NSLI-Y Russian Language Programs for High School Students (Estonia, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, academic year program in Kyrgyzstan and virtual programs for summer study and beginner learners of Russian). The next deadline will be in November 2023. Website: <https://nsliforyouth.org/>

CLS (Critical Language Scholarship Programs) including CLS Spark (summer institutes in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Tbilisi, Georgia; CLS Spark summer 2023 virtual program). Applications will be made available in mid-September with a deadline in mid-November 2023. Website: <https://clscholarship.org/>

Summer, Semester and Academic Year Programs at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty; Yerevan State University, Tbilisi State University; Summer Language Teacher Program. Information regarding all these programs can be found on the American Councils website: <https://www.studyabroad.americancouncils.org/>

3. AC/ACTR Summer Russian Teacher Institute for US teachers of Russian (SLT) in Almaty (July 2023; Deadline for applications: March 1).

4. Two announcements were made as part of this report:

Lyudmila Klimanova (Department of Russian, University of Arizona) was confirmed by the ACTR Board of Directors as the new editor of the Russian Language Journal (RLJ), effective with volume 73. Dan also expressed heartfelt gratitude to Jennifer Bown, Chair of the Department of German and Russian at Brigham Young University for her five years of service on the RLJ and her contributions to volumes 68-72.

American Councils launched a program to support teachers and scholars displaced by the War in Ukraine. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Richard Lounsbery Foundation and the Stirling Foundation have awarded grants to American Councils to create a Ukrainian Visiting Scholars Program (VSP) to support displaced Ukrainian university faculty and researchers whose work has been disrupted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The VSP allows affected scholars to resume their work in safer parts of the country or at institutions outside the country. Dan also mentioned the Emergency Support for Ukrainian Initiative which is being led by American Councils and alumni to provide humanitarian support to people in Ukraine as well as to refugees in Poland, Moldova, Romania and elsewhere.

Link to Program Office report: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1zYcmXzspInJBlea9UBvRniwa8KX4g6r/edit?usp=share_link&ouid=112048485720185126160&rtfpof=true&sd=true

Report from the American Councils Board of Trustees Meeting

Nataliya Ushakova, ACTR President and representative to meeting, reported that the AC Board of Trustees met on November 10 in Washington DC and AC highlighted the fact the organization is doing well with regard to its programming efforts in spite of the current situation with the war in Ukraine. More information regarding upcoming summer and fall AC programs will be detailed at the next meeting in March 2023.

ACTR By-Laws Committee Report

Diane Nemec-Ignashev reported that the amendments to the rules of governance that were approved by the general membership last year have now been ratified by the American Councils Board of Trustees. During the process of ratification, the AC Board of Trustees made a suggestion regarding elections conducted online, which has already been implemented by ACTR. The option to vote by mail is no longer available, but members who have an issue with voting procedures are encouraged to contact a member of any voting committee. Contradictions regarding the period of voting have been either removed or clarified.

Cynthia Ruder and Betsy Sandstrom also serve on the committee, which will review the ACTR By-Laws and check them against those of AC Board of Trustees to ensure that both sets of By-Laws overlap and are not contradictory. The committee will look for provisions that are contradictory, obsolete or that need to be added, such as a Code of Conduct for the organization. This committee was appointed at the October 15, 2022 ACTR Board meeting and started meeting January 11, 2023. They plan to present revisions at the September 2023 meeting of the American Councils Board of Trustees. Any formal amendments to the By-Laws must be presented no later than sixty days prior to the annual membership meeting. *Link to By-Laws Committee report:*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aVBsT4Y8vq9fDI5q6iiH7iKdJ6CwS9F/view?usp=share_link

ACTR Nominations Committee Report and Elections

Raquel Greene, Committee Chair, presented the report of this year's ACTR Nominations Committee, in which she commented on their charge to identify and present nominations to the ACTR Board and general membership for the period of March 2023 - March 2026. This year there were seven total vacancies on the ACTR Board, with three current board members filing for reelection and three nominees to fill the remaining four vacancies. Voting was conducted online to preserve anonymity. Voting results were verified by the ACTR webmasters. Of all members eligible to vote, 128 votes were cast, with an elected candidate requiring a simple majority of 65 votes.

Prior to announcing the results of the board vote, Nataliya Ushakova thanked those board members who are stepping down after this current term for their service: Mark Trotter (Co-Chair of the National Olympiada Committee) and Nina Bond (National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest).

Newly elected ACTR Board members are:

Elizabeth Ewaskio, Instructor of Russian - University of Utah (new to board)

Elena Farkas, Adjunct Instructor of Russian - University of Alaska, current ACTR Treasurer and ACTR Executive Committee member (reelected to board)

Olga Mesropova, Associate Professor of Russian - Iowa State University (new to board)

Ben Rifkin, Dean of Maxwell Becton College of Arts and Science - Farleigh Dickinson University and Tenured Professor of Russian (returning to board)

Lee Roby, Upper School Russian Teacher and Language Department Chair - Friends School of Baltimore (reelected to board)

John R. Rook, Russian and Spanish Teacher - Smith Middle School/Glastonbury Public Schools (reelected to board)

Since both the ACTR President and Vice-President are up for term renewals in 2024, they cannot appoint members to the 2024

Nominations Committee. The Board of Directors will create the Nominations Committee by a poll conducted by the 2023 Nominations Committee after this annual membership meeting. All materials submitted by and for this year's candidates will be removed from the ACTR website and will no longer be made available after this meeting. Mark Trotter thanked the board and wished the newly elected and re-elected board members well. Diane confirmed that only board members can serve on the Nominations Committee. Jane Shuffelton requested that the committee forward the information contained in this report to the ACTR Letter for publication in the next issue. *Link to report of the Nominations Committee:* https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CINbUZAwrCdEEFy3Badi-M8TmDJGwcl7/view?usp=share_link

ACTR Olympiada Materials Development and Revision Committees

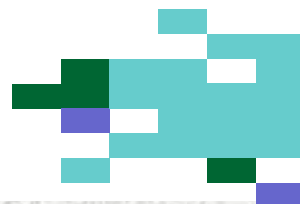
Mara Sukholutskaya reported that the materials that are currently being used for the Olympiada of Spoken Russian are those that were written or revised two years ago. The members of the committee that worked on these materials are aware that they need to revisit these materials once again for editing, which will be done shortly. The Heritage Materials Committee has been working for the past year and a half and meets regularly with a special charge to consider the diverse populations of the Russian speaking world, in addition to the current situation with the War in Ukraine. Both committees welcome any suggestions to improve the materials. Currently materials for Level III are being addressed. *Link to Committee report:* https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RF0g1UZ_H1mXo1WNTY8kknC4EpBYRYik/edit?usp=share_link&oid=112048485720185126160&rtoref=true&sd=true

ACTR Treasurer's Report

Elena Farkas mentioned that she posted a more formal report online along with two financial statements. She specified that the fiscal year for ACTR runs from July 1 - June 30 of each year. Elena worked with both Solomon Workneh and Dan Davidson of American Councils on financial reporting for ACTR, and made some clarifications and adjustments to some ACTR sub-accounts. Solomon will create a new account line item to reflect a new activity regarding the K-16 teaching awards. Membership dues are the primary source of revenue, while special ACTR funds receive donations that are restricted in use. As of December 2022, ACTR has \$13,351 in the cash operating account. As of December 2022, ACTR has \$59,722 in the cash-restricted account. General donations made to ACTR without specification to a fund will be applied to the ACTR General Donations Fund. Another source of revenue is advertising, either on the website or in the ACTR Letter and Russian Language Journal. Currently ACTR is operating in the black with enough funds to cover its operating costs. Any ACTR accounts showing a deficit will be adjusted by the end of the current fiscal year. The organization currently has one investment account - the ACTR Pushkin Fund. In addition to this account the American Councils Fund for the Future and Dan Davidson Scholarship Fund are invested with Northern Trust. As of January 2023, the ACTR Pushkin Fund has \$56K, which has increased from \$53K since December 2022. Currently the Olga Kagan Fund is not invested but it is bank-protected, the funds of which are available to ACTR. Dan Davidson will be working with a funds account manager on how and when to best invest these funds in the near future and report this information to the board and membership.

ACTR uses WildApricot to process registrations and payments for its events and contests, which must be paid for as a subscription. Checks written for any ACTR contest must be made payable to "American Councils for International Education" (and not ACTR). Additionally, any requests for reimbursements should be accompanied by a detailed/itemized expense report with supporting docu-

ACTR SERVICE AWARD



This award, originally established *in memory of Jane Barley and Fred Johnson*, is given annually to recognize outstanding service to ACTR. The award is traditionally presented at the annual ACTR membership meeting.

Nominees must be members of ACTR in good standing. They should have demonstrated prominent service to ACTR in the form of active involvement in the work of the organization and promotion of its goals. Additional considerations include demonstrated devotion to the profession in terms of activities such as teaching, professional involvement, and activities in the field beyond ACTR and the classroom. Those were qualities exemplified by Jane Barley and Fred Johnson.

Members of the awards committee are Elena Farkas, Betsy Sandstrom, and Jane Shuffelton.

Nominations for the award may be addressed to Elena Farkas: Russianaz@alaskan.com. Nominations for the award must be submitted by November 15 to be considered for that year's award.

Past recipients:

- 1995—George Morris
- 1996—Marian Walters
- 1997—Zita Dabars
- 1998—John Schillinger
- 1999—Irwin Weil
- 2000—Elizabeth Neatrou
- 2001—Renate Bialy
- 2002—Jane Shuffelton
- 2003—John Mohan
- 2004—Halina Danchenko
- 2005—John Sheehan, Richard Brecht*
- 2006—Robert Channon
- 2007—Betty Leaver
- 2008—Elizabeth Sandstrom, Vitaly G. Kostomarov*
- 2009—Maria Lekic
- 2011—Patricia Zody
- 2012—Thomas Garza
- 2013—Peter Merrill
- 2014—Benjamin Rifkin
- 2015—Dan Davidson (special lifetime award)
- 2016—Cynthia Ruder
- 2017—William Rivers
- 2018—Camelot Marshall
- 2019—Paavo Husen
- 2020—Alla Smyslova
- 2021—Evgeny Dengub
- 2022—Mara Sukholutsкая, Mark Trotter*

*special award

Mara Sukholutsкая



The annual ACTR Distinguished Service Award goes to *Dr. Mara Sukholutsкая*, Professor of Russian and Director of Global Education at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma.

She holds several degrees from Kiev State University of Linguistics and an Honorary Doctorate of linguistics and international relations from the National Dragomanov

Pedagogical University in Kiev. Among her honors and awards are the AATSEEL Excellence in Teaching Award and the Excellence in Teaching World Languages Award from SWCOLT (The Southwest Conference on Language Teaching). Her list of publications is long and varied.

Dr. Sukholutsкая has served ACTR as a member of the Board of Directors and also as a representative of CARTA, the Central Association of Russian Teachers of America. She has been a judge of ACTR's National Russian Essay Contest for many years, reading and rating hundreds – or by now perhaps it's thousands – of essays by pre-college students of Russian. She worked tirelessly for several years on an ACTR committee charged with rewriting the materials for the ACTR Olympiada of Spoken Russian, and has been instrumental in guiding that work to completion.

2023 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of CARTA, which Mara founded in 1988. She continues to serve as the association's President. CARTA's membership of over 200 instructors

has access to numerous events including a yearly conference. Mara has brought to campus many distinguished speakers, including Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Mikhail Gorbachev. She also coordinated the visit of a delegation from East Central University to Ukraine and Russia that led to sister-institution agreements with the National University of Linguistics in Kyiv and the State University of Management in Moscow.

Dr. Sukolutsкая has led summer STARTALK programs in Ada and has made numerous presentations at conferences, where she is always a lively and engaging speaker. She was the star of a session at the MAPRIAL congress in Granada, where she demonstrated a culture learning game that had attendees crowding around her after the session with questions and enthusiastic praise. She once gave an unforgettable, entertaining talk at an ACTFL conference, with a priceless description of how Gorbachev managed to get an authentic Native American head-dress. She had the audience enthralled with the narrative of how she managed to fulfill Mikhail Sergeevich's wish.

Mara Sukholutsкая stands out as a tireless champion for Russian language and culture, a respected pedagogue and dedicated teacher. She is known for being an exceptional teacher, committed to bringing her students to high academic levels, while caring about them as individuals. The letter nominating her describes her as "a valued colleague, a dedicated teacher and scholar, and a hard-working and highly responsible professor."

It is a pleasure to honor her this year with the ACTR Distinguished Service Award.

Mark Trotter



We are giving a second award this year, a special award in recognition of Mark Trotter's many years of outstanding service to the field of Russian and to ACTR. This award acknowledges his long and distinguished record of teaching, promoting, and supporting the study of Russian and the programs of ACTR.

He has a history of mentoring and supporting new instructors, as evidenced by comments from those who proposed him for this award. One person wrote that "Conversations with Mark on teaching pedagogy had a meaningful impact on me and Mark's ideas made me a more successful instructor." Another comment describes Mark as "tirelessly kind, patient, understanding, and flexible."

The special award that honors Mark Trotter today recognizes his long involvement with ACTR and his work in outreach programs for Russian. Mark has been an active member of the Board of Directors of ACTR for several decades, sharing his perspectives and his wisdom at many board meetings. He has been

co-chair of ACTR's Olympiada of Spoken Russian for almost as many decades and has guided that program faithfully over the years. In fact, he succeeded in expanding the Olympiada to seven new regions. He initiated a series of teleconferences for Olympiada chairs that made it possible for all Olympiada chairs to share ideas, discuss policies, and make decisions together.

Mark has been instrumental in outreach to assure that ALL students of Russian are able to participate in the Olympiada, supporting the principles of DEAL.

He has demonstrated support for Russian beyond the university and the ACTR Board, with outreach presentations on Russian culture and society for high school Russian programs and he coordinates an after-school program for pre-K -grade 6 heritage learners of Russian.

One writer describes accompanying Mark on a visit to a school in Chicago where she was impressed with his genuine enthusiasm for sharing his love of Russian language and culture with this group of mostly minority high school juniors and seniors. He talked to them about sports and music. He understood that in order to hook this audience, he needed to show them how rich and varied the study of Russian language and culture can be.

Mark holds the position of Associate Director/ Outreach Coordinator of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. He has served as the Resident Director and Academic Coordinator for the Russian Flagship Program at St. Petersburg State University. He has also taught at directed language programs in Hungary and Montenegro. He holds degrees from McGill University and the University of Michigan and has completed coursework at the Jagellonian Institute in Cracow and the Pushkin Institute in Moscow. Mark really gets around!

His record of publications and conference presentations is long, focused mostly on language acquisition pedagogy and assessment. Mark is fluent in Hungarian and has written and given presentations on Hungarian for publications and conferences at places I won't even try to pronounce.

As one writer put it "Mark's administrative leadership has significantly promoted the study of Russian for underserved and underrepresented students in our field, and has inspired, supported, and pushed many classroom instructors to expand their understanding of how we might teach about the Russophone world to our increasingly diverse student populations. Mark's administrative leadership, mentoring and support have been powerful and wide-reaching and have ushered us into a new era where practitioners are beginning to look at the teaching and learning of Russian from new and exciting angles.

It is our pleasure to present Mark with this (special) ACTR Service Award.

Поздравляем!



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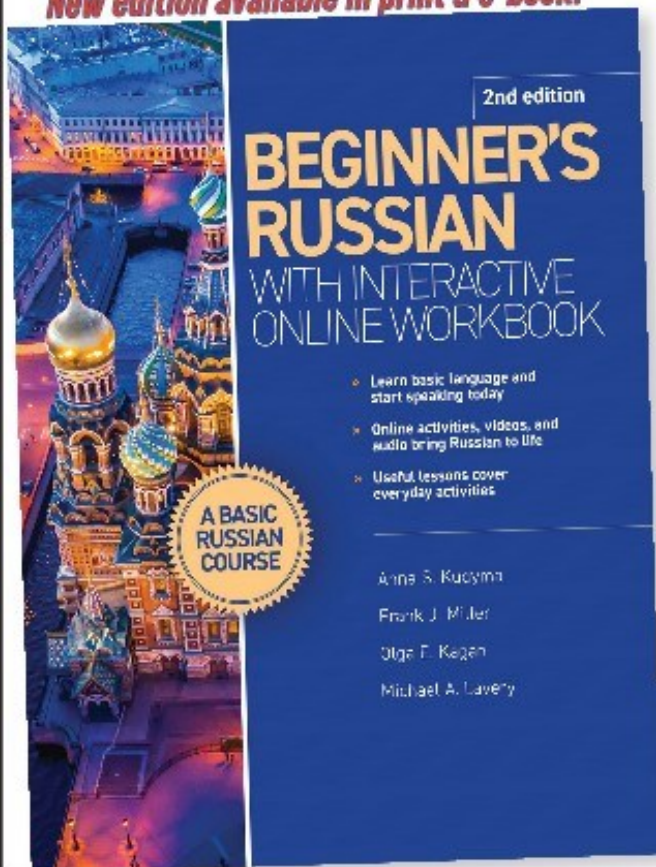
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LAUREATES OF THE ACTR POST-SECONDARY RUSSIAN SCHOLAR AWARD 2023

Thanks to the efforts of ACTR members who are Russian program directors, coordinators and lecturers, this year seventy-seven outstanding students received the ACTR Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Award-2023. These students stand out for their commitment to studying the Russian language and to deepening their knowledge of the field of Russian studies.

Four Russian-language programs participated for the first time - *McGill University, UC Berkeley, University of Denver and University of South Dakota*. For the participating institutions and laureates, see below. All students received a letter acknowledging their accomplishments and a certificate, newly designed this year with a folkloric theme by PSRSLA co-chair Izolda Savenkova.

Congratulations to the 2023 laureates on a job well done! Along with their instructors throughout the country, we wish them continued success.

Желаем дальнейших успехов!

Colleagues, we look forward to receiving your nominations in 2024!

The annual nomination period is January 1 - March 1, and all submissions are made electronically: <http://www.actr.org/guidelines.html>. The form will open for submissions January 1, 2024, with a call for nominations posted on the ACTR website and on SEELANGS. Since 2019 this award has been open not only to four-year colleges and universities, but also to community college programs that offer two years of Russian language courses; these colleges are welcome to nominate a student who will be continuing on to a four-year university to major in Russian.

Please feel welcome to contact the Committee at any time with questions or suggestions: kresin@ucla.edu, as2157@columbia.edu, iza.savenkova@gmail.com.

With best wishes for the summer,

Susan Kresin, Izolda Savenkova and Alla A. Smyslova, PSRSLA Co-chairs

ACTR Post-Secondary Russian Scholar LAUREATES-2023

**For the full list of PSRSLA recipients since its inception in 2007,
please see <http://www.actr.org/past-psrsla-laureates.html>**

Appalachian State University
Max Shirikjian
Arizona State University**
Eric Wagner
Barnard College**
Eva Nikitovic
Binghamton University*
Lea Frenkel
Bowdoin College
Colby Santana
Brandeis University
Aeryn Rowe
Brigham Young University**

Ada Vucenovic
Bryn Mawr College
Erin Ramsey
Columbia University*
Talia Abrahamson
Connecticut College
Beatrice Voorhees
Dartmouth College
Jasmine Li
Davidson College
Meghan Lagoutine
Dickinson College
Lauren Evans

Fordham University
Emma Jane Konkoly
Georgetown University**
Jesse Ryno 2023
Grinnell College
William Sweek
Harvard University
Paige Lee
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Beatrice Elizabeth Hoffman
Indiana University**
Nicholas Siambekos

Thank you for everything you do to sustain this program!!! This is such a great program, and it means so much to the students who are selected.

Emily Johnson, University of Oklahoma

Thank you so much for providing the opportunity to recognize and celebrate wonderful students like Ben. It means so much to the awarded student, faculty members, our program, and the community."

Julia Katsnelson, University of Vermont

Thanks for doing this--it is a nice recognition for our students. Benjamin Sutcliffe, Miami University

Thank you very much. I am glad that there is such a great opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of our students."

Maria Ivanova, McGill University

Thanks to you all for doing so much good work for this great program and service to the profession!

Tom Garza, The University of Texas at Austin

Thanks as always for this wonderful service to the profession! Nicolas, Lehigh University

We are most grateful that you organize this opportunity for the many deserving students studying Russian every year. Janneke van de Stadt, Williams College

"We're so delighted to have the opportunity to honor our students in this way and very much appreciate all you do to make this possible. Lara Ravitch, University of Oregon

Thank you for providing this service! Holly Myers, University of Delaware

I really appreciate your work. This has been an exciting opportunity for our students!

Snezhana Zheltoukhova, Stetson University

Thank you for making this available. It is very important to us and our students. Erin Collopy, Texas Tech University

Thank you for the opportunity! Larysa Stepanova, Ohio State University

Thank you for doing such a great job with this! It is a beautiful certificate and goes a long way to instilling a sense of accomplishment in our winners! Halima Belemlih, University of New Haven

Thank you for offering this important recognition of student dedication to Russian studies. The award is an important component of our program's spring awards ceremony, and it's a wonderful thing to connect our students with a larger community of honorees. Molly Blasing, University of Kentucky

Thank you again for this excellent service. We love honoring our students, and this is a great way for us to do that.

Cori Anderson, Rutgers University

Thanks for making this great opportunity available! Michael Gorham, University of Florida

Thank you so much for organizing this award! Laura Little, Connecticut College

Thank you so much for your ongoing efforts to recognize our best students' achievements!

Larry McLellan, University of California, Santa Barbara

Thank you very much for this much appreciated service to the profession and our students!

Karen Evans-Romaine, University of Wisconsin – Madison

PSRSLA..., continued from p. 19

Iowa State University

Anna Borisenko

Lehigh University*

Hannah Moss

McGill University

Daisy Sprenger 2023

The University of Arizona

Fatima Eyub

The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Anna Raezer

The University of California, Berkeley

Olivia Kirschman

The University of California, Los Angeles**

Elyse Ostroske

The University of California, Santa Barbara

Victoria Korotchenko

The University of Central Florida

Hannah Hillsgrove

The University of Delaware

Sheldon Wilson

The University of Denver

Cloe Miller 2023

The University of Florida**

David Griffin

The University of Georgia

Mariah Cady

The University of Kansas**

Brook Elizabeth Binger

The University of Kentucky*

Rowan Brazel

The University of Maryland

Jacob Svoysky

The University of Michigan

Timothy Olson

The University of Missouri at Columbia

Alexis Dove

The University of New Hampshire**

Taylor Nydam

The University of New Haven

Max Ganter

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Alexandra Love

The University of Notre Dame

Cullen Geahigan

The University of Oklahoma*

Alyssa McGlamery

The University of Oregon

Emris Kissel

Miami University

Daniel Zhou

Missouri University of Science and Technology

Ryan Juergens

New College of Florida

Brendan McMahon

New York University

Megan Finkel

Northwestern University

Eryk Hovde

Oberlin College

Theo Schenk

Pomona College

Claire Chang

Portland Community College**

Elizabeth Aley

Purdue University**

Renee M Forfa

Rutgers University**

Helen Hopersky

Stetson University

Madison Sepiol

Swarthmore College

Grace Sewell

Texas Tech University

Ryan Russell

The College of Charleston

Grace Fairchild

The College of the Holy Cross

Samuel A. Jayasi

The College of William & Mary**

Kathryn Webb

The Ohio State University

Bailee Wolfe

The University of Alabama**

Katie Jewell

The University of Pennsylvania**

Vita Raskevičiūtė

The University of Pittsburgh

Hannah Faulkner

The University of South Dakota

Ryan Conover 2023

The University of Tennessee

Madison Watts

The University of Texas at Austin**

Kameryn Guilbeau

The University of Utah**

Lynn Ricks

The University of Vermont

Benjamin (Ben) Asack

The University of Virginia

Tianyue Guo

The University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Taylor Hatley

United States Air Force Academy

Lauren E. Bogue

United States Military Academy at

West Point**

Hannah Matsas

Utah State University

Patrick Gee

Vanderbilt University

Fan-Ching Jasmine Ding

Wellesley College

Sophia Bailey

Wesleyan University

Amina Cecunjanin

Williams College

Madeline Lawler

*Program has nominated laureates every year since 2007

**Program has nominated laureates for ten or more years in a row

JOIN THE ACTR PSRSLA PROGRAM!

NOMINATE A STELLAR STUDENT FOR PSRSLA-2024!

41st ACTR National Russian Essay Contest

November 14-18, 2022

First and Second Round Results

The ACTR National Russian Essay Contest (NREC) provides high school and middle school students the opportunity to demonstrate their writing proficiency in Russian in a meaningful context. The 41st NREC occurred November 14-18, one week before Thanksgiving, an NREC tradition.

This year 738 traditional learners, heritage learners, and native speakers, who represent 30 programs and 37 teachers in 16 states and DC, wrote essays.

New and returning (from a Covid hiatus) programs and teachers in the contest this year included: ACIE STARTALK Discover Russia (DC), Katya Ratushnyuk, Betsy Sandstrom, and Nataliya Ushakova; Central High School (TN), Brooke Ballenger; Madison Russian School (WI), Inna Reinfeldt; and Pritzker College Prep (IL), Phillip Stosberg.

The **topic** this year was: Моё любимое место

The **topic prompt** was: Your goal is to write an essay about your favorite place. Your favorite place might be a place that you frequent often or it might be a place that you visit rarely, or a place that you want to visit. This may be a real place or a virtual place. Besides describing the place, you may want to write about what makes this place particularly special to you and how you feel in this place. You may write about the things you like to do when you are at your favorite place. You may want to describe people, food, or any other features associated with your favorite place. You may use the suggestions given above, or any other information that you consider important, but you must write in Russian and stick to the topic: My Favorite Place.

Judges for the first round of the NREC this year were:

Anna Czeulin, Goucher College, MD

Jill Lederman, Berkshire Country Day School, MA

Lisa Steffen, State University of New York at Brockport, NY

Mara Sukholutskaya, East Central Oklahoma University, OK

Marina Sweany, Rochester Institute of Technology, NY

Bozena Szulc, Linden Hills High School (emerita), NJ

Dawn Weinraub, Emma Willard School (emerita), NY

Judith Wobst, Amherst Regional High School (emerita), MA

Each judge received essays at the end of December and read and assessed them according to communicative guidelines. Judges were instructed to look first at whether the students were able to communicate their thoughts to a tolerant native speaker, and then to judge the content, effort, style, and grammar presented in the essays. First-round NREC results were sent to teachers in February.

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Honorable Mention	No Award	Total
Beginner	44	74	92	48	1	259
Beginner Heritage	11	6	10	3	0	30
Intermediate	37	56	64	27	1	185
Intermediate Heritage	31	21	21	8	0	81
Advanced	17	39	49	17	0	122
Advanced Heritage	23	16	9	7	0	55
Native Speaker	4	1	1	0	0	6
Total	167	213	246	110	2	738

In this table you can see the distribution of awards for the first round.

NREC, to be continued on p.22

NREC report ..., continued from p.21

FIRST ROUND GOLD MEDAL ESSAYISTS, 41st NATIONAL

RUSSIAN ESSAY CONTEST

(Teacher names in bold)

American Councils STARTALK Discover Russia - **Betsy Sandstrom, Katya Ratushnyuk, Nataliya Ushakova**: Alessandro Accardi (AH), David Brokhin (AH), Jasmine Garry (B)

Buckingham, Browne and Nichols School, MA - **Joshua Walker**: Thomas Fulginiti (I), Nicole Resnick (I), Audra Soni (I), Kevin Winschell (I)

By the Onion Sea, IL - **Julia Kriventsova Denne**: Rowan Starr (A), Eva Carlton (B), Jonah Brandenburgh (I), Stella Schick (I), Betty Polyakov (IH)

Cherokee High School, NJ - **Marian Barnum**: Alisa Shapiro (AH), Andrew Casey (I)

Friends School of Baltimore, MD - **Elizabeth Lee Roby**: Sophia Clark (A), Nathan Renard (A), Alice Riley (A), Hannah Pangbariguan (B), Sasha Rosenthal (B), Connor House (I),

Glastonbury High School, CT - **Olga Gotta**: Allison Desmarais (A), Thomas Fahey (A), Elise Grin (A), Kamryn Herrick (A), Sydney Shaw (A), Alexandra Cole (AH), Madison Handrahan (I), Sara Hearne (I)

James Madison High School, NY - **Natalia Billings**: Dzmityr Lebedeu (AH), Pavel Lebedev (AH), Arsenii Stepanenko (AH)

James Madison High School, NY - **Ekaterina Kalmanson**: Atai Zheebekov (IH), Mariia Vainshtein (NS)

Langley High School, VA - **Valentin Cukierman**: Siddart Immidiseti (I), Cleia Jones (I), Arielle Virnik (IH)

Langley High School, VA - **Nazalie Nersesian**: Vishwa Rakasi (I)

Madison Russian School, WI - **Inna Reinfeldt**: Olesya Kazina (AH), Maxim Shumilov (AH), Alexandra Vakar (AH), Timothy Harrold (IH)

Maggie L. White Governor's School, VA - **Michael White**: Ella Forlin (B), Caroline Johnson (B), Keira Kinnier (B), William Knutson (B), Abigail Montgomery (B), Tanvi Palavalas (B), Greta Shope (B), Amelia Johnson (I)

Newton South High School, MA - **Jill Christensen**: Nikita Kladov (BH)

Russian Kids Club, CA - **Ilona Tombu**: Michelle Tam (AH), Zoe Vodyanoy (AH), Nelly Yermakova (IH)

Russian Language School Ckyku Net, CA - **Lyudmila Andreyeva**: Maksim Begar (IH), Polina Chistyakova (IH), Alexandra Dalarcao (IH), Ivan Duaweke (IH), Alexey Gribok (IH), Anna Gribok (IH), Iekateryna Khaperskova (IH), Iurii Kirpichev (IH), Alon Liubovich (IH), Mathew Loenko (IH), Miro Maedo (IH), Julia Okuneva (IH),

Sara Perkhodnik (IH), Alina Prostota (IH), Emily Troy (IH), Maria Vanovich (IH), Polina Terekhina (NS)

Russian School Olympus, DC - **Nathalie McGregor**: Lydia Fayak (BH), Gleb Kasyan (BH), Julia Lewis (BH), Daniel Swensen (BH), Ally Felde (IH), Max Felde (IH), Natalie Henry (IH), Natalie Ann Sazonova (IH)

San Diego Russian School, CA - **Elena Yulaeva**: Alisa Franklin (A), Julian Stockton (A), Eva Chertukhina (AH), Daniel Kaluzhny (AH)

Shaker High School, NY - **Anna Shkaf**: Abigail McManus (A), Benjamin Preceruti (A), Amy Devendorf (B), Michelle Jamil (B), Megan Razzano (B), Inna Shargorotski (BH), Selena Tang (I), Julia Cheban (IH)

Smith Middle School, CT - **John R. Rook**: Melinda Cao (B), Ryley Elizabeth Handrahan (B), Devyn Ann Johnson (B), Emma M. Stricevic (B)

St. Louis University High School, MO - **Robert Chura**: Colin Cavanagh (A)

St. Paul Central High School, MN - **Oksana Cox**: Carson Bloedel (A), Umar Dzhumabaev (NS)

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Olga Goyco**: Tasnim Ghoniem (B), Sameeha Saleem (B), Zhuoying Yu (B), Diana Ibragimova (BH), Mark Kleyman (BH), Katherine Kobichev (BH), Polina Zilber (BH)

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Natalya Levina**: Edward Novodvorsky (AH), Milana Radinovskiy (AH), Elliot Zakursky (AH), Elizabeth Fleyshmakher (IH)

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Veronika Maslyukova**: Andrea Guo (B), Yaolin Tan (B), Jacqueline Yu (I),

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Katya Ratushnyuk**: Daryna Glum (B), Kristina Kong (B), Irene Li (B), Alyssa Malloy (B), Samuel Sandler (B), Julianna Veretchak (B)

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Elena Sokolovski**: Laura Cossack (IH), Konstantin Maslov (IH), Michael Yahontov (IH), Batyrkhan Alimzhanov (NS)

Staten Island Technical High School, NY - **Nataliya Ushakova**: Alexander Kokhno (AH), Elena Alhaddad (B), Jessica Chen (B), Cindy Fu (B), Jenny Huang (B), Ryan Huang (B), Kristine Tan (B), Ashley Zhong (B), Cayden Auyeng (I), Eleanor Cohen (I), Isabella Kasparov (I), Tara Isabel Lago (I), Annie Lin (I), Sean Lublinsky (I), Juliet Masica (I), Yanna Mei (I), Marianna Mikheyeva (I), Erica Yu (I)

The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, KY - **Ekaterina Myakshina**: Tayveon Wood (B), Reagan Phelps (I), Sophia Wielawski (I)

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, VA - **Betsy Sandstrom**: Steven Van Hulle (A), Zara Callahan (AH), Ariana Mamedova (AH), Benjamin Reznikov (AH), Penelope

Clark (B), Raghav Karthikeyan (B), Archi Marrapu (B), Nithia Senthilnathan (B), Julia Showers (BH),

Walnut Hills High School, OH - **Johanka Hart-Tompkins**: Kristina Klimov (AH), Dominic Domizio (I),

West High School, AK - **Nadejda Hess**: Elias Bourdukovsky (A), Damaiah Figueroa (B), Alexandra Harkey (B), Venice Reine Koy (B), Mariah Block (I), Ellie Bloechl (I), Ava Cintula (I), Cyrus Clendaniel (I), Ashley Conlon (I), Nora Houston-Speckman (I), Iona Snyder (I), Bristol Tesch (I), Maria Kingry (IH),

West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South, NJ - **Ivett Figueroa**: Dahria Charadnichenka (AH)

SECOND ROUND GOLD MEDAL ESSAYISTS, 41st NATIONAL RUSSIAN ESSAY CONTEST

Essays awarded gold medals at the Native Speaker, Advanced Heritage, and Advanced levels in the first round are traditionally forwarded to a judge for the second round of judging. This year the NREC Co-chairs enlisted Elena Farkas, Adjunct Instructor of Russian at the University of Alaska and long-time member of the ACTR Board to read the second-round essays. Elena is particularly suited for this task because of her 30+ years of experience working with K-16 non-heritage and heritage students. Of special note is the fact that Elena established and developed the first public school K-12 Russian immersion program for non-heritage students in Alaska.

ADVANCED GOLD

School/Teacher/Student

By the Onion Sea, IL

Julia Kriventsova Denne

Rowan Starr

Friends School of Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Lee Roby

Nathan Renard

Alice Riley

Glastonbury High School, CT

Olga Gotta

Sydney Shaw

San Diego Russian School, CA

Elena Yulaeva

Julian Stockton

Shaker High School, NY

Anna Shkaf

Abigail McManus

St. Louis University High School, MO

Robert Chura

Colin Cavanagh

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, VA

Betsy Sandstrom

Steven Van Hulle

Olga Gotta

Allison Desmarais

Thomas Fahey

Elise Grin

Kamryn Herrick

San Diego Russian School, CA

Elena Yulaeva

Alisa Franklin

Shaker High School, NY

Anna Shkaf

Benjamin Preceruti

St. Paul Central, MN

Oksana Cox

Carson Bloedel

West High School, AK

Nadejda Hess

Elias Bourdukovsky

Maxim Shumalov

Aleksandra Vakar

Russian Kids Club, CA

Ilona Tombu

Zoe Vodyanoy

Staten Island Technical High School, NY

Nataliya Ushakova

Alexander Kokhno

Staten Island Technical High School, NY

Natalya Levina

Edward Novodvorsky

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, VA

Betsy Sandstrom

Benjamin Reznikov

Walnut Hills High School, OH

Johanka Hart-Tompkins

Kristina Klimov

West Windsor-Plainsboro HS South, NJ

Ivett Figueroa

Dahria Charadnichenka

ADVANCED SILVER

Friends School of Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Lee Roby

Sophia Clark

Glastonbury High School, CT

ADVANCED HERITAGE GOLD

Glastonbury High School, CT

Olga Gotta

Alexandra Cole

James Madison High School, NY

Natalia Billings

Pavel Lebedev

Madison Russian School, WI

Inna Reinfeldt

Olesya Kazina

ADVANCED HERITAGE SILVER

American Councils STARTALK Discover Russia, DC

Betsy Sandstrom, Katya Ratushnyuk, Nataliya Ushakova

Alessandro Accardi

David Brokhin

NREC Report ..., to be continued on p.22

NREC Report ..., continued from p.23

Cherokee High School, NJ

Marian Barnum

Alisa Shapiro

James Madison High School, NY

Natalia Billings

Dzimitry Lebedeu

Arsenii Stepanenko

Russian Kids Club, CA

Ilona Tombu

Michelle Tam

San Diego Russian School, CA

Elena Yulaeva

Eva Chertukhina

Daniel Kaluzhny

Staten Island Technical High School, NY

Natalya Levina

Milana Radinovskiy

Elliot Zakursky

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, VA

Betsy Sandstrom

Zara Callahan

Ariana Mamedova

NATIVE SPEAKER GOLD

James Madison High School, NY

Ekaterina Kalmanson

Mariia Vainshtein

Russian School Ckyku Net, CA

Lyudmila Andreyeva

Polina Terekhina

St. Paul Central High School, MN

Oksana Cox

Umar Dzhumabaev

Staten Island Technical High School, NY

Elena Sokolovski

Batyrgan Alimzhanov



Congratulations

to these remarkable students and their extraordinary teachers!

Paavo Husen, John R. Rook, and Phillip Stosberg, Co-Chairs of the 2022 NREC



The 42nd National Russian Essay Contest is scheduled for

November 13-17, 2023.

ACTR Annual Meeting..., continued from p. 12

**AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF RUSSIAN
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**



mentation and submitted to Elena Farkas. This will facilitate the reimbursement process and ensure the proper allocation to the correct line item on the financial ledger. Total assets for ACTR are \$142,846 for 2022. Elena thanked American Councils for their support and collaboration in assisting ACTR with their financial reporting.

There was a question in the Zoom chat regarding where members can access all the reports presented at today's meeting. All reports can be accessed in the following Google Drive Folder shared with members when they registered for the meeting: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NC8e063b6t6utpvgNAHjtRDNe5cwiYwm/view?usp=sharing>

Link to ACTR Treasurer's Report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OUPu8sgpjRUNY-OtcPNID4TfktjViWP/view?usp=share_link

DEAI Committee Report

Raquel Greene reported that since 2022 the DEAI Committee has primarily focused on two initiatives, which included finalizing a survey for the general membership which will be used as part of self-study to assess the socio-economic make-up of ACTR. The committee also drafted a framework document which offers a rationale and methodology for conducting the survey. They also finalized a climate survey to be used by ACTR standing committees, along with a similar framing document. Raquel also reported that the ACTR Board accepted both surveys and framing documents and that their committee will continue to prioritize initiatives and determine which ones should be implemented in the

short and long term. Links to the documents mentioned above are listed in the attached committee report.

Diane Nemec-Ignashev made a comment that at the last board meeting, it was specified that any member filling out these surveys will be able to opt out of answering any question.

Link to DEAI Committee Report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hK24ATZzMX_VI4WDI-AxlgX_5L2VZpE8/view?usp=share_link

Reports and Announcement of ACTR Awards

ACTR Service Award Committee Report

The committee members are Elena Farkas (Chair), Jane Shuffelton, and Betsy Sandstrom. Jane Shuffelton presented this report in which she announced two ACTR awards for this current year. The ACTR Distinguished Service Award has been awarded to Dr. Mara Sukholutskaya, Professor of Russian and Director of Global Education at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. For many years, Mara has served on the Olympiada Materials Review Committee, as well as judging the National Russian Essay Contest (K-12 Level) for ACTR. The complete citation to accompany this award was read and will be published in the ACTR Newsletter. Mara graciously accepted the award and thanked the committee and ACTR for this honor. She also recalled various people throughout the years who played an integral role in her becoming a teacher and scholar, and added that inclusion is an important goal of CARTA,

where they try very hard to preserve, notice and encourage Russian studies programs in the US heartland. Mara also stated the importance of service to the profession.

The second award was presented by the committee chair, Elena Farkas, to Mark Trotter, Professor of Russian and Associate Director and Outreach Coordinator of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. This was an ACTR Special Service Award in recognition of Mark's many years of outstanding service to ACTR, to the field of teaching Russian and promoting ACTR and other outreach programs. Mark has been an active member of the ACTR Board of Directors for several decades and served as Co-Chair of the Olympiada of Spoken Russian, which he successfully expanded to seven other regions. Elena also read the accompanying citation which will be published in the ACTR Newsletter. Mark graciously accepted the award, thanked numerous people who have had an impact on his professional development in the field of Russian pedagogy and dedicated it to the memory of his late father.

ACTR K-12 Awards Committee (K-8 and 9-12 Levels)

The members of this committee are John Rook (Chair), Elena Farkas, Paavo Husen, Tony Brown and Betsy Sandstrom. Elena presented the ACTR Excellence in Teaching Award -K-8 Level to Suzanne Jouravlev of Sparta Middle School in Sparta, New Jersey. Elena read the citation for the K-8 award. Elena also presented the ACTR Excellence in Teaching Award - 9-12 Level to William Brennan of Sparta High School, Sparta, New Jersey. These awards honor and recognize outstanding teachers for their dedication, professionalism and excellence in Russian language instruction across the US in both private and public schools. These awards were also created to further engage ACTR member teachers through national recognition, in addition to highlighting and strengthening ACTR and Russian language programs nationwide. The full citation for the 9-12 award was read and will be published in the ACTR Newsletter. On behalf of ACTR and the K-12 ACTR Awards Committee, Elena congratulated both award recipients.

ACTR National Scholar Laureate Award (pre-college)

The members of this committee are Katya Ratushnyuk and Nina Vaykhanskaya. Katya reported their committee awarded the National Scholar Laureate Award to thirty student recipients from twenty-three schools across the US. Every school with an established Russian program may designate one outstanding sophomore or junior for this award. Recipients from other years are not eligible, and there can be only one award per school. Any school with more than 100 students studying Russian may nominate two students.

The list of awards recipients and their photos will appear in the ACTR Newsletter. An electronic nomination form facilitated the process this year. Awards, certificates and letters to teachers and administrators have been sent. Katya thanked all participating teachers for their support.

Link to RSLA report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v9WHloBEQyrw6vngH3l1CKD8gfnFREgX/view?usp=share_link

ACTR Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate Award (PSRSLA)

Susan Kresin reported that the nominations are ongoing and will be accepted until March 1, 2023. Both junior and senior level students at the post-secondary level are eligible to receive this award from four-year university/college and two-year community college programs. Last year there were seventy-nine participating programs. This year's award has a new template created by Izolda Savenkova and contains a folkloric image. Award certificates and accompanying letters will be sent to students. *Link to PSRSLA Report:*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IA8Se1L6-I_zNYnq5Xvz4EDDXzhV84M/view?usp=share_link

ACTR Post-Secondary Awards Committee

Susan Kresin also presented the report for this committee, stating that two new awards at the post-secondary level were launched in the fall of 2022. The ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian at the Graduate Level has been awarded to two graduate student instructors - Ani Abrahamyan, PhD Candidate in Russian Literature at Indiana University and Aselle Almuratova, PhD Candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. This award offers national recognition to graduate students who demonstrate excellence in teaching the Russian language, as well as a commitment to the teaching profession. Susan read the full citations for both awards, which will be published in the ACTR Newsletter. Both awardees thanked their many mentors who have played a vital role in their formation as instructors and scholars.

The ACTR Teaching Excellence Award for Post-Secondary Instructors offers national recognition to a college or university instructor who demonstrates effective and innovative teaching practices and the ability to serve as an influential advocate for teaching Russian on a regional and/or national basis. This year's honoree is an outstanding instructor of the Russian language and culture at the post-secondary college/university level, Dr. Olga Thomason, Senior Lecturer in Russian at the University of Georgia. *Link to Post Secondary Awards Committee's report:* https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hm2t8E2EQJ9lWWzFvq3s5ym4IDp-KwW/view?usp=share_link

Olga Kagan Professional Development Fund Report

Susan Kresin also presented the report for the Olga Kagan Professional Development Fund. Honoring Olga E. Kagan, an expert in second language and heritage language pedagogy and a colleague who was renowned for her dedication to professional development, the purpose of this grant is to support the professional development of Russian language instructors. This fund offers support for Russian language instructors, including, but not exclusive to, graduate students. Two grants (up to \$300) awarded annually to graduate students will help offset the cost of professional development in language pedagogy. Eligible reimbursable expenses include travel to professional and academic conferences, conference registration fees, pedagogical workshops, and other professional development and/or training activities which focus on language pedagogy. The deadline to apply for this grant is April 1, 2023. Last year's recipients were Natalia Petrova (University of Wisconsin-Madison), who attended the workshop "Connecting Learning Target to Checks for Learning" organized by PEARLL Summer Institute at the University of Maryland, and Kamila Saifeeva (University of Kansas), who attended the workshop "Using the Target Language" organized by PEARLL Summer Institute at the University of Maryland. Susan also appealed to the ACTR Membership to disseminate information regarding these awards and funds so as to reach the widest spectrum of candidates and applicants.

ACTR Programs, Awards, Contests, Webinars, and Lounges

National Olympiada of Spoken Russian - Mark Trotter

Mark Trotter presented the report for the National Olympiada of Spoken Russian, highlighting a few items that are contained in the attached report. The numbers of participants in the contest were down again last year for various reasons. The contest did see a new participating program in Wisconsin. Mark also thanked Betsy Sandstrom and her students of Thomas Jefferson High School for

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF RUSSIAN ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



ACTR Annual Meeting..., continued from p. 25

Science and Technology, who stepped in to assist in the operations of the contest during his prolonged absence this past fall. Mark also announced that this spring will be his last year as national co-chair of the Olympiada contest.

Link to National Olympiada of Spoken Russian report:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-xx8ZvnJ5EXVe4m_2HtTPr8luqesUyNaYs3Jlfbvg/edit?usp=share_link

National Russian Essay Contest – John Rook/Paavo Husen/Phillip Stosberg

Paavo Husen reported that the report for the 2022 NREC was posted online.

Link to NREC report: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rdfnzAN8Y15Ct295pfarndK62vfwK2uH/edit?usp=share_link&oid=112048485720185126160&rtol=true&sd=true

National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest – Nina Bond

The report for the NPSREC was not formally presented at the meeting.

SLAVA – Olga Gotta, Betsy Sandstrom

Betsy Sandstrom presented the report for SLAVA, sharing that since last year there are 124 new members in SLAVA with 13 schools participating. SLAVA also added a new school chapter from Memphis (Whitehaven High School). This year, SLAVA will also continue discussions regarding potentially expanding SLAVA at the middle school level. Their plan is to devise a plan and procedure to properly recognize middle school programs. A book-prize has been added to the Olympiada contest. Betsy also appealed to any member teachers who have yet to open a SLAVA chapter at their school to do so.

Link to SLAVA report: No report was submitted

ACTR Webinars and Teacher's Lounges

The members of this committee are Irina Dubinina, Olga Klimova, Susan Kresin, Lee Roby, John Rook and Irina Kogel. Irina Dubinina reviewed the focus of the fall 2022 programming which concerned diversity, equity and inclusion at the lower proficiency levels, teaching Russian today, and addressing the diversity of the Rusophone world and diverse voices from the field of Russian. Any resources that were highlighted during these discussions were included in the shared Padlet which can be found on the ACTR website (<https://padlet.com/eroby4/6xqnsjc51mn0cfu6>). To further engage participants in the lounges and spotlight diverse voices from the field, a feature was added to the registration form where registrants could offer to make a small presentation or offer to moderate the lounge. Lounges were also advertised to a larger audience, including to instructors in AATSEEL programs. A webinar entitled "Meeting the Challenges of Teaching Second Languages to Students with Learning Disabilities" was presented on February 11, 2023 by Linda Hecker, M.Ed. On March 3, there will be a follow-up lounge to this webinar. Upcoming events include a March 10 webinar on "Ungrading" with Evgeny Dengub and a follow-up discussion/lounge on March 17. Another webinar "The Role of Feedback in Second Language Acquisition" will occur on April 7th (presented by Olesya Kisselev) with a follow-up discussion/lounge on April 14. On May 5, there will be another session of the DEAL reading group on the topic of equitable grading, with a related workshop occurring on May 12. Teacher lounges are available to

active members of ACTR and one must register formally for the events in order to obtain a recording. Webinars are free to ACTR members and cost \$15 for non-members. Members were encouraged to contact any committee member with suggestions for topics next year. Link to PD Committee report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V3o797fAHPG053Vmv5EPkvQ0m8JfTxHe/view?usp=share_link

Final Remarks, New Business, Adjournment (All Present)

As part of the closing remarks and new business, it was reported that Olga Klimova is now the ACTR Vice-President and that there are now three new webmasters for ACTR: Diane Nemec-Ignashev, Olga Klimova and Kaylin Land. Any questions or suggestions regarding the ACTR website should be sent to the current webmasters. Members were also reminded that they are able to send questions and suggestions to the members of any standing ACTR committees. New information about the make-up of the current committees will be posted very soon. There is also a By-Laws Committee and members were invited to send along any suggestions or recommended changes to the current bylaws.

Nataliya Ushakova announced the 2022 AATSEEL award winners:

AATSEEL Book Prize - Best Book in Pedagogy (2 prizes awarded this year):

Etazhi: Second Year Russian Language and Culture. by Evgeny Dengub and Susanna Nazarova. Georgetown University Press, 2021;

Transformative Language Learning and Teaching. ed. Betty Lou Leaver, Dan Davidson, and Christine Campbell. Cambridge University Press, 2021.

AATSEEL Awards for Teaching, Service and Scholarship

- Outstanding Contribution to the Profession: *Irina Dubinina*
- Excellence in Teaching Award (Secondary School): *Devin Browne*
- Excellence in Teaching (post-secondary): *Olga Klimova*
- Outstanding service to AATSEEL: *Lee Roby*

Mark Trotter wanted to thank SLAVA and Slavica Publishers for their generous contributions to the book prizes to the Olympiada.

Nataliya Ushakova closed the meeting by inviting ACTR members to express their interest in joining ACTR committees and to send along any suggestions, ideas and texts for the Olympiada. She also reminded the membership that the board is comprised of volunteers and praised them for doing a great job.

Motion to adjourn the 2023 ACTR General Membership Meeting. Vote: All members voted to accept the adjournment of the meeting by leaving the meeting at the end.

NOTE: All reports that were prepared and submitted for the 2023 ACTR General Membership Meeting were posted and are accessible in the following Google Drive Folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HEjcNLIHjUeWR9hm7XDyF6LY5WE29?usp=share_link

Link to ACTR Newsletter Report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SyrS5WcJKLFc32Y6vW-ueN9_eLMNStk/view?usp=share_link

In Memoriam

Peter T. Merrill (1954-2023)

ACTR regrets the death of Peter Merrill, who passed away April 16 at his home in York, Maine. Peter played a major role in ACTR for many years and contributed widely to the field of Russian language pedagogy.

Peter began learning Russian as a high school student at Philips Andover Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. He continued his studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and at the University of California at Los Angeles, where he earned a Master's Degree in Linguistics and a PhD in Slavic Languages. His teaching career began at the University of Maryland, where he taught for several years before returning to his Alma Mater in Andover and later working as an advisor in international education at Whittle School and Studios.

Peter was a committed instructor, determined to bring cultural knowledge and competency into his classroom along with the process of language acquisition. He was known to his colleagues as having an active and probing mind, especially in terms of exploring and utilizing strategies to give learners a global perspective through their Russian studies. His students respected and valued him, as witnessed by visitors to his classroom. Betsy Sandstrom noted that when she observed a class one day, she was struck by the way the students never took their eyes off him.

Clearly a master teacher, he was recognized with the AATSEEL Award for Excellence Level. He was also the recipient of the AATSEEL Award for Excellence Level. He was also the recipient of the AATSEEL Award for Excellence Level. He was also the recipient of the AATSEEL Award for Excellence Level.



Peter and Susan Merrill, May 18, 2020

Peter served on the ACTR Board of Directors for several decades, including two terms as Vice-President and two terms as President. He was involved in creating materials for a prototype AP Russian exam (now the NEWL exam) and facilitated several summer workshops for teachers.

Peter leaves a significant legacy in the wider sphere of language learning, as one of the writers of the *Standards for Learning Russian in the 21st Century*, part of the series of language learning standards that have had a major impact on pedagogy, curriculum, and teacher education. He led the original task force that also included Ruth Edelman and Jane Shuffelton, and then served on the task force to revise and expand the Russian-specific standards, with Tom Garza and Jane Shuffelton.

Those who knew Peter appreciated his intelligence, his calm demeanor, and his thoughtful approach to challenges. Those qualities were important during the many hours of work in-person, on Skype, and then on Zoom, during the process of writing and revising the standards. Working with Peter was always productive, and always a joy.

Peter was a devoted husband to his wife Susan, a loving father to his daughter Jessica (Harbick) and his son James and a loving grandfather to Rose and Alexander Harbick. In retirement he enjoyed spending time with his family while living by the ocean in his home in York, Maine.

ACTR has lost a distinguished colleague and friend. We will truly miss him.

Submitted by Jane Shuffelton

Post-Secondary Awards Committee Report for the newsletter, March 2023

*Evgeny Dengub, Irina Dubinina, Olga Klimova, Susan Kresin (chair),
Kaylin Land, Benjamin Rifkin*

Two new ACTR post-secondary awards were launched in Fall 2022:

The [ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian at the Post-Secondary Level](#) honors an outstanding instructor of the Russian language and culture at the college/university level.

The [ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian at the Post-Secondary Level for Graduate Student Instructors](#) offers national recognition to graduate students who demonstrate excellence in teaching the Russian language, as well as a commitment to the teaching profession.

This year **Olga Thomason of the University of Georgia** received the [ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian at the Post-Secondary Level](#). Two recipients were selected for the [ACTR Award for Excellence in Teaching Russian at the Post-Secondary Level for Graduate Student Instructors](#): **Ani Abrahamyan, Indiana University, and Aselle Almuratova, University of Wisconsin-Madison.**



Ani Abrahamyan, a Ph.D. candidate in Russian literature at Indiana University, is an outstanding instructor who is strongly committed to creating an engaging, interactive, and supportive classroom environment. In her teaching, she employs a variety of

innovative approaches to teaching language and culture, including genre-based teaching and project-based learning to enable students to connect language, culture, and communication. She strives to develop learners' multiliteracies by creating learning tasks that engage students with printed and online texts as well as auditory and visual materials. The awards committee particularly noted Ani's commitment to helping students from Novice to Advanced levels find their voices in Russian and become, as she says, "masterful participants in the linguistic and cultural life of the Russophone world."

Ani has been working as a language instructor in the regular program at Indiana University and also as a lead instructor in the Indiana University Summer Language Workshop. She has helped dozens of students reach their proficiency goals. In addition to teaching language courses at various levels, she co-designed and co-taught a survey course on Russian culture. The innovative syllabus for this course was structured around cultural artifacts of various periods, rather than historical progression. She has also contributed to the Russian language program at Indiana University by developing training materials and training and mentoring assistant instructors and language tutors.

In addition to being an outstanding language instructor, Ani has been an enthusiastic promoter of Russian language and culture. She has organized and led many outstanding extracurricular activities for students of Russian, such as a Russian conversation table, Slavic Department talent shows, and holiday celebrations.

Aselle Almuratova, a Ph.D. candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Aselle is an extraordinarily gifted, dedicated, and creative teacher. At UW-Madison she has taught first- and second-year Russian, including summer intensive courses (which she revised



for online teaching), and an introductory intercultural course on Kazakhstan. She has also served as a Teaching Assistant and discussion leader in courses on 19th and 20th century Russian literature. Aselle is firmly committed to inclusive classroom practices that reflect an understanding of her students' perspectives, goals, and needs, and to expanding their awareness and knowledge of the diversity of the Russian-speaking world. This commitment permeates all aspects of Aselle's work: serving as a TA for the course "Russia: An Interdisciplinary Survey," as a Language Program Coordinator in Russkii dom, facilitating meaningful online discussions between advanced students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and students from Nazarbayev University, creating authentically grounded videos for the next edition of Golosa, and much more. Importantly, Aselle

strives to create a sense of community in and out of the classroom for students and colleagues: she supports her students by developing and leading co-curricular activities, and her fellow graduate students through mentoring.

The committee was impressed by Aselle's outstanding contributions in teaching, curricular development, and materials design, especially in DEI, and fully agrees with her nominators that Aselle "will help change our profession for the better as a teacher, scholar, designer of curricular and pedagogical materials, and mentor, helping all of us toward the goal of decolonizing our curricula and better representing the Russophone world."

Dr. Olga Thomason, a Senior Lecturer of Russian at the University of Georgia, has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her students' linguistic and cultural growth, to her own professional development, to the field of Russian language pedagogy, to promotion of the languages and cultures of the Russophone world, and to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom.



In the course of her teaching career at the University of Georgia, she has taught over twenty different language and culture courses, educating hundreds of students. Dr. Thomason's courses include discussions, creative writing, communicative problem solving, and cultural analysis of contemporary events. She has worked hard on creating meaningful opportunities for her students to engage in authentic communication with their Russian-speaking peers and other native speakers. To this end, she organized engaging telecommunication activities and led a number of successful summer study-abroad programs in Russia, which included topics in politics, social structure, and religious tradition. Dr. Thomason's teaching innovations are varied and include implementing a Dynamic Assessment (DA) model for developing listening comprehension, organizing telecollaborative projects with students in Russia, developing intercultural communication tasks, engaging students in experiential learning, and applying the Project-Based Language Learning approach to training language tutors.

In addition to being an inspiring teacher in the classroom, Dr. Thomason also mentors undergraduate and graduate students who engage in independent research on the Russophone world. She believes that collaborations between faculty and students benefit mentors and students alike, and she is a well-admired re-

source for Russian language instructors, tutors, and teaching assistants.

Поздравляем!

ACTR awards for excellence in teaching at the Post-secondary level, 2023-2024

Purpose of the awards: to honor outstanding instructors of the Russian language and culture at the college/university level.

Two awards will be presented, to

- [a graduate student instructor](#)
- [a college or university instructor](#) of any rank from any public or private post-secondary institution; this includes part-time/adjunct (not concurrently in graduate school) or full time, contract or tenured, lecturer or professor.

The Selection Committee will select one finalist from each category.

Nominations are due by **December 15th** of each calendar year. Notification of award recipients will be made by **January 15th**, and the finalist will be announced at the general ACTR membership meeting at the AATSEEL conference.

For guidelines and the submission links for nominations, please see the two awards links under the "College" tab on the [ACTR website](#).



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— members are eligible to participate in the ACTR-sponsored completions and award programs:

- The Olympiada of Spoken Russian
- The National Russian Essay Contest
- The National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest
- The Russian Scholar Laureate Award program

- The Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate Award program

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ACTR Letter

Newsletter of the American Council of Teachers of Russian

Elena Farkas, Chair, Editorial Board

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